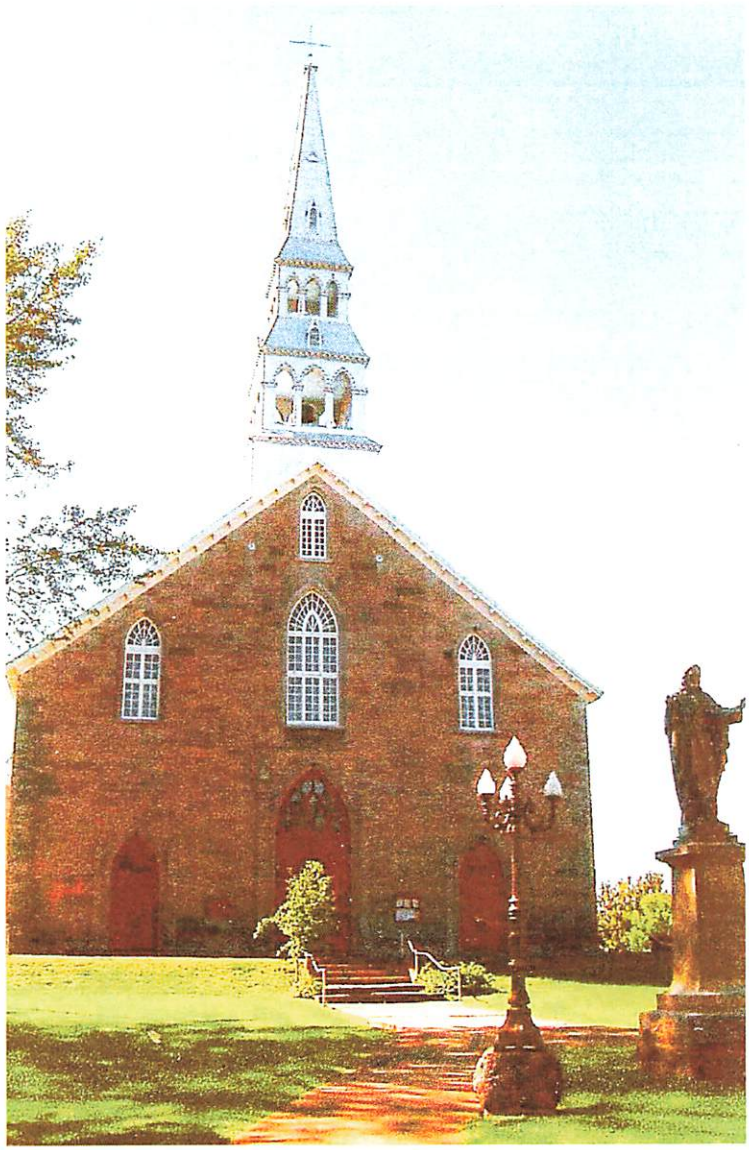
SENT BY THE KING

Journal of La Société des filles du roi et soldats du Carignan



La Société des filles du roi et soldats du Carignan is dedicated to the women and men who played a major role in the growth and settlement of New France.

Their courage, independence, and self-sacrifice are evident in the strength of their descendants.

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SENT BY THE KING, the Journal of La Société des filles du roi et soldats du Carignan is published twice a year. The Société is an organization of volunteers and people interested in finding out more about their ancestors and the role they played in the development of New France. The Société may be reached at P.O. Box 220144, Chantilly, VA 20153-6144, USA.

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On the Cover...

Photo of Saint George Church in Henryville, Quebec, Canada by Beverly Morin Thomas

(see article pg. 16)

A Message from our President

The mission of *La Société des Filles du roi et soldats du Carignan* is threefold: to encourage sound genealogical practices and provide certification of lineages; to offer information via our website (www.fillesduroi.org) and personal email correspondence; and to publish this journal with articles about the *Filles du roi* and Carignan soldiers, their times, and related matters. We are particularly proud to publish articles and brief items by our members and people connected to our members, or to the other organizations to which they belong.

So now I renew the call to you, our membership, to tell your stories in this journal. It must be a story – we no longer print merely lineages or names of ancestors with dates. And it should be a tale with likely interest to our membership.

It could be about one of your *Filles du roi* or Carignan ancestors; and/or it could relate to the personalities from and history of the world they lived in. It might recall your own adventure into the challenging field of researching your family history, or a trip (perhaps to Quebec, to France, or to the place in the USA or elsewhere where your ancestors settled) to search for your origins. Or perhaps the story could connect your more recent ancestors to those from New France.

Then again, you might choose to write about your experience (or that of your near ancestors) with French-Canadian culture, be it cuisine, clothing, design, music, dance or art. It might show others the techniques and sources you used to overcome a challenge you encountered in your research. Or you might find a topic that fits our mission but one we have not yet entertained.

Your article must contain your original writing; of course, you can quote sources, but the quotes should be brief. We ask that you provide a citation for the information you write about (i.e. where you obtained it) in a footnote or as part of a list of your sources at the end. An article might be one page or ten pages (or anywhere in between). We encourage you to provide an accompanying image or photograph; but it must be one you made, or you will need to show us permission from the artist/ photographer.

Another possibility is that you could suggest a great article you read in another magazine or on a website. We will need the author's (or copyright holder's) permission to reprint it (same as with any art or photograph) and we might need your help in obtaining it.

On a technical note, we request that an article be provided in a Word document (preferably in Arial 12 font). Our editors reserve the right to edit the length to fit the space in our journal, and to make formatting, grammatical and typographical changes to fit the existing style of the journal. If our editor requests more significant changes (such as to the wording), we will contact you and either request you make the change, or we may suggest a change. Deadlines for submission of manuscripts for our two annual issues are February 15th and September 15th.

Our journal should reflect the interests of and showcase the hard work and research of our membership in pursuing our cause of promoting the history of the *Filles du roi* and Carignan soldiers of 17th century New France and their descendants. We emphasize that our published articles display your sources for the information in your articles, just as we show the sources for the genealogical information in our lineages and family histories. Please consider joining this effort! Send your writing (to info@filleduroi.org) so we may all benefit from your fascination with the genealogy and history of the *Filles du roi* and Carignan soldiers. We're interested in your journey in pursuing your family's contributions to the French-Canadian diaspora.

Dave Toupin
President, SFRSC

Book Review and Synopsis: A Treasure Trove of Facts about "*Les Filles du roi*"

by Dave Toupin
originally published in Sent By the King: Vol. II, Issue 1; Vol. II, Issue 2; and Vol. III, Issue 1.

Yves Landry, in his book, *Les Filles du roi au xvii'ème siècle* (The King's Daughters in the 17th century), published by Leméac in 1992 and subtitled, Orphans in France, Pioneers in Canada, provides a detailed view of his subject from the eye of the demographer. This work is a marvellous introduction to the history of the *Filles du roi* (King's Daughters), women who were sponsored by the King of France, Louis XIV, in the mid-17th century, to travel to New France for the purpose of marrying some of the huge majority of male colonists and to settle in Canada.

Landry's book is written in French (436 pages), and provides a critical analysis of previous research on the King's Daughters, while presenting his own findings in a well-balanced and fascinating, albeit technical description of who they were, where they were from, whom they married, and of the families they raised. He presents reams of data in the form of figures, tables, and graphs, and concludes with a brief bibliography of each *Fille du roi*. This book is a real treasure trove of general information for the genealogist and history buff, though it will not provide many specifics regarding your ancestor.

There are many definitions of who was a King's Daughter; depending on the author (historian, genealogist or demographer), the particular definition could produce a different total number of *Filles du roi* who settled in Canada, including or excluding your ancestor in the process. Two sources of information might be used in this process: the writings of contemporaries in the 17th century, and parish registry data.

The author notes that from 1634 to 1662, a private administration ran the colony of New France. But in 1663, the King took over the operation of Canada. Although the Queen of France had sponsored some young women to settle in Canada in 1654, no other concerted effort by the royal government had been made in this regard until 1663.

Landry describes how the term "*Fille du roi*" is first seen in the writings of Marguerite Bourgeoys in around 1697-1698. It was not repeated until historian Étienne-Michel Faillon used it in 1853. The term derives from "*enfants du roi*" (children of the King), which was used in 17th century Canada to refer to children without parents (orphans) who were raised at the King's expense.

Historian-authors in Quebec such as Sulte, Groulx and others in the early 20th century used the term to distinguish girls who were raised, recruited and transported to New France at the expense of the State (as opposed to those who arrived at their own cost). In 1935, Caron had the total number at 732; in 1950, Malchelosse put it at 857.

In 1952, Gustave Lanctôt, the historian of the *Filles du roi*, established that the King's Daughters were only women who arrived in Canada between 1663 and 1673. He counted a total number of 961 *Filles du roi*. Landry states that Lanctôt didn't limit their number to those who were originally from Paris and Normandy, as had previous authors.

