



chez nous

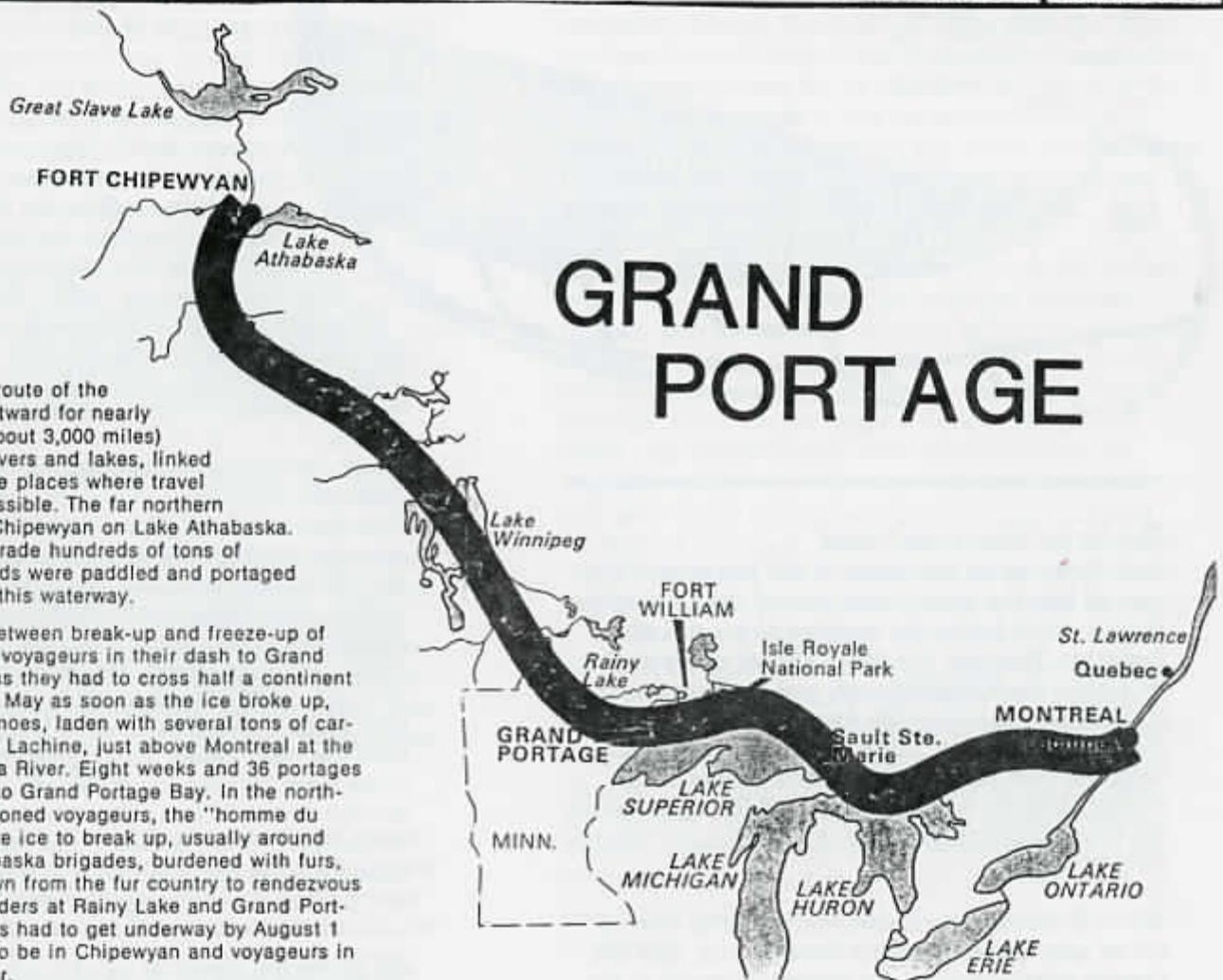
Newsletter of JUIN - JUILLET 1988

la société canadienne-française

EDITOR-Dick Bernard

Vol. 9 No. 6

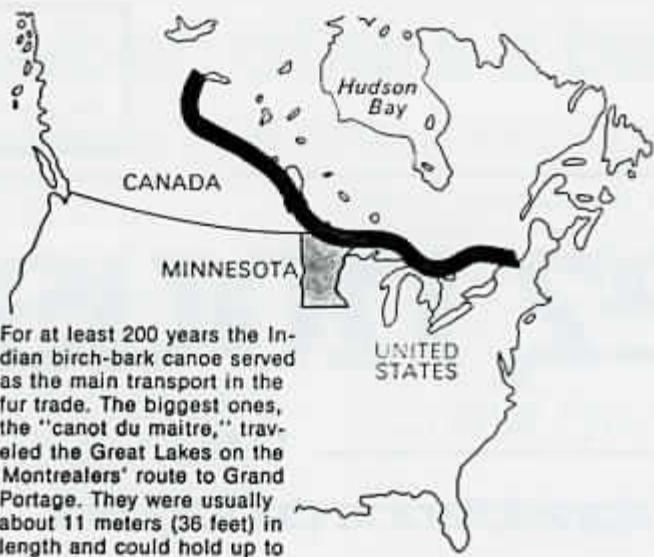
CO-EDITOR-Jerry Forchette



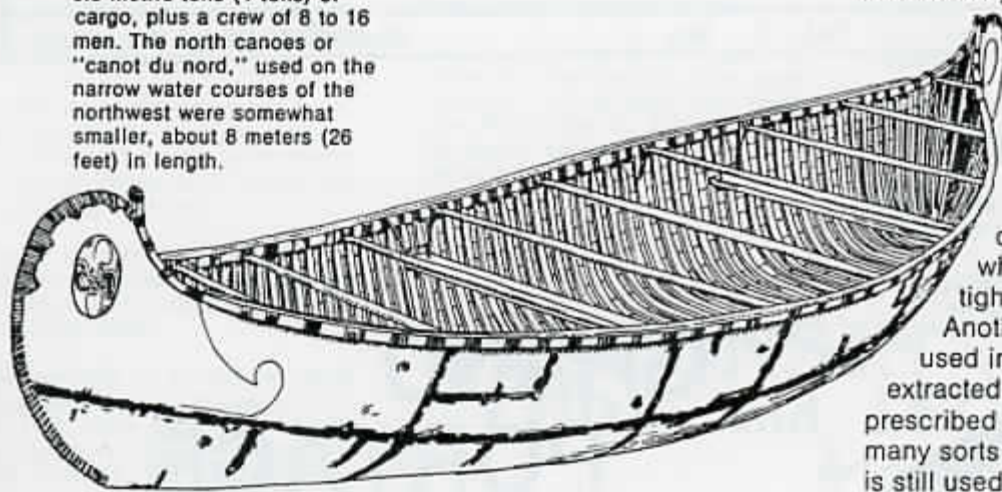
From Montreal the route of the fur trade swept westward for nearly 5,000 kilometers (about 3,000 miles) over a network of rivers and lakes, linked by portages in those places where travel by canoe was impossible. The far northern terminus was Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabaska. At the peak of the trade hundreds of tons of pelts and trade goods were paddled and portaged each season along this waterway.

The short season between break-up and freeze-up of the ice spurred the voyageurs in their dash to Grand Portage. In 5 months they had to cross half a continent and return. In early May as soon as the ice broke up, brigades of lake canoes, laden with several tons of cargo, moved out from Lachine, just above Montreal at the mouth of the Ottawa River. Eight weeks and 36 portages later they glided into Grand Portage Bay. In the north-west, crews of seasoned voyageurs, the "homme du nord," waited for the ice to break up, usually around May 15. Then Athabaska brigades, burdened with furs, began traveling down from the fur country to rendezvous in mid-July with traders at Rainy Lake and Grand Portage. Return journeys had to get underway by August 1 to allow northmen to be in Chipewyan and voyageurs in Montreal by October.

A HINT: The article above and on the next pages comes from a very simple source - the brochure everyone receives when they come to Grand Portage Historical site on the North Shore of Lake Superior. Often you will see historical markers and other descriptions that are interesting. Take pictures, write down what you see and let us know what you discovered. The readers of Chez Nous would appreciate it. Mail to Jerry Forchette, 4655 University Ave NE Mpls MN 55421 or Dick Bernard 2014 1st Ave #6 Hibbing MN 55746. HAVE A GREAT SUMMER.



For at least 200 years the Indian birch-bark canoe served as the main transport in the fur trade. The biggest ones, the "canot du maitre," traveled the Great Lakes on the Montrealers' route to Grand Portage. They were usually about 11 meters (36 feet) in length and could hold up to 3.5 metric tons (4 tons) of cargo, plus a crew of 8 to 16 men. The north canoes or "canot du nord," used on the narrow water courses of the northwest were somewhat smaller, about 8 meters (26 feet) in length.



Bartered Goods and Beaver Pelts

It was a fact of the fur trade that beyond the places where the traders had already been lay the richest sources of beaver furs. This principle went unchanged on the North American continent until its entire breadth had been crossed. The beaver, a mild mannered, natural homebody, was an easy catch and it took a long time for beaver populations to restore themselves after the ponds had been trapped out. Relying on Indian guides who knew the country and where to look for beaver, the trader managed to keep one step ahead of the retreating line of the beaver frontier.

Otter, ermine, marten, mink, and the other fur-bearing animals of Canada were listed on the returns for pelts coming out of the northwest.

But beaver was the most highly prized. Bound for distant ports— London, Moscow, Berlin, and Canton— beaver was recognized as the medium of exchange of the colonial market. European taste in fashion, the principal reason for the high price of beaver, dictated a felted top hat, the finest of which were made out of beaver fur pressed tightly together by industrial methods. Another beaver by-product which was widely used in Europe was castor, the substance extracted from the scent glands. Europeans prescribed a potent concoction of castor for many sorts of bodily ailments, and castor extra is still used as a fixative in perfumes.

The Great Carrying Place

Only three water passages to the Northwest are scored into the broad rock face of the Laurentian Shield which forms the western shore of Lake Superior. They are the rivers known today as the St. Louis, the Kaministiquia, and the Pigeon. The last of these is navigable except for a few kilometers at its mouth, but a narrow, muddy trail links the lake with the navigable waters of the Pigeon. Indians had used this trail for ages before the first European explorer, a Frenchman, recorded it in 1722.

The French explorers, who continued to search for an easy passage to the western sea, and the French missionaries, who sought converts in the wilderness, gave the trail its name—"Le Grande Portage," The Great Carrying Place. It remained, however, for the Highland Scots and their partners in the North West Company to give Grand Portage its place in history as the vital link in a network of waterways that nurtured the fur trade empire.

