Je Me Souviens

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President's Message

By Janice Burkhart, President

Can you remember such a wild winter? All over the world, this winter has left its mark. Earthquakes, tsunamis, blizzards, floods, ice storms, rogue waves, and high winds. It makes you think how little control we really have over the elements and how small we are in the larger scheme of things.

Well, spring is here. It is time to look around and see new life appearing everywhere. It gives you hope. Those beautiful daffodils and spring flowers, familiar birds returning to the feeders, leaves popping out on the trees and warm breezes greeting you as you stroll around the yard. It makes you feel that everything will be all right.

Genealogy is like that too. Everything will be rolling along when suddenly you hit a wall. Nothing works. Every path is a dead end. You search and search to no avail. Then suddenly you get a lead and low and behold, you make a break through and you feel that everything will be all right. Your searches become fun again.

At AFGS, we love to watch this series of events unfold. One person's success becomes everybody's success. It gives the rest of us happiness and a desire to continue our own work.

Let us all hope that 2010 will be a great year for everyone. Why not plan a trip to Woonsocket, RI and share your stories with us?

Bienvenue - From the Editor's Desk

By Shellee Morehead

This issue's authors bring us a variety of new sources, methods and techniques to enhance our research, and to preserve our unique family stories. Using censuses, traditional historical documents such as vital and church records, and local history are shown to be reliable methods to break down our brick walls, and understand our ancestry in new ways. Robert Gumlaw describes a tricky problem for border towns and what can happen with the Americanization of French surnames. Becky Keegan gives us the how and why of U.S. census records, and what they can tell us about our families. Gloria Hicks and Jeanne Carley describe the areas where they grew up and how French-Canadian history influenced their family and neighborhoods for generations.

What about doing something you may not have tried before? Family reunions and DNA testing are great ways to learn more about distant places, and distant ancestors. The Perrons and Leon Bergeron describe their recent family reunions and the trips that they inspired. Tom Allaire explains genealogical DNA testing and how you can help AFGS connect DNA to the wonderful traditional resources available to French-Canadian researchers through the new AFGS DNA project.

Or how about applying for a lineage society? Some Acadian descendents are eligible for membership in Daughters and Sons of the American Revolution. Check out Ray Duquette's account of Acadian patriots.

And what do you do with all that research when you feel you've "solved" a problem or broken down that brick wall? You write it up and submit it to JMS so that all of our members can share your success and perhaps be inspired to try something different in their own family history journey. Clyde Rabidoux's search for his ancestors is preserved and shared for the benefit of all our society's members.

AFGS hopes that all of our members can find something in this issue to inspire us to try something new. When you do, write a story and tell us about it, so you can inspire others to do the same

Author's Guidelines

Je Me Souviens publishes articles of interest to members of the American French Genealogical Society and people of French Canadian and Acadian descent. Articles dealing with history and genealogy are of primary interest, although articles on related topics will be considered. Especially desirable are articles dealing with sources and techniques, i.e. "how-to guides," related to specifics of French Canadian research.

All manuscripts must be well-documented (i.e. with sources) and well-written material on French-Canadian or Acadian history, genealogy, culture or folklore, but not necessarily limited to these areas. However, there MUST be a French-Canadian connection to what you submit. They can be of any length, though we reserve the right to break down long articles into 2 or more parts.

We prefer a clear, direct conversational style. A bibliography is desirable, and documentation is necessary for genealogical and historical submissions. Please use endnotes, rather than footnotes. All articles should be single-spaced and left-justified. Do not use bold, italics or underlining for headings.

All submissions must be in electronic form. Any word processing file will be accepted but we prefer .txt, .doc, and .rtf files. Please no PDFs. All illustrations and photos should be submitted as JPEG (Joint Photographic Experts Group) files. You may also submit printed black-and white photographs for publication. These photographs should be labeled with the submitter's name and contact information and the caption for the photo, preferably on the back. We are not responsible for loss or damage to originals and they may not be returned.

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Members' Corner

Welcome to our new Members!

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Jacqueline Henderson	RI
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Luella Elie Stilley	ID
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"Aw"struck: Americanization of French-Canadian Names

By Robert Gumlaw

Some of you may be wondering about the title about the Americanization of French Canadian surnames. There have been many articles written about "dit" names, nommes des guerres, and the various spellings of common surnames found in Québec. This one is a bit different.

I started researching my paternal ancestry about seven years ago. One of the first questions many would ask was "What kind of name is Gumlaw?" I am able to answer it gladly today. It is French Canadian.

My father's family entered the United States through upstate New York during the 1850's. Keeseville, Plattsburgh, Redford, Champlain, and Au Sable are a few of the places the name Gumlaw appears in the later censuses. While reviewing the pages of these towns, I started to notice something unusual. A rather large number of the surnames listed ended in "aw".

As I continued to research using other sources, this pattern continued to appear. Many of these "aw" families were living in neighborhoods that were predominately French Canadian. The marriage records indicated that most of my relatives in the area married people of French Canadian descent. Ultimately, I discovered the surname change on a marriage record of one of my great uncles in Burlington, VT. The name was listed as "Gamelin - Gumlaw". A plausible explanation may be that when the name Gamelin was pronounced by my French speaking ancestors, the locals could have written Gumlaw... a somewhat phonetic spelling for a common surname from Québec. Other records followed with a similar pattern.

I corresponded with a gentleman from Easthampton, MA with the surname Amlaw. He told me his ancestral surname was Hamelin. His family followed almost the same route south as did my own. They traveled from upstate New York across Lake Champlain to Burlington, VT for a few years, then to Western Massachusetts.

The following is a partial list of some of the "aw" names I have found in Clinton, Essex and Franklin County, New York records:

Amlaw	Crinklaw	Mussaw
Bashaw	Dashnaw	Rushlaw
Besaw	Dishaw	Santimaw
Bushaw	Dupraw	Shatlaw
Capstraw	Ghostlaw	Shatraw
Cassavaw	Grimshaw	Whitelaw
Coolaw	Gumlaw	

These surnames may not all be of French Canadian origin, but it is worth considering when researching this difficult border area.

About the Author

Robert Gumlaw is an AFGS member and occasional contributor to JMS.

No Plan, No Problem, Almost

By George and Therese Perron

This year's Perron Family reunion was held at L'anse St-Jean, which is located on the Saguenay River some four hours north of Quebec City. It is a very picturesque village with many artisans, and a ski resort. We don't want to say that they are out of touch because they have all the modern conveniences but they do not yet have cell phone service. Can you imagine our children without cell phones or text messaging? To us, it was a sort of paradise. The church, covered bridge, sightseeing boat rides, and walk on top of the mountain were certainly worth the trip.

A last minute decision when we left L'anse St-Jean was to see what we could while we were in the area as we drove home. No plans, no agendas. No cell phones. We traveled the south side of the Saguenay to a small church that had a collection of almost three hundred Christmas scenes all carved out of wood, collected from all over the world. We took some pictures outside but nothing could be taken in the church. Even the life sized figures at both entrances of the town were carved of wood.

We went to Chicoutimi and crossed over to see the other side of the river on the way to Tadoussac. Once there we decided to go north to Les-Escoumin to catch the ferry to Trois-Pistoles on the Gaspe peninsular and then travel the coast around it. Of course not having any plans, we got to Les-Escoumin at three o'clock. The last ferry left had at two. We decided to drive to Forestville, further north, to catch another ferry, hoping there would be one. We arrived a four thirty and the last ferry would leave at five for Rimouski. We made it, but we didn't have reservations and we were put in a line of <u>possible</u> travelers. Needless to say, we were one of the last three cars on the boat. We didn't have a specific plan so when we got off the boat, we went to the first motel and found out that nearly all of them were already full. The woman at the desk was kind and offered to call the hotel downtown to check if they had anything available. The answer was yes but only a smoking room or a suite. No question there, we would take the

expensive suite. The clerk was very busy at the time and said she would have to call back for the confirmation. Luck was on our side as when the phone rang again, it was another motel telling her that she had a cancellation and asking if there would be anyone to take it. She would only hold it for 20 minutes. We were there in ten. No plan, no problem.

The restaurant nearby was supposed to close at eight p.m. but stayed open because of the many customers waiting to be seated. Good meal. The next day we drove to Cap-Des-Rosiers a wonderful area in the Parc National Forillon. We started looking for rooms at around three o'clock and there were not many left. Our decision then was that for the remainder of the trip, we would start looking for rooms at least at two pm and hope for the best.

We drove next to Moncton, New Brunswick to see and experience the magnetic hill. We never thought we would see the day when we would pay five dollars to experience a car rolling backwards uphill in neutral. We guess it's one of those things we all have to try sometime. Having learned our lesson regarding lodging, we stopped at one of the numerous visitors' centers (most of the people spoke very good English and were very helpful) we asked them to find us a room nearby. They did this at no cost to us, thankfully. It was a short drive and now we were seeing thousands of tents, campers and people milling about. Good thing we had reservations this time as the parking lot was having numerous tailgate parties. Why do you think? There was an AC-DC rock concert at Magnetic hill that night. The cannons fired at eleven pm and the fireworks shortly thereafter. Not exactly what we expected. How do we get into these things? The next day we observed the thousands of tons of trash that would have to be picked up. It was time for us to leave, for sure.

Next stop was Hopewell Cape to witness the highest tide change in the world on the Bay of Fundy. It was a long walk but worth it as we saw the tide rising one vertical foot every ten minutes.

As we drove toward Maine, Therese decided we should have a good lobster dinner, so we would stop at the first lobster restaurant we found. Easier said than done. We crossed the border at five minutes before four in the afternoon. Just around the corner, we found lobster dinner but it didn't open til four.

So we walked up and down the street until ten after four. The door was still locked and no one was inside setting up or waiting to unlock. As I closed the door of the car to leave, the man came out and put up the open sign. We thought he must have been blind or he didn't want us there so we left. Some time later I saw another place and when I got to the door the sign said it would not open till six. It was only five fifteen.

So on we went. The next stop only sold live lobsters. Finally, we found a little town crowded with visitors and restaurants by a fishing dock. Into the dinning room we went. But they only do lobsters on the patio deck. We didn't care so off to the deck. Five minutes after we gave our order but the waitress said that they are not serving lobsters because one of the cooks cut off his finger, went the hospital and now they were short handed (pardon the pun).

We still wanted lobster so off we went again. At the next place, I asked before we went in and the lady said that they had the best lobster rolls in Maine. Therese went in and lo and behold, no dinners.

The next stop was another live lobster place but this time I asked him where he sold his and could he recommend a restaurant that served a dinner. It was in Machias, Maine, twenty miles down the road. We had finally found our lobster dinner. We ate well but our fingers were sore and smelled of fish for the rest of the evening. This was George's first whole lobster. We'll stick to lobster rolls next time, thank you.

You would think that no more could happen on this trip, but here we go. After a good night's rest and removing the fishy smell, we headed for home. We were going to be near our friend's house in Wells, Maine, so we called to be sure they would be home. We made two calls and had no luck reaching them.

When we were only two miles away from home, we got a call from our granddaughter on our cell phone. The house alarm went off when she entered and she could not shut it off. After we told her how to turn it off, we warned her that the police would be there shortly. Lucky for her, the responding policeman was a neighbor of hers.

The day after we got home, our friend from Maine called. She had been with her daughter and son-in-law the lobster

fisherman. They had gone to pick up several lobsters and had a feast at her house later that afternoon. How's that for luck? All those restaurants we stopped at for a lobster dinner, but we missed one with friends!

We had a great time and will always remember our trip to the Perron family reunion and all the fun and frustration of "seeing what we could see".

Hope you have enjoyed our thoughts.

Check out our online
Cemetery Databases
At www.afgs.org
Central Falls, RI
Cumberland, RI
Lincoln RI
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Smithfield RI
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Massachusetts
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~
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Bergeron-D'amboise Reunion

By Leon C. Bergeron

In mid-year 2008 I received a letter from Larry Bergeron inviting all descendants of Barthelemy Bergeron dit Amboise to a reunion at Fredericton, NB in July 2009. Prior to receipt of his invitation, I had not considered another trip to eastern Canada, since I had made three previous trips to the Maritime Provinces and Quebec. Almost immediately upon receipt of the announcement I knew that I must go to the reunion if at all possible. Although I had been in New Brunswick years ago, I had never visited the city of Fredericton – something I wished to do. So the reunion would provide that opportunity in addition to meeting some of my cousins whom I had never seen.

I e-mailed Larry with my intention to attend the July 2009 reunion. He had set up a Google group on the Internet, and I was made a member of the Group. This entitled me to receive all correspondence between members of the group. Larry, who lives in Alexandria, Virginia, utilized the Internet almost exclusively in planning the reunion.

The idea of the reunion is attributed to Richard Bergeron, from Minneapolis, who has done extensive research on the Bergeron family and written a most interesting account of his findings. As I understand it Rich asked Larry to head the planning process as he was unable to devote the time necessary to see it to a conclusion.

The capital city of Fredericton was chosen because it was once the home of my ancestors – the Bergeron-D'Amboise family. During the time my ancestors lived there it was known as Pointe Ste. Anne. Fredericton, the capital of New Brunswick, is in the northwest part of New Brunswick on the St. John River – less than 100 miles from the Bay of Fundy, which separates New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Although the family has a dit name, it is the same family. When Barthelemy Bergeron came to New France in 1684

he identified himself as Bergeron dit D'Amboise to differentiate himself from other Bergeron families. Over time some of the family dropped the Bergeron name and are known by the family name of D'Amboise. The name D'Amboise originates from the city in France where he once lived – Amboise, France.

The reunion was scheduled for the year 2009, which marks the 250th anniversary of the destruction of the village of Point Ste. Anne by the British in February 1759. The anniversary was also being celebrated by The History Society of the River Saint Jean. Hence the Bergeron-D'Amboise Reunion was scheduled at the site of the former village of Point Saint Anne to coincide with the History Society's commemoration.

Most of you are somewhat familiar with the plight of the Acadian people, who became involved, involuntarily, in the disputes and wars between England and France in the 1700 hundreds. The Acadians had settled in the Maritime Provinces – primarily Nova Scotia – in the early 1600 hundreds. Most of the Acadians were natives of northwestern France, who left France to settle in the then French colony of Acadia or New France as it is sometimes referred to. There they lived a fairly peaceful existence until they became involved in the skirmishes with the English who were attempting to take over Acadia and all of present day Canada. Acadia was ceded to England by France by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. The Acadians, at that point, were without the support of France and therefore claimed neutrality.

The Acadians were permitted to continue to live in the Maritimes after the Treaty of Utrecht although they were constantly harassed by the English who lived in Nova Scotia as well as those from the New England states. As the British prepared to take Canada and the Maritime Provinces from France, the fate of the Acadians became less than certain. There were countless skirmishes between the Acadians, along with their friends the Indians and the British. And the English authorities in Nova Scotia considered the Acadians a threat – especially since they were allied with the local Indians. In 1755 many of the Acadians in Nova Scotia were captured by the British and deported to various parts of the world

including England, France, the American colonies as well as other places. You have the right to ask, how does this history pertain to the reunion in Fredericton? Not all of the Acadians were deported in 1755. Quite a number escaped deportation because they lived in other remote parts of the Maritime Provinces. This was true of the Acadians who lived on the St. John River at Point Saint Anne (Fredericton). This group, of which my ancestors, the Bergeron-D'Amboise family were a part, lived in the village up until the time that Lt. Moses Hazen of the British Troops decided to lead his group of 16 men to raid their small village in February 1759 – in the dead of winter. All of the homes and crops were burned, some of the villagers were killed and others were taken prisoners.

Others, however, sensing the oncoming raid, escaped the attack by going into the woods and into Quebec. Ultimately many of those were either captured or surrendered to the British due to the lack of provisions. A group of the Bergeron-D'Amboise family walked through the woods and settled in Quebec –between Montreal and Quebec City.

