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ABOUT OUR COVER

As this drawing illustrates, illness and disasters were frequently a part of our ancestors' lives. Here we see a man with a torch walking alongside a cart of plague victims and a woman holding a dead child. Chalk drawing by E.M. Ward, 1848. Iconographic Collections.

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**FROM THE
PRESIDENT'S
DESK**

by Robert Gumlaw

It has been some year, hasn't it?

The news is filled with stories of the pandemic, masks, the economy, protests, social justice, statue questions, and elections. We are told to be ready for a new normal. No one is certain what that is yet, but we'll know at some point.

The Board of Directors and committees have been having virtual meetings. We have been reviewing the guidelines and procedures we will have to follow going forward. Visits to our research library, classes, and meetings will be noticeably different. Physical distancing, daily cleaning, and mask wearing are only some of the necessary steps being reviewed and implemented. The safety and comfort of our members and volunteers is of the utmost importance to us.

The stories in this issue of *Je Me Souviens* illustrate how our ancestors had to cope with some very tough situations as well. The answers we seek about elusive families are often found not in vital records, but in biographies, newspaper articles, and town histories. What was happening when they lived there? Were they a member of a local organization? Is there information available about that organization? Did they run for office?

Obituaries are usually a great source of information when we are looking to round out what we know about a person. Members of the family, relationships, occupations, offices held, and club memberships are some of the commonly listed highlights. There are over 600,000 searchable obituaries available in our growing AFGS Members Only Online Library.

We are looking forward to reopening our building to our members. Many volunteers have been missing their routine duties at the large lost and found otherwise known as the AFGS. Thank you for being patient with us during the temporary closure. It has not been an easy summer.

Thank you and be well,

Rob



A TIP FROM YOUR BOOKIE

*by Janice Burkhart
Librarian*

I hope you have all survived the sheltering in place order and that you have all stayed healthy and safe. Remember when we use to wish we could stay home and have time to do fun things like read a book, work on our genealogy, sort pictures or just chill out? I guess we will be more careful about what we wish for in the future!

In spite of the inconvenience and life changing new routines we have had to master, I hope you have found time to work on your research and perhaps organized some of the projects you have been meaning to work on for a long time. I have been engaged in two projects that might interest you.

The first project was inspired by reading the JMS article dedicated to the “1918 Flu Pandemic” that is included in this issue. It was surprising how much the approach to that pandemic mirrors what we did in the face of COVID-19. More than 100 years later and we are still using many of the same methods to get through this trying time. That got me thinking about how we are often committed to researching the past. It occurred to me that 50 years from now our descendants might want to research what happened in 2020. To that end, I started to keep a journal. This is a project you could do too. Keep track of how the pandemic started, how the death toll rose and fell, how it affected your way of life. Did you get the virus or know someone who did? How did it affect you? Do you know anyone who passed away during this time? How did you keep in touch with family members? What did you do to keep yourself occupied? Did you make masks, shop for an elderly neighbor, or learn new methods of communication such as Zoom? How did you celebrate birthdays, weddings, and graduations? Since groceries were sometimes hard to secure, did you develop new recipes in order to use what was available? Don’t forget to mention the shortage of toilet paper!! In fifty or more years people will want to read about your experiences. If you are crafty, save newspaper clippings and take pictures, use them to illustrate your stories. Save it all on disk or in a nice binder. It will become a family treasure.

The second project, which also was fun, was helping a friend organize some of the genealogy work that she had completed. She wanted to give it to her three, young grandchildren. The oldest is twelve years old. They were much too young to fully appreciate relatives that they had never met and who lived more than 100 years before they were born so we needed a different approach. We decided to make a book for each of the children. We used three ring binders and sheet protectors. Each book started out with the name of the child and a picture of the child on the cover sheet which had the title “This Is My Family Story.” The first section was all about the child with a birth certificate and pictures of their house, birthdays, celebrations, hobbies, talents, sports, favorite pass times and pets. The pictures were mounted (or printed) on acid free paper and my friend used little stickers (such as soccer balls, birthday cakes, musical instruments) to decorate the pages. Now, children can relate to themselves and might not be as interested in the rest of the book at first but as they get older, curiosity might win out.

The next section was entitled “My Parents.” First came the wedding certificate and wedding picture. There were also a few pictures of the wedding ceremony. Then each parent had a section which included his/her birth certificates and pictures of them when they were growing up. These

pictures included important events in their lives, their hobbies their graduation pictures what they did and do for work, places they traveled - anything they would want their children to know about.

As I am sure you have anticipated, the next section was called "My Grandparents." Follow the same procedure. You might be able to continue on with Great-grandparents. The point is, everything is in sheet protectors and you can expand the books as the age and interest of the child grow. At the very end, we included the five generation charts that were completed. This was a fun project that helped organize my friend's research, family stories and pictures. I think the grandchildren will be surprised and happy with their very own family albums.

HAVE YOU USED OUR AFGS RESEARCH SERVICES?

Did you know that AFGS will help you do genealogy research? The members of our AFGS Research Committee have over 70 years of combined experience in genealogy research. If you hit a brick wall or just don't have the experience or extra time to really dig into your research, let us help you.



You can find our helpful volunteers in the AFGS Library at 78 Earle Street in Woonsocket, RI. We are open on Monday from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm, Tuesday from 1:00 pm to 9:00 pm and Saturday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. If you are not a member of AFGS, there is a fee of \$5.00 for your visit to the library. There is no charge for the help you may receive from our expert research team in person.

If you live too far from our library to visit for help, we also have a research service where you can request help for specific lines. You can submit your information to us on line at our website, <https://afgs.org/site/>. On our main page, click on "Services/Resources" on the blue bar and select "Request Research" and "French Ancestors/Vital Records Request." This will take you to the "Research Options and Fees" page where you will find a link to a downloadable order form or you can scroll further down the page to an on-line order form for Birth/Baptism, Marriage, Death/Burial, 5 Generation Chart, Direct Lineage, or Other (specify). You may also request photo or microfilm copies of original records, if available. DO NOT send payment in advance, you will be billed when the research is completed. AFGS members receive reduced rates for this research service.

EPIDEMICS IN CANADA

by Annette Mimeault Smith

Historically, epidemic diseases in North America were initially spread from European explorers to Indigenous peoples. Later, the unhealthy conditions of ships which linked the Americas to Europe favored the development of contagious diseases such as smallpox, typhus, cholera and influenza among their passengers. Ignorance of the causes of these diseases and how they were transmitted helped spread them into port cities. The outbreak of an epidemic almost always coincided with the arrival of a vessel full of sick passengers.¹

When Europeans began arriving on the shores of the Americas, the epidemic diseases they brought with them set off one of the largest depopulations in human history. Prior to European arrival, diseases such as smallpox, measles and yellow fever did not exist in these regions of the world. Having never been exposed to these illnesses, Indigenous peoples did not have the antibodies needed to ward off infections. Using Christopher Columbus' arrival in the Americas in 1492 as a starting point, Indigenous populations were drastically reduced by epidemic disease over the course of the next 400 years, as Europeans continued to explore new territory and came into contact with different communities.² Of all the diseases that affected Indigenous peoples, smallpox was often the worst.

When traveling the St. Lawrence River, Jacques Cartier observed well-established, heavily populated communities at Stadacona, an Iroquoian village located at what is now Québec City. Not long after his arrival, in the winter of 1535, he noted that Iroquoians were dying of an illness he and his own men seemed immune to. Later historians would identify the illness as smallpox. About 70 years later, when Samuel de Champlain explored the same route in 1603, Stadacona was a ghost town.

Another incident speaks to the intentional spread of disease. In 1763, as Odawa chief Obwandiyag (Pontiac) began his resistance movement against British Rule, Sir Jeffery Amherst, leader of the British army, suggested to Col. Henry Bouquet that smallpox be introduced via infected blankets given to the First Nations they were fighting. He wrote, "You will do well to try to inoculate the Indians by means of blankets as well as to try every other method that can serve to extirpate this exorable race." Several historians note there is no evidence that Bouquet or any of his men carried out the act. That same year, however, William Trent, a trader at Fort Pitt (located in present-day Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) wrote of a meeting with two members of the Delaware Nation, "... we gave them two blankets and a handkerchief out of the Small Pox Hospital. I hope it will have the desired effect."³

Typhus first reached Canada in 1659, but the outbreak of 1746 was notable for its severity. France had sent a large flotilla of warships to Canada to retake Port-Royal in Acadia. Of the 3,150 soldiers aboard, 1,270 died at sea and another 1,130 in Bedford Basin, where they were supposed to

¹ <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/epidemic> accessed on July 16, 2020

² Ibid

³ Ibid

rendezvous with an army coming from Québec. The disease hit the Mi'kmaq of the region and more than one-third died.⁴

In 1847, 9,293 immigrants from the British Isles (particularly those of Irish decent) died during the Atlantic crossing, causing the year to be dubbed, “the year of the typhus.” Another 10,037 died at Grosse-Île, the quarantine station in the St. Lawrence River below Québec, or in the hospitals of Québec, Montreal, Kingston and Toronto. Monuments at Cap des Rosiers on the Gaspé coast commemorate those who died at sea.⁵ In this issue, Daniel Doyle’s article, A Tribute to the People of Québec tells us of the compassionate welcome the refugees from Ireland received during the “Great Hunger” that devastated the Irish Catholics during this time.

In 1832, the Canadian government forbade the local population to visit ships in port when Asian cholera was devastating Europe. Quarantine laws were strengthened and Grosse Île was placed under military command. However, one ship was permitted to leave the quarantine station and was responsible for the cholera epidemic in 1832, resulting in some 6,000 deaths. Thereafter, Canada experienced sporadic cholera outbreaks throughout the century.

In 1918, influenza or the flu traveled throughout North America and you will find an excellent article by Lori Lyn Price regarding this epidemic in this issue of *JMS*.

Yellow Fever arrived in the port of Québec from the West Indies in 1710. This disease was transmitted by mosquitos who found the heat and humidity on board a ship ideal for its reproduction and infected the vulnerable passengers. The sick sailors were taken to Hôtel-Dieu in Québec, where they died – as did six nurses and 12 priests. Although the disease spread throughout the area, the exact number of victims is unknown. Once winter came, the insect and its disease both disappeared.

In 1773, a mysterious disease appeared in the Baie Saint-Paul area that spread quickly to surrounding areas and finally reached the Montréal region. Its symptoms included buccal (cheek lining) ulcers, pain in the limbs and finally the destruction of the bones of the nose, the palate, the gums and the appearance of swellings on the head, the clavicles and the bones of the limbs. Men, women and children were all afflicted. This malady, known as the Baie Saint-Paul disease, was a form of syphilis.

Throughout history, serious diseases have spread and caused suffering. In this significant time of COVID-19, we are reminded that our ancestors experienced the terror of contagious illnesses and worried about their transmission, just as we worry today. Now we feel their anxiety and understand their lives better through our own experiences. When researching your ancestors, pay special attention to multiple deaths in your family trees and compare them to the timeline of these epidemics. You may discover that your ancestors were directly affected by these historic events.

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid

A TRIBUTE TO THE PEOPLE OF QUÉBEC

by Daniel (Danny) Doyle, Esquire

Daniel Doyle is a practicing attorney in Massachusetts. He was President and Historian for the James Connolly Division 17, Ancient Order of Hibernians in Blackstone, Massachusetts. He has authored three books, Keeping Teens on Track; co-author & playwright of The Jesus Trial which is under agreement to be made a feature film; and Canal.

The French Canadians are truly a distinct people whose history and culture deserve unique recognition among its English counterparts. In turn, to associate them with the people of France would do them a disservice as well. The French Canadian deserves a truly significant standing as a culture that is vibrant, prosperous, energetic, compassionate, emotional and creative. In a few short words, they value the full pleasure of life.



History has recorded many contributions to humanity that have had far reaching impact on many people throughout the world. One such selfless act was recognized in August 1997, at Grosse Isle in the Province of Québec. A Celtic Cross was erected to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the hundreds of thousands of famine struck Irish immigrants who were displaced on this island in the St. Lawrence River near Québec City. Of equal importance is the story of those children who survived because of the people of Québec who became their savior.

After the failure of the potato crop in Ireland in 1845 and 1846, the Irish poor, who had been exploited by the prosperous English landlords, were dying of starvation by the tens of thousands outside the gates of productive English farms. The English Parliament required that the English landlords be responsible for their own tenants.

This time is remembered as “An Gorta Mor” which means The Great Hunger (1845-1850). It was indeed a hunger event and not a famine. There was plenty of food on the English farms but the English landlords saw the opportunity to rid their tenants from the land and to expand their livestock interests. In fact, the Native American tribes gathered and sent ship loads of corn to feed the Irish during this time period. The corn, received by the landlords, was fed to their cattle instead. The landlords found an alternative that was less expensive.

A one-way commerce existed between England and its colony in Canada. England was mining the forests of Canada just as she had stripped the forests of Ireland to build her navy fleet. The ships carried the timber to England but required ballast for the empty ships returning to Canada. The English landlords of Ireland were paying 12 pounds a year per person to place their tenants in poorhouses. They found it far less expensive at 6 pounds per person to book passage for these Irish tenants on the empty ships returning to Canada. Not only was it less expensive, but the landlord then had permanently rid himself of the responsibility of these tenants. The English landlords began large-scale evictions of their Irish tenants thus providing them with the opportunity to turn their land over to more productive cattle and sheep raising.

The ships were not designed to carry passengers. There were no walls for privacy with little ventilation below the deck and no sanitary facilities. The Irish were stacked below the deck for ballast and let up only once per day for fresh air. Many ships and lives were lost at sea in storms. Others could not survive the 10-12 week trip and perished of starvation in these "coffin ships."

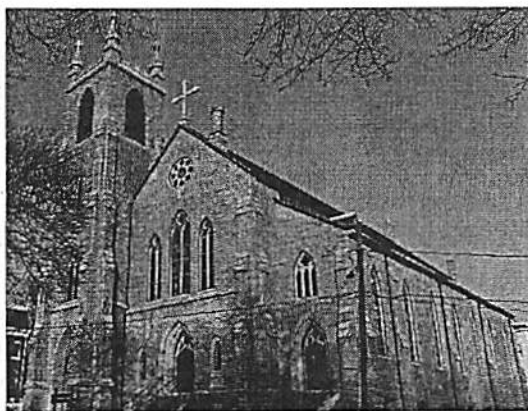
Canada had no choice but to receive these starving, disease-ridden souls. They were sent to quarantine stations that were set up to receive them. One of those stations was an island in the St. Lawrence River near Québec City in the Province of Québec. The island is called Grosse Isle. This quarantine station was established by the English to deal with the anticipated disease-ridden Irish. Hundreds of thousands of Irish immigrants ended their miserable journey at Grosse Isle. Many suffered from malnutrition, typhus and cholera. Over 100,000 Irish immigrants were sent to Grosse Isle. 25,000 died on this island and were buried in mass graves.

Out of sublime tragedy, came hope and salvation for over 2,000 orphaned Irish children on Grosse Isle. A French Canadian priest, Father Charles Felix Cazeau, who was also known as the "priest of the Irish," organized a Catholic charity to come to the aid of these children. He sent priests out amongst the French Canadians of the Province of Québec to urge them to adopt these children. All were adopted and more importantly, the children were allowed to retain their Irish surnames. One might speak of the act of allowing these children to retain their Irish names as magnanimous but such an act by a French Canadian can only truly be regarded as a normal reaction. There are to this day many descendants of these Irish children who are woven into the culture of the French Canadian.

Even in 1847, the French Canadian zeal for retaining one's identity was of high importance. French Canada greatly contributed to differentiating Canadians from their American cousins to the south as well as from its English siblings. Perhaps such an approach to preserving one's culture is extreme but the message is clear that the French Canadian culture was and is an integral part of Canada's lifestyle, and Canada's identity.

That French Canadian culture had also become an integral part of the culture of Woonsocket, Rhode Island. The infestation or "Blight" that brought about the loss of the potatoe crop in Ireland, caused the crops in Québec to fail as well by late 1850's to early 1860's. People were without food and thus began a migration south to work in the textile industry throughout New England with the greatest concentration of migration to Manchester, New Hampshire, then to Lawrence and Lowell, Massachusetts and to Woonsocket and neighboring communities of Cumberland, Albion, Manville, Lincoln and North Smithfield, Rhode Island.

In the beginning of the 1800's, there were over 13,000 Irish immigrants living in Woonsocket, RI. They were the largest population base in the city. The Irish lived in the areas known as Fairmount and Cato Hill. The major Irish churches in the city were Sacred Heart in Fairmount and St. Charles Borromeo in the north end of the city. The



St. Charles Borromeo Church, Woonsocket, RI

migration of French Canadians that started in the 1800s would see them become the leading ethnic group in the city by 1866. They would control the growth of the city economically and politically over the next 100 years. They brought a work ethic that would see the city prosper from the major development of textiles to the region. The French influence was found throughout the city's schools, churches, factories and politics where the French language and culture would flourish.

There was also a spillover of French Canadian peoples who settled in the area of Blackstone, Massachusetts referred to today as the Millerville district of town. This was an isolated area from the rest of the Blackstone Township located between Bellingham, Massachusetts and Woonsocket, Rhode Island. The main street and thoroughfare of Rathbun Street would see the neighborhood develop into a French Canadian community that had plans for its own future. Because of their isolation from the rest of the Town of Blackstone, they petitioned the Town and State government in the 1950s, in order to break away and form a new town. There was indeed a town wide vote taken as to the question of secession which ultimately failed and the Millerville district remains to this day as a village within Blackstone, Massachusetts. It should be known that if the French community of Millerville had been successful in its endeavor to secede from Blackstone, the new name for this town would have been "Lafayette."