The fur trade of North America developed in the 16th century between French fishermen and Indi-

As the demand for beaver spread across the North American continent Indians took sharper notice of their little forest neighbor, an animal which had represented hardly more than an occasional source of food or warm clothing. Collected and taken to the trading post, beaver pelts could be exchanged for a surprising assortment of goods few of which the Indian had ever known. He especially liked iron kettles, axes, and other iron products. Cloth from England, beads from Italy, brandy from France, rum from the West Indies, and gunpowder and guns— these were luxuries, soon necessities, that soared as high on the Indian scale of values as the furs did on company profit sheets in Montreal. So the Indian became allies with the trader and became embroiled in his territorial disputes with other trading rivals.

ans along the banks of Newfoundland and the mainland coast. Furs gathered by the French for sale in Europe soon became the cash crop of New France. When fur-bearing animals, particularly beaver, became scarce, the French traders searched westward. Blocked to the north by the British fur domain of the Hudson's Bay Company, the French traders were forced over a long water and land route from Montreal through the Ottawa River and the Great Lakes to Grand Portage—

The North West Company

Furs, to most Europeans, were the greatest resource of North America, and after 200 years the fur trade had pushed on to the north and west beyond Hudson Bay and the Great Lakes. In the 1770s the beaver frontier lay deep in the Northwest wilderness. Traders groping for new routes to the interior at Grand Portage stood on the threshold of immense opportunities for profit and an era of momentous discovery over the water highways that flowed northward to the Arctic Ocean and westward to the Pacific.

After the French and Indian War and the transfer of Canada from France to Great Britain in 1763, English and Scottish newcomers visited the old French trading centers on the St. Lawrence and outposts on the Great Lakes. Soon these men were reviving the French transportation system by river, lake, and portage to the interior. At the Grand Portage their paths converged.

Competition among these independent traders became fierce. By loosening trade restrictions, the new British government in Quebec had opened up the Great Lakes fur trade to anyone with a license, and plenty applied. The men of the Hudson's Bay Company, who dominated the Canada fur trade, derisively called these Montreal traders "pedlars." The Hudson's Bay men watched with intense interest, however, as their new rivals penetrated deeper into the continent and more and more goods were

gateway to the untapped fur riches of the Northwest.

Under British auspices after 1763, the route over the Grand Portage was inherited by independent traders who founded the North West Company. There was a fur trade empire based primarily on the exportation of beaver fur to supply the particular tastes of European fashion. Beaver pelts, from which the finest quality felt hats were made, were in tremendous demand.

In July the post at Grand Portage was the scene of the North West Company's annual rendezvous. From the east came canoe loads of trade goods from the warehouses in Montreal destined for the interior. From the northwestern outposts came wintering traders with loads of furs en route to Montreal.

Though it was the North West Company's most important inland trading center, the Grand Portage post was short-lived; it was founded about 1778 and abandoned in 1803 when the North West Company moved north to avoid American taxation and established the post of Fort William. The buildings at Grand Portage were left to the elements and quickly disappeared. Traffic along the portage trail dwindled; then it, too, disappeared.

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carried to the post at Grand Portage. In 1774 a total of 60 canoe loads moved over the portage. By water and birch-bark canoe the Montreal traders were building a strong line of transportation which neither the Hudson's Bay Company to the north nor the American colonies approaching independence to the south would be able to break into.

Free-wheeling competition had its harmful effects, too. Alexander Henry, a trader visiting Grand Portage in 1775, found the traders "in a state of extreme hostility, each pursuing his interests in such a manner as might most injure his neighbor." Those farsighted enough to see the ruinous consequences of such cutthroat dealing formed partnerships to protect themselves and their vital supply lines to the fur country. The North West Company emerged the most profitable of these partnerships. It was a joint stock company, though it would not have qualified as a company in the modern sense because it was never legally responsible for its debts or accountable for its actions. Partners in the North West Company "joined their stock together and made one common interest of the whole," but were still free to trade outside the company as well as within it.

Benjamin and Joseph Frobisher, Simon McTavish, and James and John McGill were the Montreal traders who formed the nucleus of the company in 1778. As the new company took form, they began holding their annual meetings at the fort at Grand Portage. Here the fur returns were counted and stock was redistributed; new partners were accepted and sent out into the northwest as winterers; and clerks were given their instructions and voyageurs their pay. Here, in the words of historian Jeannette Mirsky, "a thousand men from Montreal and others who had been working months or years in solitude gorged on talk, food, and drink. Fights and friendships were renewed, appetites assuaged; eyes and ears and voices had their fill of sociable function. Grand Portage was lusty and lively, hugely satisfying; it was active, animated, strenuous. And through the clamor and movement of canoemen and guides, northmen and clerks, moved the employers, partners in the North West Company, the Pedlars; respect and obedience attended them as they moved about, masters of many men and half a continent."

As fur returns mounted steadily and the company prospered, the original partners quickly joined the ranks of the wealthiest and most powerful men in Canada. After further consolidation of company interests in 1783, the Frobishers and Simon McTavish traveled no further inland than Grand Portage, where they acted as middlemen between the wintering partners and the European markets. Besides contending with competitors as ruthless as ever,

OLD TIME MUSIC IN MANITOBA

from—"Along the Red", newsletter of the Ft. Garry, Manitoba Historical Society, Summer of 1987.

In the settlement of the West, much has been written about the pioneers. We know of their ability to surmount great difficulties through hard work and perseverance. In spite of great odds, they succeeded in building their homes, farms, towns, and cities. The role of many institutions has been recorded in this development: government, church, school and many private and public organizations. The emphasis has always been on the serious side of life. The practical economic condition and the spiritual and moral character of life have been seen as the important forces that shaped our past.

On reading about our past, only passing references are usually given, if at all, to the lighter side of life, that of amusement and entertainment. Now a book is being planned on this subject, specifically a book on old time music and dance, and the effect this form of entertainment had on the lives of the people of Manitoba. The author, George Leger, would like to learn about the social customs regulating this unique force of expression which was enjoyed by so many.

In what George calls the counter-balancing side of a hard prairie life, weekend parties, pursued throughout farm communities in every part of the province, were a way to find enjoyment and often provide opportunities for young people to meet in an atmosphere of relaxation and congeniality.

The mainstay of the house party was fiddling music and square dancing. Next to the musicians, the most important person was the caller. A good caller would add life and excitement and keep the dancers going often till morning.

George plans to examine the development and origins of old time music and dance from it's Scottish and Irish beginnings to the French and Métis influence here in Manitoba. The

the company partners were constantly fighting among themselves over management problems. Nevertheless, by the time the company had moved its operations from Grand Portage to Fort William, it was on equal footing with the Hudson's Bay Company in the contest for the riches of the North American fur trade.

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violin as the lead instrument in old time music goes back to the early *coureurs de bois* and was assimilated by the Métis very early.

About the only sources of information for this book are people who can recall stories and experiences. George is constantly looking for people who can provide anecdotes and names of popular fiddlers and callers of the past; also names of popular hosts of house parties and the way these parties are organized.

Community picnics were often the site of fiddling and jigging contests such as the ones at Lido Plage which remained popular until the 1950s. Information about these as well as the dance hall which became popular in the 1930-1940s is needed.

The title of George's book will be "Bagpipes Across the River" and subtitled "The Story of Old-Time Music in Manitoba". If you understand the connection between these two titles, George will want to talk to you. You could call him at 204-269-1178 (Ft. Garry, Manitoba).

THERE'S LOTS TO DO THIS SUMMER!

Mark your calendar with these special summer events:

Rendezvous at Old Fort William, Thunder Bay Ontario July 1-4;

Twin Cities La Societe Picnic at Lake Minnetonka July 10;

Minnesota Ethnic Days, Ironworld, Chisholm MN July 13-17;

Minneapolis Aquatennial, Minneapolis, July 15-24, **Torchlight Parade**, July 20 at 8p.m.;

Pea Soup Days, Somerset, WI, July 19 (parade at 2:15 p.m.);

Folkarama, Winnipeg, Manitoba, July 31 - August 13;

Rendezvous at Grand Portage, Grand Portage MN, August 13-14;

"Customs, Traditions and Cultural Representation" of Chippewa and French-Canadian Red Lake MN Humanities Center 2-6 p.m. August 21;

Old Fort Snelling, Minneapolis MN, is open all summer and a wonderful place to spend a day. Start with the interpretive center open at 9:30 a.m.

Call the **Minnesota Historical Society** 1-800-652-9747 or 612-296-6126 for a 24 page booklet on summer special events, sites and theme tours.

ENJOY A FASCINATING SUMMER.

St. Louis, Roi de France

by John England

The Three Corners of God, by Reverend John J. Emerick, S.M., is a cheerful, concise and interesting history of St. Paul's French parish, St. Louis, King of France.

It is written in a flowing organized style, which is no easy task when dealing with a lot of facts and figures. Father Emerick states in the preface that the parish archives were somewhat inadequate. Nevertheless, it is to his credit that he and his assistants, including Rose Lancette Johnson, were able to compile such an excellent history.

The author interjects some interesting anecdotes about the parish and its pastors - particularly Fr. Paul Rulquin. The reader will

soon discover that Fr. Paul would never have made a success of himself as a diplomat. At any rate, these vignettes add a touch of human warmth. Indeed, they provide the reader with not only a few chuckles but they also tend to put the entire chronicle of St. Louis in a deeper perspective than that of black and white facts.

This little volume is well illustrated with pictures of early diocesan clerics, the many Marist priests, the *e'éscole Française*. Included also, is a copy of a hand written letter by Archbishop Ireland in Latin, with an accompanying translation.

This parish history won't be around forever and it should be in your collection of French Canadian books. It is available from the Church of St. Louis, 506 Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55101 at \$6.00 per copy.

CONGRATULATIONS FATHER HOULE

Father Cecil Houle celebrated the golden anniversary of his ordination on May 22 at St. -Baptist parish in Hugo.

The church was filled with the sounds of joy, with Ave Maria and Panis Angelicus. It was filled with family and friends including Father Cecil's aunt who had just turned 101 years old that day. Indeed, it was a beautiful testimony of faith and of the high regard in which this Franco-American priest is held.

Father Houle's ancestors came from Trois Rivieres to the Hugo-Centerville area. The most precious item they brought was their deep faith. He is proud of his Canadian heritage and his family who are so numerous in the area. He told us that when he informed Father L'Aventure of his wish to be a priest, the elderly cure said "well it's about time."

Father Cecil has a wonderful singing voice, and I've seldom met a man who loves music the way he does. He had a choir at every parish where he served. Even during his years as a chaplain in world war II, he had the troops singing when they often had little to sing about. And when some of his G.I. buddies came to help him celebrate his anniversary, Father led them in song again - a rousing chorus of ALOUETTE, of course!

by John England

OBITUARY

Eugene F. LaFond, 84, a Little Falls native and noted St. Paul realtor died May 5, 1988.

Gene was so interested in things French-Canadian, and it was always delightful to hear him speak about his heritage. He would become very animated - in fact his eyes would twinkle when he spoke about the voyageurs, the habitants and his own family history. He had a talent for making others of French-Canadian decent feel a distinct and justifiable pride in their culture. Gene awakened a dormant spirit in many of us who were hibernating in a cultural winter called Minnesota where the French-Canadian heritage was all but forgotten.

Back in 1976, he was instrumental in organizing La Societé des Voyageurs, a group dedicated to proclaim the French-Canadian role in Minnesota. We had a canoe race from Lake Phalen to Keller lake, a soupe aux pois, picque-nique on Keller Island, Mass at St. John's in Little Canada, and a dance at the St. Paul hotel. The organization was riddled with strife and was short lived. But, it was a start; it was an ancestor of the present day Societé Canadienne-Francaise.

