



FOLEY RD NE

La Prairie  
rue Perras

# Minnesota, eh?

## A Foley/Perras Family History

*Le 26<sup>me</sup> Janvier elbo  
ceste fait et solemnise le mariage de Pierre  
Lerai fils de defundt Pierre Et Jeanne Louise  
avec Denise le maiette fille de Benyt Et de  
Ceste Catherine Decharmes tous deux de cette paroisse  
Les trois bancs avant este public au presant  
mariage fut en presence de Parolle Jeanne Marie  
administratrice de l'hospital - Jacques Le Moyne  
Marchant, seye Charles Chaisien et filz  
de l'amy commun des parties.  
Le 6<sup>me</sup> Mars*

as told by  
**Jerry Foley**

# **Minnesota, Eh?**

***A Foley/Perras Family History***

**Gerald Foley**

*/William Foley*

*\Alma Perras*

## MINNESOTA, EH?

	INTRODUCTION	1
Ch. 1	ACADIAN ROOTS: The Bergeron and Serreau Families	4
Ch. 2	QUEBEC: Louis Hebert and Marie Rollet	18
Ch. 3	AMERINDIANS: Martin Prevost and Marie Manitouabewich	32
Ch. 4	ILE D'ORLEANS: The Paternostre and Verieul Families	45
Ch. 5	MONTREAL: Pierre Perras and Denise Lemaitre	56
Ch. 6	LAPRAIRIE: Second Generation Perrases, Patenaudes, et al.	68
Ch. 7	BEAUCE: Pierre Cressac Toulouse and Catherine Vincent, Louis Toulouse and Catherine Rochford	82
Ch. 8	GASPESIE: Georges Fallu and Genevieve McIntyre	95
Ch. 9	OUT OF CANADA	109
Ch. 10	PINE COUNTY: George Foley and Annabelle Willis	129
Ch. 11	BROOKS: Max Perras and Nellie Toulouse	146
Ch. 12	KELLIHER: Bill Foley and Alma Perras, Ocie Peck and Violet Foley	160
Ch. 13	OFF THE FARM: The Greatest Generation Members	183
Ch. 14	INTO THE PROFESSIONS: Baby Boomers and beyond	194
	APPENDIX: GENEALOGY OF THE FAMILY	199

## INTRODUCTION

*“To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain always a child. For what is the worth of human life, unless it is woven into the lives of our ancestors by the records of history.” Cicero, about 50 B.C.*

Members of my family have held family reunions for many years. Through the years, I have witnessed the end of my grandparents' generation, the end of my parents' generation, and now many of my generation have died. A few years ago, I was able to attend only Sunday morning of the weekend gathering, and after breakfast and a prayer service, most of the family members scattered. Not wanting to simply get back in my car for a five hour trip home, I decided to visit the Kelliher cemetery where my parents, my Dad's parents, and a number of other relatives are buried. I spent several hours going from grave to grave around the cemetery, visiting the gravesites not only of relatives but also of my teachers, school bus drivers, classmates, merchants and farmers that I had known over the years. It was a profound experience of gratitude as I remembered the persons who had helped shape my life. Shortly after this, my brother, Ray, began working on a family genealogy with a cousin from Canada, and Ray invited me to get involved. I told him that I was more interested in the stories of these family members than in a list of their names, but then I started helping him trace the family relationships, ending up inheriting this project when Ray died unexpectedly shortly thereafter. Picking up where Ray left off led me to several trips to Eastern Canada, to the sites where my family ancestors once lived.

This is a story of immigrants. Their history is not always that recent, of course, as some of my ancestors were in Eastern Canada likely more than 10,000 years ago. These Native Americans had a great respect for the earth and living in harmony with nature, a gift I learned also from my father. Some French family ancestors were in North America before the Mayflower. Other family ancestors were recent arrivals. What first struck me is that all my immigrant forbearers came through Canada but, by the lives of my grandparents, all had convened in Minnesota.

Like many family stories, ours is a tale of persons who painfully left their homes and families, some to follow a dream while others were escaping injustice and seeking survival. Our Native American ancestors likely came across the ice from Siberia in pursuit of wild game. Many others came to New France as fur traders, soldiers, fishermen, and indentured workers, usually not with any intention of staying in the New World when they left home. Many of the women, however, came at a very young age with the intention of staying, hopeful of marriage and an opportunity for their families.

One sad note is that most of these pioneering people never set eyes on their birth family again. I became painfully aware of this while pursuing the story of my grandfather. George Foley left Eastern Canada for the United States at age 17 and never turned back. Traveling to Canada, I was fortunate to meet cousins in Quebec and New Brunswick whom I had not even known about before my trip. Unfortunately, like me, many persons in the United States know little of their family story beyond recent events,

and most of us know very little about the fascinating history of Eastern Canada. My experience makes a good case for the study of Canadian history in Minnesota schools.

This is a story of ordinary folks who worked hard to survive in a new land. In reality, many were extraordinary folks with endurance and steadfastness. As I recall my father working diligently to clear cutover land of pine stumps, even with the help of dynamite, I can visualize what Louis Hebert and many generations of my ancestors went through grubbing out stumps and breaking the ground with only a spade rather than a plow. As I still visualize my mother on her knees scrubbing wooden floors, I am mindful of all the generations of women before her that had almost none of today's conveniences and yet rarely complained.

While I focus the story on life in North America, I will try to share a few insights into the circumstances that motivated or compelled the first generation of our family members to uproot from their families and homelands to venture into the unknown. I can't tell all their stories, although each life story was unique, so I will tell the family story primarily through individuals who help us understand the times and events that created a fascinating legacy. Some of these were folks in my mother's Perras lineage and others contributed to my father's family background.

Thomas Jefferson, one of America's founding fathers, said that "Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God, if ever He had a chosen people...whose breasts He has made His peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine virtue." Small farmers of modest means were close to Jefferson's heart, and he made this dream of owning land possible for several generations of my family by the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, which brought a large tract of land west of the Mississippi into the United States. For nearly 150 years after Jefferson, life on the farm or in the small towns was still considered the American ideal, even though it now appears more of a lingering myth.

From my childhood, the one homily I remember was not preached in church but on the main street of Kelliher on Labor Day, when a local Baptist minister farmer, Mr. Braswell, kept telling us to "hitch your wagon tongue to a star!" A farm boy, my world did not extend far beyond the surrounding countryside at the time, but my older brother, Bill, even then might have been hearing a different message from the preacher than I was, because a couple years later he talked about landing a man on the moon in our lifetime and, being a skeptic kid, I bet him a million dollars that would not happen. I watched with tears of joy in 1969 when Neil Armstrong pronounced from the moon "That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind," knowing that Bill had played a significant role in getting our first astronauts that far.

Much of this book is about those small steps of pioneers in our family, done with sweat and hard labor that helped build a country and make us what we are. In referring to the ideal of rural living as being a lingering myth, I watch as our gifted younger generations make giant leaps in a technological world, recognizing that the "substantial and genuine virtue" which Jefferson praised continues to motivate their generosity and commitment even though they are not rural dwellers. Their addition to the family story gives me great hope for the future, a future differing from centuries of rural roots but still rooted in hard work, family, and service to others. I dare to hope that in the future not only will family members continue to share the stories I have related here but that others will continue to document additional chapters of this ongoing family story.

My thanks to Greg and Jennifer Foley for designing the cover of this book, my brother Bill for reading it and giving me some feedback, and to many family members who have shared information and stories or expressed an interest in the history as it was in the writing stage.



Foley Family Reunion: Bob Foley, Kelly Gauglin, Rick Foley, Alan Foley



Buzz Foley and Bob Foley compare Foley Family noses

As a youth reading Longfellow's *EVANGELINE*, I remember feeling anger toward the British for what would now be called a terrible ethnic cleansing and my compassion for this fictional young woman rather than for my ancestors who suffered horribly from the British dispersion of the Acadians. Like most persons with deep Acadian roots, I did not know at that time that I shared this Acadian heritage through both of my parents. What an exciting discovery.

When I studied American history, we started with the Mayflower and Jamestown. However, French and other fishermen were off the coast of what is now Canada as early as 1504 but they did not establish a permanent settlement. Then, in 1604, Pierre de Guast (Sieur de Monts), a wealthy French merchant from Saintonge, was given a fur trade monopoly for Acadia, and arrived with 79 men that year to found a colony in New France. My family history started at this time in Canada (actually it started even earlier with the Native Americans who are part of my background as well.) The British and French were at war and many were tired of fighting and ready for a new adventure. With De Monts were men with familiar names like Samuel de Champlain, a cartographer, Jean de Biencourt de Poutrincourt, an associate of De Monts who would serve as a tenant governor, Francois Grave du Pont (Pontgrave), a navigator who had previously been to Acadia, and Louis Hebert, an apothecary, horticulturalist, and the roots of my family in North America. Some of the men, apparently including Grave du Pont, Poutrincourt and his wife's first cousin, Louis Hebert, returned to France that fall, while 35 of the men who stayed behind on an island in the St. Croix River died over the winter, many from scurvy.

Grave du Pont came back in 1605 with 2 ships, men, hogs, sheep, chickens, and supplies and, looking for a better place to settle, they chose the spot that would become Port Royal. Grave du Pont and Champlain remained with 45 men for the winter, while de Monts and Poutrincourt returned to France. Intent on colonization, Poutrincourt returned to Port Royal in July, 1606, bringing with him Louis Hebert, who was already determined to live in the New World, fifty men including his own son, and supplies. Hebert's task was to supervise construction of the first winery and grist mill in North America.

Louis Hebert, our ancestor, went to work clearing land and planting, quickly discovering that the Indians were good farmers raising a crop of beans, pumpkins, corn, squash, and tobacco. Hebert was conducting experiments on growing wheat, rye and hemp in natural fields surrounding the lower part of Annapolis River and the grist mill was built on the Allain River near present day Annapolis Royal. With his background as an apothecary, Hebert was busy gathering plants and studying their medicinal use, consulting with the local Micmac Indians to learn about their use of herbs and other plants in folk medicine. This small colony is generally accepted as the first European settlement in North America aside from Florida, but this settlement did not last long as the fur trade monopoly was taken from De Monts in 1607, likely because of the jealousy of other French merchants and because it was unprofitable, and the colonists abandoned Acadia.

Back in France, Poutrincourt secured a land grant in the area where the French had settled. In 1610, he again bought Louis Hebert, his own son, a priest, and other men

and cattle to Acadia with him. Forty men remained for the winter while Poutrincourt's son returned to France with a cargo of furs. When Charles de Biencourt, the son, returned to Acadia in 1611, he brought his mother and Louis Hebert's wife, Marie Rollet, the first European women in New France, and more men. Lacking women in this early settlement, a few of the men partnered with Indian women, but were then likely to leave the settlement to live with the Indian community.

Competition in the fur trade business began rather quickly, which led to some conflict with the priests who wanted to turn the trading post into a mission while Poutrincourt was more interested in profits. When a competing group came to pick up the priests at Port Royal in 1613, they found only the two Jesuits, their servant Louis Hebert, and one other man at the post. A note from that time says that they presented "to [the Apothecary Hebert] the Queen's letters, which contained the royal command to release the Jesuits and to let them go wherever they pleased.... They made it as pleasant for Hebert and his company as they could, so that this arrival would not be a cause of sadness to him. At their departure they left them a barrel of bread and some bottles of wine, that their farewell might be received with equally good grace."

Having returned to France, Poutrincourt left again late in 1613 with supplies for Port Royal, but before he arrived, Samuel Argall, a notorious freelance trader from Jamestown, Virginia, had been authorized by Governor Dale to drive the French out of North America. In November, he attacked Port Royal, took their supplies and burned the settlement, including Hebert's grist mill, killing the livestock and scattering the settlers. When Poutrincourt arrived in the spring of 1614, he found only a few men left. He decided to abandon the colony, although his son Claude, Charles La Tour, and a few others remained to trade for furs. This raid by the British signaled the start of a struggle for the American continent that would last for the next 150 years. Louis Hebert and Marie Rollet, whose plans for settling permanently in Acadia were shattered, left Acadia and returned to France. We will meet Louis Hebert and Marie Rollet back in Canada in the next chapter.

Sir William Alexander, Earl of Stirling, hoping to develop Acadia as a Scotch territory, got a charter for New Scotland [Nova Scotia] in 1621. He brought colonists the next year but had to winter in Newfoundland. The Scotch finally set up a colony at Port Royal in 1629, building a fort where French settlers had previously grown wheat. Meanwhile, Jean de Biencourt, leader of the French settlement, died in 1623 and Charles La Tour took over the small French colony in New France, establishing a fort at Pentagouet. La Tour and some of his men married Micmac women and lived in close alliance with the Micmac. When the Treaty of Germain-en-Laye gave the whole of Acadia back to France in 1632, many of the Scottish settlers left for New England or for England.

Previously the French government had little interest in settlement of North America, being more interested in the fur trade, but then Cardinal Richelieu founded the Company of 100 Associates specifically to establish French settlement in North America. After the treaty gave Acadia back to France, the Company of 100 Associates sold their rights to the fur trade to private companies, and one of the founding members of the Company, Isaac de Razilly, a distant cousin of Cardinal Richelieu, was appointed Lieutenant General of Acadia and came to Acadia in 1632 with 300 men and a few women and children to found a settlement at the mouth of the LaHave River. Some

among them form part of our family background. Razilly brought his nephew, Charles de Menou d'Aulnay as one of his lieutenants and, when Razilly died in 1635, d'Aulnay became governor of Acadia and brought several groups of settlers to Acadia, who produced numerous children so the colony started to grow and spread along the rivers. On d'Aulnay's initiative in 1636, many colonists moved to Port Royal where colonists busied themselves with fishing, farming, lumbering and trade, and soon herds of cattle, sheep and pigs appeared. By 1650, about fifty families were living at Port Royal. Later, Acadian settlement began in the Isthmus of Chignecto in 1671 when Jacques Bourgeois, who had come to Acadia as a military surgeon in 1641, moved his family from Port Royal to take up land at Beaubassin, which soon became one of the most prosperous and fast growing areas of Acadia. In 1682, another group of Acadians settled at Grand Pre, where settlement expanded rapidly, so that by 1700 there were 600 residents in the Minas Basin.

Skirmishes occurred frequently between the New England settlements and Acadia but, except for some short periods of British occupation, Acadia (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and some parts of Newfoundland) remained French until Queen Anne's War, when part of it was ceded to the British by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. France kept Cape Breton, Prince Edward Island, the fortress of Louisbourg at the entrance to the St. Lawrence River, and also insisted that the coast of New Brunswick remained French, which the British contested over many years. Those Acadians who refused to move to Cape Breton had an ultimatum to move or to swear loyalty to Britain. In 1714, many of the Acadians in Nova Scotia planned to leave the area but the English prevented this by refusing to let them build boats or to sell their property. While every effort was made to compel them to take an oath of allegiance to Britain, they chose rather to stay neutral as they generally had throughout the history of Acadia, both because fighting for the British would have meant fighting against their friends, the Micmac Indians, from whom they feared reprisals if they allied with the British, and because they claimed that taking an oath of allegiance to Britain violated their Catholic religion.

## LIFE IN ACADIA

The area where the French colonists settled had long been inhabited by the Micmac Indians. Fortunately, the Micmac welcomed the French, helped them learn how to live off the land, and the two became long time allies, with many of the Micmac embracing the Acadian's religion. This was a beautiful area, with virgin forests covering the hills above the river valleys. Along the rivers were vast stretches of salt marsh, which the Acadians recognized had great agricultural potential and would be easier to farm than was clearing the woodlands, and the settlers had the skills already practiced in Europe to build dykes that would allow them to turn the salt marshes into rich farmlands. The dykes were constructed to prevent the highest tides in the world from flooding the marshes while allowing water from the hills to flow out, washing the salt out of the soil after several years and leaving very fertile land. Constructing the dykes took a great amount of labor using the efforts of extended families and the entire community. The streams provided power for grist and saw mills. Although settlers had few luxuries, the farms provided abundant grain and gardens with cabbages, turnips, peas, beans, onions,

corn, and orchards with apple, pear and cherry trees. Game and fish were quite readily available. While the French settlers farmed land not used by the Indians, the settlers in New England by contrast forced the Indians off their land.

Most of the Acadians valued their Catholic faith, held strong family values, and were virtuous people living a simple lifestyle, believing in peace and equality. Acadian clothing was made of wool or flax, while footwear was usually either wooden shoes or shoes made of elk, moose, and seal skins. Their mostly log houses with thatched roofs had only one room, with cellar and a small garret upstairs where the children slept, and often housed more than one family. Walls of the homes were lined with clay which they whitewashed to provide clean bright walls. Cooking was done in an open hearth, which also heated the house. In spring they made maple sugar and spruce beer. Women played an important role, spinning and weaving wool, cooking, sewing, and helping with field work at planting and harvest times. A woman in the community served as a midwife. Children were valued as they did their share of the work, but had little education, perhaps being schooled at home or by an elder of the village. Most families had cattle and sheep in their pastures, pigs and chickens in their yards. Families were ready to lend a hand to each other, and they enjoyed getting together for singing and dancing. The French governor of Acadia wrote in 1708 that “The more I consider these people the more I believe they are the happiest people in the world.”

Most of the emigrants came to Acadia between 1610 and 1650 and, after that, the rapid population growth was due to large families as the population multiplied many times by 1755. In search of new marshlands to farm, settlers spread out throughout what is today Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, forming small communities of four to twelve houses lining the river basins, often made up primarily of related family members.

The Acadians were an independent people, without a central government. They were not isolated, as they had frequent visits from both French and English soldiers, New England raiders, and merchants. They sold wool, wheat, and meat to the armies and merchants, often bringing goods to Boston and New England as well as to the French settlements, so they could obtain clothing, guns, kettles and other needed goods. Some were also involved in the fur trade. Caught between the French in Quebec and the English in the New England colonies who hated each other and were frequently fighting, they tried to appease both the English and French, which won them the title of “Neutrals.”

## OUR ACADIAN ANCESTORS

Most of us today cannot name our great-grandparents, and even fewer would know the names of earlier ancestors, a situation complicated by the fact that many family names are spelled in several ways and also that many used another name, a so-called dit name based on such facts as where a person was from or their specific skill. An example from our Acadian ancestry (on the Perras side) would be Pierre Cressac dit Toulouse, where the family name that has come down to us is Toulouse, the place where Pierre Cressac, a soldier in the Contrecoeur regiment, originated. Many of the Acadian family names of our ancestors are today common names in Canada and in the French-Canadian communities of the Midwest. One can quickly recognize such surnames as Bergeron,

Bourg, Doucet, Dugas, Gauterot, Landry and Terriot (Therriault) on the Foley side and Blanchard, Comeau, Gaudet, Pitre, Richard and Vincent on the Perras side, with some names in both family genealogies. Some of these families had members who married spouses from the Amerindian tribes as well.

It would be difficult to tell the stories of each of our Acadian ancestors, so I will focus primarily on the Bergeron dit Amboise family (on the Foley side). First, though, a few details about some others of our Acadian relatives. Many came initially as soldiers and stayed to farm; others came with the fur trade. Some wives came already married in France, while other women came recruited specifically to find a husband. Because life in the New World was very fragile, many had two or three marriages.



Pierre Lejeune came to Port Royal with Biencourt around 1611, ultimately had several wives, including a Micmac woman he apparently took back to France when the early Acadians departed. They returned to Acadia in 1636 with three children, where their daughter, Edmee, married Francois Gauterot in 1646. To get away from the increasingly hostile British, a number of Lejeune families left for Ile Royale, present day Cape Breton Island, which was protected by the French fort at Louisbourg. While they were not affected by the initial deportations of 1755, there was another round of deportations during the summer of 1758 after the fall of Fort Louisbourg.

Jean Terriot arrived in Acadia in 1632, recruited as a three year indentured laborer by the governor of Acadia. It is likely that his wife, Perrine Bourg, and their son Claude accompanied him as part of a group consisting of about 300 persons including soldiers, their officers, missionaries, and about a dozen married couples. The new arrivals started clearing farms and building a fort at LaHave. The colony was moved to Port Royal in 1636, where they built another fort, dwellings, and a salt processing operation. Claude

Terriot married Marie Gauterot, the daughter of Francois Gauterot and Edmee Lejeune, in 1660. The 1671 census shows Jean with six cattle, sheep, and five acres under cultivation. His sons Germain, Claude, and Bonaventure also had farms, as did son-in-laws Pierre Thibodeau and Pierre Gibault. In the early 1730's, some of the Terriot (Theriault) families moved up the St. John River and settled in what today is New Brunswick.

After De Razilly died in 1635, his two lieutenants, Charles de Menou d'Aulnay and Charles de La Tour were soon at odds with each other over the fur business. Each built up a fort and both were busy recruiting soldiers. Isaac Pesseley came to Acadia with Isaac de Razilly as a major of the garrison. His wife, Barbe Bajolet, did not accompany him but arrived later. In 1645, Pesseley was stationed at Fort La Tour, while Charles La Tour had gone to Boston to recruit men and arms and left the fort in charge of his wife. Learning this, d'Aulnay launched an attack on Fort La Tour on Easter Sunday and, after gaining entrance to the Fort, promised that he would harm none of the men if she would surrender the fort. Tricked into believing him, she surrendered, and d'Aulnay hung every man in the garrison in front of Lady La Tour while she stood watching with a rope around her neck. She was not hung, but died three weeks later, probably from a broken heart. Isaac Pesseley, our ancestor, was hung along with the other defenders of Fort La Tour, so his wife, Barbe Bajolet, and their daughter returned to France. This daughter, Marie, would return to Acadia and marry Jean Pitre, a Flemish tool-maker who came to Acadia in 1659.

Germain Doucet, Sieur de Laverdure, had also come to Acadia in 1632 with Razilly as an officer (a major) with the small group of soldiers, accompanied by his wife Marie Bourgeois, his son Pierre, and his daughter Marguerite. He landed at La Have, where he assisted in building a fort. Within three months, Razilly sent d'Aulnay to retake Port Royal from the English. Doucet, who was a loyal friend to d'Aulnay, accompanied him on this mission and then accompanied the captured English colonists shipped back to England. In 1635, when d'Aulnay was sent to take possession of Fort Pentagouet on the western edge of Acadia, Doucet accompanied d'Aulnay, taking his family with him. After the fort was retaken, Doucet remained as commander with a small garrison and successfully defended it against a British detachment from Massachusetts. After the fall of Fort La Tour and the death of the commander, Isaac Pesseley, Doucet was named commander of the garrison at Port Royal. In 1654, 500 Bostonian soldiers under the command of Major Robert Sedgewick captured the fort at Pentagouet and laid siege to Port Royal. Doucet had only 100 soldiers and after resisting for sixteen days found it wise to give up without further struggle. Doucet and his wife were taken prisoner and returned to France along with the other military personnel, never to return to Acadia. Their two sons and daughter remained in Acadia where Marguerite became the wife of Abraham Dugas.

Abraham Dugas came to Acadia at age 22 in 1640, the gunsmith of the king. He remained in Acadia, in time became a Lieutenant-general, and farmed while developing a business making guns which in time brought him a fair amount of wealth. He held offices as justice of the peace and chief of police at Port Royal. He and Marguerite were married in 1647. Their son Martin married Marguerite Petitpas, daughter of Claude Petitpas, notary of the tribunal at Port Royal, and Catherine Bugaret; a grandson Abraham Dugas married Marie Madeleine Landry, daughter of Claude Landry and

Marguerite Terriot. The family was scattered when the British dispersed the Acadians, some ending up in Louisiana, and others in various parts of Eastern Canada.

Jean-Claude Landry and his second wife, Marie Sale, came to Acadia in about 1640 with their son, Rene Landry, and three of Jean-Claude's children from a first marriage, as well as three of Marie's children. Jean-Claude's daughter, Marguerite, was already married to Robert Martin and living in Acadia for several years. Daughter Antoinette married Antoine Bourg shortly after their arrival, while her twin brother, Rene, married Perrine Bourg, a nineteen year old widow with four children in 1645. Rene and Perrine had five children, including their last, Claude, who in 1683 married Marguerite Terriot, a daughter of Claude Terriot and Marie Gauterot. Claude and Marguerite's daughter, Marie Madeleine, married Abraham Dugas, and their daughter, Marie, married Michel Bergeron I, whose story is later in this chapter. Antoine Bourg and Antoinette Landry's daughter, Jeanne, married Pierre Comeau, and they became parents of Abraham Comeau, married to Marguerite Pitre, grandparents of Anne Comeau married to Pierre Vincent, and great-grandparents of Catherine Vincent, the wife of Pierre Cressac Toulouse. All of Jean-Claude Landry's grandchildren were born around Port Royal but, by the 1670s, this settlement was getting crowded and many moved east about sixty miles to Minas Basin, creating the settlement of Grand Pre, which later became the principal point of deportation for Acadian settlers in 1755.

Pierre Vincent came to Acadia about 1663 and that year married Anne Gaudet, the daughter of Denis Gaudet and Martine Gauthier. They had six children at Port Royal, with their son, Michel, marrying Marie Richard, and their grandson, Pierre, marrying Anne Comeau. Marie Richard's father, Michel Richard, came as a soldier to Port Royal in the early 1650s and, completing his service, remained in the colonies as a farmer, married Madeleine Blanchard, and raised ten children. Many of our ancestors were farmers, while others were skilled tradesmen, such as Pierre Comeau, a cooper making casks for dry goods like salted fish, Jean Pitre, an edge tool maker and blacksmith, Abraham Dugas, a gunsmith, and Pierre Doucet, a mason. Nor can we forget the determined women who crossed the Atlantic to a new continent, supported their husbands in their endeavors, raised large families, often with their husbands absent, and confronted the hardships of pioneer living. These were strong women like Marie Gauterot, daughter of Francois Gauterot and Edmee Lejeune, a young widow with a child, remarried and raising a second family with Claude Terriot, who lived beyond her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## THE GRAND DERANGMENT

The people of New England and New France were constant enemies, just as their European relatives were. Acadia changed hands six times in the seventeenth century. Frequently raiders from New England burned houses and crops, killing settlers or taking them prisoner, and the Acadians stayed on alert to run to the woods for hiding until the danger was over. By 1750 there were more than 10,000 Acadians (estimates as high as 18,000) who spoke French and worshipped as Catholics. As hard as their English conquerors tried to get them to swear allegiance to the English crown, they refused. They would promise not to take up arms against the British, but would not agree to take up arms against the French, even though they seemed almost forgotten by the government in

Quebec. The local Micmac Indians sided with the Acadians, who adapted many of the Indian ways and were less arrogant than the British, who viewed the Acadians as an obstacle to their goal of taking the rest of Canada from French control. After a treaty ceded Acadia to Great Britain in 1713, the English kept their contact with the Acadians through representatives of the community. In 1719, the French began building Fort Louisbourg to protect France's interest in fishing and commerce and soon became a very active trading post. In September, 1727, Abraham Bourq, Francois Richard, and deputies Charles Landry and Guillaume Bourgeois refused to take the oath of allegiance to King George II and were thrown into prison, maintaining their neutrality and insisting on freedom to practice their Catholic religion.

In 1744, Britain and France were again at war, with Acadia in the center of action, and Fort Louisbourg fell to the British and New Englanders in 1745. John Gorham of Massachusetts led "Gorham's Rangers" in a number of skirmishes in Nova Scotia in the 1740's. Late in 1746, he and 500 men from New England moved to occupy the French homes at Grand Pre. In January 1747, French soldiers from Chignecto made a cross-country winter march, attacking and overtaking the larger English force at the Battle of Grand Pre, but then trekked back to their former position and soon received orders for the entire force to return to Quebec. By summer's end in 1747, there was little French military presence in Acadia even though the French encouraged the Acadians to keep up the war against the English.

When the war ended in 1748, the fort at Louisbourg was returned to the French, displeasing the New Englanders who still viewed it as a threat. Governor Shirley of Massachusetts was by this time studying ways to get rid of the Acadians. Britain had already decided to build its own fort at Chebucto, which marked the start of Halifax, upsetting the Micmac, who claimed this as their land. The founding of Halifax in 1749 brought a large Protestant population to Nova Scotia. In the disputed area of New Brunswick, where a small tidal river, the Missaguash, today marks the boundary between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, the English made a provocative act by building Fort Lawrence at Beaubassin in 1750. When the English came to build Fort Lawrence, Abbe Le Loutre incited the Acadians at Beaubassin to burn their buildings and move across the Missaguash to the north side, which the French considered their territory, and the British built Fort Lawrence near the ruined village. This prompted the French to build Fort Beausejour only about one mile away across the isthmus of Chignecto. Aware of the dangers, nearly half of the Acadian population now numbering about 3000 moved to what they considered the French side.

Charles Lawrence, who disliked the Acadians, became Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia in 1753 and in November, 1754, Governor Shirley of Massachusetts contacted Lawrence about a joint effort against Fort Beausejour. Although Britain and France were not at war, Governor Lawrence sent a force of about 2000 provincials, under the leadership of Colonel Robert Monckton, to capture Fort Beausejour in June, 1755. The fort had about 150 regulars and, when the English landed, they were reinforced by about 300 Acadians recruited under pressure from the local population. The British interpreted the participation of the Acadians in defense of the fort as complicity with the French. When word came that no help was available from other French sites, even before the final attack, the Acadians started slipping over the walls of the fort to join their families hiding in the woods. When Fort Beausejour surrendered on June 16, the soldiers

were taken to Fort Louisbourg by British ships and were forbidden to bear arms for six months while the Acadians were allowed to go free.

Our relative, Pierre Cressac dit Toulouse, a soldier in the Company of the Contrecoeur, had come to Fort Beausejour as a soldier in 1750 and married an Acadian widow, Anne Comeau, on April 23, 1755. The marriage contract lists him as a soldier at the fort, marrying with the permission of the commandant, Sieur de Vergor, in the presence of family and friends. It is not clear whether Pierre was among those taken to Fort Louisbourg or among the Acadians who escaped the British forces, but before long he appeared in Quebec. We will pick up on the life of Pierre Cressac dit Toulouse with the settlement of Beauce, Quebec.

With the fall of Fort Beausejour, the British took control of the disputed territory in New Brunswick but, to finish the victory, two subsidiary forts remained to be captured. Colonel John Winslow was sent to capture Fort Gaspereau, 12 miles away, which fell on June 19 and the French fort at the mouth of St. John's River fell on June 20. The success of Monckton's attack on the isthmus opened the way for Governor Lawrence to carry out his plan to deport the Acadians. He had 2,500 troops in the area now free to enable the deportation.

The British had entertained thoughts of getting rid of the Acadians throughout the eighteenth century. The colonial governors of New England had met in April, 1755, and agreed that the French needed to be expelled. The Council in Halifax agreed with this decision, hoping to fracture the community of Acadians and to destroy their identity as a distinct people. No one, however, could have imagined the severe ethnic cleansing that would soon scatter the Acadians around the world. Lieutenant Governor Charles Lawrence was a military man, intent on capturing Louisbourg and Quebec, but first he had to deal with the Acadians. He soon saw that the Acadians were deprived of the guns they used for hunting and the boats used for fishing and travel to prevent them from leaving their settlements and from participating in armed conflicts. When the Acadians sent representatives with a petition for the return of their arms and boats, these persons were imprisoned on Georges Island as they still refused to take an oath of unconditional loyalty to Britain. What the Acadians wanted was to be left alone to care for their farms and families. Another Acadian petition asked that, if they were to be forced from their lands, they be allowed a convenient time of departure. Instead, on August 11, 1755, Governor Lawrence gave an order to "Clear the whole country of bad subjects...and disperse them among...the colonies upon the continent of America...Collect them up by any means. ...Send them off to Philadelphia, New York, Connecticut and to Boston."

Orders were given to round up the men and boys and hold them prisoners until ships could be provided to deport the Acadians, at the same time destroying their buildings, crops and herds so they would not be tempted to return. At several locations, men and youth were called to a meeting and imprisoned in the local churches or forts. This was harvest time, when the men were needed in the fields. By the 13<sup>th</sup> of October, 1,100 Acadians from Beaubassin had been transported to South Carolina, Georgia and Pennsylvania. As boats arrived, young men were loaded on ships for security reasons until twenty four sailing vessels left the Minas Basin on October 27 with 4,217 Acadians on board. The fate of these people and future deportees was in the hands of sea captains for weeks, and sometimes months. Many died at sea as some of the older ships capsized with the refugees locked in their holds while many more died of illnesses. When the

ships did arrive at various ports, the Acadians were viewed as a nuisance and burden and often refused permission to leave the ships. Some were sold into slavery; others were eventually sent to England and France. A proud and successful people had been reduced to poverty as the British torched their buildings and confiscated their lands to be given to new English speaking immigrants.

The story of Evangeline recalls the pain of families being separated, sometimes deliberately, and of persons searching for each other across the American continent while among an alien people who were generally unsympathetic or indifferent to their plight. This rounding up the Acadians and dispersing them went on for several years. Small numbers of Acadians from almost every settlement managed to escape deportation by hiding or taking refuge along the Restigouche and Miramichi Rivers, along the shores of the Bay of Chaleur, or on the Gaspé Peninsula. Many had made their way to the French colony at Ile Saint-Jean until the British took over the island in 1758 and deported about 3,100 Acadians to France. Some Acadians repatriated to France spent over twenty years at Saint-Servan near the Isle of Jersey. The Robin Company of Jersey Island played a significant role in encouraging the Acadian refugees to return to the Maritimes to work at their fishing posts, a story told in the chapter on George Fallu. Among those who escaped for a time were some members of our ancestral Bergeron family.

## THE BERGERONS (1)

The original Acadian Bergeron, Barthelemy, was a sea captain usually known as d'Amboise, not as Bergeron. Records show him captured by the Bostonians as early as the 1690's. Barthelemy, his son Michel, and another of our ancestors, Pierre Couroit, were considered "pirates" by the British in the frequent skirmishes as Britain and France were generally at war. Barthelemy had come to New France with the *Troupes de la Marine*, a unit assigned to New France in 1684, originally to fight the Iroquois and later used to protect the fur trade. Arriving in Quebec in October, Barthelemy had a layover until the next May, lodging at the home of Pierre Lazeau, a "boat-master" who became a close friend and likely introduced Barthelemy to navigating. He and another friend also partnered that winter with a master pastry cook in a baking business. In the spring, he became part of a 24 man force sent to capture English forts on Hudson Bay, part of the struggle for the fur trade. Until recently, the Company of the North had controlled the fur trade in this area but now the British Hudson Bay Company had also entered James Bay. Three Le Moyne brothers, from a seigneurial farm (French feudal system of landholding – see Chapter 2) near Montreal and nephews of our ancestor Anne Le Moyne, whose father was a director of the Company of the North, were also part of the group led by Pierre de Troyes. Pierre Le Moyne, known as D'Iberville, would become a courageous leader in New France and later in Louisiana, and Barthelemy would be one of about twenty young men attached to D'Iberville for special missions for at least ten years. Throughout this time Barthelemy remained unmarried.

The strike force left Montreal in the winter, arriving in the spring after a difficult trip and, although exhausted, caught the British by surprise and quickly captured three English forts in James Bay. Barthelemy stayed in the north with D'Iberville from 1686 to 1689 to guard the French fur trading forts and to continue expeditions against the English

in Hudson Bay. By the time they returned to Montreal with English prisoners and furs in October, 1689, a new war was beginning between the French and English in North America. In August of that year, Iroquois sent by the English attacked Lachine, a village near Montreal, killing and capturing many and burning their dwellings. Recognizing that the English were supporting the Iroquois in the battle over furs, Governor Frontenac decided to send D'Iberville in an attack against New York. Knowing the danger of this mission, Barthelemy made a last will and testament, naming Pierre Lazeau as testator. A party of 210 men left Montreal in the middle of the winter on snowshoes, heading for Albany but ending up at Schenectady instead, where they vented their anger by killing and capturing many and burning the town. Ironically, Schenectady was a Dutch town, not English.

In February, 1692, D'Iberville was sent south to attack the English Fort William Henry at Pentagouet (across the bay from Portland, Maine today). Three ships were assigned, one directed by D'Iberville, a second by Simon-Pierre Denys, sieur de Bonaventure, and the third by Baptiste Maissonet. Bonaventure, who had come to Canada as one of the Troops of the Marine and had also served at Hudson's Bay, and Baptiste, operating out of Port Royal, were well known privateers with whom Barthelemy would sail for many years. Barthelemy had completed his six year enlistment and was now free to work wherever he wished. This time Barthelemy was sailing with Baptiste, but the attack was thwarted when Baptiste could not show up because of English activity at Port Royal.

Meanwhile, Benjamin Church from Massachusetts spent much of 1692 harassing the Acadians. On November 9, Church captured the families of Charles Serreau and his brother-in-law, Jacques Petitpas, looting and burning their properties and imprisoning them at Boston. Two French deserters had agreed to help the English capture Baron de Castian, the feared Indian chief at Pentagouet (in today's Maine), and the governor of Massachusetts convinced Serreau and Petitpas to enter into the plot, holding their families as hostage to guarantee their cooperation. Serreau and Petitpas pretended to accept the proposal but on the trip captured the traitors and turned them over to Governor Villebon, who had them executed and gave the two Acadians money to ransom their families. For whatever reason, Petitpas' wife was not released with the other family members.

Sometime after this, Barthelemy was captured and imprisoned at Boston. He was returned to the French in May, 1694. Jacques Petitpas died in 1694 and, while in prison, Barthelemy and Petitpas' widow, Genevieve, were married. Genevieve was the daughter of Jean Serreau de Saint-Aubin, a French noble with a colorful history in New France who had first settled on Ile d'Orleans and now was a friend of Barthelemy. Jean Serreau's wife, Marguerite Boileau, and her sister, Marie, had come to New France as "Filles du Roi," women recruited by the French king to become wives of the soldiers and fur traders already in New France. Serreau, angered when he saw Marguerite walking arm in arm with their Swiss neighbor, had killed the man with a stick. Fearful of the consequences of his action, Serreau quickly escaped to France, where he appealed to King Louis XIV, who granted him a pardon and sent a letter to the Sovereign Council of Quebec to that effect. When Serreau returned to his farm on Ile d'Orleans, the wife of the seignury ordered him off the grounds that he had occupied for five years, so Serreau then went to Acadia, where he eventually obtained a seignurial land grant from the king

(where the Saint Croix flowed into the Atlantic). Barthelemy and Genevieve were given land on Campobello Island, part of Serreau's seigneurie.

By 1704, Queen Anne's war was in progress. A group of French and Indians from Quebec attacked Deerfield, Massachusetts, killing some residents and taking others prisoners. New Englanders, led by Colonel Benjamin Church, sought revenge against the Acadians, who had nothing to do with the Deerfield attack. Jean Serreau was away on a business trip to France and upon his return found his seigneurie in ruins and Barthelemy Bergeron's entire family in a prison in Boston. Barthelemy's friend, Baptiste, was also in prison and the English watched these two corsairs closely. Jean Serreau died at 95 in March, 1705. On September 18, 1706, 51 persons arrived at Port Royal from Boston, including Barthelemy's family, who were absolutely destitute after more than two years in prison.

Barthelemy went back to his mercantile business, sailing the Bay of Fundy and sometimes traveling even to Boston. He continued to have a place at Campobello Island and sailed his own ship, a 50 foot long sloop with a crew of about five, becoming a renowned navigator. Campobello Island was caught in the strife between the British and the Indians. Barthelemy also lived part time at Port Royal, where he was raising a family of three sons and three daughters. His second son, Michel, worked as a seaman like his father, using the name "de Nantes," the town of his grandmother.

An interesting event happened on June 13, 1722, when the crew of a sloop from New England stopped at Campobello Island to have breakfast with Barthelemy, who was not home. A group of Indians led by Joseph Serreau St. Aubin, Barthelemy's nephew, seized the captain of the ship, James Blinn, and held him hostage for ransom. When Barthelemy returned, he arranged for Blinn's release. The friendship between Barthelemy and Blinn continued for another generation and showed itself later in another family encounter. In July 1736, Michel Bergeron and his brother-in-law, Joseph Bellefontaine, went to visit Annapolis Royal (formerly Port Royal). Charged and imprisoned for not stopping to report to the lieutenant governor when they arrived, they were required to give the authorities the names of inhabitants at Saint-Anne's Point and held for ransom. They had arrived in a sloop operated by Captain Peter Blinn, son of James Blinn, who paid their bail.