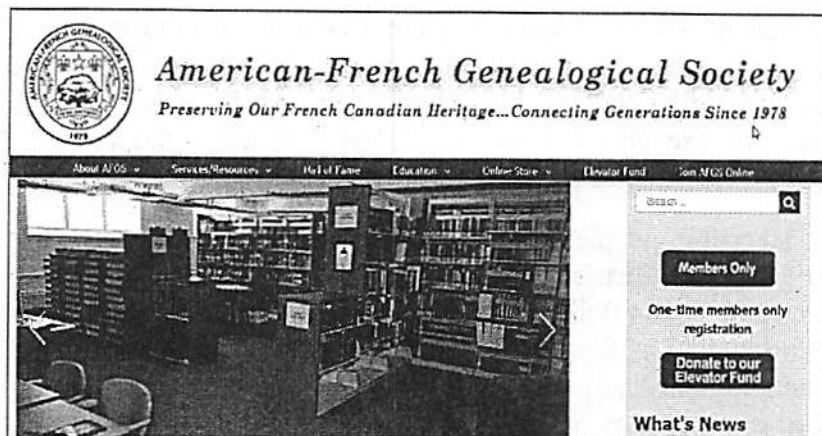
Indeed, we will remember and pay tribute to the French Canadians for the assistance that they provided to the children of Irish heritage and for the many contributions they have made to the city of Woonsocket and its neighboring communities.

American-French Genealogical Society

Mission Statement

The mission of the American-French Genealogical Society is to:

- ✦ Collect, preserve and publish cultural, genealogical, historical and biographical matter relating to Americans of French and French Canadian descent;
- ✦ Play an active part in the preservation of French and French Canadian culture and heritage; and highlight the role that they have played in the history of North America;
- ✦ Maintain an educational, research and cultural center;
- ✦ Conduct periodic educational programs and conferences to explore cultural, genealogical, and historical topics;
- ✦ Disseminate cultural, genealogical, historical, and biographical information to members and the general public.



FIND IT ON OUR WEBSITE

If you have not visited our AFGS website, you should do so at once! Simply go to <https://afgs.org/site/> and you will find many resources for your use. One area to check out will be the library, listed under **Services/Resources**. Once you click on that heading you will find an abundance of

information about the comprehensive resources in our AFGS Library.

Our library is currently closed until further notice due to the quarantine order put in place as an effort to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Please check our website for updates on when we will be re-opening the library to the public. While the library is closed, orders for books, merchandise, membership applications and renewals will continue to be processed.

You can also continue your research, including Acadian research in our Members Only Online Library from the comfort of your home. (See Periodicals Perspective on page 21.)

A CALL TO ACTION

MASSACHUSETTS VITAL RECORDS ACCESS TO BE SEVERELY LIMITED

The Massachusetts Genealogical Council has notified us that severe new restrictions on vital records access are being proposed in Massachusetts. Since our ancestors traveled and moved throughout the country, the records we seek in our research are distributed through various states and in the early years throughout New England. This proposed change in records access will affect our members' ability to obtain records needed for their research. The American-French Genealogical Society would like to urge you to respond to this issue and to encourage your local societies to respond (both as individuals and as a society). Remember that short, polite responses work best. Do not be discouraged by non-committal, vague replies. The recipients mostly count the number of missives received, pro or contra. If you are from out of state, you could also mention the tourist dollars that you as a researcher bring to the lodging restaurant and entertainment industries when you come (with your family) to do research. If you can't access records, you won't be coming to Massachusetts. You can send a message to the governor at <https://www.mass.gov/forms/email-the-governors-office>

For more information on the topic and ideas for what you can do, see the following page on the Massachusetts Genealogical Council's website: <https://www.massgencouncil.org/call-to-action>

You can read information from prominent genealogists like Judy G. Russell, *The Legal Genealogist*, Dick Eastman of *Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter*, Ryan Wood, EVP and COO of *American Ancestors/New England Historic Genealogical Society* and Massachusetts Genealogical Society President, Barbara Mathews to find out what they are saying about this proposal.

Thank you!

DID THE 1918 FLU HIT YOUR FAMILY TOO? UNDERSTANDING THE 1918 FLU PANDEMIC

by Lori Lyn Price, MAS, MLA

Lori Lyn Price, MAS, MLA is a professional genealogist and owns Bridging The Past, a speaking and writing business. She has been speaking at historical and genealogical events since 2009 and has been working on her own genealogy off and on for over 20 years. She loves social history and medicine (perhaps due to working as a statistician in medical research for over 20 years) and helping genealogists bring their ancestors to life via social and historical context. She can be found at BridgingThePast.com and the stories she has collected about the 1918 flu can be found at 1918FluStories.com. She is always looking for more stories to share about the impact of the 1918 flu.

The COVID-19 pandemic introduced the terms “social distancing” and “flatten the curve” into our vocabulary. We experienced grocery shortages, closed businesses, and stay-at-home orders. Many of us are required to wear masks while in public spaces. We are concerned about the safety of our loved ones and ourselves. Life in the coming months is uncertain. We are experiencing what our ancestors experienced during the 1918 flu pandemic.

Many news stories have compared the effects of the coronavirus pandemic with the effects of the 1918 flu pandemic. This article focuses on telling the story of the 1918 flu pandemic and its effects. The 1918 flu is also known as grippe, la grippe, and the Spanish Flu, although it did not originate in Spain. World War I was still ongoing in 1918 and Spain was one of the few neutral countries in Europe. While the Allied and German forces censored the news, Spain did not and was one of the first countries to openly report the effects of the flu.

BACKGROUND

There are various theories about where the 1918 influenza virus originated, including China and France.⁶ The most popular theory is that it originated in Haskell County, Kansas in the spring of 1918. The county doctor, Loring Miner, noticed that the county experienced a slightly worse flu season than usual, with some unusual symptoms and more deaths than typically seen, before disappearing in March. But the flu soon showed up in Camp Funston, 300 miles away. During March more than 1,100 soldiers were admitted to the hospital and thousands were treated at infirmaries in Camp Funston. Twenty percent of those hospitalized developed pneumonia and a few died. Meanwhile, Camp Funston was transferring soldiers to camps throughout the U.S.⁷

⁶ Mark Osborne Humphries. “Paths of Infection: The First World War and the Origins of the 1918 influenza pandemic,” *War in History* 21 (January 2014): 55-81. See also Peter C. Wever and Leo Van Bergen. “Death from 1918 Pandemic Influenza During the First World War: A Perspective from Personal and Anecdotal Evidence,” *Influenza and Other Respiratory Viruses* 8 (September 2014): 538-546, specifically 539.

⁷ John Barry, *The Great Influenza: The Story of the Deadliest Pandemic in History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 92-97. See also Catharine Arnold. *Pandemic 1918: Eyewitness Accounts from the Greatest Medical Holocaust in Modern History* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2018), 30-40.



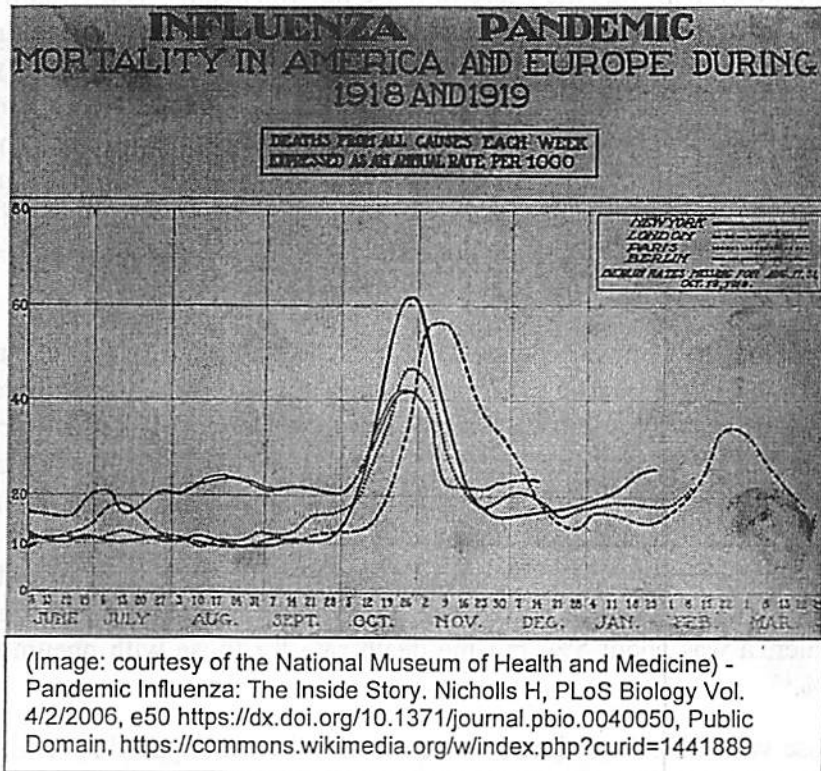
Emergency hospital during Influenza epidemic, Camp Funston, Kansas

By Otis Historical Archives, National Museum of Health and Medicine - Emergency hospital during influenza epidemic (NCP 1603), National Museum of Health and Medicine.
<https://www.buckscountycouriertimes.com/news/20190923/mxfctter-museum-to-mark-historic-influenza-pandemic/1>, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=25513204>

About two-thirds of the Army camps in the U.S. experienced an influenza outbreak in March and April, along with higher than expected mortality, but not enough to catch anyone's attention. Influenza showed up in April in Brest, France, where U.S. soldiers disembarked from troop ships, and from there spread throughout both the Allied and German troops over the spring and early summer. Thousands of soldiers were affected, but few experienced complications or died and it was considered a mild disease.⁸ The first wave of the flu pandemic ended in late summer.

⁸ Barry, *The Great Influenza*, 170-175. For a more international flavor see Arnold, *Pandemic 1918* and Laura Spinney, *Pale Rider: The Spanish Flu of 1918 and How it Changed the World* (New York: Public Affair, 2017).

The second wave (fall 1918) was by far the most deadly and its impact was felt across the world. Two-thirds of the total deaths attributed to the flu pandemic occurred during this wave. In the U.S., Boston was ground zero for this second wave, although it hit almost simultaneously at Brest, France, and Freetown, Sierra Leon, and spread across the world in a matter of weeks, infecting even indigenous peoples in remote locations. This influenza strain was extremely contagious. Historians estimate that 25%-33% of the world's population was infected. Those infected were 25 times more likely to die from this strain than from the regular seasonal strains. Fifty to one hundred million people died worldwide, with most of the deaths occurring from September-December. The illness disproportionately affected healthy young adults aged 20-40 years old. According to one researcher, half of all influenza-related deaths occurred in this age group.⁹ A third wave hit in the winter and spring of 1919, and the Spanish Flu entirely disappeared by 1920.¹⁰ At least 675,000 people died in the U.S. (which is equivalent to more than 2 million deaths for the current U.S. population). In fact, the life expectancy in 1918 dropped by more than 10 years due to so many deaths in young people.¹¹



SYMPTOMS

In a typical flu season, people may be sick for a few days, but most usually fully recover within 10 days. Common symptoms are fever, fatigue, muscle ache, and respiratory issues. The overwhelming majority of people who caught the flu in 1918-1919 fully recovered. However, up to 80% of infected patients experienced symptoms that were so varied and intense that physicians first thought that they were seeing cases of malaria, dengue fever, cholera, dysentery, or typhoid,

⁹ Jeffery K. Taubenberger. "The Origin and Virulence of the 1918 'Spanish' Influenza Virus," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 150 (March 2006): 86-112, specifically 92.

¹⁰ John Barry, *The Great Influenza*, 4, 373-381.

¹¹ Barry, *The Great Influenza*, 238. <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/us-population/> states that 330,841,620 people live in the United States as of May 30, 2020. <http://www.demographia.com/db-uspop1900.htm> states that 103,208,000 people lived in the U.S. in 1918. According to estimates of 675,000 deaths in the United States, there was about a 0.7% death rate. For the 2020 population, that works out to over 2 million deaths. Websites accessed May 30, 2020. For information on the drop in life expectancy, see Taubenberger, "The Origin and Virulence of the 1918 'Spanish' Influenza Virus," 91.

rather than the flu.¹² Some victims suffered extremely high fevers, so high that their hair fell out or turned white, even in young people. Victims also complained of severe pounding headaches and “body aches so intense that they felt like bones were breaking.”¹³ However, the most striking and horrifying symptom of the 1918 flu was hemorrhaging: nosebleeds, coughing up blood, or bleeding from the eyes and ears. When this happened, death was usually not far away.

Today, many historians believe that the cytokine storm, the result of a severely overreactive immune system, was the cause of these horrific deaths. The virus weakened the lungs and opened them up to pneumonia. The body’s immune system fought back against the pneumonia. Barry writes that the cytokine storm is “a massive attack using every lethal weapon the body possesses.”¹⁴ The cytokine storm produced so many byproducts that the lungs were filled with fluid. This made breathing difficult and many died due to insufficient oxygen. Organs failed due to lack of oxygen as saturated lungs could not get oxygen to the heart to pump throughout the body. Heart failure occurred due to the strain of pumping blood out of the lungs. Some died due to simple exhaustion—they were breathing so rapidly to get enough oxygen that the muscles failed. Many of these victims turned cyanotic, with the skin blue-tinged, before dying.¹⁵

Roy Grist, an Army physician at Camp Devens, wrote that “[t]hese men start with what appears to be an ordinary attack of LaGrippe or Influenza, and when brought to the Hosp. They very rapidly develop the most viscous [sic] type of Pneumonia that has ever been seen. Two hours after admission they have the Mahogany spots over the cheek bones, and a few hours later you can begin to see the Cyanosis extending from their ears and spreading all over the face...It is only a matter of a few hours then until death comes, and it is a struggle for air until they suffocate.”¹⁶ He noted that there were an average of 100 deaths per day at the height of the epidemic, and that the camp lost an “outrageous number of Nurses and Drs.”¹⁷ In Army camps, the death rate for influenza was about 5%, but the death rate for those with pneumonia due to influenza was 25-27%.¹⁸

Those who experienced a severe bout with the flu required several weeks, if not months, to fully recuperate. People who tried to return to daily life too soon often relapsed. Many experienced complications throughout their lifetime. My great-grandmother Effie Jane Rasmussen Powell (29 years old in 1918) lost most of her hearing due to the flu and never recovered it. Genealogists have shared stories with me about their young ancestors who died of heart or respiratory conditions in the early 1920s, likely due to weakened heart or lungs due to their bout with the 1918 flu. Other long-term conditions included mental health disorders and nervous system disorders.¹⁹

¹² Barry, *The Great Influenza*, 234-238. Laura Stephenson Carter. “Cold Comfort,” *Dartmouth Medicine*, Winter 2006 36-42, 56-57. Nancy Bristow. *American Pandemic: The Lost Worlds of the 1918 Influenza Epidemic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 44. Bristow claims that only 20% of infected patients experienced mild symptoms.

¹³ John Barry, *The Great Influenza*, 2.

¹⁴ Barry, *The Great Influenza*, 249.

¹⁵ Barry, *The Great Influenza*, 247-252.

¹⁶ Weber, “Death from 1918 Pandemic Influenza During the First World War,” 542.

¹⁷ Christine M. Kreiser. “Influenza 1918: The Enemy Within,” *American History* 41 (Dec 2006): 23-29, specifically 25.

¹⁸ Kathleen M. Fargey. “The Deadliest Enemy: The U.S. Army and Influenza,” *Army History* 111 (Spring 2019): 24-39, specifically 32.

¹⁹ Barry, *The Great Influenza*, 378-380.

Encephalitis lethargica has also been proposed as a long-term effect of the 1918 flu pandemic, but Foley describes why this is unlikely.²⁰

LACK OF TREATMENTS

Unfortunately, there were no good treatments. Antibiotics to treat pneumonia were not available until many years later. Anti-viral treatments such as Tamiflu were developed decades later. Basic preventive measures to avoid catching the flu were recommended. Local and federal governments encouraged healthy people to avoid crowds and advised the sick to stay home. Does this sound familiar? Rest and nourishment were the best treatments for patients who caught the flu. Fresh air was also considered healthy.

Despite the lack of useful treatments, doctors and nurses did all they could to alleviate suffering and treat their patients. Many doctors and nurses were serving in Army camps in the U.S. and overseas, so there was a nursing shortage for civilians from the very beginning. Boston immediately put out a call for nurses, which was quickly echoed by other East Coast cities. Soon they were willing to take anyone who could provide caregiving, regardless of training. The Red Cross was an important part of this process.²¹ Nurses were arguably more important than physicians during this time as they provided the care that let the ill patients rest. Both nurses and doctors worked extremely hard to save as many patients as they could. And they paid the price—many caught the flu and died.

IMPACT ON CHILDREN WHO LOST ONE OR BOTH PARENTS

The impact on children who had one or both parents die was devastating. “It is impossible to give the total number of orphans...but it is certainly not small...Ten mothers or fathers dead in one block; twelve applications in thirty-six hours to the Overseers of the Poor from as many widows, all of whose husbands were under thirty and leaving families ranging from two to six each.”²² This record comes from Boston, but the making of orphans happened across the U.S. and throughout the world. New York City reported that 31,000 children had lost one or both of their parents due to the flu pandemic by November 8, 1918.²³ Although anecdotal, of the family stories that have been shared with me, in only one case did the child remain with the surviving parent. In the other cases, the children were sent to live with other family members or placed in orphanages, even after the surviving parent remarried. The road ahead for orphaned children was often difficult and sometimes traumatic.

THE EFFECT OF WORLD WAR I

One cannot talk about the 1918 flu without talking about the war effort. The United States entered World War I in April 1917 and within months the government built Army training camps all over the United States. While these camps were large, they were soon filled to over-capacity. Soldiers were constantly being sent between camps on cramped transports for training, carrying disease

²⁰ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2758908/>, website accessed May 30, 2020.

²¹ Marian Moser Jones. “The American Red Cross and Local Response to the 1918 Influenza Pandemic: A Four-City Case Study,” *Public Health Reports* 125 (April 2010): 92-104.