Lanctôt's definition included a dowry gift from the King at marriage for the woman in the sum of 50 *livres* for girls of ordinary social origin, and 100 *livres* for "*demoiselles*" (those of higher social class).

In 1972, genealogist Silvio Dumas defined the *Filles du roi* in terms of who was "not" included in the group, according to author Landry. He excluded widows with children, those of Canadian origin, those who arrived outside the period of 1663-1673, those who arrived with parents or whose trip was financed by a parent, and those recruited by the

Companie des Indes occidentales. He calculated a total of 774 King's Daughters including some women who voyaged to Canada without public aid.

Dumas' list of *Filles du roi* was utilized and embellished by Elmer Courtois and Joy Reisinger in their widely known book, "The King's Daughters", published in English in 1988.

The author relates that in 1983, Marcel Trudel gave a more restricted definition of a King's Daughter: she was an orphan, of high social level, recruited by the State (in need), with a royal grant at marriage. However, the detailed work by Yves Landry (1991), analyzing the data of the Programme de recherche en démographie (PRDH). study and historical writings, has provided the most reliable definition to date (i.e. as of 1995).

In his book, "*Les Filles du roi au xvii'ème siècle*", published in 1992, Yves Landry defined a *Fille du roi* as a woman, single or widowed (including widows with children), who arrived in Canada between 1663 and 1673 inclusive, and who is presumed to have benefited from royal aid in her transport to and/or settlement in New France. They were identified and unified as a group. Landry does not require documentary proof of the State financial assistance for the woman to qualify as a King's Daughter. The presumption of being a *Fille du roi* depends on the year of arrival, the freedom to contract marriage, and the absence of private aid.

Using parish registries and notarial records, Landry has listed 770 women as *Filles du roi* (with biographies) in his book. Of these, 751 also were in Dumas' listing. Landry found 23 of the King's Daughters in Dumas' book in error, either because of duplications, falling outside the 1663-1673 period (as for example, Marie Mazouer, who immigrated in 1662 and married Louis Garneau), arriving with a husband or employer, or because she was Canadian.

Landry's primary source of information was the PRDH, which covers 1621-1765, with over 300,000 civil records from 122 parishes concerning 200,000 individuals in 45,000 families (24,608 individuals in the 17th century). 737 of the *Filles du roi* listed by Landry settled in Canada; 33 others arrived there, but either returned to France, died, or remained without marrying.

Some of these women were recruited and transported at the King's expense; others came to the ports of La Rochelle or Dieppe on their own, and were integrated into the group; and again others were neither recruited nor transported by the King, but arrived between 1663-1673 and their settlement was facilitated by colonial administrators (less than 100, during 1664, 1666 and 1672).

Landry began his count from civil records beginning after the first ship arrived (June 30th) in 1663, until the end of 1674. Women who arrived with a spouse or with a parent who remained in Canada were not included in the group. Thus, the three Raclos sisters are *Filles du roi*, because their father, who accompanied them on their voyage, returned to France during the same year of his arrival in Canada.

Landry admits that two categories of women have not been counted: those who remained single and were not mentioned in civil records (as witnesses, for example) until after 1674; and those who died in the voyage to Canada (on average, 10% of those who travelled to New France died

Les Filles du roi au XVIIe siècle:
(The Kings's Daughters in the 17th century)

Orphelines en France, pionnières au Canada
(Orphans in France, pioneers in Canada)

By Yves Landry, 1992
Published by Leméac

during the crossings at that time). Thus, he estimates the true number of King's Daughters at around 850 when these women are added to the total.

The number of arrivals according to Landry's research are as follows: 1663: 36; 1664: 15; 1665: 90; 1666: 25; 1667: 90; 1668: 81; 1669: 132; 1670: 120; 1671: 115; 1672: 15; and 1673: 51. Almost one half of the *Filles du roi* arrived during 1669 to 1671. This follows the demobilization and settlement of 400 of the Carignan-Salières Regiment's soldiers and officers in Canada in 1668.

Landry notes that the King's Daughters of 17th century Canada were of diverse cultural backgrounds, contrary to the assertions of some authors. However, certain characteristics were dominant in the group, according to his research. Nearly 80% were from either Paris, Normandy or the West of France. Almost 50% came from around Paris (Ile de France); most of those arrived in New France in 1665, 1669, 1670 or 1671. Only 6% were from countries other then France, and only 2% were Protestant (despite the 123 departures of *Filles du roi* [out of 770] from the port of La Rochelle).

Two-thirds of the King's Daughters were of urban versus rural origins, though only 15% of the population of France at the time lived in cities. One half of the urban King's Daughters were from Paris. Thus Landry concludes that immigration of the *Filles du roi* could be said to be connected to the mobility of urban dwellers where word spread quickly of the emigration to Canada. These numbers can be compared to the two-thirds of male settlers of known origin in Canada at that time who arrived before 1680 and were from rural areas.

The author notes that two women in particular, Mme. Bourdon and Mme. Estienne, acted as recruiters of women as *Filles du roi*, concentrating on the *Hôpital général de Paris* during the 1669-1671 migrations. The very great majority of the King's Daughters were from extreme poverty. It's likely they left France because of financial difficulties, whether they were orphans from the *Hôpital général de Paris* or their parents sent them off.

Landry's findings assume that 58% of King's Daughters would have spoken Central French (from the Ile de France); only 26% spoke semi-*patois*, and 16% only *patois*. Compare this to the distribution among the general population of France: one-fifth; one-fifth; and three fifths, respectively.

Given the high marriage and birth rate, and the traditional role of the mother in raising and educating the children, Landry concludes that the King's Daughters could have contributed to the acceleration of the assimilation, making Central French the common speech of Canada.

Four socio-economic groups of origin (based on the father's profession) were represented among the *Filles du roi*: nobility & *bourgeoisie*; tradesmen; farmers; and the "humble" occupations. Landry estimates that only 12% of the King's Daughters fell into the first group, again contrary to earlier writings. This figure is comparable to the percentage in the general population of France, and slightly less than that in the population of Canada at the time.

Landry describes how the general lack of money and personal goods among *Filles du roi* demonstrates the importance played by the royal aid in their settlement. Royal aid consisted of the cost of the voyage, assistance upon arrival, and a royal dowry on marriage.

The author notes that only 250 of the 606 known marriage contracts (or 41%) of the King's Daughters mention a royal dowry. Almost all of them were in the sum of 50 *livres*, and two were 200 *livres*. About three-quarters of King's Daughters of known upper socio-economic origins received only a 50 *livres* dowry.

The dowry was an important part of the royal aid given to some of the *Filles du roi*, according to

Landry. Almost all were in the amount of 50 *livres*. Of the seven higher dowries (100 livres or more), six were given to "*demoiselles*" (higher social origins). Author Landry assumes that dowries were paid in goods, given the rarity of money in the colony.

Most dowries were granted between 1669 and 1671 (244 of the 250), years when recruits of Mme. Bourdon and Mme. Estienne arrived; these were mostly from the *Hôpital général de Paris*, an orphanage.

Women who arrived with fewer possessions were more likely to receive a royal dowry at marriage. However, social class or origin did not determine the likelihood of a dowry. According to Landry, the Intendant of the colony, Jean Talon seemed to equalize the level of wealth among the newlyweds through this practice.

Landry's research reveals that the average age of single *Filles du roi* on arrival in Canada was 23.9 years; for widows, it was 32.5 years. Only half of these women were between 18 and 25 at immigration. However, 96% of the *Filles du roi* were between 16 and 40 upon settlement in New France.

A total of 718 of the *Filles du roi* were single on arrival; 38 were widows (though Landry believes that many failed to declare their true status for fear of rejection); and 14 were of unknown status.

Another aspect studied by Landry was literacy among the King's Daughters. Using notarial records, he determined that only 24% could sign their name, a rough estimation of literacy. The *Filles du roi* were on par with average French women in this regard, and had a higher rate of literacy than that of female Canadians (21%). Yet as a group, the *Filles du roi* undeniably were disadvantaged by a low level of education, contrary to popular belief.

Though subject to error because of ambiguities in the records, Landry found that 56.7% (387 of 663) of *Filles du roi* who provided information had a deceased father upon immigration; 19% had a deceased mother; and 11.3% were complete orphans. Thus 64.4% were orphaned of at least one parent. This percentage was even higher among women recruited by Mmes. Bourdon and Estiennes from Paris in 1669-1671.

Overall, Landry notes that this was a much higher rate of paternal mortality than for the average French woman at the time. The author writes that this would account for the intense poverty of the *Filles du roi* as a group. (The maternal mortality was likely much higher than appears in the records, because of the method of recording at the time). More orphans received royal dowries at marriage than other King's Daughters.