When the French built a fort on the River St. John, Barthelemy became one of the early landowners. In about 1725, the Bergerons moved back up St. John River to Sainte-Anne Pointe, now part of the city of Fredericton. The Treaty of Utrecht had given Acadia to the English but, as noted earlier, the French claimed that the River St. John area was excluded. The census of 1739 noted that "the new settlement will act as a barrier to render useless the projects of the English... There is no lack of wood for construction and our French make ships for trade." Barthelemy's son, Michel, married a second time in 1727, this time to Marie Dugas, the daughter of the Bergeron's old friends and neighbors from Port Royal, Abraham Dugas and Marie-Madeleine Landry. Michel continued as a sailor on the Bay of Fundy, sometimes also performing as a buccaneer raiding British ships in the war between France and England, and was considered one of the most dangerous "pirates" by the British. Michel and Marie's fifth child, their third son, was born in 1736 and named Michel II after his father. In all, Michel married four times, due to the deaths of his wives, with his last marriage to Marie-Jeanne Hebert in 1747.

In the early 1750's the English continued to capture parts of Acadia. Their efforts to get the Acadians to swear loyalty to England failed and the English were nervous that the Acadians would join the Indians in their fight against the British. The Acadians were also Catholic and spoke French, even though they received little support from other French colonies in North America. As mentioned earlier, when the British captured Fort Beausejour in the area connecting Nova Scotia and what is now New Brunswick in 1755, Governor Lawrence was able to execute his plan to rid the area of Acadians. Sensing trouble, many of the Acadian families left their homes and took refuge on the Saint John River, some traveling long distances. Of the 10,000 Acadians in Nova Scotia, about 3000 fled and 7000 were deported. Nearly half of these died during the deportation.

Efforts to deport the remaining Acadians continued. In 1758 British troops were sent to clear the St. John River of all Acadians living there. French army forces left the area and returned to Quebec, telling the St. John Acadians that they could also go to Quebec if they wished. Many did go to Quebec, only to face starvation and a smallpox outbreak that took over 300 lives. Intent on wiping out the Acadian settlements, the English came up the St. John River almost to St. Anne's, burning crops and homes and killing animals before they returned to Halifax for the winter, taking 30 Acadian families along as prisoners. Acadians knew the trails through the woods to safe retreats in the heavily wooded valleys, but without homes and, lacking provisions, many died of cold and hunger that winter. Michel Bergeron II and others headed further up the river to the Indian communities, where Michel lived with his cousin, Ambroise St. Aubin, son of Genevieve's brother Charles Serreau married to a Malecite Indian woman, believing that the British would not come that far upriver. But the English were not done and by February, 1759, Rangers from Fort Frederick were on the march to St. Anne's Point, where they destroyed homes and killed the inhabitants who were not able to flee into the woods. Two of Barthelemy Bergeron's sons, Barthelemy II and Joseph Augustin, were taken to Halifax as prisoners, soon to be deported, ending their lives in Louisiana. Barthelemy had died by this time but Michel I, his fourth wife and four youngest children ended up in Louisiana, where they died at Martinville. Marie-Anne Bergeron and her husband were prisoners at Halifax, and later sent to Boston where the authorities refused to accept them, then sent to England, where they were kept in the ship's hold for days, and finally taken and released in Cherbourg, France, where they lived in destitution for years. Other Bergerons ended up in diverse other places. Meanwhile, Quebec fell to the English in 1760 and Montreal in 1761, making all of Canada British territory.

A few residents of St. Anne's Point, including Michel II, Barthelemy's grandson, and some of his siblings remained in the area, living with the Malecite Indians, managing to evade deportation for eight years but enduring grave hardships. In 1763 the government at Halifax ordered them to move to some other part of the province, and a group of ten extended families, many of them children of Michel Bergeron I, under the leadership of Michel Bergeron II, that spring became the last Acadians to leave Acadia. The group, including elderly persons, pregnant women and young children, and six sons of Michel I with their families, trudged through dense forests and across rivers, fighting the mosquitoes and other insects, through the summer of 1763.

In the last week of October, these refugees reached the tiny village of Cacouna, where they were welcomed and spent the winter building small boats for the next leg of their journey. Michel II and his wife, Magdeleine Bourg, had their second baby baptized

while there. The next spring, the refugees hosted their sails to move up the river, stopping at Quebec, where they learned, probably from Michel's widowed aunt Anne Marie, that some of their Acadian relatives had settled in the Nicolet and Becancour areas. They reached Becancour in November, 1764, and settled near Lake Saint Paul behind the first group of Acadian refugees. Michel Bergeron II, a master carpenter, worked that winter in Trois Rivieres to provide provisions for the new settlement which today is Saint-Gregoire. In the spring of 1765 they cleared land for a community garden. Michel died at Saint-Gregoire at age 96 in 1832. Michel II's brother, Etienne Bergeron, a teenager at the time of this march, settled on the south shore of the Gaspé Peninsula and, at age 36, married Claire Courtois, and they became the grandparents of George Fallu's wife, Genevieve McIntyre.

Through the years there had been so much intermarriage between the Acadian families that the deportation tore most families apart. Some Acadians had made their way to Louisiana during the deportation years, although none were deported to Louisiana, which was a Spanish territory. Following the deportation, Spain invited the Acadians who had been deported or escaped to France to settle in Louisiana. Victims of neglect in France, the Acadians realized how different they were from the French. For them, the invitation provided an opportunity to rejoin some of their kin and to make a new beginning. In time, they became identified as the "Cajuns."

The names of the Acadian families are also common today in New Brunswick and Quebec. In the Chaleur Bay area of Gaspé, the Acadians found refuge in 1758 at the mouth of the Restigouche River, no doubt arriving either by small boats following the coast line or aided on a land journey by the Indians. After the Battle of Restigouche in 1760, when the British again destroyed their homes, many left this region to found the villages of Bonaventure and Carleton in Quebec. Charles Robin, whom we will meet in the story of George Fallu, brought 81 Acadians back from France to the Chaleur Bay area. A parish priest later invited some Acadians to settle in Beauce, even though the land was not good for farming, and this is where we again meet the Pierre Cressac-Toulouse family.

Over time a few Acadians made it back to Nova Scotia, provided they took an oath of allegiance to the British Crown. They found their farms now occupied by persons who ultimately had little success with the land since they were not skilled in the farming techniques used by the Acadians. In 1758 the Nova Scotia Assembly passed a law forbidding land ownership by Catholics. Governor Lawrence devised a plan to use some of the Acadians to rebuild the dikes; in 1764 more than 1700 Acadians remained imprisoned and continued to work on the dikes. A few Acadians were permitted to return as advisors to the new farmers but most ended up in areas with little agricultural potential and turned to the sea or lumbering to survive, in large part again due to the efforts of the Robins fisheries.

With Longfellow's *EVANGELINE* and later the efforts of historians to document "The Grand Derangement", England was urged to acknowledge this ethnic cleansing as criminal activity. In 2003, the Queen's representative to Canada designated July 28<sup>th</sup> each year as "A Day of Commemoration of the Great Upheaval", beginning in 2005.

(1) I am indebted to Richard Bergeron for much of the information on the Bergeron family. Bergeron\_Damboise@yahoo.com

When he came to New France with the expedition of 1603 Champlain traveled by canoe up the St. Lawrence River while others of the group traded with the Indians. From that time on, he had a desire to settle New France, primarily to take part in the fur trade.

Champlain and Sieur de Monts met again in Paris in 1607 and made plans for settlement of Quebec. Champlain arrived at the present site of Quebec in 1608, where his men began cutting trees, building protective walls and shelters, and planting gardens. Loss of men from scurvy and other illnesses was high the first winter. In 1609, Champlain led a war party of Huron and Algonquin warriors against their enemy, the Iroquois, a victory repeated the next year; acts that would strengthen his alliance with the Montagnais, Algonquins and Hurons, but would continue to spell trouble for the French settlers with the Iroquois for many years. During the next several years, Champlain was back and forth to France to lobby for the new colony. He returned to Quebec in 1611 and sailed up the St. Lawrence to what is now Montreal, giving orders to begin clearing land for a fort at that site.

The next several years were difficult for Champlain as he tried to get French backers for the fur trade. Back in Paris in 1616, Champlain encountered Louis Hebert again and invited Hebert to come to the fort at Quebec. Hebert and his wife, Marie Rollet, had returned to Paris when they were removed from Acadia, and he had reopened his apothecary shop, catering to privileged French nobility, but the lure of New France with its freedom was still with him. To entice Hebert, Champlain offered attractive terms on the part of the Company of Canada, the fur trading company that Champlain now represented. He promised Hebert and his family a cash bonus of 200 crowns per year for his services as an apothecary and physician for the Company and, in addition, a 10 arpent tract of land (an arpent is about five-sixths of an acre) and provisions for him and his family for their first two years in the new colony. Louis agreed to serve as the general medical officer for the settlement, to give his other services to the company when needed, and to keep his hand out of the fur trade.

Hebert sold his apothecary shop, house and garden in Paris, packed his family belongings and, along with his wife, his three children, Anne Marie, Guillemette and Guillaume, his servant Henri, and Marie's brother, Claude Rollet, headed to the French Port of Honfleur. When he arrived at the port, he found that the company had changed hands and the interest was now in furs, not settlers. The company claimed that Champlain had grossly overstepped his authority and now gave Hebert a take it or leave it reduced contract that would pay him only 100 crowns without the promise of land, the Hebert family and servant Henri would have to serve the Company without any remuneration, Louis would have to assist any sick person without payment, and Heberts would have to sell to the Company any agricultural produce harvested by the family beyond their personal needs at a price determined by the company. Despite his disappointment, Louis decided to continue with his plans for life in the New World.

After a rough sea voyage of thirteen weeks aboard the St. Etienne, the Heberts arrived early in June of 1617 at the fort where Quebec City now stands. Quebec at that time was a small fur-trading post with about 50 people, all employees of the Company of Canada and involved in the fur trade. Three other men at the fort had their families with them, all likely coming also in 1617. The Heberts socialized with these families of Pierre

Desportes and Marie Francoise Langlois and their daughter Helene, Abraham Martin and Marguerite Langlois and their daughter Anne, and Nicolas Pivert and Marguerite Lesage and their niece. The Desportes and Martin wives were sisters. Francoise Langlois delivered a baby girl, Helene, at the home of Samuel Champlain on July 6, 1620, who is listed as the first white child born in New France. Helene Boule, Champlain's wife, was her godmother. The Heberts were the first European family of permanent settlers and farmers in Quebec.

Louis was loyal to Champlain, the only other man in Quebec interested in cultivating the land, and did not blame him for the poor treatment he received. At Champlain's suggestion, Louis took a piece of land of 12 arpents on the hill overlooking the fort, and without waiting for any title began to clear and cultivate the land. With his skill as an apothecary, the Company insisted on the bulk of Louis' time, but he devoted all his spare hours to his farm, occasionally helped by townspeople to burn and to dig up the stumps or clear the land of rocks, but he spaded the soil mostly by himself. With hard work and persistence he had the 12 arpents of land under cultivation in five years. He planted a vegetable garden, with an orchard to one side with apple trees brought from France, and used pastureland along the river flats where he also gathered wild hay for his cattle. Before long, Louis began construction of a permanent home for his family and, with help from craftsmen at the fort, built a 20 by 40 foot one-story stone house, filled with furniture from Paris, the first dwelling on the plateau above the village. This unpretentious home was comfortable and would be cited often in the early history of Quebec for the hospitality provided there by Louis's wife and daughters. Along with the domestic chores and caring for the children, Marie Rollet helped Louis treat the sick and did agricultural chores on the homestead.

After one of his visits to the Hebert home, Champlain wrote: "I inspected everything, the cultivated land which I found sown and filled with fine grain, the gardens full of all kinds of plants, such as cabbages, radishes, lettuce, purslane, sorrel, parsley, and other plants, squash, cucumbers, melons, peas, beans and other vegetables as fine as in France, together with vines brought and planted here, already well advanced, in short everything increasing and growing visibly."

In lean winters when food was scarce the Heberts provided a good portion of their food supplies to the inhabitants of the fort. Louis consulted frequently with the Indians about their herbal medicines and cared medically for them in addition to the staff at the fort. He had learned from the Indians that scurvy, a serious problem for early settlers, could be prevented by drinking a tea made with pine needles. Hebert's medical functions were wide ranging, from blood letting to dousing the sailors with his special concoctions. Officials of the fur-trading company were not happy with Hebert's success and made matters difficult for him, intending to give the signal that settlers were not welcome in Quebec. They accused Louis of trading with the Indians and forced him to surrender his surplus grain to the Company as well as to devote most of his time to medical and other duties for the Company. Louis and Marie both enjoyed the confidence of the Indians, recognizing them as intelligent although lacking formal education, and opened their home to Indian visitors. Louis complained to Champlain about being hassled, but Champlain was unable to help him. Although he was friendly with the people at the fort, Louis was fed up with the attitude of the Company and decided to fight back.

When a legal system was put in place in 1621, Louis was appointed Royal Procurator in the first court of justice in Quebec. In this capacity, he joined with other settlers in signing a petition to the King of France protesting the fur-trading company's monopoly and abuses that were leading to "the immanent ruin of the whole country." In a letter to the King, the St. Lawrence area is described as having "many beautiful and fertile islands, stocked with such an abundance of all kinds of fish as cannot be described, bordered by hills full of fruit trees such as walnuts, chestnuts, plums, cherries and wild vines, with numerous meadows, which adorn and embellish the valleys... peopled with all kinds of game...elks...beaver, black fox, and other animals, the fur of which gives access and hope of a very great trade hereafter. Moreover, the fertility of this country has been more and more established."

Because of the callous attitude of the Company toward settlers and land cultivation, Louis was apprehensive about not having ownership of the land he has worked so hard to develop, concerned that at some point he might be deprived of his home and lands. Louis returned, without his family, to Paris in early 1622 to bring a difficulty before the Privy Council of the King, and soon returned to Quebec. Since Champlain now had little influence in France, Louis decided to send his own petition to the Viceroy in Paris, requesting title to his lands and, in February, 1623, the Duke of Montmorency granted Louis a concession giving him free and full possession of his lands. The lands were later designated as the fief Sault-au-Matelot, making Louis's the first seigneurial grant of land in New France. Two years later, a new Viceroy confirmed that the lands were to be held by Hebert as a "noble fief," and not only did he acknowledge Louis's services to the colony, he granted Hebert a further noble fief consisting of a French league of land adjacent to the Charles River. Thus Hebert became the first nobleman or seigneur in New France. The land along the St. Charles River was originally called the fief of St. Joseph and gave Louis the title of Sieur d'Espinay. Ironically, it was Hebert who believed it was agriculture and not the fur trade that promised prosperity to the new county, and the habitants who eventually built up New France, not the fur traders.

On November 23, 1617, not long after their arrival, Hebert's daughter Anne married Normand Etienne Jonquest, a young man at the fort, in what was the first formal marriage of Europeans in Quebec. Anne died in childbirth in 1619, as did her newborn infant, and her husband died soon after. Hebert's other daughter, Guillemette, married Guillaume Couillard, a tradesman and a shipwright who came to work for the fur-trading company in 1613. Their marriage in 1621 was the first marriage shown in the registers of the Parish of Notre Dame in Quebec. Couillard became a farmer and permanent settler like Louis; he was the first to use a plow in New France (Hebert had imported an ox from France but the fur company refused to let him import a plow), and established a flour mill. The Couillards had ten children.

Louis Hebert had a serious accident when he slipped, smashing his head on the ice in the winter of 1626, and died due to these injuries on January 25, 1627, after being bedridden for nearly a year. On his death bed, Louis told his family that he had come to help the Indians and urged them "to love them as I have loved them and to assist them according to your ability..." Champlain had viewed the colony as both a fur-trade center and an opportunity to evangelize the "savages," bringing Jesuit priests to the colony who were soon in conflict with the mostly Huguenot, not Catholic, fur traders. The year

Hebert died, the Jesuits appealed to Cardinal Richelieu, who cancelled the existing trade monopoly and established the Company of One Hundred Associates, a group concerned as well with converting the Indians. Samuel Champlain and Pierre Desportes, the man in charge of the fur trade warehouse and also serving as baker for the small community, were two of the principals of the new Company.

Marie Rollet had established a school for French and Native children in her home. In the months after Louis died, Marie was godmother for an Indian boy at his baptism and, on this occasion, hosted a large banquet attended by many including local natives. Nine months after Louis's death, Henri, the servant who had accompanied the Heberts to Quebec, was killed by an Indian at Tourmente, another loss for Marie. Two years after Louis' death, Marie, now nearly fifty years old, married Guillaume Hubou, a man much younger than herself. Two months later, Quebec was captured for the English by the Kirke brothers, privateers from New England, who took Champlain and most of the residents back to France.

The Kirkes had stopped the previous year to terrorize the Acadians, burning their homes and fields, and then sailed boldly up the St. Lawrence, blockading the river and demanding that Champlain surrender Quebec. The Company of One Hundred Associates had just launched their first big expedition to New France with 20 ships, supplies and colonists, but the Kirkes met them at the Gaspe Peninsula, capturing eighteen ships and 600 persons as well as the livestock and food supplies. The Kirkes left before the onset of winter, leaving Quebec to face starvation so, when the Kirkes returned the next summer, Champlain had no choice but to surrender. The Kirkes allowed Marie and Guillaume Hubou, the Couillards, and a few others to remain at Quebec, keeping the French presence during the English occupation, and they were supported by Indians who appreciated the French friendship. Lewis Kirke, the new commander at the fort, invited them to remain in their homes and on their lands in Quebec.

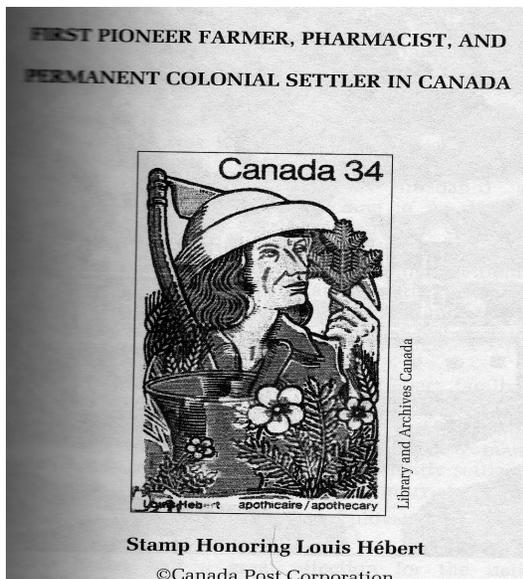
King Charles of England was short of money, so he agreed to give the colonies back to France for a large payment by a treaty in 1632. Champlain and Olivier LeTardif, an official of the fur trading company, returned to Quebec in 1633 with about 200 people. At Champlain's request, Marie Rollet turned the school over to the Jesuits who had returned with Champlain, but continued to house orphans and Indian girls. In 1635, Guillaume Hubou was granted land at Saint-Genevieve, Quebec. Two years later, Guillaume and Marie witnessed the marriage of Guillemette's daughter, Marguerite, to Sieur Jean Nicollet de Belleborne. In 1637, LeTardif married Louise Couillard, and it was LeTardif who later adopted Marie Olivier Sylvestre Manitouabewich, an Indian maiden who married Martin Prevost at Quebec in 1644, a story told in the next chapter. Marie died in Quebec in 1649 after more than thirty years in Quebec and Guillaume Hubou died in 1653. Half of the Heberts' property became the property of the Couillards as Guillaume Hebert was still a minor.

While women in France had little autonomy apart from their husbands, Guillemette Hebert was a good witness to women's active role in the New World. She lived a life of adventure and danger, being a woman of compassion and strength who, like her parents, was interested in the Indian children, took two Indian girls into her home, and became godmother to many others. The Couillards had their share of pain as their daughter Louise died only four years after her marriage to Olivier LeTardif. 1660 proved to be another painful year for the Couillards, when two of their sons, Nicolas and

Guillaume, and their nephew, Joseph Hebert, were killed by the Iroquois. Guillaume Couillard, a well respected and courageous man, died in 1666, and Guillemette died in 1684.

Guillaume Hebert, Joseph’s father, had married Helene Desportes in 1634. He died five years later, leaving a widow with several children, and later Helene married Noel Morin. The Heberts’ daughter, Francoise, at age 13 married Guillaume Fournier, a baker who had come from France about 1641. They parented fourteen children. Fournier was a cantankerous man and, even though marriage to Francoise gave him a good bit of land, he was always fighting for more. Because of the inheritance from his wife, Fournier became a seigneur. He had a number of fights with Guillemette Hebert, Couillard’s widow, over land. At least 100 court documents stretching over 30 years witness to Fournier’s obstinacy. He began in about 1660 to distribute land which had belonged to Louis Hebert and Guillaume Couillard, which he called “fief of St. Joseph.” He also acquired a piece of land in 1662 that had previously belonged to Nicolas Paternostre, whose story is in the chapter on Ile d’Orleans.. In 1671, he sold some land to Intendant Talon and moved his family to Riviere du Sud. The next year, Talon ceded him land fronting the river and he regained his title of seigneur. He bought a fishing boat and went into partnership with his son-in-law, Jean Prou. The Fournier’s daughter, Francoise Fournier, our ancestor, married Jacques Boulet in 1686. Guillaume Fournier died at age 80 in 1699. His widow, Francoise Hebert, outlived him for sixteen more years and was very active in the community, serving the colony for many years as a midwife.

The Heberts and Couillards had been generous with charitable and religious gifts. In 1666, Guillemette sold the land where Heberts had first settled to Bishop Laval as a site for a seminary. Some of her children were upset by this sale and sued, with court proceedings carrying on for generations. Sometime later, Guillemette retired to the L’Hotel-Dieu Convent, where she lived until her death in 1684. Today the property of Sault-au-Matlot is in the heart of Old Quebec City and contains sites for Notre Dame Church, the Quebec Seminary, and the Museum of French America.



Louis Hebert Postage Stamp



Louis Hebert Statue, Montmorency Park

J.C. Southerland wrote in *THE ROMANCE OF QUEBEC*: “The story of Louis Hebert, the first real settler and the first farmer in Canada, is a simple one, but it is one that is cherished in Quebec to this day. Here is a family of courageous and noble character, who faced toil and difficulties innumerable, and who left long generations to honour them and follow their example.” In Montmorency Park, part of the Hebert farm now in Old Quebec City, there is a monument to Hebert family: Louis stands on top with a sickle in his hand offering his first sheaf of wheat to God, on one side of the base Marie Rollet clasps three children in her arms, and on the opposite side Guillaume Couillard holds a plough in his hand. Louis Hebert has also been honored by the Canadian government with a postage stamp and by the pharmacists of Canada with a plaque “to honour the memory of Louis Hebert pioneer Apothecary in Acadia 1604.”

### THE SEIGNEURIES

At the time New France was settled by the French, the North and West of France had suffered greatly from the wars of several centuries. French feudalism, with land owners among the nobility, had diminished and many nobles had lost their land and faced destitution. New France offered many of the deposed youth a chance for adventure.

As mentioned, Louis Hebert held the first seignury in New France, a small fief at the edge of the fortified camp at Quebec. Based on the European concept of feudalism, the seigneurial system in New France was devised by Cardinal Richelieu. In 1627, The Company of One Hundred Associates was granted most of Eastern North America and obliged to give it as seigneuries. Land grants were to be given to meritorious individuals, usually soldiers, noblemen, or religious organizations, who were obliged to bring settlers (called habitants) to colonize the land. However, since the Company’s first interest was the fur trade, the prospect of building an agricultural community was a conflict of interest and an unwelcome chore. In the early years of New France, most of the seigneurs failed to take up their land or to bring colonists.

An estate belonged to the seigneur on the condition that he would develop it. Habitants given land owed the seigneur a few days work each year on his farm, paid a small rent, often in produce, and used the seigneur’s grist mill for grinding grain. Habitants did not fully own the land they worked, but could pass it on to their children or sell it, making them in effect owners. Seigneurs enjoyed a place of dignity and privilege. Relations between the seigneur and habitants were usually close and friendly as they were working hard to clear the wilderness and succeed as farmers. The St. Lawrence plain was covered with a dense forest, thus clearing land was inevitably slow.

The first land grant and one of the more successful seigneuries was that of Robert Giffard, a surgeon, who was granted land at Beauport. Giffard, an apothecary and doctor of medicine, had first come to Quebec in 1621, recruited by Champlain as the doctor for the settlement there. He returned to France in 1627, married Marie Renouard in 1628, and a few months later returned to New France as part of the first group sent by the Company of One Hundred Associates. In 1634, the Company granted him the first seigneurial concession extending from Beauport to the river Montmorency, a four mile frontage on the north shore of the St. Lawrence a few miles northeast of Quebec. Giffard quickly returned to his native Perche to recruit persons skilled in various trades who could help him achieve his goals while living mainly off farming rather than the fur trade,

and in 1634 brought a number of engages or indentured servants to work on his land for several years in return for a landholding of their own. I chose to describe this seigneurie because many of our ancestors settled there, their children married neighbor children, and they contributed to our family's early history in North America. Persons mentioned here are almost all family ancestors ten or more generations back. (Consult the family genealogy chart in the back of this book).

Two of Giffard's first recruits were Zacharie Cloutier, a master carpenter, and Jean Guyon, a master mason. Giffard agreed to give each man a few head of livestock to get started in farming and, after their three year indenture, a thousand arpents of land with the right to build on it. Both men had five children at home and would be allowed to bring one of their children with them. Giffard promised that he would bring the remainder of their family to New France in 1636. However, it appears that Cloutier and Guyon's wives, Xainte Dupont and Mathurin Robin, decided at the last minute to bring their families in 1634. Since the ships were small and crowded, each family could bring a chest containing their tools, clothing, seeds and a few other items. Guyon's eldest daughter, Barbe, had already married Pierre Paradis and they would come to New France twenty years later with a large family.

Cloutier and Guyon hastened to begin building a manor house for Giffard upon their arrival. Three years later they received their promised fiefs and became "bourgeois seigneurs," with Zacharie naming his seigneurie "la Clousterie." Zacharie and Jean continued to do much of their work together and were among the residents of Beauport who worked on construction of the parish church at Quebec and the governor's residence in 1646 and 1647. But they didn't always get along with Robert Giffard who, in 1636, obtained a judgment against them concerning work due him. Later they had boundary disputes. In 1646, Giffard sued Cloutier and Guyon for refusing to render him "faith and homage," the act of a subordinate due to his lord, when they refused to present the inventory required of all landowners in a seigneurie for tax purposes and, when Giffard complained to the governor, they were forced to comply.

In July 1636, Zacharie and Xainte prearranged for their daughter, Anne, to marry Robert Drouin. Robert had come to Giffard's seigneurie in 1635, living at first in the Cloutier home while making bricks and helping with the buildings of the first settlers. Sometime later, Notary Jean Guyon witnessed as Robert and Anne signed the first marriage contract made in Canada, with Robert twenty-nine years old but Anne only ten years old and agreeing to live with her parents until age thirteen. A religious ceremony took place when Anne was eleven, but Robert had to wait for two more years before they could begin conjugal relations. In the first double marriage ceremony recorded in Canada, Marie Guyon, the daughter of Jean and Mathurin Robin, married Francois Belanger in the same ceremony. Robert and Anne had six children, but only two, Genevieve and Jeanne, lived to adulthood. When Anne died in 1648, Robert decided to leave the area, rented his land, and gave Zacharie and Xainte custody of his two daughters. The next year, Robert married a widow, Marie Chapelier, with whom he had eight children. Zacharie did not trust the stepmother of his grandchildren, whom he thought mistreated them, so he took permanent custody of them. Jeanne, the youngest daughter of Robert Drouin and Anne Cloutier, married Pierre Maheu in Quebec in 1659.

Pierre Maheu came to Beauport in 1651 as a servant to Giffard's brother-in-law, Jean Juchereau, who paid him 45 livres per year plus food and a new pair of shoes

annually. He agreed to work on Juchereau's farm in 1655, now paid primarily in such produce as turnips, cabbage, wheat and peas, while also earning money by clearing land for other settlers. In 1657, Pierre was able to purchase his own land in the fief of Charlesville and, in 1659, married Jeanne Drouin, who came with a dowry of 300 livres, a milk cow, and some clothing. One of the five Maheu children, Jeanne, married Paul Belanger. In 1717, Pierre Maheu and Jeanne Drouin returned to Beauport to spend the remainder of their lives with Jeanne's family, in return giving them the land they had received at Chateau Richer from Robert Drouin.

In a few years, Zacharie Cloutier had his sons settled on land that in time would become the parish of Chateau Richer. Zacharie sold his fief in 1670 after meeting with his children about care of their parents in their last years. Zacharie and Xainte placed themselves in the care of their son, Zacharie, and his wife Barbe Aymard.

Noel Langlois, a ship's navigator, also came with Robert Giffard in 1634, perhaps persuaded by a brother-in-law or one of his three sisters, who were married to Jean Juchereau, Abraham Martin, and Pierre Desportes. Noel also worked at building the manor house for Robert Giffard and, on July 25, 1634, the day Giffard laid the cornerstone for his manor house, Noel married Francoise Grenier, who had come to Canada in 1634 with Giffard and is considered the first marriageable woman to arrive in Quebec after the French returned in 1633. This was the fourth recorded marriage in New France and the first since the return of the French. In 1637, Giffard gave Noel 300 arpents of land, mostly covered with mature standing timber.

Over time Noel Langlois acquired considerable land and worked hard at clearing it. His work as a riverboat pilot and as a carpenter helped him pay new immigrants to help clear the land. Noel and Francoise had ten children. Francoise Grenier died from an accidental gunshot wound in 1666 and nine months later Noel married an old friend, Marie Crevet, the widow of Robert Caron. Parental pressure kept the youngest son, Noel, on the land. Like many of the settlers, it seems that the Langlois family sheltered men from the Carignan Regiment of French soldiers who came to fight the Iroquois (see chapter 4). After one young officer, Francois de Traversy, was killed by Indians while hunting, Noel Jr. took the name Sieur de Traversy to distinguish himself from his father. He later distinguished himself as a soldier on an expedition with Governor Frontenac and was given a seigneurie on Ile d'Orleans, where two of his brothers became shipbuilders. The younger Noel remained a Lieutenant in the militia at Beauport for the remainder of his life. His father wanted him to remain at Beauport to care for him and his second wife, Marie Crevet, and assigned all his assets at death to his son. Marie Crevet had a young daughter, Aimee Caron, who in time married the younger Noel.

Paul Vachon, a mason with an extraordinary education, came to Beauport in 1650. In 1653, Paul married fourteen year old Marguerite Langlois, a native of Beauport and daughter of Noel Langlois and Francoise Grenier, with whom he had twelve children. Their oldest son, Paul, was one of the first priests born in New France. They lived in the village of Fargy in the seigneurie of Beauport. Over the years Paul added new land, using hired help to clear and manage his farms, including one on Ile d'Orleans. While Paul spent his life as a farmer and mason, his principal profession was that of a notary and record keeper for seigneuries at Notre-Dame-des-Anges, Beauport, and two on Ile d'Orleans. Paul's signature appears as notary for about 1500 acts, such as marriage contracts and land sales

Marguerite Langlois died September 25, 1697. Epidemics were always a threat to folks in New France and a severe epidemic of measles struck down a fourth of the population of Quebec between 1699 and 1703. The Vachons were perhaps typical as their son Noel Vachon, the husband of Monique Giroux, died in 1699, Guillaume Vachon died in 1702, and 1703 saw the death of four family members: Pierre on January 17, Marie-Madeleine on February 18, Marguerite on June 24, and finally Paul Vachon on June 15.

Marie Godard, from the area of Perche as was Robert Giffard, came to Canada in the service of Giffard. When Giffard received his seigneurie, his brothers-in-law, Noel, Jean and Pierre Juchereau stayed in France to recruit craftsmen and laborers for Giffard's project. Zacharie Maheu was one of the recruited craftsmen and a neighbor of Toussaint Giroux, who accompanied Zacharie and his son, Rene, to Beauport sometime before 1654. Giffard granted the three, jointly, a first concession next to Robert Drouin of 100 arpents for grazing cattle and 100 arpents for cutting firewood, for which they were to give two days of work per week.

Toussaint Giroux and Marie Godard were married at the home of Robert Giffard on September 29, 1654. After four years and three children, they were still living at the Giffard manor as Toussaint had not yet built a home. In 1658, his friend and neighbor, Jean Crete, sold a piece of land in the village of Fargy to Toussaint for a house and garden and, with the help of neighbors, Toussaint built a house having a room with a fireplace, an ante-room, a cellar and a granary. The Giroux's still held a third share in their original concession.

Robert Giffard died in 1667 and his son, Joseph, became the new seigneur of Beauport. While his father had been generous with the habitants, Joseph was not, and in June, 1668, eighteen habitants, including Toussaint Giroux, had their concessions revoked for failing in their contracts. Each habitant was left with one arpent of land. In 1670, Joseph made another concession to Toussaint of three arpents in the St. Joseph Village, where he promised to build a house in one year and to cultivate the land. Realizing that he would not fulfill this contract, Toussaint sold this concession a year later.

Toussaint Giroux and Marie Godard had a large family before Marie died in 1684. By that time, their son, Raphael, had married Marie Madeleine Vachon, daughter of Paul Vachon and Marguerite Langlois in 1681. The close friendship between the families of Toussaint Giroux and Paul Vachon would be noted again when Monique Giroux married Noel Vachon in 1695. She was widowed four years later with two children. A double wedding ceremony united Michel Giroux with Therese Prevost and Jean-Baptiste Prevost with Marie Ann Giroux on August 18, 1683. Therese and Jean-Baptiste were two of the nine children of Martin Prevost and Marie Olivier Silvestre Manitouabewich (Chapter 3).

Two years after Marie Godard's death, Toussaint married Therese Leblanc, the widow of Pierre Lavallee, mother of ten children. Together they had one daughter, Marie Angelique. This marriage did not go well and, in 1691, Toussaint obtained a legal separation on the grounds of incompatibility and infidelity, with Toussaint agreeing to raise their daughter.

Adult male habitants were required to be part of a militia in each parish. In 1690, English troops from Boston attacked Quebec and Beauport. Along with other residents, Toussaint and his older sons were engaged in the battle. English soldiers encamped near

Beauport harassed the village for three days, burning some farms and destroying cattle. In the end, the English could not break down the defenses of the French forts and returned to Boston. Toussaint Giroux died in 1715.

Some others of our ancestors who settled at in the Beauport seigneurie include habitants Paul de Rainville, a farmer, and Rolline Poete; Nicolas Belanger, a salt merchant and farmer who was very close to Paul de Rainville and married the Rainville's daughter, Marie de Rainville; Jean Crete, a wheelwright and farmer, married to Marguerite Gaulin, who had come to New France with her brother, Francis Gaulin; Robert Pepin, a master slater, who signed a marriage contract with the Crete's daughter, Marie. Marie was only twelve years old so they had to wait until the next year to marry, at which time her parents gave them a three year old bull, a cow, two suckling pigs, a suit of clothes, two blankets, two sheets, a bolster stuffed with feathers, two tablecloths and four napkins. Villagers who lived at Fargy had small land concessions from the seigneur and some also had farms in the surrounding area. Each village was the center of a parish, with the church holding prominence as the one place where habitants came together regularly.

The first houses were patterned after the French houses that people were familiar with in France. Early farmhouses were built of posts driven in the ground to make a palisade-like structure which was chinked with clay and eventually covered with boards. The roof was thatch or bark, and the floor was dirt. Farmhouses built of roughly hewn logs and later of stone soon followed. The houses were small and centered around a fireplace used for heat and cooking. In time, heavy iron stoves began to appear. The habitants purchased pots and pans and cutlery but made almost all of their own furniture.

Wheat was almost always the habitant's main crop and most also raised peas, oats, and barley. Peas were a dietary staple, oats was raised for livestock feed, and corn, the main crop in Indian villages, was not popular with the habitants, who were even less fond of potatoes, which they saw as British food. Many habitants raised some flax for spinning. Almost every farmhouse had a garden nearby filled with onions, cabbages, lettuce, beans, carrots, beets, horse-radish, parsnips and perhaps pumpkins and melons. A patch of tobacco grew in a corner of the garden. Most adults smoked, as did boys by twelve years of age. Fruit trees, such as apples and plums, were common, with apples often converted to cider.

Cattle were raised primarily for domestic use, providing milk, butter, and cheese, as well as meat. Most had an ox or two for pulling the plow and wagon. In the earlier years, horses were used for fast rides and pleasure more than for work. Pigs, chickens and often turkeys, geese and ducks filled the farmyard. Habitants fashioned rakes and forks from wood, but had to buy a saw, an axe, and blades for their scythe. The ordinary habitant was a jack-of-all-trades, but sometimes sought the special skills of those other farmers who were artisans such as blacksmiths, carpenters, harness-makers and masons.

## FILLES A MARIER

Only a few French citizens migrated to New France which, in their eyes, was a distant country with lots of dangers and a bad reputation. Most of the men who came returned to France because there was little opportunity for them to find a wife and settle

down in the New World. By 1633, the French authorities tried to solve the lack of French women by proposing that the men marry Indian women to create a new race that would dominate the continent. This would also help to create ties between the French and the Amerindians. The authorities attempted to promote this intermarriage by offering a dowry of 150 livres to Indian women who married Frenchmen but by 1663 only five of these marriages had taken place. The Ursuline Sisters backed the idea of Frenchmen marrying Indian women and took the girls into their school at Quebec City in an effort to give them some instruction and make them like French girls; however, Mother Marie de l'Incarnation eventually realized this effort was futile. French leaders soon recognized that the Indian women had only two or three children because they nursed their children for several years.

At first Robert Giffard and others encouraged the immigration of families to New France, but for the three decades between 1632 and 1662 an average of 82 percent of new immigrants were men. Individuals and religious groups began to recruit single women in France, called Filles a Marier or "marriageable girls," to come to New France. Between 1634 and 1662, 262 young ladies came alone or in small groups looking for a chance at a better life. Men who came to New France as soldiers or indentured servants intended to return to France at their employer's expense at the end of their commitment. The women, however, came with no hope of seeing their homeland again, facing the harsh dangers of crossing the ocean, the hope of finding a husband, the hard life of subsistence farming, harsh winters in a log cabin, epidemics of smallpox and fever, and the ever-present threat of death at the hands of the Iroquois. Since Beauport was a vulnerable spot, Giffard had ordered his settlers to build palisaded forts for protection in case of an attack while, at Montreal, the men were required to carry a gun for defense and the inhabitants were ordered to remain in their homes at night after the fort's clock rang and the gate was closed.

In France, many of these young women would have had little or no choice in their marriages as marriages in France were arranged. If a girl's family did not have the means to provide a suitable dowry, her only option was to become a nun or marry beneath her station. Many of the Filles a Marier were orphans or daughters of peasants and farmers; others were from urban families, often daughters of craftsmen, laborers and servants. A few girls from the modest elite families came to marry military officers, doctors and others of status. At first there was only a trickle of marriageable women and the population of New France increased only by 960 people from 1640 to 1660.

The Societe Notre-Dame de Montreal was founded in 1640 and sought to recruit single women to come to Canada, and was responsible for recruiting most of the Filles a Marier. The immigration of women to New France rose gradually in the 1650's. Jeanne Mance, director of the hospital, was busy recruiting women for Montreal. Beginning in April 1658, Marguerite Bourgeoys began teaching school in a converted stone stable and, later that year, accompanied Jeanne Mance back to France to recruit nuns and colonists for Montreal even though the colony was threatened by the Iroquois. Thirteen marriageable girls came as part of the contingent for Montreal in 1659, leaving La Rochelle on July 2, 1659 aboard the Saint-Andre, which had formerly been a hospital ship but passengers now had to share the hull with livestock. Close quarters made conditions ripe for the spread of disease and these passengers were soon battling a horrible outbreak of fever on the ship. Once the ship reached Quebec City, those

passengers going on to Ville-Marie stayed a few weeks to regain their strength, arriving at Ville-Marie on September 29, 1659.