Gene LaFond's memory will always be with us. We extend our deepest sympathy to his family.

by John England

Quebec offers a baby bonus

Objective is to reverse dwindling provincial birth rate

By Don McGillivray
Newhouse News Service

Ottawa, Ontario

While other places worry about the population explosion, Quebec is paying people to have more babies.

In its new budget, the province populated mainly by French-speaking Canadians will pay \$500 to families for their first child. They'll get \$500 for a second child, but then the bounty jumps.

A third baby will earn parents a bonus of \$3,000 from the provincial treasury. And so will a fourth and a fifth and so on and so on.

Experts doubt the policy will work. But the objective clearly is to raise a provincial birth rate that is the lowest in the developed world except for that of West Germany.

Quebec worries about its birth rate because it has been, for more than 200 years, a tiny outpost of French in an English ocean.

The survival of French in North America is almost a miracle in itself. In 1759, when Gen. James Wolfe stormed the fortress at Quebec City and captured New France for the British, there were only 70,000 people in the colony compared with about 2 million in the English colonies, which later became the United States.

And this French population never has been reinforced by any significant immigration. It has had to depend on its own natural increase.

For a long time this was no problem. The Quebec population, with its roots in the land and its faith in the Roman Catholic Church, had the highest birth rate in Canada.

But today about 80 percent of the population is urban, and only 3 percent are farmers. City living has produced city values. The birth rate has dropped to become Canada's lowest and now is too low to maintain the population on a long-term basis.

In times when the Quebec birth rate was high, there was a lot of talk about "the revenge of the cradle." Some French-speaking Canadians thought there was a chance (and some English-speaking Canadians saw it as a danger) that the English majority might be overwhelmed by French babies.

This talk peaked in World War II, when Quebecers resisted the draft, refusing to fight in what they saw as a British imperial war. In 1944, while the controversy still was hot, the federal government in Ottawa introduced a family allowance or "baby bonus," which consisted of a small monthly sum of money paid to mothers of children under 16.

Critics called it a waste of money that would encourage poor families to procreate. It was supposed to be of particular benefit to Quebec, where large families then were the rule.

But the payment didn't appear to encourage large families. Like most countries, Canada had a baby boom after World War II. But then, with the family allowance still in effect, the birth rate dropped.

Governments did find out, though, that it was easier to start a family allowance than to stop it. The federal family allowance still exists and cost

Ottawa about \$2.5 billion last year.

Quebec probably will find the same situation with its new allowance, which is not dependent on the income of the parents.

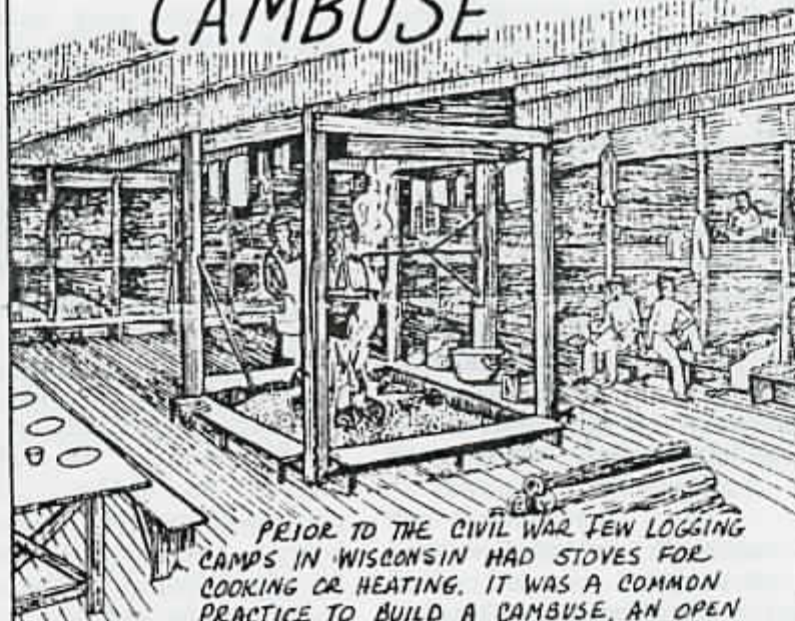
Even before this year's budget, Quebec was paying a bonus on top of the federal family allowance. But the provincial government now is aiming to make the prize big enough to induce more parents to have larger families.

Most experts say it won't work. Most Quebec women of child-bearing age now are in the paid work force. For them, even a bonus of \$3,000 per child is not enough for them to give up a career and a second income.

WISCONSIN LORE and LEGENDS



The CAMBUSE



PRIOR TO THE CIVIL WAR FEW LOGGING CAMPS IN WISCONSIN HAD STOVES FOR COOKING OR HEATING. IT WAS A COMMON PRACTICE TO BUILD A CAMBUSE, AN OPEN FIREPLACE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SLEEPING SHANTY. SMOKE FROM THE FIRE ESCAPED THROUGH A HOLE IN THE ROOF. A CRANE MOUNTED ON AN UPRIGHT POST PERMITTED THE SUSPENSION OF IRON KETTLES OVER THE FIRE. A BED OF DEEP SAND FORMED THE BASE OF THE CAMBUSE WHERE THE FIRE WAS BUILT.

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E. J. HILL
'87

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chez nous

Newsletter of AOÛT - SEPTEMBRE 1988

La société canadienne-française

EDITOR—Dick Bernard

Vol. 10 No. 1

CO-EDITOR—Jerry Forchette

PARIS

by Stephanie Wolkin

"Paris is a moveable feast." So wrote Ernest Hemingway nearly a half century ago. To his accurate assessment, I can only add "and so is the rest of France."

My recent visit to France reminded me of just how much a feast for the senses France is. From the spicy sharpness of the andouillettes (tripe sausages) of Cambrai to the delicate sweetness of fraises de bois (wild strawberries) in countryside inns, the food of France invite you to put your diet aside. The bright sunflower fields of the Loire Valley, the crepe paper flowers and garlands that celebrate the regional agricultural fair in Argent and the bleu, blanc, rouge enveloping the Arc de Triomphe during restoration in preparation for next year's bicentennial celebration are a feast for the eyes. And the sounds—"La Marseillaise" played by six World War I veterans in a small northern French town on Bastille Day, the excited chatter of young children touring a chateau with their parents, the traffic passing by a sidewalk cafe—all mistakably a part of "la vie in France."

I've had a love affair with France and the French people, beginning with my first stay there nearly twenty years ago and continuing during several visits.

My good feelings were strengthened during my recent visit there in July. The chance came to explore new regions, reacquaint myself with my old neighborhood in Paris and visit with good friends was, for me, a renewal of spirit. It also spurred me to make a few promises to

FRANGLAISE

While in Moscow last spring, a Hibbing teacher attempted without success to secure an album by the popular Soviet rock group called Aquarium.

The next stop was gay Patee. While there he decided to try Printemps, a major department store. Surely they would have the album. Parlez vous anglaise, he said to a very pleasant clerk. "Non"—so, he went into pantomime, then to a tablet, "aha, poisson" said the clerk and she took the teacher by the arm leading him to the correct department in the very large store. They reached their destination or at least hers, the tropical fish department.

Sadly, Aquarium is still in Moscow; Poisson is still in gay Patee.

YOU, my friend, are on the staff of Chez Nous. Your next deadline is October 5, to Jerry Forchette, 4655 University Ave NE Minneapolis MN 55421 or to Dick Bernard, 2014 1st Ave #6, Hibbing MN 55746.

How about your recollections, Marshall?
Or Jim - we'd like something about Bayfield.

myself. (1) to see more French films, (2) to read more French novels (3) to attempt to recreate, in my home, some of the good French food I enjoyed there. (4) to not wait another six years before returning to France.

Ed. Note: Ms. Wolkin is editor of THE ADVOCATE, the newspaper of the Minnesota Education Association.

Complementary desires were basis of fur trade

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of the Diocese of LaCrosse WI

PRAIRIE DU CHIEN — Father Jacques Marquette and explorer Louis Jolliet's 1673 discovery of a water route connecting the Great Lakes with the Mississippi River blazed the trail for the most romantic and colorful of all historical epochs in the Mississippi River Valley and the Old Northwest: the fur trade.

At its core, the fur trade was based on the European desire for clothing, hats and carriage robes made and trimmed with the high quality peltries from American northlands, and a Native American desire and need for European-made cloth goods, cooking utensils, decorative accessories and, most important of all, guns and gun powder.

Nicolas Perrot was the first to follow the lead of the great French explorers of 1673. In 1685 Perrot and his men followed the Fox-Wisconsin waterway to the Mississippi River. At the confluence of the Wisconsin and the Mississippi rivers, Perrot was struck by the advantages the location offered for trade with the resident Native Americans. Lands claimed and used by the Sac and Fox, the Menominee, the Eastern Sioux and the Winnebago all came together in the general vicinity of the river junction. Water routes branching off of the Mississippi River penetrated deep into each of these nations' heartlands. Perrot called his fur trading post Fort St. Nicolas and with the fort began the French presence and occupation of the area which today is called Prairie du Chien.

Throughout the 18th century the Fox-Wisconsin waterway to the Mississippi River became a great highway connecting the fur lands of the West with the fur markets of the East. A French fur trading village grew up at Prairie du Chien, though it appears to have faded or flourished with the economic tides of the fur trade as well as with the disposition of the natives toward the traders. By the 1750s a permanent fur trading community had rooted itself on St. Feriole Island, a narrow island in the Mississippi River separated from the Prairie du Chien mainland by the shallow slough.

Prairie du Chien became noted for its semi-annual trading rendezvous held each fall and spring. In the fall,



Courtesy of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin

John Jacob Astor

trade goods would be shipped out from Montreal via the Great Lakes and the Fox-Wisconsin waterway. These goods would be advanced to the region's native trappers in exchange for furs to be collected during the ensuing winter. In the spring, traders, trappers and voyageurs would once again rendezvous at the Prairie to assemble their winter's trade for shipment back to Mackinac. These gatherings were also attended by great feasting, revelry and brawling.

The French controlled trade by issuing licenses to the traders, though non-licensed traders flourished in the remote wilderness of the Upper Mississippi. Following the French and Indian War in 1763, Wisconsin came under the nominal control of the British, who slowly came to control the fur trade in the Old Northwest. The British tended to maintain the rugged French-Canadian voyageurs, who had been long associated with the Western trade, as their primary source of labor. These short and sturdy men paddled the canoes, dragged the heavy packs of furs and trade goods across land portages and literally carried the industry on their backs. Because of the heavy British reliance on such men, villages like Prairie du Chien retained their French dominance well into the 1800s. It was the British, however, who controlled and thus profited by the trade. Because the British controlled the purse strings of the fur trade in the Upper Mississippi Valley, Prairie du Chien remained loyal to the British cause until the end of the War of 1812.

Many independent traders who were not connected with any of the major fur trading companies worked the Prairie du Chien area in the early 1800s. One such man was Jean Joseph Rolette, a French-Canadian by birth who arrived in Prairie du Chien in 1804. Rolette became a

Canoeist follows explorers' route

OSHKOSH, Wis. (AP) — Times have changed since Father Marquette traveled the Wisconsin and Fox rivers, and 35-year-old Paul Konetzke of Menasha looks more like a surfer than an explorer.