Landry does not agree with the assertion that all King's Daughters immigrated to Canada voluntarily with the only goal to take a husband. Many sought to escape miserable conditions in France. Though most did so voluntarily, at least one instance of coercion existed according to contemporary correspondence cited by the author.

Also, Landry points out that some may have been incited to immigrate by family ties to other immigrants who preceded, accompanied or followed them to Canada. One in ten King's Daughters were related to someone in New France; however, this percentage was low compared to the

Yves Landry defined a *Fille du roi* as a woman, single or widowed (including widows with children), who arrived in Canada between 1663 and 1673 inclusive, and who is presumed to have benefited from royal aid in her transport to and/or settlement in New France.

general French immigrant population, among whom two in three were related to a Canadian (pre-1700), demonstrating the isolation of the *Filles du roi* as a group.

At least 32 of 770 King's Daughters made it to Canada and did not marry, according to Landry's findings. At least eight of these had the promise of a royal dowry, showing their status as *Filles du roi.* Landry presumes that the vast majority of these women returned to France, probably the same year they arrived.

Among the remaining 738 by Landry's count, only one died in Canada without marrying after age 50 (compare this to 100 in 1000 Canadian women who never married, or 70 in 1000 French women, at that time). Thus, the author concludes that a very high percentage of the King's Daughters married after their arrival.

Marriageable men outnumbered available women between six and fourteen times in Canada up to 1670, according to Landry. By 1679, this ratio had decreased to two to one. Landry theorizes that the *Filles du roi* played a fundamental role in the functioning of the matrimonial marketplace in Canada. 737 King's Daughters married one time; 181 married twice; 35 married three times; and two married four times. The last first marriage of a *Fille du roi* occurred in 1677, only four years after the last contingent had arrived in Canada. By 1673, 656 first marriages and 25 second marriages had been recorded among the 737 King's Daughters who married.

Another striking statistic in Landry's research relates to how quickly these women made their choices of a spouse and married after arrival. The average interval between arrival and first marriage in the 1663-1673 period was 4.7 months. From year to year, the average varied from one month (1673) to 8.5 months (1667).

With these statistics, Landry proves that the previously reported interval of only a few weeks between arrival and marriage does not represent the average for these women. Nevertheless, Landry shows that 80 % were married within six months of their immigration. His conclusion: these women obeyed the official and financial pressures exerted on them to marry quickly.

By comparison, female immigrants to Canada from 1632 to 1656 married on average within one year after their arrival, according to Landry. *Filles du roi* who arrived between 1669-1671, who were well supervised and often had a dowry, tended to find partners sooner (3.6 months) than other King's Daughters (5.6 months). Landry's study shows that the youngest ones, and those of higher social class origins, took longer to marry than did the other *Filles du roi.*

Marriages were also connected to the seasons and the Roman Catholic calendar, as noted by the author. Nine out of ten marriages of *Filles du roi* occurred during the months of September through November, corresponding to the Canadian norm. Landry demonstrates that this pattern fits into the constraints of the agricultural season and restrictions of the religious calendar in Canada at the time.

Landry also describes how the *Filles du roi* resided initially at reception centers in Quebec City, at the *Hôtel Dieu* hospital, and at houses of the Ursuline nuns and of individuals such as Mme. La Peltrie and Anne Gasnier, following their arrival in the colony. Sixty-eight percent of their marriages took place nearby at the church of *Notre-Dame-de-Québec* or in its chapel. Thus, notes the author, there was an attempt to honor the French tradition of marriage in the wife's parish of residence. Five of six marriages of the King's Daughters were celebrated in urban parishes; only 15% took place on the Ile d'Orléans and Côte de Beaupré, 14% in the Montreal area, and 3% in Trois-Rivières and Champlain.

The husbands of these wards of the King had been residing in the colony for an average of four years. The author notes that this sign of stability (in a transient population) was important to the *Filles du*

roi, who often asked of a prospective husband whether he had an established home.

However, Landry describes how the King's Daughters dispersed throughout the colony after marriage, with few (10%) settling where they had just married in Quebec City. More than half of the couples settled in a different parish within a radius of 40 km or more from Quebec City, including the Ile d'Orléans. The areas around Montreal and Trois -Rivières attracted 26% and 12% of the newlyweds, respectively. But only 16% of the *Filles du roi* founded their new homes in the major towns of the colony, whereas 83% had had urban marriages.

The first official act in the nuptial process for the *Filles du roi* was an oral promise of marriage called a declaration of "*fiançailles*" (fiancees). At least 65% of the King's Daughters did so; perhaps as high as 92% of those in Quebec. It served to reinforce the fragile link between betrothed in their brief relationship, according to Landry.

Next came the marriage contract. Though not a necessity, 82% of the *Filles du roi* entered into one with their husbands for their first marriages (most did so prior to the religious ceremony), as opposed to only 65% of couples during the earlier 1632-1662 period. King's Daughters had marriage contracts in only 62% of their second marriages, closer to the colonial norm. Why such a high percentage for their first marriages? Landry speculates that a desire to confirm the choice so quickly made, and provide as much opportunity to become acquainted as possible, likely provoked this trend.

The King's wards also distinguished themselves in the observation of Church rules regarding the three weeks of publication of the banns prior to marriage. This requirement was waived in just less than one in every two marriages for the *Filles du roi*, as compared to one in four marriages prior to 1663.

Not all contemplated marriages took place. Fifteen percent of the King's Daughters who signed first marriage contracts did not marry their intended (highest during 1669-1671), according to Landry, three times the rate for the period 1632-1662 and twice as high as for second marriages for the *Filles du roi*. And another 13% of these women did not marry following a second try at a first marriage. The author concludes that such data highlights the instability of the pre-nuptial relations of this group. The shorter the period to make the choice, the higher the rate of cancellation.

Most of the husbands in the first marriages of the *Filles du roi* were born in France (95%). Only 3% were Canadian-born; but then, only 10% of the males in the colony were born there, notes Landry. Yet there was a high degree of cultural mixing in the choice of spouses. For example, whereas half of the wives were from the region around Paris, only 8% of the husbands hailed from that area (among persons of known origin). Only 18.7% of spouses were from the same region, as compared to a rate of 33% among Canadian couples generally before 1680.

Landry's statistical analysis shows that the choice of a partner was made without much regard to place of origin (whether region of origin, or rural versus urban origin), social class, literacy, or language spoken, in contrast to established trends. It is possible, though not confirmed, that as many as almost half of the couples had difficulty comprehending each other! The author questions his own data on that point, but nevertheless it tells us something of the nature of these matches.

The author examined the difference in ages of the spouses. The average age of a *Fille du roi* at marriage was 24, and that of the husbands was 28.5. This difference in age was greater than that seen in marriages in France on average, but less than that of Canadian marriages of the period. The King's Daughters of noble origin immigrated and married at an earlier age (average 24.4) as opposed to others (27.7).

Landry concludes that his data shows the tremendous pressure on the *Filles du roi* to marry quickly, especially during the 1669-1671 period.

He theorizes that these findings highlight the state of anticipation of the population, the dearth of females in Canada, and the predisposition of the King's Daughters to their mission. One could add that the government and religious community in the colony may also have been predisposed to this result.

In all, the author again reveals how important the *Filles du roi* were to bringing a balance between the genders in the marriageable population of New France. Without their arrival, Landry notes that the lack of available females would have had a far more disastrous effect in the survival of the French colony than the Iroquois threat.

Certain sections of "*Les Filles du roi au xvii'ème siècle*" are highly technical, containing formulae and pedantic discussion best left for the academic demographers. But in his section on fertility rates among the King's Daughters, Landry points out how his data refutes the claims of Baron Lahontan that many of the *Filles du roi* had been prostitutes in France. The author notes that the high level of fertility shown by the *Filles du roi* excluded the possibility, because prostitutes were shown to suffer low reproductive rates as a result of venereal disease.

The *Filles du roi* were slightly more prolific in child-rearing than women in France, and slightly less so than Canadian-born women of the time. This causes Landry to conclude that more favorable sanitary and nutritional conditions in the colony resulted in a higher level of health and reproductive capacity among the *Filles du roi* as they adapted to their surroundings.

The author found that 71% of the children born to the King's wards entered the world between 1670 and 1685. In all, there were a total of 4459 births to *Filles du roi* from 1664-1702. Baptismal and later records (especially the census of 1681) were used to track these births. Over 100 births per year occurred during 1669-1687 alone. One-third of the first-borns of the *Filles du roi* were conceived during the period of November through January; in other words, within a very few months of the profusion of autumnal weddings that took place shortly after the arrival of these women in the colony.