Eventually, my Bergeron ancestors were in captured or surrendered. They were placed in detention camps in the city of Halifax, where they remained until after the Treaty of Paris was executed between France and England in 1763. At that time the Acadians remaining in Halifax and other locations in Nova Scotia were given 18 months to leave Nova Scotia.

I believed that some of my ancestors chose to first go to Haiti, which was a French colony, but found living conditions unbearable there and finally ended up in Louisiana. At far as I have been able to determine they arrived in Louisiana in early 1765.

Thanks to the research by Rich Bergeron we know quite a lot about the early Bergeron family, especially Barthelemy Bergeron – the head of the family. Others, such as Father Adrian Bergeron and Bona Arsenault have contributed to writing the early family history. Barthelemy was born in Amboise, France in 1663, and arrived in Quebec in 1684 as a seaman in the French Navy stationed in New France. He sailed with the famous naval explorer

D'Iberville, mostly in his exploration and defense of the Hudson Bay area. Apparently he became proficient in navigation and later operated his own vessel on the Bay of Fundy and the rivers in the Maritimes. He lived for a long time in Port Royal, Nova Scotia with his wife Genevieve Serreau de St. Aubin, who was from Quebec. They had several children, and the family continued to live in Port Royal until about 1728 or 1730 when Barthelemy relocated his family to Point Saint Anne on the St. John River. The move was primarily to escape continuing harassment by the British in Nova Scotia. Some of his children were at Point Saint Anne when the village was destroyed in 1759.

In regards to the reunion effort, Larry Bergeron continued to invite as many of the descendants of the Bergeron-D'Amboise family by use of the Internet, direct mail and newspaper articles touting the planned reunion. An association was formed known as the Bergeron-D'Amboise Family Group. A web site was created thanks to a group member from Montreal. A modest reunion registration fee of twenty dollars per person was established. As the registration grew there was quite a lot of Internet interaction between Larry and group members concerning a program and other facets of the two-day reunion. Since the association's budget was very small, it would have to rely on help from outside the association membership as well as the efforts of association members.

Larry lives in Alexandria, Virginia – quite a distance from Fredericton – so his efforts in planning were limited to Internet and mail correspondence. Larry's contact in New Brunswick was Aline Cormier, a group member. Aline was instrumental in securing a place for the reunion to be held as well as a reasonably priced motel where members could stay should they wish. Aline has her own genealogy web site, Acadian Roots, and enlisted her family to help – including her 91 year old mother.

As time passed Larry, with help from the Historical Society of the Saint John River, and others developed a program for the two-day reunion. Aline along with her family and some other local volunteers provided food, door prizes, and a large

Reunion cake, Acadian headbands, etc. A Bergeron Dairy from Quebec provided some delicious cheese. Larry designed a Bergeron-D'Amboise lapel pin that was sold to association members. It is very attractive and includes both the Acadian flag as well as the Cajun Acadian flag.

I had registered early –nearly a year before the time for the reunion. As the New Year arrived (2009) I began to consider how I would travel to Fredericton in July. I had attempted to recruit my two brothers as group members. They both signed up and anticipated attending. However in the end only my brother, Paul, who lives in Knoxville, TN, was able to attend. I had considered driving to Fredericton with my wife. We had made a driving trip to Quebec and New Brunswick about 20 years ago – which took about three weeks. Also under consideration was traveling by plane. After much thought, I ruled out driving the 2,000 miles one-way journey. My brother and I began corresponding about the upcoming reunion. After some discussions, my brother invited me to fly from Knoxville with him and his wife Mary Lee. So that is what my wife and I did, we drove to Knoxville and boarded a plane with my brother and his wife for Halifax, NS. You may question why we opted to fly to Halifax rather than to Fredericton –the reunion site. My brother had not been to Nova Scotia and wished to see where our ancestors once lived. We planned to rent a vehicle in Halifax and drive to Fredericton. Once the reunion was over we planned to return to Nova Scotia by a different route and visit a couple of places of interest. And that is what we ultimately did, after much planning and making advance hotel reservations.

The flight to Halifax was on time and after changing planes in Washington, DC we arrived in Halifax where we rented a minivan and with some difficulty, located our hotel near the airport. After a few hours rest we ventured into downtown Halifax and dined at the Five Fishermen Restaurant. Ada and I had eaten there on our first trip to Nova Scotia in 1983 so it was somewhat like a homecoming. The following morning we departed on our drive to Fredericton with a stop in Moncton, NB. While in Moncton we visited the Center for Acadian Studies at the University of Moncton and met some interesting people who were aware of our

Bergeron reunion. We tried to visit with Stephen White, but he was busy with a client. Little did we know that Mr. White would attend some of our reunion in Fredericton, where we were able to meet him. After eating lunch in Moncton, we continued on to Fredericton. For the last 50 miles or so, we were on Highway 105 that follows the beautiful St. John River into Fredericton.
Our motel, the Ramada Riverside, was right on Hwy. 105, close to the river. After settling in we drove about two miles further to the Fort Naswaak Motel, the motel where Larry Bergeron and many of the others members were staying. Although the Fort Naswaak Motel offered a very enticing room rate, it was an old motel, and there were few amenities. We were happy that we had decided on the Ramada. The Fort Naswaak provided a small room for the group to meet one another, receive name badges and an updated schedule of events. We met Larry Bergeron and several of the Bergeron cousins.

Saturday July 18, 2009

The day began with a light rain – almost a mist – and about 65-70 degrees temperature. The group was scheduled to meet in Odell Park in Fredericton at 10 AM. We located the park, which is a large and beautiful park and the place that was designated as our meeting place. Initially only a few members were present, and we all thought that we may have the wrong location in the park. There was limited shelter so we got acquainted with those there as we experienced the light rain. Eventually more people arrived and by 11:30 or so the group had materially increased in number. About half of the group spoke French, but most were also bi-lingual, so it was easy to converse with them. Many were from Quebec; some were from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, and many others from the states.

Those from the states were mainly from the northeastern states; however some came from as far as California and of course Louisiana. All went their separate ways for lunch. We assembled at 1 PM at the old Government House to tour the building, but more importantly to tour the grounds. There was no one available to give us a tour of the building, so we proceeded to walk in the

rear of the building to the site of the village of Saint Anne. It is believed that it is also the site of the village cemetery; possibly the burial place of Barthelemy and Genevieve. A prayer was offered and some pictures were taken. It was a moving experience to walk on the site of the village and probably some of their graves. No graves are marked and there is an ongoing dispute over whether the site is an Acadian graveyard or an Indian cemetery. There was some excavation done many years ago and two bodies were discovered that were Europeans and not Indians. Further excavations have been prevented by the ongoing dispute.

Sunday July 19, 2009

The weather did an about face, so Sunday we were greeted with bright sunshine and a comfortable temperature. We arrived at the Saint Anne Community Center about 10 AM, where Aline Cormier and her group were decorating the large room and putting out food for the afternoon program. We helped her some, and visited with various group members who were arriving for the scheduled activities. The first scheduled event was a Catholic Mass at 11:30 AM at the Saint Anne Church said by Father Donald Savoie. The Mass was said in part in French and in part in English, and Father Savoie acknowledged the Bergeron –D'Amboise group in attendance.

For me it was another very touching experience. After the Mass we were milling around visiting in front of the church when a television person asked to interview my brother and myself. So, we got to be on Canadian television – although only briefly.

We walked from the church to the community hall and registered for the afternoon program. Each of us were given an Acadian head bands and other memorabilia,

After a light lunch the program began, which consisted of three speakers. First was Professor Marius D'Amboise a University professor from Montreal, who spoke on his trips to Amboise, France. While there, he successfully located the baptism record of

Barthelemy Bergeron, which is dated May 23, 1663. Up until the time of his discovery, it was unclear when Barthelemy was born.

The next speaker was Stephane Bergeron, a member of the National Assembly of Quebec for Vercheres since 2005. Stephane spoke of his close association with the process that leads up to the Royal Proclamation. He outlined the main highlights of this process, which began during the second World Acadian Congress, while he was a member of the Canadian Parliament. His efforts in Canada somewhat parallel those of Warren Perrin of Louisiana, that ultimately resulted in the Royal Proclamation of 2003. Mr. Perrin and supporters are credited with persuading Queen Elizabeth II, in her capacity as Queen of Canada, to sign a royal proclamation acknowledging the historical fact of the Great Upheaval and consequently, the suffering experienced by the Acadian people.

The final speaker of the afternoon was Gerald D'Amboise, another cousin, who spoke of his branch of the family who established themselves on the Gaspe side of the Baie of Chaleurs. Gerald spoke of the various aspects of his life and his ancestors who chose to relocate in this part of Quebec – where they remain to this day.

The reunion was concluded later Sunday afternoon with the planting of an elm tree on the grounds of the Government House to commemorate our reunion. This was followed by a reception hosted by the Lt. Governor of New Brunswick, Mr. Chaisson at the Government House.

The Monday morning after the reunion ended, we motored to the city of St. John, where we boarded the "Princess of Acadia" for the trip across the Bay of Fundy to Digby, Nova Scotia. The three-hour crossing put us in Digby around 4 PM. It did not take long to reach the Hedley House at Smiths Cove, where we were to spend the night. We drove back into town, where we had a delicious meal of the famous Digby scallops. Digby is noted as the "scallop capital of the world". The weather was delightful, and we ate outdoors and watched the tide go out on the Bay of Fundy. The next day we picked up the Evangeline Trail and visited Annapolis

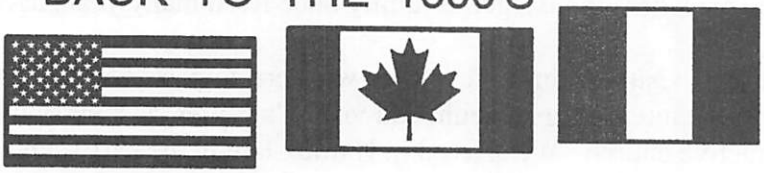
Royal, which prior to the British take over was named Port Royal. Barthelemy and his family resided there for many years before moving to Point Ste. Anne. We visited Fort Anne and the Habitation at Annapolis Royal. With the help of a map, which shows the present day locations of many of the earlier settler's homes, and with the help of an employee at Fort Anne, we drove to the area where the Bergeron family once lived many years ago.

We next visited Grand Pre, where we were surprised to find a new, and very interesting museum and visitor's center, as well as the attractive church. We arrived in Halifax late in the early evening. Our visits to sites in Halifax were curtailed as it began to rain very hard. The following morning, Paul and I ventured from the hotel to the harbor area where we visited the Maritime Museum. Our wives choose to visit a hair salon in the Scotia Mall, primarily due to the weather. The next day we began our travel home with a flight from Halifax to Knoxville.

You would be justified to ask the question – why would you travel over 4,000 miles (roundtrip) to attend a two-day family reunion of people you have never seen, and most likely would not see again? There is no substitute for visiting the places where history took place, no matter how much information one has read about them. The family reunion provided this experience for me as I had not been to Fredericton. It was also an opportunity to meet many of my distant cousins whom I would not otherwise meet. It was a unique opportunity, and I felt strongly that I should not pass up the occasion. We met some very interesting cousins with whom I immediately felt closeness. Perhaps, the reunion meant more to me, since I have been sub-consciously searching for some connection, or event that would solidify my family research of our Bergeron family in Canada - a sort of closure if you will. The Bergeron – D'Amboise reunion provided this, and I am very grateful that I was able to attend. It was also very pleasurable to make the trip with my brother and his wife. This added another dimension to our visit.

I WILL DO YOUR....
FRENCH CANADIAN
FAMILY TREE

BACK TO THE 1600'S



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E Mail...
kathysearslds@comcast.net

French Acadians are Eligible for DAR and SAR?

By Ray Duquette

Yes, many French Acadians are eligible for membership in the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR). These societies are "lineage" societies. This means that each member has traced his family tree back to an ancestor who supported the cause of American Independence during the years 1774-1783. How some French Acadians qualify for membership is quite interesting.

For causes that led to the revolution one has to go back to just before the beginning of the American Revolution when England taxed the colonists "without representation." Perhaps the most prominent one to present day New England residents is the tea tax that led to the Boston Tea Party. However, there were other acts that stirred just as much unrest in the colonies, for example, the quartering act and the stamp act. These caused such an uproar that the colonists finally declared themselves independent of England.

The French Acadian dislike of the English went back much further in time. For decades the English had been harassing the French, burning buildings, destroying crops and performing other acts of sabotage. The worst act committed by the English was the dispersion of the Acadians beginning in 1755, when whole populations of French villages were put on ships for deportation to the colonies in the south, to France, to England and other destinations. Dislike for the English became part of the Acadian's soul and was a major influence in their involvement in American's War of Independence.

The well-known battles that took place in and around Boston, such as at Concord and Lexington, in the early years of the war caused

the English to move troops from Nova Scotia to Boston leaving two small garrisons in Acadia, one in Halifax, Nova Scotia and the other in Fort Cumberland, New Brunswick, previously known as Fort Beauséjour when it was part of New France. Although Acadia was quite a distance from the colonies eventually one siege and a few skirmishes took place there.

George Washington encouraged rebellion and sabotage against the English in Nova Scotia. Col. Jonathan Eddy wanted the revolution to include Nova Scotia so he met with Washington in Massachusetts for permission to extend the rebellion. Realizing that it would be impossible to protect Nova Scotia, Washington discouraged Eddy from importing the war there. Although Massachusetts included Maine during that time, Nova Scotia was too far from the rest of the thirteen colonies to send troops should it be necessary.

Later, Washington acquiesced and on August 11, 1775 granted orders to Col. Eddy to assist in the cause of American Independence with the siege of Fort Cumberland in New Brunswick. It was Eddy's responsibility to gather men for the cause. In all, he gathered nine contingents of men with plans to cross the border at Machias, now in Maine, to attack Fort Cumberland. When the men attacked Fort Cumberland in the fall of 1776 the British garrison from Halifax left to help defeat the rebels at the fort. Not receiving the help from the Continental Army that was expected, the Acadian rebels were defeated. Some were captured and tried in Halifax then released under protests of some of the English in Halifax.

One contingent consisted of twenty-one French Acadians many of whom have descendants now living throughout New England Family names of the Acadian Patriots were Allain, Bastarache, Boudreau, Bourg, Caissie, DesRoches, Doiron, Farrel, Gaudet, Govin, LeBlanc, Leger, Maillet, Mallet, Thiboudeau and Throop.

The deportation of the Acadians still weighed heavily on their minds. When many returned to their beloved Acadia after the deportation, their barns were burned again by the English who also

stole livestock while some troops kidnapped daughters of the returned settlers. Fearing retaliation from the English for their involvement in the siege of Fort Cumberland, the French Acadians moved further north into unsettled areas. Eventually many settled in the Memramcook area where they felt safe from the Tories (British Loyalists) who had fled the United States after the revolution. Soon the area became well populated with little land left for the younger men to farm and raise families.

Two men from Memramcook who were patriots at Fort Cumberland were among those who went further north to settle in an area teeming with fish and game, arriving there on May 15, 1786. One Patriot was Joseph Bastarache, who was married to Marie Girouard. He and his brother, Isidore, who was married to Rosalie LeBlanc, and two LeBlanc brothers, Charlitte married to Marie Breau and François married to Hélène Breau, founded the town of Bouctouche, ancestral home of many New Englanders. The second Patriot was Benjamin Allain married to Charlitte's sister, Élisabeth LeBlanc. He also moved to Bouctouche following his friends there. Benjamin's daughter, Marie-Blanche Allain, married Placide Bastarache, patriot Joseph's son. Early families settling there were few so the young married fourth and fifth cousins. Now it's quite obvious how many French Acadians, descendants of these pioneers, have become related during the past two centuries.

Acadians can be proud of their heritage as well as their ancestors who fought so valiantly in the cause for American Independence. As Acadians worldwide gathered for the Acadian World Congress in August 2009 in Nova Scotia their history was once again in the forefront. Hopefully there were opportunities for those gathering to learn about another area of their history in North America, that being the role Acadians played in the American Revolutionary War. If the patriots who attacked Fort Cumberland had been successful the revolution might have included part of Canada and that would have changed the eastern border of the United States of America as we know it. There were thirteen stars in a circle on the historical colonial flag but there might have been fourteen.