But it's an interest in the history of the two rivers and the desire to travel that compelled Konetzke to take a 450-mile canoe trip.

Starting from the source of the Wisconsin at Lac Vieux Desert June 9, Konetzke traveled down the Wisconsin to Portage. At Por-

tage, he crossed two and one half miles to the Fox River and will end his trip at Green Bay. Konetzke was at Menominee Park in Oshkosh Wednesday for a "rendezvous" with his parents.

A trip down the length of the Wisconsin is something he's always wanted to do, he said.

And it's been worth it, he said. Once, he saw a bald eagle, two deer and a great blue heron all at once. He's met a lot of good people along the way too, he said.

But the canoe trip wasn't much more of a pleasure cruise for him than it was for the early explorers. You have to be able to paddle your own canoe — literally. And Konetzke has heavily calloused hands and an aching back to show for it. The bottoms of his feet are getting so tough, he says, he could probably walk on broken glass.

His motels have been islands and river banks for most of the trip.

ON A MAP
of Wisconsin:
find
Prairie du Chien,
Portage and
Green Bay. You
then have the
route.

article from
Duluth News-Trib
July 5, 1988

highly successful and powerful trader who allied himself with the British during their occupation of Prairie du Chien during the War of 1812. After the war, the American regime banished Rolette to an island in the Mississippi River, though later he was allowed to return to Prairie du Chien to again dominate the trade in the 1820s.

The trickle of American traders and settlers into the Prairie du Chien area



Hercules Dousman

before the War of 1812 increased to a flood in the late teens and early 1820s. It was also during this post-War period that highly organized and well-financed fur trading companies began to dominate and squeeze out the numerous independent traders in the area.

Chief among these companies was the American Fur Company, owned by John Jacob Astor. The American Fur Company began operating in Prairie du Chien before the War of

1812 and after the war established a full-time agency here. Rolette's power and influence were so well established by this time that the American Fur Company could not crush him with the same ease they had other traders. After years of fierce competition, Rolette and the American Fur Company worked out a merger in 1821 that gave Rolette an unusual degree of power and autonomy.

In 1826 the American Fur Company hired young Hercules Dousman to assist Rolette. Dousman's family had been associated with Astor's company for many years, both in Mackinac and in Wisconsin. The Dousman family has longed maintained that 26-year-old Hercules was sent to Prairie du Chien to keep a watchful eye on Rolette's loyalty and finances for Astor's company.

Astor sold his interest in the American Fur Company in 1834 and the company reorganized under Ramsey Crooks. The company retained its old name but was structured in a way that allowed for even greater profits by such associates as Rolette and Dousman. The American Fur Company operated in Prairie du Chien until 1842 when financial setbacks forced another reorganization and the Prairie du Chien division was jettisoned.

Through the 1830s the United States government was involved in a series of Indian treaties to purchase Indian lands in Wisconsin to be opened for American settlement. As prominent fur traders in the region, Dousman and Rolette assisted

government commissioners in the land negotiations. Trading debts owed to area fur traders were usually settled during the land treaties and the traders were often paid in land titles. Largely because of their privileged positions, Rolette and Dousman were able to secure title to valuable land tracts in exchange for trading debts owed them by various native groups.

Hercules Dousman never achieved the power and position in the fur trade accorded his partner, Rolette. However, Dousman's vision and skill as a businessman and investor far exceeded that of Rolette.

Dousman's investments included vast timber tracts along the Chippewa River, stock in the Milwaukee and Mississippi Railroad (the first to connect the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River), steamboats and much, much land.

Hercules Dousman died a very wealthy man in 1868. His life in Prairie du Chien spanned the closing of an era marked by the colonial exploitation of Wisconsin's vast wealth of natural resources and the opening of the Upper Midwest for American settlement and commerce. Dousman ultimately bested his old partner Joseph Rolette and even married Rolette's widow in 1844. Portions of Dousman's great estate still stand on the banks of the Mississippi River in Prairie du Chien and are today known as the Villa Louis.

TAKE IT FROM ONE WHO KNOWS: The French in America calendar advertised below is truly an attractive and very informative calendar that is excellent for personal use, or as a gift. I have them all, and I'm glad I do.

Dick Bernard

LES FRANÇAIS D'AMÉRIQUE/FRENCH IN AMERICA (8 1/2 X 11)

This attractive and interesting 1989 Calendar will introduce you to the rich heritage of the French in America. It has thirteen color photographs and information on numerous historical anniversaries and cultural events.

PRICES: \$6.00 each (postage & handling included)

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Continuing an old tradition

In recent years fiddle contests have been enjoying a revival of popularity. Fiddling itself, however, is a very old folk art. Those who come each year to the Lake Superior Old Time Fiddle Contest are listening to a kind of music that extends far back into many different cultures.

Peasant musicians in the British Isles, Scandinavia and continental Europe were the musical ancestors of today's North American fiddlers. But fiddle music isn't only for simple country folks, and probably never has been. Legend has it that classical violinist Nicole Paganini knew something about fiddling, and in recent years world class violinists Yehudi Menuhin and Itzhak Perlman have made recordings of fiddle music.

Variations in fiddling styles, at one time, were apparent from county-to-county and even town-to-town. Although there has been extensive merging of North American styles in recent years, there are still several general categories. A partial list would include New England, Appalachian, Missouri Cajun, Scandinavian, French-Canadian, Anglo-Canadian and Texas. The names attached to fiddle



S.A. Hawkins, 1926 winner

tunes—hoedown, jig, reel, waltz, polka, hornpipe, clog, schottische—refer to various old time dances.

The fiddle played an important part in our own Upper Midwest history, beginning with voyageur and ox cart fiddlers during the fur trade era. Later, permanent settlers from New England and from Canada brought more fiddles and fiddle tunes to the area. They were soon joined by immigrant fiddlers from Scandinavia and other parts of Europe. The native Ojibwe people developed a fiddle style of their own too. Music from these various sources be-

gan to mingle and evolve as fiddlers played together in lumber camps and at rural house parties and barn dances.

During the 1920's and early 1930's fiddle contests also flourished in the Twin Ports and surrounding communities. Many Minnesota and Wisconsin fiddlers at that time were, like the early settlers, transplanted French-Canadians and New Englanders. One notable contest took place in Duluth the week of February 22, during the winter of 1926. It was held at the 12th Annual Auto Show, and was

reprinted from
Duluth (MN) News-Trib
June 23, 1988

part of a large nation-wide fiddle competition.

The 1926 Duluth contest lasted all week, with eliminations each day. Newspaper stories tell us that the fiddle event (an old time art being revived during that 1920's "jazz age") was the most popular attraction at the Auto Show. At the end of the week Jerome Knapp, Joe Carter, S.A. Hawkins, W.J. LaBrosse, George Alex Hunter, John Willett and Leon Boisjoli mounted the platform for the final playoff. S.A. Hawkins (60) from Spooner, Wisconsin was declared the final winner. Jerome Knapp (65) from Duluth finished second. The first prize was \$100.

The Iron Range chapter of La Societe was treated to an excellent all-day tour of Rainy Lake and Grand Mound MN on August 16. 37 members and their guests took the trip into Voyageur country.

OBITUARY

by John England

Baptiste Cardinal decedent of a respected Canadian family, and husband of charter member, Justa, died July 19.

Baptiste was a likeable gentleman who displayed the good qualities we all strive for, honesty, loyalty, deep religious faith, and a great sense of humor.

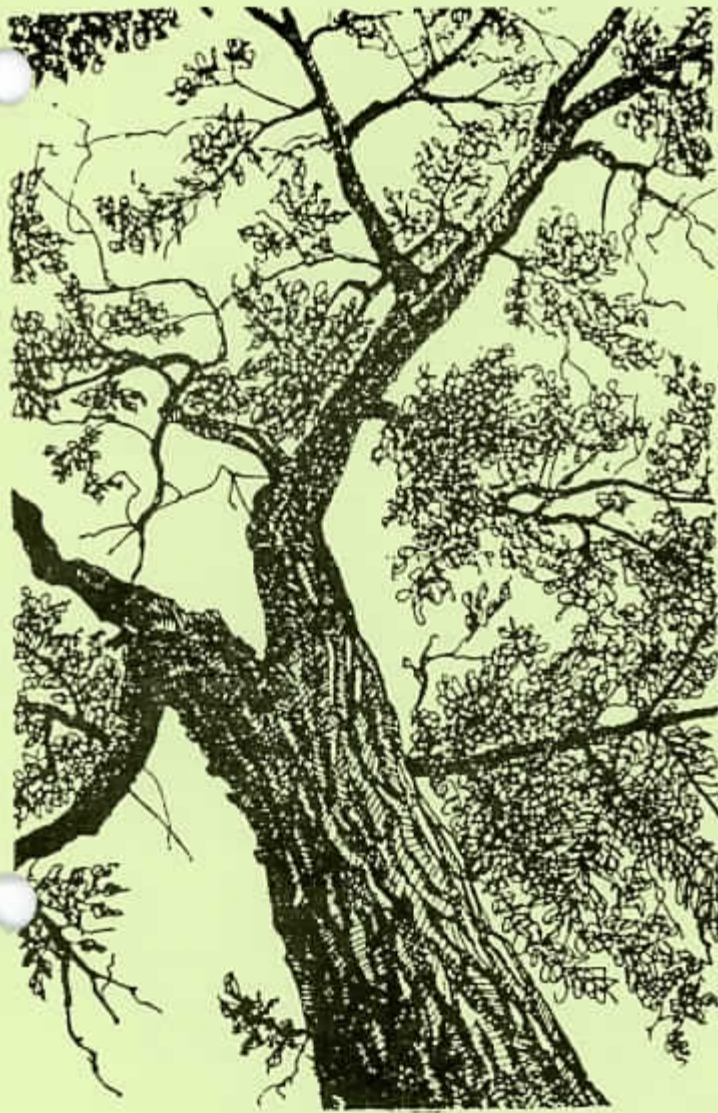
Baptiste was employed for many years by the Northern Pacific Railway in St. Paul as a switchman and yardmaster. He represented a fast fading group of men in this country known as "rails" who helped move the nation's goods and passengers. Rails like Baptiste were the aristocracy of American labor. They had a colorful patois which utilized words like rawhide and scissorbill. They wore distinctive Kromer caps on their heads, deerskin chops on their hands and 21 jewel watches in their pockets. Rails had a high spirit of adventure in their blood, and a genius for being competent employees. Their lives were similar, in many ways, to our voyageur ancestors.

I met this rail only once, but I could feel he was a good guy just by shaking his hand.

Donnez-lui, Seigneur, le repas eternal.

We, the editors of the Chez Nous, also extend sympathy to you Justa.

Inter-cultural exchange at Huot Crossing



The old cottonwood tree at Huot crossing

On October 2, 1863, the Red Lake and Turtle Mountain bands of Chippewa signed a treaty with the United States relinquishing their rights to over 11,000,000 acres in the Red River Valley of North Dakota and Minnesota.

The treaty was signed at Huot Crossing, just a few miles west of Red Lake Falls MN.

The Red Lake Band of Chippewa and the French-Canadian community of Red Lake Falls (AFRAN) remember this treaty on October 1 and 2, at a gathering at the Old Crossing.

