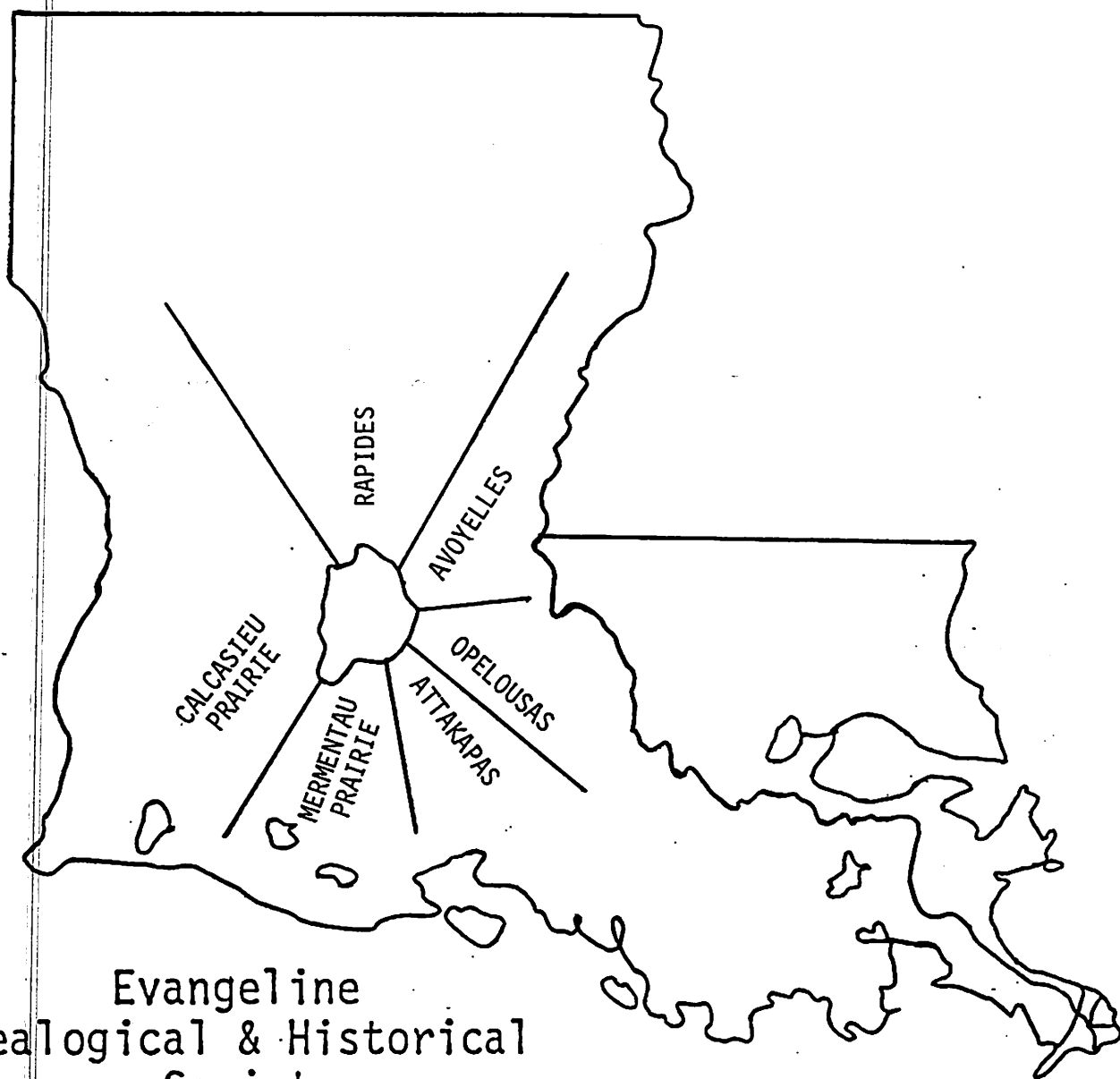


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EVANGELINE GENEALOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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MEETINGS of the Evangeline Genealogical & Historical Society are held on the third Saturday of January, April, July and October, at 1:30 PM in the Louisiana Room of the Evangeline Parish Library located on Main Street in Ville Platte, Louisiana.

MEMBERSHIP fees are \$10 per year for a single membership and \$12 per year for a family or couple (single mailing to two persons at the same address). Members receive the newsletter and a subscription to the quarterly, La Voix des Prairies. Single copies and back issues of the quarterly are available for \$3 each.

POLICY of the Society will be formulated and directed by the Executive Board. The material in the quarterly is copyrighted and cannot be used or reproduced without permission of the Editor or the Executive Board. The Society does not assume responsibility for accuracy of information submitted and published nor does it assume responsibility for any copyright infringement of submitted and published material. The Society solicits materials of genealogical/historical interest particularly articles which pertain to this area. The quarterly will print all queries; include necessary information such as names, dates, date references, places or place references.

QUARTERLY EXCHANGE will take place with other genealogical and/or historical societies. The exchanges received will be placed in the Louisiana Room of the parish library in the permanent holdings of the Society.

ACQUISITIONS/DONATIONS: The Society has an on-going project of acquiring books, periodicals, and other materials to place in the Louisiana Room of the parish library. We ask for donations of such books and materials which will be placed in the library as gifts from the Society and bearing a bookplate with the name of the donor. We welcome memorials and honorariums.

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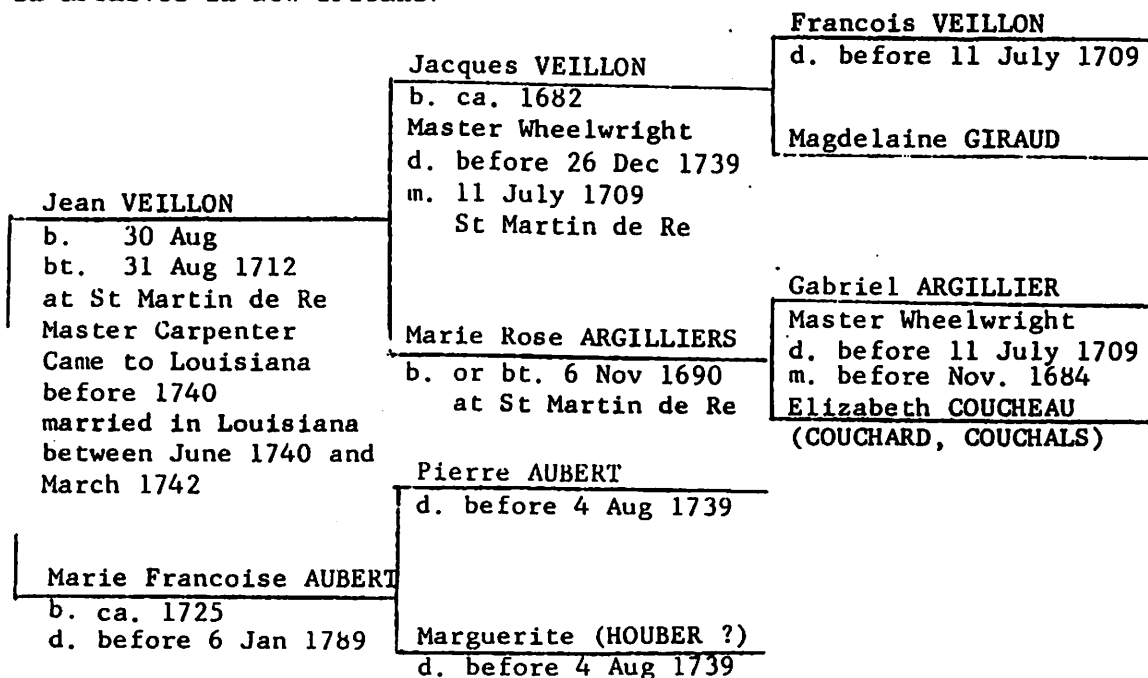
VEILLON

by Jacqueline Olivier Vidrine

In September 1979, during a visit in France, I was able to do research in the departmental archives of Charente-Maritime at La Rochelle and in the church archives of St. Martin on Isle de Re'. Although a fire had destroyed all of the original church registers earlier than 1890, many abstracts had been made. From that work, kept in the parish rectory, the ancestors of the VEILLON family were found.