If interested in pursuing membership in DAR or SAR a person can log on to the organizations' websites for instructions for prospective membership. Documentation of the lineage is easily accomplished. An excellent source is the Centre d'Études Acadiennes, Moncton University, New Brunswick, and, of course, the church records of ancestors are the primary sources for documentation. Determining whether or not an ancestor was a compatriot who fought at the siege of Fort Cumberland can be accomplished by verifying an ancestor's name in Ernest Clarke's book The Siege of Fort Cumberland, 1776, An Episode in the American Revolution, and/or at Stephen A. White's internet sites. Dr. White (LeBlanc) is considered by many to be the eminent French Acadian genealogist of our time and is part of the Centre d'Études Acadiennes at Moncton University. Benjamin Allen (Allain), one of my compatriot ancestors, has been acknowledged by the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) as taking part in the siege of Fort Cumberland. If someone were a direct descendant of him, then it would only be necessary to document a direct line from him to be considered for membership in either SAR or DAR.

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Clarke, Ernest. *The Siege of Fort Cumberland, 1776, An Episode in the American Revolution*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal & Kingston, London, Ithaca, 1995, pp. 217-218.

Michaud, Marguerite, Doctoral Dissertation *La reconstruction franc□aise au Nouveau-Brunswick; Bouctouche, paroisse-type* Fredericton, New Brunswick, Presses unversitaires, 1955.

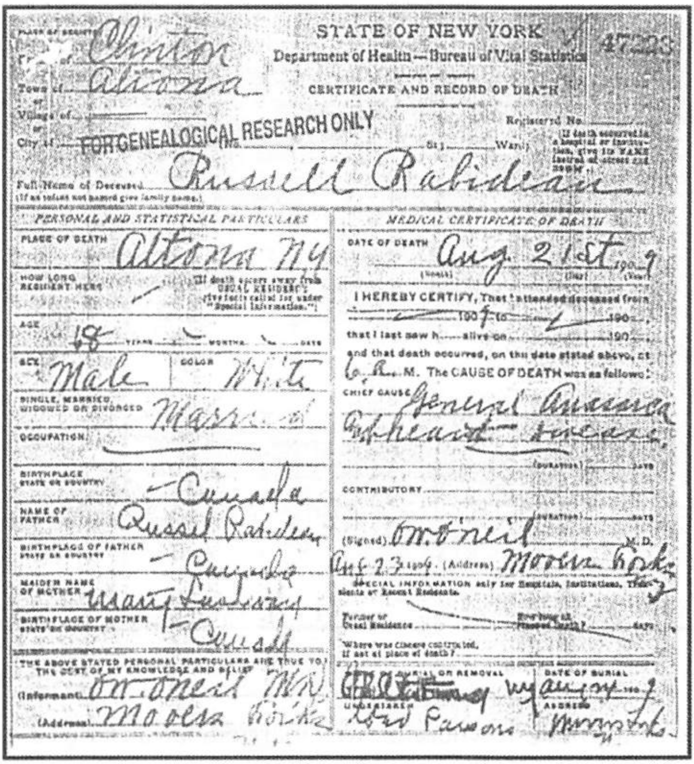
About the Author

Raymond J. Duquette, Ph.D., a retired professor of the California State University, Bakersfield, California, was born and raised in Gardner, MA. He is a member of SAR in the General George S. Patton, Jr., Chapter, Ventura, California.

In Pursuit Of My Ancestors

By Clyde M. Rabideau

I started trying to determine who my ancestors were in 1990 when I was living and working in Ottawa, Canada. It was not long before I was at a dead end. My parents were Medard (Medor) Rabideau and Lillian Varin. My paternal grandparents were Noel Rabideau and Agnes Rousseau. A close look at my grandfather's death certificate showed his name as Newell and parents as Russel Rebedeau and Philanda Mathews. A copy of the certificate is shown below:



STATE OF NEW YORK
Department of Health—Bureau of Vital Statistics
CERTIFICATE AND RECORD OF DEATH

47223

FOR GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH ONLY

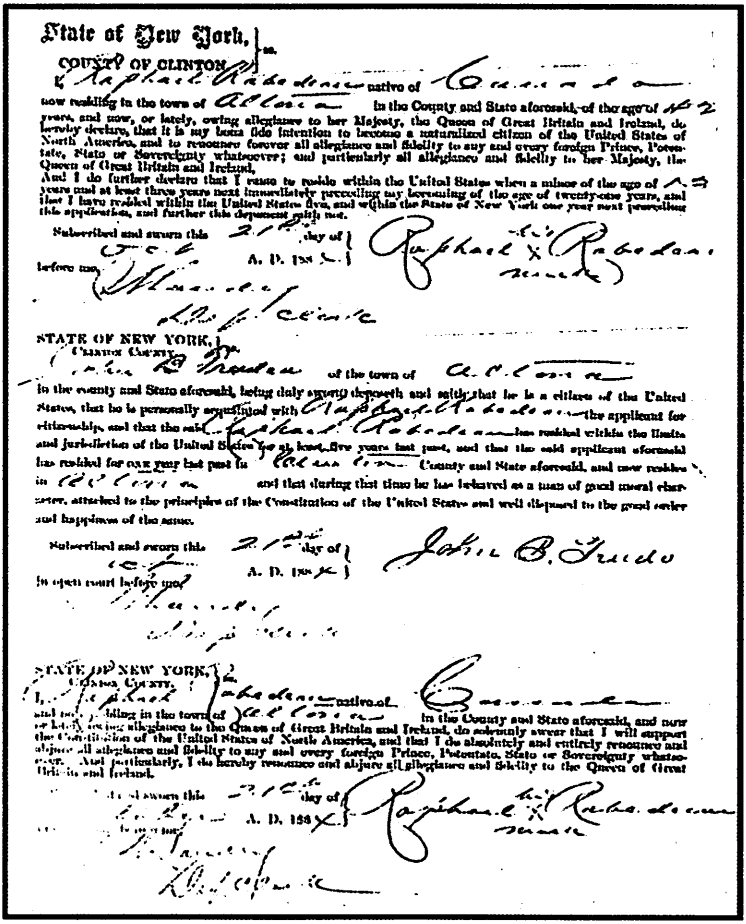
Place of death: County of Clinton
Town of Altona
Village of
City of
Registered No.
Full Name of Deceased: Russell Rabideau

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS
Place of death: Altona NY
Age: 18 years
Sex: Male
Color: White
Single, married, widowed or divorced: Married
Birthplace (state or country): Canada
Name of father: Russel Rabideau
Birthplace of father: Canada
Maiden name of mother: Mary Sudany
Birthplace of mother: Canada
Informant: O. W. O'Neil M.D.
(Address) Mooers Forks

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH
Date of death: Aug. 21st 1909
I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from 1909 to 190
that I last saw h... alive on 190
and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at 6 A.M. The CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows:
Chief cause: General Anaemia & heart disease
Contributory
(Signed) O. W. O'Neil M.D.
Aug 23 1909 (Address) Mooers Forks
Undertaker: Lord Parsons
Address: Mooers Forks

It did not take me long to determine that my great-grandfather's

name was actually Raphael Robidoux. I was able to locate his immigration papers at the Clinton County Clerk's office in Plattsburgh, New York. He emigrated from Quebec in about 1855 when he was 13 years old and became a citizen on October 21, 1884.



State of New York, } ss.
COUNTY OF CLINTON, }
I, [illegible] native of Canada
now residing in the town of [illegible] in the County and State aforesaid, of the age of 42 years, and now, or lately, owing allegiance to her Majesty, the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, do hereby declare, that it is my bona fide intention to become a naturalized citizen of the United States of North America, and to renounce forever all allegiance and fidelity to any and every foreign Prince, Potentate, State or Sovereignty whatsoever; and particularly all allegiance and fidelity to her Majesty, the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland.
And I do further declare that I came to reside within the United States when a minor of the age of [illegible] years and at least three years next immediately preceding my becoming of the age of twenty-one years, and that I have resided within the United States five, and within the State of New York one year next preceding this application, and further this deponent saith not.

Subscribed and sworn this [illegible] day of [illegible] A. D. 188[illegible]
before me,

STATE OF NEW YORK, } ss.
Clinton County, }
[illegible] of the town of [illegible]
in the county and State aforesaid, being duly sworn deposeth and saith that he is a citizen of the United States, that he is personally acquainted with [illegible] the applicant for citizenship, and that the said [illegible] has resided within the limits and jurisdiction of the United States for at least five years last past, and that the said applicant aforesaid has resided for one year last past in [illegible] County and State aforesaid, and now resides in [illegible] and that during that time he has behaved as a man of good moral character, attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the same.

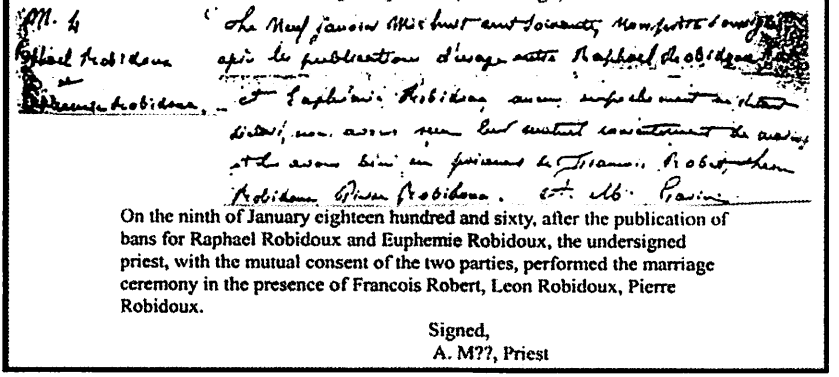
Subscribed and sworn this [illegible] day of [illegible] A. D. 188[illegible] John B. Trudo
in open court before me,

STATE OF NEW YORK, } ss.
Clinton County, }
I, [illegible] native of [illegible]
and now residing in the town of [illegible] in the County and State aforesaid, and now or lately owing allegiance to the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States of North America, and that I do absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any and every foreign Prince, Potentate, State or Sovereignty whatsoever. And particularly, I do hereby renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland.

Subscribed and sworn this [illegible] day of [illegible] A. D. 188[illegible]
before me,

My next step was to find out where he was married. I was able to locate his marriage in the St. Pierre's (Peter's) church records in Plattsburgh:

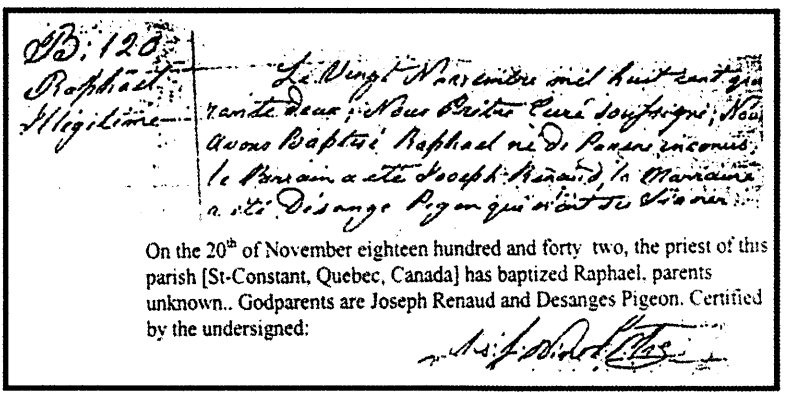
St Pierre [Peter] Church, Plattsburgh, NY



On the ninth of January eighteen hundred and sixty, after the publication of bans for Raphael Robidoux and Euphemie Robidoux, the undersigned priest, with the mutual consent of the two parties, performed the marriage ceremony in the presence of Francois Robert, Leon Robidoux, Pierre Robidoux.

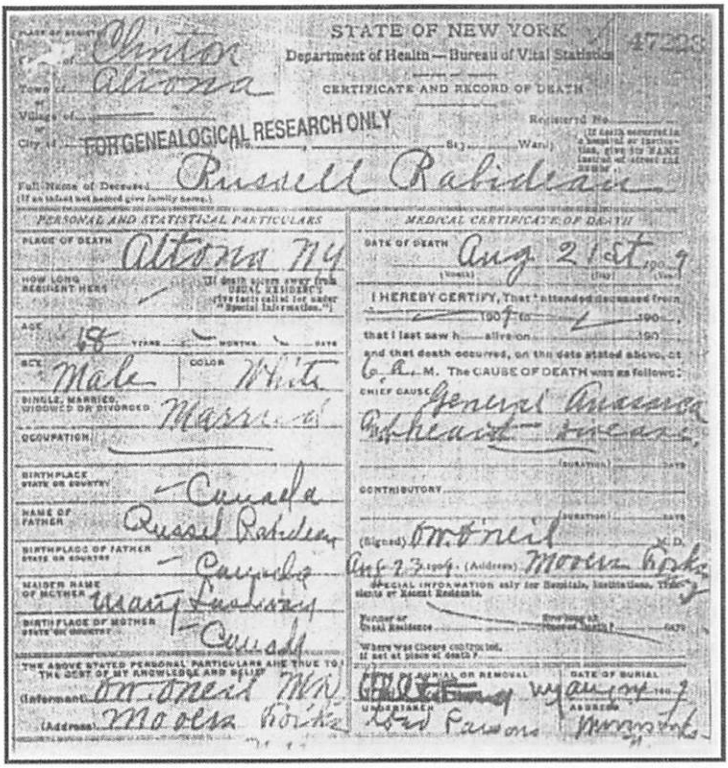
Signed,
A. M??, Priest

Unfortunately, the marriage record did not show any parents. This meant that I would have a much more difficult time in my pursuit. The Clinton County federal census records showed them living in Alder Bend in the town of Altona which is where my grandfather, Noel, was born. I still had the problem of going backwards. I started with Raphael and used Quebec church records that were available at the Quebec Archives located very close to the American Embassy in Ottawa, Canada. This location was very close to where I was posted to and working for the U. S. Government. After a considerable search, I was able to find his baptism record in St-Constant, Quebec. St-Constant is located south of Montreal and very close to the Caughnawaga Indian Reservation.



