



chez nous

NEWSLETTER OF

Juillette-Aout, 1997 VOL. 19 NO. 1

La société canadienne-française

Editor: Dick Bernard

NATIVE AMERICANS: SOME THOUGHTS

A note from the editor: On the following pages are fascinating comments of a Quebecois, Esther Wawanolett Nolett. Ms Nolett is Native American, of Quebec, and her story will help the reader understand some of the complex connections between the native peoples of North America, the French-Canadians, the English and other nationalities. (I was about to say "our French-Canadian ancestors" but changed my mind. In many of our family trees are Native Americans, with whom the French-Canadians interrelated from the beginning.)

Relationships of the white man with Native Americans have been positive but they have, it seems, more often been negative. One hesitates to advance any generalizations. I have read that the French-Canadians treated the Native Americans better than the English, or the Americans. Maybe so, maybe no. It depended, I would guess, on the circumstances at the time of each individual and group relationship. Here are two stories.

SAMUEL COLLETTE'S EXPERIENCE

by Dick Bernard

A couple of months ago, I had occasion to uncover a previously unknown fact that illustrates the problem of jumping to conclusions on this topic.

For a long while I had known of a certain relative, Samuel Collette, who came to

Minnesota shortly after 1860 from Quebec, and settled in the Centerville area. I learned through Jean-Marc Charron that Samuel was my great-grandfathers half-brother - they had a common father and their mothers were sisters - when one sister died the other sister married Mr. Collette, a not uncommon practice at the time..

I knew that Samuel died at the Minnesota Soldiers Home June 23, 1934 at the age of 95. I also knew that he had been a private in Co. G of the 1st Regiment of the Minnesota Mounted Rangers in the Civil War, serving from October 6, 1862, through November 28, 1863. I knew all these things, but took no time to follow up on the military history of his company in the Civil War.

Over the years, I had also developed an interest in the Dakota Conflict of 1862 in Minnesota. This was a major conflict where the Dakota (also called "Sioux") Indians had finally had it with broken promises of the Government, and entered an unwinnable War against the white trespassers on their land (we called them "settlers"). Much blood was shed on both sides, ending with the hanging of 38 Sioux at Mankato on December 26, 1862¹. This was indeed a sordid chapter in the history of Minnesota, I felt.

I had also been to the Whitestone Hill battlefield in south central North Dakota, where

¹ In mid-September, 1997, at the site of the hangings in Mankato (at the library about a block from the Holiday Inn on the Minnesota River) a large white buffalo, carved from sandstone, will be dedicated to remember the tragedy.

about 150 Indians had been killed by the Army in September, 1863: Their crime: possibly harboring some of the perpetrators of the Minnesota Valley uprising. A large monument had been erected in 1909 to the 20 soldiers who were killed at Whitestone; it was not until the 1930s that a small monument to the massacred Indians had been erected. The injustice perpetrated at Whitestone on the Native Americans outraged me when I first learned of it, and still does outrage me. It is a haunting place to visit.

In April, 1997, I decided to finally find out exactly what activity Samuel Collette's company had been involved in during the Civil War. The research at the Minnesota History Center was easy - the Civil War is heavily documented. What I found surprised me.

It developed that Samuel Collette's Regiment, the First Minnesota Mounted Rangers, was called into service with a specific task to defeat the Indians in what later became known as the Dakota Conflict. In the summer of 1863, under the command of Henry Hastings Sibley, with Pierre Bottineau as a scout, the Regiment went to the west, ultimately reaching the Missouri River before returning, and engaging in three battles with the Sioux (Dakota) in the general area north of I-94 and between Jamestown and Bismarck, North Dakota (near present day Tappen, Dawson and Driscoll)..

The chronicler of the activities of the Regiment, Captain Eugene Wilson, recalled events of 1862 in memories written in 1890. In six pages of narrative, Captain Wilson devoted one sentence to the plight of the Native Americans: "They undoubtedly were suffering some injustice from the neglect of general Government, which was then bending its every energy to the suppression of the great Rebellion [Civil War]. And was excusable for failure to carry out treaty obligations with the Indian tribes with the promptitude that had characterized its action in times of peace." The rest of the narrative was the expected one-sided military history, including justification for the actions taken by the First Regiment. (William E. Lass in Minnesota, A History (1983), described the same events differently: "...it certainly is a classic example of the failure of United States Indian policy." (p.109))

Private Collette and his fellows had not gone to the Civil War. They were probably hurriedly

called into service after most of the "boys" had already left for the eastern front. Most likely they were quickly called to arms to defend Minnesota against the red man, and they probably enlisted with some fledgling patriotic fervor. The Sioux (Dakota) did not fare well in the "public relations" campaigns of the time.

Exactly what Private Collette and Company G did during its tour of duty was not chronicled by Captain Wilson, except that its mission was to suppress the Indians. It was in North Dakota a year before Whitestone Hill. It seems to have suffered no casualties, and thus may not have even directly engaged the Indians. Elements of the First Minnesota Mounted Rangers apparently witnessed the hangings at Mankato. It is unknown if Samuel was one of those on horseback that awful day.

Did Private Collette go willingly or was he in some way conscripted? What motivation did he have for entering the service? Four of the 85 enlisted men in the company were listed as from Canada, and some were listed as from other countries. Did they even understand or care about the issues that led to the war? There are many questions I'd like to ask Uncle Samuel. But because of him I have developed a little better perspective about part of the relationship between Native Americans and the United States of America..

ABENAKI OF ODANAK

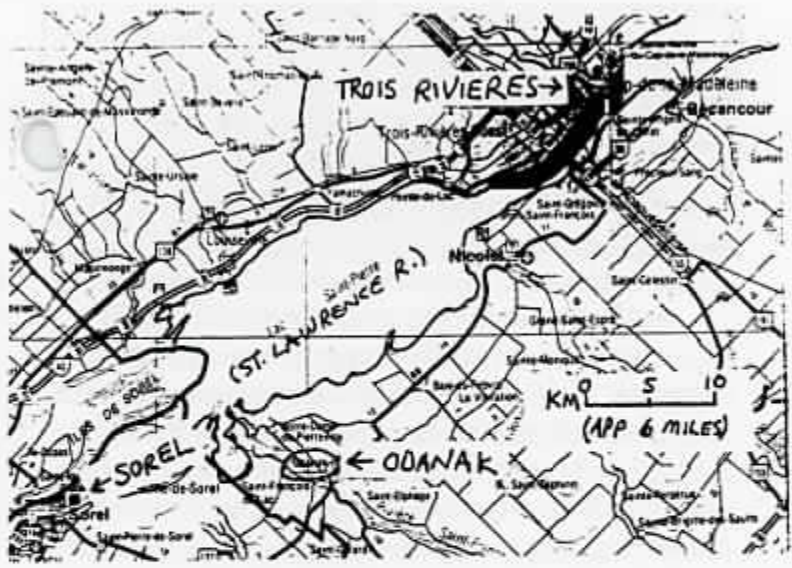
by Esther Wawanolett Nolett

(from a conference presented at Manchester NH
on April 27, 1991)

From The American Genealogist,
Vol. 17 Number 3 Issue 49

Special thanks to Jean-Marc Charron and John Cote
who directed this article to Chez Nous.

"I have always enjoyed listening to the old people talking of their past, telling stories, and legends. I wanted to know the paths that my ancestors had followed during the three centuries of our history. During the last twenty years, I have become more interested in researching, and I have been fortunate to have more time for it. Research is an emotional and sentimental journey, but thrilling for it allows me to talk and to teach those who are interested in knowing.



The young people of my nation are not ready yet to be interested. I wish that they were. I would be pleased if the young of my nation wanted to know what their ancestors have done for us and for the others. I would say that it is a must that each family should know its roots for many reasons, but especially for health. When I think of my youth I remember how nice it was to see my elders being pleased to meet. They had many reasons to meet for parties, playing games, making music, singing songs and dancing. Especially at Christmas and for the Jour de l'An, they had a special wish: "Han-Hal-Da-Mawi-Kassi-Palila Waolan Ia Koli-Si Daldamul Wli Neguedzi Gaden". "Forgive me for the injuries I have caused you. I wish you a good and happy new year."

Now, in 1991, I keep an image of the elders of my childhood representing a happy ideal full of understanding and mutual respect.

Our Abenaki village, our home, our Odanak, is on the shore of the riviere Saint-Francois, surrounded by the villages of Pierreville, St-Francois-du-lac, Notre-Dame de Pierreville and La-Baie-du-Febvre. Our village is between Sorel and Trois-Rivieres.

Inside the village, there is the catholic church, rebuilt in 1901. The church is annexed to the sacristy of the second church built in 1828. There is an Anglican Church also. Along the shore of the river is the presbytery and the museum. Around the church, there are three stones, installed as three commemorative monuments to remind residents of the history of a valiant tribe.

The history of the Abenaki is intimately linked with the story of the Massachusetts Bay

Colony and the French Colony of New France. We were known by the English as the Eastern Indians, or the ones where the sun comes. This name comes from two gallicized? Names: in Abenaki, "Wobun" or white light and "aki", earth, gallicized as Wobanaki. We write "Abenaki" in English and "Abenaquis" in French.

One of the commemorative stones by the catholic church reminds us of the three "sinisters"? That the church of the mission had to suffer. On the third stone is an inscription, "Nimikwaldamnana" meaning that we will remember the Rogers' attack of the 4th October 1759.

On 4 October 1759, most Abenakis were sleeping - those who were not celebrating the return of many Abenakis from the Battle of the Plains d'Abraham in Quebec. Two hundred soldiers under Major Robert Rogers' direction inflicted the English vengeance on our village. The entire village of fifty houses were destroyed. All that remained were three houses filled with corn. The church and convent were saved. A few women and children were killed and some were brought to New England. This October morning, the English fury rubbed out one hundred years of our history.

Along with the contents of the church and the precious things that Father Joseph AUBREY gave us, ornaments disappeared, as did the documents of a nation. The museum of the Abenaki of Odanak keeps today what has been documented since this drama of 1759. The culture of my people returned to the memory of the survivors.

Today, our village has nice houses, nice greens, nice flowers during summer, nice trees and it is a very pleasant village to stay, especially when it is your home. We have five streets. The principal street is Wobanaki, meaning the bear, even though we don't have any bears anymore, souvenirs remain. Nanaguon is the street of the rainbow, the street of hope. Tolba is the street of the Turtle. The turtle is an emblem for the Abenaki. The turtle is slow in her movements but wise in her actions. Koak is the street of the pines. It is a new street.

My family is the WAWANOLOATH, shortened to NOLETT by a priest who couldn't write our names. The writer and missionary, Joseph MAURALT derived the name of 8A8ANURUA meaning, "those who know well and do well many things" - it was a paraphrase. The name

WAWANOLOATH has another meaning, "he who puts someone off the track, literally or figuratively."

The first bearer of the name WAWANOLOATH was the famous war chief GRAYLOCK, also known as WHITE HEAD. History says that he was the brother of MALAMET. He probably was the son of Nicolas. We do not know if he was the father of LOUIS The Indian or if Louis was the son of MALAMET. GRAYLOCK probably earned his name during the Dummer's War (1722-1727).

It was said the GRAYLOCK came from the WORONOC tribe on the Westfield River in Massachusetts, traveling through Sqakheag probably in the 1740s. Nicholas WAWANOROUÉ, who could have been the son of GRAYLOCK, was one of the five chiefs of Saint-Francois who signed a letter sent to Chartres in France. Vows were made and a wampum was sent to the virgin Mary. The wampum is exposed in the Cathedral of Chartres and can be seen to this day.

I am not sure if Louis-the-Indian was the son of GRAYLOCK, or the son of NICHOLAS. Louis appears in the (Abenaki) roster of 1812-1815. Louis-the-Indian married Marie Appoline GILL, daughter of Robert GILL and granddaughter of Samuel GILL and Rosalie JAMES. More about the family of Samuel GILL will come later.

Louis-the-Indian had two sons and two daughters: Thomas, Pierre-Joseph, Marie-Jeanne and Monique. Pierre-Joseph was the oldest, and in his first marriage with Therese DEGONZAGUE, they had five children. From this marriage, one of his sons was Louis, my paternal great grandfather who married Marie-Louise OBOMSAWIN.

Pierre-Joseph married a second time to Emelie VALLEE and had nine children, one of whom was Joseph, my maternal grandfather. Both my mother and father were WAWANOLETT and my grandfather and grandmother also were both WAWANOLETT.

Louis, son of Pierre-Joseph, had seven children and one of them was my grandfather, Louis, who married Josphte OBAMSAWIN. They had four children and one of them was my father, Edmond WAWANOLETT.

Thomas WAWANOLOATH, brother of Pierre-Joseph, married Catherine DEGONZAGUE, sister of Therese DEGONZAGUE, first wife of Pierre-Joseph. They had five children, one of

whom was called Thomas. He married Louise BEAUPARLANT, a non-Indian woman. This couple had thirteen children, seven girls and six boys. One of the girls was Monique, my maternal grandmother. She married Joseph, son of Pierre-Joseph, and had ten children. This couple were my mother's parents. My mother is still living, is ninety-three and in possession of all her faculties.

My father was Edmond WAWANOLETT and he worked all his life for a private club, during the spring as a fishing guide for club members, and during the fall, as a hunting guide. During the off months, he worked as caretaker for the club and was seldom at home. It was a big feast for us when my father came home. Our family consisted of four children. One baby died, and my only brother died a few years ago. I have a sister living.

I married a Huron named SIOUI from Village Huron or Woronok, near the city of Quebec. My husband died accidentally after three years of marriage, during which time I had three children: Monique, Christine and Guy. My youngest was five weeks old when her father died. I returned to Odanak and immediately went to work. I was fortunate in that my parents were able to care for my babies. After my children went to school in Montreal, I worked for Radio Canada and was responsible for the loaning of musical records and tapes used on television and radio.

My son, Guy, was a schizophrenic and died in 1983. His children live at Village Huron. His son Akian studies at Fairfield University in Idaho.

My daughters, Monique and Christine, live at Val D'or in Abitibi. Monique works for the Algonquins as an assistant to the physicians and Christine illustrates books of legends and stories for children.

I am grandmother to six, the oldest of which is twenty-one years old and lives with me. The youngest is eight months and is named WANAKI, meaning peace. I am very proud of my children and grandchildren because they are intensely Abenaki to the bottom of their hearts. They are proud to belong to a proud nation, the WOBANAKI.

We are a nation, we are 1292 Abenakis. In our village, there are three hundred and fifty. Many in my generation were forced to find work in the United States. When these people retire, they are returning to Odanak. Many have made mixed marriages with white people, and their children's

Your membership in LaSociete is solicited.