Jean VEILLON, whose name sometimes appears as Jean-Baptiste and once as Nicolas, married Marie-Francoise AUBERT (or HOUBER) in Louisiana, between June 1740 and March 1742, probably at the church of St. Louis in New Orleans. The marriage records for that period were among those destroyed by fire; no civil marriage contract has been found. On 26 December 1739 Jean VEILLON and Isabelle LIVET made a contract to marry which was annulled 22 March 1740 (LHL, NO). On 29 March 1740, Marie Francoise "AUBERT" signed a contract of marriage with Jean Frederick LEONARD but it was annulled by mutual consent less than three months later (9 June 1740 LHL, NO). The first mention found of Jean VEILLON as Francoise AUBERT's husband is on a document dated 12 March 1742. (LHL, NO. See also Notes on AUBERT and VEILLON by JOV in the New Orleans Genesis, Vol. 9 (June 1970) p. 293-296.

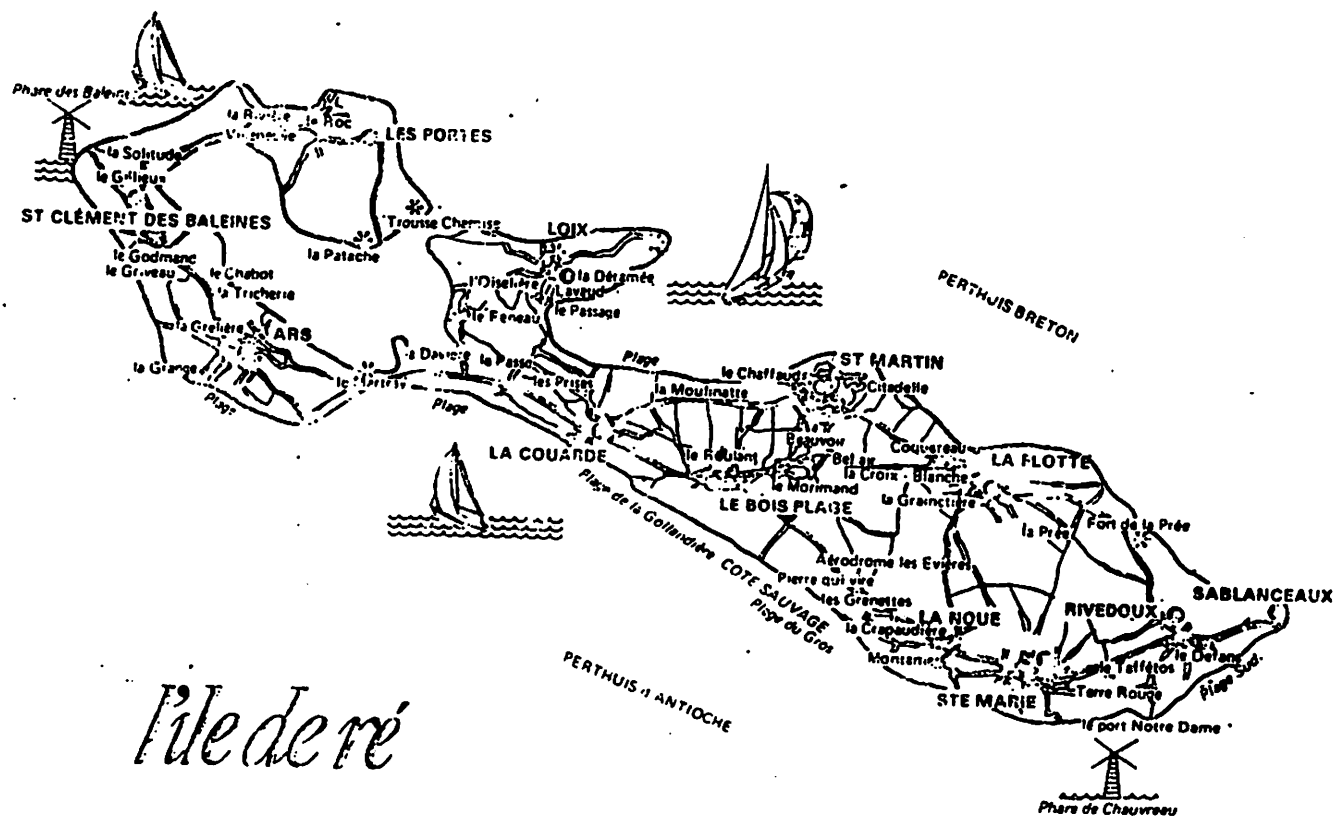
The chart shows the information found in France along with later data found in archives in New Orleans:



LHL, NO Cabildo Archives, Louisiana Historical Library, New Orleans, La.
 LHQ Louisiana Historical Quarterly
 Op St. Landry Catholic Church, Opelousas, La.
 StL, NO St. Louis Cathedral, New Orleans, La.
 StM St. Martin Catholic Church, St. Martinville, La.

The children of Jean VEILLON and Marie Francoise AUBERT were:

1. Marie-Francoise VEILLON born ca. 1742-1743; d. 21 June 1808 age 64 (StM).
marriage contract: 20 March 1762 (LHQ 23, p. 907).
married 22 March 1762 (StL,NO, but in Bapt. Book IV).
Jean Antoine BARBEAU dit BOISDORE, son of Joseph and
Marie Louise BRET.
2. Nicolas VEILLON baptized November 1744 (StL,NO). May have been
Jean-Baptiste below.
3. Jean-Baptiste VEILLON born ca. 1746-1747; d. June 1774 (StL,NO).
marriage contract 22 November 1771 (New Orleans Civil Court,
Notarial Archives, Garic, Acts Vol. II).
Jeanne CAMUS daughter of Pierre-Jean and Jeanne MAROLA(?)
of La Rochelle.
4. Francois VEILLON born 6 June, baptized 23 June 1748 (StL,NO);
d. 29 October 1804 (Op); married ca. 1780-1785.
Helene ANDRE dit LAFLEUR, daughter of Jacques and
Marie-Anne FONTENOT.
5. Louis VEILLON baptized 25 August 1750 (StL,NO); d. 28 October 1833 (StM).
[He was a surgeon at Opelousas in 1781.]
married 2 February 1789 (StM).
Marie SUDRICK (SUDERIQUE, etc.), daughter of Pierre and
Perrinne BARRAS.
6. Marguerite VEILLON baptized 11 September 1753 (StL,NO).
7. Pierre VEILLON born 15 June, baptized 25 June 1758 (StL,NO).
8. (?) Joseph VEILLON born 1763-1764, listed as baptism StL,NO Bapt. Book V,
p. 9 in New Orleans Genesis Vol. 19 p. 41.