²² Quoted in Janice Hume, “The ‘Forgotten’ 1918 Influenza Epidemic and Press Portrayal of Public Anxiety,” *J&MC Quarterly* 77 (winter 2000): 898-915, specifically 903.

²³ Bristow, *American Pandemic*, 50.

with them. Others were sent overseas, also carrying disease with them. Twenty to forty percent of American military personnel caught the flu and 55,000 Army servicemen died from the flu.²⁴

Historian Carol Byerly writes that the “Great War and the influenza virus worked together in the training camps, on troop ships, and in the trenches on the Western Front to create a human catastrophe...[due to] the complex interaction between the natural environment, human behavior, and disease pathogens.”²⁵ The overcrowding of camps, extreme conditions in the trenches, and the movement of men created conditions allowing the flu virus to mutate into the lethal virus that spread worldwide in the fall of 1918.

To keep up morale, newspapers initially downplayed the seriousness of the flu pandemic in September. Local government and public health leaders were also quick to downplay the outbreak, saying it was just the regular flu. Even after it was apparent that the flu was widespread and quite deadly in the community, newspapers and leaders continued to downplay it.

Liberty Loans were one of the primary sources of funding the war effort and fundraising efforts frequently involved parades. Once it became apparent to everyone that Boston was severely hit, the leaders canceled a large Liberty Loan parade scheduled for mid-late September. In contrast, Philadelphia’s leaders decided to go ahead with their Liberty Loan parade. The effect was immediate—hospitals were overcrowded and flu-related deaths began within only a few days of the parade. Boston and Philadelphia were among the cities with the highest mortality due to the flu.²⁶

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

The response of municipalities to the 1918 flu pandemic was quite similar to the variegated response we have seen to COVID-19. At first both the local and national government tried to assure the people that “this is just the regular flu” and not to worry. As the flu rapidly spread and the death toll began climbing, local officials had to address the issue.

Cities varied widely in utilization of public health measures to mitigate the spread of the flu. In general people were advised to avoid large crowds and stay home and rest if they were sick. Some instituted mask ordinances. Many cities banned public gatherings and closed schools, theaters, saloons, and churches. Local leaders struggled with decisions regarding which public health measures to implement and when to lift restrictions, similar to problems faced by local leaders today. In two studies examining the effectiveness of the public health measures, it was found that “aggressive early intervention” resulted in reductions in mortality.²⁷

Funerals were generally limited to only immediate family members or very small groups of mourners. Children were often not allowed to play with their friends. In some cities people were

²⁴ Fargey, “The Deadliest Enemy,” 25-26.

²⁵ Carol R. Byerly. *Fever of War: The Influenza Epidemic in the U.S. Army during World War I* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 71. The interplay of these 3 factors is fascinating.

²⁶ <http://www.influenzaarchive.org/cities/city-boston.html>, <http://www.influenzaarchive.org/cities/city-philadelphia.html>, website accessed May 30, 2020.

²⁷ Richard J. Hatchett, Carter E. Mecher, and Marc Lipsitch. “Public Health Interventions and Epidemic Intensity During the 1918 Influenza Pandemic,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 104 (May 2007) 7582-7587. Martin C.J. Bootsma and Neil M. Ferguson. “The Effect of Public Health Measures on the 1918 Influenza Pandemic in U.S. Cities,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 104 (May 2007) 7588-7593.

encouraged to avoid public transit if possible. Some cities suggested staggered work start times so that fewer people would be taking public transit at the same time.

While the details and lengths of closures (generally several weeks) varied across cities, the impact was profound on everyone, even those who did not get sick or have loved ones get sick. Fear was rampant and people were forced to stay at home and reduce contact with others. They worried that they or their loved ones would get sick. Two of the main sources people turn to for comfort during difficult times—church communities and loved ones—were unavailable to many, leading to additional stress.

RESOURCES TO RESEARCH YOUR FAMILY'S 1918 FLU STORY

Knowing that everyone was affected, how do you research how your ancestors were impacted by the flu? As a social historian, I first look for secondary sources that provide context. A recommended reading list of secondary sources, with heavy reliance on primary sources that provide general social and historical context is provided at the end of this article.

Family diaries, scrapbooks, and personal letters are a wonderful resource to determine the impact of the flu on your family members. If you don't have these records in your family, go to the local archives and research whether others left records that can give you a sense of the local impact and what your ancestors may have faced. Locate secondary sources that describe the local impact of the 1918 pandemic if primary sources are not available. Talk to family members and look through family records. My parents told me that we did not have any 1918 flu stories, but we came across stories that neither of my parents knew about their grandparents in family biographies and autobiographies in their possession.

To learn more about how the town reacted to the flu and the impact it had, search local newspapers and local town and county histories. Also search for hospital records and histories. My town has a published history of the local hospital that devotes several pages to the 1918 flu pandemic and how it affected the hospital and staff. Town annual reports, when available, often provide information on the number of cases, the number of deaths, and the public health actions implemented by the town. Church records and town minutes or other records may also contain information.

Genealogical magazines publish articles about the 1918 flu. An article by Jane Neff Rollins in *Crossroads* has fantastic resources for researching the impact of the pandemic on your ancestors, including orphanage inmate records, coroner's reports, military records, and many more.²⁸ Tina Beaird's article in *NGS Magazine* describes additional records to examine, including public health department reports, hospital records and military camp newspapers.²⁹

You may also find relevant information in historical journals and magazines. Dennis Carr wrote about the impact of the 1918 flu in Berkshire County, Massachusetts.³⁰ Laura Stephenson Carter described the effect of the pandemic on Dartmouth University.³¹ The articles by Carr and Carter

²⁸ Jane Neff Rollins. "The Spanish Flu Outbreak in 1918-19 and How it Affected Your Ancestors," *Crossroads* 13 (Summer 2018): 6-21.

²⁹ Tina Beaird. "1918 Pandemic: Fighting Influenza During the Great War," *NGS Magazine*, October-December 2018, 58-64.

³⁰ Dennis J. Carr. "The Spanish Influenza Epidemic of 1918 and Berkshire County," *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* 19 (winter 1991): 43-62.

³¹ Carter, *Cold Comfort*, 36-42, 56-57.

describe the impact in specific locales. Determine if there are similar articles for the town your ancestors lived in.

JSTOR³² also has many articles about the 1918 flu pandemic. Free accounts allow you to read a limited number of articles online. Paid accounts allow more access. Some of the articles found on JSTOR may be location specific. Others discuss various aspects of the flu that would be similar across locales, including articles about long-term effects of the flu and how impact and survival differed by socioeconomic status. Still others describe possible origins of the flu, symptoms, treatments, and other aspects.

There are also flu-related online resources. The two that I recommend are the *Influenza Encyclopedia* online resource compiled by the University of Michigan and the PBS *American Experience* documentary on the 1918 flu pandemic and the accompanying website.³³ The *Influenza Encyclopedia* is free and contains articles about several cities and the impact of public health measures, as well as more general articles about the flu. The *American Experience* PBS documentary was filmed in the 1990s and contains several interviews with people who were young children during the epidemic. The accompanying website has many additional resources. The Library of Congress is also a good resource.³⁴

The 1918 flu pandemic was a frightening event for our ancestors. Many died and many more were sick. All were affected by the public health mandates and restrictions, and with the fear that the deaths generated. Researching the impact on your family will help you better understand your ancestors and perhaps help you and your family cope with the uncertainties of the pandemic we are experiencing today.

Recommended Reading

- John Barry, *The Great Influenza: The Story of the Deadliest Pandemic in History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004).
- Nancy Bristow, *American Pandemic: The Lost Worlds of the 1918 Influenza Epidemic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).
- Carol R. Byerly, *Fever of War: The Influenza Epidemic in the U.S. Army during World War I* (New York: New York University Press, 2005).
- Alfred W. Crosby, *America's Forgotten Pandemic: The Influenza of 1918*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
- Gina Kolata, *Flu: The Story of the Great Influenza Pandemic of 1918 and the Search for the Virus that Caused It*. (New York: Touchstone, 1999).
- Laura Spinney, *Pale Rider: The Spanish Flu of 1918 and How it Changed the World*. (New York: Public Affair, 2017).

³² JSTOR (<https://about.jstor.org/>) is a powerful research and teaching platform that provides access to more than 12 million academic journal articles, books, and primary sources in 75 disciplines. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Artstor, Ithaka S+R, and Portico.

³³ The website for the Influenza Encyclopedia is <http://www.influenzaarchive.org> and the website for the PBS American Experience documentary is <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/films/influenza>, websites accessed May 30, 2020.

³⁴ <https://blogs.loc.gov/folklife/2020/04/stories-influenza-pandemic/>, website accessed May 30, 2020.

THANK YOU FOR BEING AN "ONLINE" READER

If you are receiving an email notice that this issue of *Je Me Souviens* is available for downloading from our website, we would like to thank you. Our publication has expanded with more content than ever and is now issued quarterly instead of twice a year. This has allowed us to give our members more genealogical information and as they say "*More bang for your membership buck!*"

Your willingness to support this new method of electronic distribution is a tremendous cost savings to us and allows us to keep our membership dues at a reasonable and affordable rate for everyone while increasing the content and frequency of our journal. If you save our journals on your computer and read them online that is fabulous!

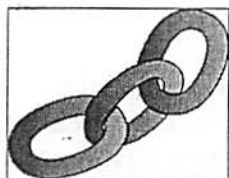
If you download *Je Me Souviens* and print it for yourself, we'd like to tell you that we have researched the fonts that we use in our publication for ease of reading and cost effective printing. According to Patrick Austin at Consumer Reports, "...we got 27 percent more [ink] mileage when using Times New Roman rather than Arial, a default font in many browsers." So know that if you choose to print *Je Me Souviens* for your collection, we have taken the cost of your printer ink into consideration when designing our journal. You can print the entire issue or just the articles of interest to you. If you are not receiving an email notice that a new issue of our journal is available for download and would like to receive these notices, please send your email address to JMSeditor@afgs.org and ask to be added to our email distribution list.

If you are among our members who are unable to receive your journal electronically, we are happy to send you a printed copy by mail. We value your membership and will send you the paper copy of *Je Me Souviens*. Just send your request to receive a paper copy by mail to JMSeditor@afgs.org or write to us at American-French Genealogical Society, Attn: JMS Editor, P.O. Box 830, Woonsocket, RI 02895-0870. Please include your member number, phone number and mailing address with your request.



If you have never accessed our Members Only Online Library, please remember that you must register with the "FIRST TIME REGISTER" button on the main AFGS web page. When you register, please make note of the user name and password that you create. A few days after you register, you will receive an email announcing that you have been granted access. You can then use the "LOGIN" button to access the Members Only Online Library with your user name and password.

You will be amazed at the amount of reference material we have placed there for your research! Our website committee is working to continue adding our many resources to the Members Only Online Library increasing the value of your AFGS membership for our members throughout the United States and around the world, as well as those who are able to visit our library in Rhode Island.



INTERESTING LINKS

WEBSITES YOU MIGHT LIKE

If you found Daniel (Danny) Doyle's article, *A Tribute to the People of Québec* interesting, you may also enjoy reading this New York Times article titled "*Irish Return an Old Favor, Helping Native*

Americans Battling the Virus" that can be found with this link:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/05/world/coronavirus-ireland-native-american-tribes.html>

Lori Lyn Price, author of our article *Did The 1918 Flu Hit Your Family Too? Understanding the 1918 Flu Pandemic* recommends the following websites that will give you more information on the 1918 Flu:

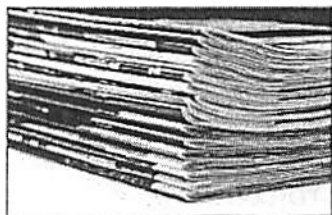
- Influenza Encyclopedia: <http://www.influenzaarchive.org>
- PBS American Experience documentary:
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/films/influenza>

The Canadian Museum of History website sheds light on the daily lives of the population of New France. "Every city had its *Hôtel-Dieu*, or hospital. Surgeons, doctors, apothecaries and healers worked together with religious congregations to help care for the settlers." Learn more about their health and medicine at <https://www.historymuseum.ca/virtual-museum-of-new-france/daily-life/health-and-medicine/>. On this site, you will learn that several smallpox and measles epidemics devastated much of eastern North America between 1620 and 1630.

When Jacques Cartier spent the winter of 1535–1536 at Stadaconé (modern-day the current location of Québec) his crew was struck down by a *grosse maladie*, or serious illness. By February, only 10 out of 110 men were in good enough health to help the others. More than 25 died. In his published account, the explorer describes how his men lost their strength, how their legs swelled and darkened at the extremities, and how their teeth and gums rotted. The scene, he says, "was a pity to see." Like his contemporaries, Cartier did not understand the nature of this mysterious disease that can now be identified with certainty. When he noticed that the St. Lawrence Iroquois who lived in Stadaconé were also affected by the disease, he wrongly assumed that it was contagious and came from the Amerindians. The fact is that the Amerindians knew of a cure for scurvy. They told Cartier that a decoction of *annedda* leaves (white cedar) could cure the disease. Indeed, thanks to this remedy, Cartier's crew members recovered quickly.

Go to <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12422875/> to read *Jacques Cartier Witnesses a Treatment for Scurvy*. And read *Arginine, Scurvy and Cartier's "Tree of Life"* at <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/19187550/>

Read about the cholera epidemic that struck Québec in 1832 and 1834 at <https://mailchi.mp/institutdrouin/witnessing-history-through-parish-registers-the-cholera-epidemic-of-1832-1834?e=f38f2d39ac>



PERIODICALS PERSPECTIVE

By Diane Olivier

RÉVEIL ACADIEN JOURNALS

Are you doing research on an Acadian ancestor? If yes, you know how difficult this research can be, as many Acadian records are missing or hard to find. We have a wonderful

addition of a complete periodical collection of *Le Réveil Acadien* journals that has been added to our Members Only Online Library to assist in your research.

You will find them listed under Books. This collection covers twenty-five years from 1985 to 2010. There are indexes listed as well as the full editions of the journals. We have also created a searchable data base for these journals where you can put in a “word search” that can be a “topic” or a “name” in order to find any pertinent information. There is also a search field for “Browse Any Issue” that will display all the indexes and the list of issues in the collection.

Volume 1, No. 1, August, 1985 announces the beginning of this new Acadian group in Marlboro, Massachusetts and the vision they had for their journal:

A New Acadian Group Formed! – Editor’s First Message

The group has been named “The Acadian Cultural Society.” The aim of the group is to bring together Acadians and Acadian descendants from all over the world, to share knowledge about our rich heritage, exchange genealogical information, and to provide a forum by which we can help old Acadia live again in her sons and daughters, who may be scattered throughout the world. Our goal is the preservation, the promotion and the promulgation of the Acadian culture among Acadian descendants.

We will publish a Newsletter, called LE RÉVEIL ACADIEN, whose name, we believe, says it best... that we hope to awaken (or re-awaken) our culture, and all that it implies, be it customs, songs, recipes for Acadian food, history, legends and genealogy. The name says it all... “Acadia lives again, in her descendants, and she re-awakens... not to dwell in the past, but to look to the future... so that, far from being forgotten, she will live again!”

We are grateful to the former *Acadian Cultural Society* for allowing us to provide this complete collection of journals for our members.

You can find a list of Acadian Family Names of the 18th Century at

<https://www.acadian.org/genealogy/acadian-family-names-18th-century/>





WANTED: YOUR HELP

with a very large data entry project.

See page 47 for details.

Thank you to our growing army of data entry volunteers:

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Boudreau
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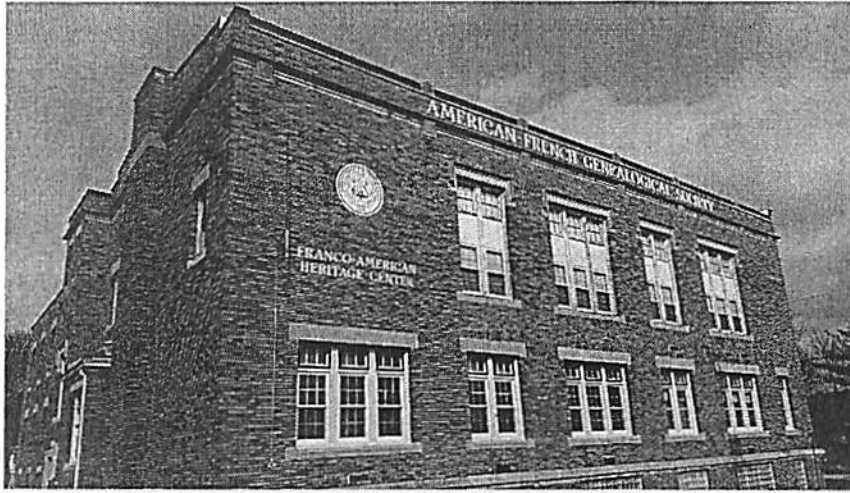
Please note that you do not have to live near the AFGS library to do this data entry work. When you volunteer, a pdf file will be sent to you via email along with a template for transcribing the information that will be added to our data base of over one million marriages. See page 47 for more details.

Do you have an eagle eye? Our data entry project has entered a new stage! We are in need of volunteer "proofreaders" who can review and correct any typos or date errors. We will provide the transcribed data file and a set of instructions.

Please let us know at JMSeditor@afgs.org if you can help.

We'd love to add your name to our list of volunteers!

AMERICAN-FRENCH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY'S FRANCO-AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER ADDED TO NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES



The Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission has announced that the National Park Service has added the former First Universalist Church, now the American-French Genealogical Society's Franco-American Heritage Center, to the National Register of Historic Places.

The National Register is the Federal Government's official list of properties throughout the United States whose historical and architectural significance makes them worthy of preservation. Erected in two phases, the former First Universalist Church building represents the evolution of ecclesiastical architecture during the 20th century. The building is also significant to Woonsocket's religious history as the city's sole Universalist Church for more than eighty years.