Checks for membership dues should be made to LSCF and sent to John England, 2002 Palace Ave St Paul MN 55105. Dues amounts: Single: \$10 (\$8 senior); Family: \$15 (\$10 senior). Membership includes subscription to Chez Nous.

Indian blood decreases with each generation. It is too bad that our people are moving to integration.

Our language has suffered. One of my cousins still speaks Abenaki, and she gives lessons each week to anyone who wishes to study. But my cousin is old; she is 82 years old. It is difficult to study this language and so few can speak fluently. Students learn to read and write the language, but the most difficult part is learning to speak it. When I was a child, I did not have the opportunity to study my language. I did learn how to read first, and pronounce later what I had to know for church. At our school, we had to learn French first, and then some English.

I would like to spend some time on the history of the settling of Odanak. Most of my information can be found in a book by Gordon Day, an ethnologist who wrote during the 1970s. He is a United States citizen, living in Ottawa and his book is titled, "The St.-Francis Indians."

Practically nothing is known about the prehistoric occupation of the lower St.-Francis River Valley. The area offered a favorable environment for Indian occupation, with arable "intervale" land, an abundance of fish especially below the first rapids, and game animals, plant species suitable for medicine and food, and canoe routes final directions.

Jacques CARTIER named six Indian villages along the St.-Lawrence River in addition to Stadaconna (Quebec) and Hochelage (Montreal). Early maps suggest that the villages were all on the north shores, so it is not known if the people of those villages spoke Iroquois or Algonquin languages.

Samuel de CHAMPLAIN passed the mouth of the St.-Francois River but recorded only its presence and its beauty of countryside. During the next sixty years, the exploration trade and traffic, and war moved through Lac St.-Pierre, and past the mouth of the St.-Francis without any mention of Indian settlements there.

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The Abenaki were preceded at St.-Francois by the Sokokis. Only names of Sokoki were found in the registers at Sorel before 1687, and in the registers at St.-Francois before 1690. Contrary to general impressions, there are signs that Indians were living in the vicinity of St.-Francois when CREVIER settled there. The Abenakis had only recently arrived from Maine so could hardly claim the region of St.-Francois as their tribal territory.

History has not been silent on the origin of the St.-Francois Indians, but there has been little consensus among authors. It is usually agreed that Odanak was a refugees village and that more than one tribe contributed to its population. I mentioned the Sokokis, but their real name is Sokwaki.

In 1687, a new war was in the making between the French and the English. Father Jacques BIGOT made a trip to New England in October to induce Abenakis to join the French in their war with the Iroquois. The next year, hostilities broke out between the Abenakis in Maine and the English.

The conventional assumption that all the immigrants from the Chaudiere were Abenakis from Maine must be corrected. BACQUEVILLE de la POTERIE was a reliable contemporary observer. He recorded that upon the abandonment of the mission, the inhabitants split into two bands. One moved fifteen leagues up the Chaudiere River to be closer to their kinsmen, the Abenakis of Acadia. The other band, among whom there were Loups and some Sokwakis, settled on the Riviere St.-Francois.

This information changes the picture drastically. Instead of the immigration from the Chaudiere creating a village of Maine Abenakis, we see the arrival of only a part of the Chaudiere band, and only part of which was Abenaki. The remainder to settle in Odanak were Loups and Sokwakis. There seems to be no information on the source of the different contingents. If we use the figure of 355 persons, as a guesstimate of the number from the Chaudiere River, and allow one third of the band to move upriver, Odanak's increase from this migration would amount to only 236 people.

Benjamin Sulte stated that small pox which ravaged the St.-Francois colony in 1701 also killed many of the migrant Sokwakis, Algonquins and Abenakis in the vicinity of Trois-Rivieres and Montreal. In 1702, Bigot wrote that he had

removed a hundred Indians to his mission on the Riviere St.-Francois and hoped to get the remainder.

In April 1713, the Treaty of Utrecht brought an official end to war between France and England. In July, delegates from the Malecites, Penobscots and Kenebecs signed a peace treaty with Massachusetts at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. These claimed to speak for all the Indians between the Saint-John River and the Merrimac. The treaty was ratified at Casco the next year, in the presence of a large number of Indians of unspecified affiliations.

There is some question as to whether the Indians who signed the treaty really represented all the Eastern Indians. More to our purpose, the treaty does not prove the residence of the tribes named in their original territories. This is demonstrated by the case of the Pigwackets who were at Odanak at this time.

During the period of the Queen's War/Spanish Succession, Odanak was moved twice. The earliest known location was on the right of the northeast bank of the river, upstream from the present site of Odanak. About 1706, the village was moved and enlarged to accommodate the increased population. Its new location was downstream to a spot near the edge of the present community of Pierreville. This village is shown on the map of Gedeon de CATALOGNE, 1709. In 1715, the village was moved downstream to its present location of the same side of the river and on higher ground. PAQUIN thought the village contained 2000 persons at the time of its last establishment.

Now it is 1991, and Odanak is still home to descendants of warriors from the year of 1812. Their surnames include OBOMSAWIN, LAURENT, MSADOQUES, WAWANOLETT, BENEDICT, PANADIS, GILL, HANNIS, DENNIS, AND DEGONZAGUE. For some families, taking a French name as a surname made dealing with the white man much easier, but the Abenaki name remained known as the real family name.

Additional problems were created by the recorders. Early church record often contain only the French baptismal name because the recorder either was unfamiliar with, unaware or indifferent to the correct Abenaki family name. Sometimes two branches of the same family used their Indian and French names together. A good example is the

numerous OBOMSAWIN family which gave rise to two other families, the DEGONZAGUE family from an early DEGONZAGUE-OBAMSAWIN family and the ROBERT family from an early ROBERT-OBAMSAWIN family. Sometimes a French given name is "Abenaki-ized" then re-gallicized by an uncomprehending recorder. A good example of that process is Michel JEAN, who became Missal AZON in Abenaki, and was heard and recorded as Michel AGENT.

Another example of the process described above is the family BENEDICT-PANADIS. The earliest BENEDICT of record was a Captain Benedict who hunted for Wolfe's Army at Quebec in 1759. Capt. Benedict's son became a famous Adirondack guide and was known as SABADIS or SABAEL, a corruption of SA-BIAL, the "Abenaki-ization" of ST.-PIERRE. In 1819, Joachim Panadis was war chief at Odanak. A BERNARD appears at Odanak in the census of 1841, but the surname occurred at Becancour before that. Wolinaks and Bernards still live in Becancour.

Abenakis at Odanak agree that the DEGONZAGUE family was a branch of the OBOMSAWIN family. I have found no documentation of this. HALLOWELL wrote "I have been told that De Gonzague was originally a personal name associated with Obamsawin as a surname and that gradually, the DeGonzague was used as a surname." Louis DEGONZAGUE was war chief in 1808, and petitioned Governor Craig for Francis ANNANCE. We may surmise that this Louis was the same Louis DEGONZAGUE (CONACK) who was head chief in 1819, and signed the petition to rebuild the church. In the Abenaki language, the correct was to pronounce this surname is, "DAGOZA."

HERNESSE, now HANNIS, was a German who was taken prisoner by the Abenaki in New England. He married M.-Joanne GILL, daughter of Samuel GILL and Rosalie JAMES in 1735, and spent the rest of his life among the Abenakis at St.-Francis. There still remain three families of HANNIS in Odanak.

My informants remembered the first LAGRAVE as a white man who married an Abenaki woman, name unknown, somewhere in the Adirondacks, probably about the middle of the 18th century. The couple had four children, Francois LAGRAVE married Ursule EMMET

(WAZOMINET) and later, married Lucinda AMMANCE. Charles LAGRAVE married Victoria OBOMSAWIN at St.-Francis. Now, there remains only one LAGRAVE in Odanak, an 88 year old woman. A few descendants of LAGRAVE remain in a BENEDICT family and a SIOUI family. There is a Walter LAGRAVE born in Old Forge, New York, who now lives in Florida.

Right here in New Hampshire, I have a cousin from Odanak who lives in Intervale with his wife. His father left our village around 1884. My cousin has an Indian Souvenir shop, and members of his family weave baskets for sale to tourists. Now there is a monument next to the shop, dedicated to Joseph LAURENT, professor and writer in Odanak. The Abenaki name for LAURENT is LOLAS, the ancestor originating in Old Town, Maine. Some of the elders are of the opinion that the LAURENTs are Malecite from Cacouna. Who Knows? Recently, the Indian shop in Intervale and the land around it was included in the National Register of Historic Places.

The surname MSADOQUES seems to be the same name as that of the SHATTOCKQUIS who deeded land in Brookfield, Mass, in 1665. Most of the MSADOQUES families moved to Connecticut, but as they retire, they return to Odanak. There are a few families with this surname in Odanak. Peter WZOKHILAIN was a student at the Indian School in Hanover, New Hampshire. He returned to Odanak to serve as schoolmaster, minister and agent. At Dartmouth, he was known as Peter MASTA, a non-Indian name, because his mother had married Toussaint MASTA. Tradition says that he moved his family to Port Huron, Michigan, and died in 1858.

Louis WATSO was a veteran of the War of 1812, although he is not included in the roster. He is recorded as aged 97 in 1875, so he was born around 1778. His father was a WATSO, but his given name is not known. His mother was Eulalie GILL. The census of 1832 lists WATSO living with his widowed mother. Apparently, there is a possibility that the WATSO family is descended from PIAL PISSENNE, commonly known as Peter MOUNTAIN or Peter LAMONTAGNE. The WATSO family has been represented at Odanak continuously until the present.

And now for the Gill family. The ancestor of the GILLs is John GILL from England. He was

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married to Phebe BUSSWELL, and we have proof of his presence at Salisbury in 1651, and of his marriage to Phebe in 1645. Eleven children were born to this couple: John, Samuel, Moses, Elizabeth, Sarah, Isaac, Judith, Benjamin, Phebe, Hannah and William. Samuel, the child born in 1687 is the GILL kidnapped by the Abenaki and brought to Odanak. Most probably, he was taken near Amesbury, Mass, and the Indians used the River Powow between Salisbury and Amesbury to escape and return to their village. The kidnapping occurred in 1697. (In 1733, Samuel, the father, was found living in Dedham, aged 81 years). During the years between 1703 and 1708, another Abenaki raid occurred in the area of Saco, Winter Harbour, and Wells, Maine. A young girl was taken whose family name was JAMES. The two kidnapped children met in Odanak and were married around 1715. The girl was about 14 years old and the boy was a man of 28. The girl was baptized and given the name of Rosalie. This couple had seven children: Madeleine, Joseph-Louis, Joseph-Piche, Josephte, Marie, Francois and Robert. These seven children make the seven branches from which come the descendants of the GILL family in Quebec.

The three girls married Abenaki men and the boys married white women, with one exception. Joseph-Louis first married an Indian woman named Marie-Anne who died with her son at Roger's Raid. Robert GILL, son of Samuel, was the WAWANOLETT, my ancestor known as Louis-the-Indian.

Olione. (Thank you in Abenaki).

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE OF LES CANADIENS ERRANTS

Sat July 26 -	Forts Folle Avoine, Webster WI
Wed July 30 -	Rice Street Parade
Sat&Sun Aug 9-10	Elk River Rendezvous
Sat Aug 23 -	Pioneer Bldg State Fair 10:30 and 1:00
Sat Aug 30 -	Ft Snelling Rendezvous
Sat&Sun Sep 6,7 -	Traverse de Sioux Rendezvous, St.Peter
Sat Sep 20 -	Snake River Rendezvous, Pine City

Interested in being part of Les Errants? Call Rene Juaire at 739-3491.



Nouvelles Villes Jumelles

Newsletter of La Société Canadienne Française Du Minnesota

NEWS FROM LASOCIETE C-F

The Annual French-Canadian picnic will be 1-4 p.m. Sunday, July 27 at Spooner Park in Little Canada. (Just NE of Little Canada exit of I-35E. Exit and follow signs.) As per tradition, this is a potluck, so bring your favorite dish. There will be prizes and entertainment. Invite your friends. Please mark this date on your calendar and attend.

Election Results: LSCF elected its new Board for 1997-98 on June 2. The Board is as follows:

Congratulations!
President: Leo Gouette
Vice-President: Dorothy Landry
Secretary: Leroy Dubois
Treasurer: John England
Membership: George LaBrosse
Members: John Ediel
Ralph Germain

Francine Roche and Mark Stillman will give a free concert from 5:45-7:45 p.m. Thu, July 17, at the Orchestra Hall Marktplatz, Minneapolis.

This publication depends on your contributions of ideas, articles, photos.... without your help, we cannot exist. Mail information to Dick Bernard, 7632 157th St W #301 Apple Valley MN 55124..

QUERIES from readers:

from **Michael Bedard, 134 Plymouth Way, San Bernardino CA 92408:** Michael is a direct descendant of Isaac Bedard, who came to Quebec in the 1660s. His great-great grandfather, Alphonse Bedard, left Charlesbourg, Quebec, and came to Argyle MN in 1883. His grandfather, Joseph Alphonse Bedard (1904-1977) moved in 1936 to Red Lake Falls, where he owned a meat market, Sanitary Meat. In 1942 most of the family moved to Long Beach CA. Michael is publishing a family calendrier and newsletter for his family, and invites your interest. He would like to hear from you especially if you have any connections to or information about his family.

From **Eugenie Fellows, 28042 Lindenhurst Dr, Zephyrhills FL 33544-2705:** Eugenie seeks information on the following persons of the family GAGNE. Antoine Gagne, who was buried in Florissant, MO (suburb of St. Louis) 15 Jan 1822, aged 72; Isaac Gagner, son of Pierre and of Angelique Bouchard, married 10 May 1775, Detroit, Marie-Louise Vallee (Jean and Marie-Elizabeth Drouillard); an Isaac Gagner is listed in the 1782 census of Detroit MI. Could Antoine have been a son of Isaac? Where did Isaac Gagner die?.