Most of the girls stayed with Marguerite Bourgeoys in the loft of the stable school. The downstairs stable served as a dovecote and livestock barn and the girls had to climb an outdoor ladder to the attic, where they slept side by side on straw mattresses. Denise Lemaitre, a midwife, came with the group in 1659 and soon married our ancestor, Pierre Perras. Her story will be told in the chapter on Montreal.

More than 20 of our ancestors came to New France as filles a marier. We have already noted Marguerite Boileau married to Jean Serreau (Chapter 1). We also met Francoise Grenier, considered the first marriageable girl to arrive in New France, married to Noel Langlois, Marie Godard married to Toussaint Giroux, and Marguerite Gaulin married to Jean Crete in the story of Beauport. Others settling in the Quebec area included Marie Madeleine Francoise married to Guillaume Thibault, a baker and tailor, Marie Grandry married to Jacques David, a tailor and ship repairman, Jeanne Mercier married to Claude Poulin, a carpenter, Marguerite Rebours married to Jacques Guitaut, a soldier and tailor in the fur trade, and Madeleine Surget married to Jean Clement. Marie-Noelle Landeau and Louis Tetrault, a farmer, settled in the Trois Rivieres area, which served as the trading post upriver from Quebec until Montreal became the fur trading center.

More of the story of Marguerite Breton married to Nicolas Paternostre, Claire Francoise Pare married to Jacques Bluteau, and Francoise Viger married to Gregoire Deblois is in the chapter on Ile d'Orleans. The largest number of our filles a marier' ancestors settled in the Montreal area and we will share some of their stories in the chapters on Montreal and Laprairie. Besides Denise Lemaitre and Pierre Perras, these include Francoise Fafard, who came to New France in 1647 and married Mathurin Meunier, a peat worker, in the first marriage celebrated at Montreal, Anne Deliercourt and Hugues Picard, Anne Lemoine and Michel Messier, Jeanne Testard and Francois LeBer, Francoise Morin and Etienne Demers, Catherine Forestier and Jacques Menard, Elizabeth Gobinet and Paul Benoit, Louise Lebreuil and Marin Deneau, and Rene Loppe and Jean Valinquet. Most of these couples produced double digit families, as girls were taught at the time that the purpose of marriage was to have children, and the population of New France began to swell.

After Louis XIV took direct control of New France in 1663, French Finance Minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert helped start a state sponsored program to bring young women to New France for marriage. Known as Filles du Roi (the King's daughters), about 800 young women came to New France between 1663 and 1673. Their arrival will be treated in the fifth chapter.

## THE VILLAGE OF QUEBEC

Many of our ancestors in the early years of New France were habitants, busy clearing land and testing their skills as farmers. However, the village of Quebec was where most French settlers landed in the New World, where they first served as soldiers, craftsmen, or fur merchants, and where many spent the last years of their lives. For this reason, I choose to look briefly at the living conditions in early Quebec City. When

Champlain returned in 1633, he found that the English had burned and devastated the community and he began the slow task of rebuilding Quebec.

Lower Quebec was a narrow strand of land between the steep cliffs and the St. Lawrence River, containing barracks for the soldiers, the fur trading warehouses, and the homes of the merchants, soldiers and craftsmen. The elite, including the government and military leaders and the church institutions, were generally in the upper city. With the constant fear of the Iroquois after 1640, much of the city was within walls. Pigs, dogs, and chickens roamed the narrow streets along with the fur traders and the rural folks coming to market their produce.

French settlers brought the poor hygiene habits of their native France, thus the fear of epidemic illnesses such as smallpox, dysentery, measles, typhoid and fever were common and spread through families. The colonists thought these diseases were often transmitted through water and for this reason they bathed only once a year, usually in the spring, and washed their hands and feet infrequently. Because they rarely washed their hair, they had problems with vermin. Such practices seemed odd to the Indians, who bathed frequently. With small homes packed together, sanitation in the homes was also a problem. Most homes used a chamber pot or pan for a toilet and often emptied these out the window into the streets. In 1673, Governor Frontenac finally gave an order that the residents had to have an outhouse to avoid infections and to reduce the odors in the streets.

The economy of Quebec in the first half of the seventeenth century was based almost exclusively on the fur trade. The Indians found the European goods superior to their tools and came to depend on knives, hatchets, kettles, glass beads, combs, awls, axes, and eventually guns and ammunition, in exchange for beaver pelts. Unfortunately, some of the fur traders recognized the Indians' taste for brandy and frequently got them intoxicated before bartering for furs.

Craftsmen passed on their skills through apprenticeships of youth ten to seventeen years old, who apprenticed themselves to a skilled person in what was similar to a parent-child relationship. The apprentice ate at the master's table and frequently shared the master's home. Fathers with a profession often taught their sons to follow in their footsteps, for example, as bakers and butchers. In time, some of the youth had a chance to attend school, but not all did, and most of the population could not sign their names.

The schools were initially run by religious orders. In 1639, the Ursuline Sisters started a school at their convent in the upper village which served primarily children of the elite and a few Indian girls to whom the sisters were attempting to teach French culture. The Jesuits started a school in 1635 but it was only in 1651 that it became a primary school for boys. In 1691, Bishop Laval opened a school for boys and the Sisters of Notre Dame started a primary school for girls, both in the lower village. These schools taught Christian values and morals in addition to reading and arithmetic. For girls, education was also focused on domestic skills such as sewing and dressmaking.

The poor struggled to survive in early Quebec. These were most often women who had been widowed by the early death of a husband or women who were temporarily alone while their husbands headed west with the fur trade. Without many skills, these women worked as day laborers for low wages, while some who could not support their children abandoned them. Families were generally expected to care for their own, including the sick and elderly. Fortunately, the Hospitalieres of Dieppe opened Hotel

Dieu in 1639, a hospital that cared for a number of the sick and elderly of the community and surrounding area. It was only in 1685 that Quebec and Montreal had bureaus for the care of poor persons.

Folks in lower town did not have watches, relying rather on the time of day announced by soldiers mounting the fort ramparts every fifteen minutes. Soldiers often enjoyed the freedom of living with local families during the winter months when there were few military excursions, helping with chores and crafts. When Barthelemy Bergeron came to Quebec as a soldier, for example, he lived that first winter with Pierre Lazeau and worked as a baker.

French settlers loved singing and dancing, especially during the long winter months, which brought reprimands from the church authorities. The church had a major influence on people's lives, yet most settlers were strong individualists who determined their own moral behaviors. Men often left the church during the priest's sermon to visit with other men or to race horses.

By 1660, Quebec was in poor condition and in need of reorganization. 1660 and 1661 were years of panic due to frequent Iroquois raids, which effectively blocked fur trading in Quebec so it moved to Montreal. The entire population of New France at this time was still only about 2,500 inhabitants, mostly scattered tradesmen and apprentices. On the advice of his advisors, Louis XIV cancelled the Company of One Hundred Associates and made New France a royal province under the authority of the king, appointing Jean Talon as his personal representative with the title of Intendant.

Jean Talon arrived in New France in 1665 and recognized the potential of the colonies. To protect the colonies from Iroquois raids, Talon brought in 1,100 French soldiers (Chapter 5). He enabled legislation to control the markets, sanitation, health and public safety, and also recruited skilled craftsmen and contract laborers in an effort to reduce the colony's dependence on the fur trade. Up to this time, most men returned to France after serving as soldiers or indentured laborers, but now a program was developed to recruit wives for the men so that many might remain in New France. Efforts were made to encourage large families since it was apparent that France would not send large numbers of new colonists. Talon brought in pedigreed animals and good seeds for the habitants, and encouraged them to raise sheep for wool and hemp for fabrics so that they were less dependent on France for clothing and other goods. He also started a shipbuilding project and a brewery, but neither proved very successful. Talon took a census in 1666, which gives us good records of the families in New France at the time.

Talon had great energy and big ideas, pushing for westward expansion and growth of the colonies. The French authorities, however, were not so convinced of his vision by the time he left the colony in 1672. To them, New France still existed to provide furs and raw materials for France rather than as a place for development.

The story of our family roots in Canada began long before the arrival of the French in North America. Indian nations were well established along the Atlantic Coast and the St. Lawrence River and could not have imagined the change that would come to their lives in the seventeenth century. .

When the Europeans came to North America, conflict was inevitable because the Europeans, British more than the French, brought an attitude of superiority and conquest. Had the newcomers been willing to learn from the Indians, the story of Canada might have been quite different, as the Indians had learned how to live in relationship with the nature as farmers, hunters, and fishermen. For the Europeans, the land, natural resources and even the people were there to be exploited. Not only did Europeans view the Indians as ignorant, but they were seen as pagans with a superstitious religion and the goal was to convert them to Christianity or to be rid of them. Once European invaders conquered the land, it was theirs, no matter that the Indians had been there for centuries.

The contrast in attitudes was obvious in Acadia, where the Micmac and Abenakis welcomed the French as friends and were active participants with them. The Micmac were an agricultural people happy to share their knowledge with the settlers. The Micmac had a practice of hospitality, gave gifts readily even if it impoverished them, and were superb seamen ready to help the French with fishing, walrus and whale hunting, and later with the fur trade. The Micmac allowed the Acadians, who were draining marshes for farming rather than taking land used by the Micmac, to use the land but did not consider them to have ownership. When the British defeated the French and took over Acadia, however, the Micmac found themselves facing the loss of their land as the British did not recognize the Micmac as having rights to the land, believing that the Indians had lost any title to the land by the French colonization and subsequent defeat of the Indian's French allies, even though the Micmac themselves had not been defeated. When the British founded Halifax in Micmac territory in 1749, they did so without consulting the Micmac, believing the Micmac had never possessed sovereignty in the first place so there was no need to compensate them now. Wanting to continue living on their land, the Micmac refused to take an oath of fidelity to the British king and formally declared war. As soon as the British deported the Acadians, settlers began streaming onto the land that the Micmac had fought hard to protect.

Early French settlers saw the Indians as Caucasians turned brown by their living practices and intermarriage between the Acadians and the Micmac was quite common and even encouraged for a time by the French government. Micmac families often lived in the same communities as the Acadians and children born of mixed Acadian and Micmac heritage were considered Acadians. By the deportation in 1755, the Acadians were considered a mixed breed where, in another fifty years, it would be impossible to distinguish the two races. Thus we can be quite confident of Micmac ancestry.

## THE HURON AND ALGONQUIN

At the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Huron or Wendat Indians were living at Georgian Bay on Lake Huron. The Hurons, numbering perhaps 30,000 when Champlain established Quebec, had quite an advanced civilization, living in fairly stationary communities with long houses holding from eight to twenty-four families, farming about 7000 acres of corn and other vegetables which supplied food to other tribes and later to the French, with each family having its own plot for farming. Women held a high place in this society and did most of the trading and agricultural work while the men did the hunting, fishing, and construction of houses and canoes. The Hurons were part of the Iroquoian people but, at this time, were in conflict with the other Iroquois groups and were allied with the Algonquin, a nomadic people who lived between Huronia and Quebec, and who were, at the time, the most powerful and richest nation in the Great Lakes region, controlling the entire trade coming into the St. Lawrence region from the west, and who could be counted on for an inexhaustible supply of furs.

The different Indian groups had occasional skirmishes but nothing like they would experience when competition developed over the fur trade. When a delegation of Huron and Algonquin came to Quebec to make a trade alliance with Champlain in 1609, he agreed to go with them on an expedition against the Iroquois. This skirmish was the first time the Iroquois had experienced guns. In 1615, Champlain traveled to Huronia, where he joined in another raid against the Iroquois. He was wounded by an arrow and spent the winter recuperating in Huronia, returning to Quebec the following spring with a fleet of canoes loaded with furs. The Iroquois had wanted to be the middlemen in the fur trade but now the French traded directly with the Huron. Champlain's decision would soon plunge New France into an ongoing war with the Iroquois Confederacy, a group of five Indian nations including the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondagas, Cuyugas, and Senecas, that would put New France under a constant siege for many years, and create conflict between the French and Dutch, as the Iroquois allied with the Dutch in the fur trade. The Dutch supplied the Iroquois with guns while the French missionaries, intent on making the Indians Christian and culturally French, insisted that only those Hurons who became Christian could have a gun.

One disaster for the Indians as they met their new French neighbors was the outbreak of infectious diseases such as measles and smallpox, to which they had no immunity. A smallpox epidemic swept through the Huron colony, killing thousands and leaving the population at only about 9000 by 1640. The mighty Huron confederacy was now vulnerable and before long would be devastated. Their trade enemies, the Mohawk, were blocking the St. Lawrence to disrupt the fur trade and had set up trade routes to the Hudson River to trade with the Dutch and English. As their fur reserves dwindled, the Iroquois decided to seize the trade from the Huron by forcing them to either be assimilated or wiped out and, in 1648, the Iroquois unleashed a full scale attack on the Huron. Some two thousand Huron joined the Iroquois, while a few others escaped but most were massacred or starved to death the following winter. The Iroquois then continued to wage war on the Huron allies, the Petun, the Neutrals, and the Erie, since they might serve as middlemen in the fur trade, and successfully destroyed these colonies. The Ottawa living to the north of Lake Huron tried to take over the fur trade

with the French after the fall of Huronia but, in choosing the Ottawa rather than the Iroquois, the French again opted for war. The Iroquois had now become the region's dominant military power and had pushed the French colony to the brink of disaster, making it almost impossible to farm due to the quick surprise attacks of the Iroquois, and the French prepared to terminate them. Meanwhile, the Coureurs des Bois started to take over as middlemen in the fur trade, which further antagonized the Iroquois. (More on the Coureurs des Bois in Chapter 6)

In 1621, Olivier LeTardif came to New France to work in the fur trade, establishing a network of fur trading posts for the fur trading company that Champlain had based in Quebec. These fur trading posts were the link between the trappers, who bartered their furs at the posts for blankets, mirrors, hats, shirts, traps, knives and colored beads, and the fur trading company. Two years later he was sent as a trader to the Montagnais and Huron and, while there, learned the different dialects of the Huron, Algonquin, and Montagnais and hired a young Indian, Roch Manitouabewich, as his own scout and traveling companion. Manitouabewich had been converted by the French missionaries and, as part of his baptism, was given the Christian name Roch. Roch is usually considered a Huron, but it is likely his wife, Outchibabanoukoueou, was Algonquin as their daughter was listed in records as Algonquin. Children in the Indian families usually claimed the blood line of their mother. Olivier LeTardif and Roch Manitouabewich became great friends and traveled together for many years, often penetrating deep into the Canadian wilderness to make contact with some of the outlying Indian settlements.

From 1626 to 1629, LeTardif was in Quebec as clerk and interpreter for the fur trading company and, when the Kirkes, English privateers, captured Quebec in 1629, he was the person who turned over the key to the trading warehouse to the Kirkes, who for the next four years made great profits in the fur trade. When Champlain returned to Quebec in 1633 after King Charles returned Quebec to the French, LeTardif returned as Commissioner General for the new Company of One Hundred Associates. In 1637, Governor de Montmagny conceded 160 arpents of wooded land to Olivier LeTardif and Jean Nicollet, an explorer who recently had failed his attempt to find the passage to China but had discovered Lake Superior on his trip. Nicollet had lived among the Algonquin for eight or more years, married an Algonquin wife, had a daughter Madeleine, and now was back at Quebec as an agent and interpreter. That year, LeTardif married twelve and a half year old Louise Couillard, daughter of Guillaume Couillard and Guillemette Hebert, who bore him a son four years later but died that same year.

The friendship between LeTardif and Manitouabewich continued and, during the autumn of 1637, Roch and his wife with their son and daughter sought a safer refuge near the French, settling in a Huron settlement at Sillery. Sillery was on land near Quebec set aside that year for the Huron when they were driven from their home on Georgian Bay. When his daughter was ten, Roch asked his old friend, Olivier LeTardif, to adopt his daughter, so that she could be educated like a French girl, taught Christian ways and be baptized, and that marriage to a respectable French man be arranged. Marie went to live with Olivier and Louise in Quebec, where she was tutored at home for about a year, and then was enrolled in the school run by the Ursuline Nuns.

The French missionaries baptized Roch's two children, giving the boy the name Francis and the girl Marie. Olivier and Louise were Marie's godparents and, as was the custom

at that time, the godfather gave her his own name Olivier, while the priest conducting the baptism gave her the name Marie, in honor of the Virgin Mary, and also the name Sylvestre, meaning “one who comes from the forest.” The Jesuit Relations in 1638 reported that LeTardif had adopted two Indian girls and one Indian boy. The Ursuline nuns, who had arrived in Quebec in 1639 and opened a school, accepted Madeleine Nicollet and Marie Manitouabewich as their first Indian boarders in 1641 along with some of the French girls. LeTardif later boarded Marie with the family of Guillaume Hubou and Marie Rollet, Louise Couillard’s mother, to be tutored.

## MARTIN PREVOST AND MARIE MANITOUABEWICH

Martin Prevost came to New France in 1639 as an employee of the Company of One Hundred Associates. He became a close friend of Olivier LeTardif and also a good friend of the Hubous, where Marie Manitouabewich was being tutored. Martin signed as a witness in 1639 to the marriage of Helene Desportes, widow of Marie Rollet’s son, Guillaume, to Noel Morin. In the winter of 1641-42, Martin was living at Sillery, helping prepare barges to transport the first French settlers to Montreal, and served as godfather for two Indian boys. Marie Manitouabewich was living in the home of a Company employee, Noel Juchereau, and Martin, working at the fur trading store at that time, would have seen Marie, who was reported to be very attractive, go past the store frequently. In 1644, Martin asked LeTardif for permission to marry Marie.

Martin Prevost, age 33, and Marie Manitouabewich, age 14, were married in Quebec on November 3, 1644, with Olivier LeTardif and Guillaume Couillard serving as witnesses. This marriage is cited as the first marriage in New France between a Frenchman and an Indian. In reality, it would not have been the first such marriage but the first one recorded in the church. At the wedding, Father Barthelemy Vimont, pastor of the church and Jesuit Superior, said that “From a small seed comes a large tree,” hinting that there would be many more such marriages. Five years later, Pierre Boucher, future governor of Three Rivieres and founder of Boucherville, married another student of the Ursulines, Marie Ouebadinskoue, who had the Christian name Marie-Madeleine Chrestienne. However, intermarriages between the French and the Indians were not as common in the church as in the woods.

Shortly after his wedding, Martin bought land west of the Montmorency River in the seigneurie of Beauport from Jamet Bourguignon, who had come to Beauport with Seigneur Robert Giffard, and Giffard confirmed the contract. Bourguignon’s reason for selling his land with a house and barn to Martin for 1,100 livres as soon as he had a written grant for the property was, at least in part, difficulty with his neighbors. The Prevosts, however, had a good relationship with these neighbors, including Noel Langlois, with whom Martin frequently shared work.

In December, 1647, Marie gave birth to their first child, Marie-Madeleine, who unfortunately died on February 5, 1648 and was buried in Quebec with Fr. Paul LeJeune doing the burial service. Martin must have been on a business trip to France when his first child was born. Like many families at that time, the Prevosts would suffer the loss of several children. Their second daughter, Ursule, was born in December 13, 1649, and died on January 1, 1661; a second Marie-Madeleine, born January 7, 1655, died on April

1, 1662; and Antoine, born October 15, 1657, died on March 16, 1662, likely from a smallpox epidemic. Martin and Marie were left with two sons, Louis and Jean, and would add Jean-Baptiste and Therese to their family later, thus raising four children to adulthood.

In 1647, Martin invited some of his family and friends to come to Beauport, advancing the money for five families to come to Canada, which put him in debt for some time. The invitation may have come when Martin went to France in 1647 with LeTardif and Commandant Louis d'Ailleboust de Coulonge. Two of the couples who came were Pierre Vitry and Marie Prevost, Martin's sister, and Simon Savard and Marie Ourdouil, the latter couple among our family's ancestors. Martin and his fellow travelers returned to Quebec the next year.

Martin bought a house in Quebec located between the store and the river from Rene Maheu in 1655 and paid for it with beaver skins. The house was on land promised to the Jesuits and they later bought four homes located on the land, including Martin's, to build a school. Martin bought another modest house in 1660 for 230 livres in the lower village with one room, a cellar and an attic. In 1667, Martin gave up his land in the lower village and obtained land at Cap aux Diamants that had strategic value, with access to the St. Lawrence and to the village, near the cliff and Fort Saint Louis. Working at the Company store in Quebec, Martin had an opportunity to meet diverse people, including government leaders, Company officials, seigneurs, military leaders, merchants, explorers and missionaries. During these years Martin still had land in the seigneurie at Beauport which he was developing, but tensions with the Iroquois were also growing along the Beauport coast. A letter of Xainte Dupont tells about the Iroquois massacre of eight habitants from the coast of Beauport. In 1659, Martin had taken his family to the store of the Company of One Hundred Associates to protect them.

The years 1663 to 1665 were difficult ones for the colony, with the threat from the Iroquois ever present and, in February, 1663, a bad earthquake hit New France, causing significant damage and frightening the settlers. That year, King Louis XIV agreed to send soldiers to New France to lessen the menace of the Iroquois. The Carignan-Salieres regiment arrived in 1665 (see Chapter 5), as did Intendant Jean Talon. King Louis XIV also cancelled the Company of One Hundred Associates and replaced it with the West Indian Company, which would assign seigneuries and control the fur trade. The first horses also reached Quebec in 1665 but for some time the French would still use oxen and cattle for work and kept the horses for racing and pleasure.

While Martin was very busy with the fur trade and farming, his wife Marie was busy with homemaking and community service. Wives made most of the clothing for the family, grew and prepared food, raised and educated the children, who in the Provost household were growing into young adulthood. Marie was active and apparently comfortable with the farmers' wives at Beauport and the French wives of merchants, soldiers, and prestigious folks of Quebec. She was frequently a witness at marriages and often accepted the invitation to be godmother at the baptism of newborn children among both the habitants and the citizens of Quebec. Above all, she was a dedicated partner to Martin.

Marie Manitouabewich died on September 10, 1665 after twenty years of marriage and was buried on the hill in Quebec in what is now Montmorency Park. Martin, who was 54, lonely, and had four children needing care, one only a few months

old, married Marie d'Abancourt on November 8, 1665 at Beauport with Robert Giffard and Charles Cadieu as witnesses. Marie d'Abancourt had first married Jean Jolliet, a wagon-maker for the fur trading company and a friend of Martin Prevost, in 1639 and, when Jean died in 1651, she was left with a daughter, Marie, and three sons, Adrien, Louis, and Zacharie. Marie married a second time in 1651 to Geoffrey Guillot dit Lavallee and Geoffrey drowned in the St. Lawrence River in the summer of 1655 leaving Marie with three more children, Jean, Elizabeth, and Louise. Daughter Marie Jolliet had married surgeon Francois Fortin in 1660 and they were living at Beauport. Martin was quite involved in the lives of Marie's children, who had great respect for Martin, as we will note in the story of explorer Louis Jolliet. In the census of 1666, Martin and Marie d'Abancourt had two servants: Marie Houarlin and Pierre Rouzillot.

Martin was like a father to Louis Jolliet, best known for discovering the Mississippi River but a man of many other talents. Louis studied at the Jesuit College in Quebec and entered the seminary there in 1663, but sometime later abandoned the idea of the priesthood and sailed for France, the first Canadian to continue studies in Europe. In Paris and La Rochelle, along with philosophy he also studied engineering and hydrography to prepare for exploration in the west and life as a fur trader. Jolliet was a talented musician who played the organ at the Cathedral in Quebec for many years. He also held the chair of hydrography at the Jesuit college, training ship pilots with classes in chemistry, physics, geometry and navigation.

Intendant Jean Talon was interested in developing the mineral deposits of Canada and anxious to discover a route to the western ocean. In 1668, he sent Jean Pere, prospector and Coureur des Bois, to find the copper mines that the Indians were reporting by Lake Superior. That same year Martin Prevost worked on the sale to Bishop Laval of the land at Beauport that Jean Jolliet had left to his widow and children at his death, which was now grown into wild oats and weeds with the house and barn in shambles. The sale price was 2,400 livres, of which Marie would get 1,200, Adrien and Louis each 300, and Zacharie and his sister would each get 300 when they became of age. Adrien and Louis wanted their share so they could go west as coureurs des bois. In 1669, Adrien Jolliet and Louis Jolliet were each paid the 300 livres and Louis bought as trade goods "two guns, two pistols, six packets of glass beads, twenty-four axes, a gross of small bells, twelve ells of Iroquois-style cloth, ten ells of linens, forty pounds of tobacco..." Adrien left by canoe taking these goods to the Great Lakes to join Jean Pere.

Louis Jolliet was at Sault Ste. Marie in June, 1671, when Simon Daumont took formal possession of the lands in the western interior for France. Fourteen Indian nations attended this event and Louis was one of the signatories of the declaration. Meanwhile, Adrien died on his dangerous trip. Louis was back in Quebec in September, when he gave a receipt to Bishop Laval for 780 livres, of which 300 were for his deceased brother Adrien, 300 for himself and 180 for their mother. It is likely that while in Sault Ste. Marie Louis had also talked with Father Jacques Marquette about a trip to discover the Mississippi River. In Quebec, Louis got the support of Intendant Talon and Governor Frontenac for a project to explore the Mississippi and, after recruiting six other coureurs des bois, left Quebec in October, 1672, heading for the mission at Michillimakinac. Zacharie Jolliet was also on this trip but remained at Sault Ste. Marie looking after business. Zacharie had borrowed money from Martin Prevost to make the trip to the Mississippi and only reimbursed Martin nine years later, which reflects the trusting

relationship between these two men. This was typical of Martin, generous in his help to others and frequently serving as a witness on behalf of other persons.

Louis' expedition left in May, 1673, and went down the Mississippi to the present boundary between Louisiana and Arkansas. By this time they had determined that the river flowed into the Gulf of Mexico and, fearing to be captured by the Spanish, headed northward.

Returning to Quebec at the end of July, 1674, Louis' canoe was upset in the Lachine Rapids and his two companions drowned while Louis lost his diary and the map he had drawn but was rescued by fishermen after four hours in the water. After his return, Louis married Claire-Francoise Bissot, granddaughter of Guillemette Hebert, with Martin Prevost and Marie d'Abancourt signing as witnesses to this marriage. Louis continued his exploration and interest in the fur trade. In 1689 he traveled with his brother, Zacharie, to survey the situation at Hudson Bay for the colony, turned down an offer to work for the English, and encouraged the French to get the English out of Hudson Bay. In 1694, he undertook a voyage of exploration into the Labrador area. Louis died in 1700.

In 1668, Martin gave up the little property he had from the Jesuits on Fort Street in Quebec to Nicolas Juchereau. Despite the danger from the Iroquois, Martin chose to live at Beauport, where the census of 1667 lists him with 45 arpents of cultivated land and nine horned cows and able to sell his crops, including tobacco and livestock. For example, records show Martin sold two beef to butcher Pierre Parent of Notre-Dame-des-Anges in 1668 for 124 livres for the feast of Notre Dame. He was also recognized as among the select number of the elite of Quebec. When members of the Carignan-Salieres regiment were dismissed from military service in 1668, a number of them remained in New France. One military captain, Francois Pollet, married Marie-Anne Juchereau, the daughter of Martin's close friend, Nicolas Juchereau, and a granddaughter of Robert Giffard. The young couple settled in Beauport, giving birth to two daughters in their first two years of marriage, but four days after the birth of their second child, Marie-Therese, on March 24, 1672, Francois died. Parents and friends of the family were concerned and approached notary Paul Vachon to appoint Martin Prevost, friend and neighbor, as guardian for Marie-Therese Juchereau. The same year, Intendant Talon gave Marie-Anne a concession on the St. Lawrence near Martin, which she named Saint-Anne-de-la-Pocatiere. Martin served as guardian of Marie Therese for many years. At age 21, she married Pierre LeMoyne d'Iberville, and, after his death in 1706, she married Louis, comte de Bethune, lieutenant general of the army and navy.

Martin's sister, Jeanne, her husband Gaston Guay, and their children came to New France before 1673 and in 1678 acquired a fief named Saint Francis by its original owner, Jean Bourdon. Martin was very helpful to the Guay family and was present at the marriages of their children. Marguerite Guay married Noel Levasseur, a carpenter, in 1679 and this couple, parents of fourteen children, would later be deeply involved in Martin's last days. Gaston, meanwhile, died in 1682 and in 1690 Jeanne sold the farm to Martin's son, Jean-Baptiste, and his wife, Marie Giroux.

**Hommage à Martin PREVOST  
baptisé ici le 4 Janvier 1611  
ancêtre de la plupart des  
PREVOST de l'Amérique Française**

**Premier pionnier de la Nouvelle-France  
qui épousa une Amérindienne  
Marie MANITOUABEWICH-3 Novembre 1644**

Plaque honoring Martin Prevost, Quebec

#### DESCENDANTS OF MARTIN PREVOST AND MARIE MANITOUABEWICH

Martin Prevost and Marie Manitouabewich gave birth to eight children but, as mentioned, only four reached adulthood. Born in 1651, Louis married Françoise Gagnon in 1672 and, after Françoise's death, married Marguerite Carreau in 1681 at Chateau Richer. He had nine children with his two wives before he drowned at age 35 near Beauport after he became involved in the fur trade. Louis and Françoise's daughter, Marie Ann, married three husbands, Joseph Lamy, Jean David, and Clement Langlois. Jean David, a farmer, married Marie Ann at Chateau Richer in 1692 and their daughter, Marguerite David, married François Cloutier, also a farmer, and they moved to St. Joseph, Beauce, Quebec. The ancestry leading up to my grandmother, Nellie Toulouse, reflects the relocation of Prevost's neighboring farmers from Beauport to Beauce, Quebec. Paul Belanger, son of Nicolas Belanger and Marie de Rainville, farmed at Beauport and married Marie Jeanne Maheu, daughter of Pierre Maheu and Jeanne Drouin. Their daughter, Marie Jeanne Belanger, married Noël Vachon, the son of Noël Vachon and Monique Giroux, and the couple started farming at Beauport and then moved to St. Joseph, Beauce. Claire Felicite Vachon, their daughter, married Zacharie Cloutier, the son of François and Margaret David. The next generation, Marie Jean Cloutier and Louis Gagne, farmed at Beauce and their daughter, Marie Anne, married Louis Veilleux. We will meet this last couple, grandparents of Nellie Toulouse, in the chapter on the settlers at Beauce. It is significant that this group of farmers stayed tied to the soil when most of the French youth headed for the woods as coureurs des bois. Some of them were charged with aiding the American forces when Benedict Arnold traveled through Beauce in 1776 to capture Quebec during the War of Independence.

Jean Paschal, born in 1660, married Françoise Cadieux and they had one daughter before Jean died in Quebec at age 33. Jean-Baptiste, born in 1662, married Marie-Anne Giroux, daughter of Toussaint Giroux and Marie Godard, with whom he had 14 children. Widowed, Jean-Baptiste then married Genevieve Sedilot, and they added 11

more children to the Prevost family. Jean-Baptiste died at St. Augustine in 1737 at age 75. Therese, born in 1665, married Michel Giroux, brother of Marie-Anne, and they had twelve children.

Martin Prevost experienced disappointments as well as joys with the lives of his sons. His eldest son, Louis, chose to be a farmer like his father and Martin purchased land just west of his own from the widow of Martin Grouvel with the intention that Louis would be the tenant, with a specific payment to the seigneur and to his father. On February 21, 1672, Louis married Francoise Gagnon, daughter of Mathurin Gagnon and Francoise Godeau of Chateau Richer. Francoise's parents gave the young couple 300 livres to purchase furniture and Martin promised 800 livres, including 400 at the wedding, 200 the next year, and the rest in 1674. The 400 livres allowed Louis to build a house and to get tools to clear the land. Martin promised to house and feed the newlyweds and to provide them tools while they accomplished these tasks.

But Louis was not satisfied with a small landholding. On August 31, 1674, he bought additional land fronting on the St. Lawrence, some of it under cultivation and some still woods, for which he would pay 300 livres at the signing of the contract, another 150 livres on the feast of St. Michel, and the final 100 livres in 1676. Lacking money to make the second payment, Louis borrowed 150 livres from Zacharie Jolliet with a promise to make reimbursement. Louis and Francoise lived on this land for eight years, until her death on May 30, 1680, leaving Louis with four living children.

Martin rented Louis' concession to harvest the grain. Louis still had not repaid Zacharie Jolliet and now also owed money to the merchants of Quebec. After a short bereavement, Louis remarried on February 17, 1681 to Marguerite Carreau, daughter of Louis Carreau and Jeanne Lerouge. This marriage lasted five years. Louis drowned between Beauport and Quebec on May 12, 1686, leaving a pregnant widow with two sons from this marriage. His body was found fifteen days later. Martin had now lost five children.

When the inventory of Louis' estate was taken, struggles occurred over a fair settlement. Notary Fillion named Jean-Baptiste Provost and Francois Gagnon, guardians of Louis' children, agreed to rent the land now claimed by Francoise Gagnon and to pay her in produce for support of the children, even though Martin had previously been helping out and now felt like an outsider. When Louis' widow, Marguerite Carreau, entered into another marriage on November 25, 1687, with Mathieu Eringue, a soldier at Quebec, Jean-Baptiste was present but Martin was not. Mathieu switched from the life of a soldier to that of a farmer and agreed to care for Marguerite's three children, Vincent, Ange and Louis, until their fifteenth birthdays. Louis left some debts that became a source of tension in the family.

Marie-Anne, the daughter of Louis and Francoise, mentioned above as family ancestors, married Jean David in 1692. Believing that she had a right to part of her father's property, Marie-Anne and her husband, supported by her guardian, Jean-Baptiste Prevost, sought arbitration to get what they believed was due to Marie-Anne from her father's estate and also from her grandfather, Louis Prevost.

The marriage of two of Martin's children to a son and daughter of Toussaint Giroux and Marie Godard was mentioned in the chapter on Quebec. Toussaint and Martin were neighbors and friends. Jean Baptiste Prevost married Marie Anne Giroux

and Michel Giroux married Martin's youngest child, Therese, in a double wedding ceremony in 1684.

Martin Prevost was now 72 years old and feeling fatigued. There had been serious conflict among his children over possessions after the death of his wife, Marie Manitouabewich. Martin wanted to avoid another conflict and decided to divide his possessions between the families of his four children so he arranged an inventory of his goods fifteen days after the double wedding. The family of his son Louis was given the land on which they were living next to Martin's property. The three others were each given a piece of Martin's land. Martin's son, Jean Baptiste, and son-in-law, Michel Giroux, were farming the land and caring for the buildings, paying rent from their earnings, and agreed to provide housing and care for Martin. Martin thought everything would turn out well with the will, not realizing the fight that would happen among siblings over his livestock. Jean Paschal and the family of his brother, Louis, thought they should have a share in the livestock which Martin had loaned to the two brother's-in-law and demanded a monetary settlement. Martin tried unsuccessfully to arbitrate this dispute and finally turned it over to the Procurator General and the Secretary of the Sovereign Council. The fight lasted for months.

The two newly married couples blessed Martin with many grandchildren. His daughter, Therese, had twelve children and seven of these had families. Jean-Baptiste and Marie Anne had fourteen children and six of them raised families. Jean-Baptiste was widowed in 1711 and then married Marie-Genevieve Sedilot, with whom he had another eleven children. Jean-Baptiste and his brother-in-law, Michel Giroux, were also in a shipping business together. In 1690, Jean-Baptiste bought the property of Gaston Quay and Jeanne Hebert, Martin's sister.

Martin's youngest son, Jean, who used the name Jean Paschal as an adult, was only five when his mother died. He obtained property at Fargy at age 15 and worked in the area doing tasks such as building a house in Quebec with Louis Jolliet but in 1684 the monotony of farming and the appeal for adventure led him to sign on for a fur trading trip and, like other *coureurs des bois*, he did so without authorization. At this time, Jacques LeBer and his partners had a store in Montreal where they bought furs for France. In 1686, Jacques was given permission by the governor of the colony to trade for furs with the Outaouais and LeBer gave the privilege for this trade in beaver pelts to Jean Paschal Prevost and Jacques Testard that July. The two came back with their canoe loaded with beaver pelts. However, Jean Paschal did not get rich from this trade as he and Jacques already had big debts owed to the merchants for this privilege and Jean Paschal would be quite constantly in debt and frequently in conflict over debts with his siblings.

Martin was troubled that his sons would chose to be *coureurs des bois* rather than farmers, especially after his son Louis drowned pursuing this adventure. His disappointment that Jean Paschal would not settle down and start a family added further pain when Francoise Cadieu, the daughter of his neighbors Charles Cadieu and Madeleine Macord, gave birth on April 5, 1690, to a daughter identified as Jean Paschal's child. The parents decided to solve the situation by getting married in Quebec a month later but Jean Paschal kept on in the fur trade rather than being a father. During Jean Paschal's long absences, Francoise Cadieu gave birth to two more children by unnamed fathers, When his daughter, Marie Madeleine, was three, Jean Paschal entrusted her to the care of his brother-in-law, Michel

Giroux, for two years, agreeing to pay his sister's family for this care. In signing the papers of agreement, notary Paul Vachon noted that the father, who could not sign his name, was the flamboyant Jean Paschal, who completely neglected his duties as a father.

In 1694 Jean Paschal was in Montreal negotiating for merchandise to continue the fur trade with the Outaouais and it appears that he spent four years with the Outaouais because he could not afford merchandise for trading. Meanwhile, he had sold his share of the land inherited from his parents to Mathieu Eringue for 400 livres to be paid over four years but did not return to receive the payments. Through the years he continued to be irresponsible for his debts and duties until he died on a fur trading voyage in 1713. His daughter, Marie Madeleine, married Mathieu Morin in 1717. The couple had three sons and lived at Saint Leonard.

Jean Paschal was typical of the young men at the time who left farming to become *coueurs des bois*, the subject of Chapter 6. He perhaps had also inherited the Indian disposition for a nomadic lifestyle. Marie de la Incarnation, who ran the school where Marie Manitouabewich had studied, noted that almost all the Indian girls they educated in the French way of life returned to the woods. Many of the French lads also enjoyed the freedom of these adventures, often disappearing into the woods with their Indian wives.

Martin's youngest child, Therese, was only three months old when her mother died. She was raised by Martin's second wife, Marie d'Abancourt. Therese and her husband, Michel Giroux, had twelve children before she was widowed at age 28 in 1715. Five years later she married Pierre Chapelain. Therese died on May 20, 1743, at age 80.

Marie d'Abancourt was bedridden in 1678 and decided it was time to make her will. Her youngest son, Zacharie, had now married Marie Niel. Along with her three sons, she also remembered each of Martin's children in her will. Marie died in 1681, leaving Martin alone for a second time. In 1685, as noted, Martin made his will, trying to give equally to each of his four children with Marie Manitouabewich. Apparently tired by the infighting which followed, Martin elected to live in Quebec with his niece and her husband, Noel Levasseur and Marguerite Quay, at their home in lower town. Martin entered Hotel-Dieu in July of 1690 and, when he was released on July 31<sup>st</sup>, returned to Beauport at what turned out to be a crucial time. That summer, after defeating the Acadians at Port Royal, the New Englanders decided to drive the French from Canada. An expedition lead by Admiral William Phips with thirty-two vessels and twenty-two hundred men came up the St. Lawrence River and anchored on the coast at Beauport. On October 16<sup>th</sup>, Phips sent a message for Governor Frontenac to surrender. In a show of bravado, Frontenac refused, stating "A man like me is not summoned after this fashion. Let him do his best; and I will do mine." Frontenac then took the initiative. Jacques LeMoyne from Montreal directed the first cannon shot, which hit the "Six Friends," Admiral Phips' command ship. The English landed thirteen hundred men at Beauport Shoals, where they were met by gunfire from the Canadians after Nicholas Juchereau rallied all the able-bodied men of Beauport to defend the village. The English, who were repulsed in this attack, continued for several days to harass the settlers, burn some barns, and steal some cattle, but could not break down the French defenses. Meanwhile, Phipps moved in to shell Quebec but, after the "Six Friends" had been hit ten times, he was forced to cut the cable and drift out of range. The troops on the ground could not get past the St. Charles River and Phips, realizing that he was short of ammunition, ordered the troops to reboard the ships. He also feared that the St. Lawrence would freeze and his

ships would be trapped in the ice so, on October 25<sup>th</sup>, the ships sailed out of the St. Lawrence.