The building consists of a two-story flat-roof block with a rear ell (built in 1924) and a one-story gable-roof addition (built in 1957), all in buff-colored brick with limestone trim. A square tower built as part of the 1957 addition connects the two blocks. Gothic Revival-style details on the 1924 structure include trefoil arch panels and drip molding carved in limestone. The 1957 addition is notable for its nine stained glass windows depicting Biblical scenes.

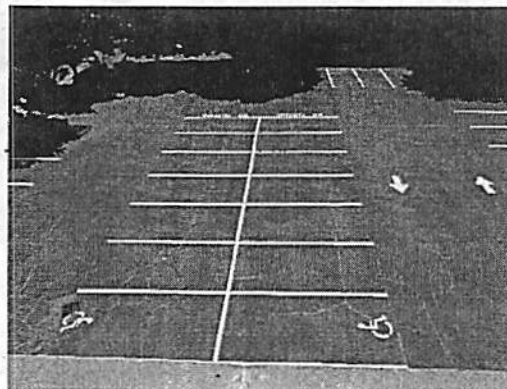
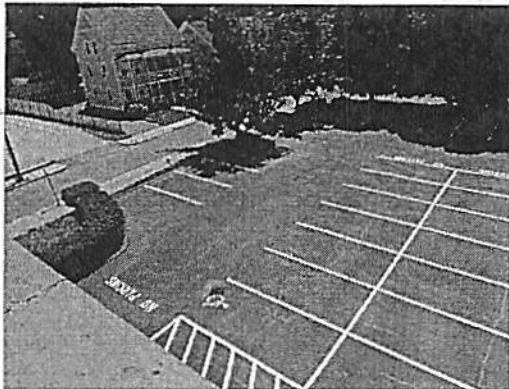
Despite their strong financial footing, the First Universalist Church faced challenges of aging parishioners and declining membership by the 1980s. The congregation disbanded in 2007. The church sold the property to the American-French Genealogical Society. AFGS was founded in 1978 to provide historical and genealogical research assistance and to maintain special collections on the topic of the French-Canadian diaspora. The AFGS is an ideal successor; the organization had been renting space in the building since 1989. The second floor of the 1924 block currently serves as the home to the Veterans Memorial Museum, which displays a collection of military-related artifacts, many of which have special connections to Woonsocket residents.

The National Register nomination was prepared by RIHPHC Architectural Historian Elizabeth Rochefort. RIHPHC's Executive Director J. Paul Loether said, "The American-French Genealogical Society has been a thoughtful steward of the building. We are especially pleased that the National Register listing follows the completion of a State Preservation Grant to improve ADA accessibility. This historic building will remain a valuable community center for years to come."

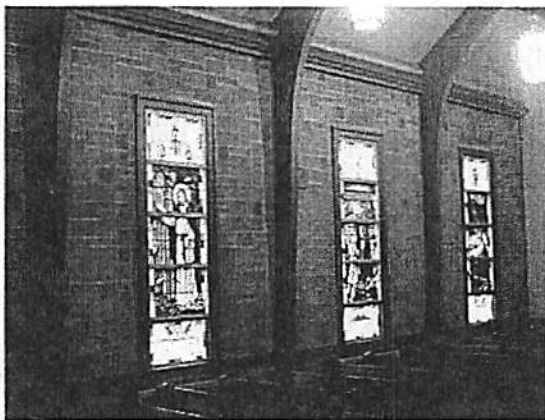
WE MAY BE TEMPORARILY CLOSED – BUT STILL WE’VE BEEN BUSY!

While the AFGS Library has been closed to visitors due to the COVID-19 quarantine order in Rhode Island, we have been busy with the normal maintenance required to maintain a 20,000 sq. ft. building. We have also been working on some significant improvements to your library.

In our parking lot, the collapsed drainage catch basin has been rebuilt and the parking lot has been re-surfaced, repairing 900 linear feet of cracked asphalt. It was necessary to reconfigure the parking lot space to include two handicap parking spaces accessible to our new vestibule. These photographs of our refurbished parking lot were taken from the roof.



All the windows in our main library section have been repaired and faulty operators have been replaced. The exterior wood frames of nine stained glass windows in the auditorium have been repainted with two coats of paint and the stained glass has been re-glazed. We expect these window repairs will result in a savings in our heating and cooling energy costs.



Repairs to the roof are also in the works.

The lunch room is currently undergoing renovations and the flooring is being re-furbished.

A good portion of the repairs and painting have been done by two of our board members, Roger Beaudry and Bill Beaudoin. We are grateful for their dedication to AFGS and their generosity with both their time and talent.

PHOTOS WANTED FOR *JE ME SOUVIENS*

We would like to give our journal, *Je Me Souviens* a new look. We think it would be interesting to put meaningful photos on the front cover of the magazine and we are asking for your help. If you have an original photo of something relating to French-Canadians, please consider sending it to us for possible publication. It could be a picture of some place in Québec, the Maritimes or France. Perhaps it could be a picture of an historic church, a monument or a celebration of some sort. The photo could be of a mill in the United States where your ancestors worked, a French-Canadian organization, or a French holiday celebration. Please include a short paragraph or two explaining what the picture is about and giving us an approximate date of when the picture was taken. Include your name and contact information in case we need to talk with you. You should email it as a .jpg file to jmseditor@afgs.org. If you must mail your photos to us, please do not send originals as they will not be returned.

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BOOK REVIEW

by Robert Foxcurran

A Distinct Alien Race: The Untold Story of Franco-Americans: Industrialization, Immigration, and Religious Strife

by David Vermette, Baraka Books, Montréal 2018

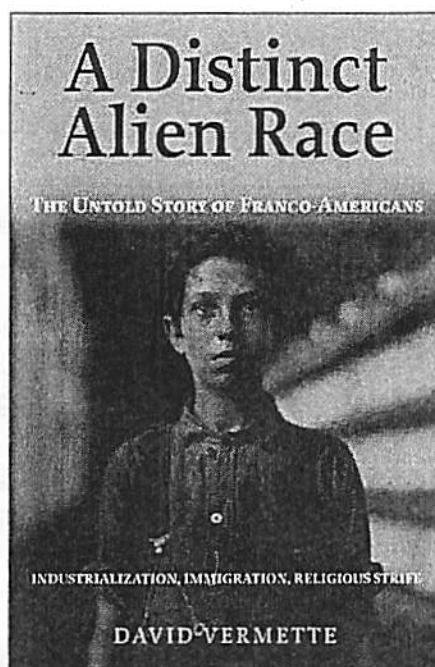
Robert Foxcurran is co-author along with Michel Bouchard and Sébastien Malette of *Songs Upon the Rivers: The Buried History of the French-Speaking Canadiens and Métis from the Great Lakes and the Mississippi across to the Pacific*.

In this book David Vermette examines a tale of aliens slipping across one of our wide-open land borders in order to fill labor shortages, working long hours at low wages, while being slow to assimilate and somehow threatening their American neighbors.

For starters, Vermette lays out the critical role played by this particular set of immigrants from the other side of the border in the economic development of New England and the U.S., especially during the period following the Civil War. More specifically these were French speaking Canadiens, or Francos, seeking opportunity, and a better life for themselves and their families, something hard to come by in their own land. Then there was the tragically slow pace of efforts to deal with issues of public health in over-crowded tenements, and issues of religious intolerance – all worthy of the closer examination Vermette has provided to us. Later, there was “The War to Make the World Safe for Democracy” which would culminate in a nativist backlash in New England and elsewhere during the 1920s. Vermette also covers the regional experience in some depth of this local target of opportunity.

Assimilation of smaller groups of people by larger ones happens, by degree over time, all over the planet. Often the authorities lose patience with the pace of assimilation, deciding to force matters with any resisting remnants. Others wait their turn for a chance to “get integrated.” During the 19th century, besides the periodic outburst of anti-immigrant passions, in the U.S. it was our Native American countrymen who had felt the full force of the turn of the homogenizing screw on their surviving families, languages, and religions. Nowadays, elsewhere on the planet, the spotlight has turned toward the western regions of China.

In the early decades of the 20th century, the cycles of forced assimilation continued in the U.S. and was directed at other non-compliant groups. After the disillusion and loss of life associated with World War I and the subsequent flu pandemic, an element of our populace reverted to that version of security offered by isolationism and xenophobia. Instead of a global crusade, anger could be more easily directed at other ethnic groups, and anyone who spoke another language. There were so many targets of opportunity lying closer to home. On the linguistic front, northern America’s two unofficial second languages over the preceding centuries came under fire. During



the war, ten percent of our population still spoke German in the home. Those who shared the tongue of our French allies, would find themselves in the cross hairs next. These German and French speaking communities increasingly found their vast network of churches, hospitals, libraries, schools and newspapers, harassed, demonized and suppressed. Within the American Catholic Church, when the opportunity presented itself, the Irish led the charge in suppressing the two languages. Other tongues would be silenced thereafter.

Vermette thoughtfully integrated his research into a very readable volume explaining how this all played out in New England for the French-Canadians. Personally, I was exposed to the region's demographic turn-style, while growing up in the southern New England town of Newport, R.I. The French-Canadian inhabitants of the highly visible mill towns surrounding us, had been "other." We crossed this belt of mill towns every time we ventured into Massachusetts to visit my father's family. I had no idea of the trauma that lay behind these eye-sores. Fortunately, my Middletown (R.I.) High School French teacher Miss Martin was from Fall River. She introduced us to these people from the other world just across the Sakonnet River Bridge.

The Catholic ancestors of my naval officer father were Irish, and my mother's French ancestry included Huguenots who had fled France in the 1680s, one of which ended up in New Hampshire as an indentured servant. His family, the Beedes, had long since intermarried with fellow Calvinist Yankees and thoroughly assimilated. Later they picked up an economic refugee from Canada, but this involved an Anglo-Canadian from *Nouveau Brunswick* who had United Empire Loyalist roots, having fled retribution in New York. Passing through the region's demographic turn-style, our Yankee ancestors were heading for the west coast as my father's Irish Catholic ancestors started to come ashore. After the Irish the region's backfill continued with other Catholic folk, les Canadiens, then the Italians and Portuguese. Within our extended family, in the course of the 20th century, intermarriage of Irish cousins with multiple Canadiens and one Native American tribal group, the Osages, would follow.

The complexities of the "Franco" demographics in this story caught my attention later, while finishing up graduate school at the University of Washington in Seattle. I stumbled onto two seemingly contradictory facts that suggested the existence of a significant, but underappreciated pattern. The U.S. census of 1970 had identified people of French ancestry as the nation's fifth largest national origin group. However, France was not listed as among the top 20 countries of origin for immigrants arriving in the U.S. according to the Federal statistics dating back to its first full year of operation, in 1790. Reflecting on this apparent disconnect I eventually realized that this was due simply to the fact that most of our collective "French" ancestry had already been over here by the time the U.S. Government came into existence. Furthermore, it became clear that the large majority of these once, or twice-removed, Frenchmen entered what eventually became U.S. territory as subjects or citizens of third countries, not France. Consequently, though barely visible in conventional histories, whether Catholic or Protestant at the time of arrival, it might be assumed that this subset of our collective ancestors might have suffered from under-representation at the national level of historiography. *

Hence, the history of this highly fractured early colonial group was ripe for further study. How would one go about making sense of this story? Clearly, lines and dates on our standard national maps, only served to mask, or confuse matters. Studies such as David Vermette's are helping us to get our arms around this larger North American story. Short of trying to integrate the complex dynamics of this story into its full continental scope, it is at the level of regional history that the

best work has been accomplished over the last several decades. This is especially true in the history of the early French speaking settlers of the American Midwest. It is often out on the periphery, in the regions, that we can find a more representative version of our collective history, not through some homogenized starting point for nationalized historiography, geography, or ethnography. The variance by region is often quite startling, and there is a lot more to this than North vs. South, East vs. West, or one binary ethnic group vs. another. The Midwest, for example, offers a unique blend of all our regions and ethnicities, plus Canada.

A Distinct Alien Race is another important contribution to identifying the New England pieces of this North American puzzle. Following on the earlier works of Brault, Roby, Perrault, and Douillard, Vermette has advanced the process, through an exhaustive mining of primary sources. Providing the context for this regional history, Vermette takes us: from conditions in rural Québec at mid-19th century; and the redeployment of profits from the global maritime trade into industrialization of New England; to recruiting the largest ethnic component of the workforce manning our factories during a critical period of U.S. economic history; and, a sampling of the individual stories and tragedies of the men, women and children who provided this manpower; such as the horrific epidemics caused by over-crowding in tenement housing in the face of the reluctance of owners and local authorities in the mill towns to invest in public sanitation in the 1870s and 1880s; and to questions over assimilation, the preservation of language, culture and issues of dual loyalties; on to the 1920s when they became the primary target of the regional branch of the KKK. Vermette smoothly integrates all the above into a very poignant and personal story.

In the Pacific Northwest, Vermette's book provides an interesting backdrop for our modern regional history. After the War of Independence, the Boston based mercantile families had to find a new mix of resources and markets outside the British Empire. Part of the response was following in the wake of Cook's last voyage to the Northwest coast. Here they amassed fortunes in the selective slaughter known under the euphemistic term as "the sea otter trade" with China. They would later redirect much of their accumulated capital to establishing textile mills closer to home where they were limited only by the acute shortage of labor.

Meanwhile, out on the far end of our northern borderlands earlier themes were echoing from the frontier days of the Midwest and the Great Plains. Here too, in the Pacific Northwest French-Canadians constituted the largest single Euro-American component among the earliest settlers. Soon thereafter, many of their descendants through women from the local and more easterly tribes joined their native cousins as a major component of the seasonal workforce on the rivers and farms of the region, and in our forests and mills. The Pacific Northwest place names, tribal designations, the Chinook Indian trade jargon, and the surviving regional native languages still include many French words introduced by this earlier wave of Canadiens. Moreover, our modern tribal confederations include tens of thousands of their descendants. The 1920s took a toll on francophones out here as well, whether mixed-ancestry Métis or Canadien.

In his book, David Vermette has made an outstanding contribution to matters of perpetual relevance. And to be relevant, or pertinent, has long been an elusive goal for les Canadiens, whether in the Canadian Confederation, the northeastern U.S., out West, or anywhere between. Region by region, we are putting Humpty Dumpty back together again. Furthermore, as we enter another cycle of xenophobic hysteria, the perspective provided by Vermette is timely. Thank you, David.

* A bit over four centuries ago the ancestors of all these people in France were settling back into more productive pursuits under Henri IV following a devastating religious civil war, one that had ended in a truce, of sorts. Henri immediately relaunched the project of establishing a North American empire by settling at the mouth of the river system draining the northern interior of the continent. It would be one based on a network of Indian alliances and trade, with only a limited number of settlers. Following his assassination in 1610 by a Catholic religious fanatic, persecution of the Huguenots picked up while other disincentives proliferated, restricting emigration to North America, whether Protestant, or Catholic. Consequently, we had the French speaking Protestants, France's Huguenots as well as Walloon and Flemish refugees from Belgium arriving in the east coast colonies of the Dutch and English. After a generation or two, they came in via a half dozen Protestant European countries or, pays de refuge, as well. And, bien sûr, there were the ever more numerous Canadiens descended from the small Catholic enclave embedded on our northern border within la Nouvelle France, and later, after 1867, a northern confederation that co-opted their name. Moreover, there were the hundreds of thousands of Native Americans located west of the Mississippi, plus 40 thousand French speakers of various origins who found out, after a short delay, that they had been "purchased" by the U.S. in 1803. Incidentally, this virtually doubled the number of Catholics in the U.S., making it a bi-lingual church. Prior to this land purchase many members of these same communities that were located east of the Mississippi, whether Indian, white, black or a mix of, had found themselves in a region re-labeled as the North West Territory following a treaty in 1783 recognizing U.S. independence.

SAY IT IN FRENCH – *DITES-LE EN FRANÇAIS*

I am not feeling well.	–	Je me sens mal.
I may have the flu.	–	J'ai peut-être la grippe.
I have a headache.	–	J'ai un mal de tête.
My throat is sore.	–	J'ai mal à la gorge.
I have a fever.	–	J'ai une fièvre.
I am sweating.	–	Je suis en train de transpirer.
I have chills.	–	J'ai des frissons.
I want to stay in bed and sleep.	–	Je veux rester au lit et dormir.
Thank you for the chicken soup.	–	Merci pour la soupe au poulet.
Call the doctor.	–	Téléphonez le docteur, s'il vous plaît.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

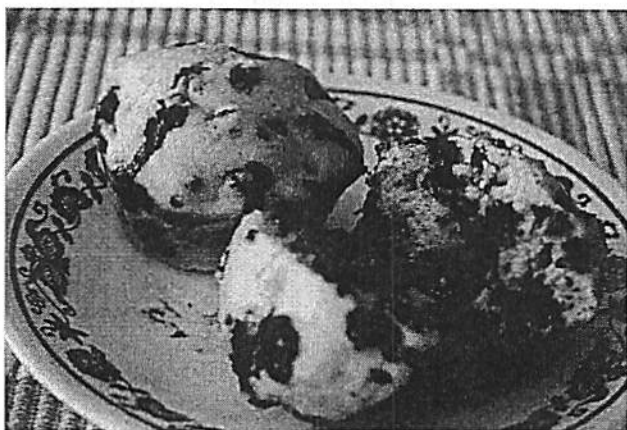


Events are held at the AFGS Franco-American Heritage Center, 78 Earle Street, Woonsocket, Rhode Island 02895. Admission is free for workshops and presentations unless otherwise noted.

Our event schedule has not yet been finalized due to COVID-19 concerns. We are currently exploring alternate methods of presenting our speakers as we currently can not safely gather with the appropriate distancing. We will advise members via email through I-Contact, our website <https://afgs.org/site/> and on our Facebook page when a schedule and more information is available.

WHAT'S COOKING

by Jan Burkhart



Nothing says "summer" like delicious, wonderful blueberries. And oh what you can do with them! American Indians harvested blueberries, traded and sold them. They used them in cooking, ate them raw and learned how to dry them for use during the winter months.