MARK  **LABINE**

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NEWSLETTER OF Septembre-Octobre, 1997 VOL. 19 NO. 2

La société canadienne-française

Editor: Dick Bernard

#103



The Consul General of Canada
and Mrs. Robert Déry

request the pleasure of your company
for wine and cheese with

La Société canadienne française du Minnesota

and

Les Errants

Sunday, September 14, 1997
3:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Official Residence
28 Park Lane
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Please reply
prior to September 11
(612) 332-7486, extension 3201



A true jewel in downtown St. Paul is St. Louis, King of France Catholic Church, to be found at the southeast corner of 10th and Cedar Street. The present church is the third building used by the French-Canadians of St. Paul. The first church (1868) was at the northeast corner of 10th and Cedar; the second (1881) was at the corner of Exchange and Wabasha (the site of the present-day Fitzgerald Theater). The present day church was constructed in 1909. The above photo, which is undated, shows the present day church and, at left, a portion of the school which had been built in 1886, replacing the first school built at the site of the present church in 1873. (The school was demolished in 1963.) In a 1958 column, well known columnist Oliver Towne wrote a description of a visit to the school. Among other comments he mentioned the nationalities served there: "...because this is a melting pot these days, the LaVasseurs, Goyettes, Lancettes and Juaires who came from miles away, sit with other youngsters of all nationalities - Italian, German, Negro, Oriental and Spanish...because the French influence has faded with Americanization, the subject of the French language was discontinued in the 1930's...In that first school of 1873 there were only 130 students, with names like Auge, Gadbois, LaPointe, Nadeau, LaMarre, Villancourt, Souci. And by the way, two names O'Toole and Kelly...."

The architect of this stunningly beautiful church was Emmanuel Masqueray, whose name may be familiar to readers. Masqueray was the noted French architect who, at the same time in history, designed the magnificent Cathedral of St. Paul, and the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis. Mr. Masqueray was known to have made the remark: "The Cathedral and Basilica are grand indeed, but my favorite is St. Louis Church. It is my little gem."

St. Louis Catholic Church is indeed a gem of a church. At the present time it is in the midst of a massive renovation project, and is seeking pledges from parishioners and others wishing to help renovate Masqueray's "little gem". Members of LaSociete are urged to contribute. For more information, please contact the Church of St. Louis, King of France, 506 Cedar Street, St. Paul MN 55101 (612) 224-3379

The Great Red River Flood of 1997

by Ernest Ebert, Grand Forks ND

From the Editor: A while back we asked Mr. Ebert, regular contributor to *Chez Nous*, to give his thoughts on the 1997 flood of the Red River of the North. His story follows.

There are, of course, thousands of stories about this flood of the century. Many of us had relatives somewhere in the Red River Valley during those awful days of April and May, 1997. Relatives in Fargo, Grand Forks, and St. Jean-Baptiste and St. Adolphe, Manitoba, sent photos and accounts of their personal trials and tribulations to the editor. For those whose property was damaged or destroyed, the recovery continues, and is difficult both financially and emotionally.

Whenever the conversation turned to the topic of great floods in the Red River Valley of the North, the flood of 1897 was always accepted as having been the greatest of all. That is no longer true. The flood of 1997 rose to 54.3 feet - four feet higher than the massive inundation of a century earlier, and because there are far more people who hold more property, the devastation and loss of property is far greater in the 1997 flood. The loss of property was extensive throughout the Valley but nature unleashed its greatest fury on the twin cities of Grand Forks ND and East Grand Forks MN. It was in Grand Forks that the raging waters of the Red, somehow, ignited a blaze that destroyed several buildings in old Downtown along 3rd Street and DeMers Avenue.

In the residential area as well as in the business area, most basements were flooded except in southwest Grand Forks. This meant that furnaces, washers, dryers, hot water heaters had to be replaced. Weeks after the flood waters had receded, berms were piled high with the remnants of these once valuable units waiting to be hauled away to the city land fill.

Businesses all over the cities were hit hard - many are not operating yet. First, it was necessary for the business people to physically crawl out from under the debris and next to mentally adjust to a completely new situation which included the maze of relocation, refinancing or just plain quitting. Of course, the people selling furnaces, washers, dryers, etc., have been doing a lot of business as have those who furnish building materials. Losses in inventory were tremendous.

The story of the Great Flood of 1997 began with the first snowstorm about the middle of November way back there in 1996! We've had

some winters in the past which produced nary a blizzard, but this past winter had eight major storms that qualified as blizzards. And the many storms piled up a lot of snow cover - about 100 inches well laden with moisture. But when the last week of March came it seemed that spring was just around the corner. From the viewpoint of 88 years of experience, I believed then, and still believe, that Mother Nature has never thrown such a bundle of weather at us as she did in that memorable first week of April, 1997. All of it began with a sleet storm accompanied by high winds which soon blended into a snow storm with continuing high winds. It had the effect of an artillery barrage the purpose of which is to destroy defensive units and to disrupt communications. It soon knocked out



The farm home of Rita and Gilles Marion near St. Jean-Baptiste Manitoba sits in the lake which the Red River became in early May, 1997. Ultimately, one and one-half feet of water flooded the first floor of their home. The Marions were refugees for several weeks, and are still uncertain about the future status of their home, which sits only about one-fourth mile from the Red River of the North.

most of the electric capacity which energizes our light, furnaces, water pumps and sewage pumps. Fortunately, it didn't affect the telephone service. The television stations, cable and all but one or two radio stations were wiped out. Those radio stations relayed messages 24 hours a day. They were tired people! The power company had some electricity but not nearly enough so they rotated us about every 8 hours or so.

The power to this area went off about 4 o'clock Sunday morning and didn't come back on until 4 o'clock that afternoon. I found that 12 hours can be a long time to be without central heat. Clad in my street clothes plus a very heavy winter coat, I listened to the unfolding drama engendered by the many, many messages relating to the storm. My battery operated radio was my only source of information except for the telephone. During this period of "incarceration", it seemed that time stood still. I kept looking at my watch only to find that it had moved only two or three minutes since I had looked before. The time was especially long because there was no power to cook with. After a dry cereal breakfast I kept on eating something every little while - there was nothing else to do! When the lights came on a 4 o'clock, it was time to blow out my two kerosene lamps which had once more performed their duty in a faithful way as they had in that long ago back on the farm. What a blessing to hear the furnace, refrigerator and sump-pump motors run again. What a blessing to be back in the twentieth century!

Meanwhile, the flood which would eventually get here, was in full progress in the southern section of the Valley. The pressure of billions of tons of water made the otherwise modest Red River into one, long, moving lake from four to six miles which flowed over or around anything in its path. This had to be squeezed in between relatively narrow waters between the banks in Greater Grand Forks. However, the rampaging waters could not be contained and levees gave way in several places in spite of super-human efforts to reinforce them.

A few days of cold weather had delayed the inevitable. Then at 6 a.m. on Friday, April 18th, whining sirens screamed and the evacuation of 3000 residents from Grand Forks Lincoln Drive had begun. The dikes in this area are 15 to 20 feet high. Later, all of the area's 50,000 people were evacuated or left of their own accord. The hundreds of volunteers, policemen, firemen and National Guardsmen had lost the fight to save the cities but they had put up a good fight.

As mentioned before, all the TV stations and all except one or two radio stations had been silenced by the sleet storm. And the Grand Forks Herald building had fallen to the blaze. KFGO radio at Fargo supplied much of the local news. Bismarck was much better supplied with news, and my two

daughters living there were fairly screaming at me over the telephone to get out. On Saturday afternoon, April 19th, Barbara came to get me and the lady who was soon to become my wife, Clara Murphy. I was to spend 3 weeks as a guest of my daughter, Joyce, and Clara spent that time with her sister in Center ND. The streets were dry in the southwestern part of Grand Forks, where I live, and the country side harbored a few pot holes in the field. On the surface, it seemed there was little to worry about. But nearer to the Red River, the streets had become supplementary little rivers with popping manhole covers. The massive evacuation was on the way.

Where did all the people go? Many were sheltered at the Air Base, some went out of town to relatives and friends; some were quartered in out of town gymnasiums; patients in rest homes were farmed out to hospitals and rest homes in other parts of the state. Now they are being brought back as quickly as room can be found. Some aftereffects of this flood will be felt forever.

On Writing a Family History

by Sr. Ann Thomasine Sampson, CSJ

From the Editor: Sr. Ann is an historian for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, and continues to be involved in history projects at Bethany Convent in St. Paul where she is writing a book, Seeds on Good Ground, about pioneer Sisters of St. Joseph for the community's sesquicentennial in St. Paul 2001 A.D. She is a loyal member of LaSociete and is well-rooted in the French-Canadian culture of Quebec and the Twin Cities (she grew up in southeast Minneapolis). Here, Sister Ann shares her thoughts on writing a family history, which she shared with her own family in 1984. She provides a useful, common-sense, framework for anyone who has ever thought of writing their own history. The editor would urge particular note to her comments about the relative lack of historical record of women. We perhaps can not rewrite the past, but we can make certain that the women we remember in our lives can be more completely described for the benefit of those who follow us. Thank you, Sister Ann.

"[For] Christmas [1984] I gave a present of a family history to members of my immediate family consisting of three brothers, a sister, nine nephews and nieces. The present was a result of a question my oldest nephew posed when he asked, "Is there something wrong with my father's father? I have never heard anything about him." It struck me that my nephew was talking about my own father and that my parents died when the generation to which

the nephew belonged were either very young or had not yet been born.

Now, I had been collecting genealogical material about my family since college days when my psychology teacher asked for information about that subject. Gradually through the years, I had acquired a massive array of materials: ancestor/pedigree charts, documents, newspaper clippings, maps, certificates, letters, pictures of places and people, names and dates, census/cemetery/church/government records, etc., gotten through extensive correspondence, oral history interviews, exchange of data, trips, telephone calls plus membership and meetings with members of genealogical societies (Minnesota Genealogical Society; NWTF&CHI; Urbain Baudreau Graveline Genealogical Association). In order to be able to know what I had, I organized this material into a number of three ring notebooks - each one having to do with a specific branch of our family.

Now, the question before me was: what to share with my family without becoming so bogged down with details that the reader would quickly lose interest. I had watched various methods and techniques people used in collecting data about ancestors. Some were mainly interested in names and dates. Some traced people who had a specific last name. Others loved to fill in ancestor/pedigree charts. Since I had been a history teacher for some 35 years and later spent nine years in intensive historical research about the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, a congregation to which I belong, I wanted my family to know much more about their ancestors than a collection of names and dates. Therefore, I set down some specific rules and criteria: A) the selected information had to be of primary interest to those receiving the gift; B) divide the material into two sections - one relating to my father and the other to my mother; C) establish an outline of questions to answer for each person I would write about. Once I had established my mode of procedure, I began to write in earnest.

Each section was divided into segments and the first segment was titled "Recollections about my Father, James Jacob Sampson, Sr." by Sister Ann Thomasine Sampson. I described in a succinct form everything I could about his parents, where/when he was born, names of his 12 brothers and sisters and whom they married, places where he moved, grew up, worked, education, work, marriages, death, etc.

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I also xeroxed copies of pictures I had of him and was careful to type up information about each. There were many questions I could not answer; therefore, in my description, I suggested that my brothers and sisters could be of help since they lived with my father longer than I did (I entered the convent at the age of 19.) I was careful to see that the same title was used at the top of each typewritten page and each was numbered in correct numerical progression. I had seen too many loose-leaf notebooks come apart and pages mixed up because they were not marked correctly. At the end of my recollections, I listed all of my father's direct descendants and whom they married: children, grandchildren, great grandchildren - so the reader could know exactly where he/she fit into the picture.

Then I did the same for his father: "Zepherin Samson, Father of James Jacob Sampson, Sr.", again being sure that this title was used on each succeeding page - but numbering each page all over again. This would allow for expansion of the first segment by the reader who might want to add data, etc. Again I used the same pattern and ended with the direct descendants. This time, the list was much longer since Zepherin was the father of 13 children. Then I did the third segment on his wife: Ellen LaVallee Sampson, Mother of James Jacob Sampson, Sr."

Since I had very little information about Zepherin's parents, other than what I wrote in his segment, I turned my attention to "Daniel Louis LaVallee, Grandfather of James Jacob Sampson, Sr." The information plus the pictures of this man who became the father of 12 daughters and step-father of his niece whose mother had died at childbirth, became more and more interesting and the list of direct descendants more exciting. Ten of his daughters grew to adulthood on a farm near French Lake and married men of French-Canadian descent, in St. Vincent's Church, Osseo, MN. Some of the names included: Zepherin Samson, Medard Arseneau, Francis Xavier LeClair, Moses Des Lauriers, Daniel Bottineau, Alexander Pouliot, Peter Dupuis, Felix Dansereau, Pierre Joly, Cyprien Gorham, Narcisse Counoyer, Sidney Potvin and Emile LeFebre. I will not attempt to give you the numerous ways these names were spelled. I also gave names and addresses of people who might be able to give more information about each of these families. I did the same for Daniel's wife: "Basiles

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Baudreau Graveline LaVallee, Grandmother of James Jacob Sampson, Sr." I had a picture of her with 10 of her daughters and another where she was the oldest of five living generations - so I incorporated these into her segment - and listed the descendants again.

The last two segments had to do with "Joseph Baudreau Graveline, Great grandfather of James Jacob Sampson, Sr." And "Josephte Fortier Baudreau Graveline, Great grandmother of James Jacob Sampson, Sr." These two with a number of their children had come to St. Paul from Sorel, Quebec, about 1847. They were the only ones for whom I had no pictures; however, I had ancestor charts back to France and included a direct listing. I had the location about where they lived on Robert Street, St. Paul, and copies of marriage records of some of their children in the St. Paul log cabin Cathedral which later became St. Joseph's Academy where our Sisters taught. Other French names were added to my list - people whom their children had married: Michael Auger, Eleanor Donais, Emmanuel Dube, Edward Boisvert (Greenwood) and Pierre Turgeon. I again gave names and addresses of people who might aid the reader to know more about these people so that I would not be writing down information that would confuse the ones for who I was essentially writing. At this point, I felt I had fulfilled my goal of one half of the project, and I turned my attention to my mother's side of the family.

My mother, "Frances Blankenhorn, Wife of Thomas J. Shanahan; Wife of James Jacob Sampson, Sr." was married twice and her list of descendants was a bit different than those of my father because she had a son by her first marriage. I wrote a long recollection of her, then went on to her parents: "Richard Blankenhorn, Father of Frances Blankenhorn Sampson" and "Mary Barbara Surges Blankenhorn, Mother of Frances Blankenhorn Sampson". A different set of names began to emerge as I listed people who were married: Boughton, Kartak, Brombach, Egesberger, Hammer, Hauck, Hamack, Avery, etc. Then onto "Johann Christian Blankenhorn, Grandfather of Frances Blankenhorn", and "Katherine Schreiner Blankenhorn, Grandmother of Frances Blankenhorn Sampson". This whole section was much shorter due to the fact that A) the family relationship was much smaller; B) records were not that available; C)

much of the information was gotten through the oral history method from my mother's sisters before they died.