On the 20th of November eighteen hundred and forty two, the priest of this parish [St-Constant, Quebec, Canada] has baptized Raphael, parents unknown.. Godparents are Joseph Renaud and Desanges Pigeon. Certified by the undersigned:

Unfortunately, I was now at a dead end. The baptism record did not provide any clues as to Raphael's actual parents. His death certificate showed his parents as Russel (Raphael) Rabideau and Mary Lashway (LaJoie). I could not find any records on a Raphael Robidoux and Mary LaJoie:


STATE OF NEW YORK
Department of Health — Bureau of Vital Statistics
CERTIFICATE AND RECORD OF DEATH
47223

Place of death: County of Clinton
Town of Altona
FOR GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH ONLY
Full Name of Deceased: Russell Rabideau

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS

Place of death: Altona NY
Age: 68 years
Sex: Male
Color: White
Single, married, widowed or divorced: Married
Birthplace (state or country): Canada
Name of father: Russel Rabideau
Birthplace of father (state or country): Canada
Maiden name of mother: Mary Lashway
Birthplace of mother (state or country): Canada
Informant: O.W. O'Neil M.D.
(Address) Mooers Forks

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

Date of death: Aug 21st 1909
I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from 1907 to 1909
and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at 6 a.m. The CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows:
Chief cause: General Anaemia of heart disease
(Signed) O.W. O'Neil M.D.
Aug 23 1909 (Address) Mooers Forks
Undertaker: Lord Parsons
Address: Mooers Forks

I had no other choice but to change my research to find out more about his wife, Euphemie Robidoux. Family records and written family history had her name as Philomene Mattis or Philenda Mathews and Philomene St. Germain. Her death certificate did show her mother as Salome Boyer:

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
DIVISION OF VITAL STATISTICS

STANDARD CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

44

Easthampton (City or Town)

1 PLACE OF DEATH
County Hampshire State Mass. Registered No. 118

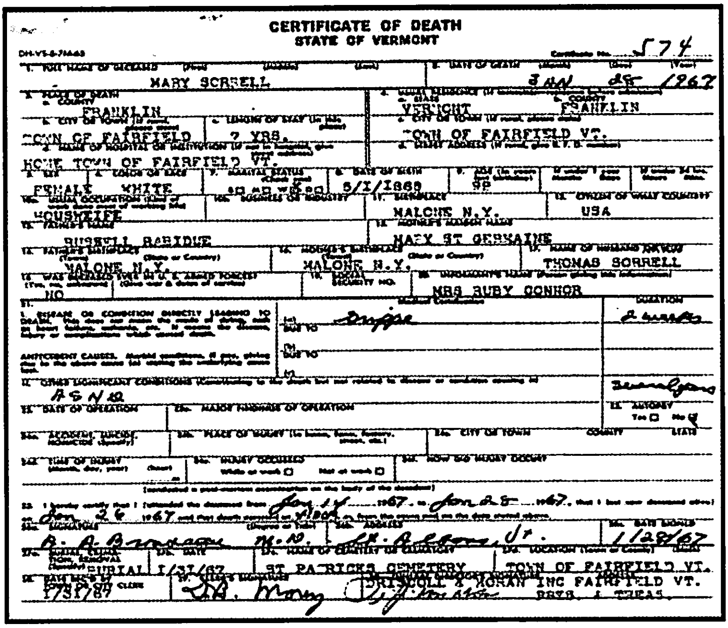
City or Town Easthampton No. 43 Payson Ave. St. Ward
(If death occurred in a hospital or institution, give its NAME instead of street and number)

2 FULL NAME Mrs. Philomene Robideau (St. Germain)
(If in the Army or Navy of the United States, give rank, organization, etc.)

(a) Residence. No. 43 Payson Ave. St. Ward.
(Usual place of abode) (If nonresident give city or town and state)
Length of residence in city or town where death occurred yrs. 1 mos. 8 ds. How long in U.S., if of foreign birth? 80 yrs. mos. ds.

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS	MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH
3 SEX: Female · 4 COLOR OR RACE: White · 5 SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED (write the word): Widowed	16 DATE OF DEATH October 14 1921 (Month) (Day) (Year)
5a If married, widowed, or divorced HUSBAND of (or) WIFE of Russell Robideau	17 I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from October 7, 19 21, to October 14 19 21,
6 DATE OF BIRTH June 28 1829 (Month) (Day) (Year)	that I last saw her alive on October 13 19 21 and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at 11.30 p.m.
7 AGE Years 92 Months 3 Days 16	The CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows:
	Chronic Valvular disease of Heart
	(duration) 2 yrs. mos. ds.
8 OCCUPATION OF DECEASED (a) Trade, profession, or particular kind of work at home (b) Kind of employer	CONTRIBUTORY Acute Brights (SECONDARY)
9 BIRTHPLACE (city) Sherrington (State or country) Canada	(duration) 3 yrs. mos. ds.
10 NAME OF FATHER Peter St. Germain	18 Where was disease contracted if not at place of death?
11 BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (City) Sherrington (State or country) Canada	Did an operation precede death? Date of
12 MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER Salome Boyer	Was there an autopsy?
13 BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (City) Sherrington (State or country) Canada	What test confirmed diagnosis?
	(Signed) Charles J. Hanson M.D.
	(Address) Easthampton, Mass.
	Date October 15 1921 (Month) (Day) (Year)
14 Informant Joseph Robideau (Address) Easthampton, Mass.	19 PLACE OF BURIAL, CREMATION, OR REMOVAL Altona, N. Y. (Cemetery) (City or town) · DATE OF BURIAL Oct. 17, 1921
15 Filed 10/15/21 (Month) (Day) (Year) Geo. C. Burt by M. [illegible] REGISTRAR	20 UNDERTAKER Adolphus Coopee · ADDRESS Easthampton

21 I hereby certify that a transcript of the record of death was filed with me C. C. Buckner Official position Agent Date of issue of permit Oct. 15 Permit No. 101



CERTIFICATE OF DEATH
STATE OF VERMONT

Certificate No. 574

MARY SORRELL — Jan 25 1967

FRANKLIN — VERMONT — FRANKLIN

TOWN OF FAIRFIELD — 7 YRS. — TOWN OF FAIRFIELD VT.

HOME TOWN OF FAIRFIELD VT.

FEMALE — WHITE — 5/1/1868 — 98

HOUSEWIFE — MALONE N.Y. — USA

RUSSELL RABIDUE — MARY ST GERMAINE

MALONE N.Y. — MALONE N.Y. — THOMAS SORRELL

NO — MRS RUBY CONNOR

BURIAL — 1/31/67 — ST PATRICKS CEMETERY — TOWN OF FAIRFIELD VT.

1/31/67 — DRISCOLL & MORAN INC FAIRFIELD VT.

All of the church baptism records of Raphael and Euphemie's children had her last name as Robidoux. Euphemie is oftentimes shown as Philomene of Philanda or something close to that. As shown on my grandfather's death certificate her name was Philanda Mathews. On the death certificate of Euphemie' daughter, Mary, it was shown as Mary St. Germaine. There were several baptisms of children in the Clinton County area to Leon (Leandre) Robidoux and Salome Boyer. Assuming that her name was actually Euphemie Robidoux, I began my search for her birth. I concluded through circumstantial evidence that the Leon Robidoux who attended her wedding was her father. I further concluded that the Pierre Robidoux attending the wedding was the Peter [Pierre] Robidoux who was married to Esther St. Germain and lived in the area of West Plattsburgh.

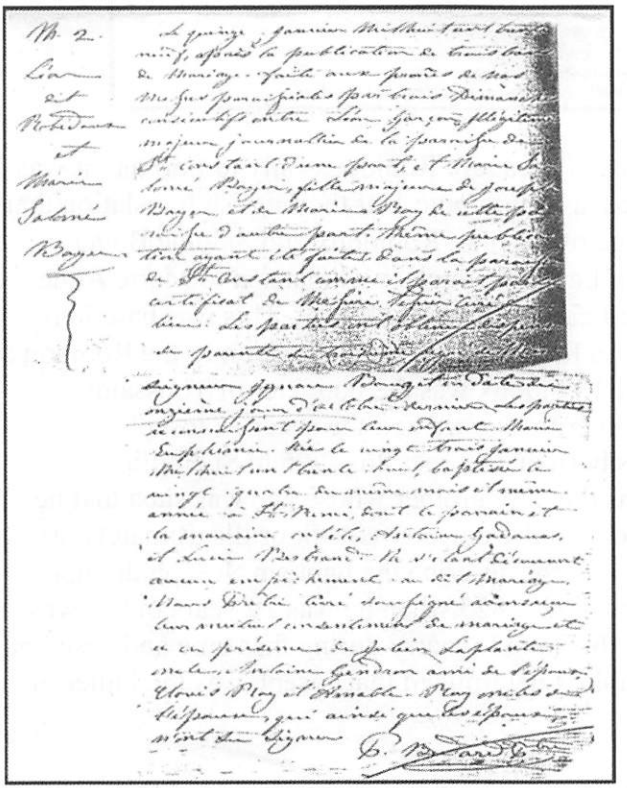
Based on these conclusions, I began my search of Euphemie and her parents, Leandre Robidoux and Salome Boyer. I found her baptism record shown below:

St-Remi, Quebec, Canada

On the twenty fourth of January eighteen hundred thirty eight, the undersigned priest baptized Marie Euphemie, parents unknown. Godfather is Antoine Gadouas, Godmother is Lucie Bertrand.

Signed:
Father Bedard, Ptre

I was still at a dead end but subsequently found the marriage of her presumed parents, Leandre Robidoux and Salome Boyer. The actual marriage record in French and English follow:



On January 15, 1839, after the publication of three bans of marriage published during the parish masses on three consecutive Sundays between Leon [Leandre], man, illegitimate, of age, day laborer, of the parish of St-Constant, party of the first part and:

Marie Salome Boyer, daughter, of age, of Joseph Boyer and Maria Roy of this parish, party of the second part, the same publication of bans having been made in the parish of St-Constant, as is shown on the certificate of masses, by father Tepier?

The two parties have special dispensation because of their relationship of third cousins.

Mr. Ignace Bourget on October 11, 1838, certified that their infant, Marie Euphemie, born on January 23, 1838, baptized on January 24, 1838 in St-Remi is their child. The godfather and godmother were Antoine Gadouas and Lucie Bertrand.

No impediment to the marriage having been shown, by mutual consent, the marriage took place in the presence of Julian Laplante, uncle[1], Antoine Gendron[2], friend of the family, Clovis Roy and Amable Roy, uncle and aunt of the bride. The latter two having stood for the couple.

Father Bedard, Ptre

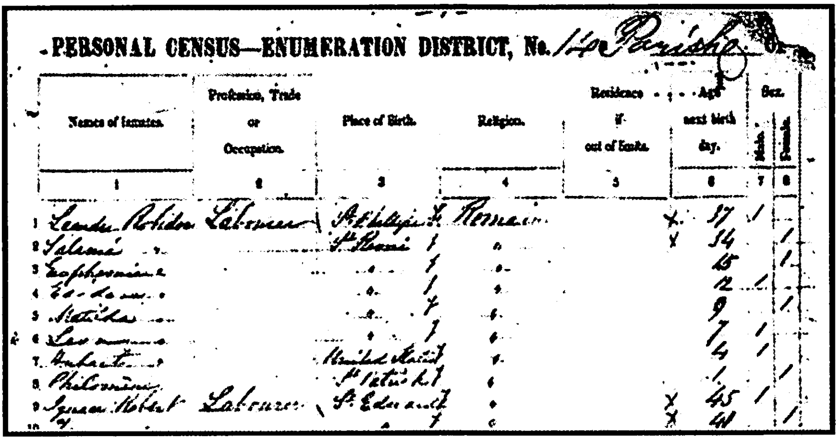
---

[1] Julian Laplante, uncle, was the husband of Marie Anne Robidoux
[2] Antoine Gendron was the father of Cesarie Gendron, wife of Edouard Robidoux

I then began to research Leandre Robidoux only to find that it was another complicated task. Footnote 1 of the English translation that I did on the marriage of Leandre Robidoux and Salome Boyer indicates that Julian Laplante, uncle, was married to Marie Anne Robidoux, and that Leandre was illegitimate. This was based on my research of Julian Laplante and the connection to the Robidoux family. Marie Anne Robidoux was the daughter of Toussaint Robidoux and Marguerite Vautrin and the sister of Joseph Robidoux who was born on October 26, 1796 in St-Phillipe, Quebec. Joseph was the only brother whose age was such that he could have fathered Leandre out-of-wedlock or illegitimately, as the Quebec church records describe the baptism. Joseph did not marry until November 22, 1825 when he was 29 years old. It was uncommon to wait this long to marry during that time and based on the evidence available, I determined that Joseph was the father of Leandre.

I was not able to locate the illegitimate baptism record for Leandre but was able to find him and Euphemie with their children in the

1851 census of Quebec, Canada. They were in Sherrington, Quebec and the age and birthplace is shown for each person. The census below shows that Leandre was born in 1815 in St-Phillipe, Quebec:

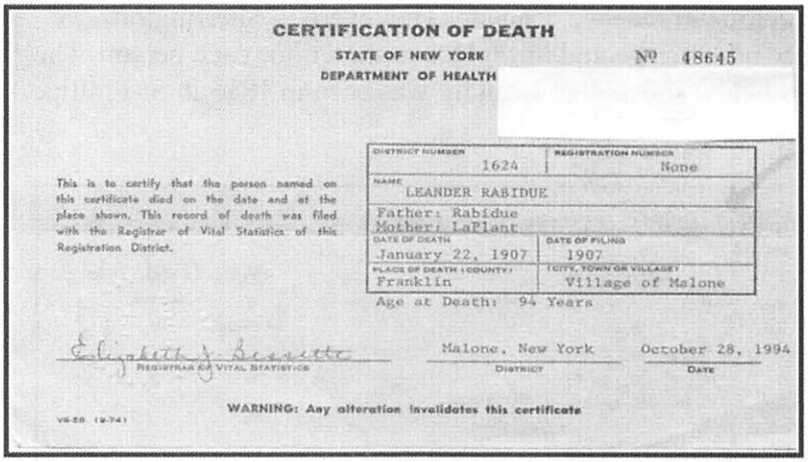


PERSONAL CENSUS—ENUMERATION DISTRICT, No. 140 Paroisse

	Names of Inmates.	Profession, Trade or Occupation.	Place of Birth.	Religion.	Residence if out of limits.	Age next birth day.	Sex. Male	Sex. Female
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	[illegible]	Laboureur	[illegible]	[illegible]		37	1	
2	[illegible]		[illegible]			34		1
3	[illegible]					15		1
4	[illegible]					12	1	
5	[illegible]					9		1
6	[illegible]					7	1	
7	[illegible]		[illegible]			4	1	
8	[illegible]		[illegible]			1		1
9	[illegible]	Laboureur	[illegible]			45	1	
10	[illegible]					41		1

I now attempted to find where and when Leandre died. Family history had him dying in Beekmantown, New York at the age of 104 with the name of Leandre Mattis. As usual, family history is not always accurate. I was in the Wead Library in Malone, New York looking through microfilm when I came across a two line notice that a Leander Robedeau had died on January 22, 1907 at the age of 94. I eventually was able to obtain a Certification of Death from the Village of Malone clerk in October 1994. The notice in the January 30, 1907 edition of The Malone Farmer read,

"ROBEDEAU - In Malone, N. Y., Jan 21st of apoplexy, Leander Robedeau, aged 94 years."



CERTIFICATION OF DEATH

STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

№ 48645

This is to certify that the person named on this certificate died on the date and at the place shown. This record of death was filed with the Registrar of Vital Statistics of this Registration District.

DISTRICT NUMBER	REGISTRATION NUMBER
1624	None

NAME: LEANDER RABIDUE
Father: Rabidue
Mother: LaPlant

DATE OF DEATH	DATE OF FILING
January 22, 1907	1907

PLACE OF DEATH (COUNTY)	(CITY, TOWN OR VILLAGE)
Franklin	Village of Malone

Age at Death: 94 Years

Elizabeth J. Bessette
REGISTRAR OF VITAL STATISTICS

Malone, New York
DISTRICT

October 28, 1994
DATE

WARNING: Any alteration invalidates this certificate

VS-59 (9-74)

The certificate indicated that Leandre's mother was a Laplante. More than likely, she was a sister of Julian Laplante and as close to the Robidoux family as Julian was. I have not been able to pinpoint exactly which Laplante was her mother. This solved the mystery of my great-grandmother, I thought.

It was not until 2008 when the Northern New York Library Network brought The Malone Paladium on line on their public access site for newspapers in northern New York, http://news.nnyln.net/, that I was able to solve the 80 year old mystery of the Mattis/Robidoux name. I found these articles:

Sep 6, 1906 Malone Palladium

LEANDER MATTIS, who is a resident of this county, was taken to the poor house on Monday by R. C. TAYLOR, overseer of the poor. Mr. TAYLOR went to Alder Bend, about five miles south of Altona, for the old gentleman. He had been there on a visit to his sister, who claims that Mr. MANNIS is one hundred years and a few days of age. She gives her own age as 96 years of age, and Mr. TAYLOR says that a friend of Mr. MANNIS was at the train to bid him good bye, who claimed to be 83 years of age.