Samuel de Champlain, in 1615, noted the native peoples' use of blueberries. He wrote in his journals that they pulverized dried berries into a powder which they mixed with

parched meal and produced a dish known as "sauta thig" "In all probability, this was the first recorded blueberry recipe of the New World." So blueberries were undoubtedly available to our early ancestors in Nouvelle France and I suspect they were eaten in many tasty recipes by those same ancestors. Today's recipes will be a little more refined than "sauta thig" and I'm guessing a little more appealing to our modern taste buds.

These first two recipes were shared with us by our member, Pat Casavant. They are family recipes that were passed down to her.

Easy Blueberry Pie

Ingredients:

4 cups fresh blueberries

1/2 cup sugar

2 Tablespoons cornstarch

1/4 cup water

a pinch or two of cinnamon

1 teaspoon lemon zest

1 cup heavy cream

9 inch baked pie shell

Wash and dry blueberries. Mash 1 cup of the berries. Set aside.

In a 2 quart saucepan, stir together sugar and cornstarch. Gradually stir in water until smooth.

Stir in mashed blueberries and lemon zest. Over medium heat, stirring constantly, bring to a boil.

Continue to cook at a boil for 1 minute. Add cinnamon and stir to mix. Turn into a bowl and

cover with wax paper (or plastic wrap) and chill. Once chilled, remove wrap and fold in remaining berries. Turn mixture into the prepared pie crust. Whip the cream and cover the pie with it. (Pat says you can cheat and use canned blueberry pie filling instead of cooking the fresh berries. Then stir in the fresh berries.) Sounds yummy to me!

Mémère's Blueberry Muffins

Ingredients:

1 cup fresh blueberries, washed and dried	1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup softened butter or shortening	1/2 cup sugar
1 3/4 cups flour	1 egg
2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder	1/2 cup milk

Make sure butter is very soft but not melted. Sift flour, baking powder, salt and sugar into a bowl. Add the butter, unbeaten egg and milk. Mix until smooth. Gently stir in blueberries. Scoop batter into regular size muffin tins lined with paper. Sprinkle tops with sugar. (Since I love cinnamon with blueberries, I would use cinnamon sugar.) Bake in preheated 375 degree oven for 20 to 25 minutes. I can smell them now!

Quick and Easy Blueberry Sauce*

Ingredients:

2 cups fresh blueberries washed and dried	1 teaspoon lemon zest 1 Tablespoon
1/2 cup granulated sugar	cornstarch dash of salt a pinch or two of
1 Tablespoon fresh lemon juice	cinnamon (optional) 1 cup water divided



In a saucepan, combine blueberries, sugar, lemon juice and 1/2 cup water. Bring to a boil. Lower heat and cook 3 to 5 minutes stirring slowly. (Add more sugar or lemon juice to taste.) Add salt. Mix cornstarch with 1/2 cup water and the cinnamon. Pour into hot blueberry mixture. Boil until sauce thickens. Serve hot or cold over desserts, pancakes or waffles.

*Source: Elizabeth W. Barton. *The Complete Blueberry Cookbook*. Phoenix Publishing, Canaan, NH. Copyright 1974, p. xi.

Maybe Mémère never wrote down her recipes, but AFGS has over 25 pages of recipes, including many traditional ones, submitted by our members. You can find them in our cookbook:

Je Me Souviens La Cuisine de la Grandmère

You can order our cookbook for \$15 from the on-line store on our website at <https://afgs.org/site/shop-online/>
It is listed under Books & Publications – Other.



THE GREAT SALEM FIRE

by D.-Michel Michaud

Reprinted with permission from La Revue de Salem, Vol. 16, No. 2, 2014. A journal published by the Franco-American Institute of Salem, Inc., Salem, Massachusetts.

THE POINT NEIGHBORHOOD

The Point, which lies between Peabody and Leavitt streets and extends from Lafayette Street to Salem Harbor, was and is a large residential area. By the late nineteenth century, nearly the entire population was French-Canadian. Most were parishioners of l'Église Saint-Joseph on Lafayette Street, and were employees of the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company, a sprawling mill complex situated on the waterfront.

Housing consisted largely of multi-family dwellings of wood, and included many "three-deckers" with porches, constructed closely together. Despite much overcrowding, there was general cleanliness and order. As early as 1885, a reporter published his findings:

A News representative had occasion recently to visit this district, and was somewhat surprised to find scrupulous cleanliness where it had been intimated that the contrary state of things would be found existing. One notes that it is not uncommon to find a family of say five persons keeping house in two rooms... In one place visited, dinner was being prepared. The room was scrubbed as clean and shone as brightly as an engine fresh from the repair shop. There was a place for everything. (Salem News, 2 May 1885)

The Naumkeag Mills, which were on the verge of closing due to lack of workers during the Civil War, were now flourishing despite low wages.

Nine out of every ten employed in the mills are French, or of French descent, and it is estimated that there are over 1,200 given employment in the busy season. The wages made by the employees are not very high, and taken at an average would not reach a much higher figure than \$5 per individual for a [61 ¼-hour] week. (ibid.)

Saint-Joseph's parish, founded in 1873, was able to construct a new church on Lafayette Street a decade later. By 1885, it numbered some 1,500 parishioners.

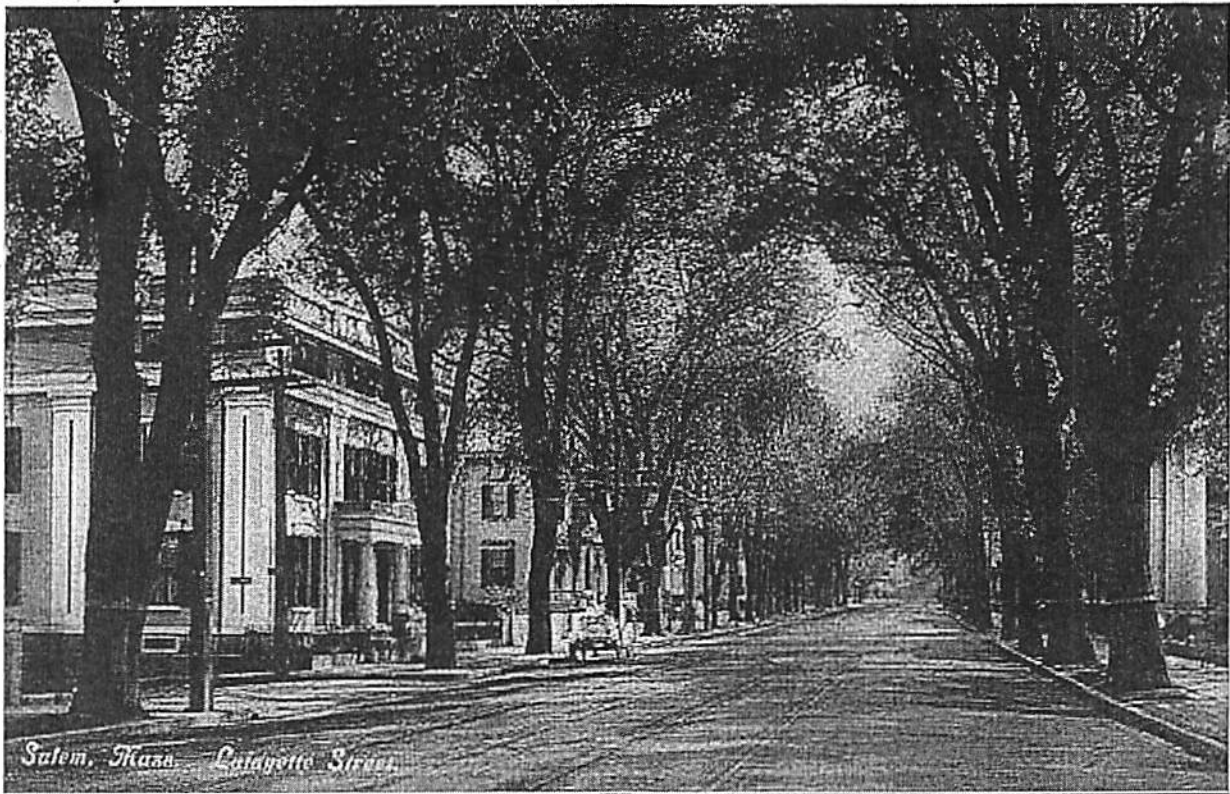
Religiously they are very devoted, and attend service regularly on Sundays, as well as on other occasions for worship. (ibid.)

The Salem Evening News frequently described the growth and development of the old Point neighborhood, and the changes to be seen since the arrival of the French-Canadian population. What could have easily become a depressed area, was instead, transformed.

In 25 years the change has been so great that a former resident would be at a loss to recognize former familiar places. There is scarcely a house that existed 25 years ago that has not undergone some beneficial change, and in place of many that have disappeared after their usefulness has passed, have arisen large blocks, some very ornamental in their architecture. Every street in the district has one or more of these substantial blocks, some four or five stories in height and affording suites for

several tenants This is conclusive evidence of the thrift and industry of the French people who have made this part of the city particularly their own (Salem News, 25 October 1899)

Similar reports of structural improvements continued to appear in the years following the turn of the century.



Lafayette Street, Salem, Massachusetts: The colorized photograph on this postcard shows the mansion of Dr. West. It was destroyed in the Great Salem Fire of June 25, 1914 while owned by S. E. Cassino. He owned the Cassino Press, publisher of "Little Folks" childrens magazine.

All the change is due to the people who came from Canada and made their homes in that part of the city. Buildings that had withstood scores of years' use were renewed; new buildings were erected, and an entirely new settlement was made in this thickly settled part of the city. (Salem News, 19 January 1901)

The prosperity of Saint-Joseph's parish was evident in its substantial brick structures. The school was "beyond comparison the best arranged and appointed school building in Salem or the immediate vicinity." (Salem Daily Gazette, 14 February 1893) With an enrollment of 1,325 students in 1911, it would become the largest parochial school in the city, and it boasted Salem's largest auditorium. And when the enormous red-brick church was constructed, it was called "one of the largest and most imposing structures for religious worship in New England." (The Boston Globe, 13 August 1913)

Clubs and organizations were also prospering. The *Cercle Veulot* had purchased the large Methodist church on Lafayette and Harbor Streets in 1909, creating a spacious center for social activities.

The French-language newspaper *Le Courrier de Salem* was called “one of the most successful newspapers of New England” by 1911 (Belisle, Alexandre: *Histoire de la Presse*). The company purchased new presses in late 1912 and began publishing twice weekly in 1913 as its circulation increased.

The Point, along with what is now the small triangular park directly facing the church, had become a “city within a city.” By 1914, the French-Canadians owned and operated no fewer than 102 businesses and professional offices in this neighborhood called *Petit Canada*.

Bakers (3)	Lodging House (1)
Chemicals (1)	Newspaper (1)
Clothiers and Tailors (8)	Notary and Justice (1)
Coal and Wood (4)	Paint and Wallpaper (4)
Confectioner (1)	Photographer (1)
Druggists (2)	Physicians (2)
Dry Goods (3)	Plumber (1)
Express and Trucking (3)	Pool Rooms (4)
Furniture (2)	Realtor (1)
Grocers (19)	Restaurants (4)
Hairdressers (8)	Shoe sales and repair (7)
Hardware (1)	Tinsmith (1)
Insurance (1)	Undertakers (2)
Jewelers and Opticians (2)	Variety Stores (14)

This vibrant neighborhood was the envy of many. Few areas of the city had been so greatly improved, and none showed a more promising future.

THE CONFLAGRATION

Salem had experienced several days of extremely dry heat. By Thursday June 25th, temperatures had reached a brutally hot 94° with humidity at a low 43%.

At the Korn leather factory, 53-57 Boston Street, a mixture called “tip finish” for patent leather was manufactured. It is presumed that the strong rays of sunlight shining through a window pane ignited the chemicals in storage, resulting in several explosions. Flames spread rapidly up an open elevator shaft and soon engulfed the wood-frame building. Several workers, including Oscar Chouinard, escaped by jumping from upper-story windows.

The first call came from Box 48 at the corner of Boston and Goodhue Streets at 1:37 p.m. with a general alarm only four minutes later. Twenty-one alarms would bring firefighters from 22 communities and 1,300 militiamen.

The 15 miles-per-hour winds were fanning the flames up Boston Street toward Essex Street and beyond. The wind “swept the firemen from the street.” “The heat is so intense that nobody can get within 30 feet of the burning zone. The fire is burning on both sides of the street. The smoke is so thick that the streets are like night.”

When the fire was raging down Jackson Street, the pastor [of Sainte-Anne'] was kept informed of its progress until he felt alarmed that his parish would be devastated. The pastor went to the church and took the Blessed Sacrament and made his way down Jefferson avenue, accompanied by some parishioners to the boundary of the parish which was, and still is, the tracks that cross Jefferson Avenue at Cressey Dockham Company. The fire jumped from Jackson Street to South Salem without even burning a shingle of any house in Ste. Anne's parish. (Salem News, 20 October 1951)

Burning embers were quickly caught up in the winds, sparking their own fires at remote locations. "Embers went swirling through the air and dropped upon roofs, which were as dry as tinder, in at least two dozen different places." As early as 2:17 p.m., an alarm was sounded from the corner of Leach Street and Summit Avenue, one mile away from the Boston Street fire. At 3:00 p.m., a fire was detected on the roof of one of the buildings of the Naumkeag Mills, about one and a half miles away. At 3:14 p.m., an alarm was sounded from the corner of Cabot and Roslyn Streets, and at 3:27 p.m., from the corner of Cabot and Cedar Streets. At 3:30 p.m., the Naumkeag Mills were ordered closed and workers were sent home. Of its 1,500 operatives "a large proportion were French-Canadians who lived in the immediate vicinity."

The occupants of the City orphan asylum were saved none too soon. There were about 20 or 25 sisters, more than 100 children and perhaps a dozen old ladies, who had to be literally carried from the building. By the time the rescue party was ready to make its getaway, there was but one avenue of escape. A few minutes more and it would have been too late. [They] were first brought to the St. Mary School. However, fears were entertained that the Sisters would be burned out, so all hands were again shifted, this time to St. John's [Preparatory School] in Danvers. The sisters at the St. Joseph convent were also taken to St. John's. (Salem News, 26 June 1914)

The Boston Street fire had reached Margin Street by about 4:00 p.m., then jumped the railroad tracks in the direction of Canal and Lafayette Streets. At 5:00 p.m., water was being directed on the rooftops of the mill buildings. "Property owners with tears in their eyes begged the firemen to exert themselves in the stricken South Salem district, only to be told again and again that the water pressure was inadequate and that nothing could be done." At 5:55 p.m., an alarm was sounded from the corner of Salem and Everett (now Palmer) Streets which were now "avenues of flame leading to the Point itself and spreading northward to include within its grasp, Ward and Peabody Streets." Lagrange (now Leavitt) Street was fully ablaze at 7:00 p.m., as were the mills.

The rush of the flames through the Point district was the wildest of the conflagration, the flames leaping from house to house with incredible rapidity. Whole rows of houses burst into flames almost simultaneously. South Salem was rapidly becoming a mammoth cauldron of seething flames. People watched the two immense towers of the St. Joseph's church and saw it spring into flames just after sunset [at 7:26 p.m.]. (ibid.)

As the evening came on and darkness shut down, a brilliant glow came from the north and made the open spaces in the roads and fields as bright as at twilight. Heavy masses of golden smoke poured into the night sky for a long distance along the horizon line, above which shot giant tongues of flame. Trees and houses were sharply silhouetted against the molten glow. In the center of it all we saw a large church whose twin towers, seen intermittently through the waves of smoke, stood

out [as] landmarks. While we watched, flames burst from every side of the building, rising still higher and higher; then, as a curtain of smoke came between, a dull, distant rumble startled us, and when the smoke rolled away again, the towers stood alone in the midst of a glowing mass – the remnants of an imposing building. Every now and then bright embers, like giant sparks, shot into the air, and sharp explosions could be dimly heard. The sights and sounds combined to give one the feeling of confusion, excitement and horror... Later in the night, [the] sinister light was still there, but it was paler, and toward morning the clouds of smoke became perceptibly smaller. The fire demon was yielding... (Salem News, 8 July 1914)

The Salem Hospital, then located on Charter Street, was evacuated at 8:10 p.m. There were 56 patients, more than 50 outpatients due to the fire, and 32 nurses inside. At 10:20 p.m., all the mills were burning and floors and roofs were collapsing. The Union (now Congress) Street Bridge, the only remaining escape from the Point District, was not on fire.



Salem, MA - In the aftermath of the huge fire, National Guard troops helped distribute rations. Troops here are pouring milk for children. (Courtesy of Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts)

It was not until the middle of the night that the fire burned itself out at the water's edge. Reporters recalled "columns of smoke by day and pillars of fire by night," and a blaze that was "so vivid that practically all the streets are very nearly as light as day." The illumination was seen from 50 miles away, and brought one million visitors to Salem. Over 250 acres were smoldering ruins of 1,800 buildings, including 41 factories and nearly 400 shops and businesses, on nearly 100 streets. Fifteen thousand men, women and children were homeless.

LE BON PÈRE BINETTE

I am a young priest in charge of this flock. The pastor of the church left Montréal last night for Europe, and this tremendous burden has fallen upon my shoulders. All wiped out of existence in almost a moment. Hardly a building of any of my parishioners is left whole. I am in great distress. – Père Binette

Père J.-Donat Binette (1881-1930), a native of Bernierville, P.Q., was ordained in Nicolet in 1907. Only three years later he was assigned as assistant to Père Rainville at St-Joseph's, Salem. Now at the age of 33, he found himself responsible for the care and consolation of 10,000 people who had lost everything.