What did I personally learn from this Family History Project? A) outstanding characteristics, talents, physical traits I seem to have inherited from each side of my family; B) vast variety of ways of spelling names, particularly the French ones. This was due to the fact that when my ancestors came to Minnesota, they could speak little or no English. Those taking the census, wrote the names down as they heard them pronounced. As years went by, some went by nicknames and some changed their names to an English equivalent. My mother's side remained consistent because they were better educated and there were fewer names to change; C) the very small amount of documented information given about the women. They are usually referred to as mother, wife, daughter, and once in a while, they are mentioned in relationship to wills and dowries. Since a woman who marries, changes her name, I can see why so many genealogical enthusiasts track down people with a consistent last name. A number of interesting biographical sketches are now being written and published about the earliest settlers from France to new France. I have found three of my ancestors among them and had a cousin, Florence Sampson Fredricksen, professor of French for 40 years at Gustavus Adolphus College, MN, translate them into English for me. The paucity of information about women is very much in evidence. D) Learn how to separate myth from fact. Each family has stories that have been handed down. There seems to be an element of truth in them so I put them down and gave my sources. E) Dates vary. I have found people baptized before they were born! Put the various dates down; however, do not get an ulcer over which one is absolutely correct. F) Be sure to put down the names of direct descendants down after each person. I ran into the problem of second marriages, divorces, change of names, one parent families, etc. The listing of descendants for each person written about, helps to clarify the relationships.

What was the reaction of my family who received the three ring notebooks as a present? Absolutely delightful! A niece in Montana wrote to say that she spent three hours on Christmas Eve reading it and wished that a whole book of

Fete du St. Jean-Baptiste

by LeRoy DuBois

recollections could be written about my mother. Her son has been asking her questions about the family and he can now make use of it for school projects as well as for his own knowledge. Another niece wanted to know what a milliner is. My mother had made her living as a widow by that profession. One brother who had worked for the telephone company became intrigued with the initials and numbers on a calling card I had xeroxed about my father's business. He did some research and found that at one time our area in Minneapolis had two telephone companies T.S. (Tri State) and E. (Bell). A man in business had to have two phone numbers. My sister in New York called to say that the present had generated much conversation and discussion between her and her children. Now the latter wanted to learn about their father's side of the family. All of the readers were amazed at the number of names that were listed and were interested to know more about them. Hopefully, some will take the time to jot down the information and add it to their family history.

Another whole group of relatives was interested in the project. A family reunion of the Podvin/Podvin relations was and I was invited to come and show the fruits of my labor. Many wanted to purchase copies. This is where the idea of the segments comes in very handily. Since all of this research involved much time, money, etc., I had to work out an equitable amount of money to be charged - and I hoped they would have other information, pictures, documents, etc., to share with me. This is an unending project filled with surprises, fun, newly found relatives as well as many unanswered questions....

One last footnote. When I gave my present, I enclosed a letter to each recipient to explain what it was all about. I listed the people whom I had researched and advised them to read the contents slowly and at different times; otherwise they would get a good case of genealogical indigestion. Thus, the first page really has a table of contents so that other readers know in a few short paragraphs what the project is all about, and for whom it was essentially written. As other more distant relatives ask for copies, this letter will be revised to show what the essential relationship between them and the contents is all about."



LeRoy DuBois, at right, waits his turn as Lauri Bernard twirls. Jane Peck, center, led.

Tuesday, 24 June, saw a reenactment of an 1840s French-Canadian Fete du St. Jean-Baptiste at the Sibley House in Mendota MN. This was a premier event at this new Minnesota Historical Society site.

When we arrived, a merry bonfire was already blazing in a spot behind the Sibley House. Couples in period costumes sat on benches and logs, clapping to jig music played by a slightly built young lad on an ancient fiddle.

Hey, I see Dick Bernard and his daughter, Lauri. And here come Ralph and Diane Germain and George and Bonnie LaBrosse. Looks like we'll have some fun after all. Hey, mon Vieux, Jane Peck is coming. She's an expert at native and period dances. I hear that she even studied in France.

Before I know what, Jane signals to the fiddler, two young damoiselles grab me by the arms, and I'm twirling around about a hundred miles an hour. Then come schottisches, more jigs, some American Indian dances, a Greek one, and maybe a Scotch and Irish one. Mon Dieu, these old 75-year old legs finally collapsed, but not before I had outdanced all of the kids. Quel fete! Quelle musique! Quel fun!

Prospective member? Checks for membership dues should be made to LSCF and sent to John England, 2002 Palace Ave St Paul 55105. Dues: \$10 (\$8 senior); Family \$15 (\$10 senior). Membership includes subscription to Chez Nous.



Nouvelles Villes Jumelles

Newsletter of La Société Canadienne Française Du Minnesota

NEWS FROM LASOCIETE

We bid adieu to **MEL THERRIEN**, who passed away recently. Mel was one of the stalwarts of LaSociete. A eulogy will be printed in the next issue of *Chez Nous*.

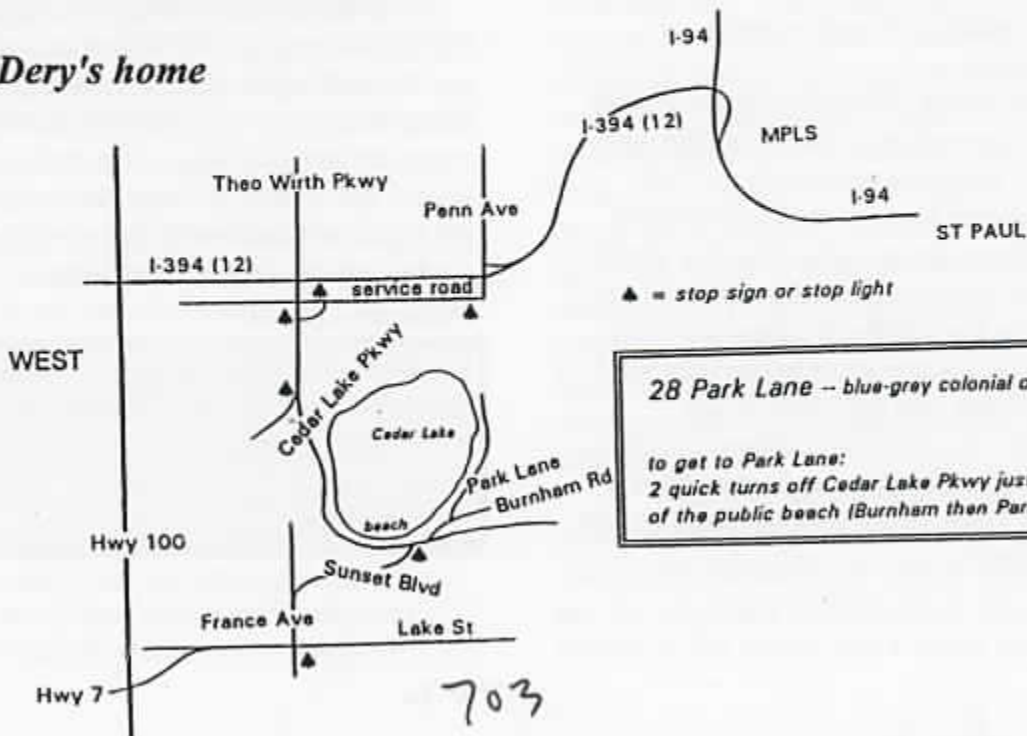
The annual summer picnic of LaSociete, July 27, attracted thirty visitors. The new pavilion at Little Canada's Spooner Park was an excellent location.

The first fall meeting of LaSociete will be **Monday, October 6, 7:30 p.m.** at the International Institute, across from the State Fairgrounds in St. Paul. The meeting place is easy to get to and the parking is very good.

The Christmas Party will be held **December 6, 1997, 6 p.m.** at the International Institute on Como Avenue in St. Paul. This will be a potluck. Let's enjoy a melange of our culinary arts, and camaraderie. Raconteurs are invited to perform. Musical contributions from "les Errants" and other groups will be enjoyed.

Come, smile a while, enjoy and be entertained.

Map to Dery's home



Linda Sutherland of the Consul General of Canada writes: "I've spoken several times with Dorothy Willard of Staywell Health Management Systems who is looking locally for a bilingual French Canadian nurse. Her number is 800-926-5455. She and the company are located in the Twin Cities." Readers?

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chez nous

NEWSLETTER OF Novembre-Décembre, 1997 VOL. 19 NO. 3

La société canadienne-française

Editor: Dick Bernard

#104

Adieu, Mel Therrien

by Ralph Germain

Mel Therrien passed away on August 9, 1997. Mel was a charter member of our Societe, joining in 1979¹. He is survived by wife, Clara, and four children.

Mel served in WWII and took part in the Battle of the Bulge. He taught French at Highland Park High School.

In the Bicentennial year of 1976, a French organization called La Societe des Voyageurs was formed to promote a two day French Festival in downtown St. Paul. Of the many events that took place, Mel took chairmanship of a canoe trip from Lake Phalen to Keller Lake. Mel had to secure permits from all local authorities for this event. Police blocked roads so a portage could be made. About fifteen canoes participated. After beaching the canoes on Keller Island, Northern Winnebago Indian singers and dancers entertained. Pea soup was served and canoe races were held, and a large ox cart and oxen were displayed.

¹ The call to form La Societe in March, 1979, is reprinted in this issue of Chez Nous. Our Societe has endured for the past 18 years. This issue of Chez Nous is the 104th newsletter for members of the Societe. Many of our formerly active members, like Mel, have either passed on or retired. To continue as an organization, we all need to work together. Otherwise this organization, like so many others, will become memory. Help us survive not only by your membership, but by encouraging others to join, and by participating in some ways in the work of this organization. We seek to continue the proud French-Canadian heritage found throughout North America. We need your help. The Editor.



Undated photo, from left: Elenore Sandberg, Mel Therrien, Del Germain. Merci to Ralph Germain.

Mel also made up sign posts with the names of Minnesota rivers and towns having French names, and put them up on the island for a walking tour. Mel also conducted games and contests at some later picnics.

He was a charter member of Les Joyeux Baladins, the first organized French-Canadian singing group, and sang with the group for about five years.

We will all miss you, Mel. Adieux.

It's time to renew your membership in LaSociete for 1998. Note renewal form in this issue of Chez Nous.

A note to readers of Chez Nous

This issue will be briefer than most due to the fact that I have been preoccupied with the recent illness of my father (and LaSociete member) Henry Bernard. At this writing (October 13), Dad is doing better, but helping him has taken a lot of time, since he lives in suburban St. Louis. So...please understand if there is less content, and more typos than usual! I know you will. And remember Dad in your prayers, too. He's 100% French-Canadian, born December 22, 1907, in Grafton ND. Dick Bernard

Two Queries from Eugenie Fellows 28042 Lindenhurst Drive Zephyrhills FL 33544-2705

1 - 7/29/97: Here is another puzzle on which I need help from members: I need correct birth, death, marriage dates for CHARLES CARON and wife MARGUERITE MORIN, married about 1860, Canada. The 1885 Minnesota Census, Red Lake County, Louisville Township, MN lists Charles, age 59, Marguerite, age 43, Oliver, 22, and six other children, all born in Canada except two, ages 8 and 6. So the family must have come to Minnesota about 1875. Son Oliver married about 1888 Julia Benoit. Daughter Clara, of Oliver and Julia, born 3 March 1891, died 22 August 1985, married Albert LaPlante. Also need data on marriage of Albert and Clara, and on Oliver and Julia. Albert was son of Mederic-Isidore Leriger de La Plante, born 29 January 1851, St. Constant Parish, Canada; died 2 December 1915, Crookston MN.

2 - 8/21/97: Need birth date, parents, death date of Howard LaPlante, son of William (Guillaume ?), residents of Brown County, Wisconsin. Also, I wish to know if they are connected to leriger de La Plante.

Prospective member? Checks for membership dues should be made to LSCF and sent to John England, 2002 Palace Ave St Paul 55105. Dues: \$10 (\$8 senior); Family \$15 (\$10 senior). Membership includes subscription to Chez Nous.

A Letter from Doris Fisk 14215 Cork Tree Court San Antonio TX 76247-3723

July 28, 1997: "...my mother was Leah M. Beauchaine, daughter of Ludger and Rosalie Lavoie Beauchaine. They came to Minneapolis and had a farm on 13th and 2nd Street and two duplexes at 610 2nd Street. My grandpere went to Everett School and learned English. He went to work for Minneapolis Water Department and carried sewer pipes from Camden. He retired twice, the second time he got a watch and was told to stay home! I graduated from Our Lady of Lourdes where my mom also went to school. [My mom's family] came from Plessisville, Ontario, Canada, around 1870. My mom was the baby, born in 1887. Her eldest sister Lida Hoshey, was 15 years older and married at 16. There were four sons, Thomas, Claude, Ephrean and Philip. They had been to Moorhead and Crookston. I recall them telling us that one uncle had a farm at Red Lake. One was retired from a brewery and worked at Eagle Lodge and had log cabins to rent at Lake Itasca. One sold furniture at Boutell's. The grandparents wed 6/18/1850. My great grandmere was Claire Tourville, grandmere's father was Perron-Rose Marcoux.

Presently we celebrate Bastille Day here in San Antonio. Many from the Canary Islands attended. They had the celebration downtown, served baguettes, french pancakes, etc. Mexican and Spanish influence is very strong.

We attend Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes when we go to Minneapolis each year. We read French. I spoke it when I was home. One of the colored windows on the right side of Our Lady of Lourdes was donated by my grandparents.

Severe, a French Huguenot Family

from the Severe family history

with thanks to Margaret Severe, Minneapolis

SEVERE family history is indeed challenging especially to a novice in family genealogy.

However, with the good help of many of the family descendants and some speculation on the origin of this family, we give you this record.

We find that the family probably descended from WILLIAM or VALENTINE (pronounced Vawhl'-en-tine). Spellings of the name are varied and include XAVIER, GAVIER, SEVIERR, SAY-

VEER, SHEVEER, SEVIER, SEVEIR, SEAVER, SAVOUR, SEVERE, SEVER, SEEVER, SEEVERS and many others.

WILLIAM and VALENTINE were brothers, and were the children of VALENTINE I and they were born in London, England. VALENTINE I descended from a French family named XAVIER. They lived in southern France and in Paris, France. The family fled as Huguenots from Paris, France, to England due to religious persecution at the close of the 17th century². Probable origin of the name SEVERE is English and French (ME le SEVERE) and probably came from "Sieve maker". In later years the name has meant a "stern taskmaster".

The brothers took passage for America and landed at Baltimore, settling within the present limits of Rockingham County, Virginia, just six miles southwest of the modern little village of New market. This was about 1740 or earlier.