Landry found that a *Fille du roi* had on average 5.8 children during her lifetime (after statistical correction), at a time when New France was sparsely populated. The author also noted that the average *Fille du roi*'s marriage lasted 23.5 years. In couples who lived at least to age 45, Landry found that a *Fille du roi* who married between the ages of 20-24 had an average of 8.5 children, and one who married between 25-29 had an average of 5.7 children. Of course, there are always exceptions to the rule: Catherine Ducharme and her husband Pierre Roy dit Lambert beat the average; they had 18 children over their 27 year marriage!

The author explores all aspects of the reproductive life of these women in his book. For example, he notes that a mere 24 illegitimate births took place among all of the *Filles du roi*, which resulted in a rate of 0.54% as compared to a level of 1% among the French population of the time (0.93% among Canadian women).

On the other hand, 1 in 18 King's Daughters were pregnant at the time of their marriages in Canada, similar to the rate for 17th century Canadian and rural French women. Landry points out that, rare as it was, prenuptial conception was more common among the women who married at an older age (often widows) and those who married noblemen, probably as a result of the longer period of courtship seen in these groups.

Landry writes that the *Filles du roi* gave birth to 46% of their first-born children before their first anniversary of marriage, with an average of less than 13 months between the two dates. This was a smaller interval than among French women, though not as short as their daughters and grand-daughters would experience in later years. The interval was longer for King's Daughters arriving during 1669-1671, suggesting, according to the author, that conditions at the orphanage where the majority of

these women were recruited (the *Hôpital général de Paris*) altered their fertility.

Although one may be tempted to skip over the statistical studies in his book, the explanations that Mr. Landry provides regarding the methods of collecting data or estimating dates according to accepted demographic practices could be helpful to the genealogist. The descriptions of 17th century record-keeping and the life experience and habits of the time also can be very instructive.

The section of this tome pertaining to mortality rates is also illuminating. Dates of death are often absent from the vital records, and Landry provides estimates for us (as he did for dates of arrival in the colony). In this instance (17th century Canada), Landry found that a date of death is estimated to be half way (50%) between the date that the person was last recorded as alive and the first record mentioning that the person was deceased, if that interval is less than five years. Regardless of age, as the interval lengthens, the date of death approaches the date of the first record declaring her demise: for a 5-9 year interval, 62.5%; for a 10-year interval, 75%.

Landry assumes that if the person was not mentioned in the 1681 census, she had died. This results in a large number of statistically-produced deaths of *Filles du roi* for the preceding period of his study. In all, the deaths of these women spanned from 1666 to 1747. The first death was that of Anne Labbé in early 1666; the last was that of Anne Rabady in September 1747 (aged 93-96). The longest-lived King's Daughter was Jeanne Amiot, apparently aged 107 at her death in 1745.

Almost two-thirds of the group died in the first 30 years of the 18th century. Landry calculates that the average age of a *Fille du roi* at death was 62.2 years. He has determined that life expectancy for the *Filles du roi* at birth was 42.5 to 45 years. But, at age 20, a King's Daughter had a life expectancy of 61.4 additional years! This was an exceptional duration of life for the 17th century.

Landry's description of the practices of the period is another benefit that this book provides to the reader.

Landry compares this statistic to known European life expectancy figures, and concludes that only women of old ruling class families in Geneva had a longer life expectancy at age 20. This rate even surpassed that of ruling classes in the rest of Europe; some did not reach this level until the late 19th century!

However, it must be noted that contemporary Canadian-born women had a similar life expectancy at that age, as Landry acknowledges. Nevertheless, Landry surmises that a selective process had taken place with the *Filles du roi*, and through the recruitment of the *Filles du roi*, their survival of the harsh Atlantic crossing and the settlement on inhospitable lands, they had adapted to and benefited from their new environment. Canada then had a very low population density, which lessened the spread of epidemics (in contrast to Europe), and the people enjoyed plenty of fish, game and clean water which no doubt assisted in this statistical accomplishment.

Few records survive that indicate the causes of death for this group of women. But the author does note that some of the years in which a large number of *Filles du roi* died coincide with known deadly epidemics (typhus in 1687, 1718; influenza in 1700; yellow fever in 1711) or a similar trend of death in the general population by unknown cause (in 1708, 1715).

Yet the year of the highest number of deaths of King's Daughters, in 1728, does not find a reflection in the rest of the Canadian populace. And a 1703 smallpox epidemic did not take a significant toll among *Filles du roi*. Landry speculates that prior exposure to this disease in France may have been the saving factor for these women.

The *Filles du roi* were not as affected by digestive tract (summer heat) illnesses as were French women of the time, whereas respiratory tract diseases resulted in a higher number of deaths among the group in late autumn-early winter. More than one quarter of the *Filles du roi* were buried the same day of their death, reflecting a high likelihood that epidemics played a significant role as a cause of death, according to Landry.

For this last hypothesis, the author assumes a faithful adherence to religious practices (the "*Rituel de Québec*") which restricted the time of burial except for cases of death by contagious disease. Landry's description of the practices of the period is another benefit that this book provides to the reader.

In two-thirds of the marriages, the author found that the husband of the *Fille du roi* died first, a higher percentage than in France. Even when of equal age, the man died first twice as often as did the woman. The average age at widowhood was 51.1 years for a King's Daughter. The importance of this statistic, Landry points out, is the lightened burden of the widow, supporting only an average of 1.5 dependent children under age 15 by that time in her life.

Unfortunately, one-fourth of the *Filles du roi* lost their husbands when they were between 30-45 years old, during maximum responsibility for young children (an average of 3.6 dependent children). In the extreme, Landry cites the case of Marie Hatanville, who had 11 dependent children living with her in 1685 when her third husband died. But wait! A few months later she married again... to a widower with seven dependent children of his own!

On average, at least one spouse had been married previously in roughly one in four marriages of the King's Daughters, according to the author. Landry shows us that the adoption of step-children was not a deterrent to remarriage in this society: 86% of widows were under 40 years old, and three-quarters of those remarried while responsible for five or more children. And the custom of waiting one year prior to remarriage was often violated by the *Filles du roi.*

Mr. Landry concludes his book by stating that "(t)he demographic study of the *Filles du roi*, settled in New France during a brief 11 year period, admirably serves as a... study of the assimilation of immigrants, for an era where there is a paucity of such works." But for genealogists, it provides a window into the world of our ancestors. It demonstrates precisely why this group of women stand out so significantly as founders of the French-Canadian population. On the other hand, this treatise disproves old myths about their background and nature, and questions the accuracy of some contemporary writings pertaining to their history.

It confirms the high number of orphans (of at least one parent) among the *Filles du roi*, yet shows the high rate of illiteracy among them. Throughout the book, we see how the harsh conditions of poverty of their early lives in France influenced their capacity to survive and adapt remarkably well to the conditions of the new world.

The intense pressure to marry quickly and the brief courtships resulted in altered nuptial practices (*fiançailles*, marriage contracts, banns), and consequences such as low rates of illegitimacy and prenuptial conceptions, more annulments and higher levels of cultural mixing (in other words, a lower level of in-breeding).

Landry surmises that the Canadian environment impressed itself upon this group of women, by influencing their fertility and mortality rates. But he also points out that the change in their demographic behavior and the extent of their adaptation had a profound connection to the character of these individuals as well. The *Filles du roi* demonstrated the great capacity for recuperation under new conditions, notes Landry, permitting escape from their prior, limiting circumstances.

In addition to the very brief but helpful biographies of each *Fille du roi* at the end of this book, you may find a footnote mentioning an ancestor along the

way that might add a previously unknown tid-bit of information to your research. His book also provides a comparison of conditions in France versus Canada at the time, to enlighten us on the origins of our predecessors and the challenges that they faced in the young colony.

In summary, this book may be overwhelming in its technicalities, tables and graphs, but if you can weather the regular use of your French-English dictionary, you will greatly benefit from the reading experience in the end. And we can only hope that another book will follow with expanded information on the individual *Filles du roi* to satisfy our thirst for knowledge about our ancestors.

(Note: written in 1995, my wish came true with the publication of Peter J. Gagné's two volume "*King's Daughters and Founding Mothers: The Filles du Roi, 1663-1673*" in March 2001, by Quintin Publications. Also, this book by Yves Landry was republished in June 2013.)

Settler's Log Cabin. Image from the National Archives of Canada. http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca

Urbain Tessier dit Lavigne: A Tale of Extraordinary Courage

Father-in-law of Carignan Soldier, Corporal Pierre Payet

By Stephen Amandus Arter #F601

Drouin: "To take pride in being descended from such a hero is not vanity, but patriotism of the highest order."