LAHAYE

By Callie Pitre Avera

The following is the birth record of Nicolas Augustin LaHaye, who came to Louisiana in 1818. It was copied exactly as written in French, then translated into English.¹

✓
50
788°
nicolas
augustin
Lahay

Today the fourth day of the month of *Thermidor* year six² of the French Republic at six o'clock in the evening, before me, Thomas Blanchard municipal agent of the community of Montoir have appeared in the Community Hall Augustin Lahay, *Laboureur*,³ resident in this commune sector of *Du Bourg*, who assisted by Nicolas Lahay, *laboureur* 30 years of age, (and) by Jeanne Brousard *Laboureur's* daughter 21 years of age, both residents of this commune Section *Du Bourg*, declared to me Thomas Blanchard that Marie Boisrobert his spouse in legitimate marriage gave birth today at nine o'clock in the morning in the house situated in the village of Lataillé Section *Du Bourg*, to a male child whom he presented to me and to whom he gave the christian name Nicolas Augustin, according this declaration that the citizens Nicolas Lahay, and Jeanne Brousard have certified conforms to the truth and to the representation that was made to me of the child. I draft this present act that Nicolas Lahay has signed with me, Augustin Lahay father of the child and Jeanne Brousard declared that they did not know how to sign, done in the Community Hall of Montoir afore mentioned day and year.⁴

Nicolas Lahay

Th. Blanchard
agt. m. p.

1. Copied and translated 20 June 1984, Nantes, France, (department of Loire-Atlantique) by William D. Grain (son of Callie P. Avera), who was a student at l'Université Catholique de l'Ouest, Angers, France; B.A. French, Louisiana State University, 1985, Baton Rouge, La.; M.A. Linguistics, University of Illinois, 1987, Urbana-Champaign, Il.

2. 22 July 1798.

3. *Laboureur*: (1) husbandman; (2) tiller; (3) plough-man. *Bourg*: small market-town. A. Spiers, French and English Pronouncing Dictionary, revised by G. P. Quackenbos, A.M. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1899.

4. Extrait des Archives de la Loire-Atlantique, Nantes France. Montoir Document An VI No. 94, p. 50.

More information was sent to me by Monsieur Moyon André, genealogist, of Nantes, France. No records of siblings of Nicolas Augustin were found by me or Mr. André. His endeavors to help me research this line were fruitless while I was in France, but after I returned to Louisiana Mr. André kindly sent me the results of his further work. With the help of a student in Donges, France, he was able to obtain the following:

Mariage le 21 brumaire an III de la republique² a` DONGES

de Augustin DE LA HAYE, 31 ans, fils des feus François DELAHAYE et
Guillemette MACE, natif de cette commune et domicilié de cette
de Prinquiau
et Marie BOISROBERT, 34 ans, fille des feus Antoine BOISROBERT et
Isabelle LOISEAU, veuve de Joseph COUVRAND, native de la trêve
de Sainte-Reine, commune de Pontchateau et domiciliée en cette-ci
depuis plusieurs années.

En présence de Julien et Nicolas DE LA HAYE, frères du marié,
de Guillaume BOISROBERT, frere de la mariée.

François DE LA HAYE de Crossac fils de Jean et Julienne MAHE
épouse le 14 Novembre 1747 a` Donges
Isabelle TREMOUREUX, ded. a` Donges le 08.06.1753
après avoir eu 2 enfants:
François né le 24.06.1750
Julien né le 03.06.1753

François DE LA HAYE epouse en
secondes noces le 25 Novembre 1755 a` Donges
Guillemette MACE de Donges fille de Jean et Jeanne NICOLAS.
dont il a les enfants soivants:
Julien né le 03.10.1756 a` Donges
Jean né le 06.08.1758 a` Donges
Augustin né le 28 Aout 1763 a` Donges
Suzanne née le 22.01.1764 a` Donges
ded. le 25.01.1764 a` Donges
Renee née et ded. le 05.01.1767 a` Donges

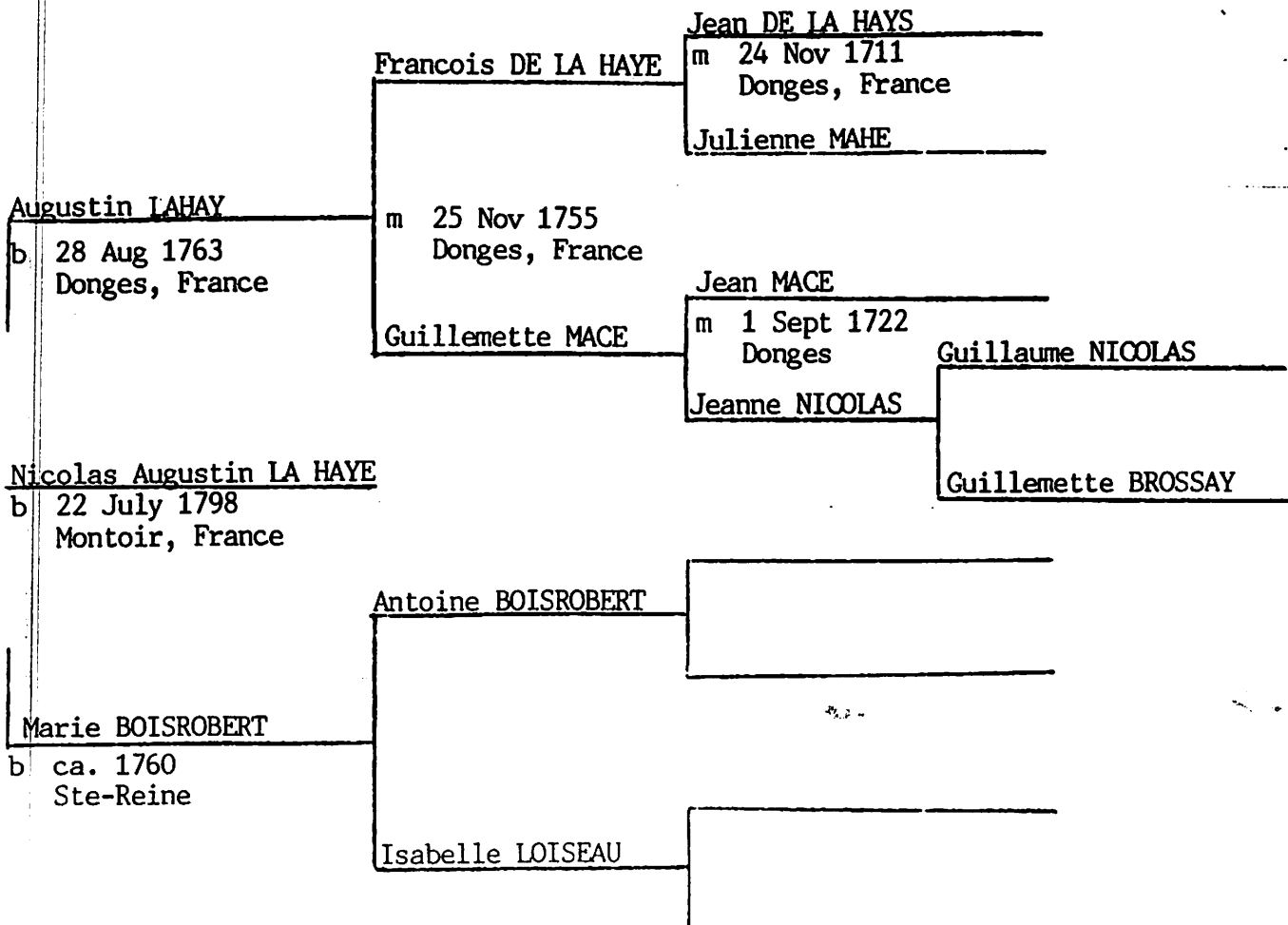
Mariage a` Crossac le 24 Novembre 1711 de Jean DE LA HAYS et Julienne MAHE.