Everyone is cordially invited to attend.

Events begin on Saturday, October 1.

Between 1:00 and 5:00 p.m. there will be eight different half-hour events, including traditional music, dance, crafts and some short talks. The presenters will be from the Red Lake Band, AFRAN, and the Michif from the Turtle Mountains of North Dakota. Between 5:00 and 7:00 p.m. there will be a supper and folk dancing.

Events on Sunday will be more solemn, including special ceremonies to mark the 125th anniversary of the treaty.

Plan now to attend this extra special program.

Huot Crossing is easy to find, both from Crookston and Red Lake Falls. Simply follow the brown "Old Crossing Treaty State Park" signs. The site is about 6 miles west of Red Lake Falls on the north side of the Red Lake River. Don't worry about the weather. A large tent on the site will accomodate everyone who attends.

SOME NOTES FROM ALL OVER. . . . Volume VII of Our French-Canadian Ancestors by Thomas Laforest is now available. Still available are volumes I- VI. For more information write The LISI Press, PO Box 1063, Palm Harbor FL 34273. Cost is \$14.00 You may be interested in two recent books published in Canada: **A Short History of Quebec** in English, by Young and Dickinson, is available from Copp Clark Pittman, 2775 Matheson Blvd East, Mississauga Ontario L4W 4P7. Cost is \$15.95 in Canadian funds. . . . A very recent publication is **Ste. Madeleine: Community Without a Town** by Ken and Victoria Zeilig which is a book of interviews with Metis Elders from a former western Manitoba Metis town which was decreed out of existence by the Manitoba government in 1938. This book gives a very interesting view of history as seen through the voices of common country people. Cost of the book is \$14.45, also in Canadian funds. (Many banks will write money orders in Canadian funds. Ask them). Order this book through Ken and Victoria Zeilig, 1 Sunburst Crescent, Winnipeg Manitoba R2N 1C6. . . . Joy Reisinger, 1020 Central Avenue, Sparta WI 54656 continues her help for those of us "hunting" for our ancestors. Her publication is appropriately entitled **Lost in Canada?** Write her for more information. . . . Similarly, the **Northwest Territory Canadian and French Heritage Center** (PO Box 26372 St Louis Park MN 55426) can give you much help and has an interesting publication **Cousins et Cousines**. Write them for more info. . . .

Red Lake tribe, whites make try at understanding

By Leonard Inskip
Associate editor

Red Lake and Red Lake Falls, Minn.

"To imply that Indians were given land is to completely reverse the facts of history. Treaties settled disputes over boundaries and land cessions. Never did the United States give any Indian tribe any land at all. Rather, the Indian tribe gave the United States land in consideration for having Indian title to the remaining land confirmed."

Vine Deloria Jr. in
"Custer Died for Your Sins" (1969)

If President Reagan's ignorance about historic Indian treaties causes Americans to think more about Indian-white relations, his Moscow remarks may serve some good. Too many whites know too little.

A small model for improved understanding is occurring this year in these northern Minnesota communities separated by 55 miles of sparsely settled farmland and swamps — and by culture and race.

Red Lake is the principal community of the Red Lake Indian Reservation, Minnesota's only reservation with a large land base left. Red Lake Falls is a small community with a large French heritage. The Red Lake River flows from the reservation through Red Lake Falls.

In 1863 the Red Lake Indians ceded millions of acres in northwest Minnesota (later they would cede more). The treaty, which also involved land and Indians in northeast North Dakota, was negotiated at "Old Crossing," the Red Lake Falls site where ox carts traveling from Winnipeg to St. Paul crossed the river.

The cession's 125th anniversary isn't being celebrated, however; instead it's prompted an effort by a French-culture group and Red Lake tribal representatives to understand each other better.

A series of five seminars, alternating between Red Lake Falls and Red Lake, began in April and will end in October. It's titled: "Intercultural Communication: the Journey of a Relationship."

The journey is an old one. It began when French explorers reached Minnesota in the 1600s, nearly two centuries before other whites arrived in significant numbers. Exploration led to the fur trade, the voyageurs from French Canada and their intermarriage with Indian women. Pierre Bottineau, who founded St. Anthony in 1845, and later Osseo and Red Lake Falls, had a French fur-trader father and a Chippewa mother.

Virgil Benoit, a University of North Dakota French-language professor, is also a historian of the French experience in northwest Minnesota and adjacent areas of North Dakota and Canada. A Red Lake Falls resident, he is president of the Association of the French of the North, which offers educational and interpretative programs based on French and French-Indian culture.

"No other group has associated so closely with Indians," Benoit says of the French. But the French Canadians who came as homesteaders to northwest Minnesota in sizeable numbers in the late 1800s tended to separate themselves from what had gone before — the explorers, the trappers, the voyageurs, the mixed-blood French-Indians. A curtain fell that Benoit wants to penetrate.

"I think that if we are to study French history in North America, we have to study Indian history," he says. Otherwise, there's a missing chapter.

In developing the joint program, the Red Lake Indians quickly reminded the French group that the 125th anniversary of the "Old Crossing" treaty "was not a celebration," according to Benoit. "Make it a history awareness activity and we'll work on it," Benoit was told.

So instead of the French group's annual "festival," which coincides with the final seminar in October, the group is dropping the word festival for this year and calling the event History Awareness weekend, Benoit says.

Don Allery, Red Lake tribal historian, says the Indians were forced to cede their land in 1863 by "one of the worst treaties."

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An implied threat existed. Only the previous December, the government hanged 38 Sioux at Mankato for their role in the 1862 war in southern Minnesota. It argued that the northern Chippewa had helped the Sioux. And it brought cannons and cavalry to the Old Crossing negotiation, Allery says.

He hopes whites will recognize that feelings are "still strong" at Red Lake about losing land.

"What we're trying to do is to ask the French of the North and the Red Lake people to reexamine their views and attitudes, and create community understanding," Allery says.

Al Thunder, another tribal official, said that, through the meetings, "we've seen people able to ask questions on language, how we live, Indian religion and traditions. We've finally found a way to bring out questions without being afraid of offending anyone."

According to one participant, the first two meetings were somewhat formal. That changed in the third meeting — one on language and its effect on intercultural understanding.

For that meeting, the whites spoke French and the Indians spoke Ojibwe. Communication was through an interpreter. Discussion became much livelier — especially after one woman described her difficulty with a grandchild. People on both sides had shared the experience.

The Minnesota Humanities Commission granted \$6,900 to the French association to finance the seminars, typically attended by 25 to 30 people. The association also has received funds from the McKnight-supported Northwest Initiative Fund.

The seminars won't end prejudice, misunderstanding or lack of communication between whites and Indians, but they're useful. That an American president could tell the world that whites humored Indians by giving them reservations shows how little understanding now exists.

reprinted with
permission from
the June 12, 1988
Minneapolis Tribune

THE DAMASE GERMAIN FAMILY JAMBOREE-1988

Reunions are important to the decendants of the Damase Germain families. Years ago, the first two reunions we held in the town hall of New Johannesburg. As the families increased the hall could not accommodate everyone.

In 1983, the jamboree was held on the Leo Germain farm property east of Stillwater. There were one hundred and twenty five present and old movies of former gatherings were enjoyed by all. French and English songs filled the air and an airplane tipped it's wings in salute. Five years went by, Jerry Germain, Dennis and Velma's son and his wife, Susie offered to host the 1988 jamboree at their home in Afton. With several acres of land, it was an ideal place to celebrate together. Two large tents were erected as a protection against the heat of the sun and possible rain. Tents were set up by the families who chose to stay overnight.

As expected the day dawned bright and warm. Two hundred and tweny five decendants of the Germain families braved the heat of the day for the reunion. At 2:30 in the afternoon, everybody was surprised when they saw a limousine driving in and around the yard. Who could be the distinguished visitors? The door opened and out stepped five good looking French people. The women were dressed in stylish black slacks or skirts with white blouses and black bows. The young man wore chic white shorts, a white shirt and bow tie. They all wore black berets, first worn by Frenchmen from France and later by French Canadians. Each one came with something characteristic of France. Janice Germain Roe had the honor of carrying the French flag. Judy Germain Olson and Joy Marie Sitterly each carried a basket filled with a supply of crusty French baguettes. Andrew Germain flashed a bottle of French wine and Rita Germain Kipka held a beautiful bouquet of red roses which was presented to the hostess, Susie. Jerry Germain was given a white cap decorated with the word "Paris" and a miniature French flag. They all shouted "Vive La France!" and sang "Vive la Compagnie" and "Prendre un Petit Coup". These visitors were decendants of the John D. Germain family whose ancestors were originally from Normandy, France.

When evening came the adults made everyone laugh with their comical skits, everyone danced and jigged. Delore Germain the oldest member of the clan sang in his strong and beautiful voice, "How Great Thou Art".

When darkness came a string of lights lit up the yard, and tents and the young people danced for hours on end.

The Germain are indebted to their ancestors. It is because of them that we are able to celebrate together. The Germain jamboree of 1988 was a great success.

by Sister Ella Germain

ENGLAND'S COLONNE

Monsignor Henri Dulac, professor of philosophy at St. Thomas College, where he spent most of his career, retired in May. He is now assigned to St. Therese Home in Hopkins as a chaplain. Monsignor Henri smiled and added that he is the youngest resident there.

Monsignor studied at the St. Paul Seminary and did his graduate work at the world famous Laval University in Québec City. It is safe to say that he has forgotten more about Catholic philosophy than most people know.

Although he is a native of Robbinsdale, Monsignor's family first settled in Faribault over a century ago. His great-grandparents were Octave Dulac and Philomene Bergeron; his parents were the late Joseph and Lena Dulac.

Monsignor Henri has been researching his surname, and he shares along with many other Dulacs the distinction of having a dit name, and it is just not any garden variety dit name. He enjoys relating the history of the name because of it's unique Canadian origins. He told us that one of the first ancestors of the family was Nicolas Bonhomme dit Beaupré who was born in 1603 at St. Croix-de-Fécamp in Normandy-not from Le Havre. He was a soldier sent on an expedition to Canada where he married Catherine Goujet in 1640. Nicolas acquired a good deal of land at Coté St. Michel, and in the canton of Belair. There is a lake within this land at Belair called Lac Bonhomme dit Beaupré. A grandson of Nicolas, being an original thinker and a collector of long names, attached dit dulac to his name because of the lake. This name Bonhomme dit Dulac lasted a generation and then was abrieved to Dulac, thus forming a new surname that has spread throughout Québec, New England, the midwest and even California.

It is no wonder that Monsignor Dulac is proud of his name, as we are proud of him and his many years of teaching. He is indeed a worthy member of the French-Canadian community in Minnesota.

THE TRUTH REVEALED....
ABOUT ENGLISH NAMES!

by VISUM

Rabbits and Englishmen

Rabbits were unknown before the conquest of 1066, as rabbits were reserved for the Norman nobility and used as a food source to supplement the normal meat hunted. The rabbits were brought to England by the Normans at the time of the conquest. They were generally kept in an enclosure or pen called "Warren". The royal rabbit keeper was known as a "Warrener", thus was the rabbit introduced to the Saxons, Through common usage and reference, the name of KEEPER OF THE RABBITS came into the English language as a family name under the guise of Warren Warrener, thus the name is not English as one might think but Norman French. Warren or Warrener is the Norman word to denote KEEPER OF RABBITS and the place where rabbits were kept.