It is unclear where Martin Prevost was during the fighting, whether with his friend, Nicolas Juchereau, who led the Canadian forces, or away from the battle, but he no doubt lost some friends in the fighting. Jacques LeMoyne, the second of the LeMoyne brothers, was wounded in the fighting at Beauport and died on December 3. The stress of these days was tough on Martin and he re-entered Hotel Dieu on January 1, 1691. He died at Hotel-Dieu on January 27<sup>th</sup> and was buried the next day at Beauport. Throughout a long life, Martin had been well respected and had served his community devotedly. His name appeared often as a witness for the notaries regarding land deals, sales of supplies, marriages and wills. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it was unusual for someone to live to age 80, especially faced with the hard physical labor required to open fields and build a successful farm.

### A TRAGIC STORY

By the time of his death, Martin Prevost had witnessed the struggle to establish a French presence in North America. Married to an Indian wife and watching his son, Jean Paschal, take on the Indian way of life, he no doubt questioned the relationship of the French and Indians in New France. When he arrived to work for the fur trading company, he had frequent dealings with the Indians bringing furs, but he also witnessed the consequences of the French military support of the Algonquin and Huron against their enemies, the Iroquois. He saw the demise of the Huron nation, the people of Marie Manitouabewich, at the hands of the Iroquois, who were trying to become the middle men in the fur trade. The Iroquois lived south of the St. Lawrence and Lake Ontario, had depleted the beaver in their region and, besides, the beaver pelts from further north were better and brought higher prices.

This was not simply a fight to control the fur trade as the Indian nations were drawn into the long struggle between France and England which spilled over into a fight for domination of North America by the European powers. The Dutch in New York State recognized the profits to be made from the fur trade and courted the Iroquois, providing them with guns and trade items often of higher quality than those of the French. After Champlain fought with the Huron and Algonquin against the Iroquois, the Iroquois took the offensive, now armed with guns from Albany and, from that time on to the end of the century, the French would find themselves engaged in a painful struggle to protect their fur trade and the lives of the habitants. There were many sides to this struggle. When the Iroquois came to trade and make peace with their Huron and Algonquin foes, the fur trading company directors in France were quick to see that if the Iroquois made peace with the western tribes they might then divert the fur trade south to the Dutch with the French losing out.

It did not help when the French established Montreal in territory claimed by the Iroquois, and Montreal quickly became the fur trading center for New France. Several times when the Iroquois made peace with the French, furs flowed into Montreal but in 1649, the year the Iroquois almost eliminated the Huron, no pelts came to Montreal. The Iroquois often blockaded the river routes to stop the transport of furs from the west. In

1658, the colony suffered heavy losses at the hands of the Iroquois who ravished the land, burning homes and barns, destroying crops, and killing habitants. The French response was to send soldiers to subdue the Iroquois, which will be discussed in the chapter on Montreal.

For the Indians in the Eastern part of Canada, the first half of the seventeenth century brought a revolutionary change of lifestyle. In times of peace, the French and the Indians associated freely and the French adopted many of the Indian ways, including a diet of corn, squash and pumpkins. French men and women dressed much like the Indians and learned to travel by canoe, snowshoes, and toboggans. French *coureurs des bois* quickly recognized the value of Indian women as cooks and companions in their long journey for furs.

The Indians, however, paid a high price for a better standard of living. Their strong social and family values were threatened. They found themselves in much more dangerous conflicts than the skirmishes of the past between Indian nations. They were not immune to the diseases of the Europeans and suffered heavy losses due to communicable illnesses. They did not have a tolerance for alcohol and were often deceived by traders who got them intoxicated before making deals for furs. Even though these were the lands they had lived on, hunted on, and even farmed for centuries, the Europeans did not see them as having ownership rights. In the end, the Huron nation was only the first to disappear.

When I visited Ile d'Orleans while working on the family history, I realized in discovering that many of my ancestors lived there that under different circumstances I might have grown up on this beautiful island situated about five kilometers downstream from Quebec. Jacques Cartier, when he landed there on his voyage of 1535 and met the Indians who had been attracted to the island by the abundance of game and fish, wrote that they gave him eel and other fish, coarse grain, and melons.

Champlain landed on Ile d'Orleans on his first trip up the St. Lawrence in 1603 and again in 1608 when he came to found Quebec. Although he was enthused about the woods, especially the beautiful oaks, and the abundance of game and fish, he apparently did not view it as a place for settlement, perhaps because of the rocky coast. Since it could only be reached by water, Ile d'Orleans was settled only after the banks on either side of the St. Lawrence.

The Company of New France gave Ile d'Orleans and the Beupre coast to an association of eight partners, the Company of Beupre, in 1636, but these men were interested primarily in the fur trade and did nothing to develop the island. Olivier LeTardif went to France in 1645 and, while there, he met with two of the principal members of the Company of Beupre. They offered to transfer an eighth share which belonged to another partner for the sum of 1,500 pounds if he would agree to represent the company in New France and to supervise the interest of the members and settlers. LeTardif kept his eighth share in the ownership of Ile d'Orleans for 16 years before he sold it, but like the others he had little interest in developing the island as he was working instead to attract settlers to Beupre, where he was also a joint-seigneur.

In 1648, Francois de Chavigny and his wife, Eleanore Grandmaison, settled on the western part of Ile d'Orleans, probably to avoid the Iroquois, at a time when there were only two or three other families living on the island. After Olivier LeTardif granted Françoise and Eleanore a seigneurie, named fief de Beaulieu, in 1649, Eleanore was the first French woman to settle on Ile d'Orleans. Francois died on a trip to France in 1651. The next year, Eleanore married a third time to Jacques Gourdeau, who was murdered by one of his servants in 1663, after which she married a fourth time to Jacques de Cailhaut, who died ten years later. Eleanore lived another 20 years and became well known on the island.

When the Iroquois were wiping out the Huron, more than 300 Huron spent the winter of 1650 in Quebec. The Jesuits rented land from Eleanore and on March 29, 1651 Huron who had camped at Quebec and others dwelling in Sillery moved to Ile d'Orleans. They were attacked by the Iroquois in 1654 and again in 1656, when 71 were killed or taken prisoner, at which time they moved back to Quebec.

Ile d'Orleans was controlled by a number of seigneurs in the early years, including Martin Prevost's friends, Jean Juchereau and Nicolas Juchereau. In time, Ile d'Orleans was divided into eight seigneuries or arriere fiefs (sub-seigneuries), where the seigneurs had a special place in church and collected a small payment from the habitants, but were themselves habitants in anything else. Settlement was well underway by 1660 but colonists had to be quite self-sufficient because they were cut off from the other colonies of New France. Bishop Laval became interested in the settlement of Ile

d'Orleans and between 1662 and 1668 he succeeded in buying the rights of the initial eight proprietors or their heirs. Churches were soon erected in each seigneurie and Bishop Laval was busy assigning concessions of land. Most of the first settlers chose to settle where they were sheltered by the cliffs at Saint Pierre and Sainte-Famille. By The first census in 1666, many of our ancestors' names appeared on the north side of the island at Sainte-Famille, which had excellent soil for grains and vegetables and rapidly filled with habitants. In France, peasants worked very hard to get a small piece of land, while here the habitant could easily start with a larger plot of land and also buy land for his sons. Where many of the French went to bed hungry most nights, here the abundance of game and fish and wheat for bread meant the families were better fed and visitors remarked that the youth were big, well-built, and vigorous. Before 1665, many of the women recruited for marriage in New France were orphans not strong enough for the ardor of farm work, but then the French government began to look for healthy peasant girls and a great number of the men on Ile d'Orleans married King's Daughters. The habitants built a stone parish church at Sainte-Famille in 1669, the island had its first teacher by 1673, and the Sisters arrived to open a parish school at Sainte-Famille in 1685, by which time the population of Sainte-Famille was over 400.

#### NICOLAS PATERNOSTRE AND MARGUERITE BRETON

Nicolas Paternostre came to Canada at age 22 after learning the trade of cloth merchant or tailor in France. Nicolas arrived in Quebec in the service of Charles Sevestre, who was clerk at the warehouse of Quebec and also provost judge.

Marguerite Breton of Paris came to Canada as a Filles a Marrier, probably after the death of her father in 1651. When she arrived in Quebec, she was helped by Marie Favry, the widow of Pierre Legardeur who had died at sea in 1648 leaving Marie with six children, four still at home needing care. Ultimately, two of Marguerite's half sisters, Marie-Sainte Vie and Marie Vie, also came to the colony and married respectively Jean Poitras and Hubert Simon.

On October 25, 1651, at the house of Marie Favry, friends of Nicolas and Marguerite gathered in the presence of notary Andouart to witness their engagement. Charles Sevestre was present as were members of Marie Favry's family and a number of citizens of Quebec, among them Jean Lemire and Guillaume Gauthier. Marguerite signed her name but Nicolas could not sign his. They were married at the church of Notre Dame of Quebec on October 30<sup>th</sup>.

In January, 1652, Nicolas met with Jesuit father Jean Dequen at Sillery and was ceded a piece of land with two arpents of river frontage and twenty arpents deep, with Jean Lemire and Jean Noel as his neighbors. Nicolas was obliged to build a house as soon as possible and would pay cens and rent each year on the feast of Saint Jean. Perhaps Nicolas was still trying to support his family as a tailor or it may be that he was struggling to learn farming skills as it is unknown how much Nicolas developed this land before he sold it in 1656. Meanwhile, in August, 1655, he took a six year lease of a piece of land with one arpent frontage belonging to Guillaume Gauthier, this time promising to build a barn. He left that commitment in 1658 and on March 10<sup>th</sup> of that year acquired

another farm with two arpents frontal land on the St. Charles River and 39 arpents depth in the seigneurie of Notre-Dame-des-Anges.

Fortunately, Nicolas Paternostre had a good neighbor, Jean Normand. Likely by mistake, Nicolas built his house on land belonging to Normand, and to avoid disputes or a lawsuit, Nicolas moved the house to his own land at his expense and Normand agreed to help Nicolas dig a well similar to the one Nicolas had dug on Normand's land.

In February, 1662, Nicolas got a concession from Charles de Lauzon, son-in-law of Robert Giffard, and moved his family to the seigneurie of Charny-Lirec in the parish of Sainte-Famille on Ile d'Orleans. Here his land had two arpents of frontage on the St. Lawrence and a total of 132 arpents. He likely now devoted all his time to farming with the help of his growing sons. By the census of 1666, Nicolas and Marguerite had seven children. The next year they declared that they had nine arpents under cultivation and nine head of cattle in the stable. In 1675, Nicolas purchased another piece of land with three arpents of frontage by 30 arpents deep with no buildings for 300 livres. He was to pay 25 livres in cash and the remainder over time with interest.

The Paternostre family apparently was fairly quiet, good hearted and generous as we do not find their names in the records very often. Nicolas is listed as a favorable witness before the Sovereign Council in the case of Francois Blondeau, who was accused of having lost his canoe. Another record indicates that Intendant Jean Talon ordered Nicolas to give two minots of wheat to the head of the prisons "for the subsistence of the prisoners," perhaps to repay a debt.

Nicolas and Marguerite's little white-washed house was huddled with others lining the St. Lawrence. Behind the house was a barn and fields and further back the forest that provided lumber and firewood. Land concessions were long and narrow, stretching inland from the river, to give everyone access to the river and its abundance of eel, which were salted and preserved in barrels. Each farmer paid a tax and was expected to present grain and fowls to the seigneur on St. Martin's Day and to do three to six days chores for the seigneurie. They raised flax to weave into cloth and sheep for wool to make garments. After the harvest was in, their day consisted of chores and gathering firewood, with time to visit the neighbors and to socialize. Dancing was a favorite recreation and every village had a least one fiddler.

The homes were built of rough hewn timbers or stone, with floors of hewn timber. They were low buildings with deep pitched roofs, usually with a single doorway and few windows. Homes generally had two or three rooms on the ground floor, with the living room serving also as the dining room and kitchen. A fireplace at one end of the building was usually the sole means of heating the home and generally the only means of cooking. The house at night was lit by homemade tallow candles. Parents usually had a private bedroom downstairs, while children slept on straw mattresses on the floor of the loft or attic reached by ladder.

On Sundays, the Paternostres dressed up and went to church at their parish of Sainte-Famille. It was here that the population first gathered on the island. Land had been reserved for a church in the 1650's, but it was 1669, after Bishop Laval bought the seigneurie, that construction began on the church building. The parish church was an emblem of village solidarity, the center of the community as the habitants did not separate their religion from their daily life. One priest was surprised to see county girls who tended cows during the week coming to church with lace and hoop skirts, wearing

their hair in a very elaborate, high-piled style. After Mass on Sundays, the habitants spent the rest of the day in visiting neighbors or enjoying amusements.

In the census of 1666, Nicolas listed his occupation as tailor, but no evidence exists that he practiced this trade on the island. The Paternostres gave birth to eleven children. Nicolas and Marguerite's three daughters all married and raised families. Marie married Claude Plante, raised eleven children, and died at Sainte-Famille. Marguerite married Pierre Plante, raised seven children, and died at Saint Jean on the island. Elisabeth, the youngest daughter, married at Montreal to Jean Ferron, a soldier, raised nine children, and was buried at Montreal.

Like many young men of the time, members of the Paternostre family headed for the Montreal area, attracted by the lure of the fur trade. Elisabeth's husband, Jean, and perhaps four sons of the Paternostres became coureurs des bois. Jean, second child and our ancestor, first married Marie Brunet, with whom he had two children, and three years later he married Marie Robidoux, adding four more children to the family including our ancestor Jean Francois Patenaude. Jean died at the hospital in Montreal on June 25, 1699. Charles married Francois Sequin at Boucherville, entered into the fur trade the summer of his wedding, and fathered ten children. Pierre married Catherine Brunet, a sister of Marie, and they raised ten children. Gervais may also have entered the fur trade, as he returned from the west in poor health and died after two years as a patient at Hotel Dieu, likely from tuberculosis.

What happened to the other four sons of Nicolas and Marguerite? The eldest and first named Pierre died young. Louis remained a bachelor, worked at least for a time as a servant at Hotel Dieu, and died at age 43. Nicolas had a concession of land from the Nursing Sisters in 1684, was at Saguenay, a fur trading post, in 1688, and then disappears. Marin, the youngest son of the Paternostres, was ceded all rights to his family's two pieces of land in March of 1695. Marin married Marguerite Mercier, and they raised seven children, including three daughters who became nuns. Marin died at Hotel Dieu in Quebec, where one of his daughters was serving.

Nicolas Paternostre died in 1679 at age 50, while some of his children were still minors. In the register of deaths at Sainte-Famille, where he was buried, their pastor, Father Lamy, described Nicolas as a man of "self-sacrifice and devotion." Marguerite continued to raise and educate her children. She was still alive when her son Marin took over the family farms but died at Sainte-Famille sometime after November, 1698.



Nicolas Paternostre and Etienne Corriveau Memorial, Sainte Famille, Ile d'Orleans

## NICOLAS VERIEUL AND MARGUERITE HYARDIN

It is questionable whether Nicolas Paternostre knew Nicolas Verieul and his wife Marguerite Hyardin, since they only acquired land at Saint Francois on Ile d'Orleans in 1681. However, as years went on and names changed, from Paternoster to Patenaude and Verieul to Veilleux, the two families would be united as our ancestors after Vital Perras and Marguerite Patenaude moved to Brooks, Minnesota, and Louis Toulouse, son of Jean Toulouse and Archange Veilleux, and his wife, Catherine Rochford, settled at Lambert, Minnesota.

Nicolas Verieul, whose baptismal name is listed as Verieu, came from Normandy to Canada in 1658 as a sailor. On April 25, 1659, he signed on as a sailor to serve Pierre Emouys, Sieur de Saint-Jacques, at a salary of 27 livres a month for four months hauling cargo up and down the St. Lawrence. He developed a friendship with Richard Dumesmil, another Norman, and they cultivated two farms together a bit west of the river at St. Anne de Beaupre. The two farmers leased the most easterly part of their land in 1663 to Isaac Lemay for two years.

Jean Picard, a neighbor, inadvertently cut off a piece of land that Richard and Nicolas owned and, when they confronted him about this, they agreed to leave him an arpent of land where he could build a barn and have a space large enough to turn a cart on the condition that he remit an arpent of his land to them, cleared and ready to be seeded. While living at St. Anne de Beaupre, Nicolas gave a gift to help build the second church there.

Marguerite Hyardin from Paris came to Canada in 1665 as one of the Filles du Roi (Chapter on Montreal). In October, 1665, notary Aubert drew up a marriage contract between Marguerite and Nicolas Verieul at the Cap Tourmente home of Julien Fortin. The contract, which Marguerite signed but Nicolas could only make his "X", stated that whenever one died, the remaining spouse would inherit the estate of the other. Nicolas and Marguerite married in December, 1665, also at the home of Julien Fortin.

Nicolas and Richard severed their mutual affairs in January, 1666. Nicolas held his piece of land in what today is the center of the town of Beaupre, likely continuing as a sailor since the 1667 census shows him with eight arpents of cultivated land and a hired hand, Jean de la Fond.

In March of 1676, Nicolas acquired property with three arpents frontage from Pierre Gagnon in exchange for his property at Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupre, which he soon transferred to Jacques Cloutier and Jean Gagnon. We next find Nicolas and Marguerite on property of 5.8 arpents frontage in the parish of Saint Francois on the north coast of Ile d'Orleans. Nicolas was no longer involved as a sailor but would travel to the mainland by a sailing bark or canoe in the summer and over the ice by sleigh in winter. Farmers on Ile d'Orleans sold part of their wheat and produce to the settlers in the city of Quebec. On March 20, 1697, Nicolas and his wife ceded a piece of this land and their house to their son-in-law, Jacques Baudon, while holding on to a piece of land on the west side, which in 1708 they gave to their twenty-six year old son, Joseph.

Nicolas and Marguerite had nine children. Their oldest son, Nicolas, our ancestor, was born in 1667 and married Marie-Anne Mesny in April, 1692, at Sainte-Famille. This couple had four children before Marie-Anne died and Nicolas then married Marie Duchesne in 1705 at Ile d'Orleans, fathering another four children, including

Augustin, our ancestor, who now spelled the family name Veilleux. Marie Duchesne's parents were long time farmers on Ile d'Orleans, where Pierre Duchesne had come sometime before 1664 to work for another resident of the island. In January, 1666, Pierre married Catherine Rivet, one of the first Filles du Roi to come to New France. The next month he received a concession of land at Sainte-Famille, which he farmed for 30 years. Marie was the seventh of twelve children born to the Duchesnes. When Pierre Duchesne died in 1697, Catherine Rivet went to live with their daughter, Elizabeth, until her death in 1723.

Nicolas Verieul died at age 80 on October 17, 1714 at Saint Francois after being in a weakened condition for some time, and his son Nicolas died at Saint Francois in 1719. Marguerite Hyardin lived another six years before her death on May 29, 1720, at Saint Francois. Even though early deaths from accidents, child-bearing, and illnesses were common, many of the settlers lived to an advanced age.

### MORE ILE D'ORLEANS ANCESTORS

Charles Pouliot came to Canada about 1650 as a master carpenter, a trade he had learned from his father, after hearing a presentation on New France by Robert Giffard, who was in France on a recruiting mission. He likely came as an engage and was living in the home of Mathurin Meunier in 1653. He became a landowner at Saint-Anne-de-Beaupre in 1653 when Meunier sold him half of his property. In 1658 he hired out as a carpenter to Nicolas Huot, Guillaume Couture and Claude Charron and in 1662 bought land near Chateau Richer.

In 1662 he signed a marriage contract with Marie Fayette, a Filles a Marrier from Paris, a young woman who had just annulled her marriage contract with Jean Durand, who chose to marry an Indian maiden instead. But Marie had the contract with Charles Pouliot annulled and married carpenter Nicolas Huot from Ile d'Orleans that summer. Three years later Charles asked to marry Francoise Meunier, the daughter of his friends Mathurin Meunier and Francoise Fafard, who themselves had been the first French couple married at Montreal in 1647, shortly after Francoise Fafard arrived in New France as a Filles a Marrier. Francoise Meunier was not quite fourteen and Charles was thirty-nine.

In New France, seigneurs were expected to build a mill to grind grain since the cost of construction and maintenance would be beyond an individual habitant's means, with the understanding that the seigneur would keep the mill in good condition but the habitants were obligated to have their grain ground there. In 1664, Charles signed a contract to design and build a mill to grind grain for Charles de Lauzon, the seigneur at Charny. In part, the contract reads that "Pouliot is pledged to build and erect a windmill and everything pertaining to its operation: this mill to be placed and set up on the Island of Orleans on the spot which shall be shown to him; it is agreed that the walls of the first floor of the said mill shall be of lath and plaster of eight inches thickness, whether they be solid or hollow, with suitable floors and stair-cases, and that the said Pouliot shall be obliged to furnish, at his own expense, everything necessary to the body and interior of the mill, as well as the requisite wood and planks to form the wings of the mill; and that he must have set up the said mill by the month of September of next year agreed upon in

1665...for which the said seigneur of Charny has bound himself to pay to the said Pouliot the sum of a thousand livres in pieces of legal tender or in beavers at the current price.” This first mill on the island was at Sainte-Famille. Charles had to cut down the trees, hew the beams, and cut up and assemble the milling parts. In 1668, he built a windmill at the seminary in Quebec and worked on repairing the cathedral. In 1671 he built another mill on Ile d’Orleans.

Charles obtained a land concession at Sainte-Famille from Bishop Laval in 1667 and moved to the island about 1670, continuing to work as a carpenter and to farm only incidentally. In 1675 he was hired to build the first church at Saint Laurent, a wooden building fifty feet long by twenty wide. In 1683, Bishop Laval said of this church: “It is made of lath and plaster and extremely badly roofed.”

Charles got in trouble with the law at least once. Marin Varin, a servant in the employ of Charles Legardeur, ran away and Charles gave him refuge for fifteen days. When he was discovered harboring a fugitive, he was fined 100 sous.

Charles and Francoise had ten children. Their fifth child, Jean, our ancestor, was born at Sainte-Famille on December 26, 1674. He married Madeleine Audet in 1697 at Montmorency and died at Saint Laurent in 1745, while Madeleine died at Saint Laurent in 1761. Jean and Madeleine’s son, Jean, was born in 1699 at Saint Laurent, married Anne Denis in the same community, and they were the parents of Marguerite Pouliot who, with her husband Ignace Quirion, were the parents of Therese Quirion, the wife of Charles Toulouse.

Charles Pouliot died on August 16, 1699 and was buried at Saint Laurent. Francoise Meunier married Jean-Paul Maheu in 1700. She was buried at Saint Laurent in 1703.

Madeleine Audet’s parents were also residents of Ile d’Orleans. Her father, Nicolas Audet, came to Canada in 1663 as an engage for Bishop Laval. At first he worked for the bishop on the Saint-Joachim farm near Cap-Tormente and later he was the caretaker and porter for the seigneurial manor of the bishop in Quebec City. In greeting the Bishop’s guests, Nicolas displayed a quality often noted among the men of New France, namely that they were very courteous. In return for his services, Bishop Laval granted him a concession of three arpents frontage on Ile d’Orleans in the parish of Sainte-Famille on June 22, 1667. He hired his neighbors, Robert Boulay and Guy Boivin “to help him build a house to be finished within one year from this day.”

Now that he had a house, Nicolas needed a wife. He found one in Madeleine Despres, who came to Canada as one of the Filles du Roi in 1670 at age 17, bringing with her goods worth an estimated 200 livres for her dowry. On September 15, 1670, Nicolas and Madeleine were married at Sainte-Famille. They also received the promised King’s gift of 50 livres. Madeleine could sign her name but Nicolas was unable to sign his.

Nicolas and Madeleine gave birth to twelve children, with the first two boys dying at an early age, and all but the last one were born at Sainte-Famille. Their fifth child, Madeleine, and her husband Jean Pouliot raised nine children, all baptized at Saint-Laurent on Ile d’Orleans. As so often happened that several marriages occurred between members of the same families, the next child, Joseph, married Jeanne Pouliot, a sister of Jean.

The 1681 census shows that Nicolas Audet had fifteen arpents of land under cultivation and had acquired six cattle. Nicolas became very ill in 1689 and spent much of the summer at Hotel Dieu in Quebec but he continued to work hard on the farm and in 1696 obtained another concession of three arpents river frontage, which he gave to his son, Jean-Baptiste, in 1698. By the time Nicolas died at age 59 in December, 1770, and was buried at Saint Jean, he had 75 arpents under cultivation, a nearly new house, a shed and stable. Madeleine was left with seven children still at home and cared for the family for twelve more years before she died at age 56 in 1712 and was buried next to Nicolas.

Robert Boulay, a drapery weaver, was recruited by Pierre Boucher to come to New France and, after borrowing money for the ocean crossing, Robert arrived in 1662 with his wife, Francoise Garnier, and their daughter, Jacqueline, on the ship carrying Pierre Boucher back to New France. Of the 100 men on board, thirty three died from hunger and thirst in a difficult crossing. Robert went to Ile d'Orleans, where he received a land concession at Sainte-Famille, and four years later added another concession of land at Saint-Jean. He sold his first concession in 1670 and the second in 1675, then moving off the island to Riviere du Sud. Robert and Francoise had ten children. Their youngest son, Paul, married Marie Francoise Paquet, daughter of Maurice Paquet and Francoise Forget, and they were the fourth generation ancestors of Julienne Boucher, who married Julien Patenaude.

Jean Helie came to Ile d'Orleans as a young farmer and bought land there in 1669, where he lived the rest of his life. His wife, Jeanne Labbe, came to New France as a Filles du Roi in 1669 and married Jean soon after. They had five children baptized at Sainte-Famille. Their son, Pierre, married Marie Rosalie Pepin, daughter of Robert Pepin and Marie Crete of Beauport, and entered a second marriage with Marie Gromelin. The son of Pierre and Marie Rosalie, Joseph, married Marie Josette Corriveau, daughter of Guillaume Corriveau and Marie-Francoise Remillard and parented Marie Helie (aka Genevieve Breton), who married Francois Veilleux, the great-grandson of Nicolas Veilleux.

One of the best known landowners on Ile d'Orleans was Paul Vachon, whom we met already at Beauport. Paul served for many years as the Siegneurial Notary on Ile d'Orleans as well as at Beauport and his name is on many documents from the island. Paul received his first land on Ile d'Orleans in the parish of Saint-Pierre in 1660 and had Thomas LeSeuer caring for this farm because of his other duties. He sold this farm in 1678 but continued his notarial duties until he retired in 1693. The Vachon name is still well known on Ile d'Orleans but is also common in the Beauce area, where Claire Francoise Vachon, the fourth generation Vachon, was the grandmother of Marie Gagne, the wife of Louis Veilleux.

## SAINTS AND SINNERS TOO

Pierre Miville, a native of Switzerland, had served as a guard for Cardinal Richelieu in France and brought his family to Quebec in 1649 as part of a group recruited by the Company of Habitants. Pierre, a master cabinet maker, quickly accepted land in the vicinity of Quebec. Pierre and his wife, Charlotte Maugis, were quite influential in the community before Pierre was imprisoned in 1664 and accused of having “committed

sedition and intentionally, through open force, accompanied individuals to kidnap passengers sent by the King..." For his sentence, he was to be "banished in perpetuity from Quebec and relegated to his house on the coast...and not to leave the area of the said Seigneurie of Lauzon on penalty of the gallows." Pierre apparently did not lay low for long as we soon find him busy building large ships, including one of 300 to 400 tons capacity. The crew working with him included his sons, Jacques and Francois Miville, the latter married to and raising a large family with Marie Langlois, the daughter of Noel Langlois and Francoise Grenier. After Marie died, Francois married Jeanne Savonnet, a Filles du Roi, and their only child, Marie Francoise Miville, was the fifth generation ancestor of Margueirte Patenaude.

Pierre Miville wanted to bring other Swiss colonists to New France and had the support of Intendant Jean Talon, who stated that "I am persuaded that one man from his nation is worth at least two from ours for what is done in this country." Some of the recruited Swiss colonists settled on Ile d'Orleans, including Jean Terme, mentioned in the chapter on Acadia, who was granted a lot with three arpents frontage in the seigneurie of Argenteney. A bachelor, Jean lived with one of his neighbors, Jacques Delaunay. It was Terme who took an interest in Marguerite Boileau, the wife of Jean Serreau de Saint-Aubin. Serreau had warned Terme several times to stay away from his wife but his warnings went unheeded and, when Serreau met Terme and Marguerite arm-in-arm on the beach, he snatched a stick in his anger and struck Terme, killing him on the spot.

Earlier it was related how Serreau quickly escaped to France, received a pardon from King Louis XIV, and returned to Canada to present this evidence to the Sovereign Council. Council members were offended that the French Court had granted this reprieve and, after their own investigation, accepted the French pardon but condemned Serreau to pay ten pounds to Hotel-Dieu and ten pounds to the priest for Masses for Jean Terme. When Serreau went back to the land he had occupied in the Seigneurie of Argentenay, the wife of the Seigneur, Madame d'Ailleboust, had him ordered off the land he had occupied for five years. When Serreau appealed to the Sovereign Council, the Council upheld the sentence and, seeing that Serreau had blasphemed God, condemned him to pay a five sol fine for the poor at Hotel-Dieu. Before he and Marguerite moved to Acadia, Serreau was also accused of trading intoxicating liquor to the Indians.

Lent was a strict season in New France. During Lent in 1670, Louis Gaboury, a farm worker on the Lirec fief, had eaten meat without asking permission from the church, and was accused by one of his neighbors, Etienne Beaufils, before the provost judge of Lirec. Louis was tried and found guilty. The provost judge sentenced him to be tied to the public post for three hours, then brought to the doorsteps of the chapel at Ile d'Orleans where, on his knees, with his hands tied and bare headed, he had to ask for forgiveness from God, the King, and the Justice. He was also ordered to pay a fine of twenty pounds applicable to the charities of his parish and to give his accuser one cow and a monetary sum.

Louis thought the penalty was too harsh and appealed to the Sovereign Council, but the Council's judgment wasn't much easier as they found his appeal null and void and ordered "Gaboury to pay to the said Desmoulins (attorney for Etienne Beaufils), the sum of sixty pounds, comprising capital and interest for the value of the said cow, and as an act of mercy, twenty-five pounds fine, to wit, one-half to the funds of the parish church of the Island of Ile d'Orleans in reparation for having eaten meat during Lent

without having asked permission, and the other half to the bailiff Levasseur... and he is forbidden to repeat the offense on pain of corporal punishment, and costs according to the settlement with shall be made.”

Louis Gaboury had come to New France as a soldier. In 1665, he married Nicole Souillard, who came to Canada at age 25 in 1665 as a Filles du Roi. Louis and Nicole settled at Sainte-Famille, where their second child, Anne, our ancestor, was born. After Louis was punished for eating meat, he was no doubt embarrassed and perhaps angry as he left Ile d'Orleans soon after his trial and moved to the seigneurie of La Durantaye. Louis and Nicole raised seven children. Their daughter, Anne, married Francois Remillard, and they were the parents of Marie Remillard, already mentioned as the wife of Guillaume Corriveau.

The Gaboury family connected us with another bit of history when a descendant, Marie-Anne Gaboury, married Jean-Baptiste Lagimodiere and moved west to become the first white woman to live in Western Canada. Lagimodiere had left his home in Quebec to become a coureur des bois in the fur trade hired by the Hudson's Bay Company. Contrary to the custom of this time, Marie-Anne traveled to the west with her husband and, after their first child was born at Pembina, North Dakota, the Lagimodieres settled in what is now northern Saskatchewan for a few years until they heard that Lord Selkirk was establishing a permanent colony at the Red River and returned to the new settlement in 1812. Lord Selkirk gave them a tract of land near the Red River, which they successfully homesteaded for many years. Here they had six more children, including Julie Lagimodiere, the future mother of Louis Riel. Marie-Anne died at age 95, living to see Manitoba become part of the Canadian Confederation after Louis Riel had led the Red River Rebellion of 1869-1870 in an attempt to bring Manitoba into the United States.

Claire-Francoise Pare from Paris came to New France as a sixteen year old Filles a Marier after both her parents died. In 1661 Claire-Francoise married Jacques Baudon at Beauport, who had also emigrated from France. Jacques and Claire Francoise had four children and were living at Sainte-Famille when Jacques died, probably at the beginning of 1669. Living as a poor widow on Ile d'Orleans and trying to support her family of four children for the next ten years, Claire-Francoise had four more children out of wedlock. Three of these died young, while Anne lived to marry Jean Charland.

Jacques Bluteau came to New France at age 18 and found work on Ile d'Orleans as a “travaillant” or un-enlisted day laborer. He lived on this land for eighteen years before getting his own land at Sainte-Francois. Jacques met the widow Claire-Francoise Pare when she was about 35. They married on November 3, 1679 and purchased land at Sainte-Famille, where the 1681 census lists Jacques with 10 arpents of cultivated land and three cattle. With the ongoing conflicts between the French and the English, Jacques signed aboard the ship Le Frontenac on April 26, 1697 to fight the British, especially at Boston. We know that this ship captured at least one British ship during the fighting. Jacques returned to Sainte-Famille when peace came in 1700 and lived on land belonging to Abraham Baudon, Claire-Francoise's son.

In 1702, Jacques and Claire-Francoise leased a farm on which there was “a house of pieces on pieces covered with planks consisting of a heated room and two little rooms with floor above and below and a fireplace in the cob.” They added five children to their family but only two of these lived to adulthood. Their son Etienne, born in 1686, married Marie Deblois, daughter of Ile d'Orleans' farmer Joseph Deblois and his wife, Marie

Marguerite Rousseau. Etienne and Marie had eleven children before Marie died and Etienne married a second time to Marie-Anne Guyon. Etienne and Marie Debois' daughter, Marie Reine Bluteau, married Pierre Gagne, the grandfather of Louis Toulouse. The Deblois descendants of Joseph's parents, Gregoire Deblois and Francoise Viger, a Filles a Marier, continue to be well known on Ile d'Orleans.

In 1710 Jacques went into his woods to cut trees for firewood. And dead tree fell on him and crushed his skull. He died at Hotel-Dieu on February 1, 1710. In 1715, Claire-Francoise sold land with two arpents of frontage to their son Etienne. In the census of 1725, Etienne had a house, barn, stable, and sixty arpents of cultivated land at Sainte-Famille. Claire-Francoise died on Ile d'Orleans in January, 1720, at age 70.

## EXODUS

It did not take long for most of the land on Ile d'Orleans to be occupied, with houses and barns lining the shores of the St. Lawrence all around the island. In Sainte-Famille, for example, with its desirable farm land, 65 rotures had been conceded by 1667. Children of the habitants expected to inherit equal parts of the parental land and, as farmers subdivided up their land, many individual holdings became very narrow and difficult to farm, while the tendency toward larger farms soon became apparent as well. This tendency slowed for a bit during the wars with the Iroquois at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when the colony became a series of fortified camps where people could take refuge along with their livestock. The population of Ile d'Orleans almost doubled between 1712 and 1739, although there was no new land to concede and, as a result, Ile d'Orleans produced a steady outflow of grown sons and daughters. Sons were important for farm work but many of the young men headed for the fur trade, where the freedom from heavy farm tasks, a life away from the restrictions of their parents and priests, the lure of adventure and the hope for quick profits attracted many restless youth away from the farmlands. Young women were still scarce and many young men could not find a wife, yet women were quite essential to farm life. Youth were drawn to the free and easy Indian lifestyle, the attraction of Indian girls, and the feats of endurance on the long trips west. Montreal, on the edge of the wilderness, grew rapidly with the soldiers and men engaged in the fur trade and we soon find a concentration of our ancestral family there.

The island where the city of Montreal now sets was originally inhabited for thousands of years by the Iroquois. French explorer Jacques Cartier set foot on the island in 1535 and claimed it for France, naming the mountain “Mont-Royal”, which became “Montreal.” The Huron called it Hochelaga.

The Society of Notre-Dame, led by Jesuit Jerome le Royer and a group of wealthy French benefactors, wanted to establish a mission dedicated to evangelizing the Indians and hired Paul de Chomedey de Maisonneuve in 1641 to found a settlement at Montreal known as Ville-Marie. About 50 men and women, including Jeanne Mance, one of Maisonneuve’s first recruits and a woman who was to figure prominently in the history of Montreal, arrived on May 17, 1642, and quickly set about building a fort to protect themselves from the Iroquois. They maintained peaceful relations with the Algonquins but, when the Iroquois discovered the settlement in 1643, a long conflict erupted to threaten the new colony. Jeanne Mance, the first lay nurse to practice in Canada, soon established her hospital to serve the little community.

Among the group who arrived at Montreal in 1642 was Augustin Hebert, who it appears had come to New France in 1637. In 1646, Hebert returned to France, where he married Adrienne DuVivier, and two years later the couple and their first child, Jeanne, came to New France and settled at Montreal. Augustin was now 25 and Adrienne was 22. Augustin received a large parcel of land on the island and his trades were listed as master-mason, merchant, fur trader and farmer. Their fourth child, our ancestor, Ignace, was born on October 28, 1652 in Montreal. Ignace and his wife, Jeanne Messier, daughter of Anne Lemoine and Michel Messier, were the great-grandparents of Marie Madeleine Cadoret, the wife of Andre Patenaude, a fifth generation Paternostre in New France. Augustin died in September, 1653, while defending the colony from the Iroquois and the next year Adrienne married Robert LeCavelier, with whom she bore three more children.

Another member of the original group settling in Montreal was Charles LeMoyne, the brother of our ancestor, Anne Lemoine, who had come to New France at age 17. After serving as an interpreter with the Huron missions, Charles settled in Montreal as a guide and a fighter for the defense of the settlement and was captured and released by the Iroquois. He was granted land on the south shore of the St. Lawrence opposite Montreal, which he named Longueuil, one of the most prosperous seigneuries in New France. Montreal was ideally located for trading with the interior of the continent and, before long, Charles and his brother-in-law, Jacques LeBer, entered the fur trade and became quite wealthy. In 1654, he married Catherine Primot, who bore him thirteen children.

During the winter of 1643, the Mohawk (one of the Iroquois tribes) began harassing the settlement, picking off anyone who dared venture out into the countryside. Settlers soon became tired of being cooped up in the fort and began to ask Governor Maisonneuve for land near the fort for planting. In the summer of 1651 the Iroquois renewed their attacks on the St. Lawrence Valley, terrorizing the people with horrendous deaths of settlers so at Montreal Maisonneuve ordered everyone to leave their lands and take refuge at the fort. 200 Iroquois warriors stormed the hospital and tried to set it on fire, but were forced to withdraw by sixteen soldiers who rushed to defend it. Jeanne Mance had to leave the hospital and allow it to become a fortified post.