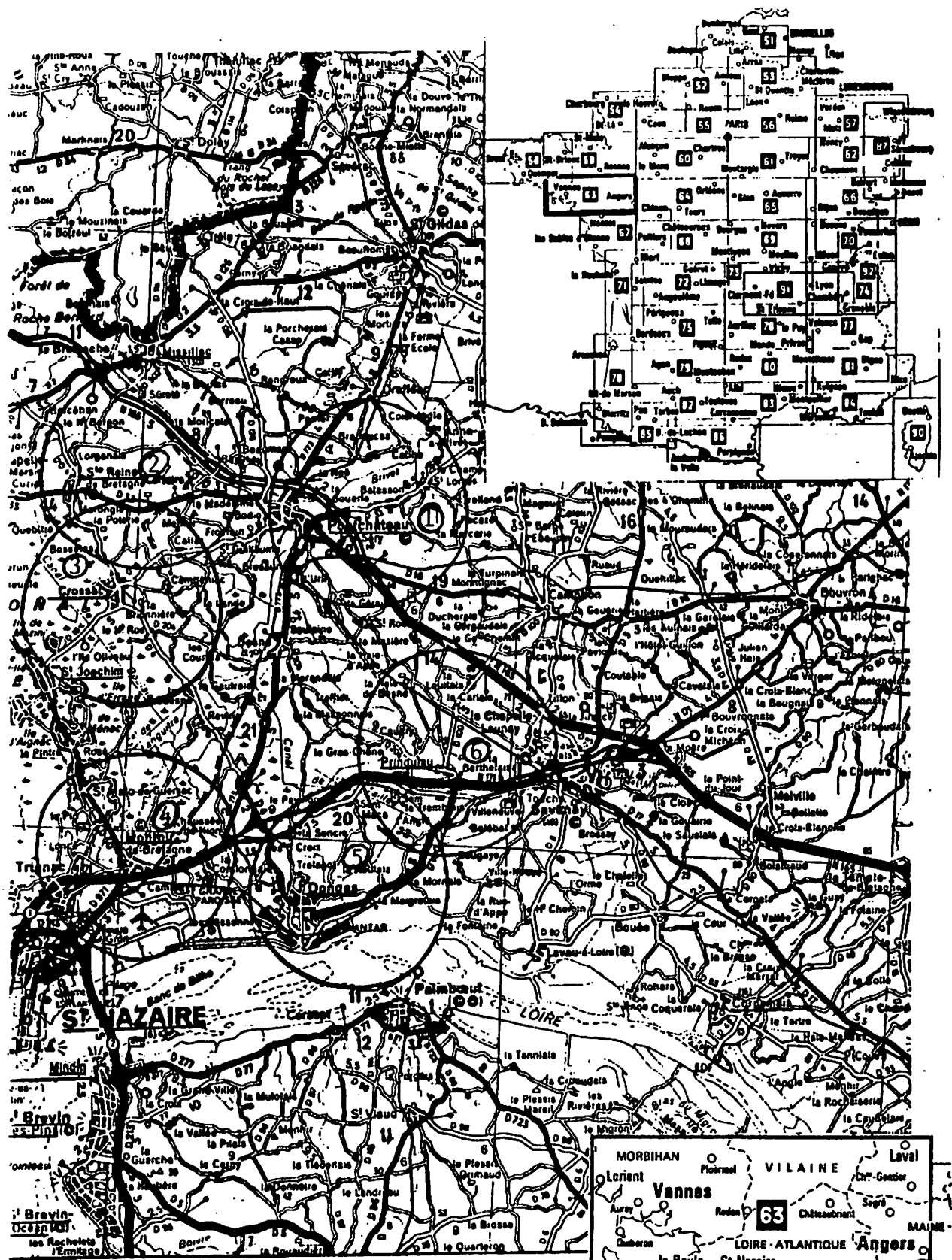
1. Letter dated 6 August 1984, Moyon André', Nantes, France, to Callie P. Avera. These records are copied as written by Mr. André'.
2. 11 November 1794.

Enfants nés de cette union, tous a` Donges:

Jean	né	13.02.1724	
Jacques	né	25.07.1725	ded. 1e 27.07.1725
Francoise	né	07.06.1726	
Jacques	né	23.09.1727	
Joseph	né	19.03.1729	ded. 1e 02.04.1719
Francois	né	08.07.1732	
Martin	né	21.09.1734	
Olive	né	09.03.1736	ded. 1e 24.03.1736
Olive	né	20.05.1737	

Part 3 of LaHaye article will be published in a future issue of La Voix. Please send comments, additions or corrections to Callie P. Avera, 509 Juanita Lane, Abbeville, LA 70510.







THE BOOK SHELF



LOUISIANA PLUS Genealogy Resources, compiled by Clifton Earl Ryan, Soft cover, pocket sized, 128 pages, \$7.00 postpaid from the compiler, 1445 Homestead Avenue, Metairie, La. 70005.

This handy reference book is filled with information on genealogical facilities across the United States and abroad. The Louisiana repositories covered are located in New Orleans, Baton Rouge and Alexandria, and cover most of the major research centers. The out-of-state repositories include Arkansas, Illinois, Mississippi, South Carolina, Utah, Virginia, and the foreign countries of Canada, England, France, Germany, Italy, Jamaica, Ireland, Norway and Sweden. For each research center, Mr. Ryan provides information on the location, mailing address, telephone number, days and hours of operation, parking availability and tips for researching in the facility. This guide provides information for researchers on acquiring certain records, utilizing publications and columns and the services of a professional genealogist.

UPON A LOVELY HILL - THE CEMETERIES OF JOHNSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE, by Jeffery L. Carrier. Soft cover, 334 pages, available from the author, box 117, Mountain City, Tennessee 37683.

This volume contains listings for 282 cemeteries found in Johnson County, located at the tip of Tennessee that borders Kentucky, North Carolina and Virginia. Names of husbands and wives are listed together as well as all epitaphs. The book contains an every-name index for quick reference.

WHITE COUNTY, TN., MARRIAGE RECORDS, PART OF BOOK I (Jan. 11 1859 to June 11 1881), compiled by the Van Buren County Historical Society. Soft cover, 122 pages, \$15.00 postpaid, available from the society at P. O. Box 126, Spencer, Tennessee 38585.