Now here is another one to show to what folly a person will go to establish a family name.

It seems that a certain citizen of London submitted a pedigree for authentication to the Board of Heraldry that issues Coats of Arms. With his application was submitted the following evidence substantiating his claim to his name of Pettifer. His evidence rested on the fact that a Pettifer or iron foot was the appropriate name for a ROMAN CENTURION whose descendants had lived in London right through the Saxon times. If you try to claim this family name of Petifer be aware of certain facts and do not attempt to base your claim on the same facts or logic that the Englishman did. The name Pettifer is actually from the Norman French contraction of pied de fer—iron foot, what Americans call a fire dog used in the fireplace to hold the logs above the hearth.

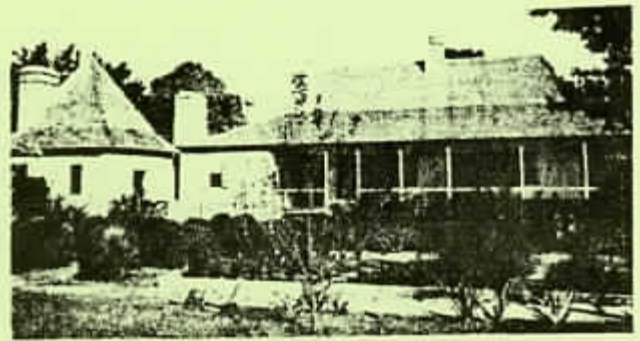
Ed note: VISUM is the "nom de plume" of a French-Canadian who happens to live in the hot bed of Yankee-dom, Connecticut. Perhaps that is why he prefers to not use his real name - especially when declaring that the English stole our names!

In reality, Visum is a retired Navyman who spent an entire career, including World War II, in submarine service. He is thus accustomed to being "under cover". With some good fortune we will have future offerings from him.

The Bolduc House

Ste. Genevieve, Missouri

(on the Mississippi, about a hour south of St. Louis, Missouri)



Louis Bolduc, né au Canada en 1734, est devenu un mineur, planteur, et marchand très prospère à Sainte Genevieve.

La maison Bolduc, construite en 1770, est un excellent exemple de l'architecture française coloniale en Amérique du 18^e siècle. Elle est surtout connue pour son armature normand.

The Bolduc House is the first instance of an authentic, and essentially complete French colonial house of the Mississippi Valley being preserved in its original form. All the eighteenth-century Creole houses in this region have either disappeared or been subjected to comprehensive Americanization. This house now becomes a major example, and an original one, of French colonial architecture in America.

As it stands, once again its earliest form, the house is a large rectangular building measuring forty-eight by eighty-two feet. It consists of two large rooms separated by a central hall; and these are completely surrounded by a deep gallery (galerie), the northwestern corner of which was walled in, at an early date, for a kitchen. The main block of the house is covered with a high, hipped roof, and spreading around it on all four sides is a low-pitched roof covering the gallery. The walls of the house are constructed of heavy oak timber set upright on a stone foundation. These great posts are set about six inches apart, the interstices filled with a nogging of clay and straw. The roof is supported by a series of heavy oak trusses, also directly descended from French mediaeval construction.

THINK ABOUT IT: This issue of Chez Nous costs you little more than 50¢. When was the last time you got a greeting card for 50¢. We bet you can't remember! Pass the word: "LaSociete and AFRAN are good deals!"



chez nous

Newsletter of OCTOBRE-NOVEMBRE 1988

La société canadienne-française

EDITOR-Dick Bernard

Vol. 10 No. 2

CO-EDITOR-Jerry Forchette

Dear Jerry,

Enclosed is a news article about my grandfather's death in 1924. He moved to Wisconsin from Canada in the late 1880s and homesteaded in the bay area.

My dad often told about how the hog mash was really a distillery for moonshine that grandad sold on his milk route.

I thought the readers would be interested in this bit of history.

All the best,

Wayne Simoneau
Wayne Simoneau
State Representative

A Note From The Editor:

I much appreciate Mr. Simoneau's sharing of the "obit" which is reprinted on this page of Chez Nous. I especially appreciate the story since it reveals, albeit from a tragedy, that our ancestors, like us, were human beings with a rich and delicious and sometimes "rascal" character! That fact is, unfortunately, sometimes lost in our efforts to make those who came before into something they weren't - perfect! "Warts" and all, I love my heritage. And I think Charley Simoneau would have been a delight to know. I'm sure he rests in peace!

**BODY HURLED DISTANCE
OF THIRTY FEET
September 18, 1924**

Charles Simoneau, farmer, residing on the Washburn-Bayfield road two miles north of this city was so badly injured in an explosion of nearly two hundred pounds of Sodotal last Thursday night, that he died within in a few hours at the Washburn hospital. Mr. Simoneau's side was crushed in and he was injured about the arms legs and face.

The explosion was the result of a fire which started in the tool shed back of the Simoneau residence. Mr. Simoneau was engaged in cooking hog feed for his hogs and the cooking was being done over a large camp stove, which ignited the building and fire spread with great rapidity.

Mr. Simoneau endeavored to save some of the machinery in the building and he was standing close by when the explosion occurred and was hurled a distance of over thirty feet, into a cabbage patch in the field adjoining his farm. Mrs. Simoneau and son saw the body hurled through the air and as they rushed to him was seen to get up, but fall again. He was taken to the Washburn hospital in the Harris automobile where everything was done for him but he was so badly injured that he died within a few hours.

The sodotal which exploded was located in one end of the tool shed. The explosion tore a large hole in the ground near the building, tore out one end of the Simoneau

HISTORIC FORT SNELLING



THE FORT'S STORY 1820 - 1946

The story of Fort Snelling is the story of the development of the Northwest from 1819 to the present. Presently surrounded by a web of freeways and an urban population of more than a million people, Fort Snelling was once a lonely symbol of American ambition in the wilderness.

Although the United States had gained jurisdiction over the Upper Mississippi Valley by the early nineteenth century as a result of the Revolutionary War and later Louisiana Purchase, this vast territory lay beyond American settlement and was inhabited by fur traders and Indians still loyal to the British. After the War of 1812 the government sought to take physical possession of the wild Northwest frontier by establishing a chain of forts and Indian Agencies from Lake Michigan to the Missouri River.

16
residence, tore down a chimney and shattered every glass in the home, throwing fire brands into the barn which was totally destroyed by fire which followed. The force of the explosion was plainly felt in the city and at Bayfield where many thought the explosion had occurred at the powder works at the du Pont company.

Charles Simoneau was born in New Brunswick, Canada, September 28, 1861. He has been a resident of this city for the past thirty years or more and was well and favorably known throughout the city. For many years, he has been engaged in farming and has built a nice home on the Bayfield road about two miles north of the city.

He is survived by his wife and three sons, Harry and Ralph of Milwaukee and Rex. They have the sympathy of many friends in their bereavement. Among the out of town people to attend the funeral were, Mrs. Thos. Doucette, Ashland; Mr. and Mrs. Fred Thompson, Ashland; Mr. and Mrs. Milo Taylor, Ashland; the Frank Butrich, Superior; Mr. and Mrs. John Young and son Walter of Marble, MN; Mr. and Mrs. Jos. Landry and son Warren of Mellen; Ms. Edna Veno, Mellen

These outposts were to be instruments of foreign policy, Indian pacification, police power, and ultimately of American expansion. They were charged with ending British control of the rich fur trade by denying the outsiders use of American rivers, while winning the good will of the Indian tribes through a mixture of intimidation, gift giving, and fair dealing. Indian lands were to be kept free of white encroachment until appropriate treaties could be signed; outlaws, particularly murderers and whisky traders, were to be apprehended; and law-abiding travelers and traders were to be granted the full co-operation and protection of the United States Army.

In 1819 the 5th Regiment of Infantry arrived at the junction of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers to build the northwesternmost link in this chain of forts and





agencies. At this well-chosen location, where traffic could be controlled on two major rivers that provided excellent transportation to the north, south, and west, Fort Snelling was completed in 1825 and named for its builder and first commander, Colonel Josiah Snelling. Under Snelling's guidance the 5th Regiment began the taming of the Minnesota frontier, building a gristmill and sawmill at St. Anthony Falls and roads connecting them, planting hundreds of acres of vegetables, wheat, and corn, cutting hay for their stock and wood for their fires, and enforcing the laws and policies of the United States. Beside the fort at the St. Peter's Agency, Major Lawrence Taliaferro labored to keep the Dakota and Ojibway at peace while easing tensions between both tribes and their white neighbors.

For almost 30 years Fort Snelling was the hub of the Upper Mississippi. Traders stopped at the fort while their goods were inspected. The American and Columbia fur companies built headquarters posts nearby, and employees of the two companies settled with their half-breed families at Mendota. The Dakota and Ojibway gathered at the fort to trade, sell game, and talk business, as well as to perform their dances and sports. Missionaries called on the agency for help in their efforts to teach the Dakota Christianity and farming. Swiss, Scotch, and French immigrants from Lord Selkirk's unsuccessful colony in Canada were given temporary refuge at the fort. Their fields and herds spread over the prairies northwest of the outpost until they were forced to move downriver in 1839, where they formed the small settlement that grew into the City of St. Paul. Army officers, government officials, and an increasing number of eastern tourists stopped at the fort for lodging, entertainment, and supplies.

By 1851 treaties had pushed the frontier farther west and opened much of the new Territory of Minnesota to settlement. New forts Ridgely, Ripley, and Abercrombie took over frontier duties, and Fort Snelling was demoted to a supply depot. In 1858, the year that Minnesota was

granted statehood, the fort was sold to land developers and platted as a townsite. Plans for the City of Fort Snelling were abandoned, however, with the outbreak of the Civil War. During the war the state used the fort as a training center, building additional barracks to house the thousands of Minnesota volunteers who joined the Union army. In 1866 after the Civil War had ended, the regular army returned to make the fort the headquarters and supply base for the military Department of Dakota, which extended from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains. Regulars from Fort Snelling fought in the Indian campaigns and in the Spanish-American War of 1898.

Between 1870 and the early 1900s, many new barracks, officers' quarters, and storehouses were built, while the decayed buildings of the old stone fort were demolished. In 1946, after serving as a recruiting and training center in two world wars, Fort Snelling was decommissioned and turned over to the Veteran's Administration and Army Reserve.

In 1956 the threat of a freeway through the heart of the old fort stimulated public efforts to save the remnants of the oldest buildings in Minnesota. Fort Snelling was designated Minnesota's first National Historic Landmark in 1960, and the following year the state legislature established Fort Snelling State Historical Park. Since 1963, Minnesota has contributed public and private funds to develop the 2,500-acre park and rebuild the old fort. Exhibits, publications, and the costumed guides at the now-reconstructed fort tell the story of Minnesota's change from an ungoverned frontier to a modern state.



COLONEL JOSIAH SNELLING

Historic Fort Snelling is reached by the Fort Snelling exits on Minnesota Highways 5 and 55. It is located between the Mississippi River and Twin Cities International Airport. For information or reservations for group tours call 612-726-9430.