Sep 13, 1906, Malone Palladium

In last week's issue of the PALLADIUM we printed an item concerning one LEANDER MATTIS, whom we were informed, on what we deemed good authority, was a few days over 100 years of age. The question of the truth of that item seems to have given the editor of the *Telegram* some uneasiness, for he states that he journeyed to the county house on Sunday for the express purpose of making inquiries into the matter, and "that if the item were true to see and converse with the aged centenarian." He says he found that Mr. MATTIS is only 91 years of age. Now, for the information of the editor of the *Telegram*, we have taken a hand in looking up the history of Mr. MATTIS, and we find that his real name is ROBIDEAU. When he was a young boy he went to live with a family named MATTIS, and took their name. His son, THEODORE ROBIDEAU, who resides in Malone, informs us that his father is 97 years old, and we are inclined to the opinion that he is pretty good authority on the subject. We did not question the word of Overseer of the Poor R. C. TAYLOR when he gave us the information which led to the writing of the item, and have never had reason to question his veracity. Now, Mr. *Telegram*, it looks very much as though your figures on the old gentleman's age were wider of the mark than those we published last week.

To correct some of the information in these two newspaper articles, I must point out that in 1906, Leandre was 91 years of age and not over 100 or 97 as his son, Theodore told the newspaper. In the September 13th article, the editor got the age right.

Also, Leandre was visiting his daughter, Euphemie, who lived in Alder Bend, and not his sister. Euphemie was 68 years old at the time. I could find no record of a sister, let alone one living in Alder Bend with my great-grandparents.

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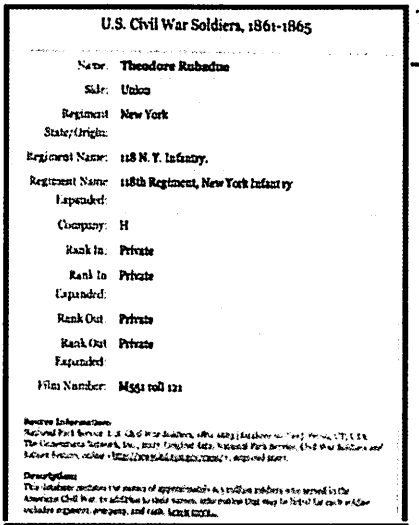
These articles solved forever the family history of Euphemie's surname and revealed that there were several Mattis, Mattice, Mathes, Mathieu, Matthiew who lived in both New York and Massachusetts and who were descended from Leandre Robidoux and Euphemie Robidoux. I found several of her siblings who had taken the Mattis name, which subsequently evolved into the names shown above. It appears that Euphemie and Theodore, the two oldest children, were the only siblings to retain the Robidoux

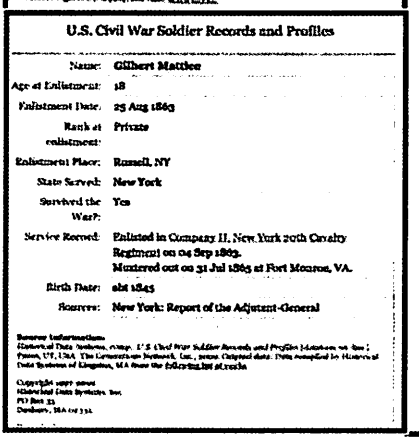
name. In Euphemie's case, she apparently told her family that her maiden or surname was Mattis.

Euphemie's brother, Leandre Mattis, moved to Lowville, New York and her brother, Gilbert Matthews, lived in Malone, New York for several years before moving to Massachusetts. Both had large and extended families. Theodore and his brother, Gilbert, both served in the Civil War. Theodore as Theodore Rubadue and Gilbert as Gilbert Mattice. It had been a difficult task but I now had a line back to Andre Robidou, the original Robidou who came to Quebec in the 1600s . There are now over 70 spellings of the Robidou surname.



U.S. Civil War Soldiers, 1861-1865

Name: Theodore Rubadue
Side: Union
Regiment State/Origin: New York
Regiment Name: 118 N. Y. Infantry.
Regiment Name Expanded: 118th Regiment, New York Infantry
Company: H
Rank In: Private
Rank In Expanded: Private
Rank Out: Private
Rank Out Expanded: Private
Film Number: M551 roll 121



U.S. Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles

Name: Gilbert Mattice
Age at Enlistment: 18
Enlistment Date: 25 Aug 1863
Rank at enlistment: Private
Enlistment Place: Russell, NY
State Served: New York
Survived the War?: Yes
Service Record: Enlisted in Company H, New York 20th Cavalry Regiment on 04 Sep 1863. Mustered out on 31 Jul 1865 at Fort Monroe, VA.
Birth Date: abt 1845
Sources: New York: Report of the Adjutant-General

The following obituary was found in the May 8, 1929 Malone Farmer Newspaper:

WAR VETERAN ANSWERS CALL

Taps were sounded early yesterday morning for Theodore Robideau, one of Malone's oldest residents and a veteran of the Civil War. He was 89 years of age. The veteran succumbed at the home of Frank A. Tebo, with whom he had resided the past fourteen years.

Mr. Robideau had been confined to his bed for three months and his death was due to the infirmities of age.

The veteran, although born in Canada, spent the greater share of his life in Malone. At the outbreak of the war between the North and South Mr. Robideau joined the Union ranks, enlisting in Company H. 118th Regiment. He took part in a number of important engagements and was wounded in his right leg. An infection, which developed in the old wound, hastened the veteran's death.

He was twice married but both of his wives are now dead. No children were born of either union. Mr. Robideau was a member of Notre Dame church and was formerly a member of Brennan Post G. A. R. He was employed for a number of years as a janitor in local public schools. The old gentleman was always cheerful, kind and thoughtful and made a host of friends who will be sorry to learn of his death.

He leaves one brother, Gilbert Mathews, of East Hampton, Mass., and three nieces and one nephew.

Funeral services will be held at 9 o'clock Thursday morning from Notre Dame church with interment in Notre Dame cemetery.

Now, for the rest of the story. By January 2009, I was getting the itch to retry to connect up my great-grandfather, Raphael Robidoux. I spent a couple of months researching the Quebec vital statistics and possible connections. Remember, my grandfather's name was Noel and my father's name was Medard. Finally, I used these names as a clue in my search. Both names were extremely rare in the over 9,000 Robidou/Robidoux Quebec record of vital statistics. I found a Medard Robidoux born on June 9, 1798 in Yamaska, Quebec, son of Antoine Noel Robidoux and Josette Godin.

This was too much of a coincidence to pass up. I discovered that Medard married Marie Brouillard on Feb 2, 1819 and they had eleven children born in Quebec. Further, most of their children lived in the Schuyler Falls, Morrisonville, and Cadyville area of Clinton County, New York area. It turned out that the Pierre Robidoux attending Raphael & Euphemie's wedding was a son of Medard Robidoux and Marie Brouillard. This further pointed to Medard Robidoux as the possible father of Raphael. But of course, I did not have any proof..

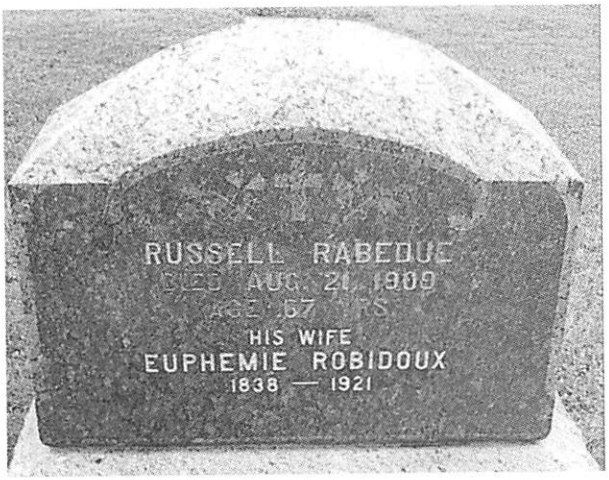
I had in mind how I was going to prove the connection but I needed to do some more research. I traced the male descendants of Medard Robidoux & Marie Brouillard to one who was living in North Carolina. My next step was to make contact and discuss with him what I had in mind. He was reluctant so I sent him a couple of my books that I had written on the Robidouxs and continued to talk to him and his daughter. Finally, he agreed.

I purchased two paternal lineage DNA Test Kit-Y-Chromosome 33s for $79 each from Ancestry.Com with one to be sent directly to the male descendant in North Carolina and one to be sent to me. The test kits were received in May 2009 and I completed mine and returned it for testing. He also completed his and returned it for testing. I then had to wait about a month.

The results of the test were emailed to me in June 2009 with a perfect match! Raphael had been born out-of wedlock to Marie Lashway with Medard Robidoux as his father. This meant that the

Pierre Robidoux attending the wedding was Raphael's half-brother and that the male descendant in North Carolina was my third cousin. He was not nearly as excited as I was about the match. It also meant that many of the local Rabideaus were closely related to me and that my long search for my roots was successful.

Euphemie Robidoux andRaphael Robidoux on their wedding day at St. Pierre's church in Plattsburgh, NY on January 9,1860 [small photo] and later in life.



Raphael & Euphemie's headstone directly behind the church in after I had her name added to the headstone Holy Angel's cemetery in Altona, NY

Note: Please notice the many different spelling of both the given names and the surnames of all of the ancestors.

About the Author

Clyde Rabidoux is a frequent contributor to Je Me Souviens. He is the author of Beaver Tales, parts of which were reprinted in JMS in Autumn 2007 and Spring 2008.

Using Census Records in Genealogical Research

By Becky Keegan

The value of the United States and Canadian census records for the purpose of genealogical research is incalculable. Although the information contained in each of these censuses is varied, they have similarities as well. Some of these are; family groups with ages, place of dwelling at the time of the census, ages of the family members and others living in the dwelling at the time of the census. Other valuable information would be place of birth, place of birth for parents, marital status, occupation, immigration and citizenship information. Before I discuss how to use these records in your research or to add to existing research, I think that I should discuss a little about the background and history of the census.

The United States was founded in 1776 with the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Under English rule until that point, it was the custom of the English to take a counting or census every 10 years on the eleventh year (example: 1901 and 1911). The new independent country also needed to know about their inhabitants and needed to census the population. The first census to be taken in the U.S. was the 1790 census and one has been performed every 10^{th} year (example: 1800 and 1810), through to today. The content of these censuses varies tremendously.

Canadian census records are less regular. With the colonization of New France starting in 1621, the first census was not taken until 1666 and was not taken every 10 years until 1851. Some censuses were taken by the local authorities and not the Canadian government, so they may not be as complete as some of the later censuses. As with the United States censuses the content varies from census to census.

For Canadian census records, I recommend Michael Leclerc's article that covers all the main points covered here for the United States census records. You can find that article online at www.newenglandancestors.org. Look under the tab at the top that says 'databases and research' and go to 'articles'. When at the 'articles' page, go to 'Canadian Family History'. There will be a link to the article on that page under 'getting started'. As a side note to his article, AFGS has the 1871 census on microfilm, although there is no index. The records have to be searched by location. The AFGS library has various Quebec censuses indexed in book form by location among our other repertoires. They are not a complete collection of all censuses for all locations, however. The Canadian census records are available through AFGS through interlibrary loan with the Canadian Archives.

The first census of the Unites States included valuable information such as heads of households, age groupings of family members by male and female, village, town, county and state of the family members and even what families they lived next to. Every subsequent census was more complex and contains more information, such as value of property and property holdings, such as livestock. Unfortunately, family members are not named and listed until the 1850 census and although listed in 1850 no relationship is to the head of household is given until the 1860 census.

It is important to know the purpose of the census records and what they were used for to know how they can benefit your research. The census is used as 'snapshot' for the federal government to understand the country's demographics, housing, and economics every ten years. From their mission statement it is "To serve as the leading source of quality data about the nation's people and economy". It is also important to know what instructions were given to the enumerators prior to the census so that you can understand why some information in the census contradicts other research. As an example: Great Uncle Joe was born in June of 1880. The census enumerators began in June of that year so he should be listed on that census record. The census schedule is located, but Uncle Joe is not listed. His birth record clearly

indicates that he was born 5 June 1880. How does that happen? The census was taken on the 10th of June, further confusing the matter. But when looking at the enumerator's instructions for 1880 this is what you find:

"Upon it (the census schedule) is to be entered, as previously noted, the name of every man, woman, and child who, on the first day of June, 1880 shall have his or her "usual place of abode" within the enumerator's district. No child born between the 1st day of June, 1880, and the day of the enumerator's visit (say June 5 or 15 or 25) is to be entered upon the schedule. On the other hand, every person who was a resident of the district upon the 1st day of June, 1880, but between that date and the day of the enumerator's visit shall have died, should be entered on the schedule precisely as if still living. The object of the schedule is to obtain a list of the inhabitants on the 1st day of June, 1880, and all changes after that date, whether in the nature of gain or loss, are to be disregarded in the enumeration."

Within these instructions we understand why Uncle Joe is not listed. The same could be said for a person who died after June 1st of 1880 but before the enumerator took the census information. That person would be listed on the census as living!

A complete listing of enumerator instructions are listed the IPUMS USA (Integrated Public Use Microdata Services) website at usa.ipums.org. You will also find a listing of forms and questions that were asked for each census year up to 1950. You can find the enumerators questions under the listing of 'IPUMS documentation: user's guide'. Although the website asks for user registration, you do not have to register to view these pages.

The United States census records are available as public record after 72 years, according to U. S. privacy law, which means that all records up to 1930 are available at this time. The 1940 census will be available in 2012. The only exception to this would be the 1890 census, the majority of which was destroyed by fire and water. Only very few schedules remain, most of them military schedules.

Main repositories for these records are the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), and numerous online databases. NARA is the largest repository of microfilmed census records that exists. The records are, for the most part, indexed by heads of household and by soundex. The Soundexing method of indexing uses the first letter plus all of the other consonants of the surname and gives that name a letter and a three digit number code (example: M150). All surnames with that number are included in the index together. NARA has a computer that is dedicated to the soundex. This computer can find the soundex number of the surname you are looking for. Once you find that number you can look it up in the index book and find the microfilm number you will need in any given location. The books are divided by states.

The closest NARA locations to the AFGS library in Woonsocket are the Boston branch at Trapelo Road in Waltham, Massachusetts and at Conte Drive in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. More information about hours and directions can be found at www.archives.gov/northeast/. There are other NARA branches throughout the country.

The largest most complete online databases for census records are www.ancestrylibrary.com and www.heritagequestonline. Both of these databases can be accessed at your local public library for the price of library card. For a list of libraries that have access to these databases visit http://www.eogen.com/heritagequestonline. If you want the convenience of using the database at home you can purchase a subscription to www.ancestry.com. Heritage Quest also has the advantage of remote use. While Heritage Quest has excellent usability, Ancestry has a more complete indexing of the records. I have used both of these databases. Usually what I cannot find in one I can find in the other.

The Family History Library has a database online as well, which is very flexible and easy to use. It can be accessed at www.familysearch.org. Go to the 'search records tab' at the top of the page and then go to 'advanced search'. From there choose 'census' on the left. This database includes the 1880 census of the United States, the 1881 census of Canada and 1881 British census.

As with any database, flexibility in searching is the key to success, especially when trying to find our French speaking Canadian relatives.

Some methods that that work well are:
-Using an unusual first name only, no surname
-Using the first three letters of a surname with an asterisk, along with a first name (wildcard searches)
-Using no name while using a birth year range and place of birth and location
-Listing the name of a spouse, father or mothers name in the search box along with a first or last name (or any of the above suggestions)
- Using dit names or anglicized names for surnames.

The main stumbling block for researchers is that some of our French Canadian ancestors were giving information to English speaking enumerators who misunderstood or misspelled names. So keep an open mind when what you find does not always 'fit' what you know.

When all else fails, going page by page can usually find what the search engine cannot. Most of my difficult searches were a matter of poor quality of the census record or difficulty of reading the handwriting, resulting in poor indexing.

Any discussion of census records would not be complete with mentioning the state census records. Most states took census records on the 5th year ten years apart starting in about 1855. In Rhode Island these records include 1865 to 1935 and are found at Rhode Island State Archives. For Massachusetts only the 1855 and 1865 censuses survive. These records are available at the Massachusetts State archives. More census records are being made available online, so checking periodically with a good search engine, such as www.google.com or www.yahoo.com, is a good idea.