As a result of the war with the Iroquois, other Indian tribes would not come to Ville-Marie, which had not traded for a beaver skin in the past year. The habitants were forbidden from trading with the Indians, which ultimately led to the illegal *coureurs des bois* and, as a Jesuit Le Mercier noted, “our entire French youth is planning to go trading with the Nations, who are disseminated all over the territories, and they hope to come back with beaver pelts from many hunting seasons.” The stores at Quebec were empty and people began talking about abandoning the colony, which still had only 60 residents. Arguing to maintain the young community, Jeanne Mance convinced Maisonneuve to go to France to recruit soldiers; he returned with 100 soldiers and an assortment of sixty plowmen, carpenters, masons, shoemakers and other craftsmen in 1653. This group included Marguerite Bourgeoys, who belonged to a teaching order and planned to establish a school in the colony. However she found only one school age child and at first cared for the sick and the poor. The hospital was now used to defend against the Indians, so Jeanne Mance was using a building near the fort as a hospital and, before long, Marguerite used the attic as a classroom. The soldiers who came at this time were credited with saving Ville-Marie from extinction.

In 1657, Jeanne Mance and Marguerite Bourgeoys decided to go to France to plead for more funding for the colony. In the meantime, an order came in 1658 from the French King forbidding the people of New France from leaving the colony without the Governor’s permission in the form of a permit. Until now, many of the indentured servants had returned to France after completing their indenture; now a permit was to be offered only to allow those with a wife and children to return to France to do business. This decree did much to encourage the indentured servants and soldiers, forced to stay in New France after completing their commitments, to seek an income as *coureurs des bois*. When Jeanne and Marguerite returned to Montreal in 1659 with 62 men and 47 women, Jeanne brought three young nuns from a community of nursing sisters and Marguerite brought three teaching nuns to help her. 1659 is also the year that Pierre Perras and Denise Lemaitre arrived in Montreal.

## PIERRE PERRAS AND DENISE LEMAITRE

Denise Lemaitre was born in Paris in 1636, one of ten children in a family living right behind where Notre Dame Cathedral stands today. Her mother died while she was still a young girl and Denise was placed in the “Hopital de La Pitie” of Paris, an orphanage, and while there obtained a certificate as a midwife. Among the last *Filles a Marier* recruited to come to New France by Jeanne Mance, Denise accompanied Mance on the ship *St-Andre*, which was plagued with sickness. After three weeks of caring for the sick in Quebec, Denise traveled to Ville-Marie by canoe. She started work with the *Hospitalieres de St-Joseph* but soon after signed a marriage contract with a local farmer, Andre Hurtubise. However, Andre was wounded in a battle with the Iroquois on December 2 of that year and died in Denise’s arms. On January 10, 1660, Denise signed a marriage contract with Pierre Perras, a cooper skilled in the art of making wood barrels, who had come from La Rochelle, possibly on the same ship as Denise. Their marriage on

January 26, 1660 was witnessed by Jeanne Mance, Jacques LeMoyne, and Louis Charier, a surgeon.

In the Quebec census of 1666, Pierre Perras was listed as one of only eight barrel makers or coopers in this part of New France. Barrels were important in commerce and in the fur trade for storing and transporting goods such as brandy, water, cereals, meat and fish. Dry goods barrels were generally made of pine while oak was preferred for barrels containing liquids. Barrel making required the hands of a skilled cooper, who shaped staves of wood into a bulging cylinder bound by six or eight wood or metal hoops. Logs for the staves had to be split and quartered, dried, cut to the proper length, tapered at each end, planed on the outside and slightly hollowed on the inside, before they were assembled into barrels. Barrels were made bulging in the middle to make them easier to roll and to change directions while rolling. Barrel makers frequently made wooden buckets, tubs, and butter churns as well. It was a lot of work.

Pierre's trade did not provide enough income to support a family so in August of 1667 he bought a 24 acre farm on the edge of the St-Pierre Valley between the farms of Pierre Mallet and Jacques Beauchamp. When the Jesuits opened their seigneurie at LaPrairie for settlement, Pierre became one of the first settlers at Cote Saint-Lambert, a marshy area along the south side of the St. Lawrence. By the time the Perrases left Montreal, they had given birth to seven children, namely Pierre born in 1660, Jacques in 1663, Marguerite in 1665, Catherine in 1666 died as an infant, Jean in 1668, Catherine in 1670, and Jeanne in 1671. They would give birth to two more children in Cote Saint-Lambert. Marie was born in 1672, which means they likely moved in 1671 or 1672. The story of Pierre and Denise is continued in the chapter on LaPrairie.

Le 26<sup>me</sup> Janvier 1660  
M<sup>3</sup> 1. C<sup>est</sup> fait et solemnise le mariage de Pierre  
peras pere et Denise  
Denise avec Denise le maitre fille de Denys et de  
Catherine Deharme tous deux de cette paroisse  
Le trois banns ayant este publiez au paravant  
mariage fut en presence de Mademoiselle Jeanne Mance  
administratrice de l'hospital. Jacques Le Moyne  
Marchant, Louys Charrier Chirurgien et plusieurs  
autres amys communs des parties.  
Le 6<sup>me</sup> Mars

Marriage Certificate, Pierre Perras and Denise Lemaitre, Montreal.

Translation: 26 January 1660 was made and solemnized the marriage of Pierre Peras, son of deceased Pierre and Jeanne Laniel with Denise Lemaitre, daughter of Denys and Catherine Deharme, both of this parish. The three banns were published previously. The marriage was in the presence of Mademoiselle Jeanne Mance, administrator of the hospital, Jacques LeMoyne, merchant, Louys Charrier, surgeon, and many of the friends in common of the parties.

## FILLES DU ROI

Once King Louis XIV took over the control of New France, he became concerned both about the success of settlement in New France and the lack of women of marriageable age for men who stayed in the colony. Where previously Jean-Baptiste Colbert, Louis IV's chief advisor, had encouraged marriage between the French and Amerindians, believing they should be "of one blood and one people," now there was concern that the young French men were taking up with Indian women rather than contributing to the growth of the Colony. Indian women usually had only two or three children, and the Metis children went unrecorded and left in the hands of the mother for rearing in the Indian setting. In 1663, the King developed a plan to recruit and transport marriageable women to New France, not a new idea as both the English and Spanish had recruited women for their colonies. In time, these women, who came in the ten years between 1663 and 1673, were called the Filles du Roi or King's Daughters, but that term was only first used by Marguerite Bourgeoys about 1697. Out of more than 800 women who came to New France through this program, at least 25 are our ancestors. One fact that struck me in reading their stories is that most of them had lost one or both parents before signing the contract to come to the New France.

In the first two years of the program, only slightly more than 50 women arrived, but once Intendant Jean Talon came to Quebec in 1665, the program grew with adequate incentive and funding. At first attention was given to recruiting women for the soldiers and tradesmen who had come to the colony, but in time concern developed to find women for the officers and gentlemen in the colony as well. Most of these women came from urban areas, notably Paris. Merchants and ship outfitters were charged with recruiting these women, for which they were given ten livres for each girl. Girls had to present their birth certificate and a recommendation from their parish priest or local magistrate stating that they were free to marry. Intendant Talon asked that they be "healthy and strong for country work, or that they at least have some aptitude for household chores."

Once in New France, these women had unprecedented choice to accept or refuse an offer of marriage. In France, young girls were put into convents or boarding schools to await a marriage in which they had no say as parents agreed to their marriages. For most of these girls, their future in France was bleak, either because they were orphans or from peasant families, whose families were happy to provide them an opportunity for marriage. Turning to the Church for support, French minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert wrote to the Archbishop of Rouen, stating that girls sent the previous year were "not robust enough to endure neither the climate nor the cultivation of the land, and it would be more advantageous to send young village girls who would be able to endure the fatigue that must be supported in that country." On farms, at that time, wives often pulled the plow while their husbands pushed with one hand and carried a musket in the other to defend from the Iroquois. The men generally picked the plumpest girls first, seeing this as a sign of fertility, knowing that children would be a great benefit on the farms.

The largest number of Filles du Roi arrived in France right after the demobilization of the Carignan-Salieres Regiment because of the government's recent

effort to keep these men in New France. Most married shortly after arriving in New France. A dowry from the King was promised to the girls after they were selected, with a girl receiving 50 livres if she married a soldier or habitant, but 100 livres if she married an officer. They also received new clothing before leaving France, plus a small hope chest, one head dress, one taffeta handkerchief, one pair of ribbons, 100 sewing needles, one comb, one spool of white thread, one pair of stockings, one pair of gloves, one pair of scissors, two knives, one thousand pins, one bonnet, four lace braids and two livres in silver money. After the girls arrived in Quebec, they received more clothing suitable to the climate and additional provisions drawn from the King's warehouse. After the marriage was consummated, the newly married couple received an ox, a cow, two pigs, a pair of chickens, two barrels of salted meat and eleven crowns of money and headed off to their new home.

The Filles du Roi sailed from France under close supervision by government appointed agents. Those sent to Montreal came under the care of Jeanne Mance and Marguerite Bourgeoys and were lodged together, while Marguerite lived with them, conducted a school for them, taught them not only the catechism but practical skills such as sewing, knitting, cooking, and making natural remedies and medicines from herbs and plants. The girls had the privilege of accepting or refusing any suitor, and could ask such questions of the men as how many lived in their house, how many animals did they own, and did they have a proper bed and adequate blankets. When men came to the house to make their selection, Marguerite oversaw these encounters, helped girls to make a selection, and often signed their marriage contracts as a witness.

Most of the Filles du Roi adapted well to the local climate and enjoyed a long life in the colony. They had come for the chance to have a home and family of their own and were offered an incentive to have a large family. A yearly pension of 300 livres was granted to families with ten children, rose to 400 livres for twelve children, and even more for larger families. Among our ancestors who came as Filles du Roi, Catherine Duchesne and Pierre Roy had 18 children, and Marie-Anne Metru and Jacques Samson had 17 children. In 1671, Talon wrote to the King boasting of the birth of six to seven hundred babies that year and assuring that in a few years the country would produce its own marriageable age women without further help from France.

Other Filles du Roi among our ancestors besides those already mentioned here in Montreal or on Ile d'Orleans include Jeanne Mansion (Jean Charlot), Marie Moitie (Jean Magnan), Jeanne Denote (Andre Robidoux), Jeanne Petit (Francois Seguin), Marie-Madeleine Hebert (Dennis Brosseau), Catherine Paulo (Etienne Campeau), Marguerite Tenard (Charles Boyer), Ursule-Madeleine Turbar (Francois Hebert), Cathereine DeSeine (Jean Senecal), Marie Faucon (Guillaume Chartier), Denise Marie (Jean d'Quenneville), Francois Lefrancoise (Francis Lavergne), and Anne Poitraud (Rene Bruneau).

Not all the men in New France were of French origin. Jeanne Denote married Andre Robidou, a 27 year old Spanish sailor, and they settled in Laprairie, where Andre was employed by Eustache Lambert, a prominent land owner. They had five children before Andre died at age 35, leaving Jeanne a widow. With a family to support, Jeanne soon married Jacques Suprenant, who had come to New France with the Carignan-Salieres Regiment, with whom she added eight more children. As mentioned earlier, Jeanne Savonnet's third marriage after ten children was on Ile d'Orleans to Francois

Miville, a native of Switzerland, who already had twelve children from his previous marriage. Jeanne and Francois had only one child, our ancestor Marie-Francoise.

The harshness of life in New France is apparent in the lives of many of these Filles du Roi. Denise Marie came to Canada in 1673 and married Jean Quenneville in Montreal. Denise and Jean settled at Lachine and had eleven children. Jean was a master tailor, and served in various public offices, as a seigneurial court officer, tax collector, jailer and prison keeper, and royal court officer. After Jean died in 1701, Denise married Jean Gilbert, a father of nine children with his first wife, Elizabeth Lanceleur, but Denise and Jean had no children together.

Anne Lemoine arrived in New France with her sister Jeanne and brother Jacques. Likely, both of their parents had died and the three rejoined their brother, Charles LeMoynes, the seigneur of Longueuil, who had come to New France sixteen years earlier. Anne married Michel Messier on February 26, 1658 in the chapel of the Hotel-Dieu in Montreal with many of the notables of Ville-Marie present. Michel was already in Montreal by the summer of 1651. He was captured by the Iroquois in 1654 and was returned along with other French prisoners to Montreal the next summer by a Mohawk captain in exchange for some Iroquois captains held at the fort at Ville-Marie. In 1657, Michel bought a parcel of land from Charles LeMoynes, his future brother-in-law. He was captured again by the Iroquois in March, 1661, but succeeded in escaping and returned to Montreal at the end of 1663. Michel and Anne's brother, Jacques LeMoynes, were jointly granted a seigneurie at Varennes in 1668, which they split in 1673. In 1678, Michel bought the seigneurie of La Guillaudiere, which he gave to his daughter Marguerite in 1690. In 1684, Michel again took part in a campaign against the Iroquois, this time as the commander of the launch La Generale. For years after that, Michel was involved in fur trading. The second of Michel and Anne's twelve children, Jeanne, married Ignace Hebert.

The local Indians had reason to wonder about the welfare of these French newcomers. Many of the Filles du Roi were sent against their wishes and once married women were considered property of their husbands. They could never get a divorce and could only separate from their husbands if a husband beat his wife with a stick thicker than her wrist, which the Natives saw as belittling women, the givers of life. Also, French colonists rarely bathed, believing that a bath would cause colic, headaches, and vertigo. The tradition in France was an annual May bath with June weddings before they began to smell too bad. Brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide body odors and both men and women wore sachets of dried flowers for the same purpose. The Natives bathed fairly often and couldn't understand this strange practice.

## THE CARIGNAN-SALIERES REGIMENT

In the busy fur trade the French colonists developed strong ties with the Algonquin and Ottawa Indians but earned the hatred of the Iroquois, who traded instead with the English and Dutch who wanted the French out of North America and urged the Iroquois to raid French villages and kill the settlers. The dependence of the governing authorities and the colonies on the fur trade for revenues gave the trade crucial

importance. Before 1665, defense of the colony depended on a small troop of soldiers maintained by the Company of 100 Associates and on the habitants. The French began to form military units under the direction of Pierre Boucher, the governor of Trois-Rivieres and very knowledgeable in Indian affairs, who had successfully protected Trois-Rivieres from Iroquois attacks. In 1661, Governor Dubois Davaugour arrived in Quebec, quickly realized the dangerous state facing the colony, and chose Pierre Boucher to speak with the King Louis XIV and various persons of the French court about the need for protection and the reasons for keeping New France as a colony. The success of Pierre Boucher's mission in 1662 marked a turning point in the history of New France. He was able to get France to take the fate of its distant colony seriously, which resulted in France sending troops of the Carignan Regiment, the first expedition of royal troops to New France, along with the coming of Marquis de Tracy and Intendant Jean Talon.

The Carignan Regiment was a seasoned for-hire army of hand-picked volunteers that had just returned from success against the Turks. The Regiment was placed under the leadership of Henri de Chapelas, Sieur de Salieres, and renamed the Carignan-Salieres Regiment. Marquis de Tracy was named Lieutenant General of North and South America and ordered to wipe out the Iroquois with the help of the Carignan-Salieres Regiment. Tracy left for New France in April of 1665 and over the next three months 1,200 officers and soldiers arrived. The colony at this time had only about 3200 inhabitants, so the arrival of 1200 soldiers and 80 officers had an extraordinary impact. Tracy's arrival in Quebec was accompanied with a show of splendor as the uniformed troops marched up the hill to the sounds of the fife and drums while citizens lined the route cheering at this display of French power. As church bells pealed, Bishop Laval waited in his episcopal vestments at the church entrance to greet the forces that would save the colony.

As more troops arrived throughout the summer of 1665, sickness was so prevalent that offensive action could not be immediately taken against the Iroquois. In July, work started on forts along the Richelieu River. In the settled areas, most of the soldiers were billeted with the habitants and the officers with the seigneur or more well-to-do families. The soldiers usually worked for those who billeted them and received a small wage and food. Instead of defense, these troops went on the offensive against the Iroquois, attacking them in their own territory, not always successfully as the first venture would prove.

Actually, the first offensive was a disaster. The newly appointed governor of Canada, Daniel de Remy de Courcelle, himself a former army officer, wanted to quickly suppress the Mohawks. Against the advice of his military and civilian leaders, Courcelle insisted on leading a military raid in the winter of 1666 which turned out tragically. Courcelle left Fort Saint-Louis in January with a force of about five hundred soldiers from the Carignan-Salieres Regiment, a few Indians, and about two hundred French Canadian volunteers from the local militia. While the Canadians had snowshoes to travel through the waist deep snow, the soldiers were on foot, lightly dressed, with one blanket and a short supply of food. Courcelle was too impatient to wait for the promised Indian guides as the contingent headed supposedly for a Mohawk village, but wandered for days in the forest until they spotted what they thought were Mohawk houses. Only after initiating an attack, burning some homes, and a gunfire skirmish, did they discover they had attacked Schenectady, New York, a Dutch village. In the harsh winter weather,

Courcelle lost two-thirds of his men to hypothermia and starvation and likely would have lost more had not the Algonquin guides appeared to hunt food for them and lead them back home.

Within two years the Regiment had accomplished its task and the countryside was peaceful. Determined to people New France, Intendant Jean Talon encouraged the soldiers to stay when they were discharged, and about 450 of the soldiers decided to remain in New France with the promise of land. The officers were given large seigneuries and the enlisted men were encouraged to take land in these seigneuries where they could farm and start a new life. Each soldier who decided to stay in New France was granted half pay for the first few years and the essential farm implements. The plan was to establish a frontier settlement with veterans who could be called upon to defend the frontier at any time, and some new seigneuries were along the Richelieu River, the main route used by the Mohawk war parties to ravage the colony.

Since many of the soldiers had helped the habitants in their fields, having a piece of land and a home appealed to them, even if it meant hard work and living in a hovel. Most were ordinary foot soldiers, rough men who caroused, gambled, and dreamed of making their fortunes after belonging to the impoverished and landless class in France. In 1668, however, farming had not yet reached a subsistence level in New France, but these men not only realized the profit to be made in the fur trade as *coureurs des bois* but also the freedom such a life offered as well as the adventure they had sought in joining the army. Many led double lives, farming for part of the year and ranging the forests in search of furs at other times. Some of these men married Indian women, who often accompanied them on their expeditions. A few others married daughters of those settlers already in New France, some married the women who came to New France especially for marriage, but most of them enjoyed their freedom and were reluctant to marry. Their lifestyle contradicted Intendant Jean Talon's desire to populate the colony and, as a result, Talon ordered that if any were unmarried fifteen days after the arrival of the next ships bringing girls from France for marriage, they would be barred from hunting and trading activities. However, this order was unenforceable and had little effect in persuading the former soldiers to marry.

A few of the Carignan-Salieres Regiment, mostly officers, did get involved as entrepreneurs in the fur trade but most lacked the capital for this. Those who did were sometimes willing to finance the *coureurs des bois* for a share in the profits. Many of these independent traders were unscrupulous, for example tricking the Indians with brandy to entice them into unfair trade deals. The plan that these soldiers would be available to defend the colony did not work out, in part because many were off in the woods much of the year, and before many years the Iroquois threat was serious again. .

A number of those soldiers who settled in Canada are our ancestors, although it is often difficult to identify the soldiers since they used only nicknames while in the army, but I will share a couple of their stories. Francois Seguin came to New France at age 20 as a soldier in the company of Captain Pierre de St. Ours of the Carignan Regiment. Francois had lost his mother at age six, was raised by his grandmother, and left his family early to earn a living. He had enlisted as soon as he could as a soldier in the Carignan Regiment and arrived in Quebec aboard the St. Sebastien on September 12, 1665. His company would spend the following winter at Fort Sorel at the mouth of the Richelieu River. When the company was discharged after three years of war, St. Ours

was granted a seigneurie on the Richelieu River and Francois Seguin obtained a fief on his officer's land. When St. Ours found himself in financial difficulty on his seigneurie, he was designated by the governor to levy troops for the defense of Montreal and reorganized his company. Many of his former soldiers, including Francois, joined him. Francois remained with the garrison for a few months and then returned to his farm.

In 1671, Francois leased for two years a piece of land of 50 arpents at Boucherville. He also acquired a house to live in on the condition that he cut and clear two arpents of land per year. Francois was a weaver by trade, so whenever his farm work allowed him free time and he found a demand by the local peasants for his trade, he worked as a weaver. In September, 1672, he exchanged his farm at St. Ours for that of Pierre Chaperon in Boucherville, which consisted of two arpents frontage on the St. Lawrence by 25 arpents depth, with four arpents under cultivation. At the same time he purchased another half-arpent with a barn on it. Single up until now, he looked for someone to marry. Jeanne Petit, an orphan, had arrived as a Filles du Roi in 1671 and went to Montreal under the protectorship of Marguerite Bourgeoys until she could find a husband. Since Jeanne arrived in 1671 but did not turn 16 until September 1672, it is likely that she was sheltered by the nuns until she turned 16. A marriage contract was drawn up between Francois and Jeanne on September 21, 1682, the day before Francois exchanged his farm at St. Ours for the one in Boucherville. When the couple was married at Ste. Famille church in Boucherville on October 31, 1672, among the witnesses were Pierre Boucher and his wife, Jeanne Crevier.

At the beginning of 1673, Francois sold the land he had acquired from Pierre Chaperon to Francois Senecal and received another grant from Pierre Boucher. His neighbors now were Jacques Menard and Pierre Martin. Records show him several times leasing a cow and working as a weaver. In 1698, Francois sold his concession of 50 arpents with a poor building upon it to Jean Baptiste Lamoureux for 850 livres. In 1700, Madame de la Valtrie granted Francois and Jeanne the privilege of living on a strip of wooded land on Ile Grosbois along the channel, where Francois would take care of the donor's two cows and provide some labor. They lived together on this land until Francois' death sometime before their daughter, Marie Jeanne, married Joseph Robidoux on October 10, 1701. Jeanne continued to live at Ile Grosbois until 1713, when she moved to Lachenaie to live with her son, Francois, and his wife Marie Louise Feuillon. She died in 1733 and was buried at Longueuil.

Jean Magnan arrived in New France in September, 1665, as a soldier with the Dugue Company of the Carignan Regiment, and left the army in 1688. Jean was a tailor. His wife, Marie Moitie, came to New France as a Filles du Roi at age 24, bringing with her goods worth an estimated 300 livres for her dowry. Jean and Marie were married in Montreal on March 19, 1672, at which time Marie received the King's Gift for 200 livres, only one of two Filles du Roi to benefit from this much from the King's largesse. The newly married couple settled at Cote Saint-Lambert, where the 1673 records show Jean with 120 arpents of land. No doubt because of his involvement in the fur trade, Jean hired help on the farm. In 1684 he had the services of Claude Peguin and some years later he engaged Jean Brau. In 1681 he had six arpents under cultivation and later his cultivated land had increased to thirty arpents. In about 1689 Jean and Marie were among a number of residents from Cote Saint-Lambert and Laprairie who moved to live in the fortification at Montreal because of the Iroquois attacks. They never returned to

their farm. By this time they had eight children. Their third child, Marie Anne, born in 1777, married Francois Leber, son of Cote Saint-Lambert residents Francois Leber and Jeanne Testard, who was a captain in the local militia and involved in the fur trade. One of this couple's twelve children, their daughter Catherine Leber, became the wife of Andre Patenaude. Jean died in 1694 and in 1700 Marie married Pierre Chesne, a widower with seven children whose job was enlisting fur traders. Marie died in 1727.

## GROWTH OF MONTREAL

Paradoxically, the increasing poverty caused by the fur trade coincided with a growing prosperity for Montreal as it became the primary base for the fur trade. Its location on the western edge of the colony at the confluence of the Ottawa and St. Lawrence Rivers helped once the government monopoly in the fur trade passed to local traders after 1663 and ambitious traders headed upstream to purchase furs from the Indians, thus gaining an advantage over other traders. The entry into the fur trade of some of the military officers helped build Montreal into a bustling business community. Licenses from the French government were required to enter the Indian country for the fur trade, and soon persons with sufficient capital to purchase trade goods obtained a license and hired men from the neighborhood to take the goods west and exchange them for furs. This gave rise to the voyageurs, who worked for the merchants, and soon to the vagabonds in the fur trade, the *coureurs des bois*, who wanted to share in the fortune of the trade. Children now grew up in the Montreal area expecting that they would some day work for the fur companies, while likely also excited by stories of the *coureurs des bois*' adventures.

The population of Montreal was slightly over 250 in 1659 but by 1666 numbered 655 inhabitants. Many of these were young families; for example, among those of our ancestors listed in the 1666 census were Jacques Beauvais and Jeanne Solde, raising six children, Hugues Picard and Anne Deliercourt, five children, Pierre Perras and Denise Lemaitre, three children, and Michel Messier and Anne Lemoine, three children. Jacques Beauvais was a chalk producer, stone and sand merchant, and dabbled in construction. Hugues Picard was a woodworker for the Sulpicians of Montreal when he married Anne, the widow of Blaise Juillet, and became guardian of Anne's children. Both Jacques and Hugues were soldiers in the local militia and would later become land owners. The French government was now sending enough indentured craftsmen as well as enough cattle, sheep, goats and horses to make the colony self-sufficient. Settlement was starting to expand outside the town of Montreal as well.

In 1647 the seigneurie of La Prairie de la Magdalene (LaPrairie) was granted to the Jesuit missionaries, who wanted to convert the Indians, but the Iroquois slowed settlement for over 20 years. It is in La Prairie that the story of Kateri Tekakwitha took place, and where our first Perras ancestors, Pierre Perras and Denise Lemaitre, both died. Jean Patenaude (son of Nicolas Paternostre and Marguerite Breton) married Marie Robidou at Laprairie, where they raised their children. The Perras and Patenaude families continued to populate Laprairie until Vital Perras and Marguerite Patenaude, both born in Laprairie, left their farm nearby at St. Remi in the early 1880's to move to

Minnesota as Vital, by then in his sixties, wanted to give his seven sons a chance to own farms of their own.

Longueuil, also on the south shore of the St. Lawrence, was part of the seigneurie granted in 1657 to Charles LeMoine, brother of our ancestor, Anne Lemoine. Charles named it Longueuil after his birthplace in Normandy. Pierre Boucher began farming at Boucherville in 1667, and the first settlers arrived there the next year, turning Boucherville into an agricultural community, but Pierre did not receive his seigneurie until 1672, when he built a palisade to protect the community from the Iroquois.

New settlers were faced with the difficult task of clearing the land to plant a crop. The arable land along this stretch of the St. Lawrence River was covered with dense hardwood forests interspersed with stands of pine. Clearing the trees, burning the slash, and digging out the roots after they had rotted sufficiently to be removed so the field could be plowed was a grinding task. Most of this labor was done in the summer months when the mosquitoes and black flies made life almost unbearable. Even so, the insects were nothing compared to the marauding Indians who blockaded the river routes to stop the fur trade, hid and waited patiently for an unwary settler to come to his fields, or burned crops, barns and homes. As one of the priests wrote, "One can hardly gather greens in a garden for a salad in safety, and in order to get any supplies of wood everyone has to go in battle order or stand guard. It is not that these thieves are always around us, but that one is never sure either that they are there or that they are not, hence we have to beware of them all the time."

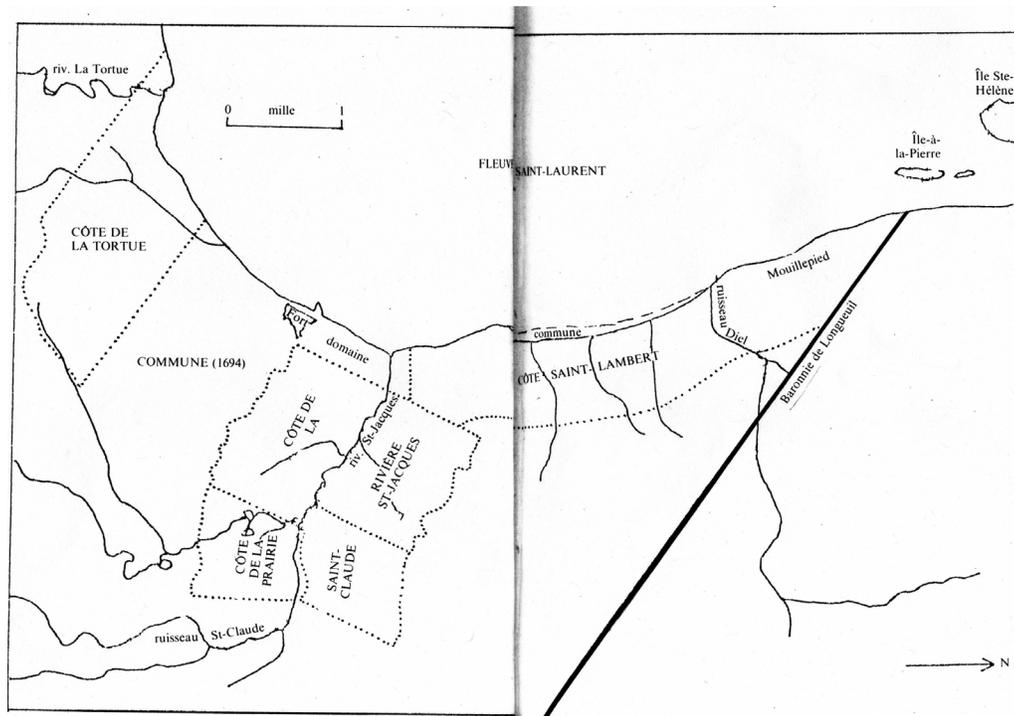
By now the French were learning how to live quite well in the strange environment of New France. Many now had their own land, which provided an opportunity they likely would not have had in France. They lived well, enjoying the right to hunt and fish, something they had been denied in France. They had ample supplies of wood and leather and plenty to eat. They could grow enough for their basic needs but did little to grow more for economic gain. Settlers had mastered the skills of the Indians and had learned how to live among them. There was concern that the young men had become too comfortable. A letter from Intendant Jean Bouchart de Champigny stated: "It is most unfortunate that Canadian youths, who are vigorous and tough, have no inclination for anything but these voyages where they live in the forest like Indians for two or three years at a time, without benefit of any of the sacraments." When it was quickly discovered that the local men did better in forest warfare than the soldiers from France, the entire male population was formed into militia units, given military training, and used in campaigns against the Indians and the English. The troops from France were used mainly to defend the forts.

The Indian threats continued through the last half of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. For example, at dawn on August 5, 1689, fifteen hundred Iroquois descended with shrill war cries on the settlement of Lachine, near Montreal. Many settlers were killed in their homes, others were killed as they tried to flee, and some were captured alive. Fifty-six of the seventy-seven habitations in the area were burned. That night survivors who had taken refuge in the forts on the north side of the river could see the glow of fires on the opposite shore as the Iroquois celebrated their first victory of this war by burning a few of their prisoners to death.

In 1672 war broke out again in Europe when England declared war on Holland and the French joined with the English in this war. This effectively stopped immigration

to New France for the next three generations. Meanwhile, the French continued to fight with the Iroquois. In 1689, King William's War began between the French and the English, with New France now pitted against the English in New England and New York as well as against their Indian allies. Because of an oversupply of beaver pelts in New France, many of the French *coureurs des bois* were now trading with the English despite orders from the King. The English and French made peace in 1698. There were now foreboding signs for the future of New France, which at the close of the century had an estimated population of 12,000 while the English Colonies had about 294,000.

Land on the south side of the St. Lawrence was given to the Jesuits as a seignury in 1647, only five years after the founding of Montreal. However, war with the Iroquois was raging and LaPrairie was an Iroquois settlement from which attacks were launched on Montreal. Consequently, it would not be until peace with the Iroquois was concluded following campaigns of the Carignan-Salieres Regiment that this seignury could be settled. The Jesuits established a mission to the Indians in 1667 and opened the surrounding land for settlement. The majority of the first colonists came from Montreal, with a number from the Carignan-Salieres Regiment including Charles Diel, Thomas Hebert, Antoine Rousseau, Jacques Testu, Mathieu Faye, and Jean Magnan. By 1670, the population of settlers was significant enough to open the seignorial administration for LaPrairie de la Madeleine and also to establish the parish of St. Francois Xavier with the building of a chapel for the Indians and habitants on the seigneur's estate bordering the river. Relations between the early settlers and the Indians were friendly, although many of the Indians soon left as the land was being settled.



Seignury of LaPrairie on the south side of the St. Lawrence River

This was an area of woods, prairies, lakes, rivers and stone quarries quite suitable for farming. By the end of 1673, the population of habitants in the seignury was fifty-one men, thirty-six of them unmarried, fifteen women, of which six had come as girls from Montreal, and thirty-three children. But the population did not grow as fast as expected as the Jesuits were charging exorbitant rents, higher than those of the seigneuries run by French laymen, and the habitants were having trouble making payments. For the next two decades, the Jesuits tried to attract settlers by reducing the

rents by half, but when the settlement was well established the rents were raised again. Several motives other than farming likely attracted the settlers. Initially the profits from the fur trade were all in the hands of the merchants but, after 1663, local traders started to emerge and included many soldiers who remained in New France after the wars with the Iroquois. The advantage of LaPrairie was that it offered a direct water route via the Richelieu River, Lake Champlain, and the Hudson River to Albany, the trading center for the English.

The dream of Pierre Perras and Denise Lemaitre, among the early settlers, was to acquire a farm so that they could pass on to their growing sons an opportunity which would have eluded them in France. This was farmland easily accessible to the growing markets in Montreal. While it was hard work to prepare fields for cultivation, the Perrases had growing sons who could help. Pierre's farm was a long, narrow strip of land extending back from his house near the St. Lawrence River, one in a line of houses in a settlement isolated enough that the habitants of Cote Saint-Lambert thought of their settlement as distinct from LaPrairie. The small house was built of timber, with a sloping roof and walls filled with clay. The main room had a few pieces of homemade rough furniture, a loom and, likely, a spinning wheel. The walls were bare except perhaps for a religious picture or two brought with them from France. The loft or attic was a busy sleeping place as the Perrases had nine living children.

The house and the nearby barn made of upright posts standing side by side with a straw thatched roof sat in a farmyard surrounded by post and rail fences. Wooden buckets used to carry water and a wooden washtub showed Pierre's skills as a barrel maker. In the summer, sons and neighbors helped cut hay with a scythe and haul it to the barn on a cart drawn by oxen. At harvest time grain was bound into bundles and stored in the barn for several months until the men of the family flailed it on the threshing floor. Once the crops were harvested until planting time the next spring, aside from cutting firewood and doing the daily chores, there was time to jump in the sleigh and visit neighbors. Winter was a great social time, filled with drinking and smoking, playing cards, dancing and singing. The French habitants worked to the rhythm of work tunes as they threshed, cut wood, and did their chores, while the women did their spinning, weaving, and beating the wash to familiar tunes. The 1661 census showed Pierre Perras with ten acres under cultivation and six head of cattle.

The Perras family was devout Catholics. Attendance at church was difficult, however, because of the distance from either the seigneurial mansion or the Indian mission, with no road and the Saint-Jacques River to cross. Attendance was easier in the winter, when they could travel on the ice of the St. Lawrence. To host religious services at Saint-Lambert, Pierre and Denise donated a building on their farm 25 feet long and 20 feet wide with a thatched roof and dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The local habitants were responsible for maintenance. The Jesuits gave permission and agreed to offer Mass for the Saint-Lambert settlers. Pierre and Denise's son-in-law, Pierre Poupart, a local farmer, was one of the church wardens. In 1686, he sold a piece of land to Pierre Foubert and donated 218 livres for church furnishings. Because of the Iroquois threats, Jerome Lonctin, a local carpenter, dismantled the building at Saint-Lambert and built it back up inside Fort Saint-Lambert, recently built to protect the habitants. In 1686, the Jesuits turned the parish at LaPrairie over to the Sulpicians, who began plans to build a new parish church in LaPrairie. At the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the building at Cote

Saint-Lambert was torn down, and under the direction of Pierre Roy its furnishings were transported to the new church at LaPrairie.

Meanwhile, the number of families at Cote Saint-Lambert more than doubled and children were growing to adulthood. Denise must have been busy as a midwife for her own and others' daughters. Four of the Perras daughters married men from Saint-Lambert between 1682 and 1690. In 1682, Marguerite, age 16, married Pierre Poupart, who had come to Quebec as a domestic for Pierre Gagnon and later bought a farm at Saint-Lambert. Pierre and Marguerite had seven children before Pierre was killed by the Iroquois at age 40 in 1699 and Marie married a second time to Joseph Boyer. At age 18 in 1688, Catherine married Eustache Demers, son of local neighbors Etienne Demers and Jeanne Denote, and this couple had 10 children. Later that year, Jeanne, age 17, married Claude Faye, who had come from France and bought land at Saint-Lambert in 1682. Jeanne and Claude had eight children, while Claude worked in the fur trade. After Claude's death, Jeanne married Pierre Jolibois. In 1690, Marie, age 17, married Antoine Jacques Boyer, son of Saint-Lambert pioneers Charles Boyer and Marguerite Tenard. Marie and Antoine's oldest child of seven, Marie Boyer, later married Jean Francois Patenaude.

Pierre Perras died on April 30, 1684 at LaPrairie. Because of Pierre and Denise' hard work, at the time of his death they had two farms, one barn, one stable, eleven cattle and six pigs. Yet the revenue from the farm was not enough to support Denise with her large family so she got involved in fur trading with the Catholic Iroquois to make ends meet. Probably resulting from her involvement in the fur trade, a Montreal merchant, Francois Pougnet, had a lawsuit going against Denise in 1687 over a business deal. Denise appealed the sentence in Montreal in 1687, again at Trois Rivieres later that year, and the case was finally brought to the Sovereign Council in January, 1688.

In October of 1684, Denise married Francois Cael, another pioneer, at LaPrairie. Denise had at least four children left at home and Francois brought eight minor children into the marriage. When Francois Cael died in 1687, Denise sold their land to her son-in-law, Eustache Demers. Denise still had a family to support and went back to the skill she had learned in Paris, practicing midwifery until her death.

During this time, the attacks by the Iroquois were escalating and a number of habitants from Saint-Lambert sought shelter in the fortification at Montreal. Denise remained behind and was killed at age 55 by the Iroquois at Cote-Saint-Lambert on October 29, 1691, when a group of Dutch and Indian fighters led by Major Peter Schuyler of New England struck the French in reprisal for the French attack on Schenectady. Denise' daughters were by this time busy raising big families while her sons were still unmarried and likely away in the fur trade. Ironically, Denise' granddaughter Marguerite, the daughter of Pierre Poupart and Marguerite Perras, was also killed by the Iroquois as an eleven year old at LaPrairie in 1696.

Pierre and Denise had only a few grandchildren to pass on the Perras name. Their oldest son, Pierre, died at age 27 in 1687. Their second child, Jacques, died at age 25 in 1688. The Perras sons were more interested in the fur trade than in farming. Jacques received a concession of land in 1679 and sold it in less than one year to A. Marsil. Jean Perras, also in the fur trade, married twice; the first time with Marguerite Testu, with whom he had one child, and secondly with Madeleine Roy, the daughter of neighbors Pierre Roy and Catherine Ducharme. Jean and Madeleine had eight children, including

their son, Andre, who married Marie Catherine Leber, the daughter of Francois Leber and Marie Ann Magnan. The youngest son of Pierre Perras and Denise Lemaitre, born after they moved to Cote Saint-Lambert, also used the name Pierre. Pierre and his brother-in-law, Antoine Boyer, bought land conjointly in 1690 for 600 livres from the sale of beaver pelts. Like his brothers, he was away in the fur trade, marrying only at age 36 to Marguerite Diel. He died three years later, leaving his widow with a fifteen month old son.

Like the Perras family, members of the Patenaude family had relocated from Ile d'Orleans to work in the fur trade. Charles LeMoyne in the neighboring seigneurie of Longueuil gave concessions to Pierre and Charles Patenaude. Pierre married Catherine Brunet and they parented ten children. The oldest brother, Jean Patenaude, first married Marie Brunet, sister of Catherine, with whom he had two children, and had a second marriage to Marie Robidou, daughter of Andre Robidoux and Jeanne Denote of Cote Saint-Lambert. Jean and Marie's son, Jean Francois Patenaude, married Marie Boyer, the daughter of Antoine Boyer and Marie Perras. Charles married Francoise Seguin, daughter of Francois Seguin and Marie Petit, and they parented ten children. Elizabeth, the younger sister of the Patenaude men, married Jean Ferron, a soldier, shoemaker, and fur trader, and they raised their nine children in Montreal.