Imagine my surprise to find that when I proved my lineage to *Carignan Salières* Regiment Corporal Pierre Payet, I discovered Pierre's father-in-law was none other than Urbain Tessier dit Lavigne, an early founder, land holder, and defender of the tiny settlement of *Ville Marie*. After this startling discovery I became highly motivated to learn all I could about him and his life and deeds in helping this tiny settlement in the wilderness grow and become what is now the modern city of Montreal.

From various records stating his age, it appears Urbain was born about 1625. On his marriage record he states that his parents are Artus Tessier and Jeanne Meine, from the parish of Chateau en Anjou in France. His life is a blank from the time of his birth until the next record shows him in Montreal in early January 1648 at a ceremony where M.de Maisonneuve granted parcels of land to twelve of the earliest settlers in Montreal. Until that time, everyone lived within the fort. Urbain was only the eighth person to receive a grant of land in *Ville Marie*. His grant consisted of one *arpent* of land near the hospital, which was the first structure built outside the walls of the fort, as well as an adjacent 30 *arpents* extending over a half mile back into the forest. (An *arpent* is .846 of an acre or 192 feet linear measure).

There is no record of when he actually arrived in Montreal. Therefore, we don't know if he arrived the year before, in the summer of 1647, or if he was there even before that date. His trade is listed as a pit sawyer. This was a trade that was very important to a new venture in the wilderness. Did he arrive with this skill already or is it one he learned after his

arrival? A sawyer's job is to take large logs and cut them into planks for building material. The small group that landed in Quebec in late summer of 1641 needed this skill right away. It was too late to go on to Montreal, so one of their first tasks during the winter they stayed in the Quebec area was to cut down oak trees in the forest to the west of the city. Then they sawed them into planks to build the four smaller boats needed to get their party and supplies to Montreal. The next spring when they arrived at the wilderness that was to become Montreal, their first task was to build a fort and surround it with a palisade to protect them from the Indians. Most likely, he was not with this group.

In 1643, King Louis XIII presented a ship called the *Notre Dame du Montreal* to The Company of One Hundred Associates, and it was sent from France with more settlers and supplies. These reinforcements arrived in Montreal under the command of Louis d' Ailleboust. Unfortunately, he and his wife are the only members of the group that we know by name. Ailleboust was an engineer, and when he arrived he saw that the fort was in dire need of repair and reinforcement. Jeanne Mance, a nurse and early settler, received money to build her hospital. It was a building that would not fit inside the fort, so it was to be the first building to be constructed outside of the fort. They also learned that ten of the recruits were sent over to build the hospital. Thus, a new construction boom created a new need for sawyers. It was in the area of France that Urbain lived that the society was recruiting young men, so we can only speculate that he might have been in this group. If Urbain did not arrive with them, he would have arrived on his own sometime between 1644 and 1647.

Tessier would have been an ideal recruit to be trained for such an occupation. He was young and apparently strong with great stamina as we will see later in discussing his life and his work and deeds in building and protecting the community. We know that he could neither read or write, but he must have had some basic knowledge of math to be able to do his job. Besides being hard and tedious work, it also required some skill. In making planks for different projects, the cuts had to carefully measured and each had to be the same width, depending on the job. He and his partner at the other end of the two handled saw had to make sure that the cuts were perfectly straight and each cut was the same width as the one before. There were continuing measurements being taken. It was back breaking work but also great skill was required.

We can assume that after receiving that *arpent* of land closest to the hospital, Urbain began work on gathering and making the lumber he needed to build his own house, which was one of the very first to be built in Montreal. Now, with a dwelling of his own, he decided he needed to find a wife. A fellow settler had recently come back from Quebec with a new wife, Ann Archambault. When he found out that she had two unmarried sisters in Quebec, he and a friend, Paul Chalifou, decided to go there and look up the Archambault family. The trip was successful and, on 28 September 1648, Urbain Tessier dit Lavigne married Marie Archambault, and Paul Chalifou married her sister Jacquette. Urbain was now 23 while Marie was 12 years and 7 months old. With three of their children gone, Marie's parents decided to also move to Montreal.

An early map of *Ville Marie* shows eight of the earliest structures belonged to Tessier. Two of them are on his original one *arpent* of land and are his house and stable. The others are a little north at the perimeter of The Place d'Armes and we believe they may have had something to do with his sawyer operations - like his pit, a shed for his tools and other equipment. Jacques Archambault, his father-in-law, was also given a grant of land adjacent to Tessier's and the map shows his house adjacent to Urbain's. We can only guess that Urbain helped in building the Archambaults' dwelling.

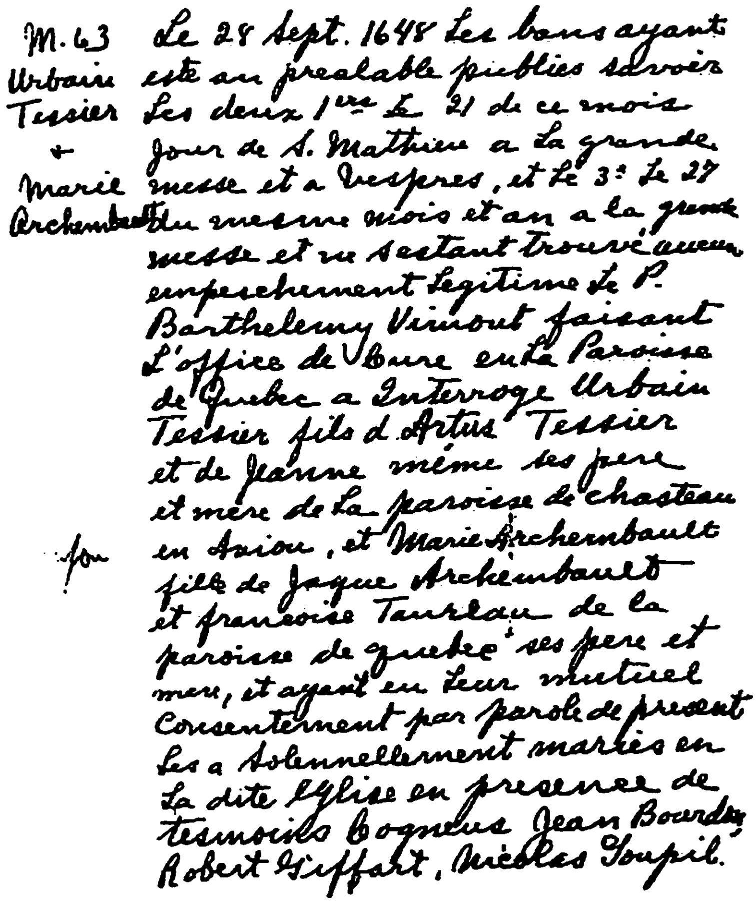
The raids by the Iroquois became more frequent and the Governor had small defensive fortifications built in the fields. Each of these structures was given to men he could trust to man them. The one called *L' Enfant Jesus* was given to Urbain Tessier, Jacques Archambault and Francois Bailly. By spring of 1651, things got so bad that Maisonneuve

ordered everyone to move back inside the fort, even the nuns living at the hospital.
Urbain and Marie didn't escape these attacks. Four days after there was a surprise attack on a group of men working in the fields planting crops that resulted in some deaths and prisoners taken, the bold Iroquois came back for a night raid at 2 AM on 10 May 1651 and burned down the houses of Urbain Tessier and Michel Chauvin.

The next month, shortly after Mass on Sunday the 18th of June, four settlers were taken by surprise by a band of hostile Indians and took shelter in a small redoubt among a large quantity of felled wood. Tessier, hearing the gunfire and noise of battle, was the first to run to their aid. The story of his bravery and valor soon spread not only among the colony but even beyond. In his history of Montreal, Dollier de Casson describes him as "one of the boldest of men" and his account goes on to say "Was the first to hasten to the spot, being nearest thereto. This he did with amazing boldness and great good luck; he surmounted the fallen trees all alone and with extraordinary agility and speed, in order to reach his comrades; he fell into four Iroquois ambushes one after another and was shot at sixty to eighty times without being wounded or checked in any way until he succeeded in reaching the unfortunate men besieged, who were not a little encouraged by his bravery." More French settlers came running and the assailants were repelled with many casualties.

By 1654, several of the settlers had already returned to France. To stop the flow, the Society of Notre Dame offered a cash allotment of 600 *livres* to anyone who would sign an agreement to remain permanently in Montreal. A small minority of settlers did and among them was Urbain Tessier and his father-in-law Jacques Archambault.