VALENTINE became a large landowner, energetic colonizer, merchant, agent for the crown or colony, a miller and family man. (This information taken from the book "SEVIER FAMILY HISTORY"). His home was on Smith's Creek in what was first in Organe, then August, now Rockingham County, Virginia. VALENTINE's grist mill was on Smith's Creek, southeast of his home. His inn was on a branch stream southwest of his residence. His patents of land totaled at least 4,000 acres and included land as far away as Halifax, now Henry County, Virginia. He received much of the land for bringing over immigrants, usually at the ratio of 50 acres for each immigrant, plus a cash payment. Trees in the area were so thick and foliage was so dense that the sun could not shine through. branches formed a canopy over the roads and paths that travelers cut. Every spring each settler had a log rolling as the land was cleared. Dogwood was used for spike poles as they were very light and strong.

WILLIAM, we believe, settled in Frederick County, Virginia - now present day Maryland, and

² Readers: can you provide any information about Huguenots and the reason for the ill-relations between Catholic and Protestant in France at the time? The 17th century is when the primary migration of French to Quebec took place.

Quebec seems always to have been a Catholic province. It would appear that the 17th century was a time of particularly strong religious ferment and zealotry in France. Will anyone take the bait? Send to Dick Bernard, 7632 157th St. W #301, Apple Valley MN 55124.

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directly east of Morgantown, West Virginia. WILLIAM was born approximately 1702-1704 in England and according to a land record of Frederick "County, Virginia, married a Catholic girl named CATHERINE O'NEAL. We know that some sources say the forefathers of the SEVERE family were sailmakers by trade and spelled their name SEVIER. (From NORMAN MCKINLEY SEVERE, Baltimore, Maryland.) By associating dates and many sources of information, we believe that WILLIAM and CATHERINE's children were JACOB, JOH, CASPER, JAMES, JESSE, ROBERT and perhaps others. There were so many spell'ng of the name that all should be considered at this early date of history....

**A personal comment on the
French in America Calendar
(See ad in this issue)**

**Each year since it began in 1985, I
have purchased and used the
"French in America" Calendar
edited by
Marie-Reine Mikesell.**

**It is a fabulous calendar, full of
color photos and lots of pertinent
facts about our culture, dates and
events.**

**This years calendar almost went
defunct due to the
great Red River Flood
(read the ad for that story).
Order your calendars early.**

**They're perfect for gifts.
Last year they sold out.
Enjoy.**

Dick Bernard



Nouvelles Villes Jumelles

Newsletter of La Société Canadienne Française Du Minnesota

LA SOCIETE CHRISTMAS PARTY

La Societe Canadienne Francaise du Minnesota will hold its Christmas Party on Saturday, December 6, 1997, 6 p.m., at the International Institute on Como Avenue, St. Paul. The International Institute is very easy to locate. It is just a few blocks west of Snelling Avenue, across the street from the State Fairgrounds. The parking lot is well lit.

Our Party will be a Smorgasbord Menu. Members are always ingenious at offering and presenting a great variety of delicacies. For certain, the menu will include Soupe aux pois, tourtiere (meat pie) from Our Lady of Lourdes, salads, condiments, and relishes, petits fours, desserts, coffee, and tea. Wine will also be available.

Members may bring their own renditions of the aforementioned foods for a potluck.

Those who do not choose to bring food are asked to make a \$5 donation per person at the door to help cover costs.

There will be singing of carols in both French and English.

We would like to have a "Memory Lane" with pictures of members and their activities at our various festivities over the years. Please identify the photos if you bring them!

Our guests will be a group of Canadians, currently living in Minnesota as students or in other jobs. It will be a good opportunity to meet and exchange greetings with our neighbors from north of the border.

We want you all to participate! This is your Club! Please join us Saturday, December 6.

MARK  LABINE

ATTORNEY AT LAW

Mark Labine and Associates, P.A.
Suite 204, Evenson Building
2239 Carter Avenue at Como, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55108
Office: (612) 644-1739 • Fax: (612) 645-2439

The Voyageur
John T. Rivard
RR. 2 No. River Rd.
St. Cloud, Mn. 56301
Phone (612) 253-2199
March 12, 1979

21
*our roots.
Let us not
forget them!*

CALLING FRENCHPERSONS AND OTHERS INTERESTED:

You are the recipient of this letter because your name was submitted as an enthusiastic person interested in organizing a French Club in Minnesota.

At present there is no French Club that appeals to every segment of society. Let us get together and form such an organization. Your input will be a definite asset for organizing and maintaining the viability of such an organization.

A meeting of those invited will be held at the International Institute, 1694 Como Ave. St Paul, on Monday, March 19, at 7:30 PM. The Institute is located across the street from the State Fairgrounds.

At this meeting we will define the purpose of the organization, compose a constitution and form an organization. We are fortunate in having the experience and expertise of the Institute to aid us in initiating a solid and durable society. The International Institute fosters some forty nationality organizations of long standing accomplishments.

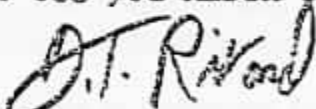
Like all ethnic groups, we believe we have a rich heritage which must not be lost or forgotten. We believe that our French Heritage has given a substantial contribution to our great country. Let us glory in that contribution. We must retain and appreciate more fully our heritage for our own personal benefit and for the benefit of our American society.

We French also have the opportunity of participating in the Festival of Nations in May 4-5-6 at the Civic Center in St Paul sponsored by the International Institute. Almost every nationality in Minnesota will be represented. Plans are being made to have French participation.

Only twenty five invitations are being mailed for this first meeting. It has been advised that we start small and grow step by step into a statewide group.

We hope to see you March 19th.

Amitié,



John T. Rivard
R. 2 No. River Rd.
St Cloud, Mn. 56301

P.S. Your spouse is
most welcome.

The 1998 calendar "French in America" saved from a watery grave !

For the last 14 years our calendar has been printed in Grand Forks, North Dakota. The printing plant there was totally destroyed, last April 18, when the Red River broke through the protective levees and spread disastrously into the town. The calendar texts were sent to the printer the first week of April, but not the photographs, because one had not yet arrived, and I decided to wait. The 13 photographs were sent April 17 by over-night Federal Express. I waited five days to learn their fate. They had remained stranded in a Federal Express warehouse at Grand Forks airport outside of the town.

If the photos had been sent with the texts, as has usually been done, they would have been lost in the "500-year flood" !

The sons of Normandy have a prominent place in the 1998 calendar
It also celebrates
the 325th anniversary of the exploration of the Mississippi River
the 150th anniversary of the discovery of gold in California
the 150th birthday of the greatest American sculptor . . .

Prices: US\$6.50 + \$1.50 each--for postage & handling - US\$8.00
US\$6.50 each (postage & handling included) for an order of
5 calendars or more sent to a same address.

Make check payable to: *French American Calendar -1998* and
send it to: **R. Mikesell**, 1155 E. 56th Street, Chicago, Illinois, 60637-1530.

number of copies _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

*For the persons who requested back copies: previous editions of
the calendar can be obtained for \$4.00 a copy, postage included.*

ALLIANCE FRANCO-AMÉRICAINNE DU MIDWEST
Chicago, Illinois. Tél.: (773) 643-7865
FAX: **Mikesell**: (773) 702-5140

La Societe Canadienne-Francaise du Minnesota MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL/APPLICATION

Please send with check made to La Societe C-F to
John England, treasurer
2002 Palace Avenue
St. Paul MN 55105

Name _____ Telephone _____ Profession _____

Address _____
Street City State Zip

Annual Membership dues:		2-Year Membership Dues:	
Family	\$15.00	Family	\$30.00
Single	10.00	Single	20.00
Senior (over 62)	8.00	Senior (over 62)	8.00
Senior Couple	10.00	Senior Couple	10.00

*Benjamin!
Co...
we have not included
this le included
municipal
the*



French American Music Enterprises

P.O. Box 4721, Portsmouth, NH 03802 Tel. (603) 430-9524

8/27/97

PRESS RELEASE Immediate Release

E-mail: lt@star.net Internet: www.star.net/People/~lt

FRANCOPHONE CARNIVALS, FÊTES & FESTIVALS A New Vidéo by LUCIE THERRIEN

Lucie Therrien's third video "*Carnivals, Fêtes et Festivals Francophones*" is a year-round celebration! Beginning with *Mardi Gras* in February and winding up with *La Galette des Rois* January 6th, this video is an eclectic collection of international footage, music and history, from countries with French cultures.

The format is similar to her previous videos "La Musique Folklorique" (1990) and "La Chanson Populaire" (1992): vignettes containing **French traditional songs** separated by **English anecdotes**, that fill in the history and traditions associated with each feast; it could be described as both entertaining and educational. "My videos are viewed in many homes, bringing back cherished memories, as well as in schools and libraries across the country," says Lucie Therrien. Indeed, her videos are distributed nationally and internationally.

"*Carnivals, Fêtes et Festivals Francophones*" opens with *Mardi Gras*, but Therrien doesn't limit the feast to New Orleans; she exposes us to the Cajun Mardi Gras of Louisiana, the rhythmic *Vaval* of Martinique, and the chilly *Carnaval de Québec*! "See you at the ball" she quips before launching into "J'ai été au bal," a

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traditional Cajun song. "La journée de la Francophonie," a worldwide francophone feast uniting all the French-speaking nations of the world on March 20th, is represented with footage from North Africa. Other fêtes include Le Poisson d'avril the French April fools, Le Temps des Sucres for the sugaring-off party, followed by La Saint-Jean Baptiste with fireworks, La Bastille, and l'Assomption, the national holidays for the Province of Quebec, France and Acadia, respectively, represented by film from each area. Smaller traditional feasts such as L'Epluchette de Blé d'inde (a corn husking party), La Toussaint (Nov. 1st), La Sainte-Catherine (Nov. 25th "Old maids" day celebrated by wearing elaborate hats), and Noël, as it is traditionally feted in Quebec, Europe (Alsace, Brittany) and the French Antilles. The year of partying comes to a close with La Guignolée, a feast from France that is celebrated by collecting food for poor children, Le Jour de l'An, citing the traditional paternal blessing given by the French papa and La Galette des Rois when a bean is hidden in a cake - the lucky finder is crowned. This same feast is called l'Épiphanie in Quebec and New England; it pays homage to the the three Kings who traversed the desert.

The rich myriad of traditional repertoire contains songs for each feast, as well as the change of the seasons: La Chanson du Mardi Gras and J'ai été au bal (Cajun), Le Carnaval de Quebec and Le Temps des Sucres (Quebec), Gai Ion la, Voici la Saint-Jean, La Carmagnole, (France), Grain de Mil (Acadian), Jeux d'automne and Célébration! (Lucie Therrien), Reel la Guenille and Reel des Vieilles Filles (Quebec fiddle tunes), Vive le vent and La Guignolée, (France) C'est dans l'temps du jour de l'an and La marche des Rois Mages (Quebec).

Therrien has succeeded once again in sensitizing her audience to the ethnic differences in various French cultures. "*When a culture is transplanted to a new environment and climate, with new neighbors and influences, a new ethnic shade is added to the palette!*" comments Therrien. As in her past videos, Therrien starred, scripted, directed and produced the video, but this time, she also filmed and edited the entire movie. The second Fellowship Finalist Award she received from the New Hampshire Council on the Arts in 1996 (the first was in 1991) partially funded the project. Therrien has to her credit ten recordings, three videos, a songbook and two research manuscripts. Both her previous videos have been aired on PBS. She was nominated to the National Endowment of the Arts Folk Heritage Fellowship and the NH Governor's Arts Awards (1993); in 1997 she received a nomination to the publication "Who's Who."

A companion 25-page booklet with lyrics, projects, and cultural discussions, (it even includes a recipe for *tourtière* and *Sainte-Catherine taffy kisses*) helps to study the music, history, geography and heritage simultaneously; something Therrien is often called upon to do when giving conferences in universities, schools and historical societies, artist-in-residencies, as well as teacher and student workshops. Her conferences in New Hampshire are funded by the NH Humanities Council.

To order the 52-minute, all-color VHS (lyrics included) **Carnavals, Fêtes et Festivals Francophones**, send \$29.95 plus \$3.75 (shipping). The 25-page study-guide booklet is \$8.95. (no charge for shipping if ordered with the video), add \$1.75 if ordered separately. Make check payable to French American Music Ent., P.O. Box 4721, Portsmouth, NH 03802.



chez nous ²⁵

NEWSLETTER OF Janvier-Fevrier, 1998 VOL. 19 NO. 4

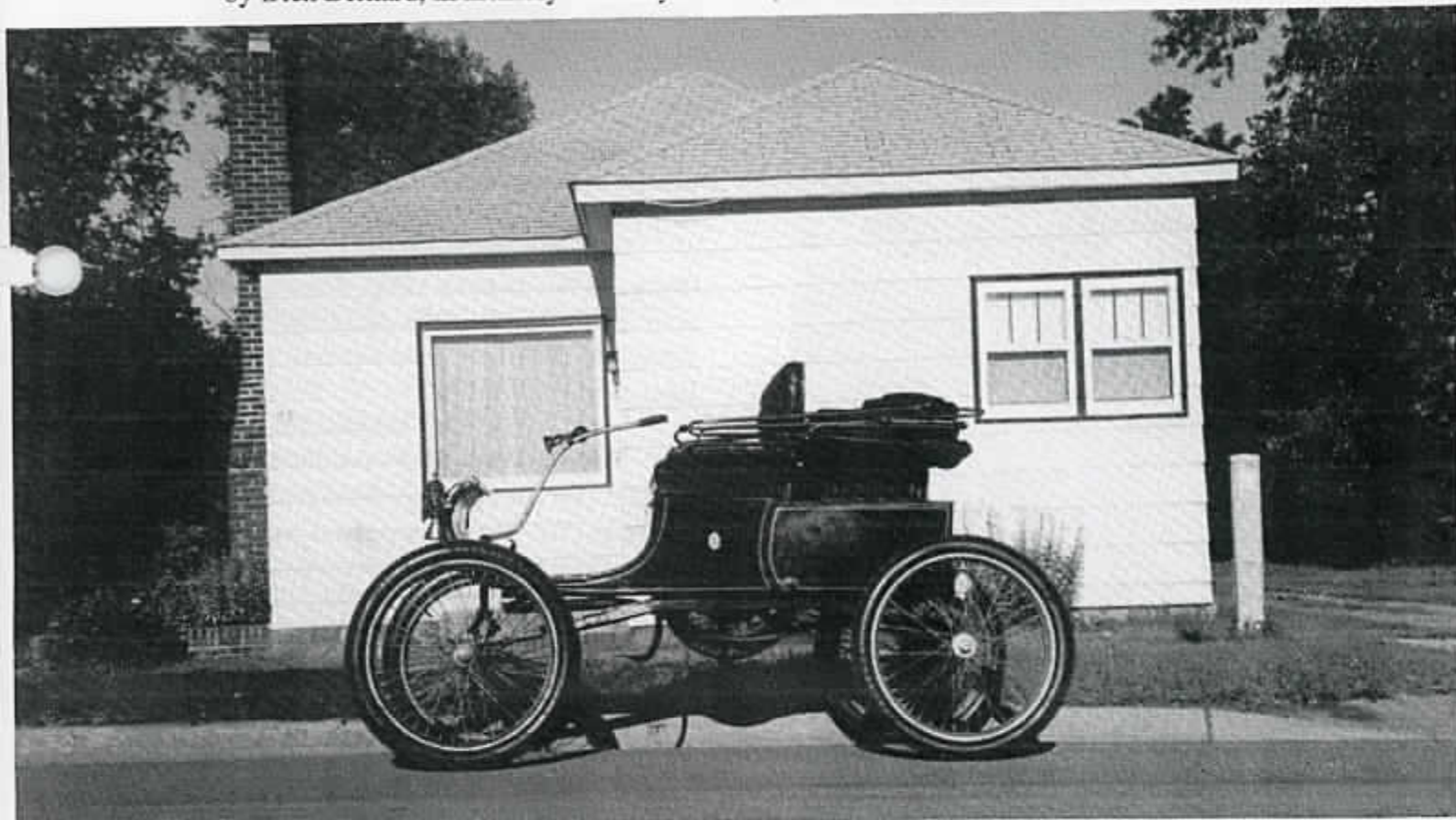
La société canadienne-française

Editor: Dick Bernard

#105

GRANDPA'S AUTOMOBILE

by Dick Bernard, in memory of Henry Bernard, December 22, 1907-November 5, 1997



Henry Bernard Sr's 1901 Oldsmobile, in front of his original home in Grafton ND in Summer, 1997.
Photo taken by Tony Bowker, present owner of the voiture.