Among these early settlers in the LaPrairie seigneurie, we can recognize many familiar names of our ancestors. Charles Boyer and Marguerite Tenard earned their farm by serving as domestic servants to the Jesuits. Housed by the Jesuits, their responsibilities included delivering 500 pounds of wheat to Montreal annually, preparing food for the priests and guests, providing 12 pounds of bread weekly, cutting 12 cords of stove wood, and maintaining the fences and bridges. They received a farm with two arpents along the river when they finished their commitment. Even during the time that he served as a domestic servant, Charles was also involved as a *coureurs des bois* in the fur trade. It was their son, Antoine, born at LaPrairie in 1671 and a captain in the local militia, who married Marie Perras.

Denis Brosseau was the miller at a mill the Jesuits built to grind the habitants' wheat. The farmers were obligated to grind their grain at the mill, which was built as a service to the community. Denis signed a five year contract as miller in 1692. Denis and his wife, Marie Madeleine Hebert, had eight children and, since he could not make enough at the mill to support his family, he bought two farms totaling 100 arpents for 600 livres, which he would pay off in annual installments. They had their home in the village. Their son, Pierre, also a miller, was married to Barbe Bourbon, daughter of Jean Bourbon, who was killed in the battle at LaPrairie in 1690 when Dutch forces and Indians led by Peter Schuyler of Albany were retaliating for a raid led by Pierre LeMoyne. Governor Frontenac had gathered 1200 military and habitants at LaPrairie to counter this attack. It was Schuyler's forces that would be responsible for the death of Denise Lemaitre the next year.

Jean Bourbon's wife, Anne Marie Benoit, was the daughter of Paul Benoit and Elizabeth Gobinet. They had four daughters before Paul was killed. In 1695, Jean Besset decided to defy his father's authority and marry Anne Marie Benoit. His father, a former Carignan-Salieres soldier now farming, judged this a poor union and was scandalized that his twenty-three year old son would marry an older widow with three children and tried to stop the wedding. The vociferous elder Besset appeared with witnesses and

threatened the priest if he married the couple, but the priest deemed the consent of the marrying parties was mutual and authentic and witnessed the marriage of the couple at the 6:00 a.m. Mass at Ville Marie on May 16, 1695. Jean and Anne Marie had one daughter, who was buried on May 25, 1697. In August of that same year, the Iroquois struck again and tried to take Anne Marie captive. She defended herself valiantly, but, like her first husband, died of her wounds. Ironically, her second husband, Jean Basset, along with Eustache Demers, had been captured by the Iroquois in 1693. Both were scalped and left for dead but survived to tell about it.

Charles Deneau, the son of a pioneer of Montreal, was married to Madeleine Clement at LaPrairie. Charles and Madeleine had eleven children. Charles was one of the first *coureurs des bois* with the Ottawa Indians and did not return from one of his trips. Their son, Charles, married to Marie Anne Demers, was the father of Genevieve Deneau, who with her husband, Pierre Pinsonneau, were the grandparents of Joseph Perras. As was the case with so many intermarriages between families in the community, Charles and Madeleine's son, Claude, married Marie Poupart, the daughter of Pierre Poupart and Marguerite Perras.

Two Demers brothers, Joseph and Eustache, were pioneers at LaPrairie. Joseph, who had been a domestic for the Jesuit mission among the Outaouais, married Marguerite Guitaut and was a major in the militia at LaPrairie. Their son, Jacques, married Marie Barbe Brosseau, the miller's daughter. Jacques and Marie Barbe's daughter, Marie Anne Demers, married the second generation Charles Deneau. Joseph Demers was also the second husband of Marguerite Perras, the widow of Pierre Poupart. Eustache Demers was the husband of Catherine Perras.

Andre Robidou was a Spaniard who came to New France in 1661 as an engage of Eustache Lambert, a prominent interpreter, settler and fur trader. Andre was a sailor living with his employer. In 1664, Andre received a concession of land on Ile d'Orleans and another in 1665 at Cote Lauzon near Quebec. His wife, Jeanne Denote, came to Quebec in 1666 and resided at a house on the grounds of the Ursuline monastery until she married Andre on June 17, 1667. In 1771, Andre and Jeanne moved to the village of LaPrairie with their first daughter, Marie Romaine, most likely because of involvement in the fur trade. In 1672, Andre acquired property on the Cote de la Riviere Saint-Jacques near LaPrairie, which he exchanged in a few months for property at Cote de la Tortue of LaPrairie. He also sold his property in the village. Andre and Jeanne had four more children before he died in 1679, when their youngest child, Joseph, was three months old. Four months later, Jeanne Denote married Jacques Suprenant, a soldier originally with the Carignan Salieres Regiment, with whom she had eight more children at LaPrairie. Son Joseph Robidou married Jeanne Seguin, and they were the grandparents of Etienne Perras. Joseph would later be well known in the fur trade at Detroit. Daughter Marie Robidou married Jean Patenaude and they became the parents of Jean Francois Patenaude.

Trouble with the Iroquois started up again with vigor in 1684. Because of Iroquois threats, Governor LeBarre designated LaPrairie as a frontier against the English and Iroquois and a fort was built around LaPrairie in 1687. The fortification would surround the habitants and animals for refuge in case of an attack. Another fortification was constructed at St. Lambert.



Picture of the fort at LaPrairie in the city park.

LaPrairie was a major target of the two reprisals by the Iroquois for the French attacks on Albany. On August 30, 1690, responding to four cannon shots which served as a signal to reassemble, troops who were now dispersed to help with the wheat harvest hurried back to the fort. 1200 men gathered at LaPrairie. Governor Frontenac of Montreal was alerted to the presence of Iroquois near Lake Champlain but, when scouts did not find any traces of the Indians, they returned to their quarters. On September 4<sup>th</sup>, the Iroquois stealthily attacked the habitants and soldiers harvesting wheat. Unfortunately, the French had failed to post sentinels or to have a guard ready to resist. The consequence was that eleven habitants, three women, one girl, and ten soldiers were killed or captured. Before help could arrive, the Iroquois had set homes and haystacks on fire and slaughtered the farm animals. Among the habitants killed in this attack was our ancestor, Jean Bourbon.

On August 11, 1691, Major Peter Schuyler led another surprise attack on a much larger force of 800 French and allies at the fort at LaPrairie. Schuyler's force attacked in a rainstorm just before dawn, inflicting severe casualties before withdrawing to the Richelieu River. This was the raid in which Denise Lemaitre was captured and lost her life. Schuyler's force was intercepted by a force of 160 men who were detached to block his road to Chambly. Among the habitants who participated in this expedition to revenge these attacks we find the names of Jacques Perras, Pierre Poupard and Francois Cael. The two sides fought in vicious hand-to-hand combat for about an hour before Schuyler's

force broke through and retreated back to Albany. As mentioned, some of the families sought refuge at Montreal because of the dangers. On the positive side, a few of the Troops de la Marine decided to settle at LaPrairie, including Claude Guerin. When the fighting was ended, Claude received a plot of land in payment for his services. His neighbors introduced him to a widow whose property included the prime source of water in the area, a natural spring. The widow, Marie Cusson, the daughter of habitants Jean Cusson and Marie Foubert, was one of sixteen children and had already been widowed twice. She had settled at LaPrairie with her first husband, Jean Bareau, and they had five children when Jean was killed by the Iroquois. Two years later she married Joachim Leber, who was lost on a fur trading expedition to the west, with whom she had a daughter. She was thirty-three when she married Claude Guerin and they added four more children to the family before Marie was left again as a widow with small children.

LaPrairie grew between 1694 and 1697 as Iroquois hostilities diminished. A number of new residents sought refuge there, including merchants, craftsmen and skilled workers. By 1697, the fortification enclosed 120 persons, among them Charles and Jacques Deneau, Francois Leber, Denis Brosseau, Francois Bourassa and Claude Guerin.

The story of the Bourassa family is somewhat typical of the times. A native of France, Francois Bourassa married Marie Leber, the daughter of LaPrairie pioneers Francois Leber and Jeanne Testard, and widow of Charles Robert. After five years of marriage, Francois was captured during a skirmish with the Iroquois and presumed dead but returned after a prolonged absence. Francis and Marie had seven children, with five living to adulthood. Their daughter, Marie, married Jacques Pinsonneau. Francois Bourassa had two concessions of land and also a home in the village of LaPrairie but had prospered even more by being involved as a fur trader in the west. When Francois died at age 48 in an epidemic at Montreal, Marie married a third time to Pierre Herve. Like most of the families of LaPrairie at this time, the Bourassa family watched their sons head west to make a profit in the fur trade.

## THE COUREURS DES BOIS

Francois Bourassa's son, Rene, is a good example of the younger men of LaPrairie at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the early decades of that century, the merchants of the English colonies were paying twice as much as the French price for furs. LaPrairie, located on the south shore of the St. Lawrence, gave easy access to the English markets. Tempted by these profits, Rene was carrying on illicit trade with the merchants in Albany and was fined 500 livres when he was caught in 1722. He was dispatching canoes to the west by 1726. In 1729 Rene carried letters to New England, a trip which was often a cover for the illegal trade. In 1735 he hired engages to go to Pierre Gaultier's (La Verendrye) posts at Fort St. Charles on Lake of the Woods and Fort Maurepas near the mouth of the Red River. He wintered with La Verendrye at Fort St. Charles. In June, 1736 Rene set out from Fort St. Charles with four others for Michilimachinac. They were captured by Sioux warriors, who claimed the French were arming their enemies, a truth because La Verendrye was trading guns to the Assinabois who were fighting the Sioux. The Sioux were preparing to burn Bourassa at the stake when his Sioux girl

(wife?) pleaded for his life and he and his men were released. He had narrowly missed death when other Sioux on Lake of the Woods ambushed and massacred a party of 21 following close behind Rene's party, including La Verendrye's son and Fr. Jean-Pierre Aulneau., for crimes against their people. In 1637, Rene constructed a post and wintered at Vermillion, Minnesota, to trade with the Ojibwa. After that, most of his trade was around Michilimackinac, where he was selling goods to the Indians. His family had joined him there. The Ojibwas captured the fort at Michilimackinac in 1763 and, because they disliked Rene, they killed all his cattle and horses. Soon afterwards, he settled in Montreal as a merchant in the fur trade.

The heart of the economic system of New France was the fur trade, especially in the Montreal area, where the profits were almost all in the hands of a small number of merchants who controlled the trade. Initially, the merchants expected the Indians to bring furs to Montreal but, as the danger from the Iroquois increased, other Indian nations were hesitant to come to Montreal and a small group of unregulated independent vendors began to go out to trade with the Indians. Merchants tried to compete by hiring men called voyageurs, paid employees of the fur companies, who carried supplies and merchandise from Montreal and other towns into the Indian territories, returning the same season with seven-man canoes filled with furs for the Montreal merchants. They founded trading posts at forts, which were occupied by a commandant, a few soldiers, a gunsmith, an interpreter and missionaries. As they pushed further into the interior, some voyageurs traveled with smaller canoes and spent the winter in outposts.

Two good routes from Montreal reached directly to the best beaver pelts on the continent. A trip by the Ottawa and Mattawa Rivers was fairly safe from the Iroquois and English attacks but required portaging. The other route through the upper St. Lawrence and the lakes to Niagara, Detroit, Michilimackinac and Green Bay passed through a long stretch where voyageurs were threatened by Iroquois interference. Voyageurs were primarily in the business of bringing merchandise to central depots and hauling furs from the depots to Montreal.

By the 1670's, some of the habitants began to fan out to deal with the Indians in their own territories. Called "coureurs des bois," a name which means "wood runner," they were seen as outlaws because they traded illegally in the eyes of the French authorities and independently. They enjoyed the adventure, money, the beauty of nature, and a life free of conformity and the harsh work of farming. Living closely with the Indians, they adapted to Indian ways and dress, and soon were as skilled as the Indians in the ways of the forest. Most cared little for tomorrow. This lifestyle appealed more strongly to the French temperament than to that of any other European race. One coureurs des bois reported that "there is no life so happy, none so independent, no place where a man enjoys so much variety and freedom as in the Indian country." These wandering coureurs des bois were perplexing to the authorities. Even when Louis XIV decreed that the first offense for being a coureurs des bois would be flogging, a second offense branding with the Fleur de Lys, and a third offense punished by life in the galleys or by the death penalty, this mattered little to men who didn't intend to get caught a first time. Most persons in New France conspired to protect the coureurs des bois from the law. When they were hauled before a judge, they were usually at most fined and turned loose to continue their trade.

In 1681, the French authorities decided these traders had to be controlled if the fur trade was to remain profitable for the merchants. The market at Montreal was being oversupplied with furs and hurting the local merchants who supplied the clothing, muskets and copper pots for the trade. The authorities offered amnesty to the *coureurs des bois* involved in the illegal trade and set up a system of permits for those voyageurs who either had a permit or were allied with a Montreal merchant. These permits or licenses authorized outfitting a canoe with goods and three paddlers to go for trade in the Indian villages but only 25 permits were to be granted annually. Lists of the trips, destinations to be visited, and names of the voyageurs had to be registered with the notaries. With estimates of at least 800 men in the west as *coureurs des bois*, this did not provide an opportunity for most of those active in pursuing furs. Besides, many of the young men preferred to be independent and hoped for financial success on their own and did not sign up with the Montreal merchants. Estimates in 1700 put the number of voyageurs at 400-500 each year and the *coureurs des bois* at 2500-3000. Without the *coureurs des bois* the fur trade would not have continued successfully for almost 150 years.

Many of the *coureurs des bois* were persons of good birth, with some military training and education, who felt a magnetic pull to roam the forest. One governor in French Canada wrote that "I cannot tell you how attractive this life is to all our youth. It consists of doing nothing, caring nothing, following every inclination, and getting out of the way of all restraint." Intendant Jean Talon saw the *coureurs des bois* as contradicting what he wanted the colony to become, namely a nation of farmers and large families, and referred to them as "these willful individuals of whom I found considerable numbers literally pursuing careers as bandits." A later Intendant, Jacques Duchesneau, estimated in 1880 that there were more than 800 men out of a population of 9,700 now in the woods. He wrote that "there is not a family of any account but has sons, brothers, uncles, and nephews among these 'Coureurs des bois.'" This was certainly true for LaPrairie, where the seigneurie developed about the same time as the vagabond traders, and was ideally located for trade with both the Montreal merchants and the English and Dutch at Albany.

The story of LaPrairie in the early years is similar to that of the Wild West in the United States. LaPrairie had several advantages for young men who chose to be *coureurs des bois*. As mentioned, being on the south shore of the St Lawrence, it had a water route via the Richelieu River, Lake Champlain, and the Hudson River direct to Albany, the principal place for the prohibited trade with the English, who offered higher prices for furs and had better and cheaper trade goods. The Iroquois from the mission at Sault-Saint-Louis already traded with the English and gladly worked with the French in this illegal trade. With their dislike for authority, LaPrairie offered a distance from the rigidity of the clergy and the authorities of the colony. In 1684 an ordinance was passed with the penalty of death for anyone traveling to the English colonies in an attempt to keep the *coureurs des bois* and Indians from trading with the English. Despite the dangers of being caught, audacity and desire for profit drove many from LaPrairie to this trade. A third advantage was that most of the youth did not like the hard work and limited income of farming, seeing a chance for gain as beaver pelts paid the bills. Eustache Demers, for example, bought a property for 700 livres, which he promised to pay with beaver he acquired the following year. The economy of LaPrairie depended

more on the fur trade than on agriculture, although some of the habitants tied to do both. Many of the men did not marry or married at a later age; for example, Pierre Perras at age 36 and Pierre Poupart at 33.

This was not an easy life although it fascinated and challenged these courageous young Frenchmen. Many of the habitants' sons had grown up around the Indians and the Indian way of life and freedom had an attraction that held many of them to the end of their lives. The *coureurs des bois* often paddled 15 to 18 hours a day and at 55 strokes per minute for weeks on end. They carried two ninety pound bundles of pelts, canoes, and supplies across multiple portages, often ending up with strangulated hernias, the most common injury in the wilderness. Their mortality rate was high. Most could not swim and many drowned when canoes capsized in rapids or during storms on the lakes. The canoe was their shelter for the night but did not protect them very well from the mosquitoes, black flies, and poisonous snakes. They had to fight the winter snows and sub-zero temperatures. Their diet was mainly biscuits, peas, and wheat, with a little brandy to wash these down, and sometimes supplemented by meat, fish or corn from the Indians, but they frequently lacked food. Many were gone from their homes for two or three years at a time. Those involved in illegal trade were able to avoid authorities as they warned each other of dangers and found the woods and rivers an easy place to hide.

Indian girls were as free as the *coureurs des bois* and willing to do chores such as setting up camp, cutting wood, cooking and washing. When either a *coureurs des bois* or the girl tired of the other, each went their own way. It was not unusual for Frenchmen of the woods to have a dozen wives during a lifetime. The *coureurs des bois* were colorful, with their short pants, mocassins, leggings of wool or deer skin, and stocking caps. One trait that attracted the Indians to the *coureurs des bois* was their music and conviviality. Both the *voyageurs* and the *coureurs des bois* paddled to the rhythm of canoe songs, which started as soon as they picked up their paddles. These men had good voices and sang tunes together with words often relating a long story. The fiddle was part of their camps at night as they lounged around the blazing fires, singing and dancing to their hearts delight. Scottish melodies often mixed with ancient songs from France.

A number of names stand out among the *coureurs des bois*, such as Louis Joliet, Jean Nicolet, Greysolon Du Lhut, Pierre Esprit Radisson and Medard Chouart de Grosseilliers. These men are important to the history of North America. For example, Radisson, who had been captured by the Iroquois at age 15, lived with them for two years and learned their lifestyle, and then returned home to become partners in the fur trade with his sister's husband, Grosseilliers. In 1659, Radisson and Grosseilliers set off on a secret trip in search of new fur supplies north of Lake Superior. When they returned home they were accompanied by over 100 canoes loaded with furs. Because they were *coureurs des bois* and not part of an official French expedition, the governor imprisoned them. They were heavily fined and their furs taken from them. They were refused permission to trade unless they gave half of their future trading profits to the fur trade monopoly. In 1663, the two men with 300 canoe loads of northern pelts returned to Quebec and were again arrested and fined. Grosseillier went to France to request that the trade decision be overturned but, when his request was denied, Radisson and Grosseilliers decided to work for the English instead. They met with King Charles II in 1665, who agreed to finance an expedition and then agreed to grant Hudson's Bay Company a charter. Radisson and Grosseilliers worked with the Hudson's Bay Company until 1674,

when they returned to work with the French in outwitting the English. In 1681, Louis XIV's declaration of harsh penalties for *coureurs des bois* did not stop them, but when the French authorities again confiscated Radisson and Grosseilliers' ships and 25 percent of their furs, Radisson returned to the English and worked for Hudson's Bay Company until his death.

Over time, the fur trade was sometimes marked by unscrupulousness and disregard for the law. The granting of licenses was often marked by political corruption. The merchants who provided trade goods frequently exploited the *coureurs des bois*, often forcing them to buy goods at more than 33 percent interest. The individual traders sometimes used brandy to get Indians intoxicated so they could take advantage of them in the trading. After returning home, many *coureurs des bois* wasted their earnings with debauchery in the cabarets. Smuggling grew more rampant, carried on from Fort Frontenac and Fort Chambly despite the penalties, and in time more furs were going from French Canada to the English and Dutch than to the French trading companies. Thus the image of the *coureurs des bois* as honest and skilled entrepreneurs became somewhat tarnished by the unscrupulous practices of a few.

Among our ancestors at LaPrairie, most of the able-bodied men were either *coureurs des bois* or *voyageurs*, often serving in both capacities at different times. A tradition developed in families where older experienced men cared for the younger sons of *habitants*. All three sons of Pierre Perras and Denise Lemaitre were involved in the fur trade, as were their sons-in-law, Pierre Poupard, Claude Faye, Jacques Boyer, and Joseph and Eustache Demers. Three sons of Nicolas Patenaude and Marguerite Breton spent years in the fur trade, and likely a fourth son, Gervais, had been in the fur trade also before he was hospitalized in 1689 until his death with what was likely tuberculosis. The involvement of whole families in the fur trade is obvious. Not only was our Deneau ancestor, Charles, involved but his brother Jacques and a total of 19 Deneau family members are listed on 69 *voyageur* trips. Fourteen members of the Demers family, including Joseph, were recorded on 36 *voyageur* trips. Ten members of the Boyer family, including Antoine, the husband of Marie Perras, are listed on 31 *voyageur* trips. In all 736 contracts of *voyageurs* are listed for LaPrairie residents, while these lists do not include the trips these same men made on their own as *coureurs des bois*.

While much attention has been given to the French men in the fur trade, the role of women was also important in the developing trade. In the early years of the trade, European women were virtually banned from the West, which led to many intermarriages between traders and Indian women. Contrary to the opinion of many, these relationships were generally not casual but formed family units, although difficult to trace since most were not recorded in church records. Indian wives were important to a trader's progress. The bond between a trader and an Indian woman helped advance trade relationship and played an economic role in a trader's success.

Many of the traders spent the better part of their lives in Indian country and Indian women were the only option for wives. It was not uncommon for Indian women to initiate the contact with the trader as marriage to a fur trader brought prestige to the Indian family and drew the trader into the kinship circle. The Indians expected the relationship of their women with traders to be a sanctioned marital union. Indian women enjoyed the benefits of such trade goods as kettles, knives, awls and woolen cloth. In turn, Indian women provided a broad range of domestic skills, such as making pemmican

and maple sugar, grinding corn, harvesting berries, drying fish, dressing furs, making moccasins and leather garments, webbing the snowshoe frames, making birch bark canoes, and serving as guides and interpreters.

French fur traders generally made good husbands and loving fathers. Wives of the traders bore more children than other Indian women. As a result, large numbers of mixed-blood children (Metis) soon grew up and made ideal wives for the fur traders. These young women had learned the skills of their mothers, who were skilled in the life of the woods and also made affectionate and devoted wives who valued family. While the missionaries questioned the validity of these unions, the French traders thought they were legitimate even if contracted without the benefit of clergy. Many of the families remained in the West after leaving the fur trade, while some brought their wives back to Quebec.

## CHANGING TIMES

The period from 1700 to 1760 witnessed the expansion of the fur trade from Montreal to more distant areas. These changes significantly touched the lives of the folks at LaPrairie and eventually some of these factors would lead to the downfall of French Canada. Not only did the quality of furs decline and the price drop, but the Indians preferred the better quality English goods, such as woolen cloth and kettles. As the fur trade moved west, the cost of transportation increased and profits declined, and as trade with the English increased, the French tried to stop competition by building more forts and increasing military efforts. The distance and the need to carry heavier loads caused the fur trade to become more dependent on individual traders among the Indians and a shift from independent *coureurs des bois* to *voyageurs* hired by the Montreal merchants. Each spring some 100 canoes, each manned by five to ten men, headed west from Montreal, taking commodities to the more distant outposts and bringing back furs for the merchants. Procedures for the journey became more specific, such as that the merchant not only had to have a permit to send canoes to a specified post to trade within limits of this post, but had to list the number of men, their names and their places of residence in the colony. The men were all required to have muskets and were limited to four jugs of brandy each, which they were not allowed to use as trade with the Indians. While we can be sure that evading the limit of four jugs of brandy did not challenge the ingenuity of the *voyageurs* too much, the regulations allowed the authorities to keep a careful check on who left the colony and where they were most of the time.

The wars of this period between France and England, which spilled over into North America, were disastrous as they seriously weakened the French in the fur trade and ultimately contributed to the downfall of the French regime. When forces from New England attacked New France in 1759 and 1760, all men of age fifteen and older in New France were ordered to fight for the French forces but, in the end, many abandoned the army to care for their families. After the fall of New France in 1760, the fur trade revived and flourished. However, much of the profit now went to English and Scotch traders while the French became the paid *voyageurs* and clerks. Control of the western fur trading posts was a major objective of the War of 1812 between Great Britain and the United States.

LaPrairie continued, however, to be a good place to recruit voyageurs. In 1789, traders in Montreal organized the Northwest Company, which picked up where the French had left off, following old trade routes and re-occupying French forts. They competed with the Hudson's Bay Company, which the English had established in 1670 with the assistance of Radisson and Grosseilliers, and later with the American Fur Company, which was chartered by John Jacob Aster in 1808. The recruitment of voyageurs and men to staff the posts for all three companies was centered in Montreal and agents canvassed communities like LaPrairie annually for voyageurs. In 1777, 2,432 voyageurs were recorded in the licenses obtained from Montreal and Detroit, and it was estimated that more than 5000 men were in the west for the fur trade. Fur trading posts continued to be established throughout the West, with at least 125 posts in Minnesota alone.

As the frontier of the fur trade pushed further westward through Minnesota and the surrounding region, the canoe route from Montreal was abandoned in favor of steamboats and railroads. By 1850, the task of the voyageurs was at an end. Many of the voyageurs settled in the area around Winnipeg and St. Boniface as the fur trade changed.

Back at LaPrairie, by 1723 most farms still had no more than nine arpents under cultivation and none had more than fourteen arpents cleared. Difficulties in draining the low, flat land may account for these small, patchy clearings but choice of the fur trade over agriculture was the main determinant. No farm as yet had more than one house, as contrasted with Ile d'Orleans where farms had been carved into smaller holdings shared with the sons choosing to farm. From 1739 to 1760, LaPrairie lost population as young families move away from the south shore of the St. Lawrence.

Once the Iroquois threat was reduced, most habitants chose not to live in the village under the supervision of the priests. They liked their freedom from the traditional channels of authority, which made it easier to participate in the fur trade. The strict regulations denying unauthorized expeditions into the woods and defining conduct of the trade barely bothered the residents, who listened in church on Sunday to the denunciation of the *coureurs des bois* but were on their way to the fur country on Monday morning. The church was where official edicts were read and posted. With the tight surveillance, most habitants were content living on their farms and did not find it inconvenient to make an occasional trip to the village for supplies and services. Their purchases were few, such as salt, molasses, cloth, a few tools, nails, kitchen pots, powder and shot for their muskets, and perhaps a little wine. Otherwise they were self-sufficient or relied on the skills of other habitants of the cote. Someone nearby had a forge and could fix a cart or use his carpenter skills to help with a building project.

As the fur trade slowed, more habitants came to live in the village. Artisans and merchants opened their shops. The Jesuits had formulated rigorous rules, for example, rules about selling liquor to the Indians. The first thirty years of the village were marked by repetitive bans on opening a cabaret. Finally, Pierre Pinsonneau was given permission to open a cabaret in 1710.

While neighbors helped each other, there were also plenty of disputes over boundaries, roads, and use of land. Common pastures, often strips along the river or tracts of forest, were set aside early on and festered disputes over who could use the pasture, the number of animals that could be grazed there, and who was responsible for the fences. In 1720, farmers living near the village of LaPrairie complained that their

commons was being used by farmers who lived in Saint-Lambert but who also had land near the village. The habitants from Saint-Lambert were not paying for the right to use the commons, were not contributing to its maintenance, and did not have their home on the land which they owned near the commons. The Saint-Lambert habitants replied that they were ready to pay the charges for the common and to aid in its upkeep, but that they could not pay taxes on several farms. They and their children had cleared and cultivated the landholdings near the village of LaPrairie but, since their homes were in Saint-Lambert, they could not be expected to do more. The Intendant agreed that they were entitled to use the commons as long as they continued to cultivate their land near the village of LaPrairie. He saw nothing irregular simply because no one was living on these farms.

Another conflict which showed the power of the local habitants involved our ancestor, Francois Leber. Francois, a local habitant with land on the Saint-Jacques River, partnered with Jean-Baptiste Hervieux, a merchant in Montreal, to build a sawmill on Leber's property. The local farmers opposed the mill while Intendant Begon defended the interest of the sawmill operators. At the beginning of 1714, a few months after the sawmill started operation, habitants petitioned the lieutenant general in Montreal to stop this operation, noting that Leber and Hervieux had taken 400 to 500 trees from the communal woods and continued logging would threaten the good of the community. The magistrate revoked a concession of 1694, which allowed cutting of the timber for sale as long as a fair tax was paid for each foot of trees cut, and which the proprietors claimed gave them the right to harvest timber. Leber and Hervieux appealed to the Intendant, reminding him that the King's desire was to establish manufacturing and commerce in the colony. Intendant Begon revoked the decision of the lieutenant general and refused to modify the conditions allowing the sawmill operators to cut timber but, nevertheless, the petition of the habitants was effective as this sawmill did little after that time. Twenty seven years later, when the folks of LaPrairie were seeking representation in community affairs, Jacques Leber acknowledged that it was not the number of folks who opposed the mill but the quality of the petitioners who asked the lieutenant general to shut down the mill. Among that group were some of our ancestors, including Jacques Deneau, an elected civil representative.

Once the fur trade no longer required the voyageurs, farm lands began to open up in the region around LaPrairie. Many of those involved in the fur trade had decided to stay in the west as settlers, and before long farmers around LaPrairie were also looking for farm land for their sons in the areas now opening for settlers in western Canada and the United States.

Ch. 7 BEAUCE: Pierre Cressac Toulouse and Catherine Vincent;  
Louis Toulouse and Catherine Rochford

Pierre Cressac dit Toulouse came to New France in 1750 as a soldier in the Contrecour, a division of the Troupes de la Marine stationed at Fort Beausejour in New Brunswick. A native of Toulouse, France, he was already 36 years of age, which means he may have been a professional soldier. Since France was not at war and the French in North America were exploring the west, he may have come seeking adventure. Pierre came at a turbulent time in Acadia. He could scarcely have dreamed of what the next forty years would hold for him.

Since the treaty of 1713, the English believed that all of Acadia had been given to them. The French and Acadians claimed that only Nova Scotia was now English territory and that New Brunswick was still a part of New France. Throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Acadian farmers wanting to leave British territory made their way to the Isthmus of Chignecto, close to the border with Nova Scotia. By 1750, the seigneurie of Beaubassin had about 1000 inhabitants.

To protect the habitants from the British, Fort Beausejour was built on the north side of the Missaguash River in 1749. The Indians in the area of Acadia were upset that the English had taken their land at Halifax and were pressuring the English, who were determined to fortify Nova Scotia. In September of 1750, Colonel Charles Lawrence came to the south side of the Missaguash. The Acadians at Beaubassin, led in part by the fiery Abbe Jean-Louis LeLoutre, burned their crops and buildings and became refugees across the river near Fort Beausejour. Lawrence then built Fort Lawrence just opposite Fort Beausejour on the south side of the Missaguash. An uneasy peace continued through the years 1750-1754.

Pierre Cressac's new home at the fort was nothing to brag about. It was marked by corruption. The commander, Louis du Port Chambon Vergor, a man of doubtful character enhancing himself by fraud, owed his appointment to a notorious and corrupt Intendant, Francois Bigot. It was said of Vergor, who had grown up as a child of the army and been promoted as a favorite of the Intendant, that he was "the most dull-witted fellow but he knew all the angles." There were about 160 soldiers living in quarters that Vergor described as "poorly built, in bad condition, very damp, and the rain comes in everywhere....There is always danger of fire, which is the more serious in that there would be neither remedy nor escape." Built on a hill between two vast swamps, the fort was plagued with mosquitoes during the summer and in the winter the drafty buildings and inadequate diet made life miserable. The avaricious Vergor neglected the defenses of the fort even though he knew the dangers of an English attack. One bright spot for Pierre was his marriage on April 13, 1755 to Anne Comeau, the widow of Joseph Levron and mother of Marie Levron, born in 1741. Commandant Vergor gave his permission. The wedding took place in Anne's home area, Petitcoudiac, with the aforementioned Abbe LeLoutre officiating. Both Pierre and Anne signed with an X, indicating that they did not know how to sign their names.

The honeymoon period for Pierre and Anne was quickly interrupted. Charles Lawrence had become Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia on October 21, 1754. On November 5<sup>th</sup>, Lawrence wrote to Governor Shirley of Massachusetts that "I think it's high time to make some effort to drive them (the Acadians) from the north side of the

Bay of Fundy.” Noting that it would be difficult for him to raise the troops needed and still defend Nova Scotia, he sent Lieutenant Colonel Robert Monckton to reveal his plans and to recruit help with this expedition. On April 14, 1755, governors of the British colonies agreed that it was time to stop the French expansion, even though France and England were not at war at this time. Monckton had orders to attack Fort Beausejour with a force of a few regular soldiers and 2000 colonial men mustered at Boston. After waiting for a shipment of muskets from England, the ships arrived at the isthmus on June 1, 1755.

The folks at Fort Beausejour were quite confident of peace and were not prepared for this assault. When a settler came to inform Vergor that a fleet of about forty ships loaded with men had entered the isthmus, a call went out to Acadian men to come to the fort for its defense, even though the Acadians were pledged to be neutral. English forces moved to the north side of the Missaguash on June 4. An Acadian village of at least 60 buildings and a church in front of Fort Beausejour were torched to prevent their use by the British and the settlers retreated into the woods. The British moved in cannons and build a siege trench to within 700 feet of the walls of the fort. French defenders inside the fort were a disheartened group, especially when word came to the fort that there would be no outside reinforcements. The Acadians, who realized what might happen to them if the fort fell, were deserting into the woods to join their families.

On June 16, a mortar shell shattered a “bomb-proof shelter at the fort, killing seven French officers. Vergor immediately raised the white truce flag, surprising the British. In the terms of surrender, the Acadian defenders were forgiven and allowed to return to their farms. The French troops were allowed to march out with their bags and guns. Any peace was short-lived. On August 11, Monckton declared that all the farm animals were English property. Acadian men were labeled as rebels and locked up. Monckton’s soldiers were to burn Acadian buildings and fanned out through the area doing so. The deportation of the Acadians was underway.

## REFUGEES

What happened to Pierre Cressac Toulouse and Anne Comeau after this is not clear. Many of the refugees fled the area, mostly going up the northeastern coast of New Brunswick. The winter was harsh and many lacking food froze to death on the shores of Miramichi. Some of the soldiers went by land or water from Beausejour to Quebec, where they were given lots for settlement in the future parish of Saint Gervais at Bellechase. Another group of refugees made their way up the St. Jean River to Quebec. Some families, among them some of our ancestors, made it to Carleton. Pierre and Anne had one child, Marie, born likely in 1756. Anne Comeau died at Bellechase on December 12, 1757.

After the fall of the fort at Louisbourg in 1758, General Wolfe decided to carry out his plan to exterminate the Acadians along the St. Lawrence River Valley with a view to protecting their rear flank if they attacked Quebec. On September 4<sup>th</sup>, he arrived in Gaspé while other forces arrived at Miramichi, destroying fishing villages and equipment, burning mills and homes and causing more suffering for the recent refugees.

The people of Gaspé fled into the woods or to Québec, where war would soon catch up with them again.

Pierre Cressac Toulouse married another Acadian refugee, Catherine Vincent, in 1758. Catherine was the daughter of Pierre Vincent and Anne Comeau, who were settlers initially from Beaubassin. Catherine's mother, Anne, and Pierre's first wife, Anne Comeau, were both great-granddaughters of Pierre Comeau and Rose Bayol, the first members of the Comeau family in Acadia. Pierre and Catherine's first son, Pierre, was baptized at Kamouraska on August 6, 1760 and died on September 26. Pierre may well have still been a soldier, defending Québec from the British siege of 1759 and fighting in the battle on the Plains of Abraham on September 13, 1759, when Québec fell to the British. At the time of Anne Comeau's burial in 1757, Pierre is listed as a "soldier of the colony." When Anne's daughter, Marie Levron, married on February 3, 1758, Pierre is listed as "a soldier of the infantry troops in the colony."

Meanwhile, his former commander at Fort Beausejour, Captain Duchambon de Vergor, had been assigned to protect l'Anse du Foulon, which was where the British troops ultimately made their landing. After the surrender of Fort Beausejour, Vergor had been court-martialed for cowardice but was acquitted by Bigot's testimony. Stripped of his rank, Vergor had made his way to Québec where, through his friends in high places, he was reinstated and allowed to carry on his military career. General Montcalm has installed Captain St. Martin as commander at the post above l'Anse au Foulon, but Governor Vaudreuil replaced him with Captain Duchambon de Vergor, one of his lackeys. The British were able to land because Vergor thought there was no danger and his troops were not vigilant. Vergor had about 100 men at a post overlooking the Anse au Faulon, but only about 30 were in position as Vergor had allowed the rest of his troops to go to their homes. Pierre Cressac Toulouse may well have been at the post with his former commander. If Pierre was not still in the army, he most likely was forced by law to become a colonial fighter like most men in the colony, who at the time made up the greatest number of the French forces.

The siege of Québec occurred in the middle of the Seven Year's War between France and England, known in North America as the French and Indian War. British ships and troops had arrived at the end of June, 1769, and started shelling Québec. General Wolfe had orders to "burn and lay waste the country" and his men were burning homes and crops, killing livestock and some of the residents all along the St. Lawrence River. The people of Québec faced a desperate summer as their homes were destroyed, food was in very short supply, and they waited for the English to attack. Wolfe was excited when he noticed a small cove and a trail zigzagging up the steep cliff upriver from Québec. Vergor's lack of vigilance allowed the English to make their landing and finally to involve the French in combat on the Plains of Abraham after a long siege throughout the summer. Pierre Cressac Toulouse was no doubt a witness to the defeat of General Montcalm and the French forces. After the battle on the Plains of Abraham on September 13, 1759, British forces occupied the city of Québec. Governor Vaudreuil and his troops panicked and escaped to Montreal. The French mustered every man possible to take back Québec. General Levis led an army back and drove the English forces back inside the fort, but with little food and ammunition, they awaited supplies only to have the English ships arrive instead. Bitterly disappointed, Levis led his troops back to Montreal. When British troops arrived at Montreal with a force of 17,000 men, Levis

could barely muster 2000 men and, on September 8, 1760, laid down their arms. New France now belonged to the British.

The life of the common soldier during these last years of French occupancy was living hell. They faced a grave food shortage, rampant fever and dysentery, lived with wet uniforms in sloppy trenches, and sometimes crawled through slushy snow. As disappointing as the British takeover of New France, for Pierre and his wife, Catherine Vincent, there must also have been a sense of relief.

After the fall of Canada, French soldiers were refused the right to serve elsewhere until the end of hostilities and were ordered to rejoin their French army forces to be repatriated to France. About 4000 soldiers embarked on September 14, 1760 but Pierre was not among them. Had he escaped the surveillance of the authorities to remain in Canada? Quite likely! He was the father of a four year old daughter with Anne Comeau and had just had a child with his second wife, who was baptized on August 6, 1760. Between 1760 and 1770, Pierre and Catherine lived in Quebec. Fortunately, General James Murray, who took over leadership for the British, was favorable toward the French and allowed them to retain their property, to practice their religion, and worked to help them rebuild their lives. The Treaty of Paris on February 10, 1763, gave Canada to the English.