One of the first of Boston's leading citizens to arrive at the scene of the fire was former Mayor John F. Fitzgerald. He recalled:

I shall never forget the picture presented by the young curate in charge of St. Joseph's new, beautiful church, which was burned. He was walking in and about through his flock with his hat off, counseling them to be brave and all would be for the best. I asked him if there was anything I could do for him, and he replied: "I am anxious to know about the arrangements for feeding." I told him



The ruins of St. Joseph's Church and parish house, which were destroyed during the Great Salem Fire of 1914.
Source: https://digitalcommons.salemstate.edu/fire_photos/20/

that relief was on its way which would take care of all the needs. He didn't seem to understand as well as he ought to and he called over a beautiful young French girl to interpret for him. The eyes of both the priest and the young girl lit up and they went among the people and gave the good news. (Boston Post, 27 June 1914)

Père Binette offered Sunday Mass for his parishioners at Forest River Park.

No mass for the dead was ever more sad or impressive than this religious service. From the brave little priest, who tried to hide tears which would not be denied, and who spoke till overcome with emotion, to the hundreds of tearful men, women and children who stood grouped about, the whole affair was most touching indeed. It was for the homeless parishioners of St. Joseph's that he felt most deeply, who had no insurance on their belongings and who now have no work and but food and clothing enough for immediate needs only. This is what touched him most deeply. (Salem News, 29 June 1914)

The young priest did all in his power to secure food and water, clothing and blankets, and medical supplies. He met with agents and made arrangements for jobs for his parishioners. He spoke with each person individually, attending to their needs as best he could. Five days later it was reported that:

Gaunt and haggard from many sleepless nights and worn from the incessant labor of trying to alleviate his stricken flock, Father Binette collapsed last night and had to be taken to the relief station at the armory. The armory physicians there found he had collapsed from exhaustion. His shoes were burned, great white blisters covered his feet and his condition was pitiful. After receiving treatment, he... retired to sleep for the first time since the conflagration. (Salem News, 1 July 1914)

Père Rainville returned to Salem on the 10th of July and was first taken to Forest River Park. Père Binette rang the bell to announce his arrival, and 2,000 people emerged from their tents. He began by saying, "Reverend Pastor, I return to you the parish which you had entrusted to me. I return it to you burned and destroyed." Choked with emotion, he could not go on. But the pastor replied by thanking God that their lives were spared, and vowed that the parish would rise from the ashes, more beautiful and more prosperous.

So great was the work of Père Binette that *Le Courrier de Salem* of 9 July questioned: "*Pourquoi ne pas nommer le Forest River Park Binetteville?*" (Why not call Forest River Park "Binetteville?") Infants were given the name of the popular priest, such as Arthur-Donat Bourgoin born on August 2nd, Jean-Paul-Donat Roy born on August 12th, and others were given "Père Donat" as their Godfather.

Père Rainville remained as pastor of St-Joseph's until his death on 23 March 1920, with Père Binette as his esteemed assistant. Four months later, Père Binette was honored to be appointed pastor of his own church, Sr-Zéphirin in Cochrane (now Wayland), where he remained for seven years. On 25 July 1927 he was directed to found a new parish, Notre-Dame-de-l'Assomption in Bellingham, Massachusetts.

Exhausted from overwork and suffering from ill health, Père Binette retired 30 March 1930 and sought rest at Warwick (Arthabaska), P.Q. Only six months later on September 26th, *le bon Père Binette* died at the age of 49. *The Salem Evening News* noted:

His name will long linger in the annals of the parish due to... his splendid work during the disastrous fire in 1914. His sermon... in which he greatly encouraged the sorrow-stricken people... is still remembered. He possessed a remarkable personality, which drew to him the people of the parish and enabled him to achieve worthy results. He was popular wherever he went and leaves a legion of friends.
(29 September 1930)

AN INTIMATE WEDDING

An elaborate wedding was to be held a century ago, on 6 July 1914, when Délia Turgeon (1896-1977) would become the wife of Odias Pelletier (1888-1969). The nuptial Mass was to be celebrated in the new Saint-Joseph's church, followed by a reception and a honeymoon trip. Upon their return, they would settle into their new home at the corner of Prince and Palmer Streets, conveniently located near their work at the Naumkeag Mills. On 25 June 1914, their plans literally went up in smoke!

The church and the mills were in ruins, their home was in ashes, and most of their invited guests had left Salem quickly in search of shelter and work. In the days which followed, mill agents from Manchester, N.H. arrived to offer housing and employment. Délia and Odias accepted an offer on June 29th, on the condition that they could remain in Salem for one more day.

On Tuesday morning, 30 June 1914, the couple was married in Sainte-Anne's church, Salem. The bride wore a white wedding gown, the only item she had saved from the fire five days earlier, and a small wreath of white flowers in place of a veil. Only "three or four guests" attended the small ceremony.

The Pelletiers spent a short time in Manchester, and "were among the first to move back to Salem." Odias resumed his position as loom-fixer at the Naumkeag Mills, and the couple lived for many years at 96 Congress Street where they raised their six children: Jean-Paul, Émile, Roger, Maurice, Armand, and Irène.

On Sunday 28 June 1964 the couple, now residing at 9 Holly Street, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in grand style. More than 100 guests arrived from Massachusetts, New York, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Canada, some of whom had been invited to the wedding 50 years earlier. The Mass was offered in the new Saint-Joseph's church with Père Wilfred-K. Harvey, OMI (#151) officiating, and was followed by a reception at the Knights of Columbus Hall overlooking the

Salem Common. It was here on the common, fifty years earlier, that so many took refuge from the devastation wrought by the Great Salem Fire.



Reproduced from an original postcard published by Tichnor Brothers, Boston, Massachusetts
Source: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bird%27s-eye_View_of_Ruins_of_Great_Salem_Fire.jpg

“Just as if swept by a cyclone, the Point district in South Salem stands shorn of every vestige of living thing and structure of any sort...” (Salem News, 26 June 1914)

“The Salem fire is by far the most serious conflagration in the history of New England.” (ibid.)

“Hospital list of injured – Oscar Chouinard, 32 Cabot Street, fracture [of] right arm by jumping from a second story window [at Korn leather factory].” (ibid.)

“La paroisse Saint-Joseph, si cruellement éprouvée dans cette incendie, était l’une plus florissantes de la Nouvelle Angleterre, au point de vue des nôtres. La population catholique était de 7,200. Son église et son couvent étaient deux édifices imposantes, qui faisaient honneur aux canado-américains.” – Saint-Joseph’s parish, so sorely tried in this fire, was one of the most prosperous in New England, from our point of view. The Catholic population numbered 7,200. Its church and its convent were two imposing structures, which were an honor to the Canadian-Americans.) (La Presse, Montréal, 26 June 1914)

“St. Joseph’s structure is not only destroyed, but the whole parish has been scattered to the winds.” (Salem News, 27 June 1914)

“Lynn – Emile Paradis, 41, whose home was at 41 Hancock St., Salem, dropped exhausted at 12:30 today [in Lynn], from exhaustion caused by lack of food. Paradis has a wife and seven children in Salem. He was taken to the Lynn Hospital.” (Boston Globe, 27 June 1914)

“Beverly – Mrs. Charles W. Rainville of 2 Cypress St., Salem, was severely injured in an accident [in Beverly] this morning She was on the way to see some property here. [The car] struck a telephone pole. Both occupants were thrown out. Mrs Rainville was taken to the Beverly Hospital and it is feared she has a fractured skull.” (ibid.)

“The colony [at Forest River Park] is composed largely of homeless people from the former French district, and several volunteer interpreters were on duty all night to aid in communication with the hospital corps and the officers of the guard.” (Salem News, 29 June 1914)

“[Alfred] Audet, the South Salem builder, loses \$90,000 in the fire. Although largely insured, Mr. Audet will lose thousands of dollars.” (ibid.)

“Danvers – Another death due to the Salem fire was that of William R. Gadbois, in his 26th year. He resided at 68 Harbor Street, and his home was destroyed. He was a sufferer from heart disease, and was taken to the Salem hospital. When that caught fire he was transferred to the Beverly hospital. Over there, he became violent, and it was necessary to remove him to the Danvers hospital, where he passed away.” (Salem News, 2 July 1914)

“It is certain that the valuable buildings of the French Catholic church will be restored to the city. Inasmuch as the French people are prospering in Salem, and are increasing in numbers, it is reasonable to say that the buildings of the church will be rebuilt on a better scale than ever.” (Salem News, 7 July 1914)

“Fr. Rainville comes home to a hard task, but that he will prove equal to the occasion, no one [who] knows of his unusual executive ability doubts for a moment.” (Salem News, 8 July 1914)

“J. B. St. Pierre... has lost his little daughter, Julia, seven years of age. She has been missing since the fire [twelve days ago].” Salem News, 7 July 1914)

“The father of the [Dubé family] has not had any news of his wife or children since the fire [thirteen days ago].” (Salem News, 8 July 1914)

“While no comprehensive figures can be obtained, it is safe to say that hundreds of people who formerly lived here have left Salem since the conflagration. Some have gone temporarily, with the expectation of coming back here in the course of a few months and taking up their old work again. Others have gone away and never expect to come back. Up to last night about 225 persons had been given transportation by the railroads... free of charge to some other point in New England or Canada.” (Salem News, 10 July 1914)

The American-French Genealogical Society, founded in 1978, is a 501c3 non-profit organization. Our mission is to collect, preserve, publish and disseminate cultural and historical matter relating to Americans of French and French-Canadian descent. Donations are tax deductible as allowed by law. Consult your tax adviser or the IRS about how to claim charitable tax deductions.

Le Courrier de Salem

Events of a century ago in Salem's Franco-American newspaper

September – December 1914

Properties

- The Salem Reconstructin Committee voted to acquire the triangular parcel bounded by Lafayette, Washington and Harbor Streets for the creation of a park.
- Gilbert Bourgault of East Gardner Street was among those who sold their property to the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company for rebuilding the mills.

Businesses

- Among the businesses which have reopened in new locations are: Mme Desaulniers, hat maker, 133 A Essex Street; Mme Thomas (Marie Barbeau) Cadorette, women's clothier, 4 Central Street; J.-H. Chouinard, optometrist, 209 Essex Street; Mlle Rose Dubé, milliner, 16 Forest Avenue; and Emile Lévesque, barber, who has purchased the Pariseau shop on Washington Street

Construction

- Among the first contractors working after the fire are MM. Audet, Benôit, Bouchard, Caron, Devost, Dugrenier, Dupuis, Forcier, Gadbois, Courdeau, Joly, Leclerc, L'Italien, Marchand, Mathieu, Maurais, Perron, Poitras, Rioux, and Tardif.
- Audet et Forcier Contractors open a lumber yard on Harrison Avenue.
- Some 100 building permits have been issued as of September 9th.
- Stanislas Lévesque is building a new funeral home on Harbor Street
- By September 25th, new homes are being built for Elzéar Belleau, Alfred Bérubé, Louis-R. Bourgeois, Adélar Bousquet, Frank Caron, Augustin Chouinard, Exilda Chouinard, Joseph Dubé, Joseph Fugère, Eugène Gauthier, Georges Gauthier, Joseph Giguère, Alphone Joly, Alfred Nadeau, Jules Poussard, and Joseph St-Pierre.

Tax Payers

- Eighteen Franco-Americans are listed among Salem's highest taxpayers: Alfred Audet, Emma-D. Beaudry, Ovide Bouchard, Paul-N. Chaput, Auguste Chouinard, Exilda Chouinard, Herménégilde Claveau, Eugénie Côté, Alphée Demeule, Joseph Fugère, Joseph-F. Hudon, Alphone Joly, Joseph Ledoux, Delima Lévesque, Stanislas-S. Lévesque, Martial Michaud, Emile Poirier, and Philippe-Orphir Poirer.

Church

- All Masses for parishioners of St-Joseph's are now held in the basement chapel of St. Mary's (Immaculate Conception) church until the rebuilding of St-Joseph's is completed.

School

- Among the students who attended *l'École St-Joseph* last year, some 400 are now enrolled in Beverly, 300 in Danvers, 220 in Lynn, 100 in Peabody, and 80 in Marblehead. Enrollment in the Derby School at Castle Hill (grades 1 through 4) has increased from 140 to 226.

Celebrations

- More than 400 individuals from Salem attended the Franco-American picnic at Lebel's Grove in Danvers on September 7th. Under the circumstances, it was considered a great success, both in attendance and in revenue.
- The *Cercle Lacordaire* reconvened on September 13th. Its new quarters are in the Phoenix Building on Lafayette Street.
- Cauncy Pépin of Salem is reelected in November as State Representative from the 18th District.
- Isaïe and Odlie (Soucy) Michaud celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at the home of their daughter at Castle Hill.

AFGS would like to let our membership know that we have lost a dear and dedicated friend. **Lucile (Poulin) McDonald** has volunteered at the AFGS library for over 30 years, doing French and Latin translations as well as binding many of the books on our library shelves. Lucille passed away on 21 May 2020 at the age of 88 years, and she will be deeply missed by all who had the chance to know her. Lucile was at work in the library as recently as this spring. As a tribute for her dedication to preserving French-Canadian traditions, we include her obituary here in our journal.



LUCILE R. (POULIN) MCDONALD
JANUARY 24, 1932 – MAY 21, 2020

Lucile R. (Poulin) McDonald, 88, of North Smithfield passed away peacefully on Thursday May 21, 2020 at the Hope Hospice Palliative Care of Rhode Island. She was the beloved wife of James T. McDonald. Born in Berlin, New Hampshire, she was the daughter of the late Eugene and Marie Louise (Belanger) Poulin. Married at St. Joan of Arc in Cumberland, Lou and Jim were together for 65 years. Lucile worked as a registered nurse for 40 years starting at

Woonsocket Hospital in the 1950's. She enjoyed the bulk of her career as a leader in the Surgical and Burn Unit at Rhode Island Hospital while raising her 4 children with Jim in North Smithfield. She graduated from St. Louis School of Nursing in Berlin, New Hampshire 1953 and was honored with a Bachelor of Psychology from University of Rhode Island in 1979.

Some of the highlights of Lou's life were her large family of 8 brothers and sisters. As the youngest of the family, she was drafted at 3 years old as the mascot of The Berlin N.H. Snowshoe Club. Lucile was a Majorette at Woonsocket High, participating in roller dancing at Scholl's Roller dome in Warwick, team waterskiing on Beach Pond, and dancing at Rhodes on the Pawtuxet were the highlights of her younger days.

Traveling was an important part of the feisty redhead's life. Family in Québec, historical fun with the family, and multiple tours of the United States were just some of the destinations. She and Jim toured London, Paris, and Seattle in their late 80's. Closer to home, Lucile enjoyed the company of friends at OLQM Bingo. Lucile was always involved in civic programs including 30 years as an officer and instructor at Woonsocket Youth Figure Skating Association, serving 11 years as President of the St. Agatha's Senior Citizen Group, and 30 years as an important member of the *American – French Genealogical Society* as a Latin and French translator. She is survived by her husband James McDonald of North Smithfield, her four children; Patricia Fortier of North Providence, Joan Phillips (Pete) of Coeur D'Alene Idaho, Michael McDonald of North Smithfield, Thomas (Cindy) McDonald of Blackstone, Massachusetts. 7 Grandchildren – Jason, Benjamin, and Catherine Fortier, Cody Phillips, Michael McDonald, Erin and Ella McDonald. 3 Great Grandchildren – Alyssa, Kelsey, and Jason Fortier. She is survived by one sister, Theresa Gosselin, of Florida and numerous nieces and nephews. She is predeceased by her parents, brothers, and two of her sisters.

Members Only Online Library

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FIND IT IN OUR MEMBERS ONLY ONLINE LIBRARY

Are you researching original records that are written in a different language? AFGS can help you translate them with the definitions in our Members-Only Online Library. This spring our webmaster, Francis Fortin added the following definitions:

- 1,100+ Italian words
- 1,400+ Latin words
- 1,200+ German words
- 800+ Spanish words
- 900+ Polish words

Here are a few samples of words beginning with the letter A

Term (accents removed)	English Definition	Term (accents removed)	English Definition
ITALIAN		GERMAN	
a	At, to	abbauer	tenant on a farm
A cagione di	Because of	abdecker	skinner
A casa	At home	abend	evening
Abbiamo	We have	abendmahlsgast	communicant
Abbiente	Owner	abends	in the evening
Abbracciatutto	Jack-of-all-trades	abenteurer	jeweler, jewel trader; adventurer
LATIN		aber	but
Ab anno 16	At [or more than] 16 years old	abgestorben	deceased
Ab hoc mense	From this month on	SPANISH	
Abavia	Great-great-grandmother	a	to, in, into, on
Abavus	Great-great-grandfather	Aa.M. = abuela materna	maternal grandmother
Abdormitus	Died	Aa.P. = abuela paterna	paternal grandmother
Abdormivit	He/she died	abogado	lawyer
Abiit	He/she died	abril	April
POLISH		absceso	abscess
adoptowany	adopted	abuela	grandmother
akatolicki	non-Catholic	abuelo	grandfather
akt matzenstwa or slubu	marriage certificate	abuelos	Grandparents
akta malzenstw, akta slubow	marriage records	abuelos	Grandparents
akta urodzin	birth records		
akta zapowiedzi	banns records		
akta zejsc	death records		
akta zgonow	death records		

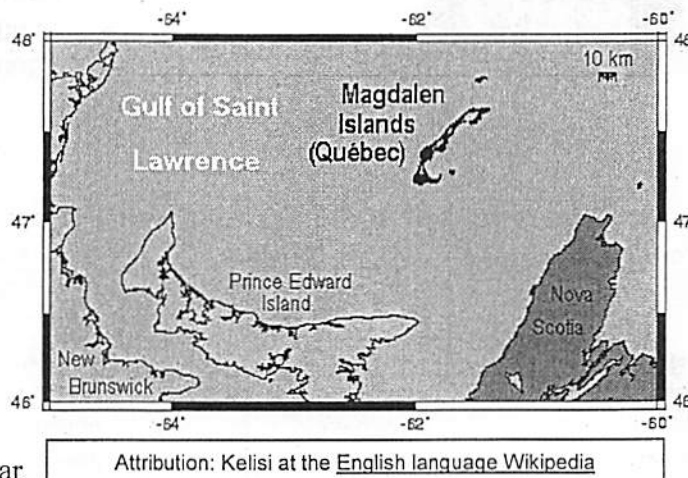
THE MERMAID OF THE MAGDALENS

Collected and Recorded by Cyrus MacMillan

Reprinted with Permission from FairyTalez.com

Editor's note: The breadth of folkloric history in Canada is a vast and colorful one. Folk tales and fairy tales are amusing, clever and fun loving tales that transform the ordinary into the extraordinary. This folk tale contains a shipwreck, fishermen and fish: all elements that would be very familiar to the people in the Magdalen Islands. It is possible that listening to the wind and waves encouraged the residents to think about Mermen and Mermaids. Their lives were so entwined with the sea. I can imagine this tale being told in front of a fireplace on a dark and stormy night. Why not read it to your children or grandchildren and be sure to tell them it is a French Canadian tale? – Jan Burkhart

Far off the northeast coast of Canada is a group of rugged islands called the Magdalens. They are a lonely, barren group, where grass and flowers and trees grow scantily. There, the northern storms rage with their wildest fury, and the sea breaks with its greatest force upon the bleak rocks. Numberless birds of strange cries and colors fly constantly about. On days when the storm dashes the sea white and angry against the coast, even the thunder of the surf is almost shut out by the screaming of countless gulls; and on clear days the sun is hidden when the birds rise in clouds from their nests. The "Isle of Birds," the Jesuits called one of the islands when they first visited the group hundreds of years ago, and it is an "Isle of Birds" still. It is a wild and rock-bound desolate land. But although the islands are barren of grass and flowers and trees, the waters around and between them are rich in fish. "The Kingdom of Fish," men call the place, for adventurous traders grow wealthy there reaping the harvest of the sea. The greatest product of the waters is the lobster. He always inhabited these northern seas, and about his power in olden times strange tales are told. Away off the coast of one of the islands, you can still see on fine moonlit nights in May, and also during the day once a year, a maiden holding a glass in her hand, combing her long hair, and looking wistfully to the land. Sometimes, too, on calm nights you can still hear her strange song above the murmur of the waves. She is the phantom lady of the Island over whom the Lobster in far away days used his power. She is now a prisoner in the deep, held there as a punishment for her deeds.