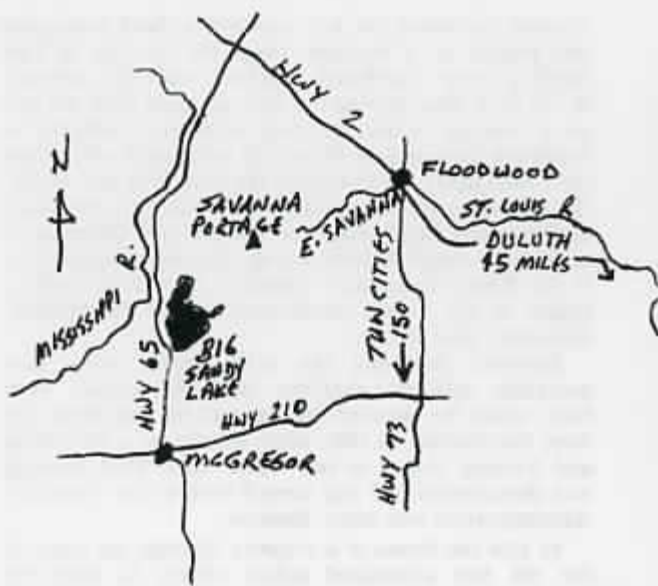
1988 LES FRANCAIS D'AMERIQUE/FRENCH IN AMERICA (8 1/2 X 11)

This attractive and interesting calendar, the fourth in a series, introduces you to the rich heritage of the French in America. It has thirteen color photographs and information on numerous historical anniversaries and cultural events. **An ideal gift!**

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THE SAVANNA PORTAGE (near McGregor, MN)

Between the headwaters of the East Savanna river and the lower section of the West Savanna river is a very old foot trail that winds through woods and swamps. It was hated and dreaded by the voyageurs who carried their canoes and loads across the divide between the St. Louis river watershed and that of the Mississippi river on the canoe route from Lake Superior to the upper Mississippi. The fur traders and later explorers used the Savanna portage because it was the shortest distance between these water sheds. At Floodwood, the East Savanna river empties into the St. Louis river. Here the canoe parties ascended the East Savanna river, a slow meandering stream, to the limit of navigation. At this point they transferred their canoes and loads to a canal which saved a mile of portage. The canal consisted of a stretch of shallow creek that had been improved to hold a steady water level. This was known as a decharge, a waterway deep enough that canoes could be dragged through. When the water became too low for fully loaded canoes, the men would make extra trips with part loads. Travelers described the crude pole platforms along the canal where goods could be placed when this condition existed. The worst section of the Savanna portage began at the west end of the canal. Here the men had to carry their canoes and loads across a wet tamarack swamp. The muck was knee deep, so to facilitate travel, poles were laid lengthwise in the trail bed for the men to walk on. The difficulty of a man carrying a heavy load on his back while trying to balance himself on a wet pole has been described by members of the Governor Cass expedition and by others. After crossing the swamp the rest of the portage was less difficult. It is gently rolling country with a few wet spots and much of a relief from the first mile and a half. At the west end of the trail stood the remains of a fur trader's building, possibly a storage and overnight place. It was probably built by Jean Baptist Perrault when he used the Sandy Lake region as a base where he and his partners assembled and then ventured out into their respective trading territories of northern and northwestern Minnesota. The Northwest Company cached canoes on both ends of the portage in order to save carrying them across the four mile stretch.

The Savanna Portage has been described as being six miles long with thirteen pauses (resting places). A pause is a tiny clearing in the higher areas of the trail or in the swamp areas; they were platforms built on the edge of the trail. They were used for rest stops. In the days of canoe travel the common practice on portages was for each man to take two pieces of freight or baggage, a total of 150 to 175 pounds, carry them a half mile, lay them down and run back for another load. When everything was brought up, the men were allowed a rest period when they could smoke their pipes, visit and relax until the leader ordered them to start carrying again.

In 1927, William F. Ingersol and Professor Irving H. Hart covered the Savanna Portage, and their writings and research did much to call attention to the importance of the Savanna Portage as a historic site.

In 1930, when the great depression was at it's worst, the Minnesota Legislature, in order to be prepared for a major federal work relief program, passed the bill which created a number of state forests. One of the new state forests included lands adjacent to Sandy Lake and Lake Minnewawa, and was named Savanna State Forest, as a memorial to the old portage.

In 1941, the Eagle Scout Trail Project, which had been carried on at Itasca State Park, was transferred to the Savanna Portage, and the boys had the job of restoring the old trail. Men from the Hill City office of the Division of Forestry had the duty of finding the exact location of the portage, laying out the work and servicing the project. The boys worked on the portage in the forenoons and on woodcraft studies in the afternoons. The project lasted two summers, and the trail was cleared out all the way from the West Savanna river to the canal on the East end.

In the late 1950's, a group of residents from the McGregor-Sandy Lake region started a movement to have the Savanna Portage designated as a state park. In 1961, the legislature passed the bill which made it a reality.

Historical Figures Traveled the Savanna Trail

Medard Chenart, Father J. Marquette, Graysolon Duluth, Jacques Nbellin, Jean Baptiste Perrault, William Morrison, Henery Schoolcraft, David Thompson, Henery Monk, Governor Cass, Charles Towbridge, Dr. Alex Wolcott, Capt. David Douglas, Lt. Aeneas Mackey, Robert A. Forsyth, James Duane Doty, Alexander Chase, Rev. William T. Boutwell, Rev. Edmund Ely, William A. Aitken and Joseph G. Norwood, Ul.S. Govt. Geologist.

PORTRAIT OF A REGION

Located halfway between Montreal and Quebec and traversed by the majestic St. Laurent river, Coeur-du-Quebec is a vast land. Its versatile landscape includes the Canadian Shield, the Mauricie hinterland, the plain stretching along both shores of the river and brushing the Appalachians in its southern part.

Algonquin, Iroquois, Huron and Abenakis Indians have inhabited the region for a long time, living on the abundant wildlife of the Mauricie forest. In 1634, following recommendations of Algonquin chief Capitanal, Champlain charged Sieur de Laviolette to found Trois-Rivieres by establishing a fur trading post at the mouth of the St. Maurice river. The second oldest city in Canada, it then served as departure point for several famous explorers, traders, and missionaries.

The rapid population growth in the Trois-Rivieres government seigniories created a demographic movement across the St. Laurent river initiating the development of agricultural lands in Becanour county.

In 1730 the Forges du St. Maurice (ironworks) came the first iron making operation in Canada by exploiting the site of an iron deposit, it supplied the seigniories with cast iron cauldrons, various tools and even cannon.

As of 1820, Coeur-du-Quebec gradually

strengthened. Loggers and raftsmen developed the Mauricie hinterland. As the 20th century opened, the pulp and paper industry settled along the St. Maurice river, especially in Trois-Rivieres, now called the world capital of papermaking.

Today, the region ranks third in Quebec with a population of 436,700 inhabitants living on both shores, linked by the Laviolette bridge.

Strategically located at the outlet of the riviere St. Maurice in Quebec's heartland, it features an important road network improved by the Duplessis bridge spanning the St. Maurice and the Laviolette bridge, only extant link between both shores of the St. Laurent in addition to those of Montreal and Quebec City.

Seat of Catholic Bishopric, Trois-Rivieres was marked by the visit by his Holiness Pope John Paul II in September of 1984. A statue of the Blessed Virgin was erected under the Monument de la Couronne (Crown Monument) to commemorate the prestigious event.

All in all this sounds like a delightful area to visit and to spend some time to absorb our heritage.

More than 350 years old, Trois-Rivieres represents, together with the cities of Trois-Rivieres-Ouest and Cap-de-la-Madeleine, a major commercial, industrial and cultural center.

A group of twenty plus Franco-Americans invaded the peaceful environs of Prairie du Chien over the weekend of September 11. Unlike their predecessors of another time, they came via air conditioned bus rather than canoe. This splendid rendez-vous was organized and conducted with the capable leadership of Helene Peltier.

Our first stop was the Villa Louis, a victorian mansion formerly owned by the Dousman family, and located on Feriole Island. This magnificent estate is truly a living statement of how the idle rich of the nineteenth century lived high off the hog.

Dousman was not French-Canadian. However, his wife was the estranged widow of Joe Rollette, Senior, who had been his business partner. Dousman was a little less than honorable in his business dealings.

Also located nearby are the Brisbois and Rollette homes which are not open to the public, and fur trade museum which is.

Later in the evening we attended Mass at St. Gabriel's Church, a functioning historic monument where M. le Abbé Lucien Galtier served for nearly two decades. This parish began in 1817 as a mission called St. Jean Baptiste. It was organized as a parish by Fr. Samuel Mazzuchelli, O.P. a Dominican missionary in 1836. Father Galtier's tomb is located in from of this stone edifice.

After a good nights rest at the Brisbois motel adjacent to the B. & N. main line where the twin zephyrs used to fly past like a striped tailed ape, we again visited St. Gabriels, touring the cemetery. Next we visited the Calvary cemetery and l'ancien Cimetiere Francais, blessed by M. l'abbé Durand in 1817. The grave stones have been eroded by the elements over the years, but a marker is provided which lists the early Canadian pioneers who are buried there including the Rollettes and Jean Marie Cardinal. While touring Calvary, I searched for the grave of Ruben Valley, who was also significant to the history of Prairie du Chien. He was the last link with the voyageurs, according to Mary Agnes Starr in her book, PEA SOUP AND JOHNNY CAKE. She must remember when he was 99 at the Villa Louis Days celebration in 1950, and he sang the voyageur songs that he had learned from them as a child in the 1850's in Prairie du Chien.

Our trip also included a visit to Fort Crawford Medical Museum and later in La

Crosse, a delicious dinner at Piggys where we offered our best wishes to Ray and Huberta Bennett on their fifty-first anniversary.

Prairie du Chien is a splendid place to visit, it's wealth of history and tradition is remarkable. We can only offer our deepest regrets to the members who were unable to accompany us.

Find It in French

Memorizing French vocabulary isn't necessarily exciting—but it might as well be, asserts Anne McCrary Sullivan of Baytown, Texas. Sullivan adds excitement to her French classes by organizing a scavenger hunt for her students at Robert E. Lee High School. She equips each team of three with a list of objects to find, a bag in which to collect them, a French-English dictionary, and an individualized set of directions for leaving the school building.

Once outdoors, the students look up words they don't recognize and search



for the specified objects: un brin d'herbe (blade of grass), quelque chose de rouillée (something rusty), une pièce de monnaie (a coin), un caillou (a pebble), un morceau de bois (a piece of wood), une plume d'oiseau (a bird's feather), un cheveu blond (a blond hair), un cil (an eyelash). The scavengers return to the classroom at a specified time, and by next day's class Sullivan has tallied their results and announces the winning team.

The students find it easy to add words to their vocabulary: "Those words," Sullivan says, "become linked with creative personal experience.

"I've never had so much fun teaching vocabulary," she adds, "and my students have never had so much fun learning it."

The next deadline for Chez Nous is December 5 to: Jerry Forchette 4655 University Av NE, Minneapolis MN 55421, or Dick Bernard, 2014 1st Ave #6 Hibbing MN 55746.