We know that Urbain continued his business as a sawyer and we suppose that most of his work for other settlers was based on a verbal agreement and a hand shake. In the records there is at least one


M. 63 Le 28 Sept. 1648 Les bans ayant
Urbain esté au prealable publiés scavoir
Tessier les deux 1ers le 21 de ce mois
+ Jour de S. Matthieu a la grande
Marie messe et a Vespres, et le 3e le 27
Archambault du mesme mois et an a la grande
messe et ne sestant trouvé aucun
empeschement legitime le P.
Barthelemy Vimont faisant
l'office de Curé en la Paroisse
de Quebec a Interrogé Urbain
Tessier fils d'Artus Tessier
et de Jeanne même ses pere
et mere de la paroisse de chasteau
for en Anjou, et Marie Archambault
fille de Jaque Archambault
et francoise Taureau de la
paroisse de quebec ses pere et
mere, et ayant eu leur mutuel
consentement par parole de present
les a solennellement mariés en
la dite Eglise en presence de
tesmoins cognus Jean Bourdon
Robert Giffart, nicolas Goupil.

Marriage of Urbain Tessier and Marie Archambault, 28 September 1648. Printed with permission of the Drouin Institute. (www.genealogyquebec.com)

contract, in 1658, where he agreed to supply 300 pine planks to the *curé* of Notre-Dame, Father Gabriel Souart, in exchange for a steer and 150 *livres*.

Tessier's luck finally ran out as disaster struck on 24 March 1661, when the Iroquois attacked a group of fifteen men working on his land. Four of them were killed, and Urbain Tessier and Michel Messier, along with another four, were taken captive. Nothing had been heard about them when three months later both men's wives gave birth. The children's birth certificates note that the fathers had been captured and it was not known if they were dead or alive. Later, a returning prisoner reported that Messier was dead, having been burned alive by his captors. There was no news, however, on Tessier's fate.

Lucky for Urbain, Father Simon LeMoyne had forged a friendship with an Onandaga chief named Garakontie, and they conspired to save some French captives to use in prisoner swaps. Fortunately, Urbain was one of those who had been saved from being burned alive and Father LeMoyne met him when he went to the Onondagas to discuss one of their swaps. Urbain had been beaten, tortured and had one finger cut off, but was in good spirits and glad to be returned to his family after more than a year in captivity. He and Marie were happy to be reunited and had nine more children together.

The Jesuits in Montreal were replaced by the priests of St. Sulpice who assumed the spiritual charge of Montreal. They built two fortified houses at the two extremities of the village and called them Ste. Marie and St. Gabriel. They placed armed members of the settlement overnight in each of these buildings. The following story has been told about one night when Urbain was staying at Ste. Marie: "A man named Lavigne, who had lately returned from captivity among the Iroquois, chancing to rise at night and looking out the window, saw by the bright moonlight a number of naked warriors stealthily gliding round a corner and crouching near the door, in order to kill the first Frenchman who should go out in the morning. He silently woke his comrades; and, having the rest of the night for consultation, they arranged their plan so well that some of them, sallying from the rear of the house, came cautiously round upon the Iroquois, placed them between two fires, and captured them all." (Parkman; The Old Regime in Canada)

In 1663 Tessier sold the redoubt to his neighbor Jean Auger. Also that same year he enlisted as a soldier in the Sainte-Famille militia. The 1666 and 1667 censuses list not only Urbain, Marie and their children, but also two unmarried men that may have worked for them. The 1681 census shows the ten children living with them and also list their possessions including three guns, 5 oxen, and about 31 *arpents* under cultivation. At about this time, Urbain was also acquiring more property including 30 *arpents* at Longue Pointe, along the river east of *Ville Marie*. He was now one of the largest landowners in the community.

The summer of 1665 saw the arrival of the Carignan-Salières Regiment and, finally, the settlers could relax with the soldiers arriving to stop the attacks by the Iroquois. At this time, Urbain would have met his future son-in-law, Corporal Pierre Payet of the La Tour Company, who would marry his daughter Louise, my ancestor. I am also a descendant of son Laurent. Urbain and Marie had another daughter, Agnes, who also married a member of the Carignan-Salières Regiment, Guillaume Richard.

Being without a proper church for the first thirty years, in 1672 the Sulpician fathers decided to build a permanent church and chose land partially owned by Urbain Tessier as the site. Urbain was delighted at this honor and graciously deeded the land needed for the new Church of Notre Dame. The church lasted almost 150 years until the present Notre-Dame Basilica was built in 1829, also on land originally owned by Urbain Tessier.

In summation, Urbain and Marie had sixteen children, ten of whom married, including my ancestor Louise, who married Carignan-Salières Regiment Corporal Pierre Payet.

Urbain Tessier dit Lavigne died 21 March 1689 at the age of 64. His wife Marie, who was only 12 years old when she married Urbain, lived another 30 years, passing away at the old age of 86. Her early age at marriage didn't seem to hold her back in any way. She bore the first of their 16 children when she was 13. One of her first sorrows was the baby's death just a few days later. She had many more hardships to endure including the raids by the Iroquois, one of which burned down her house and another that carried away her husband as a prisoner. For over a year, she didn't know if he was dead or alive. She also enjoyed good times as well. Her immediate family - mother, father and sisters - all lived near her. She was present at the marriages of ten of her children and was happy to be close to

their families, including her grandchildren. On 16 August 1719 she was buried at Pointe -aux-Trembles at the east end of Montreal Island.

If you should make a trip to Montreal and would like to see where Urbain Tessler dit Lavigne lived and what happened to some of his land in downtown Montreal, I would suggest the following Itinerary. First head to the Place d'Armes at Notre Dame Street and Saint Sulplice Street. At the center of this park is a statue of Paul de Chomede de Maisonneuve, the founder of Montreal and its first governor. He granted 31 *arpents* of land to Urbain in 1648, and now his statue stands in downtown Montreal on a parcel of the land that he granted to our ancestor. Across the street from the park is the magnificent Notre Dame Basilica of Montreal, a must-see site for any tourist to the city. That is also located on land that was originally owned by Urbain Tessier. Before you visit there, however, look back to the statue and across Saint Jacques Street to the nine story building at the corner of St. Jacques and St. Sulpice Streets. This is the building

Couple # 87282

of URBAIN **TESSIER LAVIGNE** and MARIE **ARCHAMBAULT**

Burial :1689-03-21 Montréal (Notre-Dame-de-Montréal) | Burial :1719-08-16 Montréal (Pointe-aux-Trembles)

Father :ARTHUR **TESSIER** | Father :JACQUES **ARCHAMBAULT**

Mother:JEANNE **MEME** | Mother :FRANCOISE **TOUREAU**

Marriage : 1648-09-28 Québec (Notre-Dame-de-Québec)

Lists of the married children :

Sex	Date of marriage Place	Name of the child Name of the spouse
m	1681-10-13 Château-Richer	PAUL MARIE MADELEINE **CLOUTIER**
m	1681-10-20 Québec (Notre-Dame-de-Québec)	LAURENT ANNE **LEMIRE**
f	1671-11-23 Montréal (Notre-Dame-de-Montréal)	MARIE LOUISE PIERRE **PAYET STAMOUR**
f	1675-11-26 Montréal (Notre-Dame-de-Montréal)	AGNES GUILLAUME **RICHARD LAFLEUR**
m	1686-11-21 La Prairie	JEAN BAPTISTE JEANNE **LEBER**
f	1684-01-31 Montréal (Notre-Dame-de-Montréal)	PETRONILLE PIERRE **JANOT LACHAPELLE**
m	1698-11-04 Montréal (Notre-Dame-de-Montréal)	JEAN BAPTISTE ELISABETH ISABELLE **RENAUD DUMOULIN RAINAUD**
m	1699-05-10 Montréal (Notre-Dame-de-Montréal)	JACQUES MARIE **ADHEMAR STMARTIN**
m	1703-05-23 Repentigny	IGNACE MARIE MARGUERITE **LUSSIER**
m	1716-01-27 Montréal (Notre-Dame-de-Montréal)	NICOLAS MARIE GENEVIEVE **AUGER BARON**

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Urbain Tessier Lavigne and Marie Archambault and their 10 children that grew to adulthood and married. Printed with permission of the Drouin Institute. (www.genealogyquebec.com)

that was built for the Royal Trust Company. Walk over to the façade of this building and look for the plaque that has the following inscription: "THIS BUILDING IS ERECTED ON PART OF THE ORIGINAL CONCESSION TO URBAIN TESSIER DIT LAVIGNE BEING THE 8TH GRANT MADE TO AN INDIVIDUAL IN THE ISLAND OF MONTREAL". Now you may proceed to the basilica for a tour of this edifice. Also check out the many light shows that they have as you may want to come back for another visit while you are in the city. As you leave the basilica, turn right to St. Sulpice Street and another right on this street. Walk along the side of the basilica and when you get to the end of the building you are about where Urbain and Marie's first home was built, burned down by the Iroquois in 1651 and rebuilt. Next on the right is the St. Sulpice Hotel. You may want to step inside to say that you walked just few feet away from where they lived. Or better yet, you might stay for a while and have a toast to Urbain and Marie or even a meal or snack to commemorate being on the first parcel of land that they were granted in 1647. Back out on the street look back up past the basilica and know that about three blocks away the street's name changes from St. Sulpice to St. Urbain Street and into land that was once the ancient forest that was also part of Urbain's grant.