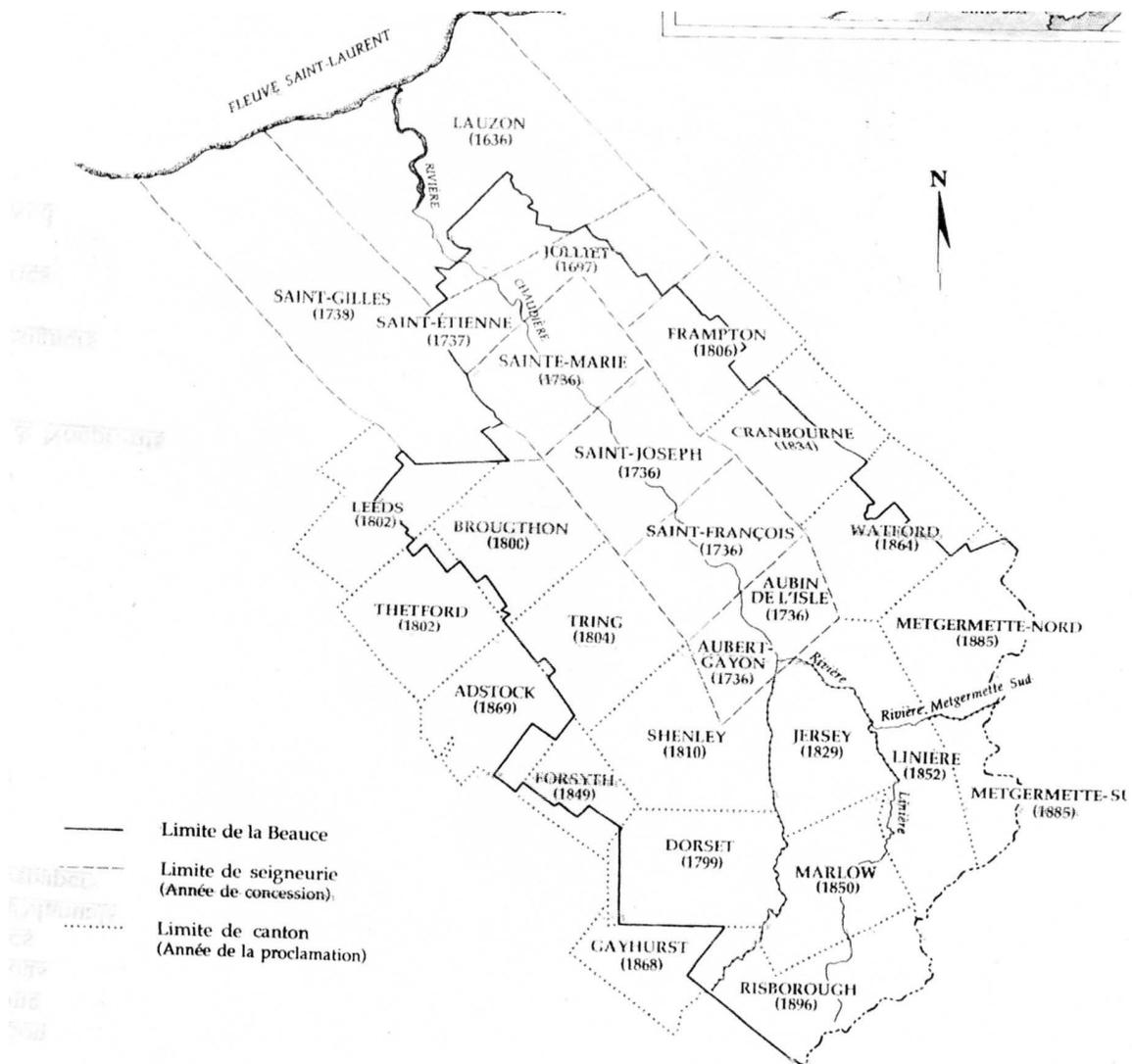
In the first years of peace after the British occupied Canada, Pierre was listed as a merchant at Quebec in the baptismal records of his children. A second son, Pierre Martial, was baptized at Notre Dame Church on September 19, 1761. Jean was baptized in 1762, Pierre in 1763, twin sons Charles and Philippe in December, 1765. Philippe died a month later and Charles would live to be our ancestor. Joseph, the last of the children born in Quebec, was baptized in 1768. It is unclear what Pierre did in Quebec as a merchant, but there are hints that he was buying furs from the Indians and dealing with the merchants of Quebec. The fur trade was still the dominant commerce of Quebec, only now mostly handled by British merchants using French workers. He might also have been involved in importation of goods from the English colonies or from England, since English trade goods dominated the fur trade and supplies for the colony since goods were no longer brought from France. Merchants lived in Lower Town, which had been utterly destroyed during the siege of Quebec. It is unlikely that Pierre could have developed a profitable business of his own.

About 1770, Pierre and Catherine moved away from Quebec to start over at St. Francois in Beauce, a small village of 20-25 families about forty kilometers south of Quebec. Quebec was teeming with English soldiers and a fast growing population of English-speaking immigrants. Pierre may have been thinking of the future of his growing children. A significant number of Acadian refugees had already settled in the Beauce area and more would follow in the next few years.

## BEAUCE

The area south of Quebec City along the Chaudiere River is known as Beauce, named Nouvelle Beauce because it reminded the French of Beauce, a fertile wheat producing area in France. It was originally inhabited by Algonquin Indians. In 1672, Intendant Jean Talon conceded to Francois Miville, son of Pierre Miville and Charlotte

Maugis, a fief of land for a trading post at Saint Marie. Francois was starting a fur trading company with his mother, Marie Langlois, and his brother Jacques. However, the next summer they had to break up the company. They had bought goods on credit, but a high mortality rate from illness among the Indians along with a lack of snow made the fur business unprofitable. This was the first in a series of mishaps for the Mivilles. A bailiff seized their Lauzon and Quebec City properties. In May 1673, Francois successfully argued before the Sovereign Council that the children's share, which was half of the goods, be excluded from garnishment. In 1674, Francois became his mother's guardian until her death in 1676. The first settler at St. Joseph in Beauce was Noel Vachon, the son of our ancestor Paul, who built a flour mill there in 1739.



This area was fairly quiet until the French realized a need for a barrier between New France and the English colonies of North America to stop English expansion. In 1737, the French king conceded three seigneuries along the Chaudière to one family, Joseph de la Gorgendiere and his two sons-in-law, Francois Pierre Rigaud de Vaudreuil

and Thomas-Jacques Taschereau. They were to build a cart and carriage road along the river and to recruit settlers. The first settlers were primarily second generation children of the pioneers of Ile d'Orleans, Beupre and Lauzon, coming to Beauce as young families. Names of early settlers include our ancestors Pierre and Louis Gagne, Gregoire Deblois, Joseph Helie, Zacharie and Francois Cloutier, Claude Poulin, Joseph and Ignace Quirion.

Settlement slowed down in the 1750's because of fighting between the English colonies and Canada. This region was spared during the war years and, in the ten years after the conquest of Canada by the British, many Canadian and Acadian refugees took farms there. Pierre Cressac Toulouse, his wife, sons Pierre, Charles, and Joseph, and daughter Marie were among the new habitants at Saint Francois. Pierre was now 56 years old and would start over clearing land and trying to support his family, perhaps better than he had been able to do in the rebuilding years at Quebec. Pierre and Catherine had five more children between July 1770 and February 1780, baptized at Saint Joseph and Saint Marie since there was no priest at Saint Francois. Three sons died early deaths. Marie Catherine would in time marry Francois Regis Quirion and Marie Louise would marry Antoine Montminy. In these years we find Pierre assisting at the marriages of Marie, his child with Anne Comeau, who married Francois Lenedique, and his son Charles, our ancestor, who married Therese Quirion in 1787 at St. Francois church. Therese and Francois Quirion were children of Ignace Quirion and Marguerite Pouliot. The area where Pierre settled was in a valley along the Chaudiere River, surrounded by Appalachian hills. It was largely woods with soil of modest potential for farming. Floods were common in the Chaudiere valley. Settlers tried to grow wheat but the area was better suited for dairy and pork production or for forest products.

When the American Revolution erupted in 1775, most of the French in Canada, including the habitants of Beauce, stayed neutral even though the American colonies invited them to join in rejecting the British. The thought of bringing the eighty thousand inhabitants of Canada into the American cause was certainly on the minds of many. The British parliament had passed the Quebec Act in 1774, which established Quebec as a province with its own governor and council, preserved the French Civil Code, and allowed Catholics the freedom to practice their faith and to hold office. It also expanded the boundaries of Quebec southward to the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers and northward to the height of land between the Great Lakes and Hudson's Bay, designed to set a brake on the expansion westward of the Thirteen Colonies and to regulate the Indian and French living in the area. The American colonists considered the Quebec Act intolerable, giving the French Canadians what they wanted. The French Canadians were tired of fighting with the American colonies and uncertain of fair treatment from Protestant America, thus the Act was a major factor in the French Canadians staying loyal to England.

In 1774, the American Continental Congress invited Canadians to join them in rejecting British control. Many Americans thought their fight for freedom would be hopeless unless they could keep Britain from using Canada against them. Governor Carleton tried to mobilize the manpower of Canada and, while many of the seigneurs joined the Canadian militia, most of the French Canadians claimed this was a quarrel between the colonies and England and none of their business. The Quebec Act provoked an invasion of Quebec by the colonies in the winter of 1775-76. General Benedict

Arnold convinced General Washington to let him invade Canada to gain military control of Quebec and to convince the French Canadians to join the War of Independence on the side of the American colonies.

Washington gave Arnold an army of 1100 men, who headed north from Cambridge, Massachusetts along the Kennebec River and, after struggling through wilderness country that most considered impenetrable, along the Chaudiere River in Beauce. Late fall weather made the trip difficult, as did leaky boats that destroyed food supplies and gunpowder, sickness, starvation, and desertion by nearly half of the soldiers. Their diet was sometimes tree bark, moss, birds, squirrels, dog meat, and even moccasin soup. Although the Beauce habitants wanted to remain neutral, they didn't hesitate to rescue men from capsized boats or to provide supplies for Benedict Arnold's troops as they passed through the area. Arnold wrote that the French inhabitants rejoiced to hear that he was coming and would gladly furnish him with supplies, that a friendly priest did services for one of his officers who died, and that a Frenchman with a family of seven housed one of his sick soldiers and refused payment, saying that he had merely obeyed the duties of religion and humanity. Actually, many of the Beauce residents sympathized initially with the American grievances but sentiments changed as the invading army began looting farms and homes looking for food and also clearly reflected an anti-Catholic bias.

Gabriel-Elzear Taschereau, the seigneur at Saint Marie, received a commission as Captain in the militia and took part in the defeat of the American forces at Quebec on December 31, 1775. Benedict Arnold set up his headquarters in Taschereau's manor house when he reached Saint Marie. The habitants of Beauce were willing to provide food and supplies to Arnold, even though it meant giving up food they might need for the winter, but they were unwilling to pick up their muskets and join the American forces. They likely had mixed thoughts, knowing that siding with Carleton and the English likely would support a government that would raise their taxes, while taking up arms with the Americans could mean loss of their lands if the Canadians won but could gain them ownership of their land rather than tenancy if the Americans won. Taschereau had loyal habitants who kept him informed of events back in his village.

Benedict Arnold's troops, joined by the forces of General Montgomery which had already captured Montreal, assaulted Quebec City in a snowstorm. The battle was a disastrous defeat for the continental armies, with Montgomery killed, Arnold wounded, and many men taken as prisoners. Taschereau's loyalty to the British upset some of the habitants who had dealt with the American troops even though Benedict Arnold's men had pillaged Taschereau's manor and the communal mill and sold the spoil to pay for supplies. The hospitality of some Beauce habitants did not go unnoticed by the authorities. Governor Carleton appointed a commission of three including Taschereau to examine the actions of those who aided the rebels. The records at the Taschereau manor showed that Pierre Toulouse sold Arnold a horse with harness for 61 livres and a blanket for 10 livres. The commission also cited a number of bad subjects at Saint Marie, including Louis Gagne and Etienne Vachon, and also at St. Joseph's, including Jean Gagnon, Ignace Quirion, and the Cloutiers. Fortunately, Governor Carleton was fairly lenient in penalizing those who assisted the Americans. The Canadian authorities dispatched troops to winter at Beauce in the autumn of 1776.

Pierre was by now an aging and venerable man working to clear a farm and to set his sons up in farming. He died on February 27, 1791 at age 76 and was buried at Saint Francois in Beauce. His widow, Catherine Vincent, remarried on April 11, 1796 at Saint Francois to Jacques Roy, another Acadian. A note from a priest's visit in May, 1798 lists Jacques as a day laborer. Louise was living with them and had her mother's approval when she married Antoine Montminy, a mason, at the Cathedral in Quebec in 1799. Catherine was widowed again with the death of Jacques and went to live with the Montminys. When their first child was baptized in 1807, Catherine was the godmother. Catherine was buried at Saint Francois on January 6, 1822. She would have been happy to know that two Montminy sons that she had likely helped raise would become priests in Quebec.

Two of the Cressac Toulouse sons, Charles and Joseph, are listed in parish registers as farmers. Charles and his wife, Therese Quirion, were married at and farmed at Saint Francois. Their son, Jean, born March 25, 1802, also became a farmer and married Archange Veilleux, daughter of Louis Veilleux and Marie Angelique Gagne, at Saint Francois on January 20, 1824. Two more of Charles and Therese' children, Gertrude and Anselm, married Veilleuxs, two others, Marie Louis and Joseph married Poulins, and Marie Therese married into the Grenier family.

Jean and Archange' son, Louis (baptized Basile in 1829) married Catherine Rochford and they became our ancestors. It was not uncommon when an older brother died that a younger brother was given the same first name, but using the name Louis was a bit unusual for Basile since, although he had a brother Louis deceased before his birth, the family also named another brother Louis. The other children of Jean and Archange also married into local families. David married Marie Morin, daughter of Alexis Morin and Marie Priscille Labbe, at St. Georges in 1845. Anastasia married Prisque Poulin, son of Pierre Poulin and Marie Angelique Paquet, at St. Georges in 1854. Michel married Sophie Labbe, daughter of Joseph Labbe and Marcelline Roy, at Beauce in 1862. The population grew rapidly as more refugees sought farms but especially because most farm families, including the Toulouses, had many children.

## IRISH IMMIGRATION

Farm life was just getting well underway in the Beauce area when the War of 1812 broke out. With France and England again at war, this American conflict marked the efforts of the United States to annex Canada and, for the Canadians, it was a war of independence. England attempted to prevent the United States from trading with France while the British navy also boarded over 400 American ships to forcibly enlist any sailors of British origin for military service. Americans were upset by a strong resistance among the Native Americans to westward expansion into territory the United States claimed it owned and believed that Britain was encouraging the Indian opposition. United States leaders were confident that the Canadians, including the French speaking, would quickly come to the American side

Since Beauce was close to the United States, it was inevitable that it would be involved, although with mixed responses. Many of the Beauce residents carried on a clandestine trade with the Americans while also supplying the British forces. The people

at Saint Joseph's in Beauce declined to turn out for military service; however, this was the sole exception in Lower Canada even though no battles were fought in Beauce. Thomas Pierre Joseph Taschereau, the seigneur at Saint Marie, served as a Lieutenant Colonel and a number of habitants from Saint Marie served as officers and enlisted men. French Canadians were determined to preserve their cultural heritage and, at the Battle of Chateaugay on October 25, 1813, proved their patriotism when a small band of French Canadians and Mohawks turned back the American forces. When the Treaty of Ghent ended the war in 1814, Canada remained independent of the United States, but the Native Americans were losers as the United States got free reign in the west. After the war, as Irish and English immigrants flocked to Quebec, the French Canadians, who had gained some rights and the freedom to practice their religion, were concerned that the growing number of immigrants might mean the possible loss of their culture, religion and language. The area along the Chaudiere, so they thought, belonged to them as simple farm families.

Irish were the most numerous immigrants to the Beauce area. Among them were Irish Catholics and Protestants who had a deep mistrust of each other which would take generations to heal in Canada. The majority of Protestant Irish came to Canada with ample savings and many entered into commerce. Irish Catholics, on the other hand, had been marginalized in Ireland and came to Quebec with few advantages other than the Catholic religion and rural background which they shared with the French of Quebec. Still, they sometimes suffered rejection. The clergy in French parishes were guardians of the French culture and nationalism. The priest at St. Georges in Beauce at the time reportedly would tell people from the pulpit to "Stay away from those Irish. They are filthy, they have diseases. Keep away from them." Yet, Quebec generally welcomed them, partly because of religion and perhaps because of their shared resistance to the English.

The arrival of Irish farmers started in Beauce around 1815. Groups of Irish settled at Frampton, Cumberland, and some of the other cantons. Among these were the Rochfords, including Thomas Rochford married to Catherine Bellew. Actually, their surnames were Norman, dating back to the 1100's when the English used Anglo-Normans, mostly from South Wales, to suppress the Irish. Initially, the Anglo-Normans were rewarded with land, but in time they had become impoverished and, because they were Catholic, had been deprived of their lands by English diplomacy. The Norman conquerors had been attracted by the gentleness of the Irish and adopted their manners, their language, their dress, and even their Irish song and poetry. It was often said that they became more Irish than the Irish. In Ireland, the English called them Irish while they called the native Irish the "wild Irish." In the religious reformation following Henry VIII, the Normans resisted attempts to force them to change their religion and clung to their Catholic faith, which bonded them with the native Irish. With Oliver Cromwell, they were dispossessed of their farms and harshly persecuted. The British government "Corn Laws" in the 1820's pushed the price of grain too high and rendered the potato the staple of the rural population. The Irish population more than doubled in the last half of the eighteenth century and continued to grow, forcing families to divide their small holdings of land into tiny plots. At most they had a small patch to grow potatoes for their families and many were starving even before the potato blight. In the 1820's, bad weather and crop failures left many starving to death. A crisis in 1821-1822 was

particularly severe. Then the landowners in the area where the Rochfords lived began to convert their arable land into pastures to raise cattle, which brought about rising rents, the expulsion and ruin of many small farmers, and lack of work for laborers. It was this Ireland that the Rochfords left for hope in the New World.

Thomas Rochford and Catherine Bellew were both born at Trim in County Meath in 1800. Meath was close to Dublin, where supplying cattle and sheep offered a better profit for large landholders than the rent from poor tenants. Landowners chose to rid their lands of the small paupers now living in misery, thus adding more families to the already large ranks of unemployed laborers. Starting in the 1820's, there was a flow of Irish Catholics traveling from Dublin down the Saint Lawrence to Quebec and Montreal, many of them farmers coming with their wives, children, and sometimes extended kin. Most settlers came to New France at their own expense although landlords sometimes helped with costs of emigration. A few had their fares paid by friends or relatives already settled in Canada. The trip over was cheap, usually in the hold of an old ship being sent back to Canada for timber, which were referred to as "coffin ships." Men, women and children were herded together with little privacy and sanitation, and limited supplies of food and water for a voyage that would take from six to sixteen weeks. Many brought some potatoes, oatmeal and herring on board as the ship's fare was of poor quality. It is likely that the Rochfords were among such travelers as no record appears of their arrival.

Most of these Irish immigrants were ambitious, anxious to escape the trials of tenant farming and to give their children a better opportunity. Most were literally "pushed out" as the British wanted to keep the Irish away from England and encouraged them to settle in North America. It was cheaper to come to Canada even though many already had their eyes set on the United States as the "land of promise." Irish farmers saw an opportunity for independence and land in new agricultural areas, although on arrival they often got farms with poor soil that had been passed over by the wise French farmers. Most available land could support only subsistence farming, and depended largely on the plot where the family settled and the family's labor. When they arrived, it was not possible to get title to land but only to rent because of the seigneurial system. Thomas and Catherine Rochford came to Canada in about 1826 and settled on land in the seigneurie of Aubert-Gallion on the east side of the Chaudiere River, where Charles Toulouse had become a habitant in the eighteenth century. The seigneurial system in Canada was abolished in 1854 and a civil structure was set up at Aubert-Gallion. A list of habitants in the premier rang of Aubert-Gallion in 1857 includes, by plot number:

11. Thomas Rochford 80 arpents
12. James Rochford 80 arpents
25. Jean Quirion 80 arpents
31. Louis Veilleux 80 arpents
54. Thomas Rochefort 40 arpents
55. Joseph Veilleux 80 arpents
62. Jean Toulouse 80 arpents
67. Louis Veilleux 80 arpents

Looking at a plot map, the farms of Thomas Rochford and Jean Toulouse were near each other. This was an area of subsistence farming and lumbering, but at least the Rochfords had their own land and a place to raise a family. Thomas Rochefort and Eliza Flynn on lot 54, also from Trim, likely are the parents of Thomas Rochford. James

Rochford on plot 12 is the son of Thomas and Catherine. Records for the seigneurie show that in 1844 the farmers had 8265 arpents of land in cultivation, raising wheat, oats, rye, barley, corn, potatoes, sheep, pigs, cattle and horses. The principal work in the area was farming. Agricultural technology in Quebec, as in Ireland, was still somewhat backward. The fast growth of population in both Ireland and Quebec challenged the resources available. While the Irish were facing a famine in the 1820's, the same fate would hit the folks in Beauce in the 1830's.

It is hard to imagine the challenge that faced Thomas in learning to farm this land after leaving the poverty of Ireland. After years of hard labor grubbing out stumps and breaking the sod, a farmer could perhaps till the crops and mow hay on 20 arpents. He would spend many hours cutting wood to heat the house and cook stove and splitting rails to build fences. In the spring he busied himself hauling loads of manure to be pitched by fork on the fields as fertilizer to improve his crop as well as harrowing and seeding crops. Wheat was the most suitable crop after clearing, where it was sowed among the stumps. Then it was time to cut his hay by scythe and stack it before cutting his grain and using a flail to thresh it by hand. Corn had to be picked one ear at a time, husked and shelled by hand. Any spare time could be spent building water troughs for the animals and root cellars for the vegetables, repairing buildings and fences, or building benches and other household furniture such as beds made of boards that would be covered with a mattress filled with straw or feathers. Neighbors often helped with raising buildings, harvesting, or butchering animals. Fortunately, the women in most families usually milked the cows, feed the chickens, hoed the gardens, and even helped in the fields. They did these chores in addition to daylong tasks of boiling fat to make candles for light, making soap with wood ash and fats, and the daily routine of cooking and sewing for the family, mending clothes, and preserving food for the winter.

Farm work was hard enough, but most of the farmers in the Beauce area also faced crop failures and financial crisis. By the 1830's, wheat was affected by insects and mildew while the market dwindled and prices fell. 1837 saw a major catastrophe for Beauce farmers due to floods and crop disasters. There were reports that the farmers at St. Francois and St. Georges were exhausted and suffering hunger, while their animals were dying along the roads and scarlet fever was devastating families. Ironically, where early French settlers had despised the potato as English food, the potato now replaced wheat as the primary crop in Beauce. The fungus which destroyed the potatoes of Ireland in the 1840's had originated in the Lower St. Lawrence Valley and Canadian farmers suffered a famine similar to that of the Irish. The forests took on commercial importance after 1840 as farmers turned to the woods for subsistence, and St. Georges became the primary center for the wood industry. Many of the men, especially the younger ones, worked seasonally in the woods or at sawmills and then returned home to help with the growing season. Young women looked for work as domestic servants. Meanwhile, local farmers were agitated by the high rents charged by the seigneurs and joined protests, complaining that the system was forcing emigration to the United States. Many from Beauce were crossing the border to work in the forests of New England and, before long, also in the textile mills of New England. Before 1860, about 85 percent of the folks who traveled the Old Canada Road, which followed the Chaudiere River through St. Georges and headed south to the border of Maine were from Beauce County. They either walked through the woods or used a buckboard wagon, consisting of two long boards mounted

on front and rear axles with one or two seats on which the family could ride. Jean Toulouse and Archange Veilleux were in Waterville, Maine in January 1841 when their son Jean was born. Likely Jean was working in the woods that winter.

By the time Thomas died in 1856, the Rochfords had fulfilled their dream for a home and family and most of their children had married into the families of local habitants. Daughter Anne, born in 1825, married Pierre Dion, son of Jean Dion and Margaret Racine, at Beauceville in 1845. Their daughter, Marie, married Augustin Dion, Pierre's brother, at Lambton in 1849. Elizabeth, born in 1827, married Joseph Veilleux, son of Olivier Veilleux and Marie-Louise Rodrigue, at St. Georges in 1845. James, born in 1831, married Appoline Lachance. Thomas, born in 1833, married a local Irish girl, Mary Connelly, who had come from Ireland with her parents when she was six months old. The first John Rochford died in 1835 as a child. Catherine, born in 1835, married Louis Toulouse, son of Jean Toulouse and Archange Veilleux, at St. Georges on September 23, 1856. The youngest Rochford, John, born in 1842, married Mary Ann Padden, a New Yorker, in 1869. Each of the Rochfords would have large families, adding 45 grandchildren to the family.

## EXODUS FROM CANADA

Life as a farmer in Beauce was difficult and the dreams of owning one's own farm started to fade for the youth. A serious depression hit the farming area from 1849 to 1854. Meanwhile, the United States looked like a new land of promise. Beauce still had little industrialization to employ the large numbers of children reaching adulthood. Struggling with a lack of fertile soil, lack of markets for their crops, and a short growing season, most Beauce families could not hope to get beyond subsistence farming. Many of the men had to spend the entire winter and part of the growing season working in the timber trade to survive. Many of the new immigrants to Beauce, finding life on the farm too stressful, were disappointed and left for the United States. The number of French Canadians immigrating to the United States grew in the 1850's and 1860's, with most coming from the rural parishes and struggling with poverty. Once the railroad from New England to Quebec came through the Chaudiere valley by the 1850's, it was much easier and faster to go to New England, where jobs were plentiful in the textile mills and other industries. Many from our ancestral families went to New England, but a smaller group, who still had dreams of farming, headed west. We find the names of Toulouse, Rochford, Perras and Patenaude appearing in Minnesota in the years after 1850. While most families had piled their belongings onto wagons for the trip west before 1860, railroads now began to carry a larger number of families traveling with their possessions and sometimes their animals in freight cars. Homesteading offered a new chance for fresh farm land. Before 1900, Minnesota would have a fairly large community of French Canadians. Family ties tended to keep families together. The Minnesota census of 1870 shows the family of Louis Toulouse and Catherine Rochford living at Lyle, Minnesota in Mower County. Other Rochfords, Veilleux, Lachance and familiar names were scattered around the area.

The number of French-Canadians coming into the United States was especially high during the Civil War. This somewhat reflects the lack of employment opportunities

in French-Canada, when enlisting in the Union Army meant a salary of thirteen dollars a month rather than the poverty they faced at home. Many of these French-Canadians were finding seasonal employment in logging and farming in the United States and sometimes enlisted to protect their source of employment. French-Canadians living in the United States were often pressured to show allegiance to their new country by enlisting. As they integrated into the local culture, for example, with John Rochford serving well in the Fourth Minnesota Regiment in the Civil War, the process of enculturation was often slowed as Canadian priests and nuns also left Quebec to minister to the spiritual and educational needs of Franco-Americans. Settling into specific neighborhoods, the new arrivals could keep their French language and customs alive for several more generations. At the time, it was easy for Canadians to become naturalized American citizens and to make a new start in life.

Gaspe is a peninsula with the St. Lawrence to the north and Chaleur Bay to the south. Prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Gaspe was inhabited by Micmac Indians, who were known as the “Sea People” because they were expert fishermen and most of their food came from the sea. As French fishermen came into this area, they learned from the Micmacs. In 1654, Nicolas Denys was named governor and Lieutenant general of Acadia and, when much of Acadia was occupied by the British, the Bay of Chaleur and Gaspe remained French possessions. This area of beautiful beaches and sheltered bays with numerous rivers flowing from the wooded hills had large fishing villages at Restigouche and Parce before the Acadian deportation.

Many Acadians driven out of Acadia came by boat or through the woods to Gaspe. Some spent their first winter at the Micmac village of Restigouche, located a few miles from Campbellton. Seven Acadian families went immediately to Carleton and their family names are in our ancestral history, including Claude Landry, Charles Dugas, Francois Comeau, and four LeBlanc families. Land at Carleton was good for farming and they set about farming rather than fishing. Etienne Bergeron, who came with his brother Michel on a long trip through the woods with the last group of Acadians to leave from the River Jean in the Fredericton area of New Brunswick, also settled at Carleton.

The Acadians in Gaspe were among the most mistreated of all Acadians. In 1758, General Wolfe wanted to exterminate the Acadians along the way to Quebec and his men ravaged the coast of Gaspe, hunting down Acadians along the Bay of Chaleur, burning mills and homes. In the fight for Quebec City, a military force of 700 Acadians accompanied by 800 Indians went to the defense of the city. At the Battle of Restigouche, near present day Campbellton, New Brunswick, French ships taking refuge in Chaleur Bay were defeated by the British in 1760. Acadians had been recruited to help in this fight so the British burned 200 Acadian homes along the shore. Some Acadians who escaped into the woods at Carleton and Bonaventure were forced to eat beaver skins that winter to survive. When the English wanted to eliminate the Acadians in 1861, Captain Frederick MacKenzie was sent to clean out this “nest of French vermin on that coast” and took many hostages. When Amherst refused to grant amnesty to the Acadians after the defeat of New France, the Acadians remained wary of the English and continued to hide in places such as the mouth of the Bonaventure River, where they could anchor their ships in a harbor unseen from the sea.

The Acadians along the Bay of Chaleur did not fare much better in the American War of Independence as ships and troops from the United States harassed the shores of Gaspe. Governor Guy Carleton, realizing that it was better to have the Acadians on the side of Britain during this war, offered the Acadians legal existence. After the war, numerous loyalists coming from America encroached on the Acadians land, while the British seigneurs exploited the Acadians by not giving them titles to the land.

As soon as the British captured New France, English, Irish and Scottish immigrants came to Gaspe, most settling along the shoreline to seek their livelihood from the sea. Fishermen from the Channel Islands, a British territory off the coast of France, had been among the first Europeans to visit the shores off North America for the lucrative cod fishing. Each year about 50 ships from Jersey Island, one of the Channel

Islands, with crews totaling about 2,500 men fished off the coast of Canada. Charles Robin, a 22 year old Jersey merchant, first came to the Gaspé Peninsula (Gaspésie) in 1766. The Jersey economy was directed toward fishing and trade and the language was French, so Robin could easily connect with the Acadians at Chaleur Bay. Robin recognized the benefit of establishing permanent fisheries to take trade away from the French merchants.

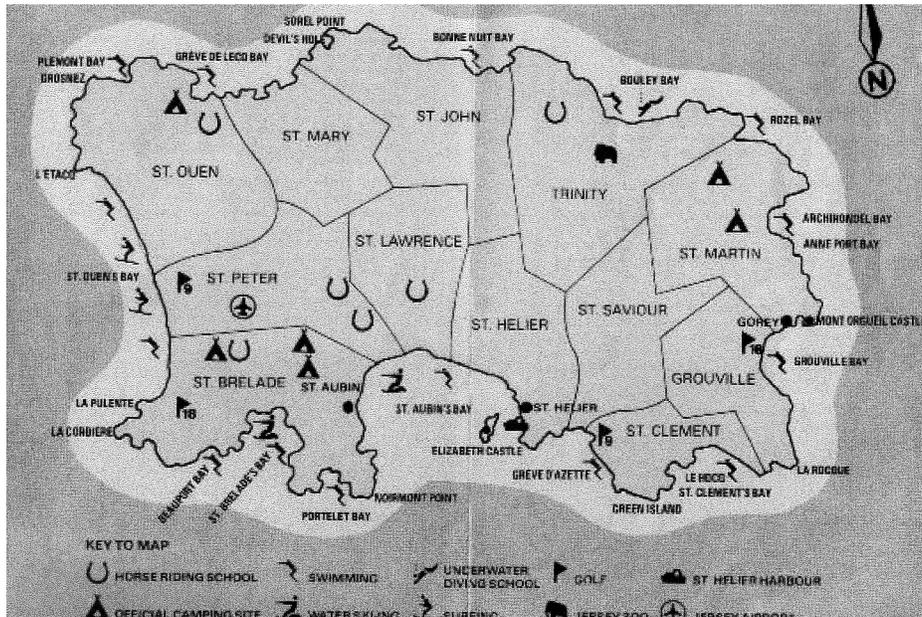
Charles Robin settled at Paspébiac near the entrance to the Bay of Chaleur. In 1774, he and his brother John brought back 81 Acadian exiles who had settled in the Saint-Malo region of France to work at Paspébiac. The British authorities at first refused to accept them but later cautiously allowed them to stay if they took the oath of allegiance. When American corsairs targeted these fishing posts during the American Revolution, Robin's property was destroyed and his ships captured, forcing him to return to Jersey. After the conflict between the Americas and the British was over, Charles Robin returned to Paspébiac and established a fishing monopoly that extended to New Brunswick and Cape Breton. For many years the Robins Company was the most substantial business enterprise on the Gaspé Peninsula.

Charles Robin and Company grew rapidly, using a system of dependency to bind workers to the company. Many of the employees came from rural parts of Jersey and had little experience working for wages. Robin looked for young men who had begun an apprenticeship that they would complete in Canada; most of these employees signed on for five years and worked extremely hard. Merchandise was provided on credit from the company store for the fishermen and company employees at high prices to keep them in debt and virtually forced to continue working for the company. Cash was rare and Robin exercised a severe hold on the lives of his employees. Robin was recruiting fourteen year old Acadian youth, advancing them their salary in merchandise to the point they were always indebted to Robin and had to work tirelessly to pay off their debts. Denying them the opportunity for school, Philippe Robin told his assistants that "there is no need for schools for them. If they were educated would they be more adept at fishing?" Bishop Plessis noted that Robin reduced his Acadian workers to being "some kind of slaves totally dependent on them." But Robins offered employment in Gaspésie.

Charles Robin and Company had strict rules of conduct, with everything in the service of Robins. The Robin family was Huguenots and took a dim view of Catholics. Charles Robin hired Catholics only as fishermen. An employee who married a Catholic had to leave the company. Young men brought to Canada generally had to be single and with no dependents. These would be the conditions which faced George Fallu, our ancestor, when he came from Jersey Island to work for Charles Robin and Company.

George Fallu was born on January 6, 1809 at St. Pierre on Jersey Island, the largest of the Channel Islands, to Philippe Fallu and Suzanne Lefevre. George's father was a miller at the Quetivel Mill on Mont Fallu, where a stream powered the mill wheel to grind flour, as well as a farmer. Most farms did little more than meet the needs of the families, although cider, cattle, and a few vegetables were imported to England. Along with fishing, the knitting of woolen goods did so well that it occupied the time of a large part of the population of Jersey. The Fallus were Anglicans following the English reform. The Fallu name can be traced as far back on Jersey as 1309. Where the family lived prior to this time is unknown. They may have been French Normans. I believe

they could also have an Irish background, since the English frequently used the Irish to fight their many wars and the Foley name in Ireland is often spelled Falleau..



Map of Jersey Island

George's father died when George was 12 years old. Life was no doubt hard for Suzanne, who as mother of eight children still had a number of them at home. Like most youth on Jersey, George had some schooling and then trained at woodworking and carpentry and had acquired a good set of tools. With little space and large families on the island, many youth were leaving. George signed an indenture contract with Charles Robin and Company at age 17, sailing from St. Helier in April, 1826, after promising his mother he would return home at the end of his engagement with the Robins Company. The voyage across the Atlantic was long and rough and after two months of sickness and vomiting during the trip, George swore he would not cross the ocean again. He arrived at Paspébiac with his chest of tools to work as a shipbuilder. Charles Robin and Company was a busy cod fishing center and a building site for large two or three mast ships used in the fishing industry. George Fallu's name appeared on two sailing ships, one of 261 tons and another of 111 tons. However, George's stay with Charles Robin and Company would be short.

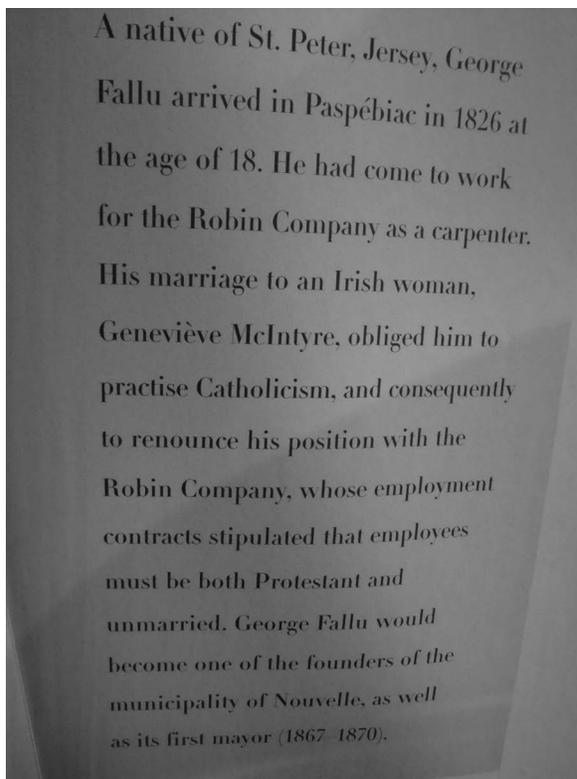
### GEORGE FALLU AT CHARLO

When the fishing industry shut down for the winter, many employees found other jobs, such as working in the woods. The spring after his arrival in Canada, George was in Carleton and on May 11<sup>th</sup> he crossed Chaleur Bay by horse and sled on the ice to Dalhousie with Edemine Landry. The next day the ice went out. It is unclear whether George opted not to make the much longer trip around the bay to return to Gaspésie or if

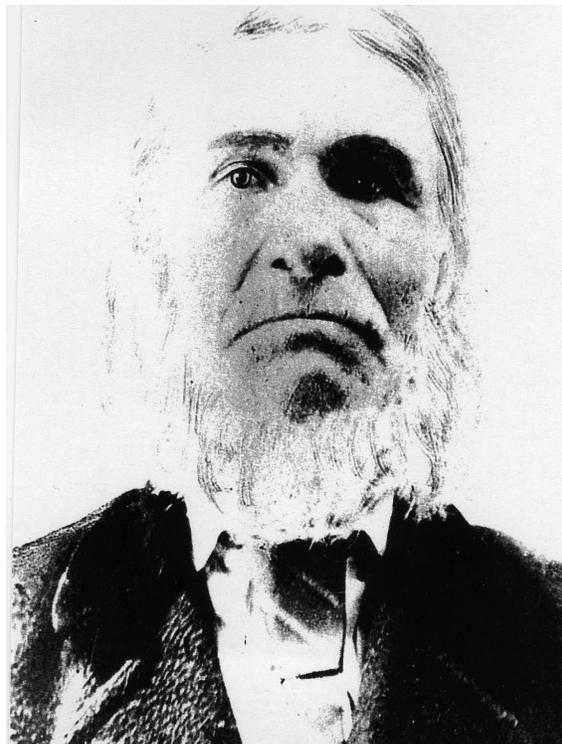
he intended to stay at Dalhousie. At any rate, he stayed on in Dalhousie and began using his carpentry skills in building houses.

The Robins Museum at Paspébiac claimed that George Fallu was the only person who broke his indenture with the company. That is very unlikely. However, they honor George with a banner in the museum which reads:

“A native of St. Peter, Jersey, George Fallu arrived at Paspébiac in 1826 at the age of 18. He had come to work for the Robin Company as a carpenter. His marriage to an Irish woman, Genevieve McIntyre” (she was Scotch and French), “obliged him to practice Catholicism, and consequently to renounce his position with the Robin Company, whose employment contract stipulated that employees must be both Protestant and unmarried. George Fallu would become one of the founders of the municipality of Nouvelle, as well as its first mayor 1867-1870.”



Banner – Robin’s Fisheries Museum



His Honor, Mayor George Fallu  
Picture in Nouvelle City Hall

John Baptiste McIntyre, the son of Leonard McIntyre and Bridgit McKenzie, was born in 1766 at Barra, Scotland on the southern tip of the Hebrides Islands, about 35 miles from the northern coast of Ireland. He came to Prince Edward Island with his parents and a group of Scottish settlers, many of them refugees, aboard the brig Alexander in 1772, where the group took land. Many of the small tenant farmers were either forced out or chose to leave on their own in the years after the Jacobite Uprising of 1745, when the Stewarts tried to regain the throne of England with help from many Scotch Catholics. Many families had lost their landholdings and in time large numbers of tenants struggled

with subsistence living. Rents had been sharply raised and many tenants were evicted as landowners realized that raising sheep was much more profitable and required very little labor. The mills were demanding wool which pushed the prices up. Thus the hapless tenant farmers were dumped from their small landholdings and the government made no effort to improve the conditions of the tenant farmers. For many of these folks, the prospect of a farm in the new English colonies seemed as preferable to heading for a city like Glasgow or Manchester to be absorbed into the burgeoning factories and the industrial slums.