Special thanks to contributors to this issue: Wayne Simoneau; Rosemary Henderson, Nashwauk (on Savanna Portage); John England (on Prairie du Chien WI); Quebec Consul (Portrait of a Region); NEA Today (Find it in French); and Historic Ft. Snelling MN.



chez nous

NEWSLETTER OF DECEMBRE-JANVIER 1989

LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE-FRANÇAISE

EDITOR-Dick Bernard

VOL. 10 NO. 3

CO-EDITOR-Jerry Forchette

A Christmas Prayer

Let us pray that strength and courage abundant be given to all who work for a world of reason and understanding ✧ that the good that lies in each of our hearts may day by day be magnified ✧ that we will come to see more clearly not that which divides us, but that which unites us ✧ that each hour may bring us closer to a final victory, not of nation over nation, but of ourselves over our own evils and weaknesses ✧ that the true spirit of this Christmas Season - its joy, its beauty, its hope, and above all its abiding faith - may live among us ✧ that the blessings of peace be ours - the peace to build and grow, to live in harmony and sympathy with others, and to plan for the future with confidence!

From your Editors-Dick Bernard
Jerry Forchette

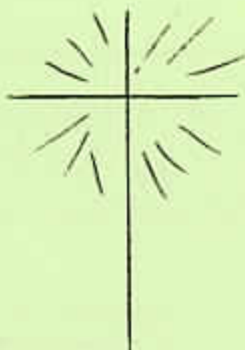
SAINTE NUIT

O nuit de paix, Sainte nuit!
Dans le ciel l'astre luit;
Dans les champs tout repose en paix,
Mais soudain, dans l'air pur et frais,
Le brillant choeur des anges
Aux bergers apparait.

O nuit de foi! Sante nuit!
Les bergers sont instruits;
Confiants dans la voix des cieux,
Ils s'en vont adorer leur Dieu;
Et Jésus en échange
Leur sourit radieux.

O nuit d'amour! Sante nuit!
Dans l'étable, aucun bruit:
Le Sauveur de la terre est né:
C'est à nous que Dieu l'a donné,
Célébrons ses louanges;
Gloire au Verbe Incarné!

O nuit d'espoir! Sante nuit!
L'esperance a relui:
Le Sauveur de la terre est ne;
C'est a nous que Dieu l'a donne.
Célébrons ses louanges:
Gloire au verbe Incarné!



BONNE ET HEUREUSE ANNÉE ET LE PARADIS À LA FIN
DE VOS JOURS

Christmas Recollections: a Trilogy

CHRISTMAS IN GRAFTON, N.D.

by Henry Bernard

Our Lady of the Snows, Belleville, IL

This is of no particular year though most refers to the years between 1910 and 1920 when I was not yet a teenager.

I recall the hardcoal heater that was set up in the corner of the living room just off my parents bedroom. It was put up in the fall and taken down in the spring. When it was real cold, there was a reddish glow from the burning coals that almost gave sufficient light for a room.

The space behind is where we hung our Christmas stockings (one of the clean black stockings we wore). Standard filling by Santa Claus was an orange in the toe, some candies, usually hard rock candy, that was

not wrapped; popcorn, an apple, and maybe an article of clothing. If the single toy was able to be fitted into the stocking it was put there, but if not, it was put on the floor. I mentioned SINGLE TOY; I remember getting an erector set one year, tinker toys another year and a windup locomotive, cars and tracks another year. Joe Bernard, who was also my Godfather, gave me a roll of nickels as combination birthday and Christmas gift each year until I was a senior in high school.

Midnight Mass was always attended regardless of the cold, snow, or storm. We walked the ten blocks to the church. Some people had a big meal when they returned home. I am sure that my grandparents Collettes had this to in their rural church parish in Oakwood. I am sure that we children were ready for bed right away when we got home BECAUSE SANTA CLAUS HADN'T VISTED YET!

LES FRANÇAIS D'AMÉRIQUE / FRENCH IN AMERICA 1989



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CHRISTMAS IN MENTOR MN 1930

by Lowell Mercil, Mentor

The first stop was at St. Anns for the 10:00 High Mass. We arrived early enough to get in the seat where we usually sat, at the right rear side. We had to take our chances because we could not afford one of the assigned rental pews.

On the way in, I noted that a few of the men must have gotten the jump on the days festivities because we were a long ways from the altar but we could still detect the sharp, pungent odor of wine.

The beautiful French carols were sung by the choir and set the mood well despite the apparent contest one of the sopranos and two of the baritones were having as to which one could sing (yell) the loudest! But I swear that when they sang "I'll et nee la Divine Enfant" the three voices hushed a bit and actually blended in with the others. It sure gave me a thrill.

The Mass started and the first thing we knew it was time for the sermon. Now I think everyone knew that our cousin, Father Dufault, was a Saint, but a speaker he was not! It was bad enough that the Mass was in latin and we couldn't understand a thing. But when father delivered his hell-fire-damnation sermon in the French, we also couldn't understand and then repeated it in French-accented English, it was too much! Oh well! It was a good time to doze off or make halos around the candles by squinting your eyes, if you could put up with the elbows in the ribs and sudden starts when your chin fell on your chest.

At the end of the Mass we went up to the side altar and made our visit to the creche. It was great! They always had the most perfectly shaped evergreen trees around the stable. The Christ child had been placed on the straw in the crib during the service.

After some visiting in front of the church, Papa went and got the sleigh. It had been anchored on one of the back streets. Since we were the only ones who had to ride a sleigh, we got in sheepishly for our little jaunt to Sylvestres. Dad dropped us off at the front door and took the horses to a hitching post behind the Grand Theatre.

Christmas at the Sylvestres was a highlight of the season for our family. Aunt Georgianna's Mama's sister and Uncle Isaie had been partner in a grocery store in Crookston with my Uncle Onesime Mercil. (Those French names! Mama's name was Albertine!). Harry and Henrietta were considerably older than us and they never married, so they kind of adopted us for special events.

When we entered the house from the closed in porch, the first pleasant sensation was the wonderful odor. Not just the smell of the feast cooking but the smell of the home - not the smell of the house but the smell of the home. It seems that every home has its own specific odor - some good and some bad - but Sylvestres was delightful for it was connected to happy memories.

Mom usually brought some of her goodies. Maybe blood sausage, head cheese, divinity or gooseberry jelly. Uncle Isaie had been impatiently waiting for us at the door. There was a beautiful tree near the hallway with electric lights and, sure enough, Santa Claus had been there and left many packages wrapped in paper with pictures of reindeer, snowmen, santa clauses, etc. Not the kind of fashion paper that we use today, but real paper that had meaning.

After the hugging and kissing of greetings - (the Sauve family were the huggers and kissers, not the Mercils) - we sat down and Harry had a special "libation" for the occasion. It was the only time of the year that we were served with such formal ceremony. Harry was a very accomplished and distinguished person, who was later to be a renowned judge. We never knew how to address him. Harry was too familiar and did not display the respect we felt, sir was too formal and we seldom used the term anyway. He was old enough to be our uncle (thirty one years older than I) but he was our cousin. We usually used Harry and got by with it.

Grandpa Sauve and Aunt Bertha arrived and after another round of hugging and kissing the great present that were always "just what we wanted" were opened one at a time starting with the youngest. After the excitement quieted down it was time for dinner.

We were seated at the extended table in the dining room. Henrietta and Aunt Georgianna helped the maid serve. Can you imagine, us being waited on by a maid? But she was so nice. I sat across from the oval picture with the three white snorting horses that was kind of scary and conjured up thoughts of Arabia.

The adult talk was in French so it just sort of floated by but English was used when they wanted us to get the message. Harry was presented with the huge turkey for approval and carving at the table was a great ritual. He put all the food on the plates after asking each diner if they wanted some. A few times I said yes when I should have said no and then had to eat a dish I didn't like to avoid leaving it on the plate. When it was

by Jerry Forchette

time for the third helping, Harry asked me if I wanted some more. I replied that I wanted to save room for dessert. In his most profound orators manner he asked: "and what makes you think we are going to have dessert?"

I was flabbergasted! Everyone looked at me and laughed. I felt like diving under the table. My embarrassment helped teach me that we all, at times, have to be the brunt of a joke, and, for heavens sake, never be so presumptuous as to think you will always have dessert.

After the banquet we went to the living room to recover. Why can't we stuff ourselves as much today as we did then?

We listened to the broadcasts of Christmas around the world over the Atwater-Kent radio with the big horn speaker that was on the table over the Encyclopedia Britannica. One's imagination did wonderful things with the direct broadcasts from Rome, Spain, France, etc. I wish they still had such broadcasts.

Later in the afternoon, after playing with our tinker toys, erector sets, tops, etc., Henrietta broke out the nuts and the kids went to the kitchen to play what we called filipino. The first to find two nuts in one shell (hazel nuts or almonds) would shout "filipino" and receive a prize.

After we were surfeited once again and before it was dark outside it was time to go home. Uncle Isaie warmed the bricks for the foot warmer, gathered the blankets from around the furnace where they had been placed for warming and Papa put on his mackinaw and homemade sheepskin mits then went to get the horses and sleigh for the trip home.

We bundled up, got our goodbye hugs and kisses, went outside to a gently falling snow and crawled into the sleigh. We slept most of the way home despite being tormented between the thoughts of our new toys and other presents and the onset of post holiday depression.

Is that all there is?

Oh well.. There is always next year!

As I typed the article Henry Bernard sent in, I find myself hearing my father telling about how monetarily poor his parents were, but how rich in family he and his two brothers were. They did not receive toys but always received an orange, which must have been costly and a great treat, they received some rock candy, that was strung on a string and some kind of clothing like mittens or caps or what ever they needed to keep warm knit by his mother. Unlike Mr. Bernard who lived in an established town, my grandpere and a handful of men bought land on the Chippewa River in Wisconsin, called it Frenchtown and started to build and farm. A small wooden school and small frame church was erected on land donated by one of the families. The church has since burned down and the old school house is boarded up. They had to make their living on that land to support their families although some men did go away to lumber camps to earn money in the winter time.

Papa would tell of the potatoes his mother would make for a treat, they would slice about 1/4 inch thick and put right on the hot lids of the cookstove and when brown would sprinkle with coarse salt, and she would also make a delicious pie out of rutabagas that tasted just like pumpkin pie, with spices, eggs and milk.

My most memorable Christmas was when I was four years old. I received a doll named Daisy Mae, almost as tall as I, with a bed, mattress, pillow, blankets etc., which I have to this very day.

Thru the grades, I sang in the choir for Christmas morning, so did not go to Midnight Mass then, but once in high school, Midnight Mass with the family became a yearly event much looked forward to.

Monsieur Mercil's card says it well:

"He who tooteth not his own tooter his tooter shall not be tooted".

In your memories there is a story. . . or maybe many stories about today or yesterday. Write to us, in your own words (and please don't worry about grammar and all those kinds of things!)

Our little newsletter is published every other month. The next deadline will be about February 5, 1989, Let us hear from you, s'il vous plait!

To:

Dick Bernard, 2014 1st Ave. #6 Hibbing 55746
or

Jerry Forchette, 4655 University Ave NE,
Minneapolis MN 55421.