The Van Buren County Historical Society, like most local groups are making their area genealogical records available to the researcher through its publications. This volume is no exception. Listed are the marriage records for 1859 to 1881 for White County, located near the middle of the state, between Nashville and Knoxville. Included are separate indexes for brides and grooms.

SURNAME INDEX 1860 CENSUS, EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH, LOUISIANA, compiled by Billy Lipscomb and Mary Lou Loudon. Soft cover 58 pages, \$11.00 from the publisher, East Baton Rouge Parish Library, P. O. Box 1471, Baton Rouge, La 70821.

This 1860 census transcription includes every head of household given and at least one representative of each differing surname within the household. The compilers have included race, age and place of birth and an explanation of the inaccuracies in surname spelling by the census taker. The population recorded is almost 7600 persons in number, including 486 black males and 375 black females, a surprising number for a Free Schedule. An index is not included, but listings are in alphabetical order.

REQUIEM, compiled by Iris-Louise Lanoux and Elsie Moore Little. Soft cover, 94 pages, \$9.00 from the publisher, East Ascension Genealogical and Historical Society, P. O. Box 106, Bonzales, La 70707.

The volume contains a collection of "Les Billets d'Enterrement", the small black-bordered papers informing of a person's death. Used in the 1800's and into the 1900's (some as late as 1951) these printed invitations to family, friends and acquaintances to attend funeral services were hand delivered to family and posted in the community store, post office, and church for all to see. They were kept and preserved by the family members, just as modern day newspaper obituaries are clipped and preserved. The book contains an index which includes the maiden name of deceased wives.

THE J. P. FONTENOT FAMILY HISTORY by Alfred Ray Ryder. Hardbound, 299 pages, \$45.00 from the author, P. O. Box 399, Oberlin, La 70665.

Published primarily for the members of the J. P. Fontenot family, this volume provides a wealth of information for descendants. The progenitor of the particular branch of the Fontenot family was Jean-Pierre Fontenot and his wife, Estelle Soileau. Mr. Ryder traces the Fontenot line back to Louis Fontenot and Louise Henry who came to the French Louisiana territory at Mobile in 1720, and later migrated to the Opelousas Post in Louisiana. The book is filled with photographs of family members, tales of early life in Evangeline Parish, and memories of Jean-Pierre and Estelle. It contains an index to documents and photographs.

QUAKER RECORDS IN GEORGIA: Wrightsborough 1772-1783, Friendsborough 1776-1777, by Roger Scott Davis, Jr. Hardbound, 278 pages, \$24.00 postpaid, available from Augusta Genealogical Society, P. O. Box 3743, Augusta, Georgia 30904.

This volume compiles the record of Wrightsborough, the southernmost Quaker community in colonial America, the only significant settlement made by the Quakers in Georgia, and the Friendsborough community settled by Captain Thomas Manson and his indentured servants. This work dispenses with the misconceptions that the community was settled entirely by Quakers, in fact only one-fifth of the population were members of the Society of Friends. Included in the book are minutes of the Mens Monthly Meeting, 1772-1793, Records of Births and Burials, 1744-1803, and Wrightsborough Quakers in the American Revolution. The Friends borough settlement section contains an introduction on William Manson and his indentured servants, the Cash Book, 1775-1779 and Account Current Book for William Manson and Company 1776-1777. An every name index is included as well as maps, photographs, and illustrations.

HISTORY OF THE SIMON MILLS FAMILY, BOOK I, II, III IV, by Katie and Ralph E. Mills. Hardbound, first volume, \$25.00, any Additional volume \$20.00 each, complete set of four, \$75.00. Order from Ralph E. Mills, 2160 Fort #4, Trenton, Michigan 48183.

These volumes give the history of the Mills family, descendants of Simon Mills, whose earliest date in America is found at Windsor, Connecticut, in October 1639, through his son John mills 1668/9-1697/8) of Simsbury, Connecticut, and through John's son Joseph Mills (1694-1783) of Simsburyt and West Simsbury, Connecticut. The first seven generations of this family are in book I by Katie R. Mills, the eighth and ninth generations by Katie and Ralph E. Mills in Book II the tenth generation in Book III by Ralph E. Mills and the eleventh generation in Book IV also by Ralph E. Mills. All four volumes are indexed and contain many family pictures an a little bit of history on each member.

GENEALOGY AND HISTORY OF THE DERTHICK AND RELATED DERRICKS by Jack T. Spencer and Robert A. Goodpasture. Hardbound, 585 pages, \$25.00 postpaid from Dr. Jack T. Spencer, 1303 Azalea Lane, DeKalb, Ill 60115.

This volume gives the history of th Derthicks/Derricks family in England and America. The progenitor of the family was John Dethick who came to the Plymouth Colony from England in 1683 at the age of nine. In 1718 he married Susanna Ransom of Plympton and the couple settled at Colchester, New London County, Connecticut. Three of the grandsons of John and Susanna Dethick (Ananias, John, and Ephrain) became the progenitors of the three main branches of the family. Two of the branches used the surname of Derthick (john and Ananias) while the other used the surname of Derrick.

Among the features of the book is an extended treatment of allied families. In most cases, the lineages of Derthick spouses are traced back to their origins in America wherever such data could be found in the published literature. Another feature is the inclusion of relevant American history at strategic positions in the book in order to orient the reader to the times in which the early generations lived. Each chapter has a separate listing of references and the volume an evername index.

 SACRAMENTAL RECORDS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW ORLEANS, edited by Monseigneur Earl C. Woods, 285 pages, \$30.00. Commonly called the "St. Louis Cathedral Records, these records of New Orleans began in 1718 and extend through 1750. The volume contains more than baptism, marriage and funeral registers of the cathedral. Included are the records of the St. Charles Parish area, those known as the "Little Red Church records", dealing with the early German families that settled the River Parishes. This hardcover book may be ordered from Archdiocesan Historical Archives, 1100 Chartres Street, New Orleans, La 70116.

NOTE: A copy of the SACRAMENTAL RECORDS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW ORLEANS is available to researchers, it is now at the Evangeline Parish Library.

The following books, either society purchased or donated to the Evangeline Genealogical and Historical Society, have been donated to the Evangeline Parish Library by E. G. H. S.

NATURALIZATION RECORD, MOBILE, ALABAMA 1833-1906 by Clinton King and Meriem A. Barlow, 148 pages, indexed (society purchased)

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF FORTS, POSTS, NAMED CAMPS AND OTHER MILITARY INSTALLATIONS IN LOUISIANA, 1700-1981 by Powell A. Casey, 474 pages, indexed, (society purchased).

DU BUISSON CEMETARY (St. Tammany Parish, Slidell, La.) by Judy Mahaffey, 7 pages (donated to the society by Judy Mahaffey)

JEANSONNE-RABALAIS and RELATED FAMILIES, PEDIGREE CHARTS and FAMILY GROUP SHEETS by Davis P. Jeansonne (two separate volumes), 86+ pages (donated to the society by Davis P. Jeansonne)

CHENO/CHAPELLE by Melba Marcantel and Mabel Ledoux, 55 pages, (Cemetery listings for Cheno cemetery in Elton, La.) (donated to the society by Marcantel and Ledoux.)

THE NATCHEZ COURT RECORDS, 1767-1805 by May Wilson McBee, 635 pages, indexed (society purchased)

The following is a summary of the research trip of Robert Bruce Ardoin made in August 1983 to research the Fontenot family. The result of that trip have already been published in La Voix. This is being published in order to give one an idea of the life in the city and the problems encountered in doing research in France. The letter is taken from the E. G. H. S. files.