Now, it happened that long ago when fish were first canned for food there was a great slaughter of sardines, the tiny fish of the sea, by cruel money-greedy traders who caught them, packed them in small boxes, and shipped them to far countries, just as they do today. These traders received large money rewards for their labor, for people all over the world liked the little fish and paid a high price for them. The sardines saw their number slowly growing smaller, for, being little, they were helpless against their captors, and among all their family there was great sorrow. In despair they asked the big fish of the sea to help them. At last, in answer to their appeal, a meeting of all the fish in the sea was called. Here the big fish took an oath to help their small cousins in their struggle with man, and to punish when they could all who ate or fished the sardine family. And the little fish rejoiced greatly.

One May day a large ship loaded with packed fish was wrecked on the sunken rocks of the Magdalen Islands. Soon the ship was broken up by the heavy surf on the sharp reef, and her cargo was strewn along the shore. It happened that in the cargo were many boxes of sardines, and they too were washed up on the beach by the tide. In the evening, after the sea had calmed, a fair maiden who lived on the Island with her father, a fish trader, walked along the shore alone to view the wreckage of the broken ship. She found, to her delight, one of the boxes in which the sardines were packed. She resolved at once to eat the contents, for she too, like all the world at that time, liked the little fish. But although she tried as hard as she could, she was unable to open the box. She sat by the side of the sea and sang a song of lament, calling on anyone who could to open the box for her. She sang, "I love sardines when they're boiled with beans and mixed with the sands of the sea."

Away out from the beach a skate-fish was resting on a sandbar. Hearing the song of the maiden, he quickly swam towards the shore. When he came close enough to hear the words of the song and to know what the box contained, he swam away in great disgust, for he was cousin to the sardines in the box, and came from the same family tree as they. But he was too timid to try to punish the maiden. Then a bold merman heard the song. He had long looked for a land wife to live with him in his home under the sea; now he said, "Here at last is a shore maiden for me," for the voice of the singer was beautiful to him. So he went to his looking-glass to dress himself in the most genteel fashion. From bright clean sea-weeds and sea-leaves he quickly made himself a new suit, all green and yellow; and he covered his feet with bright colored shells, and his neck with pearls which the oyster gave him; and dressing himself carefully, he hastened in the direction of the song. But when he came close enough to hear the words and to know what the box contained, he remembered his oath at the great gathering of the fish, and although he loved the singer he swam hurriedly away. For, like the skate-fish, he too feared to try to punish the maiden.

The maiden was now sore distressed, for it was growing late and the moon was already far up in the sky. The box was still unopened, and the girl was hungry for the fish. Going to the edge of the sea, she knocked the box hard against a large rock that lay in the water, hoping thereby to break it open. But the box would not break. Now, it chanced that under the rock a large black lobster lay sleeping quietly after a long battle with an enemy in the sea. The tapping on the roof of his sleeping-place awoke him, and he rubbed his eyes and listened. The maiden was again singing her song, "Oh I love sardines when they're boiled with beans, and mixed with the sands of the sea. I am dying for some. Will nobody come and open this box for me?" Then the Lobster remembered his oath at the great gathering of the fish. Unlike the skate-fish and the merman, he had no fear of the maiden, for he knew his power. He determined to punish her, and he resolved at once upon a crafty trick. He came out of his hiding place, and waving his claw politely he said, "Fair lady, I can open the box for you; give it to me and let me try."

But when, in answer, she held the box out towards him in her hand, he grasped her by the wrist with his strong claw, and, holding her fast, he swam with her far out to sea. Where he went and what he did with her, no man knows. It is believed that he sold her to the merman who had long sought a shore-wife, and that she is still being slowly changed into a fish. One thing is certain, — she never came back to land.



But on the first day of May she always appears on the water away off the coast of the Island; and if that day is fine and clear you can still always see her there. She holds in her hand a looking-glass in which in the sunlight she looks at herself to see if she is nearer to a fish than she was on May Day the year before when she last appeared in the sun; and she is combing her long hair which is now covered with pearls; and she looks with longing eyes to the shore and her old home. And sometimes on moonlit nights in May, when the wind is still and the sea is calm, the fishermen hear her strange sad song across the waters. They know then that she is lonely, and that she is singing her song to lure land-comrades for company to her side. And on these nights they stay on shore,

for they know that if they venture out to sea she will seize them and carry them off for playmates to her home of bright shells far under the sea.

FUNERAL CARD COLLECTION

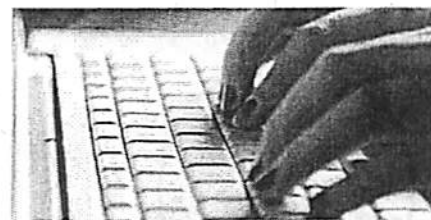


Our collection of funeral cards in the Members Only Online Library contains a good assortment of cards for women. In many cases, you will not only find information about their spouses, maiden names, dates and places of their birth and death, but also how they looked – the styles and fashions of the times in which they lived. These photos are sometimes, the only identified photos you may find of an ancestor or other relative. It is always a wonderful surprise to see a family resemblance to someone in our own family.

If you have old funeral cards that are among your family records, especially cards with photographs and family information, we would be happy to add them to our funeral card collection. You can scan them as jpg files and email them to us at JMSeditor@afgs.org or email us for information on how to submit the cards for scanning. We will gladly return them to you after they have been scanned into our collection.

**ATTENTION MEMBERS:
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY!**

The Members Only website committee is embarking on a
very large project.



We are developing a searchable database of French-Canadian and Franco-American marriages for our Members Only Online Library. This database will benefit all members across the country and those members outside the United States.

BUT we need your help, because this database could contain
well over ONE MILLION marriages when it is completed.

The more members who volunteer to enter data, the faster we would be able to create this database. *Would YOU be willing to volunteer for this project?* We are looking for volunteers who could transcribe 10-12 pages of material for us. This is a volunteer opportunity that you would be able to complete at your home, no matter where you live, at your convenience. We would provide you with an electronic (pdf) file containing the data that needs to be transcribed, a template to enter the data into (which is currently Microsoft Excel) and instructions on how to enter the data. If you are a Mac user, we can provide a template for you also.

If you feel that you can help us with this valuable project, please write to us at JMSeditor@afgs.org and we will contact you with information.

Did you know that over 18,000 volunteer hours were submitted during this past year? Our society is very fortunate to have generous and committed members who are happy to contribute their skills to make AFGS such an outstanding genealogical society. With everyone's help, we will continue to provide more unique and excellent resources for your French-Canadian genealogy research.



Follow us on Twitter at **@AmFrGenSoc**

Stay updated with photos and the very latest AFGS news as it is happening.



Please "like us" on Facebook at American-French Genealogical Society:
<https://www.facebook.com/AmericanFrenchGenealogicalSociety/> so that you can receive the very latest AFGS news as it is happening. We will keep you updated with photos and let you know what we are doing.



WANTED: YOUR STORIES

We would like to share your interesting stories with your fellow AFGS members in *Je Me Souviens*.

We have listed some topics that we will be covering in future issues:

- Do you have a Native or Métis ancestor? Many of our members have been told they have these ancestors. Have you been able to prove the family legends? How did you find the information?
- When researching your ancestors, have you discovered any significant world events that changed their lives?
- In your research, have you discovered that your ancestors were affected by any disasters such as fires, massacres, earthquakes or epidemics?
- Did you find ancestors who perished in the Flu Pandemic of 1918-1920? After reading this article, have you discovered any relatives who perished in this pandemic? Do you have any family stories involving this pandemic?
- Were you or your ancestors affected by the lengthy Polio epidemic that occurred in 1916 and reached its peak in 1952? How did the threat of this disease affect every day life for your family?

Would you like to share your stories with our readers? Although we investigate the distant past, we must take care to document our own experiences for those descendants who will follow us. They will better understand our lives and times by reading the stories we tell today.

**PLEASE SEND YOUR STORIES* TO
US AT JMSeditor@afgs.org**

***You can find our AUTHORS GUIDELINES on page 57.**

FEAR, PREJUDICE, AND VACCINATIONS

by James Myall

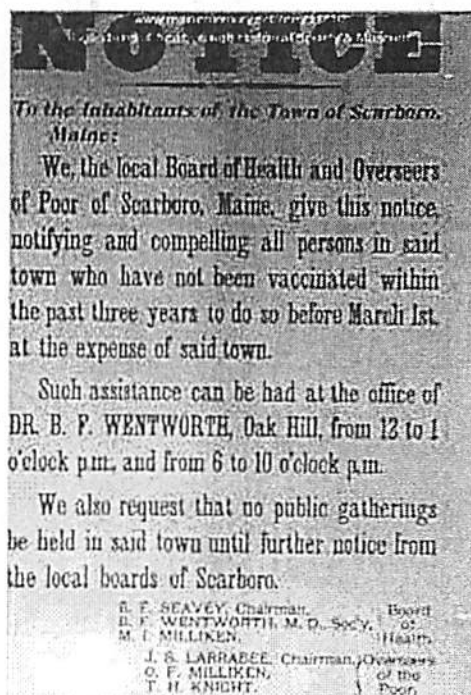
Editors note: This article is reprinted from Le Forum, a publication of Le Centre Franco-Américain, Université du Maine, Orono, Maine with permission from the author. James Myall currently works for an Augusta-based non-profit and has spent four years as the Coordinator of the Franco-American Collection at the University of Southern Maine. In 2015, he co-authored "The Franco-Americans of Lewiston-Auburn," a general history of that population from 1850 to the present." James Myall was also a consultant for the State Legislative Task Force on Franco-Americans in 2012. He lives in Topsham with his wife and two young daughters.



Maine's public health officials scrambled to respond to the threat of an epidemic. They were contending with a misinformation of the effectiveness of vaccinations, and xenophobic sentiment which blamed immigrants for the threat. The year was 1885, and the threat was coming from Canada.

In the spring of 1885, a smallpox epidemic had broken out in Montréal, then a city of around 200,000 people. Ironically, the disease came to the city from the United States, via a worker on the Grand Trunk Railway on the Montréal-Chicago line. Conductor George Longley had been diagnosed with smallpox at Montréal General Hospital but the facility refused to admit him, fearing the disease would spread to other patients. So Longley turned to the French hospital, the Hôtel-Dieu, which took him in. From there, the disease, sometimes known as the "red death," spread rapidly among the poorer French Canadian population of the city.

Despite its virulence, smallpox was preventable. A vaccine (the first vaccine to be discovered) had been developed by British scientist Edward Jenner in 1796. The invention of the smallpox vaccine had been a great advance in public health that saved countless lives.



Notice of Vaccinations, Scarborough, 1902. Image: Scarborough Historical Society & Museum/Maine Memory Network

But in Montréal in 1885, large numbers of French Canadian families had not been vaccinated. Eventually, 3,000 people, overwhelmingly French-Canadian, would die during the city's epidemic.

As word of the outbreak reached the American press, officials were worried. In states like Maine, large numbers of French Canadians were immigrating to work in the state's industrial cities or crossing the boarder to work in the logging industry. Contemporary accounts describe new trainloads of immigrants arriving in Lewiston every day. It seemed quite possible that the disease would find its way into Maine.

Officials sprang into action. The State Board of Health had been newly created in 1885, and coordinating the response to smallpox became its first major task. Larger cities employed their own physicians and health boards to oversee efforts, while in rural areas, the state sought assistance from the US Marine Hospital.

The primary initiative was a massive vaccination campaign, particularly in towns with sizable Franco-American populations. In Bangor, the City Doctor visited all 69 schools in the city during October and September, vaccinating 1,180 children.

In Augusta, Dr. Brickett went from house to house in the Sand Hill neighborhood, with the assistance of an interpreter, vaccinating 515 people at the expense of the city. He noted that he was “treated with great politeness” and that the houses were “in a neat and clean... and [good] general sanitary condition.”

In Westbrook, the Board of Health offered free vaccinations to inhabitants over the age of two, citing the “presence of so large a number of Canadians in our midst” and the “humanitarian” and “commercial” consequences an outbreak would have.

These vaccines were generally given at the city’s expense, and particularly targeted children who were most vulnerable to the disease.

Maine authorities also targeted lumber camps which employed large numbers of French Canadian workers. The state set up an inspection station at Moose River, on the major overland route from Québec into Maine. All travelers were required to be vaccinated unless they had recently been vaccinated elsewhere. However, there were reports that some immigrants were “escap[ing] by passing through in the night.”

The vaccination campaign seems to have been largely successful. Just a handful of cases of smallpox was reported in Maine that year.

On the other hand, it’s possible that the public health scare was overblown. *Le Messenger* of Lewiston complained in an October 14 editorial that the outbreak of smallpox had given the English language press in Canada “the eagerly-sought-after occasion to spew its hateful bile against the French Canadian race which it resents.” The American press, they contended, was “no longer hiding what they really think of our race, from whom they are perhaps already thinking of relinquishing their hospitality in this country.” They also accused the Maine press of repeating “hateful slander” without questioning the source.



"Immigrant Inspection Service." Image:
National Library of Medicine

The prejudice of the disease-carrying immigrant is a long one, and one that’s been repeated in our own times. Additionally, French Canadians had long been characterized as ignorant peasants held back by Catholic “superstition.” On September 30, the *Portland Daily Press* said that French Canadians were “paying dearly” for their “superstitious prejudice” in its coverage of the outbreak.

Another example comes from the *Gardiner Home Journal* of September 16, 1885, which wrote:

“There is some advantage for us in not having cotton mills, with the accompanying French Canadian population: we are not liable to have the small pox imported so soon.”

There certainly was opposition to vaccination among Montréal’s French Canadians. Not only was a large portion of the population unvaccinated when the disease broke out in the spring, but when the city authorities tried to mandate vaccination, a riot broke out, and a mob stormed city hall.

The report of the Maine State Board of Health for 1885 cited a “strange fatality of ignorance of race” among Montréal’s French Canadians, but also said that the “superstitious error” was due largely to the “demagogism of charlatans” – advocates who argued that vaccination itself was dangerous. The board scathingly called the death of the 3,164 people in Montréal – mostly children – an “experiment on a gigantic scale” by “the anti-vaccinations.”

However, accounts of the trouble in Montréal (then and now) also often leave out important historical context. Anglo-French relations in Canada were particularly tense in the summer and fall of 1885. The Anglo authorities had arrested Franco Métis resistance leader Louis Riel in May, and would execute him in November, prompting widespread protests. The French Canadians of Montréal were in no mood to have government mandated vaccination imposed on them.

The outbreak was also largely localized to Montréal, as Dr. Louis Martel of Lewiston explained. Originally of St-Hyacinthe, QC, Dr. Martel had practiced in Montréal before coming to Lewiston. Martel gave an interview to the *Lewiston Gazette* which was reprinted in *Le Messager* (where Martel was one of the editors). In addition to a misinformation campaign spread by proponents of homeopathic medicine, Montréal’s French Canadians had some reasons to distrust vaccines.

“I witnessed the smallpox epidemic which hit Montréal in 1872. There was some opposition to vaccination, for two reasons. Firstly, because two reputable doctors, one of whom was a university professor, were themselves opposed; also because the virus used was bad; so bad that in some cases arms had to be amputated.”

Doctor Martel also pointed to another reason that smallpox didn’t take hold in Maine. Because very few of Maine’s Francos came from Montréal, the state’s exposure to the disease was limited. In fact, the efforts at vaccination were somewhat duplicative:

“During the year I was City Physician in St-Hyacinthe, it was my duty to vaccinate all children over six months, by going from house to house. I don’t remember any objections or discontent. I hesitate to believe that I would be received with anything other than open arms in presenting myself to Lewiston homes with the same mission. I vaccinated more than 2,000 French Canadians in this city, and of that number, I don’t remember a single adult who had not been vaccinated at least once in their life.”