By Dick Bernard, Editor
7632 157th St. W #301
Apple Valley MN 55124

Editors note: This story is dedicated to the memory of my father, Henry Bernard, born in Grafton ND, December 22, 1907, died in Belleville IL, November 5, 1997. Henry learned to drive in his father Henry's 1901 Oldsmobile,

the car pictured above (the car in the picture is the exact same vehicle in which Henry learned to drive). The family had lost track of the vehicle for all of the 1990s, but in a truly serendipitous series of events rediscovered the car in late September, 1997. Henry Bernard saw the above photo, and made tape recorded recollections about the car less than a month before he died. With grateful thanks to Rene Collette of San Diego, who saw a September, 1997, article about the

car in the Grafton ND newspaper, and sent it to me; and to Tony Bowker of the San Diego area, the current owner of the car, I offer the following recollections

Henry Bernard, my grandfather, owned the 1901 Oldsmobile for over 50 years. I saw Grandpa drive the car in several July 4th parades in Grafton, North Dakota, his home.

I knew Grandpa for 17 years. He was 68 years old when I was born, and died at age 85 in 1957. From a kids point of view he was a great Grandpa.

Henry migrated to the Grafton ND area from rural Quebec, just south of Quebec City, most likely in the early 1890's. He was probably in his early 20's when he arrived in this frontier town, which had been founded only a few years earlier in 1882. His older brother, Joseph, had come to the area in 1888.



Henry, photographed in Grafton probably not long after he arrived from Quebec, at age 22, 1894.

Grandpa was a common man, one about whom no books were written, nor newspaper

articles published. But he seems to have been a very interesting man. 26

He had only a first grade education in Quebec, and that education was in French, and early in his life he went to work. He talked about working in the lumber mills at Ste Marie-Beauce; being a lumberjack in the area of Berlin Falls NH; mining asbestos at Thetford Mines PQ.

As a kid, I knew him to be a great raconteur. Others who knew him, including my Dad, paint a picture of a very intelligent, proud and ambitious man, who was never one to back away from a fight - and usually won. I often wonder what he would have accomplished had he been able to complete a college education, rather than ending his education at grade one. He was a big man for the times - about 5'11" 190 pounds according to his Spanish-American War enlistment record in 1898.

He began a long career as chief engineer of the Grafton Roller Mills sometime in the early 1900s; was very active in the Grafton Volunteer Fire Department, and was its president; and is said to have been among the founders of the Grafton City Park.

He married Josephine Collette of nearby Oakwood ND in June, 1901. Three children were born to this union: the second, Henry, was my Dad. Josephine and Henry were married 55 years. Josephine died in 1963.

THE 1901 OLDSMOBILE

It is not known for certain when Henry Bernard first came into possession of the Olds, but thanks to Dad, Tony Bowker and others, a pretty clear picture has emerged about the history of this car.

It is known that this Olds was the 369th produced by Oldsmobile in 1901 (Oldsmobile's Centennial was 1997. The 1901 Model was apparently the first to be produced by Oldsmobile in any quantity.).

The car was first owned by J.A. Risvold, who bought it for \$650 - a princely sum in those days.

This horseless carriage apparently created some consternation in the town of Grafton. The Centennial History of Grafton says this, quite clearly in reference to the 1901 Oldsmobile: "...Risvold...brought the first automobile to the city. It was a one cylinder, four and one half horsepower chain driven car with a steering lever. Referred to

as a "nightmare" at first, there was talk at the time to have the city council pass an ordinance forbidding the owner to run the



The 1901 Olds with "T. Roney at lever...." This photo is undated, but goes back a long way. Until learning its true "birth year" this year, assorted versions called the Olds of 1897, 1902 or 1903 vintage.

contraption upon the public thoroughfares...." (p. 186).

Henry Bernard, my father, described the car as having the engine in the back and under the seat, and the radiator under the floorboards. Before cranking to start the motor, the sparkplug was removed and a gasoline "charge" was put in the cylinder. The "drive shaft" was a bicycle-like chain.

THE HENRY BERNARD YEARS

We will probably never know how Henry Bernard first became custodian of the car. The process of speculating would create, perhaps, a more interesting story than reality.... Could it be...?

Henry Jr. remembers that his father initially stored the car for someone named Rindal. So there seems to have been at least one owner subsequent to Risvold and prior to Henry Bernard.

The original arrangement seems to be that Henry was to store the car in his barn behind their home in Grafton in return for some rent. It seems that this arrangement went on for some time, and that the Oldsmobile was never used. For some reason, Rindal did not pay the rent, and indeed left the area. Perhaps by the time Rindal left, he viewed the auto as a useless contraption - perhaps his new

27
location had no gas station and, besides, there was the expense of transporting the vehicle to the new place! At any rate, after a time, Grandpa Henry took possession of the car by default. This was probably before the advent of the automobile assembly line and more cars appearing in the town.

Dad's earliest memory of the car is its being stored, on jacks, in a corner of the barn. Because it was inside, it did not suffer the ravages of weather. He recalls it was not useable, initially, because the tires were flat. And no tires were available - replacement parts from "Mr. Goodwrench" were not to come to pass for a long while.

In 1908, Henry Ford produced his first Model T, and cars became more accessible. People in Grafton and other places began to buy more cars. By 1917, quite a number of people in Grafton had cars, and replacement parts were available.



The Bernard family in Grafton about 1917. Standing in front is Frank Peter (who later was killed aboard the USS Arizona on December 7, 1941, at Pearl Harbor HI); seated were Henry and Henry; standing Josephine and Josephine. It was perhaps about this time that Dad first took the lever of the Olds.

Grandpa prided himself as a fixer of things, and according to Dad, came to the conclusion that the Model T rims were quite similar to the Oldsmobiles. He made the necessary changes so that the Oldsmobile would accommodate Model T wheels, and now the car was operative. For a time it became a useful car in the family, and it was, indeed, the car in which Dad learned to drive.

DRIVING THE CAR

In an October 10, 1997, interview with Henry Bernard, he recalled driving the little Olds.

First was the process of starting the car, earlier described. The crank for the engine was on the left side of the car.

A lever was the steering wheel. It certainly was not a speedway vehicle, having only one cylinder, and a bicycle type chain drive, but it did work.

Dad recalled driving his mother uptown in Grafton (a matter of several blocks). It was a rainy day, so they put up the umbrella, and motored down the street. When they reached their destination, he simply stopped the car in mid-street and had to be reminded by the local gendarme of the need to park at the curb.

Another time, some neighborhood ladies took the Olds to go to the country to pick berries. They encountered an overpass over the railroad tracks, and the Olds could not make the grade. So everyone but the driver got out of the car, and helped push it up and over (in the early days, overpasses were not the gently graded roads we now have - they could be quite steep. Their function was to get wagons and other conveyances over the railroad tracks, and convenience to the automobile driver was not a prime consideration.

It seems, from Dad's retelling the stories, that the Oldsmobile never got extensive use. The family had other automobiles. And by the 1920s it was already viewed as a curiosity by residents, rolled out on occasion to show to visitors. By 1932, it was permanently housed in the barn, and Marvin Campbell, who lived with the Bernard's and was a young teenager at the time, recalled that the kids clearly understood that they weren't to mess with the car!

(The Olds, from its vantage point in the barn, viewed hard times with the Bernard family. In 1927, before the Great Depression, both the flour

mill in which Henry Sr. was chief engineer, and the bank in which they had their savings, went bankrupt. Henry was only 55 years of age at the time. The family then subsisted on a small Spanish-American War pension, odd jobs, and Henry's work as a night watchman at the defunct mill). 28

In 1937, the Bernard's sold their Grafton house and barn and virtually everything in them - except, apparently, the Oldsmobile. They began a pattern of living in the winter in Long Beach CA, and summers in a much smaller house in Grafton.

Henry worked out an arrangement with the City of Grafton to store the car in the Fire Hall area. This was perhaps an easy decision for the city to make, since Henry had long been very active in the Grafton Volunteer Fire Department, and indeed had been the president of the department.

The car stayed under cover except for the times when Henry Sr. drove it in July 4th parades. I remember seeing it drive past in the parades, and even then, in the 1940s and early 1950s, it was quite an attraction.

Dad recalls that these parades were community education events, and Grandpa was not enamored of driving the little Olds in the parades because he would then miss seeing all but the units in front and behind him. There were no videos or movie cameras in common use then, of course.

AFTER THE BERNARD'S

In the summer of 1956 Grandma Josephine had a stroke and became disabled for the rest of her life. Grandpa Henry's physical condition deteriorated quite quickly, and he passed away less than a year later.

Sometime in 1956-57, probably, Grandpa divested himself of the car, selling it to the Oldsmobile dealer in Grand Forks ND. There the car stayed for many years.

ON THE ROAD TO SERENDIP¹....

In about 1990 or so, Dad and I stopped at the dealership to see the car, and found that it had been sold to a collector in Colorado. We lost track of the car. It was subsequently sold to another party, and then to the present owner, Tony Bowker of the San Diego area. As previously described, it was true

¹ "Serendipity [coined by Horace Walpole (c 1754) after his tale *The Three Princes of Serendip* (i.e. Ceylon) who made such discoveries] an apparent aptitude for making fortunate discoveries accidentally." Webster's Unabridged

serendipity that brought us back in contact with the car. Had Rene Collette no longer subscribed to the Grafton paper, we would probably have never learned of the car. Had Tony Bowker not had a relative in Winnipeg, which is nearby to Grafton, he would have had little reason to come to Grafton. Had Tony not been interested in the human "roots" of his little car, he would not have tried to find out who owned it. Had Grandpa not taken an active interest in preserving the car, it would have long ago expired as a pile of rust somewhere. Had Rene not known who I was - we are relatives who share a long time interest in genealogy of the family - it would not have occurred to him that the article in the Grafton paper would be of interest to me. In short, many people, and serendipity, brought the car back into our families life. There are several more items to add to this list, but these will suffice.

THE OLDS GOES ON THE ROAD WITH MR. BOWKER

Especially because I knew Dad's health was deteriorating rapidly, I went into high gear to find out more about Tony Bowker. I found him, and he responded almost immediately - the miracle of e-mail! It developed that he was English by nativity, had lived about 30 years in the United States, and that the Olds had gone across the big pond (Atlantic Ocean) with him in late 1996. He sent me an article he had written and had published in several magazines in the United States and England ("One Man's London to Brighton" reprinted below).

I also learned from the Bowker's 1997 Christmas letter that the little Olds had been among 3,000 Oldsmobiles of every year at the Oldsmobile Centennial in Lansing MI in 1997, and had made NBC's evening news.

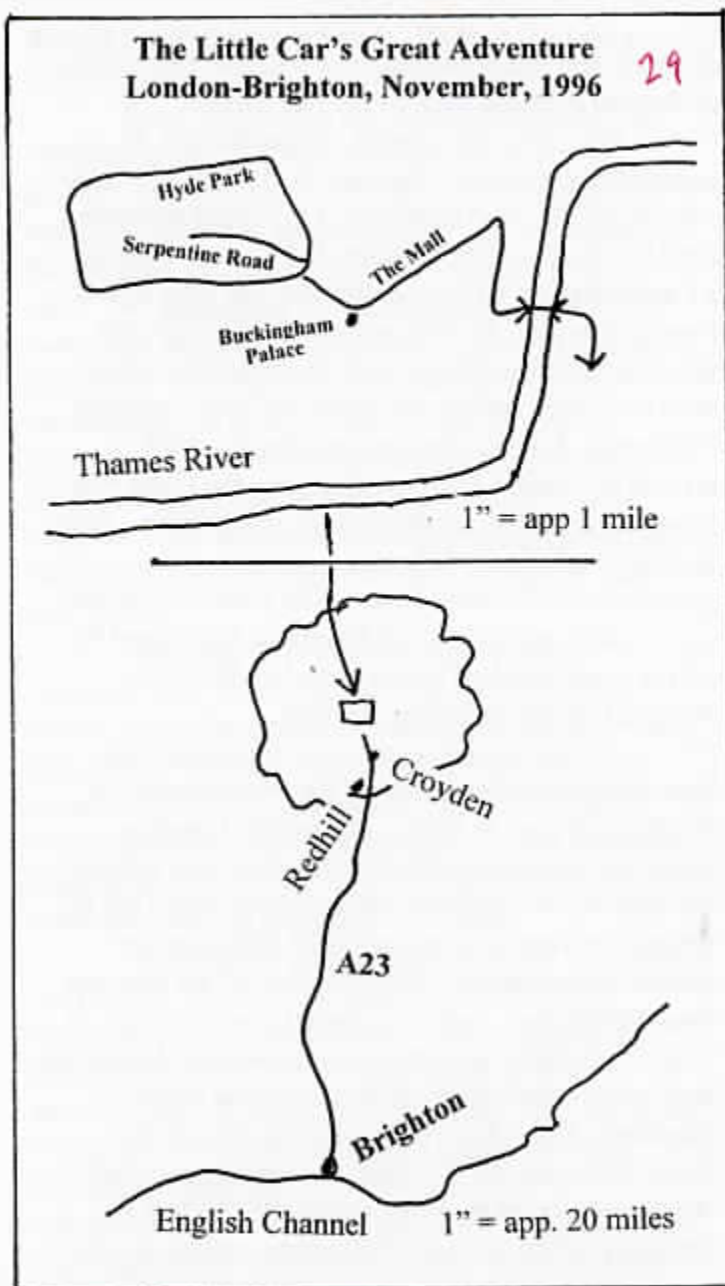
From humble beginnings in a Grafton ND barn, it has become an international "celebrity", thanks to the Bowkers!