There is much more that could be said about the information contained within the census records and its value. The first time one sees a grandparent with sisters and brothers their true value is realized. The reaction to seeing a record with the name of a parent or grandparent makes the hard work of searching all that more rewarding.

Using census records, we can find a family's location so that other family records could be located, such as birth, marriage and death records. Locating a couple in a census records close to their marriage year increases the possibility of finding a missing marriage record. The same can be said for a missing birth or death record. The possibilities are endless. If I am encountering problems in research, I usually turn to the census records. More often than not, these records suggest other possible records to explore. The information contained with the census records cannot be deemed a 100 percent accurate but it is an excellent starting point for genealogical research.

Websites For Census Research Mentioned in this Article

www.newenglandancestors.org.
www.familysearch.org.
www.ancestry.com.
http://www.eogen.com/heritagequestonline
www.ancestrylibrary.com
www.heritagequestonline
www.yahoo.com
www.archives.gov/northeast/.
www.google.com

About the Author

Becky Keegan is a long-time AFGS member. She is also one of the volunteers at the AFGS library in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, and has helped dozens of members break through their genealogical brick walls.

Early French Pioneers in Minnesota, "L'Etoile du Nord" (Star of the North)

By Jeanne M. Gendreau Carley

When thinking of Minnesota, one usually envisions Scandinavians or Garrison Keiler's famed "Lake Wobegon". But long before anyone of the Nordic countries ever entered the state, it was explored and settled by the French. Ask anyone of French-Canadian descent whether he knows about Groseilliers, Radison, and Sieur du Luth and most likely the response will be that they were early Canadian explorers in America. They've all read about these first two brothers-in-law who traversed the Northern states. They know about Pere Jacques Marquette and Louis Joliet who discovered the upper portion of the Mississippi River. And most likely, they've heard of the Catholic missionary Father Louis Hennepin who explored Minnesota, was held captive by the Dakota, and returned to France to write the first book about Minnesota, *Description de la Louisiane*. But who ever heard of "Pig Eye" Parrant and Faribault? And who has read about the settlement leader, the Huguenot Pierre Bottineau?

Though a native Minnesotan who studied its state history in fourth grade, I didn't learn very much about French explorers. As I delved into my family history, I decided to find out more about the region where I grew up, not knowing my French heritage and that of my former neighbors and classmates. From the time of the early French explorers, this state has been identified with French voyageurs, fur trappers, traders and eventually settlers from Quebec who traveled in Red River wooden ox carts on the first overland roads. These roads began as Amerindian trails and were developed by the French-Canadians and other explorers. Later settlers also found their way through the state via the Mississippi

River that flowed through my hometown of Little Falls. (In the early 20th century, it was also the boyhood home of Colonel Charles Lindbergh on the opposite riverbank).

First Explorers and Settlers

But why did these Canadian pioneers choose the northern woods and southern prairies of Minnesota? And which Frenchmen were instrumental in helping to colonize the territory? In response, we should begin with the first explorations: Pierre d'Esprit, Sieur de Radisson, and Medard Chouart, Sieur des Groseilliers were the first Europeans to discover and explore Minnesota between 1659 and 1660, and Daniel Greysolon, Sieur du Luth, arrived in 1679 at the point of Lake Superior (Duluth). But it wasn't until much later in 1819 that a fort was built in the Twin Cities area. It was constructed for frontier defense where the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers meet (Minneapolis) and was named St. Anthony's after the nearby falls. It was commanded by Lt. Col. Henry Leavensworth, but the next year Colonel Josiah Snelling succeeded him and the name became Fort Snelling. (By this time, the English had joined the French in exploring and settling the Upper Midwest.)

Major Lawrence Taliaferro, an Indian agent, was a leading figure whose mission was to keep the peace among the Indians, (the Dakota, the largest branch of the Sioux), the missionaries, and the rival fur traders. At that time, the principal industry was not wheat or iron, but fur. There were three main fur-trading companies competing: the Hudson's Bay Company, founded by Radisson in 1670; the Northwest Company, founded by Alexander Henry in 1783, and the American Fur Company, organized by John Jacob Astor in 1808.

Across the river from Fort Snelling stood the Mendota Fur Trading post and home to another Frenchman, Pierre Parrant. A voyageur, he came to Mendota in 1832 as a 60 year-old "engage" of the American Fur Company. Known as "Pig's Eye", he was called "a one-eyed, illiterate whiskey-selling Canadian" and described as a "course (sic), ill-looking, low-browed fellow." His blind eye was "marble-hued and crooked, with a sinister white ring around the

pupil giving a kind of piggish expression to his sodden, low features," according to one historian. And to the French-speaking community, he was "L'Oeil de Cochon."

In June 1838, "Pig's Eye" Parrant became the first white settler in what became St. Paul by building himself a shack near Fountain Cave. Supposedly, he claimed this site for the water flowing from the cave, which he used to dilute the whiskey he sold to Indians and soldiers. By the end of the year, nine log cabins had been constructed, "composed of a motley group of Canadians and Swiss French." Later when the military reservation extended its boundaries, Parrant and other Frenchmen were forced to move after soldiers destroyed their shacks. He built another cabin on the edge of a nearby bluff where he sold whiskey, but finally sold his claim in 1844 to Benjamin Gervais for ten dollars.

A Catholic community developed in the area and Bishop Loras of Dubuque, Iowa established St. Peter's across from Ft. Snelling, where a congregation of 185 welcomed 29 year-old Father Lucien Galtier. At first, he lived in the home of Scott Campbell, an interpreter at Ft. Snelling and used his one room as living quarters and a chapel. The next year, 1841, the priest built a chapel with eight volunteers and called it St. Paul's. Father Galtier found the name Pig's Eye, which was the informal name given to the area, so offensive, he begged that the place be named the same as his chapel. Years later, Archbishop Ireland said," If any one man can be said to be the founder of this city of which there were many more or less concerned, the honor of the title is to be awarded to Father Galtier." In 1941, a large stone was placed in the St. Paul Chapel Park to commemorate the100 year anniversary of this church. Just north of this city, another settlement became known as "Little Canada" and still exists on the present-day map. A new church was established here for the needs of the Catholic parishioners.

But long before the forerunner of the Twin Cities was created, the French had established the first fort in 1670 on the shores of historic Lake Vermillion in northern Minnesota. Known by the Chippewa or Ojibwe (who were the enemy of the Sioux) as "lake-

of-the sunset glow," it was translated as vermilion or "color ranging from brilliant yellow to red". There French traders began a friendship with the local Sioux Indians and the fort served to protect the French trade rights to the region from competing Britain. Vermilion was an important link in the chain of rivers and lakes that connected the Lake Superior (Duluth) to Rainy Lake, Lake of the Woods and ultimately Hudson Bay, and voyageurs used many routes in that region. The last fur trading post on the lake was built in 1820 by an American company and operated until the demise of the fur industry in 1870.

In southern Minnesota, Alexander Faribault, the son of a French fur-trader and a woman of the Dakota tribe, was credited with fueling most of the early settlement activity in the area beginning in 1826. He established a fur trading post on the banks of the Cannon River that had grown in popularity by 1834. Through his knowledge of the Dakota language, young Faribault improved his relations with the displaced Wahpekutes and even helped the tribe to resettle in the area. This relationship helped ensure a successful trading post and safe travel for settlers. Today, the modern town of Faribault is located a mile upstream from the former site at the confluence of the Cannon and Straight Rivers.

Two other early areas discovered by the French- Canadians in their explorations were Mille Lacs Lake in the central area and Lake Itasca in the northwest region, the source of the Mississippi River. And the names of dozens of towns and lakes still bear the names of saints and other French names: St. Pierre River (the Minnesota), Frontenac, Cloquet, Lac Qui Parle, Terre Bonne Grand Marais, Beaulieu, Nicolle, LaSalle Lac to name only a few. French-Canadians appeared to be on friendly terms with the local Indian tribes and had been living there, hunting, fishing, and trapping animals for many years. Although credit has been given to another explorer, Henry Schoolcraft, for discovering the source of the Mississippi, some historians assert that it was a band of French-Canadians and Indians who led him there.

From Quebec to Minnesota

Historian Monsigneur Arthur Durand, writing in 1958, asked, "How could Minnesota have developed so early and as peacefully as it did, if the Indians were on the whole hostile? If explorers like Zebulon Pike could go through their lands as freely as he did in 1805, if traders and trappers thrived in Minnesota territory on relatively good terms with the Indians, both the Sioux on the west bank and the Chippewa on the east bank, it was largely due to the mutually friendly attitude between the Canadians and the Indians. There were traders of other nationalities, but none matched them in the Christian heritage of their Catholic background, which made them accept, as a principle, that the Indian was also a brother. So we find the French Canadian readily intermarrying with the Indian women and rearing and loving his family in spite of the mixture of blood. (These French and Indian children became known as the Metis).

"The Canadian was a natural pioneer," says Msgr. Durand, "he adapts himself easily, cheerfully to the hardship and simplicity of frontier life. He was content with little if he had his home and if nature could give him a fair chance to provide for his family through the broad use of his axe to build, and his gun to hunt. Generally he taught and brought his spouse into the Church and saw to it that the children were baptized, or made long treks to bring them for instruction and baptism to the nearest priest, when priests finally came." However, not all French men had Native American spouses. With land pressures in Quebec during the late 1800's, many young French-Canadian couples came west seeking a new and better life. Minnesota had become a state in 1858 and offered fertile land and opportunities.

This view is reflected in the image depicted on the Great Seal of the State of Minnesota marked with the motto: L'Etoile du Nord (Star of the North). Its central design portrays an 1858 scene of a settler plowing the ground near the Falls of St. Anthony while he watches an Indian on horseback riding in the distance.

French-Canadians began their larger migration to these areas beginning in 1880-1900, drawn to the military post of Ft. Snelling and the Mendota fur trading center. Pierre Bottineau, who founded three settlements, St. Anthony (Minneapolis), Osseo, and Red Lake Falls, was a leader in French-Canadian colonization. Both he and Louis Fontaine sought settlers for these communities by publicizing through word-of-mouth and promotional ads in French language newspapers in the United States and Canada. Many would have taken steamers across the Great Lakes to Chicago and then after the railroads were built, continue by train to St. Paul, then perhaps take another train, and finally ride over a bumpy road in an oxen-driven wagon to their rural destination. After their arrival, the men sought jobs in farming, lumbering, mining, and shipping. Basically they came for work and for inexpensive land that had become less plentiful in Canada.

Despite these advantages, there were real dangers for the pioneers on this western frontier, mostly violent encounters with suspicious Native Americans who burned some homes and attacked settlers. Sometimes, they were enticed by fraudulent land agents who promised more than they delivered. And there was deprivation in a harsh and foreign land. At first, their homes were simple log cabins with dirt floors. But there was arduous work ahead -- they had land to improve and homes and churches to build while they had to contend with long, severe winters including blizzards and heavy snow, hoards of insects, wolves and bears. To endure such hardships, they needed more than raw courage and perseverance. After suffering many such ordeals in rural Minnesota during 1868, one Dutch immigrant concluded, "The soil is the best we can find, we have an abundance of rain, the scenery is beautiful. If we can keep well, with God's help, we are going to make this an ideal place to live, not only for ourselves, but for our children, grandchildren and the generations yet unborn." And so they did.

Another French-Canadian enclave began in central Minnesota when Honore Houle (Houde) of Gentilly and Sara Doucet (Doucette), his bride, migrated to a homestead in Belle Prairie Township, an outpost just north of Little Falls, in 1877. Much earlier, a group of French-speaking Franciscan nuns arrived there

from the Ile of Jersey near Great Britain, to build a boarding school, St. Anthony's Academy, first for boys, and then for girls. Among the religious were the names, Mother Superior Mary Francis Beauchamp, two sisters named Michaud, Blais and Boyer. A church was built there by Father Lemay who continually feuded with the nuns. After a disastrous fire set by a drunken opponent of the nuns, the school was badly damaged, and because of its distance from the town, area families stopped sending their daughters there.

Life in Little Falls

During the 1890's, the Franciscans moved to Little Falls and staffed a residence for orphans. In 1892 they built St. Gabriel's Hospital where my parents met, and later their five daughters were born. Then in 1922, with the help of many generous donors, they built nearby a beautiful Italian-style girls' high school with a large mission-style chapel and an indoor pool as well as a convent, nursing home and school for nurses just across from my family's home and business. St. Francis High School was where my four sisters and I first studied French, under the guidance of a petite and lively French-Canadian nun, Sr. Geneva, a favorite teacher of ours. One of my cousins, Sr. Florence Gendreau, joined the order and was known for her cooking and fancy cake decorating. Throughout the years, many of the students became nuns including many from French-Canadian families. By the mid-1970s, this wonderful educational facility stopped teaching both day and boarding students, but remains an active Franciscan spiritual center with music classes and performances, and health and recreation facilities today. The sisters are missionaries throughout the world and continue to teach school, help the Native Americans in North Dakota reservations, and nurse the ill in many Franciscan institutions in Minnesota and elsewhere.

From Henryville, south of Montreal, my grandfather, Paul Gendreau, brought his wife, Clotilde (Odile) Deslauriers, and their first three children, Eugene, Marie-Eugenie, and Hector, around 1881, to Belle Prairie. (Earlier they had traveled to Jefferson, North Dakota, another French-Canadian town, where mamere Odile delivered a new son and buried him there. She was to lose

two more young children and bear another five babies who survived -- Olive, Louise, Homer, Adelard, and Eugenie II – before her death in 1910). After they arrived in this French-Canadian community, Paul worked for the new Northern Pacific Railroad until he earned enough to buy several hundred acres of land for farming and cattle raising on the east side of Little Falls. Their children spoke French until they learned English in school. Little Falls had now become a "big little city" boasting a granite works, an iron works, a wood-working factory, new business blocks, an opera house, a new Post Office, a steam laundry, brick-making companies, pulp, paper and lumber mills (called the largest in the world!), two flour mills, a brewery and even cigar-making businesses. It had become a boomtown with a major rail line and waterpower for industry by the time my father entered this world in 1892.

Later, when America sent troops overseas during World War I, my father and two older brothers, Hector and Homer, served in the U.S. Army in northern France, as did many others from the area. To avoid killing others, my dad volunteered as a cook in the mess hall, having prepared food as a teen for his invalid mother. He liked to make his favorite foods: pork chops and scalloped potatoes, pea soup and vegetable soup, sometimes overly salted. He preferred my mother's Germanic cooking, even homemade sauerkraut, and her delicious baked goods. My dad, balding with a typical French nose, was a cheerful and amiable guy, and enjoyed kidding her by telling others, "I went to France to fight the Germans, came back, married one, and we've been fighting ever since!" After a few years spent on my grandparents' former farm, my parents left for town, now a county seat, to build a home and start their business.

A few years ago, while walking through the old Calvary Cemetery in Little Falls where my parents and French-Canadian grandparents were buried, I was surprised to see so many French names on the surrounding tombstones, including the very same names as my Quebec ancestors. My surname- Gendreau- was mispronounced so badly in this central Minnesota town with its mixed population of Scandinavian, English, Scottish, German, and Polish that I hardly

felt French. But looking back, I have found many of my parents' friends and business associates were descendants of French - Canadians: the Gendrons, our banker and clothing retailer; G.M.A. Fortier, our doctor, and his brother Ned, our attorney; the Lafonds, our local grocer; Simonet, the furniture store and funeral home owner; and Miss Dufort, our first grade teacher; the families Sylvestre, Ladoux, Desrosier, Guertin, and Bastien. Many classmates were of French-Canadian origin -- Boisvert, Parenteau, Lemieux and Croteau as well as a high school boyfriend, Dufrene (Dufresne) from a nearby town.