*“An Incident of the Small Pox Epidemic in Montréal,”
Harper’s Weekly, Nov 28, 1885. Image: New York Public*

The 1885 smallpox scare is both similar and different to our current conversation about vaccinations. Then, as now, immigrants faced prejudice and were unfairly maligned as vectors of disease. Then, as now, public health was threatened by a mistrust of vaccinations, fueled by a misinformation campaign. The public health response in 1885 was quite different from today’s. While the question of mandatory vaccination for school children has divided Mainers, there was a consensus among the politicians of 1885 not only that vaccination was a public good, but that it was worth spending taxpayers’ money to improve the health of immigrants – quite the opposite of some of the hostile rhetoric we’ve seen today.



DAUGHTERS OF THE KING - FILLES DU ROI PIN AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

As Peter Gagné describes in his book, *King's Daughters and Founding Mothers: Les Filles du Roi 1663-1673*, more than 350 years ago the King's Daughters or Filles du Roi arrived in Québec. They immigrated to New France between 1663 and 1673 as part of a program sponsored by Louis XIV. The program was designed to boost Canada's population both by encouraging male emigrants to settle there, and by promoting marriage, family formation and the birth of children. While women and girls certainly immigrated to New France both before and after this period, they were not considered to be "Filles du Roi," as the term refers to women and girls who were actively recruited by the government and whose travel to the colony was paid for by the King. The title "King's Daughters" was meant to imply state patronage, not royal or even noble parentage. Most of these women were commoners of humble birth. Almost every person of French-Canadian descent can claim at least one of these incredible, young women in their heritage.

There were about 768 "Filles du Roi." You can find a list of the "Filles du Roi" on our website at: [http://www.afgs.org/AFGS Daughters of the King List of names.pdf](http://www.afgs.org/AFGS%20Daughters%20of%20the%20King%20List%20of%20names.pdf)

Instructions and information on the documentation requirements for submission are also on our website at: <https://afgs.org/site/kings-daughters/>. *Verified descendants of a Fille du Roi will receive a pin and certificate.*



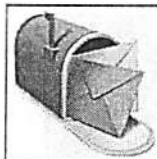
FILLES À MARIER PIN AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

A list of the "Filles à Marier" and their spouses from 1634-1662 is on our website at <http://afgs.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/filles.pdf>

AFGS is offering a second pin and certificate program in addition to the "Filles du Roi" program. This time we will be honoring the marriageable girls who came to New France before the Daughters of the King – THE FILLES À MARIER. For those receiving this newsletter electronically, all the necessary information will be found on our AFGS website at

<http://afgs.org/site/les-filles-a-marier/> *Verified descendants of a "Fille à Marier" will receive a pin and certificate.*

According to Peter J. Gagné, in his book, *Before the King's Daughters: The Filles à Marier, 1634-1662*, just 262 women answered the call to populate France's colony before King Louis XIV started the government sponsored "Filles du Roi" program which brought an additional 768 women to New France. These early seventeenth century women, who came alone or in small groups, left behind families in a civilized country, faced the dangerous ocean crossing to arrive in an uncivilized colony with harsh weather and the constant threat of attacks by the Iroquois Indians to marry a settler and raise as many children as possible for the glory of God and King.



IN OUR EMAIL BOX

We are always happy to hear from our members. Thanks so much for reaching out to us! JMSeditor@afgs.org

Here are a few comments we received from people who ordered "Daughter of the King" and "Fille à Marier" certificates and pins.

"At last I have got this project completed for myself, my daughters, my sister, my niece and my brother's daughter! (This quarantine was good for something.) Stay healthy and thank you."

Sandra

"Thank you for this amazing opportunity. I consider this a gift to my family."

Joanne

"With a lot of time on my hands, I thought I'd do some family research. I had done some on my father's Irish side but none on my mother's French side. Imagine my joy and complete amazement at discovering my connection to Pierre and Catherine - two incredibly brave and adventurous people! I am so very proud to be connected to them and will wear this pin with much pride."

Ellen

"My certificates arrived! I can't believe how pretty they are. Thank you for all you do."

Susan

"Thank you for making me aware of all these fantastic women. I am so proud of my Daughters of the King. They were so brave. Why didn't I know anything about them before this? We have so much history that we don't know about. Thank you for helping me learn about my heritage and thanks for all the work you do."

Marie Rose

"My Peter Gagné books arrived and I can't stop reading them. It is so nice that

they are written in English. Such interesting stories about these women. They certainly had adventurous lives. My granddaughter is enjoying them too. Thank you for offering them to the Society members."

Louise

"Thank you so much for your expert eye—you were absolutely right (of course); moreover, thank you so much for the joy with which you accomplished it. I am so grateful for people like you who share so openly their love of heritage AND expertise. I have attached both the original marriage record and a revised straight line chart for your records."

"I so enjoyed speaking with you over the telephone. I hope you have a wonderful holiday week (or weeks—if you celebrate from the 4th to Bastille Day on the 14th)!"

*Merci mille fois,
Steph*

"I received my certificate and pin with your confirmation of my lineage to Marie Vie dite Lamotte.

Thank you so much for your time spent proving this for me! They were a courageous set of girls!"

*Have a great rest of your summer—
Lisa*

Our research staff at AFGS is busy verifying your direct lines of descent for our *Filles à Marier* and *Filles du Roi* Certificate Program. We are thrilled to be able to provide this service to our members

We are looking forward to your responses to our latest issue. Please let us know your thoughts about our journal and what you would like to read about in the future. You can contact us at JMSeditor@afgs.org

CELEBRATING OUR NEW MEMBERS



Welcome!
Enchanté!
Bienvenue!

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Mary Butts, CT
Roland Beauregard, FL
Paul Fenaux, MA
Debbie Arvaneh, VA
Kim Thompson, CT
Janice Brown, GA
Bonita Kaye Flannery, MT
Gloria Roy, FL
Jeannine T. Levesque, NH

C. Yvonne Hickey, MA
Norma Bolduc, MA
Dianne Feray, TX
Iris Daoust Bartholomew, SK, Canada
Penny Joyce Domschot, CA
Stephen Rantz, NC

Welcome to our new members!

Please remember that your membership must be current
to access the Members Only Online Library.

BENEFITS OF American-French Genealogical Society MEMBERSHIP

- Access to the research library and collections,
- Access to our quarterly *Je Me Souviens*, a digital magazine filled with resources for genealogists, research stories, new member listings, tips and facts,
- Access to a Members Only Online Library section of our website containing genealogical research resources, archives of *Je Me Souviens*, and other useful material,
- The right to attend the annual business meeting where members are informed of Society activities,
- New members who visit our library receive individual assistance and training from experienced and highly competent staff members,
- Members unable to conduct their own research may use the library resources through the Research Committee. A staff of experienced researchers is available to conduct research at low member rates.

For more information visit our website at www.afgs.org/site .

GREAT BOOKS THAT SHOULD BE IN YOUR LIBRARY!

Before the King's Daughters: The Filles à Marier, 1634-1662

AFGS is proud to offer a wonderful book that all genealogists doing French-Canadian research should have in their library. This book, written in English by Peter Gagné, is a treasure trove of historical, genealogical and biographical information. It is being offered for sale with the permission of the author who holds the copyright.

Before the King's Daughters: The Filles à Marier, 1634-1662 is a biographical dictionary of the 262 women and girls sent from France to populate Québec between 1634 and 1662. This work gives an overview of who the "Filles à Marier" were and then presents comprehensive biographies of all the "Marriageable Girls" including a wealth of information never before available in English! This set also includes a glossary, a comprehensive bibliography, various historical documents, and an index of husbands.

This book is extremely popular at our library. Most French-Canadians have multiple "Fille à Marier" in their line. By popular demand, AFGS is also offering a certificate and pin program to honor and recognize these very brave women. Therefore, we have decided to offer this wonderful book for sale to you as we know that you will be delighted with it. Current inventory is limited so please order right away and give yourself a well-earned gift.

A Companion 2-Volume Set

King's Daughters and Founding Mothers: Les Filles du Roi 1663-1673

Written in English by Peter Gagné, this is a groundbreaking biographical dictionary of the nearly 800 women and girls sent from France to populate Québec between 1663 and 1673. The introduction explains the need for the program, compares it to similar initiatives by the British and Spanish, dispels misconceptions about the "Filles du Roi" and gives a history of the program in Canada. After defining who can be considered a "Fille du Roi," this work presents comprehensive biographies of all the "King's Daughters," including a wealth of information never before available in English.

This large softcover 2-volume set has 662 pages and also includes 20 photographs and reproductions of artwork relating to the "Filles du Roi," biographies of 36 women falsely identified as "Filles du Roi," a table of all the "King's Daughters" by year of arrival, an appendix with supporting documentation, a glossary, thematic index and an index of husbands.

Volume One includes Biographies A-J, Introduction, Historical Background and 20 Images. Volume 2 contains Biographies L-Z, Complete Table of "Filles du Roi" by Year of Arrival, Appendix and Glossary. It is being offered for sale with the permission of the author who holds the copyright.

ORDER FORM

**BEFORE THE KING'S DAUGHTERS: THE FILLES À MARIER
KING'S DAUGHTERS AND FOUNDING MOTHERS: LES FILLES DU ROI 1663-1673**

YOU MAY ALSO ORDER ONLINE AT <http://afgs.org/site/shop-online/>
You will find the books listed in our on-line store under "Books & Publications – Other"

Please send me:

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Les Filles du Roi 1663 – 1673 _____ @ \$65.00 for each 2-volume set _____

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RI Residents please add 7% tax:

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\$4.55 per King's Daughters and Founding Mothers 2-volume set _____

Shipping: \$6.00 for Before the King's Daughters

\$6.00 for King's Daughters and Founding Mothers 2 volume set

\$8.00 for both publications

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Mail completed order form to: AFGS, P.O. Box 830, Woonsocket, RI 02895-0870

RESIDENTS OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES, PLEASE USE CREDIT CARDS ONLY
AND CONTACT ROGER BEAUDRY AT rbeaudry@afgs.org FOR POSTAGE CHARGES.

AUTHORS 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 the 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 two 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 footnotes, rather than endnotes. 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 and submitted to JMSeditor@afgs.org. Any word processing file will be accepted but we prefer .doc, .docx, .txt, and .rtf files. Please no PDFs. All illustrations and photos should be submitted as JPEG files. You may also submit printed black-and-white photographs for publication. These photographs should be labeled with the submitter's name, contact information and the caption for the photo, preferably on the back. We are not responsible for loss of damage to originals and they may not be returned.

Authors are responsible for the accuracy of all materials submitted. All material published in *Je Me Souviens* is copyrighted and becomes the property of the American-French Genealogical Society and *Je Me Souviens*. All material submitted for publication must be original. Previously published material, except that which is in the public domain, will be accepted only if it is submitted by the author and is accompanied by a signed release from the previous publisher. Articles that promote a specific product or service, or whose subject matter is inappropriate, will be rejected. Submissions received that do not fit these guidelines will be returned to the author.

RESEARCH POLICY

The American-French Genealogical Society accepts requests for ancestral searches. This offer is open to the public for both members and non-members. The only requirement is that the ancestor you are seeking be French-Canadian, for that is the focus of our organization, and the area where we can be of most help.

To utilize the AFGS Research Service, simply print the research request sheet by clicking on the research request form at the bottom of the page at our website, www.afgs.org/site, fill in the necessary information, and send via regular mail to the address listed on the form.

To utilize the AFGS Research service, please fill out the research form with the following information and send it by postal mail to AFGS, Attn: Research Dept., P.O. Box 830, Woonsocket, RI 02895-0870.

What you need to send to us:**1) Your request with a choice of one of the following:****Type of research**

- **Single Marriage** – One marriage to search. Marriages of parents will also be counted as additional single marriages and billed as such.
- **Births, baptisms, deaths and burials** will also be researched at the rates listed below.
- **Direct Lineage** – A straight line of either a husband or wife back to the immigrant ancestor. This will include each couple, their date and place of marriage, and their parents' names and location of immigrants in France.
- **Five Generation Ancestral Chart** – Standard five generation ancestral chart of 31 ancestors with 8 marriages found. The last column of names will give parents' names only, no marriages are included as they would start a new five generation chart.

You must include your mailing address: name, street, city, state, zip code. Also include your phone number, email address and member number if you are an AFGS member. Any other pertinent information you may have regarding your research request should also be sent.

Please do not send payment with your research request. You will receive an invoice with your completed research.

2) What we will do in return:

After receiving your request, we will start as soon as possible on your research. Currently, our staff is very busy with a record number of searches to perform, so please be patient. When your research is completed, we will send the requested report with our findings to you along with the invoice for the research performed.

3) Your payment:

After receiving your research report and invoice, please return the top portion of your invoice with a payment by check payable to AFGS in U.S. funds. We are unable to accept/process foreign checks. Non-U.S. residents must use credit cards. We will accept payment by credit card by mail or over the phone during our business hours.

You may use the rates listed below as a guide to estimate the cost of your research:

Request	Item	AFGS Member		Non-Member	
Birth/Baptism Death/Burial	Price per Act	\$7.00	each	\$12.00	each
Marriage	Price per Marriage	\$5.00	each	\$10.00	each
5 Generation Chart	Price per 5 Generation Chart	\$35.00	each	\$50.00	each
Direct Lineage	Price Direct Lineage Chart	\$35.00	each	\$50.00	each
Other – Specify Below	Price quoted depending on research requested				

Please be patient, the Research Committee is a volunteer group, as is the entire AFGS. There is a backlog of requests, and the group is working very hard to keep up with the demand!



AFGS FILM ROOM REQUEST SERVICE



The **Film Room Request Copy Service** is where members and non-members who are unable to visit the library can request copies of actual obituary and headstone pictures or of

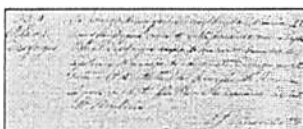
births, marriages and deaths from the vital records of Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont. Also members and non-members can request a copy of births, marriages and deaths from our own personal collection of the prestigious Drouin Microfilms. Note: The Drouin records are online, but many are unreadable due to the digital process, AFGS has access to the original microfilms and can make copies for you.

Attention: This is a copy service only. You must provide the needed information. All documents must have the name, month, year and place. Without this information, your request is considered research, not a document copy. For a research request, please click here <https://afgs.org/site/request-research/>.

The collections are listed as Categories A and B are described below.

Category A – Vital Records:

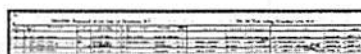
Birth



marriage



death

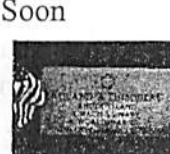


AFGS has a number of microfilms of vital records including RI, MA, VT and NH. Also AFGS owns the original Drouin Microfilm Collection of the Canadian records from 1606 to 1943. Category A is available for both members and non-members for a fee. Please visit our Category A section on our website at <https://afgs.org/site/category-a/> for the list of vital records. You will find a complete list of the years that are available for each state and their fees as well as the years available in our Canadian records.

Category B – Obituaries and Headstones - Under construction - Coming Soon

Obituaries - AFGS has a large collection of 600,000+ obituaries dating from 1979 – 2018 covering the U.S. and Canada.

Headstones - In addition, we have a collection of 116,000+ headstone pictures that covers RI, MA, CT, NY and Québec.



Obituary and Headstone categories are for non-members and for members who have do not have computer access to our Members Only Online Library. Non-members will receive copies of the pictures for a small fee. To register for access to our Members Only website, click here https://www.authpro.com/auth/afgs_olb/?action=reg

How to make Payment - You will receive an invoice for services rendered. After receiving your invoice, please return the top portion of your invoice with a payment by check payable to AFGS in U.S. funds. We are unable to accept/process foreign checks. Non-U.S. residents must use credit cards. We will accept payment by credit card in the mail or over the phone during our business hours.

Email questions to filmroomrequest@AFGS.org or call AFGS at 401-765-6141, and you can leave a message for the film room manager.

WHAT IS AFGS?

The American-French Genealogical Society, founded in 1978, is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization devoted to people of French Canadian ancestry. However, we have many research holdings pertaining to Native American nations and other nationalities including Irish, English, Italian and German. Its purpose is to assist members in tracing their ancestors and discovering the daily events that shaped their lives, and eventually, our lives.

The Society collects and publishes Franco-American vital statistics, parish registers, burial records and other data consistent with our culture.

The AFGS is dedicated to the preservation of French Canadian culture in the United States. Long and short-range plans include increasing the Society's capability to direct research and facilitating members' ancestral search.

Library Hours:

Monday from 11 A.M. to 4 P.M. Tuesday from 1 P.M. to 9 P.M.
Saturday from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. (Closed Saturdays in July)

RESOURCES

The AFGS library has more than 20,000 volumes of marriage, baptism, birth, death and burial records, genealogies, biographies, histories and reference books.

The *Forget Files* – records include thousands of early Franco-American marriages in Rhode Island and other New England states.

A collection of more than 7,000 microfilms of vital records (BMD) in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont and New Hampshire from about 1854 to circa 1915. Some of our Vermont records are earlier.

Members have internet access to Ancestry.com, AmericanAncestors.org, PRDH, FamilySearch and other digital research records and information.

AFGS publications such as our popular cookbook, our quarterly magazine *Je Me Souviens*, local church records, books, maps, journals from other genealogical societies, family histories and other items of interest to genealogists.

The *Drouin Genealogical Collection of Canadian Church and Civil Records* – this unique collection of books and microfilms, available to our members, includes records from the beginning of Québec through 1935. The films contain images of the actual baptism, marriage and burial records as they were written.

AFGS is a FamilySearch Affiliate Library. Therefore, visitors can access information from the Church of Latter Day Saints (LDS) data base from our library facility. This makes researching your ancestors from many countries throughout the world a possibility.

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