ONE MAN'S LONDON TO BRIGHTON² by Tony Bowker

It's 6:30 a.m. on a damp, cold November morning in 1996 and I am cranking the 1901 Curved Dash Oldsmobile (CDO) surrounded by over 650 pre '05 antique automobiles in central London. Just how did I get into this predicament?

²

See sketch map in next column.



Nearly fifty years ago, World War II was over and the world was full of excitement to a suburban ten year old visiting his uncle who lived in London. A man of few words, one Sunday morning he invited me for a trip out to Redhill. A few hours later we were standing on the roadside expectantly waiting for the "old crocks". At the time I wasn't sure what old crocks were, but the expectancy of the crowds was infectious and after a while the first veteran chugged by. Over the next two to three hours, they continued to pass our location, climbing the hill of Redhill. To this ten year old it was heaven, my first motoring experience....

Since then I have owned motorbikes ranging from Lambrettras to Norton Dominators and automobiles from Model Ts to Porsches. I've loved

them all, and today in London I will live the dream of that ten year old back in the late forties.

My CDO has a rather unique history, in constant use by Henry Bernard in Grafton ND from 1901 to 1930³, who then kept it in a local museum until his death in 1957. After that it was owned by a Caddie dealer, two car collectors and now by me. I really bought it for this one event. The car was shipped from San Diego early in September along with two other veteran automobiles from Southern California. Late in October, my family and I arrived at London Heathrow, hoping the CDO was somewhere in that seething mass of humanity. Sure enough, we found it safe and sound in a little warehouse on Victoria Street. On Friday we drove our modern rental down to Brighton, impressed by all the signs that had been erected to direct the Veterans on the following Sunday.

On the Saturday morning we donned our best antique clothes to attend the re-enactment of the original start in 1896. The original starting place was the Metropole Hotel, which now houses the Ministry of Defense, and had been roped off to protect the twenty or so pre-1897 cars from the crowds of spectators. The grandson of the original Lord Winchelsea read the original proclamation. It was surprisingly prophetic, expressing the sentiment that much development of automobiles might be expected. I wonder what he would think of the latest Oldsmobile???? After the speech, most of these early veterans drove round the block to the applause of the crowds. Following a quick lunch we wandered over to the hotel where the CDO had been delivered. Sure enough, after we added a little water, gas and oil she started right up. We drove out of the basement parking lot into the streets of London, making for Knightsbridge that runs along the South side of Hyde Park. With surprisingly little problem we made our way to the underground parking garage at Hyde Park as most motorists gave us lots of space. Later that evening we attended the VCC dinner at Cafe Royal, the food was magnificent, more utensils that you could count on both hands and such superb service. The toast to the Queen was followed by several speeches. The chairman of the Jaguar Motor Cars gave a moving speech which was warmly embraced by all present.

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The excellent company and small talk went on until late in the evening.

On Sunday morning we drove a borrowed modern up to Hyde Park corner and wouldn't you believe it there was a traffic jam at 6:15 on a Sunday morning.... We eventually arrived in plenty of time, the CDO again started right up and we joined the crowd of over 600 veterans that were assembling on Serpentine Road. Many familiar faces were in the crowds of drivers and passenger, including Royalty, present and past race drivers and entertainment celebrities. Promptly at 7:58 we arrived at the starting line and we were off. So much energy, time, effort and here we are on our way. In recognition of the centenary of the original event, the route went through Admiralty Arch, normally reserved for Heads of State, down Constitution Hill, past Buckingham Palace and up the Mall. This really was a dream come true. For the first few miles the route was closed to all but the veterans. The route then proceeded past the statue of Winston Churchill and his beloved Westminster Palace, more commonly known as the Houses of Parliament, over Westminster Bridge and into busy streets of South London that we shared with more modern vehicles. Every traffic light, traffic circle and significant junction were operated by the police who tried very hard to give us a clear run. On one occasion, a lady cop mis-judged our speed and we had to slow down as she was unable to clear the junction. She apologized, no need of course, but it was a wonderful gesture, typical of the day.

At Brixton we encountered our first hill. We were told that the event plans had called for three lanes on the hill, two for the moderns to go up and down and one lane reserved for the veterans. A couple of days before the event, the sewer line burst and the road was down to one lane.... Some smaller veterans drove up the sidewalk, later ones found a detour. We struggled up the hill, fighting the traffic. At the top, we thought we were home free when "bango", no drive and no brakes. Any experienced CDO owner knows this is a broken chain. It was then we found what holds the back axle on, yes, the chain. After feeling sorry for ourselves for awhile, we found a spare link, reconnected the back axle while spectators lifted the car and in less than an hour we were back on our merry way. We stopped in Croyden at a cafe that offered free coffee to contestants and the spectators

³ This article was written based on incomplete historical information available to Mr. Bowker at the time.

really crowded round the little car. The cafe owner had a gold mine for the day. A little while later we stopped at Redhill, checking gas, water and oil in the CDO. We made the hill with no problem, the little CDO pulling really well in the cool damp weather. All too soon we approached the George Hotel in Crawley where we had another coffee and had our route card stamped. Again the crowds were impressive, the newspapers later estimated that nearly one million people lined the route. I would guess that every car club in Southern England was out for the day, watching the veterans. At one pub we spotted a group of Morgan sports cars, probably over 50 in total. I wondered if Peter Morgan has ever seen so many at one time????

Until Crawley the route had been through congested suburbs of south London, complete with all the attributes of modern traffic. I recall one Model T tour where participants complained about the 30 traffic lights on one day's route. The London to Brighton route had exceeded that by at least a factor of ten. The London to Brighton is really quite unique.

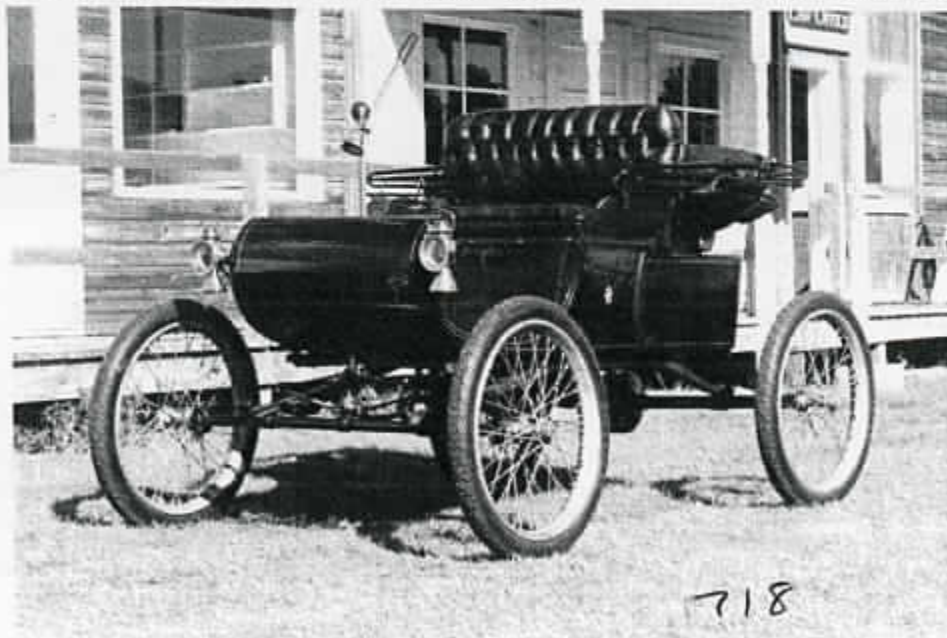
South of Crawley the cars moved off the A23, which is now a six lane divided highway, to the quiet back roads of the Sussex Downs. Many hills awaited the veterans, but the CDO was in great form, only slowing to accommodate other slower cars. Some were weaving across the road to lessen the gradient, others required some human horsepower. We just rolled along. At Cuckfield, we stopped to visit with our family, some of whom work nearby. After some refreshments and photo session, we were again on our way. On leaving Cuckfield, the route took us down rather a steep hill. I remember discussing with my navigator our plans

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should the chain again break. Bailing out was a viable option....

Prior to entering the Brighton suburbs, we returned to the A23 and even had to move into a middle lane, getting really brave. At Preston Park our route card was again stamped and we started out on the final leg, surely nothing could go wrong now. We passed the famed Brighton Pavilion and were then directed onto Madeira Drive. By sheer chance we entered the finish area alone, no one immediately in front or behind and the crowd estimated at 30,000 lining the road applauded us. What a fitting entry to Brighton for such a great little car. We were interviewed, photographed and hugged by our families. Oh what memories that will evoke.

We had lunch with the family in the marquee, then drove the CDO to the Metropole Hotel, along the Brighton promenade, jostling with the modern holiday traffic. After a little rest, we dressed for the RAC dinner in the Grand Hotel. With essentially the same company as the previous night, same speakers and similar superb quality of food, the evening passed like a dream.

Following a good nights sleep we found the car haulers who were to return the CDO to the warehouse on Victoria Street. This would be the first step on the CDO's return to the warmer surroundings of Southern California. That the event was a success would be a gross understatement. Our thanks must go out to the hundreds of volunteers who staffed the route, the pleasant police who cleared the way for us and the RAC officials who helped those in need. It really was the fulfillment of a childhood dream, and unexpectedly it was even better than I ever expected.



*Holiday
Greetings
1997*

1901 Oldsmobile in
Grafton, N.D. 1997

Tony = Heather

Barker



Nouvelles Villes Jumelles

Newsletter of La Société Canadienne Française Du Minnesota

A Message from the President of LSCF

Bonne année à mes amis.

Thank you all for coming out and enjoying yourselves at our Christmas Party. You made it a wonderful success and all the chairperson Justa Cardinal's planning and efforts were well rewarded.

I would also like to thank Evelyn Lund for making those wonderful Tourtières that so many enjoyed with great relish.

Our next meeting will be the first Monday of February, 1998, (February 2). We will meet at 7:30 p.m. as usual at the International Institute of Minnesota. All are invited. (If you have not been to previous meetings, the Institute is on Como Avenue in St. Paul, just west of Snelling Avenue, and on the south edge of the Minnesota State Fairgrounds.) **The program for this meeting will be given by John Edel, the chair of the historical Committee.** His topic will be the involvement of the French and French Canadians in the early history of the United States, including Minnesota.

Leo Gouette, president
LSCF

NOTES:

1. Please note membership renewal form in this issue of Chez Nous. Without your paid membership we have no funds to produce Chez Nous. Now is the time to renew.
2. Advertising is available in Chez Nous - business card size. For rates, contact John England at 612-699-5178.
3. We are always seeking ideas for articles, photos, art, etc., for the Chez Nous. Send your contribution to Dick Bernard, editor
7632 157th St W #301
Apple Valley MN 55124
phone: 612-891-5791

Announcing a brand new CD

"Feet to the Fire"

**featuring Linda Clare Breitag, recorded in
Quebec**

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CD cost is US\$15, Cassette tape is US\$10

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chez nous

NEWSLETTER OF Mars-Avril, 1998 VOL. 19 NO. 5

La société canadienne-française

Editor: Dick Bernard

#106

HUGUENOTS, BRIEFLY

By Treffe Daniels

Note from the editor: In the Nov-Dec issue of *Chez Nous* we printed an article about the Severe (Sevier) family, of Huguenot ancestry, and asked our readers help in some information about the French Huguenots. Four readers "took the bait": Treffe Daniels gives a brief overview below, and Ronald Beauchane gives a very interesting personal family history account in the article following Mr. Daniels'.

Mary Weller sent an excellent five page article "Au nom de Dieu" from the Autumn, 1996, edition of *France* magazine. This article opined that "The particular genius rival Christian faiths have for slaughtering each other found perhaps its most sickening expression in France...." The so-called Wars of Religion began with the massacre of sixty Protestants at Wassy (Haute Marne) in 1562 and continued until the French Revolution of 1789. The article says that "Huguenots" was the popular name for Calvinists from 1550 onwards.

Eugenie Fellows commented that "I have a book in French that lists many Huguenots, some of whom (or their relatives) came to French Canada. This book is *La Rochefoucauld au Peril de Calvin* by Yvon Pierron. Most of those with whom it deals lived in and around Angouleme and Poitiers, which is where my father's name ancestor was born (Clement Leriger de La Plante). Some of Clement's ancestors and relatives are listed among the Protestants of that area but he was not as he was in military service when he came over to Canada. Also, those who did come over had to become Catholic if they were not already, because of Canadian regulations at that time." Readers interested in Eugenie's data send SASE to her at 28042 Lindenhurst Dr, Zephyrhills FL 33544-2705.

Merci to you all!

Mr. Daniels: France was a feudal society until the French Revolution broke out in 1789. Its feudal society had three classes of people: noble, clergy and commoners¹. In French Gothic churches one frequently sees three sets of arches supporting the ceiling. These represented the three classes of society. The clergy, i.e. Roman Catholics, were in league with the nobles and exercised political as well as spiritual authority. That facet of history is a very complex relationship...too difficult to explain in this short article.

When the Protestant Reformation began in the 1500s in Germany [Luther's Ninety-five Theses were issued in 1517], some French also wanted reforms in the church. Naturally, these were opposed by many of the church's hierarchy and clergy. On the other hand, some nobles did espouse the reforms demanded by the Huguenots. Consequently there began an era of religious upheavals and wars in France which lasted almost one hundred years. Some freedoms were granted to the Huguenots but the Catholic Church exercised its political power and caused them to be revoked. It was during this period of civil wars in France when both sides fought not just to gain territory but

¹ A good description of France in these days can be found beginning on page three of the Oct-Nov 1990 issue of *Chez Nous*. Entitled "Back to France", the material comes from the text "France in Modern Times" by Gordon Wright, Norton, 1981.

control of the government by trying to gain control of the monarchy.

Eventually the Huguenots were given a bit of religious and civil freedom though many were forced to leave for such places as England, Holland, Prussia and also to our colonies on the Atlantic coast.