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In the Fall 2018 issue of *Sent By The King,* we had a small notice of the passing of Charlotte Carr, one of the Society's long-time members. Unfortunately, in this issue, we are saddened to share the news that her husband, Jim Carr, passed away just a few months later.

After researching his wife's genealogy and finding her French-Canadian roots going back to the 1600s, Jim wrote several articles for the journal and in 2013 volunteered to join our Journal Committee. He provided invaluable assistance in performing the desktop publishing of our publication, including layout, editing of text and photos, and coordination of final production and publication in digital format, ready for the printer.

Last year, Jim received honorary full membership in recognition of his significant contributions to the Journal and our association. We will greatly miss him - his talent and his friendship.

On the Road - Next Town Up!

By Beverly Morin Thomas, #F597

Working on genealogy is not for everyone. Anyone who has taken on the task of finding their ancestors knows that it can indeed be daunting work. But the outcome can be rewarding and may come with some surprises along the way.

Following the paternal line is not too hard considering, but the maternal lines, with all the name changes, can be quite difficult. Patience is definitely needed.

Ten plus years ago, I began my search for my roots, starting with my father Frederick Morin, then grandfather Philip Morin. It took me a few years but I was able to go all the way back to Poitou, France, with the first Morin coming to Quebec about 1664.

The Morin migration began with my 10th generation - 8th great grandfather Andre Morin, born in 1645, son of Jacque and Michelle Dion Morin in Poitou, France. He left his home in the parish of Saint-Jaques-de-Bazoges-en Paillers, province of Poitou, and sailed to *Nouvelle-France*, arriving no later than 1664, to start a new life in Quebec. The voyage to New France took about 8 weeks and ended at the settlement of Notre-Dame-de-Quebec on the St. Lawrence River. On March 23, 1664, Andre was confirmed in Charlesbourg, Quebec. He was 19 years old at the time.

It is noted that in 1667 Andre was a wood supplier,

quarryman and a builder of cellars. Records show that he was granted a parcel of wooded land near Beauport, Quebec in August of that year. Beauport appears to be the area just east of the city of Quebec on the St Lawrence River and Charlesbourg is north of the city of Quebec just a bit.

The next records show that Andre Morin married Marguerite Moreau on August 26, 1670 in Quebec City and was given the King's gift of 50 *livres.* Records also show that she was indeed a *Fille du roi,* a "Daughter of the King". Neither could sign the marriage contract. They settled first at Quebec City before moving to Charlesbourg. Andre and Marguerite had ten children, nine of whom survived to adulthood. Marguerite Moreau died on October 20, 1690 in Quebec City. Andre then married another *Fille du roi,* Charlotte DeLarue, on November 26, 1696. This was a second marriage for both, but they had no children together. Andre died in Montreal on January 30, 1701.

In my searches online I came across *La Sociéte des Filles du roi et soldats du Carignan.* On their list of "daughters" was indeed Marguerite Moreau, Andre Morin's first wife. After filling out all the paperwork I was able to join the Society as a descendent of a *Fille du roi.*

After ending my father's line in France, I decided to try and see what I could do with my mother's line. I began with her father, Oliver Berthiaume, and worked my way back through the Berthiaume men, to find Pierre Berthiaume, who lived in Basse -Normandy, France. His son Jacques Berthiaume came to New France and married Catherine Bonhomme in 1670. She is listed as his second wife. I did not find another "daughter", but there may be one hidden somewhere.

After the several years it took me to work on the paternal lines I thought I might be finished, but the detective in me did not let me stop for very long. Doing genealogy work is quite like being a detective, always looking for more clues and information. Even spending twelve winters in Florida kept me going to libraries, always on the search for something new to learn about my family.

Now feeling more comfortable and adept with various ways of finding information about ancestors, I began looking for the women in my past. Beginning with my grandmothers was easy, as I knew a great deal about them. I remember my mother's grandmother, living in Worcester, Massachusetts. What was my great grandmother's name? Why, great grandma! Who could I ask that would remember her name? No one. Well, I knew then I had some detective work to do again.

Surprisingly, going through records, I finally had her name - Zoe. The next surprise I found were the spellings. Do you know Zoe was spelled many different ways, such as Zoe (my favorite), Zoa, Zoie, Zoia, Zooey, Zoey and Zoah, and Joia and Tora?

Thus started my hunt for my great grandmother Zoe and her birthplace. I had her death record stating that her place of birth was Canada. The question was, where in Canada? Then I began looking at United States Census records. I started in 1940 and went back each decade to 1870. Her place of birth was listed as Vermont (with no town or city). But in the 1870 census, for the first time I see the town of Highgate, Vermont listed as her place of residence. In this census, Zoa is eight years old and her birthplace is listed as Canada again.

On the various census forms, Zoe's last name in maiden form changes from Vaolli to Valley to LeValley. Next surprise I found was that she was married three times. So, more name changes, from Valley to Roberts (also Rabbert) to LaMothe to Graveline. Along with these name changes her

"Doing genealogy work is quite like being a detective, always looking for more clues and information."

place of birth continued to change, from Canada to Vermont and back to Canada, depending on the census.

I did find that Ancestry.com is great to a point, but it does not have all the answers, nor is the information necessarily correct due to translations, misspellings, and bad penmanship. Try translating French to English with these problems in the mix and that takes another kind of determination. Now that I had my great grandmother's name, Zoe, I needed to find out where she was born.

Going again to Ancestry.com I did find a birth record for Zoe Vaolli in Henryville, Quebec in 1861 that listed the place of worship as St-George-de-Noyan. This could be my great grandma, but so hard to tell. On Zoia's marriage record to her third husband, Joseph Graveline, in 1903, it lists Highgate, Vermont as her place of birth. On her death certificate, Zoia Valley Graveline's place of birth is Canada. If you are getting confused with the name changes, so am I.

I live in Western Massachusetts. The Vermont border is not very far away, an easy 3-hour drive. So began my journey that would take another two years plus. Highgate, Vermont, near Burlington, is not far from the border with Canada. On a sunny, warm day in summer and with the information I could find in hand, my husband and I headed north. We easily found the Town Clerk's office in Highgate, in a lovely little building with very helpful people. The records were in incredibly good readable condition. No, Zoe was not born in Highgate, but most likely in Henryville, Quebec. It was getting to be late afternoon and we did not have the necessary papers to cross the border, let alone things needed to stay the night. We would just have to pick up the trail next summer.

The following summer came and I was ready again to go north, this time to go over the border into Canada. I do know some French words I could use in a pinch, but very few. I have been to Canada in the past and always made out fairly well with my limited French vocabulary. With our passports in hand, an overnight bag and my husband at my side, we started again to take up the hunt for Zoe's birthplace and information on her parents, Antoine and Lucy Vaolli. Getting onto Route 133N in Canada we would look for the church in Henryville and hopefully they would have records.

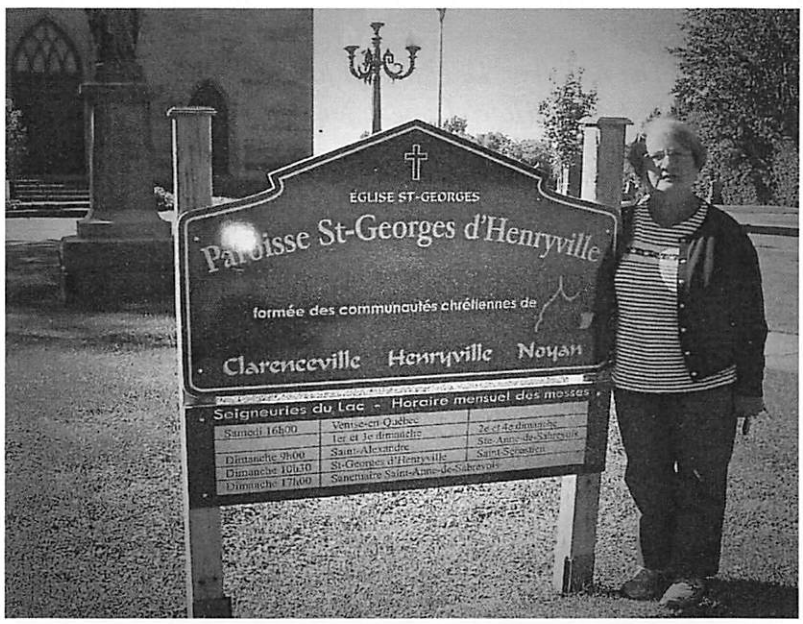
My GPS tells me I am in Henryville, so I start looking for a steeple with a cross designating a Catholic church. Great, there it is. Even better, there are two men outside raking and cleaning up the grounds. I approach them and ask if this is St. George church. Oh no! No communication! I said my nicest *merci* and left with no information. Driving past the church, I now saw the name of the church and it was not St. George.