Even though the trip made to the city of Poitiers to do research on the Fontenot family was made during the month of August 1983, it seems as though it were only yesterday. I experienced moments of tension, concentration, frustration, discouragement, happiness, satisfaction and gratitude, all mixed together from the beginning to the very end.

Thanks to Judge Tate's rapid and highly organized project, and thanks to the contributions of so many people, I was able to carry out that research. It is thus with great pleasure and pride that I would like to share some of those moments in Poitiers while doing the research. In no way do I pretend to be objective.

As the train approached Poitiers, I could see that the city was located upon a high plateau. That elevation allows, from certain areas in the city, to grasp a pleasant view of inviting, far-off-country-side sceneries which are flat for long distances, and which eventually roll off into soft waves of light green meadows, traced off by small irregular blue and blue-green lines, which in another far off distance all seem to turn into high waves of mountain, all those waves being protected by even higher and greater waves in the background.

The train station of Poitiers is located just behind the old city at the bottom of a hill. Immediately upon arriving at the station I placed my baggage in a locker and followed my way up to the center of the city to look for a hotel room. A distance of about 10 meters separated the level of the train station and plateau of the city.

For practical purposes the hotel room that I chose was close to the Departmental Archives of Vienne. Such a centralized location would at least permit far less running around, going back and forth, if need be from the archives and the municipal library in the center of the old city. The archives and the library are 5 minutes from each other according to my walking pace.

After reserving a room in the hotel "Plat d'estain" (pewter dish), I returned to the train station, got my things, and left them in my temporary demure.

It was Sunday, very few people in the street, at noon. Everyone takes off work for the four to five week legal period of vacation. The temperature was not over 18 degrees. It was too cool for an August day.

I quickly ate a sandwich, and was off to visit and explore the city where some of our ancestors had supposedly lived. As I left the hotel, I wondered how I would feel during my visit to the city, and how I would feel after....would I be able to imagine how those ancestors had lived when nothing European existed in Louisiana. How had it been possible for our European ancestors, to immigrate into a land unknown to them, unknown to so many others, adjust and survive, in a place dangerous to all, not only because of its original inhabitants who were not especially welcoming, but also because of its different aspects and form of nature, the winds, waters, cold and heat, but also the wild animals, which were often, and still are, incompatible to their own lives, to become accustomed to such differences?

So this was one of our many original home towns of France, I had an insatiable desire to know what Poitiers was all about, what it might have looked like at the time of the departure of our Fontenot ancestors. In spite of the decades of change, what would it have to offer me as a token of remembrance, would there be a reaction transposed by genes old or more than two centuries, would there be a "déjà vu" sensation, or would the whole thing be something trite, boring, or exciting? Why not just a walk around, look, visit, smell its perfume, revive, receive and feel...all at random? What

else could be done to let it come naturally?

What would I feel for my own ancestors who were Fontenots? My grandmother was a Fontenot, my grandmother's grandmother was a Fontenot, and again many more of my ancestors were Fontenots. How many Fontenot genes in my blood are responsible for my looks, my physique, my way of feeling, thinking, and acting, my gestures? Was all my genealogical research correct biologically?

About 50 meters from the hotel was a large typical square called "Mareschal LeCler". Around the square are a few cafés, two cinemas, several boutiques, and lengthwise along the sides of the square are famous huge "plataines" (cottonwood trees). At one end of the square is the Hôtel de Ville (Combination city hall, courthouse, with courts, sometimes municipal libraries, etc). What was so striking about this one was its blue color which appeared at regular intervals on the façade and in a lighter blue color in the stone parts which all serve as ornaments, and in the stained glasses which finally give the impression of being a church, a curious mixture of a religious and public building, all under a striking white sky with blue clouds. One cannot but stop and admire this Hôtel de Ville, so recent and original in construction, compared to the other buildings. It dates back only to the middle of the 19th century, but is the product of the Renaissance style. One of the windows portrays the famous Aliénore of Aquitaine confirming chartered privileges to Poitiers. This square is surrounded by many modern buildings, and probably would never have been seen by our ancestors, or their descendants in the 18th century. Perhaps it would be easier to understand and appreciate history by studying our present times and going back into time, always asking "why" for each recent happening and event, instead of jumping back into history and trying to understand it.

After approaching the building to admire its rich colors that attract many passers by, I entered a residential area just behind it. There were many old houses, dating back probably to the 16th and 17th centuries. They stood nobly, seeming to glance at all passers by, with welcoming expressions. The streets were very clean, extremely clean. They were not only spotless, in relation to litter, but also in relation to the painting, neatness, and choices of paints and colors, I felt uneasy.

I noticed a small, hideous looking, abandoned church whose façade was in need of repair. I could not understand how a quaint little church had not been cleaned and repaired, at least for use as a museum.

Many streets still have their original cobblestone surfaces. The clippety-clack and rolling of wheels could be heard far off. I wondered if it was a buggy, chariot, or simply a cart. Was it an elegant coach, or was it peasant coming to town to sell his produce? Could it be a member of the Fontenot Family? An old man, with a black cape, wearing a high hat, came around the corner. He was pulling a small vegetable cart. The white hair which came out of his hat hid the top of his eyes and his two or three day old silver colored beard reflected in the sun, like the first drops of dew in the morning. He saw me, stopped, stood up straighter, slightly puffed out his chest covered with a white ruffled shirt that could be seen in a glimpse under the cape, looked at me straight in the eyes. No expression came to his face. His big round eyes stayed round, his flat nose and thick eyebrows and swollen lips looked petrified. He turned his head and continued on his way. What had been the attitudes of those Fontenot ancestors? What had been their physical stature, light colored, fat, skinny, stout, slim? How did they walk, upright and noble, slightly bent over and humble, and how were the old people when they walked. Did they walk slowly and greet people on the way, or did they pass in front of or cross people without even telling them hello, be it that they knew them or not?

The end of the cobblestoned street slipped into the heavy black topping but the sides of the stones near the gutters were still apparent where

asphalt had not been spread properly over the street.

A cat was digging in a trash can on the side of an old building. I called, it meowed but didn't come. It's preoccupation was taking advantage of the absence of anyone who might chase it away. I thought "tu as raison, vas-y bouffe" (you're right, go ahead and feast). I suddenly realized that I hadn't seen any dogs. Could it be that this was a dogless city? (Paris is so filled with them that one must watch his step not to slip into or onto...and fall or mess up his shoes.) A different direction led me to an area from where one is made to realize that the city of Poitiers, even though located on a flat plateau, is really seated on small very irregular hills. The last street led down to a river called LeClain. It protects Poitiers with sure boundaries on three sides, thus forming a sort of buckle. From there I retraced my footsteps to the Musée Municipal.

The museum was open. I could take advantage of the absence of the people and crowds who stroll around because they have nothing else to do. The museum itself is a very modern building, built over ancient roman baths and therms. There are three levels, one containing artifacts from the Poitou area, another has paintings from different centuries and the last exhibits archeological periods, of the bronze age, the roman empire periods.