When Henry IV, the first Bourbon, finally had enough of a following to become the king of all of France [1594-1610], and stabilized the central authority, he realized that his religion must be Catholic and not Protestant. Previously he wavered from one religion to the other. His famous quote, "Paris is well worth a Mass", summed up his religious and political views.

How does this impact on our French ancestors in Quebec? The original Habitants sent to Quebec were Catholics because the government wanted only members of that church to populate its colony². Usually the early settlers had to be in good standing with their local parishes before being given permission to go to Quebec. Today that area of Canada still clings to its religious heritage, i.e. Catholic. The Huguenots of French ancestry are primarily found in the United States.

This might be a simplified answer to the religious controversy of the 16th and 17th centuries in France, but basically it's really what happened. Reading history can be an enlightening activity if one is searching for answers to today's problems. Most have their roots in the past.

HUGUENOTS, RICHELIEU AND ALL THAT

Why my ancestors became Catholic

Ronald E. Beauchane

My eighth great grandfather, Elie Bourbeau, was born in 1599 in the city of La Rochelle, in what is now called France. His family had moved to this port city on the Atlantic from the nearby city of Poitiers a few generations earlier. The first records of the family in 972 indicate that they were

² The colonization period of what is now Quebec began in the early 1600s, and ended with the defeat of the French by the British at Quebec in 1759. Only a few thousand settlers actually came from France during that period.

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"Christians", which at that time meant "Catholic", having earlier been converted from the multitheism of their Roman occupiers. Sometime in the early 1500s, they were evidently influenced by the religious reform movement and eventually became followers of Jean Chauvin (John Calvin) (1509-64), the creator of Presbyterianism. Calvin's followers, including my ancestors, came to be known as Huguenots, which was a name applied to all French Protestants of the 16th and 17th century.

At this time in France's history, the area now known as France was a land of multiple kingdoms, fiefs and domains. Centralized government was slowly being developed under the early "Kings of France". Many cities, including especially La Rochelle, were still "city-states", beholdng to no outside central leadership or country, with their own laws and customs. France had survived the Black Death of the 1300s and the Hundred Years War with England, which ended in 1458. It had regained all of its lost territory, but the plague and the war had left the population devastated and decimated. Generations of families were killed, cities, towns and villages destroyed. Churches, the repositories of family records, were put to the torch. Discontent with the "oneness" of church and state grew rapidly and the French religious reformation grew with it. Religious wars became rampant, with Protestants killing Catholics and Catholics killing Protestants.

The city-state of La Rochelle had greater commerce and alliances with England, a Protestant country, than with the rest of France. Unlike most of France, La Rochelle had developed its own town council and mayor and a strong bourgeois class with an independent nature. The city had been English property during the 12th century, used as an English campaign headquarters in the fighting against the French kings. It grew with the English influence, was recaptured by the French in 1224 and King Louis VIII allowed the city to keep its independent privileges. During the ensuing years and wars, the city again became English and then again French, but always maintained its basic independence. The city's people and customs fit well the new role it would play in the 1500s as the center of Calvinism in France. French Calvinism grew rapidly after 1565 and in 1568 La Rochelle declared itself an independent Calvinist republic. Catholic churches were destroyed, some priests and nuns were killed, and the church property that survived taken over by the Calvinist congregations.

Protestants throughout France were being

killed. Many Protestant families from outside the area came to La Rochelle for safety and commerce.

In Paris on August 24, 1572, the massacre of Saint Barthelemy Day occurred. Over 3,000 Protestants were surprised and murdered. Massacres of Huguenots followed throughout France. But in La Rochelle, there was no massacre. The city leaders closed the gates and so started the first major siege of La Rochelle.... the siege of 1573. The city remained free only because the Catholic Duke de Anjou, who had been leading the siege, was named King of Poland, and was in a hurry to leave for his new post. He quickly sued for peace and the city remained independent and Calvinist.

My family, the Bourbeau, evidently moved to La Rochelle after the siege of 1573. My eighth great grandfather Elie was born near there in 1599 and baptized in the Calvinist Temple. He was married in that temple in 1625. He and his first wife, Marguerite Renaut, had six children. The first son, and perhaps the second son, were born before 1628 and were baptized Protestant in the Temple Calviniste in La Rochelle. The four children born after 1628 were baptized Catholic in the Cathedral of Notre-Dame de La Rochelle. All six baptisms, however, took place in the same building. How can this be? The answer is the infamous siege of La Rochelle of 1628.

The siege of 1628 really started in 1624, when Louis XIII appointed Cardinal Richelieu his Prime Minister. Louis and Richelieu started the final actions to make France one nation and Catholic. By 1627 there remained only one strong and independent bastion of Protestantism...La Rochelle. Richelieu's royal troops and fleet surrounded the city, preventing any help from outside. The siege lasted from September 10, 1627 to October 30, 1628. It took 13 months and 20 days to crush the spirit of the inhabitants of La Rochelle. After food supplies were exhausted, horses, dogs, cats, mice and rats devoured, people ate grass and weeds. Soon they were eating parchment and leather belts, as soup ingredients, to survive. Women went to the beach at low tide, in search of shellfish. As they ventured further and further, they were more often captured or killed. Soon starvation, disease and wounds had killed 23,000 of the original 28,000 inhabitants. The dead littered the streets and covered the ground. The rocky earth afforded few burial places. The survivors staggered out of the walled city to surrender.

The citizens had expected their English allies to help, but the English could not overcome the wooden protection dike and the massed French fleet outside the harbor of La Rochelle. Ironically, 8 days after the surrender, a storm destroyed the wooden dike. The English would have been able to relieve the siege.

The survivors, being Protestant and anti-royalist, expected to be massacred, and to have their city destroyed. The king pardoned the 5,000, left the city standing, destroyed the surrounding city walls and allowed a Protestant temple to be built. The people lost their political and military independence and the municipal government privileges they had enjoyed.

The newly appointed Catholic governor, mayor and city officials quickly encouraged Catholics to return to the city that they had earlier left because of the Protestant threat and barbarism. The Catholics reclaimed religious buildings, and the surviving Calvinists were strongly encouraged to covert to Catholicism.

The Bourbeau had never claimed great wisdom, but they did prove to be very adaptable in the face of extinction. Great grandfather Elie became Catholic! His next four children were baptized in the Catholic cathedral. When his wife died, he married Marie Noyron in the Cathedral de Notre Dame. They had seven children; all baptized Catholic in the cathedral.

My seventh great grandfather, Pierre Bourbeau, was the fourth child of the second marriage. He was born in 1648. The sixth son of the second marriage was also named Pierre. When he became a Catholic priest, the family had accomplished its second 180-degree change!

La Rochelle quickly regained its commercial and trading importance. It once again was the major port from which the French populated New France (Canada). A majority of French-Canadian ancestors had either been residents of La Rochelle before leaving France, or had used the city as a departure point. The successful city, though, was definitely a Catholic city. The former Protestants and their descendants, now Catholic, were still looked upon as Protestants. Most economic doors were closed to them and, as a result, many chose to try their luck in the New World. Pierre left La Rochelle in 1662, at age 14, bound for Quebec.

Land ownership in New France was limited to French Catholics. Jesuit priests had been assigned to Quebec to insure that only "sincere

Catholics" populated the New World. A number of ancestral relatives left France in the 1600s, after becoming Catholic, and settled in Acadie (Acadia), now known as Nova Scotia. In 1755, the English won their war with the French in North America, occupied Acadia, took over the land, burned the farms and villages, gave the French settlers the choice of becoming English and Protestant, leaving, or being killed. My relatives again showed their adaptability and left! Some went to the Quebec area and were welcomed with open arms by their fellow French habitants. Some went south to the English colonies and were treated shabbily by distrusting American colonists, some of whom were Huguenots who had left France three generations earlier. Others went to the French territory of Louisiana, hoping to find the land of milk and honey, and instead were shunted off to the worst bayou jungle areas of the territory. Thus the Acadians became the "Cajuns" of Quebec, Louisiana and the Northeastern United States.

My ancestors were many times subjected to religious persecution and threats of death. First by the Romans, then the zealot Christians, then the Protestants, then by the Catholics and finally by the Anglican English. Several times they lost their livelihood, their land and their homes because of being on the wrong side of a particular religious war. All "In The Name Of God".

Plan to attend LSCF's Potluck, Monday, April 6. Bring a dish to share, and also a family history photo for "show and tell"!

LOUIS BONAVENTURE

By Sister Ella Germain, St. Paul MN

The Bonaventure family (the name was later changed to Laventure) has its roots in Montpellier, in the southern part of France, a short distance from the Mediterranean Sea. Lanoraie, a small town along the St. Lawrence River, was the place where the Louis Bonaventure family settled in the early 19th century. Here, on November 11, 1863, Joseph Edward Laventure, son of Louis Laventure and Caroline Fagnan, was born. The family home, on the banks of the beautiful St. Lawrence River, was sturdily built of stone walls three feet thick. Today, the home is a museum.



The parents of Sr. Ella's mother, Joseph and Louise (Beseau) Laventure, taken about 1905

Louis Laventure was a navigator and a builder of ships. His boat was the Saint-Louis. On June 29, 1864, a catastrophe occurred on the Beloeil Bridge. At 1:30 in the morning an express train composed of a locomotive and rail carriages filled with immigrants coming from Quebec and returning to Montreal was hurled into the Micheliu River beneath the bridge which connected Beloeil to Saint-Hilaire. It was estimated that 500 persons were in the coaches.

Around 1:15 a.m., the bridge was opened to allow barges and a steam boat to pass. The danger signal was a flashing red light. The guard on the bridge swung his light to signal a stop. The engineer, unable to stop, was going at a very high speed. The train fell on the barge cutting it in two. Fifty people died and the many wounded people were taken from the wreckage and given immediate help. Then, they were transported to the French or English hospital in the town.



The maternal great-grandparents of Sr. Ella, Isidore and Matilda (Letourneau) Beseau. Photo taken in 1921.

The barge was the St. Louis, which belonged to Louis Bonaventure from Lanoraie. The captain of the barge was Maxime Bonaventure, son of Louis. The barge had been built at Lanoraie. Because of the slanted area of the terrain at Lanoraie, the barges could be let down to the river more easily.

Not long after the accident Louis Laventure decided to leave Lanoraie with Joe and Frank, two sons from his first marriage (his first wife had died), his wife Caroline Fagnan, and their four children: Joseph, Adolphus, Ann Laventure (Constantineau), and Emma Laventure (Lamirande). Louis homesteaded three miles west of New Richmond, Wisconsin. The land was cheap - \$3.00 for 200 acres! Trees and brushwood covered the ground. The land was broken with eight horses at the plow. A wooden house was built. Here, Louis farmed for many years. Later his son, Adolphus, a bachelor, farmed there until he died at the age of 93.

Louis' son, Joseph, lived half a mile from his father's farm. He built a large brick house on his 320 acres farm. Adjacent to his farm he owned 160 acres which he later sold to John D. Germain and his daughter, Berengere, wife of John.

Each week Joseph loaded his wagon with produce and drove to Stillwater to market his vegetables. While there he met a beautiful waitress

named Marie Louise Beseau, daughter of Isidore and Matilda Letourneau Beseau. Joseph married Marie Louise on November 13, 1890. They had eleven children. Berengere, the eldest daughter, married John D. Germain. They had twelve children: Delore, S. Ella Marie, Andrew, S. Claire, Doris, Mae, Urban, Rita, Dennis, Donald, Leo and Ralph.

From France, to Lanoraie, Canada, and then a navigator, the barge accident, and finally on to New Richmond Wisconsin, where they settled and found happiness. We, the descendants of Louis Laventure look back with wonder and gratitude. Louis was a man of faith and rugged determination. Courageously, he always looked forward to new ventures.

(The information for this article was taken from the publication in the Eclo Parish Room in Lanoraie, Quebec.

The enduring power of a story

By the editor, Dick Bernard

We are a small organization, but out there in the provinces are delightful stories, some of which you have just read in this issue, some from past issues. Other such stories (yours?) will be in upcoming issues of Chez Nous. As I remind you often, this is your newsletter. I do this as a labor of love...sometimes the love gets strained a bit when time comes to put together the newsletter and there are too few contributions, but we seem to continue. For me, it's been 13 years doing my amateur best to keep you informed.

Stories beget memories, I find. In the last issue I did a long article on Grandpa's auto. For lots of folks, their own memories of past cars were brought back. A friend from England called me - the first time I'd heard her voice in 15 years. She had received Chez Nous from me, and she wanted to tell me that her grandfather was member #11 of the British Motor Club, England's equivalent of the American Automobile Association!

Such it can be with your memories - be they of travel, gardening, homes, etc., etc. Write some memories up and send them in. The grammar police won't look for you! **Tell a story, and continue a tradition. Send to me, Dick Bernard, at 7632 157th St W #301, Apple Valley MN 55124**



Nouvelles Villes Jumelles

Newsletter of La Société Canadienne Française Du Minnesota

NOTES from LaSociete

Our regular meetings are the first Monday of each month at the International Institute of Minnesota. The Institute is located on Como Avenue, just west of Snelling Avenue, across the street from the Fairgrounds in St. Paul. There is excellent well-lighted parking. Please come.

BONJOUR mes amis...

The Board has decided that the Monday, April 6th meeting (7 p.m.) will be a "potluck" meeting. You are all invited to bring a dish to share with others. (Also, please bring a family history photo and be prepared to tell a little story about it.)

We are looking to have a large turnout for this night, perhaps as large as the Christmas Party. This meeting will be completely social, with no business unless something of urgent importance occurs.

You are cordially invited to our meetings. We want to improve our attendance at these meetings. Please make a concerted effort to come to the meetings and show your support for your organization LSCF.

Also, the board would like to hear from the membership if they have any ideas or suggestions for social activities that would apply to and be of interest to the members of LSCF. Let us hear from you.

Leo Gouette, president
880 W Nebraska, St Paul 55117
612-489-8306

PS: A suggestion for your photo: take it to any Kinko's copy center in the Twin Cities, and ask them to make an 8 1/2x11 color copy of it. Such a copy will cost about \$1.50 and is of excellent


quality. You can also get the copy laminated at Kinko's for a very small price. Please, do bring a photo (and a story to go with it!)

Elections: This is the time of the year for elections, and the Board is accepting candidates for Board of Directors of LaSociete. Please submit names to Leroy Dubois, chair of the Nominating Committee. Leroy's phone number is (612) 484-1622; 54 Suzanne Dr, St. Paul 55127-4116.

NOTES: Please renew your membership, if you have not already done so. Forms were in the last Chez Nous. Please send dues - checks to LSCF - to John England, treasurer, 2002 Palace Avenue, St. Paul 55105.

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