Getting back on Route 133N, I looked for someplace to stop that might be able to give me information and directions to St. George church. I see a nice-looking building, blue and white, cars in the parking lot. I don't know what the sign says - *Les Jardins,* I think - but anyway it looked inviting. I'll give it a try. The woman behind the counter was pleasant and my *bonjour* started a flow of language that left me in the dust. *Parlez-vous anglais,* says I? *Oui.* OK! I am looking for St. George church in Henryville. You are not in Henryville, I am told. **Next town up**, in the center of town (very small, you can't miss it), turn left and you will see the church. Look for the steeple, I am told. With many *mercis,* I return to the car and head north to the **next town up.**

There is the sign on the side of the road, plain as day - 'HENRYVILLE'. We're here, I said to my husband. Looks like a town center, I think. We turn left. I see a steeple, says my sidekick. Oh, what a beautiful stone church with a tall steeple, housing a bell, cross on the top, three red doors, and a large statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the front. Sign says *Paroisse St-George d'Henryville* (see cover photo). We had arrived at our destination. We both get out of the car to stretch our legs and look around. There is a lovely old churchyard right there in the back of the church building with many old gravestones. But I didn't come to look at

stones, I came to look at records. The doors are locked, of course. Did I really think they would be open? We need to find the rectory, I said to my husband.

Right next door was a beautiful large house made from the same stones and design as the church. Must be the rectory! Walking in that direction I notice laundry hanging on the large front porch, with diapers. Oh no! Diapers do not go with a rectory. It appeared to us that the house had been turned into several apartments. Now what? No one outside to ask. All nicely kept older homes in the area except there is an out of place building, not in keeping with the neighborhood. We walk over and see a sign on the door, which again I couldn't read. We enter and there is a woman behind a counter. This time I started out with "hello" and hoped for the best. Between her limited English and my limited French, I was able to tell her I was looking for the old church records. She gave me a telephone number to call to see if anyone was at the rectory who could help me. Then she said, "Go out to Route 133N, turn left and **next town up.** The sign on the door we came to know, by the way, said "Town Offices". Was that just pure luck, or maybe someone was watching over us? I made the telephone call and was not surprised to hear the call answered with "*Bonjour*". *Parlez-vous anglais? Oui,un peu.* Old records, I ask? *Oui,* come. So off we went with the address already given us, which, conveniently, was located right on to Route 133N, to the **next town up.**



Author Beverly Morin Thomas standing by the sign of the church where her great grandmother was baptized

Five minutes later we arrived at a very pleasant looking rectory. We were welcomed in by the secretary, and everywhere the eye could see were stacks of cardboard cartons. We were told that four churches closed in the area and all the records from five churches had arrived there. Immediately I wonder - was she going to find the record book that I had come all the way from Massachusetts to see? Thanks to Ancestry.com, I had found the birth record beforehand, in French of course, and took time to write down the year, and page number and anything else I thought might come in handy. I couldn't believe it. In about five minutes, the secretary put before me the book with the record of my great grandmother's birth, open to the page. There was Zoe, a newborn girl who would one day be my great grandmother. I could barely read it through the tears. Even with our limited understanding of each other, the secretary and I were able to translate the birth record into English.

We were then graciously given refreshments. During limited conversation, I asked where the records would be for the time period before St. George Church was built in 1832 – the ones that would tell us about Zoe and her parents. Can you guess? **Next town up!**

I then asked when St. George Church was open. I was told once a month, and services were held at the other churches on a rotating basis. She excused herself and, in a few minutes, came back to ask if we would like to see the inside of St. George's. I quickly said *oui*, and the next question she asked as could we go now? *Oui* again. She said to go back to the church and someone would meet us there to unlock the door. With hugs and more thanks, and with my heart jumping, I could scarcely believe that I was going to get inside the church.

We drove five minutes back to the church and within a short time along came the keeper of the keys. I had to chuckle to myself because on my key ring was the key to my own church back home. This charming woman not only opened the door but gave us a personal tour of her church, pointing out many things. Coming to the baptismal font, she thought this was what I would be most interested in. Oh, what an emotional tour to see where it all began for Zoe. But even before Zoe, this was also the church that saw the marriage of her parents Antoine Vaolli and Lucie Dion in 1848. I could just picture the young bride and groom standing at this altar. And what about Antoine and Lucie's parents? Their records are most likely to be found **next town up.**

Time has passed and we have our very first great-granddaughter. And her name is - can you guess? Zoey!

Thank you Canada, for keeping the records where we can find those who came before us. I know that sitting at home in front of a computer can yield a lot of information on finding ancestors. But to hold the original record book in your hands and see places and things right up close puts everything in a deeper perspective. And I can't wait to get on the road again and do more exploring in the **next town up.**

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A Note from the Author:

I have discovered in working on my genealogical roots that information can be found in the most unlikely places and when least expected. I would like to share with you two such incidences.

The first incident occurred while in Florida one winter, my husband and I spent some time at the Largo Library. I was looking through books about Quebec while my husband just picked up an old book about Canadian stories to pass the time. What he found was an old newspaper article about an incident that happened in Quebec in the winter of 1680. *[Ed. Note: The author did not record the name of the book or publisher at the time. A recent search of the library by a friend proved fruitless. The Journal Committee allowed this to be included, without attribution, to demonstrate the many ways we can find information that adds to our knowledge about ancestors.]*

Title of the chapter: *"A Sharp Fight"*

It was during the winter of 1680. A man named Rene (Rheaume) was returning from Saint-Joseph d'Orsainville with a sledge-load of wood. Along the road our man met three other sleighs barring the way. The four men stopped and glared at each other. They were, in addition to Rene, Pierre Morterel, Andre Morin and Martin Moreau. The air was heavily charged.

Rene approached Martin Moreau and garrulously said to him: "You told Miss Villeray that I took some wood from her shed!" Moreau denied it. Rheaume impatiently called him a rascal and offered to box his ears. Moreau proudly retorted that he was not man enough! Things went quickly from bad to worse with Rene. He took the offensive with his fists, then grabbed Moreau by the hair, knocking him down so he could get in some good kicks. They ended up taking Moreau to the hospital.

The next day, Dr. Roussel found Moreau lying on a bed at the Hotel-Dieu suffering so from his stomach

Hauling Timer. Image from the National Archives of Canada. http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca

that he could hardly speak.

In the meantime, acting on a complaint from Madame Moreau, (Jeanne Lecoq) Rene had been thrown into the royal jail. In his [own] defense, Rheaume alleged that Moreau had bit him on the leg.

The Council sentenced Rene to pay a fine of 20 sols *to the King, 20* livres *in civil damages to Moreau, to pay 6 livres to the hospital and to pay the doctor bill and court costs of the trial. The defense rests its case!*

I wonder if the Andre Morin mentioned in this account (who was earlier stated to be a wood supplier) is the same Andre Morin who would have married Marguerite Moreau ten years earlier in 1670 and may indeed be my ancestor?

The second unlikely setting was in a doctor's office. I picked up a magazine that looked interesting. It was titled "Creating the Cloisters", Spring 2013, published by The Metropolitan Museum of Art. In 1938 The Cloisters officially opened as a branch of the museum, not too far from Manhattan. On page 16, I came across a photo of a portal that came from the Chateau de La Roche-Gencay, Poitou, France, circa 1520-30, which now is housed in the museum. Andre Morin, my 10th generation ancestor who came to Quebec in 1664 was from Poitou, France and I like to think that a few more generations before him, or maybe even Andre himself, may have actually laid eyes on this portal.

Someday I may just get on the road again and take a short 3-hour ride to New York to see this portal and dream that my ancestors may have seen it in its original setting. In the meantime, I will keep my eyes open for more surprises found in very unlikely places.

Post script:

I sent my story to Bill Kane and while he had some free time he did what he called "fun genealogy". Using the PRDH site, within 2 hours he found that I have another *Fille du roi* in my family tree! He took up my search for Zoe's parents, Antoine and Lucy Vaolli, married in 1848. Antoine's father's line was a dead end but he was able to follow Antoine's mother's line starting with Therese Bonneau. Then back to her father Joseph Bonneau and mother M. Angelique Crombiau. Then back another generation to Thomas Augustin Bonneau and M. Francois Demers. Her parents were Eustace Demers Dumais and Marie Francois Dubois Lafrance. And guess who *her* mother was? *Fille du roi*, Anne Guilliaume.

Thank you, Bill, for that information.

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