The local artifacts date back to the 19th and 20th centuries. Most were utensils and tools used in and around the homes and farm houses, there was a limited collection of clothes and costumes, of different periods. Many, if not all, of these looked exactly like some of the objects we find in Louisiana, but from different periods. I felt strange in front of those tools, those things of different utility, primitive, traditional and modern useful tools. However old they may be they don't seem to differ much in form from one another. The new ones are more elaborate and sophisticated than the older ones. How true it is, when we say that the more we change, the more we stay the same.

In another room I discovered Minera, a beautiful statue created in the 1st century A. D. Had the Fontenots and their families seen the same statue somewhere in Poitiers? Had the Fontenot family asked themselves the same questions when and if they had seen that statue? Had they been descendants of one of the creators or sculptors of the Roman statue. It would have been pleasant to touch it, but better only to look.

The 4th century glass funerary urn once contained the ashes of one of our "gaulois" ancestors and perhaps to thousands of others whose descendants migrated elsewhere. Who had they been, where did they go, why? Were the ancestors of our ancestors originally from the Poitou area, or had they immigrated from other areas of France, or perhaps other countries?

The other level was a collection of paintings from the 15th and 16th centuries and were mainly Italian and Dutch schools of painting.

Just before leaving, one last glimpse at the last few objects, those same things our ancestors used in the house. How had our ancestors spent their weekends, what did they do and where did they go on Saturday, and Sunday nights. Did they get together as family groups, how did they eat, what did they eat? How and where did they sleep at night, in the summer and in the winter? What did they wear, did they have bonnets, thick woolen blankets, long white thick molten night gowns? How were their rooms, how many rooms, did they have large or small families, were they united, or were there quarrels, did they laugh and joke a lot? Were they serious and non smiling?

What had been our ancestors' reactions upon reaching the shores of this land called Louisiana? How long did it take him to get used to his new environment, to the hard life?

From the museum I went towards an old church "La Bapistaire de Saint Jean." The church today is sunken into the ground, and completely surrounded by a street. The construction is rectangular, and does not measure more than about 10 meters by 9. It is believed to be the oldest extant or surviving ancient christian edifice in France. The central part was

constructed about 356 A. D. and was used for baptisms during which the people were actually submerged into the water in the sort of pool in the center. There are still traces of the original paint on the ceiling and walls.

From there, I went to the Cathedral de St. Herre, another edifice sunk into the ground. It was necessary to go down a few steps to enter the church. I wondered if this was typical of the region in France. It was the first time I had seen such ecclestical architecture. The church was very clean, but badly lit. It was absolutely empty. No altars on the side as is typical of most churches. A small notice pinned on the wall related the Vatican declaration when it was classified a minor basilica some years ago. It is not really beautiful, but is immense and very impressive. The sides are of roman and gothic styles. Construction was begun in 1162 and finished in 1271.

There is another church behind the cathedral. The inside is dark and obscure, no altars. The main altar, at the rear is located on a crypt which brings one down into a sanctuary where lie the remains of Ste. Radegonde. She escaped from her husband circa 560, and founded the church named for her. The exposed coffin said to be her sarcophagus, looks like carbonized or petrified wood. This whurch also is worth seeing, it too is sunken into the ground.

I went down a narrow street, where I could lean on the buildings with my heels and buttocks on one side, and touch the other side with the palms of my hands. Someone had honored this public way with the name of "rue."

I got the rue St. Germain. I wondered if this was the pariosse St. Germain where our Fontenot ancestor had married, in second marriage, a certain Francoise Mace in 1699. Perhaps he was from this parish. Farther on I noticed a small church. It was completely closed, the church yars was a small park. The church doors and windows were blocked with bricks and concrete blocks, it was abandoned. One whole side of the church was missing, what was left was a garage. There were apparently roman terms under this church which was discovered in the late 19th century. What a pity it could not be excavated.

I wondered if I would be able to find if the Fontenot family was from this parish or not. Would the archives be rich in church reigsters, would I find a lot of documents, would they be easy to locate, were there large collections of notary archives?

The parish of St. Jean de Montierneuf is just behind St. Germain, but on a much lower geographical level. Little did I know that I was to discover later that all the Fonteneau-Pradeau children were born and baptized in this parish, not St. Germain.

Further on what a surprise, rue Dom Fonteneau, Historien from the 18th centruy. Was he possible a cousin, great grand child or nephew to the Joachim Fontenot and Pradeau woman. I discovered later that this Fonteneau was from Jussy-en-Champagne, born in 1705.

Following this I saw the Palais de Justice. It is an amazingly beautiful monument, high, originally "Palais des Duc" built in the 13th centruy.

Next was a visit to "Notre Dame LaGrande" church. No words can describe my surprise at this church. The mixture of romanesque and arabic; it has two steeples, not at all in the arrow shaped endings, instead well rounded off, with shingles, so that they look green pine cones, lured from out of France into an unknown country. One must go down a few steps to enter the church. There are still many of the original colors that were never seen in any churches. Everything, the statues, wally were painted in many geometric figures that are found in arabic art, most of the paint that can be seen is either original or later, but not recent. This church was built or at least begun in the 1130's. Many small altars were constructed during the renaissance period. The colors of the central nave date back to the 14th and 15th centuries. It is a small church about 18 by 15 meters, but it ia appalling.

I visited another church, St. Hilaire. This church still has parts

of the original 1045 ramparts around it. The edifice still stands on the original foundation of the church founded by St. Hilaire who lived during the years 500 A. D. However because of robberies, the church was closed so I could not enter.

MONDAY 8 August 1983

After breakfast I went to the archives. A note there indicated that they were open from 9:30 to 5:30, that only 15 documents were allowed per day and no documents were distributed between 11:30 and 1:30. The day was starting off well. In Paris, generally only 6 to 10 documents are allowed per day, no matter how many people there are in the room, and no errors are taken into account for the researcher. An error, once the records have been pulled cannot be rectified, moreover the researcher pays for the errors, even if the documents are missing or misplaced, no substitutes or new requests can be made. On the other hand some departments allow the researcher as many documents as he wishes, as long as the distributor can carry out his work correctly.

The complete or almost complete set of church registers of St. Germain and Montierneuf were not in the archives, but in the municipal library. I remained in the archives though, looking for the marriage contract of the Fonteneau-Mace union, seeking specific information concerning his previous marriage and perhaps other information and references to his family, was there such a concrete document from which to start the general research project, and would it bring new elements into the research.

First a list of all notaries in Poitiers during the year 1699 had to be established, a total of 16 notarial studies. That could mean spending a few minutes looking through indexes if they existed, or if not, spending several hours looking page by page through many documents, hoping that if a marriage contract had been established, it had been one or two days recently before the marriage, if not one or two months. A woman took my request, and explained that the different bundles would be distributed one by one, because they were not all bound together in book form, not to mix the different documents together.

After approximately two hours of looking through seven of the 16 notaries, practicing at the time, looking through many packs of documents, some thin, some quite thick and bulky, voilà the Fontenot-Mace marriage contract made its appearance. A surprise, disbelief. Unreal, acceptance. Belief, reality. That was it. Happy, very Happy. A small document, difficult to read. Thick and blurry, calligraphy. It wasn't really the needle in the haystack that had been found, just the right haystack.