Little did I realize that our classmate, Joey Gendron had an immigrant ancestor, Nicolas, who came from Ile d'Oleron, France, as did my ancestor Pierre Gendreau.They came to Quebec about the same time in the 17th century and both families lived on Ile d'Orleans in Quebec. Their descendants believe that they were related. The original Fortier family in St. Laurent, Orleans was a neighbor of the Gendreaus in the 17th century as were the Dufresnes. My family knew nothing of this at the time. Other French names in the small community were: Pepin, Pelletier, Demers, Goulet, Morin, Langlois, Houle (all my ancestral names), Boudreau, Lebeau, Heroux, Doucette, Bisson, Chartier, Valle, Daveau, Picotte, Roy, Duclos, Aubin, Gravelle, Lescault, St. Onge, Bellefeuille, Aimot, Lavois, Blais, Gaboury, Chaidonnet, Barbeau, Odette, Morrisette and Marchand). Note: A listing of all the local French names can be found at the website of the Morrison County Historical Association.

The French Church

Our strongest link with the French-Canadian community when I was growing up was through our membership at St. Francis Xavier Church, whose pastor was French-speaking Rev. Arthur Lamothe of Detroit. A revered elderly priest with snow-white hair, he had baptized the first child in the parish, my father, Adelard, in 1892, and was still there to christen my four sisters and myself. And we were proud of a large stained-glass window with our name, a tribute to our grandfather Paul, who helped build this first church. (It was the only French church in Little Falls; the other Catholic churches were two Polish and one German). There were many

annual traditions surrounding the parish: every May, dressed in white, children dropped flower petals from baskets in honor of Mary, and each Christmas, the beautiful large creche emerged alongside towering pine trees and the church rang out with traditional carols. My twin sister and I were sacristans and sang Latin Gregorian chant in the choir. And my sisters and I were attendants for my sister Odile's wedding there. By the time my father's funeral was held there in 1958, a new modern church re-named St. Mary's had been built, the pastor was now Irish-American, and our treasured window was gone.

When the "German church" in Little Falls burned in the early 1950's and its parishioners had to attend our "French church", some of the congregation resisted allowing German-Americans into the pews! But soon afterward, a new outgoing Irish pastor and his young energetic German-American assistant took charge of the parish and started promoting camaraderie between the two hostile groups. They created a "Winter Wonderland" outside the city in a hilly wooded area where parishioners worked together to make skating rinks, toboggan slides, and hold parties for their children. For his successful efforts, the young German priest, Father Edward Ramacher, received the Jaycee "Man of the Year" award from both the local and state organization. An article published in the Catholic Digest told their success story in bringing together the two ethnic groups. These priests also organized the St. Mary's girls' drum and bugle corps My twin and I were front row tenor drummers flashing streamers, and we traveled all over the state performing in small town parades and ceremonies, including marching, waltzing and doing formations in the largest annual Minnesota summer festival, the Aquatennial in Minneapolis. These activities brought the people of the church together. Eventually, the French Catholics moved over to make room in their pews for their fellow parishioners.

Much has changed today. My parents left in 1954 and spent their winters in Florida and their summers at a lake home in northern Minnesota. (As my dad said, "In the winter, you can give the state back to the Indians.") All of us left Little Falls long ago for college and rarely come back now except for school or family reunions

and to visit the graveyard. There are no more living relatives in the town- only reminders of our past. Our pretty town of shady tree-lined streets and local shops is now home to a Walmart -- many other stores are shuttered. The large forested area alongside the dam and slate river walls where we often played is now bare of trees. Nearby, the ornate black iron gates and fences surrounding the impressive estates of the lumber barons, the Mussers and the Weyerhaeusers, and the homes of the state senator Rosenmeier and the banker Hartmann are gone. Lindbergh's rambling farmhouse and river frontage has been a longtime museum and beautiful state park dedicated to the renowned flier and his father, a former state representative.

Personally, the saddest part is what happened to our 16- acre property where we worked in our family resort business Cleared of all buildings, trees, flower gardens, and pool, it's been replaced by a funeral home owned by a distant member of my mother's family. Across the street, the large field where we children created "rooms" in the tall grasses during the summers and ice-skated on the rink during the winters is now a black-topped parking lot for the enlarged hospital. However, nearby, our old home built by my father in the mid-twenties still stands adjacent to the former field. But what lasts are my childhood memories of the "land of sky-blue waters" and those will remain forever.

Note: Today, there are over a quarter of a million Minnesotans who claim French or French Canadian ancestry and over 16,000 residents whose native language is French, French Creole, French Patois or Cajun.

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Growing up in French-Speaking Louisiana

By Gloria Gravois Hicks

I am a Louisiana Cajun. ("Cajun" is an American mispronunciation of the French word *Acadien*). I was born on September 14, 1927, in the tenth generation since my father's Gravois ancestor Joseph lived in Beaubassin, Acadia (now known as Nova Scotia). My mother's Landry family also had been expelled from Nova Scotia. I had a happy childhood, and it was only when I reached high school that I encountered people outside my home town of Edgard, Louisiana, who made fun of those of us who were "Cajuns". I studied Louisiana history in 8th Grade, and we learned about the *Grand Dérangement* (Deportation) of the Acadians from their homeland of some 150 years. I gradually came to realize that my ancestors were truly folks to be extremely proud of!

Between 1605, when Port Royal, Acadia, was first established, and 1730, when the British took over Nova Scotia, France and Great Britain had been warring with each other over that whole area known as the Maritime Provinces. In 1730, Acadians who did not want to take the Oath of Allegiance demanded by the British were allowed to move with all their movable possessions to Canada, New Brunswick, or the small French islands of *Île Royale* (Cape Breton Island) and *Île-Saint-Jean* (Prince Edward Island). Those citizens who tried to remain neutral but remain on their homesteads were required to sign a "Provisional Oath", in which they promised not to fight on either side should another war break out. They remained and prospered in that northern region. They used a system of *digues* (dikes) and *aboiteaux* (sluice gates) to turn coastal marshes into arable farmland. They trapped, fished and raised livestock. They successfully traded outside their country.

In about 1750, though, the British officials worried about the prosperity of the neutral Acadians. Colonel Charles Lawrence

started ordering his soldiers to burn the houses and crops of those who left voluntarily to discourage any from ever trying to come back. In 1755, arrests and deportations of families from places like Grand Pré, Chipoudy, and Petitcodiac were accompanied by the burning of their churches, homes and crops.

Joseph Gravois was a typical "French Neutral" after he had signed the provisional oath of allegiance to the British crown in the 1730s, and he and his family were able to live in peace for a number of years in Beaubassin, which is north of Grand Pré. There continued to be uncertainties and skirmishes led by various parties. Sometimes rebel Acadians used the Indians to try to force the Neutral Acadians to resist the English and to relocate to French territories. Sometimes the French in Canada tried to take Acadian towns back from the British. It was a very tense situation.

It is believed that Pierre Joseph's father, and his wife Marie Rose "Rosalie" Bourgeois left Beaubassin in 1750 when some Micmac Indians, under the leadership of "rebel" Missionary Laloutre, burned that village. They were at Baie Verte in 1752-1754, where their son Joseph was born, and at Ristigouche in 1758. However, Pierre and his family, along with his brother Jean and several friends, including Michel Haché and Philippe Lachaussée and their families, were captured by the British in 1761, and held prisoners in Halifax until 1763, when the Treaty of Paris was signed. It is unclear where they went after their release. Some have suggested that they may have taken advantage of an opportunity to go to *Saint Domingue* (Haiti), where promise of resettlement was made to a group of evacuees, but no documentation to verify this has been found. Also not known is when and where Pierre died; but we do know he died before 1766. Documents show that Pierre's widow, Rosalie, and their three sons Paul , Jean and Joseph, arrived in Cabanocey, St. James, Louisiana during that year.

Of special interest to my family is the fact that Philippe Lachaussée (1727-1808), widower of Françoise Godin, arrived with his daughter Louise Françoise in Cabanocey in April 1766 to lay claim to 6 arpents of land that was held for him "in transit" by his father-in-law Bonaventure Godin. He moved in as the

chirurgien (surgeon) for the settlement. On October 5, 1766, he married Pierre Gravois' widow, Rosalie. Eleven years later, on June 2, 1777, his daughter Louise married Rosalie and Pierre's son Joseph, and became part of my family heritage.

Because the people about whom I have been speaking came from a French area, and moved into a state that had been settled for about one hundred years by French inhabitants, the main language was French. All documents, legal and ecclesiastical, were in French. Even the brief Spanish occupation had not changed anything except for written official documents. The only change that affected the general populace was that the various Spanish priests put a Spanish spelling to many of the names in the church records. (This complicates the task of genealogists to this day!)

The area on both sides of the Mississippi River in St. James, Assumption and Ascension Parishes was known as the Acadian Coast. In St. John the Baptist and St. Charles Parishes, it was known as the German Coast, because a large group of Germans settled there starting in 1722. The Germans and Acadians intermarried during the next few decades, resulting in the German language being supplanted by the French, and many of the names being given French spellings. In my Gravois ancestry German names such as Becnel, Folse (Foltz), Haydel (Heidel), Hymel (Himel), Rome (Rommel), Trosclair (Troxler), Schexnayder, Steib, Waguespack, and Webre (Weber) appear.

Joseph and Louise's descendants Pierre Arman, Pierre Armand, Joseph Ernest and Louis Theodore were at various times all property owners of sugar plantations in St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, and St. James Parishes. (Chapter 9 of the book *La Famille Gravois, les Trois Cents Années Passées*, by Roland Anthony Gravois, gives a very detailed description of "Gravois Families and their Plantations.") All of these men had large families, and the properties were divided through the years.

By the time my grandfather, Theodore, became manager of the Webre-Steib & Co. plantation, the last of the plantations in which we had any stock, our immediate family's share had dwindled

considerably. Theodore continued to hold the position as Overseer of the plantation until his death in 1954. After our father Denis died in 1972, our brothers F.D., Jr., and Jerome, with the rest of the family's permission, sold our shares in the Webre-Steib & Co. We each received a thousand dollars or so. Descendants of the Denis Gravois family no longer carry on the "sugar cane planters" tradition of the early Gravois families.

Because of the sufferings the Pierre Gravois family had endured after being ousted from Nova Scotia by the British, formal education was impossible. We know for sure that Joseph and his brother Jean reported in St. James Parish on several occasions that they didn't know how to read or write! Pierre Armand did not learn to read or write either, but he made sure that his children got some schooling. He even sent one of his sons, Seraphin, to St. Joseph College in Bardstown, Kentucky. All the rest of the Gravois descendants received the best education that was available during that period. This early schooling was in the French language, either given by the parents or other literate relatives, until the late 1890s.

Although Louisiana became the 18th State in 1812, the modern school system did not begin until 1898. Because Louisiana was now an "American" state, English became the language that was taught in the schools. It took a good many years for all the requirements to filter down to small town rural schools. "Qualified" teachers were now hired, and many of these were imported from other states. According to Elton Oubre in his book *Vacherie, St. James Parish, Louisiana: History and Genealogy,* about 133 students were enrolled in the Vacherie schools in 1900. Sixty-eight of the students could read and write in French, but could speak English; 32 could read and write French, but could not speak English; and the 33 youngest students could not yet read or write, and spoke only French. It was said that the imported English-speaking teachers had a really tough time when they were appointed to schools where the children's first language was French! The students had a tough time, too, because many were punished if they spoke French in school. The unfortunate result of this whole situation was that many parents gave up speaking

French to their children at home, just so the children wouldn't get punished at school.

My father, François Denis Gravois, Sr., (1895-1972), was known as Denis (pronounced Duh-NEE) by his family. He was the oldest son of Louis Theodore Gravois (1872-1954) and Marie Clothilde Rodrigue (1873-1937) of Vacherie, LA. One of 14 children, he grew up speaking French, and his first years of schooling were in French. His parents had not much formal schooling, but were determined that their children would get as much as possible.

Since there was no high school in the community of Vacherie or in St. James Parish, when he finished elementary school, Denis was sent to live with his paternal aunt, Marie Lesima Gravois (1870-1944), in Franklin, LA to attend high school. Marie was married to Augustin Antoine Becnel (1866-1922). He had to learn to speak better English, of course, and graduated from Franklin High School in about 1913. He went on to further his education at Louisiana State University, where he received a degree in Vocational Agriculture in 1921 (after a brief World War I interruption, during which he served for a time in Germany as an interpreter.) He earned his Master's degree in 1939. For his entire life until his retirement, he taught Vocational Agriculture in High School.

Denis was teaching in Walker, Louisiana, when he met my mother, Mary Iola Landry (1904-1965) in St. Gabriel, Louisiana. Joseph Landry and his wife Marie Josephe Bourg had brought their family of 5 children to the upper St. James area, close to Ascension Parish, and they settled in as sugar cane farmers and rice farmers. Their grandson, Joseph Gustave moved to New Orleans, and his son Jean Baptiste Mire later moved to St. Gabriel in Iberville Parish, where he became a rice farmer. Education in the Landry family seems not to have suffered as much as in the Gravois family.

I don't know exactly why, maybe because her grandfather Joseph Gustave had moved to New Orleans where English was becoming

the preferred language, but my mother, who as a young child grew up speaking French, and her siblings were schooled in English.

Iola graduated from St. Gabriel High School in 1921. After their marriage, Denis and Iola had to live temporarily in Vacherie. Iola had to relearn to speak French by "immersion," so she could communicate with her new mother-in-law, Clothilde.

Consequently, Iola spoke only in English to her own children at home, so I grew up in the 1930s and 1940s hearing the French language only on specific occasions:

1. At Sunday Mass at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, Edgard, Louisiana. Because our priest was from France, and the majority of the congregation spoke French at home, the homilies and announcements were all delivered in French. Even many of the songs the congregation sang were in French.
2. When we went to visit my grandparents (*Mémère* and *Pépère)* in Vacherie, LA. Nearly every Sunday, after attending Mass in Edgard, we journeyed the 13 miles upriver to Vacherie for a big Sunday dinner with the Gravois family. (In South Louisiana the custom is to call the noon meal *dîner* (dinner), and the evening meal *souper* (supper).) It was the Gravois tradition for as many of the family who could to meet there weekly, so there was usually a large gathering of *oncles et tantes* (uncles and aunts), *cousins et cousines*. They were all bilingual, but spoke French around the big dining room table.
3. When we visited other French-speaking relatives and friends.
4. When our parents wanted to communicate something they didn't want their children to understand.

The overseer's house in which *Mémère* and *Pépère* lived seemed huge to me, with a parlor, 6 bedrooms, and a big bathroom, separated by a very wide central hall. Toward the back there was a spacious dining room, and a large kitchen with adjoining pantry. There was a front porch, and a side porch. It had a sizeable front and back yard, with many extra buildings behind it, such as a barn,

a cow shed, a hog pen, a chicken house and yard, a pasture for the work horses, and a corn crib. After Sunday dinner, all the children were encouraged to *va jouez aux dehors* (go play outside). We could easily find something to do for amusement. We played tag and hide and seek. We climbed fences and trees. We watched the hogs wallowing in the mud inside their pen. We went next door to visit *Pépère's* sister *Tante Loule* (Rosa Gravois Sevin, 1883-1953) and to play with *Marie-Louise* (pronounced "Maril-weeze") in her playhouse. We helped *Mémère* gather eggs. We helped *Pépère* shuck the dry corn and run the cobs through his special machine that forced all the kernels off. That was one of my favorite tasks! He sometimes let us feed some of the freshly released kernels to the chickens, but the bulk of the corn was stored in huge containers for future nourishment of the horses.

Denis' sister Rose and her husband Ozane Abadie and their fourteen children lived in the big overseer's house with Mémère and Pépère. Aunt Rose would, of course, help Mémère prepare the dinner. When everything was ready, the children were called in and served at the big *table de cuisine* (kitchen table). We sat on benches on both sides of the table. The benches were conveniently pushed underneath when we finished eating.

"*Viens*! (Come)" *Mémère* would call. "*Assis toi!* (Sit yourself down) *Mangez!* (Eat) *C'est bon, hein*? (It's good, huh?)"

"*Oui, Mémère*, (Yes, Grandma)" we would reply, as we sat down happily to eat the wonderful food.

For the grownups, dishes of that delicious food were carried into the *salle à manger* (dining room) and set in the middle of the huge table that could easily seat twelve adults. As long as I was a small child, and relegated to eating in the kitchen along with my many cousins who also went to school in the English language, I didn't have to worry about the French language. When I got older, however, and was granted the privilege of eating with the adults, I encountered problems! Everyone spoke so quickly, and so animatedly, gesticulating with their hands for emphasis, that I had trouble understanding most of the conversations. Fortunately, I grew up in the era where adults thought children should be "seen, but not heard," so I was not expected to contribute. As soon as I

could take French classes at school, I studied it diligently. That really didn't help, though, because the French text was standard French as spoken in France, and what was spoken around the *table à manger* was Cajun French, separated from modern French by some 300 years. Indeed, Louisiana French has many words borrowed from several sources – the Native Americans of the area, the Spaniards, the Germans, the African Americans, the Italians, and the English-speaking Americans. (There is a wonderful book, out of print now, called *Louisiana-French*, by William A. Read, to which I often refer for these unusual words.) So, at these Gravois Sunday dinners, I usually just sat, listened, and tried to learn as much as I could. But if someone asked me a question, I must confess I had to answer in English, and let someone else translate for me.

I can recall many humorous incidents that arose during the Sundays we were in Vacherie. My mother was not the only daughter-in-law who didn't speak French fluently. One day one of my aunts tried to tell the group that she had encountered a bug that had frightened her:

"*C'était un mimi à loules pattes*!"

"*Qu'est-ce qu'elle dit*? (What is she saying?)" asked *Mémère*, in puzzlement.

"I think she means '*un loulou* (bug) *à milles pattes*'" said my mother. "A centipede. A thousand-leg bug."

Everyone had a hearty laugh.

On many occasions, Mémère would call out to some of her grandchildren,

"*Oh, Marguerite, Madeleine, Gloria – va cherchez mes lunettes*!"

We would diligently look for her spectacles, until suddenly one of the Abadie girls would delightedly call out,

"*Mais, Mémère, ils sont sur ta tête*!"

She would reach up to touch her chignon at the top of her head, and then shake her head in wonderment to find her *lunettes* there. As I recall, we children practically fell over laughing at the silliness of it all. We never really knew if she had really forgotten

they were there, or if she also delighted in this little game of search and find.

Mémère made her own bread at least once a week. She wrapped the loaves in heavy dish towels for future use, and so her pantry always had the delicious aroma of hearty yeast bread. She would happily give us a slice if we requested it.

"*Tu veux du pain, chère? Viens avec moi*!" (You want some bread, dear? Come with me!)

I recall her holding the big loaf up to her breast and slicing it with a big knife in the direction of her breast. That knife always stopped just as it reached the bottom of the loaf, and the slice dropped into our hands, eagerly opened in anticipation!

"*Tiens*! (There!)" she would say in satisfaction.

She also made her own yeast cakes. I really wanted to know how she could do this, but couldn't understand her explanations well enough. It involved something about exposing the starter to the open air for several days. I had always planned to ask my Aunt Rose to write down the recipe for me, but I put it off too long. After Mémère died, Aunt Rose did not continue her mother's practice of making the yeast cakes. She simply bought yeast from the store.

Mémère was also in charge of cooking for the field workers on the sugar plantation. Every day she would portion out into little round metal pails (about 5 inches in circumference and 4 inches deep) the food for each of the four or five workers in the cane fields directly behind the house. It was usually substantial hearty stuff like red beans, white beans, stew, or gumbo (always served over rice), a green vegetable such as mustard greens, butter beans, or snap beans, and a thick slice of bread. Each pail was covered, and sent out to the field. On several school holidays I had the good luck to be visiting and was asked to help carry the pails out to the workers. They were usually sitting in the shade of the nearest tree in the cane field, waiting for us. I don't remember hanging around to watch them eat. I suppose *Mémère*'s instructions were for us to hurry back. I was usually with my Abadie cousins, who understood all of her French instructions and obeyed them to the letter.

Sometimes we attended Mass at Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church in Vacherie. As I mentioned earlier about Mass in Edgard, the homilies and announcements were in French. What I failed to mention also was that the main part of the Mass was recited in Latin (this was before the Vatican II changes to the English vernacular.) It was hard for me to pay attention, or to understand what was taking place. My attention would turn to my surroundings, like the stained glass windows, the statues, and of course, the other members of the congregation. In Edgard, this didn't bother my parents. In Vacherie, my inattention did bother my grandfather! He made no verbal comment. Instead, he pinched my arm! And as he pinched, he pointed to where my attention was supposed to be riveted. I learned that lesson very quickly! No looking around when you went to church with *Pépère*!

Mémère suffered from an illness called "Bright's disease" in her later years, which caused an unusual weight gain in her abdominal area. I'm sure she was uncomfortable, but to her many grandchildren whom she would hold and rock, this shelf that her tummy made was very cozy! I was ten when she died, and had grown too big to be rocked any more, but I was not too old to remember how comfortable it had been.

After her death, the weekly visits became monthly instead, and then even less frequent. We still enjoyed going to Vacherie, but I suppose our own growing family began to have commitments that kept us away.

The thing I remember most about *Pépère* during those years after *Mémère's* death was his playing solitaire at the big dining room table, either before or after the big meal. He taught me eleven other kinds of solitaire besides the regular Klondike and Canfield. (Unlike *Mémère*, he spoke English very well, and that is how we communicated at this time.) Recently, I have learned to play and enjoy Spider, played with two decks of cards. I often think that he would have liked this challenging game if he were still alive.

Another memory is of his calling out in a loud voice,

"*Paix, toi!*" (Peace, you!) when the noise of running and yelling children annoyed him. [Editor's note: This may be a regional Cajun derivative of the Quebecois "Tait, toi!," which roughly translates to "Be quiet!"] Another of his favorite expressions of exasperation was, "*Tonnerre!*" which I suppose could be translated as "Thunderation!"

"*Mais, jamais!*" was used to express surprise that I could have even thought of doing whatever it was I did. (I like Mary Alice Fontenot's rendering of this expression: "Never in my life have I heard of such a thing!" Mary Alice Fontenot is the author of the popular "Clovis Crawfish" series of children's books using Louisiana French expressions throughout.)

After I went off to college, and then worked for awhile, and then got married and settled into the wonderful task of rearing my own family of 7 children, I did not visit Vacherie as often as I would have liked. After *Pépère* died in 1954, we hardly ever found time to visit. I would tell my children about my happy childhood, though, and they are the ones who encouraged me to start writing down all the fascinating little bits and pieces that have continued to stand out so clearly in my memory all these many years.

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AFGS DNA Project

By Tom Allaire

A new opportunity is emerging in the world of genealogy. It is already big and promises to get bigger. The science of biology is being combined with the study of genealogy to give family historians a new tool - genetic genealogy. By reading the DNA in a person's cells a picture of his ancestry will emerge. The DNA used to construct our bodies is inherited from our parents and it is the reason we look much like them. It is now possible to read DNA sequences and to develop a signature that is particular to a person and his close relatives.

First, a little science: The term DNA stands for deoxyribonucleic acid and it consists of four different molecules - adenine, cytosine, thymine and guanine, attached to a sugar/phosphate backbone structure. A strand of DNA is millions of these units in length. Strands come in pairs that are twisted around each other. Each strand constitutes a chromosome that contains many genes. These chromosomes reside in the cell's nucleus. In each of the 23 pairs of chromosomes in a human cell, one chromosome comes from the mother and one comes from the father. These pairs undergo recombination during conception when the genes from the two parents are mixed. There are an estimated 30,000 genes in the human genome - the collection of genes in the human cell. The 23rd pair contains the sex chromosomes, called simply the x-chromosome and the y-chromosome. Females have an x-x pair and males have an x-y pair. The other pairs are called autosomal chromosomes and they go about the business of building the body. It is the y-chromosome that is so informative about the paternal genealogical line. It does not have a lot of genes on it, about 21 or so, although there is room for a thousand. Only the two ends recombine with the other sex chromosome, leaving it intact along most of its length. Scientists believe the rest is unused. This makes it perfect for paternal genealogical studies.

Cells also contain mitochondria. A cell has hundreds of these tiny organelles whose function is to generate energy for the cell to use. Each mitochondrion has circular DNA, called mtDNA. This ring is much smaller than an autosomal strand, about 16,000 nucleotides in length. These organelles reside in the body of the cell. The mtDNA comes only from the mother; the father has it, but does not pass it on to the baby. It does not recombine with anything. This makes it perfect for maternal genealogical studies.

A mutation can occur along any stretch of DNA. The body has a replication process that is extremely reliable, considering that it takes millions of steps to replicate a chromosome, fewer for mtDNA. But it does, in rare instances, miscopy something, producing a mutation. Mutations come in two forms - single nucleotide polymorphisms, SNP for short, where one nucleotide is substituted for another during the replication process, and short tandem repeats, STR for short, where a string of 2 to 6 or so, nucleotides which repeats itself a number of times changes the number of repeats. Insertions and deletions of individual nucleotides can also happen. When a mutation occurs in a germ-line cell, a predecessor cell to a sperm or egg, or the sperm or egg itself, the mutation is carried to the child. It is replicated along with the rest of the strand as if nothing is wrong. The body has no problem with it unless it occurs in a biologically critical area. Most of the mtDNA is critical, but the y-DNA has long stretches of its length that are not critical, so a mutation is preserved. It is these unused areas that are read for genealogical purposes.

SNP mutations happen very rarely, once every 8-10,000 years or so. They serve to establish haplogroups - large segments of the world's population that can be followed through the specific mutation they all carry. Haplogroups are named with the letters of the alphabet. One or two of these polymorphisms is enough to establish a haplogroup. Other mutations will establish clades - subsets of the haplogroup further narrowing the size of the population having them. STRs narrow the group even further. They happen more frequently than SNPs, once every few centuries or so. STRs are independent of the SNP mutations and carry over

in the signature after an SNP occurs. MtDNA is not tested for these repeat mutations. By testing enough of these markers, the test data can yield genealogically useful information.

When a customer submits a sample for analysis, the lab reads the markers (sites known to have mutations), builds a signature and adds it to its database of hundreds of thousands (someday millions) of other signatures for comparison. People matching are notified about each other and typically subjects post names and email addresses (all companies offer privacy options). This will provide opportunities for contact. The more markers the lab reads the fewer matches the customer will have at that level. The genealogically useful matches occur at the higher levels, or the lower levels with a common surname or variant, or a common origin and history for the female line. Currently 67 markers (of STRs) are testable, 12 markers cost less. Clade tests are also available. The list of matches at lower levels of testing could contain hundreds of surnames that are far outside the customer's ethnic group or religion. This indicates that the most recent common ancestor on that line predates the establishment of surnames in general. At lower levels, that ancestor could predate recorded history. At the highest levels, one notices mutations within a surname. This indicates a findable kinship within a genealogically significant time frame.

As the DNA signatures are passed down through the generations, it is easy to see which lines can be read. The y-chromosome is passed from the father to son only, so a y-DNA test can read only the strict paternal line, nothing else. The mtDNA is passed from the mother to all children, so an mtDNA test reads only the strict maternal line, nothing else. This technology cannot read the "middle" lines, where the subjects could be far more closely related to each other. Autosomal DNA tests can read middle lines as a group, but they are imprecise and return a percentage of kinship, not much else. These tests are useful for only two generations but are getting better all the time. They might not be able to pinpoint a particular line with their matches, even if they can pinpoint a particular gene. DNA testing does have its limits.

When the customer gets his own DNA signature established he is also establishing the DNA signature of his most remote known ancestor on that line. A signature is another piece of information about this ancestor that the customer did not previously have. It may turn out to be as useful as a military record, or a passenger list entry, when these other records are no longer available or were never generated. Other descendants of this ancestor may also have the same signature. With a few samples from other selected descendants, it might be possible to identify the few mutations that have occurred since the ancestor's time and establish his exact signature with as much accuracy as would come from his/her own sample. Each settler, soldier, king's daughter, fur trapper, that came to Quebec, and those similar immigrants that came to other parts of the world, and those who stayed in the old country, all had establishable signatures. The DNA signature is useful for confirming origin after a migration. The immigrant ancestor left behind relatives that had descendants, any one of whom could decide, or get recruited, to have his DNA tested in the future. DNA testing can unite these groups of people, even if no paper trail exists. Many groups of people have descendents who need the help DNA can offer in this area - Loyalists, Acadians, African slaves, potato famine Irish, mid-western settlers, etc. These tests can also disprove kinship between two groups of people, even if they have a common surname.

In the AFGS library, we have hundreds of surname books that attempt to collect all the descendants of a particular named early ancestor, or of all people who have a particular surname. Many other libraries have similar books. The quality of the research and writing varies widely. In theory, all listed people in each book will have similar y-DNA signatures, or there will be several identifiable groups within that surname, each with its own signature. A good surname study now has this additional tool. Beyond surname studies, a female descendancy can be compiled from an early female ancestor forward, in a similar fashion to the surname genealogies. All the listed women would have the same mtDNA signature, with a huge variety of surnames. A daughter of the king, an early colonial mother, or similar woman, has about the same number of female descendants that an early male settler has of

male descendants. Thousands of male surname studies have been done already; we need more female descendancy studies.

This information can unite members of other classes of people where migration was not an issue - Amerasian children fathered by American soldiers in Vietnam, (or any other children from any other group of soldiers in any other war), children of the "disappeared" political radicals in South America, Asian children and adults sold, abandoned or kidnapped into factory labor (or worse), citizens of reunited countries split by communism, and, of course, adoptions. In cases such as these, either side could post his DNA signature, hoping that the other side will also post his. The parties need not post themselves; they don't even need to still be alive. Since the children hold their parent's DNA signature, a descendant can also post his test results. It may shed light on unknown fathers from one-night-stands, illegitimate births in any time period, and, yes, even rapes. Anybody who is a party to one of these events, or is related to such a party, on either side, can post his DNA signature and may someday discover people he had no hope of discovering in available records. DNA has no social or legal agenda to fill and it cares nothing about hypersensitivity. It cares nothing about government, bureaucratic or clerical secrecy. It cares nothing about promises one person made to another long ago, nor does it care about how shocked onlookers might be. It will never lie. It will always reveal true facts about the test subjects, within the limits of its precision. The possibilities are endless.

AFGS has established a group for the benefit of its members who wish to have their DNA tested. This group takes the form of a geographical project and Family Tree DNA Company of Texas is its host. This society attracts people who have a significant fraction of French Canadian ancestry. One should expect many similar signatures among its members. Only AFGS members may join this group. There are also thousands of other groups available. AFGS members will receive a pre-arranged discount on lab fees. Sign up under the links available at the AFGS website and become part of the newest trend in the study of genealogy.

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About the Author

Tom Allaire is a long-time AFGS member, on the volunteer research staff at the AFGS library, and presenter of the AFGS DNA workshop held at the AFGS Library in November 2009.

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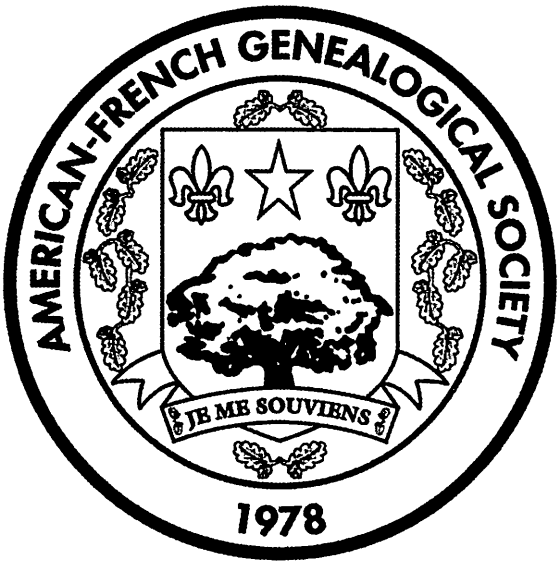

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