A photocopy please. That way I could study it that night in my hotel room. With a combination of both the departmental and municipal archives it would be possible to fill in all the gaps. The names of the parents of the contracting parties were not mentioned in the contract. Joachim Fonteneau was savetier, shoe repairman, and he was widower of Marie Pradeau, and this second wife, Françoise Macé, was the widow of François Demoiseau, escarpeur. Apart from the normal formalities stipulated in the contract, there was practically no worthwhile informative data.

Next copied the names found in the card catalog on the Fontenot and Pradeau families. The card catalog which is extremely far from being complete was however of great help. It sometimes indicated the different parishes from which came certain families and helped locate some of the families more rapidly. Different ways of spelling Fontenot varied from Fonteneau, to Fronteneau, to Fonteneau, Fonteneaux and one Phonteneau. The latter was probably an error, and should not be taken into account, it having appeared only once.

Two hours were spent preparing notes in the hotel and studying the various notes taken from different sources. Comparing them with the notes already acquired from Judge Tate or other notes from the Fontenot family, it was impossible to deduce or conclude relations concerning the different

Fontenots discovered in the Poitiers. It was impossible, there were still too many gaps and missing information.

TUESDAY morning, 9 August.

First day in the Library. It is an old building which is now part of the university. It is rich in historical and architectural past. The whole morning was spent looking page by page, act by act, for the Fontenot children born unto the Fontenot and Predau (Peradeau) marriage. I asked the librarian if there were any indexes to the church records. The answer was of course "no". Not surprising, since generally speaking, indexes are very rare before the revolution. I looked from Montierneuf Parish to St. Germain Parish, page by page, act, by act. What a discovery, all the children were born in Montierneuf parish. Here is the list I found, with date of birth, and baptism if both were given, and the godparents: They were all identified as children of Joachim (or Joachim) Fonteneau, Fronteneau, Phonteneau and of Marie Peratteau (Prouteau, Peraudeau, etc.)

1. Janne Born (notshown) bt. 29 Dec. 1682, René Simon/Jeanne Simonet
2. Ysbeau Born 2 July 1684, bt. same day Leonard Simounet/Ysabelle Partu
3. Louis Born 18 Dec. 1686, bt. 18 Dec 1686 Louis Benoist/Renée Rousseau
4. Jeanne Born 17 Mai 1688, bt. 18 Mai 1688 Pierre Matias/Jeanne Peraudeau
5. Radegonde Born 26 Nov. 1689, bt. 26 Nov. 1689 Pierre Saillet/Radegonde Pintault
6. Vincent Born 15 Dec 1693, bt. 15 Dec. 1693 Vincent Aurillar/Jeanne Boutin

The search went on. Was the marriage of the parents here also? I continued looking but found nothing. How disappointing. They were perhaps married somewhere else. It would be necessary to look at random in other parishes. Perhaps the card catalog in the archives would indicate the origin of the Pradeau woman, according to the references of other Pradeaus in other parishes.

I found, without looking for, and far from suspecting the second marriage of Françoise Macé. She in fact was the second wife of Joachim Fonteneau, but he was her third husband, her second husband having been Francois Demoiseau. Her first husband was not shown.

The library closed at noon, and as I ate my sandwich I tried to organize in my mind what other documents to ask for in the archives for the next morning, so that they could be pulled out and waiting for me, so that they would be there when I arrived and save time the next day. I continued looking through the same parish records in the noon hours, and then went back to the municipal library. There the church records, even if not complete at least fill in the gaps in the archives. Fortunately in France in the 17th century, a decree was passed requiring priests to keep second copies of their records, and they were obliged to deposit them elsewhere than in the presbtery. This was to establish a type of census and keep an account of the people for when taxes would be imposed. The double copy served against the poor people for the taxes, but in time it served a good purpose for historians and genealogists. Today the copies that survived are either in the archives of the respective departments, or in the city hall, of the cities or villages themselves. It was obvious that the day hadn't been very interesting. Disappointment. I had looked through so many documents and so many registers my eyes were tired, but more so my spirit because so little had been found.

When I returned to the hotel, I had a phone call from a Mr. Eddie Fontenot. When I had arrived in Poitiers, I had sent five letters to the Fontenot families who were listed in the telephone directory. Mr. Eddie Fontenot was the only one to answer my letter. He was kind enough to give me information, however was of no help since his family was originally from Mans (Le Sartre) which is much higher up in France, and moreover the name

he carried was in reality the family name of his paternal grandmother who had been amère-fille (unmarried mother). We had an interesting conversation.

WEDNESDAY 10 August.

Same procedure as the day before as the day before, at the library, going page by page, book by book, from 8:30 to noon, then to the departmental archives, to do random research on the two families. I began to panic, it was Wednesday, had I found all that I would be able to find, was this the climax, the location of the baptism of the Fonteneau children? Tensions rose, my veins began to palpitate from frustration, too many piles of registers and I was not finding what I wanted...did that mean going home tonight with an empty basket?

THURSDAY 11 August

Again same procedure, straight to the library, then to the departmental archives. I was very tired, not from running and researching, but from frustration and desperation. On my way back to the library, I sent a postcard to Judge Tate informing him of my negative results obtained until then. In spite of that misfortune, and also of the shame and desperation that I felt, I would carry on my conscience if I didn't find what I wanted and, knowing that so many people were waiting for good positive results, I refused to give up. On the contrary, I pushed on. Luckily so, for that very afternoon, what a surprise, I found the Fontenot-Pradeau marriage-not in the parish of Montierneuf as I had hoped and calculated, but in the St. Prochaire parish. What more of a surprise, but a church just about 17 meters away from my hotel room. I wanted to run to church before it closed to look at it more closely... I had entered it one or two days before, but only for two minutes... had kept bad souvenirs...a tramp at the door had been aggressive as much in his words when he expressed his need for money, as in his odors..from an alcohol soaked body and urine soaked clothes. I felt that from this point I would perhaps make more progress than before, but just who could know what would happen.

Needless to say, I raked through each page for the birth of Fontenau-Pradeau couple. they had married on 13 October 1681. Both were said to be from St. Prochaire, witnesses being Leonard Simmonet and Jean Partu or Partet, both cousins of Joachim Fonteneau. How were they cousins, some of them had appeared at the baptisms of the Fonteneau children. Other names were Catherine Billuin, the mother of Marie Pradeau, Estiene Prodeau, and Pierre Paplieua, uncles of the wife. The parents of the marrying couple were deceased Nicolas Fonteneau and deceased Jacquette Devillier. Marie's father was the deceased Louis Pradeau.

FRIDAY 12 August

First of all I looked at the list of notaries in 1681 for a possible Fontenot-Pradeau marriage contract, immediately after telling the librarian that I wanted to consult the documents at the noon hours and having deposited the request, ran to the library. I checked the parish of St. Prochaire, and found nothing. No children of Louis and Louise Billouin. I did find the marriage of Louis Prouseau and Catherine Billouin in that parish in 1655. I was confused, why were Fonteneau and Marie Paradeau married there? Were they both living there at the time? Why wasn't Pradeau's birth there, but the marriage of her parents was? Was the mother originally from that parish, so the marriage took place there, and then they moved? Were the children born in another parish, and then the family moved back to the original parish? In any case the Pradeau-Billouin marriage was on 7 February 1655. The names of their parents were not given.

Less and less time, tension mounting. Change parishes, skim fast, run over pages, glimpse.....fast....at random, but all the parishes of Poitiers



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