Later in the year they arrived, the Barra folks signed an obligation for payment permitting them to quit the land they were leasing and moved among the French on the mainland, some of them settling along the Bay of Chaleur. The McIntyres settled in Gaspésie. There John Baptiste married Reine Bergeron at Carleton on June 3, 1797. Reine was the daughter of Etienne Bergeron, whose story of traveling through the woods from the Saint-Jean River was told in chapter 1, and Claire Couroit, daughter of Pierre Couroit and Angélique Vautour, married at Carleton on February 12, 1774. During the struggle for Canada, Pierre Couroit was listed as a “pirate” by the British while sailing on Chaleur Bay. In reality, he was an Acadian corsair, with his boat licensed by the French government to fight the English. Angélique was a farmer’s daughter from Ile d’Orléans, but the Vautours also had roots in Acadia. Etienne and Claire gave birth to nine children at Carleton, including their daughter Genevieve, who was born on February 12, 1812. The McIntyres later moved to Charlo, New Brunswick, where they added five more children to the family. Like most children of this time, who were needed to help at home, Genevieve had some schooling up to the third grade, but could only sign an X rather than her name on a contract later in life.

At Charlo, near Dalhousie, George met the McIntyre family and their daughter, Genevieve. They were married at Charlo in 1829 or 1830. We have little information about Genevieve. She was a redhead with a tanned complexion, perhaps sunburn or freckles, a trait she passed on to future generations. Photography was becoming more popular at this time and, although we have a picture of George, we have none of Genevieve because she refused to have her picture taken. The McIntyres were Catholic. Because there was no Anglican church at Paspébiac, George had started to talk to Catholic priests there and at Charlo, and became a Catholic while working at Charlo, perhaps with a little urging from the McIntyres. George treasured a large family bible which he brought with him from Jersey in which he kept records of family events and history. This bible is now part of a permanent cultural exposition at the Church of St. John the Evangelist in Nouvelle.

Genevieve was a midwife, and stories exist of her travels, in winter by dogsled, to outlying areas to help with childbirths. She still had time to give birth to seven children while they lived in New Brunswick. Their firstborn were twins, Gaston and Olivier, who died at childbirth. Five more children were born at Dalhousie, namely Brochet George on August 14, 1831 (Brochet in French means Pike or Pickerel), Philippe on August 11, 1833, Jean (John) on July 21, 1835, Suzanne Elizabeth on July 23, 1837, and Jacques James on April 22, 1839. George supported his family by work as a carpenter and contractor at Dalhousie. It took two years to build a house at a time, when even the doors and windows had to be handmade. George became well known for his houses and especially his warehouses. His houses could be recognized by their unique style, which

he had learned in Jersey; the roofs of French houses had long overhanging eaves while the eaves on George's houses were narrow.

## FALLUS AT NOUVELLE

Just a short distance across Chaleur Bay, land along the Restigouche River on the southern coast of the Gaspé Peninsula had been given as a large seignury to John Shoolbred, an English merchant. However, some of the land in the Nouvelle River valley near Chaleur Bay was not included in this seignury but was public property of the British government. In the Act of Union uniting Upper and Lower Canada in 1840, this land was given to a united Canada. Expecting that the land would soon become available for settlement, but before the lots were available, George in 1840 chose a place on the bank of the Nouvelle River in the heart of a vast plateau bordered by two small Appalachian hills, setting up camp there so that as a squatter he could get the land he wanted. His sons were not very old but they were busy doing chores. George busied himself clearing land for his first planting and preparing wood for the construction of a house. His first home there was made of pieces of log rounded on the outside and squared on the inside. The site of this first house on the Nouvelle River disappeared about 1930 when the raging river moved north. When the land registry was developed for the township of Nouvelle and land was available for colonization in 1842, George and his neighbors had their names on paper but it was not until May 4, 1867, that George and Genevieve actually became owners with title to 104 acres of land in Nouvelle Township by letter from the land agents. George was grateful again in 1868 when he got title for another land grant of 135 acres, which he wanted to acquire for one of his sons. Ultimately, George purchased land for each of his sons in the surrounding area.

George's property was near the Gaspésie shore in an area of valleys and mountains. The lot was described as "a certain terrain located within the Township of Nouvelle, in the County of Bonaventure, being lot number three in the Nouvelle rang West, South West-Part, containing four acres fronting the Nouvelle River, with one acre width in the rear." Along with the Nouvelle River, two meandering streams crossed the lot. Humans and animals thus had water to drink, and the children hauled water to the house and led the animals to drink. They also used the creek to cool and preserve foods.

As a carpenter, George had a good eye. The south part of his land was filled with various species of broad leaf trees and especially with cedar. On the plain, George noticed large yellow pines. As he was clearing his land, he appreciated the light brown soil, a rich and thick layer of alluvial deposits. The river was full of trout, especially in May, and full of salmon in the fall. Rabbits, partridge and ducks were abundant. Even woodchucks found their way into the saucepan. At certain times, there were caribou roaming in the woods.

George and Genevieve moved to Nouvelle with their five children and would add seven more to the family at Nouvelle: Esther born July 18, 1841; Marie Jeanne on March 17, 1843; Alexandre on August 21, 1845; Elie Albert on December 15, 1847; Lazare on December 16, 1849; Marie Mathilde on October 20, 1853; and Joseph Daniel on July 8, 1858. In 1856, a set of twins, a boy and a girl, died at childbirth.

For a better sense of this time, we have the story told by his son Lazare:

“My parents worked hard to provide the needs of their large family. At this time the colonists received no aid from the government. The first colonist arrived at Nouvelle around 1837, when there was neither a road nor a bridge over the river. The people had to go to get their provisions in Carleton or Dalhousie and transport them back across the woods of Miguasha to Nouvelle. The road was constructed by the government in 1843, as the Kerr Bridge over the Nouvelle River. There was neither a church nor a chapel. The people had to go to Carleton to attend religious services. The first chapel was constructed in 1865, but there was no resident priest.”

“I had been raised in poverty. In my childhood I ate more black bread than white and sometimes there was none at all. There were no matches; you had a rock and flint to make a fire. In every house there was a fireplace where you put in a large log at night to conserve the fire. If unfortunately the fire went out at night, you had to go to a neighbor’s house if they had a fire, and find a small cinder with the pincers. The first matches were brought in around 1860 by Captain Dugas of Carleton. You lighted the house with candles made of suet; lamps were not used before 1860.”

“The first class I attended was given in a very old barn. As the majority of the people were English, the teaching was done in English. I only learned French after my marriage, when I made my children study. In the evening, to study, you had to use the fire from the chimney as there was only one candle to provide light for our large family. My mother and sisters had to work at night to prepare the clothing for our family, because we were dressed in wool carded and spun at home. The people had to work a lot, but we were happy; everyone liked each other and helped each other. If someone was late in his work, someone would quickly organize a work party and it was with pleasure that a hand was lent for the work. In the evening, after the work was finished, you would have fun playing cards, singing sometimes, and sometimes dancing the local dances. The threshing machine was unknown; we had to beat our grain ourselves with a flail. It was also necessary to crush the barely for barley soup. There was no instrument of cultivation except the plow.”

Lazare’s memories are confirmed by the stories shared by his son, Antoine Fallu, about his uncle Philippe, George’s second son:

“They planted potatoes between the stumps, making holes and building hills with old adzes. Uncle Philippe, whom I knew well, told me how his brother George and he divided an egg and ate it with a buckwheat pancake for breakfast. After this frugal meal, they spent the whole morning using pickaxes to dig hills of potatoes. After ten hours, they were so starved they were acting foolish. As if they were courageous and the whole world was like them, rather than useless complaining, they dispelled their hunger by singing “Work away your starving.”

“From the moment my grandfather arrived at Nouvelle, money was scarce and they exchanged goods and services rather than make sales.

“There were only a few English and Irish families: Thomas and John Keays, the Harringtons, and Francis Lynch. Mr. Lynch was a prosperous farmer compared to other habitants at that time. He loaned my grandfather a cow and calf. In return, my grandfather was obliged to buy hay from Mr. Lynch to feed the cow and calf. He was committed to give back a cow and calf in three or four years.

“When Zephirin Marcotte arrived from the region of Portneuf, he brought with him a custom which, when continued among friends, rendered a very valuable service to the food supply of the coast. The custom was that each time someone slaughtered an animal for meat, he made a gift of a piece to his closest neighbors and close friend’s parents. These last got the same as the others. It was evident that the generosity varied according to the neighbors and parents and depending on the season. The purpose of this custom was to enable folks to eat fresh meat. His custom continued in certain places even after the arrival of refrigerators.

“The farming tools were the pickaxe, scythe, flail, and a harrow with shovels made of wood. I assure you this was not a strong harrow.”

In 1843, the road was planned and waiting for the construction of a bridge. When this was completed it provided the opportunity to build a house near the road. This house exists to this day, even though the back part was torn off in construction of the present house by Lazare Fallu between 1892 and 1894. Two doors planed by carpenter George were incorporated into the new building. The framework squared by an axe, boards sawed in the sawpit, and the same windows with their frosted glass used in the construction of this building still serve today. In this way they removed the old house in detached pieces to construct a new house between the old road and the king’s highway. The house of master carpenter George was certainly not a castle. His wife Genevieve complained about it for the rest of her life, accusing her husband of building good warm houses for the neighbors and his children while they lived in a hovel. George dismissed her reproaches with grumpy humor, saying that he did not wish for more so that his wife would not be too proud. In reality, the truth is that the land did not yield enough to feed the growing family and to accumulate what he needed to establish his sons. George continued to work as a carpenter at Dalhousie, Carleton, Saint-Omer and Nouvelle. George, along with his sons and volunteers, built the first chapel in Nouvelle, which in 1865 was not yet a parish. The parish of St. John the Evangelist was established on July 1, 1869.

## THE MAYOR OF NOUVELLE

Since the first of July, 1845, the territory of the Seignury of Shoolbred and the rest of the township of Nouvelle were a municipality, based on the model of the older parishes of Quebec. It was not, however, until 1855 when a council met for the first time and the records are missing from the years from 1855 to 1867. The first existing record of January 7, 1867 notes that the first order of business was to elect a mayor who would carry out the recommendations of the council, and the six council members were

unanimous in selecting George Fallu as mayor. Actually, this was a re-election since George had served as mayor since 1855.

Some 42 sessions of the council, regular and special, were called from 1867 to 1869. George Fallu presided at 37 of these meetings. The first preoccupation of the council was the construction and maintenance of roads and conservation of bridges. When the municipality was born, it was set up like the seigneurial system, where citizens were expected to contribute their services and there were few exchanges of money. Each year the council designated inspectors, with more than fifty persons charged with these duties. There were fifteen inspectors of weights and measures, thirty inspectors of roads, and eight inspectors of the fences that kept the animals off the roads. Guardians were appointed for the commons which served as a public pasture under the care of the farmers. The council was precise in their directives: each year residents were expected to work one to six days on needs such as road repair.

The council levied taxes necessary for repairs and other business. The council named the municipal assessors to determine property tax levies. It received petitions and letters from the citizens, who were always allowed at public meetings. Each year the council named an auditor to verify the records of the treasurer.

The council faced a major challenge when Dr. Robitaille, a government deputy, pushed for the installation of the telegraph. At the time, Nouvelle had no telephone, railroad, or other means of communication. On December 7, 1868, the council unanimously agreed to buy the poles necessary for a telegraph line across the municipality. Actually, the people of Nouvelle furnished the poles free. The Montreal Telegraph Company undertook to join Cap Desrosiers of Restigouche and Montreal along the proposed track of the intercontinental railroad and Nouvelle had a telegraph line in November, 1872.

The citizens presented one petition two times. They requested a post office at Shoobred and then challenged the mayor as to who would represent them before the Postmaster General of Canada.

Every year the council passed an order prohibiting the sale of alcohol and intoxicating drinks. Genevieve supported her husband in the struggle of the municipal council against the sale of alcohol. She may have had good personal reasons; over the years she had often reproached George about the stoneware jug he brought back full on his return from building projects at Dalhousie.

In a sudden turn of events, the secretary treasurer William Grey was dismissed of his duties as the meeting of September 28, 1868. He was replaced in the conflict by Medard Bechard. Grey apparently challenged this decision. On July 5, 1869, at the resignation of the new secretary treasurer, the council hired Edward Arsenault. On July 25<sup>th</sup>, William Grey agreed to leave. Yet they retained his services to review the records held by Bechard. The council seemed to be going in a circle. On July 28<sup>th</sup>, a special meeting was held to audit the books of Bechard. The auditors found an error. They adjourned until the regular meeting of September 6<sup>th</sup>. On the 6<sup>th</sup>, five of the council members were present and so they had a quorum. Nevertheless, they adjourned without discussion for the reason that Mayor George Fallu was absent and none of the other councilors could read. They adjourned until September 14<sup>th</sup>.

By then, George was preparing to leave his office as mayor. He made his last appearance at a special assembly on December 13, 1869. The excitement was gone and

George was ready to leave after serving fifteen years. His faithful secretary and close personal friend, William Grey, would succeed him. On January 17, 1870, the 272 voters elected William Grey as mayor and the council had four new councilors.

## GEORGE AND GENEVIEVE'S FAMILY

Son Lazare Fallu recalled: "My father bought other lots of land to set up his sons near to his land. Only one (Joseph Daniel) preferred not to be a farmer; he sold his land and became an engineer in the United States."

Lazare's memories were corroborated when George established his son Joseph on land in 1876. George required that Joseph acknowledge this gift before a notary for the domestic harmony of the other children as they left their paternal home.

The second generation (Brochet) George Fallu's father installed him on a farm near the paternal home or, more precisely, on a farm neighboring the farm of his brother Philippe along the coast. Brochet George was a farmer but also worked as a carpenter alongside his father. His commitment to the local community was well known. In 1868, he accepted the task of inspector. Afterwards, in 1871, he was "gardien d'enclose," with the task of granting certificates for and inspecting buildings. The council asked him again at their session on April 3<sup>rd</sup> to serve also as inspector of roads and bridges. He declined.

Brochet George married Marie Ann Manwarren, the widow of Louis Laviolette, on November 30, 1860, at Nouvelle. Louis had died after he and Marie Ann were married only two years, leaving her with a son, Richard, born on February 8, 1856 at Carleton. Marie Ann was born at Newfoundland in 1834 of parents who had come from Iceland. She had arrived at Gaspésie at age 18 where she, as well as her parents, Richard Manwarren and Mary Ann Murray, settled at Nouvelle. Her mother, Mary Ann Murray had died by the time Marie Ann married. Brochet George adopted Richard Laviolette when he married Marie Ann and raised him as a son. Richard and his half-brother, the third generation George, would move to Chicago as young adults in 1880, where Richard worked as a carpenter and later as a building contractor. He had already learned carpentry skills from his adoptive father and grandfather. Richard married Margaret Meehan in 1883 in Chicago, where they gave birth to 11 children. Third generation George, who went on to Minnesota, will be featured in a subsequent chapter. George and Richard used the last name Foley once they came to the United States.

Brochet George and Marie Ann raised three more children to adulthood. Helene, born September 29, 1861, at Nouvelle, married Honore Savoie on November 14, 1881, and they raised twelve children on a farm at Val d'Amour, New Brunswick. Marie Anne Esther was born at Nouvelle on January 27, 1868. She married Alexandre Lavoie on August 9, 1889 at Nouvelle, where they raised six children. After Alexandre died in 1901, Marie Ann Esther married Archibald Dickie at Nouvelle on May 20, 1907, and they added one more son to the family. Marie Anne Esther died from injuries sustained at the time of the Halifax Explosion on December 6, 1917, when a French ship loaded with ammunition collided with a Norwegian ship in Halifax harbor, killing about 2000 and injuring another 9000 during World War I. Marie Ann Esther's daughter and granddaughter were injured but survived. Joseph William (aka "Billie") was born on May 31, 1871 at Nouvelle and married Anne Letourneau on February 4, 1896, and they

raised their three children at Val d'Amour. The area around Campbellton, New Brunswick is well populated with descendants of Helene (Savoie) and William Fallu.

The second generation George Fallu died at Nouvelle on February 28, 1899. He was buried there at age 69. Marie Ann Manwarren died at Nouvelle on March 18, 1902.

Philippe Fallu's father set him up on a farm next to his brother George. Before the special session of the Nouvelle council on June 20, 1868, Philippe was a municipal inspector and became a municipal councilor in 1872. His father guided and assisted him in construction of his house. Philippe married Sophie Berthelot in 1858 and this couple added seven grandchildren to George's growing family: Philip (died accidentally in 1882), Lucie (Charles Magher), Sophia (John McBrearty), Albert (Malvina Legouffe), Charles, Anne-Marguerite (J-Octave Pichette), and Eugene-Napoleon (Anastasia-Emerilda Bujold). Philippe died at Nouvelle on May 14, 1923.

Jean (John) Fallu's father started him on a half plot bordering that of his father to the east. A modest house had been built there by the previous owner in 1842. John followed his father's trade, journeying as a skilled carpenter. John added to his house in 1890 and added a skylight in 1892. The first Masses celebrated at Nouvelle were in John's future house between 1842 and 1845. The house was relocated and restored in 1905 as a school and named "the little school," and today is preserved as an historical site at Nouvelle. John married Helene Calvert in 1863 and they had eight children: Jane Elizabeth (Joseph D'Amboise), Mathilde (Robert Kerr), John (Margaret Anne Arsenault), Marie Josephine (Denis Doucet), Helene (Joseph Bourget), Pierre (Winnifred Jolicouer), James, and Alexander. Jean died February 18, 1916, at Nouvelle.

Suzanne-Elizabeth Fallu married Pierre Day on November 25, 1856. The Days gave George and Genevieve eleven more grandchildren: Philippe, Maria (Robert Lavoie), Pierre (Mary Jane Calvert), Jean-Baptiste, Charles (Margaret Anne Arsenault), Jacques (Emilie Poirier), Anne, Antoine, Philippe, Jean (Victoria Arcand), and Agnes (Pierre Beaudoin). Seven of these children moved to western Canada between 1886 and 1905. When Suzanne-Elizabeth died in 1899 at Nouvelle, Pierre headed west to join his children. Only James remained on the paternal land in Quebec.

Jacques (James) Fallu married Helen Berthelot on August 11, 1863 and they had five daughters: Esther (Charles Beliveau), Marie (Jean Beliveau), Parmelia (Nelson Labilloy), Flore (Alfred Labilloy), and Helene (Stanislaus Lelievre). James was working on the lower part of Chaleur Bay where he died accidentally on October 20, 1874 at Anse-du-Cap. His brother Lazare related this event: "In October, 1774, my brother James was drowned. We were told at Nouvelle of his death by telegraph dispatch and my father with one of his daughters went by horse carriage to the funeral."

Esther Fallu married Thomas McBrearty on November 20, 1860, and they had only one child before Esther died at age 22. A year later, Thomas married Catherine Wafer. Esther's daughter, Mary-Isabelle, married Jean-Napoleon Levesque at Charlo on August 16, 1881.

Marie-Jeanne Fallu married James Calvert on February 18, 1868 and they had nine children: John, Mary-Jane (George Day), Margaret Anne, James (Jane Parker), Susan Elizabeth (John Frederick Smale), Flora, Peter, Esther, and Ida Agnes. Several of the family moved to Saskatchewan. Marie-Jeanne died September 14, 1919 at Nouvelle.

Alexandre Fallu, born in 1845, died July 21, 1851 at Nouvelle.

Elie-Albert married Marie Dugas on April 9, 1877. His father gave him land just west of Philippe's. Elie-Albert and Marie had ten children: Lea (became a nun), Elie, George, Theodore (Melanie Arsenault), Lucie (Tom Wilson), Marie-Agnes (David Joseph Fortin), Hermance (Samuel Savard), Robert (Helen Berthelot), Leonie (Robert Lynch), and Elie (Ida Montgomery). Their parents had taken in a young boy, Tom Wilson, who had jumped ship in the Bay of Chaleur. When Tom grew up, he moved west to work as a lumberjack, ending up in Blind River, Ontario and, when the company Tom worked for went bankrupt in 1900, it offered its employees land. Tom was given two forty acre parcels of farmland. He returned to Nouvelle and asked permission to marry Lucia Fallu, who was 16 years younger than Tom. After the marriage in 1903, Elie-Albert and Marie, now in their fifties, accepted the newlyweds' invitation to follow them to Blind River to start an orchard. Elie-Albert had decided the harsh rigors of rock farming in Gaspesie was too hard and, hoping for something better, he traded his farm to his brother Lazare's son Joseph. Joseph later gave the farm to his son, Rene, who followed in his Grandfather's shoes by becoming mayor of Nouvelle from 1964-1969. Elie-Albert soon became part-time postmaster at the Canadian Pacific station and built a boarding house, which Marie cared for until 1925. Marie died in Blind River in 1926 and Elie-Albert in 1931.

Lazare Fallu married Tatiene Landry on August 18, 1876. His father, George, had been sick the previous winter and ceded to Lazare the farm which he had cleared along with his house and acquired goods. Lazare would be obliged to provide for the needs of his parents until their death, to see to their burial, and to have Masses offered for them. Lazare recalls those days:

"In August of the same year, I married Tatiene Landry, daughter of Jean Landry and Henriette Levasseur. Our wedding was not very grand because we were very poor. My father had been sick all the preceding winter and much money had been spent for his needs and doctor bills. I had to borrow the money to buy my wedding suit. We took dinner at my father-in-law's and supper at our house. The next day, since it was nice outside and it was the time of the haying, I took the scythe and my wife the rake and we began gathering hay. Helped by a fifteen year old boy, we made 80 trips with hay in the month of August. Happily we were young, full of health and spirit; the work was our freedom from worry."

Lazare and Tatiene had eleven children: Lazare (Lucie Pichette), Genevieve (John McBrearty), Henriette, Joseph (Leocadia LeBlanc), Henriette (John McBrearty), Lea (Alexander Bolduc and 2<sup>nd</sup> Josaphat Roy), Delina (Abraham Langlois), Marie Celina, Emilina, Georges (Regina Allard), Alexandre, and Jean-Antoine (Anna Gaudreau). Emilina had a distinguished career as a nun and Marie Celina devoted her life to teaching. Lazare was a strong advocate for education of children.

Lazare followed the example of his father and bought farms for each of his sons, willing his own farm to the youngest, Jean-Antoine. All four sons spent their lives as farmers at Nouvelle. Life as a farmer was still not easy as Lazare recalled: "The nearest market for us was in the town of Campbellton where we had to transport our products over impassable roads. We had to leave during the night to arrive in the morning and to be able to return the same day."

Lazare and Tatiene celebrated their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in August, 1936. Lazare died at age 89 on May 27, 1939. Tatiene lived ten years more and died at nearly 97 years in January of 1951.

Mathilde Fallu married Honore Arsenault on November 23, 1875, and they had twelve children: Honore Edward, Ida (Thomas McBrearty), Lucie (Anselm Francouer), Leonie (Frederic Dube), Louise (Desire Germain), Emilie (William LeBlanc), Marguerite (Napoleon Roy), Honore (Bertha D'Amboise), Edmond, Nicolas (Malvina Alain and 2<sup>nd</sup> Imelda Hache-McIntyre) and Alexander (Juliette Bilodeau). Mathilde died on November 23, 1875 and Honore died in 1911.

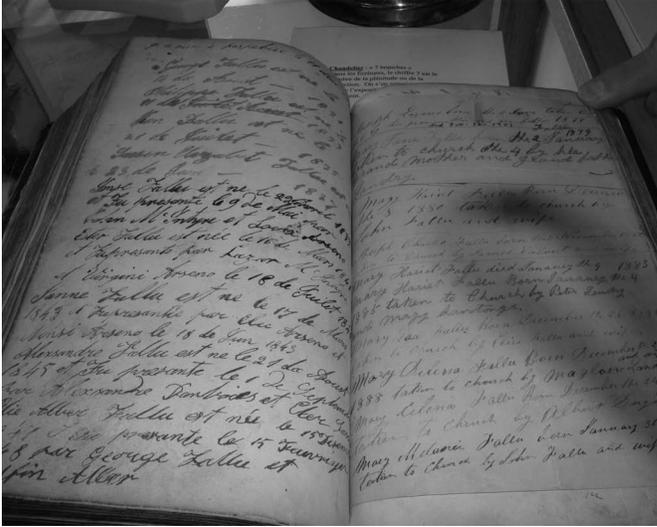
Joseph Daniel Fallu married Marie-Jeanne Arsenault from Dalhousie. His father had acquired land for Joseph Daniel in Nouvelle Township. As a young adult, he decided that his future was not on a farm at Nouvelle, so he sold the land he had received from his father and immigrated to Superior, Wisconsin, where he became a railroad engineer and worked for the same company all of his work life. Marie-Jeanne died in October 1896, likely from a typhoid epidemic, leaving Joseph Daniel with three children at home. Joseph Daniel and Marie-Jeanne had four children, George, Albert (Irene Biggs), Genevieve (Arthur Drapeau), and Daniel. George was ordained a priest for the diocese of Portland, Oregon. Joseph Daniel died September 15, 1928.

## CONCLUSION OF A FULL LIFE

Genevieve McIntyre died in 1883. One dream George had worked hard for as a mayor was to have a railroad coming into Nouvelle, and that dream was fulfilled when the railroad tracks passed 75 meters from the house he shared with Lazare's family. Lazare's son Joseph recalled a day in 1888 when his grandfather stood in the doorway with a hand on his grandson's shoulder watching the first locomotive move down the track transporting materials for construction of a bridge over the river. George commented that he never thought he would see this day in his lifetime. George spent much of a cold day in the rain watching the crew building the bridge. As a result, he developed pneumonia and never recovered, dying at age 80 in November, 1888.

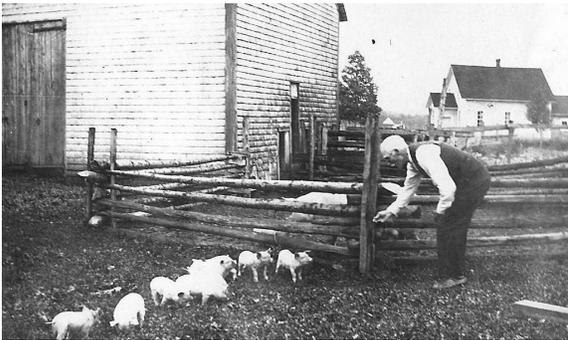
George never returned to Jersey Island to visit his family. Several other family members also left Jersey. His brother Philip lived in Liverpool and his brother Elie-Jean left Jersey first for London and then for Australia. Elie-Jean became a well known boat captain, ending his career in Adelaide, Australia. When he died at age 83, his obituary said that "nearly all his life he has been associated in one way or another with the sea and consequently few ports in the world were unknown to him." Toward the end of their lives, George and Elie-Jean finally exchanged letters with information about their families. Elie-Jean shared that he had married Mary Louise Powell at Jersey and had two children, Elie-Jean and Mary Louise.

Questions have been asked about why some of the family uses the surname Fallu and some Foley. Perhaps no one has a good answer. In the census for Nouvelle Township of 1861, we find George Follie as the senior member of the family. Some of his children are listed as Fallu, while son George married to Marie Manwarren is listed as Folli. In the census of 1871, George, Sr. and some of his family are listed under the name Foley. The Fallus of Jersey Island have changed the spelling as well.



Bible George Fallu brought from Jersey Island

Honore Savoie, Helene Fallu Savoie,  
Lazare Fallu



Richard Foley feeding pigs at Lazare Fallu's

Richard Foley, Celina Fallu, Anna  
Gaudreau Fallu, Tatiene and Lazare



Albert Fallu

Robert Fallu

Robins Fisheries – Paspebiac, Quebec

After Britain acquired New France in 1763, Canada went through a basic reorientation as the fur trade soon collapsed and much of Canada evolved into an agricultural society. The French-Canadians of Quebec were an isolated minority, mostly farmers, in a predominantly English country as they kept their language, religion, and culture. The seigneurial system was still in place but now many of these estates were in the hands of English-speaking seigneurs who had purchased and traded their way into a position of power, where they could charge high rents. By the 1840's, a number of factors led to the breakdown of agriculture in Lower Canada and to a mass migration off the farms and out of Canada.

The population of Quebec increased by 400 percent between 1784 and 1844 and continued to grow, which meant a lack of available farmland for young men growing up on farms. A drop in the price of farm produce, failure of the wheat and potato crops, and peripheral farming on lands that lacked fertility and were distant from the markets thrust Lower Canada into poverty. Most French-Canadian farmers had cleared only enough land to sustain their family as markets were not readily available. They clung to old methods of farming, perhaps in part because they lacked money to buy newer equipment, and because they had little education that might lead them to study better methods of farming. Credit was unavailable and farmers had no money to buy farms for their sons. The increasingly dense rural population strained the possibility of the land to support a family and placed many in subsistence farming, where many farmers were forced to leave their wives in charge of the farm while they worked in the forest industries for the winter and part of the spring and fall at low wages, creating a dependency on work in the woods to keep their farms viable. Faced with hard choices between poverty, starvation, and emigration, many followed the pioneer spirit of their forefathers and headed for the textile mills of New England or the available farm lands opening up in the Midwestern United States to give their families a better life than they had in Canada.

The Parliament of United Canada abolished the seigneurial system in 1854. Persons settled on these lands were obliged to buy their grants of land from the seigneurs. Most lacked money to buy the land and continued to pay excessive rents, thus emigration became a common solution. Until the 1850s, this often meant loading a few of the family's possession on a horse-drawn vehicle. When the Grand Trunk railroad ran south into the United States at the end of the 1850s, transportation was easier, faster, and more economical. Leaving behind a traditional rural society with strong family ties, families that left tended to settle in communities with other French-speaking immigrants, followed by the French clergy sent to minister to them, but they also quickly participated in American life. When the Upper Mississippi River Valley opened for settlement it drew a number of land-hungry French Canadians and Irish settlers. They were attracted to the opportunities in the west in a variety of ways, including the handbills and pamphlets of land speculators, newspaper articles, letters from émigrés passed along from hand to hand within families, and folks on a return visit home. Minnesota set up a State Board of Immigration in 1855 to publicize the availability of farm land. Railroads were given massive land grants and also advertised the availability of cheap land. Within a relatively short time, all of our Canadian ancestors would leave Canada for the United States. Although their moves depended on a family decision, it is easy to imagine that some of

the wives went a bit unwillingly as they thought of the disruption of the family, the difficulties of moving, and the primitive conditions they might endure in the new land.

## LOUIS AND CATHERINE TOULOUSE

Irish immigrant Thomas Rochford died in St. Georges, Canada, in February of 1856. By now the territory of what became Minnesota had been part of the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, had become an independent U.S. territory in 1849, and then became a state in 1858. Canadians had already started to settle in Minnesota and family ties often brought new settlers. Members of our family may also have been attracted to land on the western frontier by articles that Bishop Joseph Cretin and others were placing in Eastern newspapers. Philip Ratchford (Rochford) had brought his large family from St. Georges, Quebec to Waterville, Minnesota, where his daughter Mary was born in 1851. Thomas Rochford, the son of Thomas Rochford and Catherine Bellew, moved to Mower County, Minnesota, in the fall of 1856 with his wife, Mary Connelly. His brother John must have followed soon after as he distinguished himself as a soldier of Company K, 4<sup>th</sup> Minnesota Infantry, in the Civil War. Canada had ended slavery by 1818 and a significant number of Canadian youth sympathetic to the anti-slavery cause joined the Union Army. In 1864, the newspaper in Mower County reported that John had just reenlisted for three more years or for the duration of the war. Organized in 1861, the Fourth Minnesota first went south in April 1862, were assigned to the Army of the Mississippi in May, 1862, and participated in many battles, including the capture of Vicksburg with General Grant and in General Sherman's march to the sea. They participated in the grand review at Washington, D.C. on May 24, 1865, were mustered out at Louisville, Kentucky on July 19, 1865, and discharged at Fort Snelling on their return north. For a time, the American Civil War slowed Canadian emigration to the United States.

Elizabeth Rochford and her husband, Joseph Veilleux, are listed in the census for Beauce in 1861. Two years later, Elizabeth moved to Mower Country and from then on spelled her last name Vague, a surname also found later in Red Lake County. James Rochford and his wife, Pauline LaChance, homesteaded in the Cedar City area of Mower County in 1862, where James also worked as a carpenter. Louis Toulouse and Catherine Rochford married on September 23, 1856 at St. Georges. They started out farming in Canada and gave birth to six children baptized at St. Georges: John, Marie, Delima Rosalie, Marie Mathalie, Marie Anaisse, and Napoleon, the last born in 1865 and dying as an infant. It is uncertain when they made their move to Minnesota, where their daughter Georgiana was born in 1867. The 1870 census lists Louis as a farmer at Lyle, Minnesota, with seven children at home: John (born 1858), Mary (born 1859), Rose (born 1860), Matilda (born 1861), Eunice (born 1864), Georgiana (born 1867), and Thomas (born 1869). Catherine Bellew was living at this time with her son, John Rochford, at Austin. In 1880 Catherine was living with the growing Toulouse family at Lyle, where Louis and Catherine had added Jennie (9), Ada (7), Nellie (5), and Louis (2), and two boarders, Joseph and Mary Lachance. When Louis Toulouse moved his family to northern Minnesota about 1881, Catherine went to live with her daughter, Elizabeth Vague, at

Osborne, Kansas, where Thomas Rochford was also living. Catherine died in Mower County on April 7, 1885.

Even though the economic conditions of farming had deteriorated in Beauce, we can only imagine the stress of emigrating to the United States. Although the family was likely paying rent and did not own the land they farmed, they had little money to pay the cost of moving or to purchase new farmland in Minnesota. The Homestead Act became reality in 1862 and made it possible to pursue the dream of owning one's own land at the time of their move. They were leaving behind a lot of Veilleux and Toulouse family members and moving to a community that spoke English rather than French, and also leaving an area that was predominantly Catholic for a community where Catholics would be in a minority.

Settlers began to pour into Mower County in 1853. The railroad reached Austin in 1856. Most of the early farmers in that area began with a minimum of equipment, such as a wagon, a team of horses or oxen, a wooden harrow, and such hand tools as pitchforks, scythes, grain cradles and flails. They dug their well by hand and pulled water up with a pail. Wheat was the main crop with cattle soon becoming common on the farms. The soil in Mower County was good but the farmers were plagued by disasters when the grasshoppers destroyed their crops from 1873-1877, then stem rust literally wiped out their crop the following years, and farm prices fell. These disasters no doubt contributed to Louis Toulouse giving up his dream of farming in Mower County and heading north to start over again in an area where many French-Canadian farmers, some of them from Beauce, were homesteading on newly available lands.

In 1863, Minnesota's Governor Alexander Ramsey and other delegates met with the Red Lake and Pembina Indians at the place where Red River carts crossed the Red Lake River and formed a treaty that would open up the fertile land of the Red River Valley for settlement. This land in Eastern North Dakota and Northwestern Minnesota, later referred to as the "bread and butter basket" of the nation, made it possible for thousands of families to pursue their hopes for a successful farm of their own.

A major impetus to settlement in northern Minnesota came when Pierre Bottineau and his son purchased nearly 9000 acres near the Old Crossing of the Red River Trail in 1877-78. Bottineau had returned to Red Lake Falls in 1876 and was an avid promoter of settlement in this region, traveling to Eastern Canada to recruit settlers for the area. French-Canadian families migrated largely from southeastern Minnesota and from Quebec when advertising was placed in French-language newspapers. The arrival of the Great Northern and the Northern Pacific railroads in the Grand Forks area by 1880 gave a big impetus to colonization as immigrants from Quebec could now travel by water and railroad to Polk County.

Louis Toulouse first moved his family to Crookston, likely because his brother-in-law, James Rochford, was at that time living in Lyle Township with his wife and children but working as a carpenter in Crookston. They found it hard to adapt to life in town and when land opened for settlement at Lambert, Minnesota, the Toulouse family chose to settle on a farm again among mostly French-Canadians who spoke French and were Catholics. Settlers showed ingenuity in this new land, endeavoring to reestablish their customs and the way of life with which they were familiar, preferring members of their own ethnic group, seeking out other relatives, remaining close together, and oft-times marrying cousins. Many of the other settlers at Lambert also came in the early 1880's.

Homesteaders bought the land as \$1.25 per acre, payable in annual payments of \$40.00 over five years, had to live on the land for six months before filing a claim, and needed to prove five years residence before they had a final claim to the land. Here the French Canadian farmers settled on individual farms rather than in the more communal style of the long, narrow farms in Quebec. Even with a farm on each 160 acres, neighbors, on the average, were half-mile distant. That meant lots of travel on foot to get mail or supplies; John Toulouse made a weekly trip to Crookston for supplies, a total of 38 miles.

Louis Toulouse faced new experiences in this new land, having grown up in the timber country of Canada, where farmers judged the land by the kind of timber growing on it, not the kinds of prairie grasses. Here he could homestead on stoneless and fertile soil, using an axe to cut brush without having to fight numerous stumps for many years. In a sense this was alien land, where the nearby woods grew thinner and then opened up to tall bluestem grasslands, prairie coneflowers, and lofty cottonwood trees growing along the banks of rivers and streams. Although these differences altered the life of a prairie farmer, the potential had been noted much earlier by another member of our family when Louis Joliet noted his 1673 exploration of the Mississippi:

“At first, when we were told of these treeless lands, I imagined it was a country ravaged by fire, where the soil was so poor that it could produce nothing. But we have certainly observed the contrary; and no better soil can be found, either for corn, or for vines, or for any other fruit whatever... Sometimes we saw grass very short, and, at other times, five or six feet high....A settler would not there spend ten years in cutting down and burning the trees; on the very day of his arrival, he could put his plough into the ground.”

Louis now farmed a deep black soil that would turn emerald green in the springtime, a waving sea of gold as grain ripened in August, and then become a stark and painful emptiness as the winter snows and frigid winds drove from the northwest. As snows covered the farmland, fieldwork came to a standstill, but there was always more to do, like chopping and hauling firewood, putting up fences, fixing the sled or other farm machinery. Many of the farmers supplemented their income by working in the woods. Louis Toulouse had first gone to the woods as a seventeen year old youth in Canada to help support his family and now, until the farm became self-sufficient, it would be important to leave home for the winter months to earn money to sustain their homestead. Logging in these early years was along the Clearwater and Red Lake Rivers in western Beltrami County. During the 1880s, timber was floated down the Clearwater River to sawmills at Thief River Falls, Red Lake Falls, Crookston and Grand Forks, where it was made into lumber for the growing farms and towns of the Red River Valley. By the end of the century, logs were being floated down the Blackduck, Battle, Tamarac, and other streams to Red Lake, where steamboats towed them across the lake to the Red Lake River. This changed when the railroad reached Bemidji in 1898 and lines extended to Turtle River and Tenstrike in 1901, Blackduck in 1902, and Kelliher in 1903. By 1904, there were about 20 lumber camps operating in the pine forests near the railroads, with Blackduck and Kelliher now centers of logging. Louis Toulouse and some of his sons worked in lumber camps at Blackduck, Kelliher, and International Falls as the timber operations moved.

It is not clear whether Louis Toulouse had horses that were used in logging camps during the winter, but many horses from the farms went to the woods for the winter.

Once the spring thaw came, men and horses returned home for long hours on the farm preparing the soil, scattering the grain seed by hand, dragging the field to bury the seed, and planting potatoes, corn and other crops for food. Farmers around Lambert could not make enough for sustenance by just raising wheat and had to depend on livestock for additional income, so one of the first tasks after planting was stockpiling hay for the winter months. At first, the hay was prairie grasses cut with a scythe and put up with a fork but in time the farmers grew alfalfa and clover for cattle feed. Hay was stacked in the fields to save time and had to be hauled to the farmstead later. Haying filled a lot of the summer hours until time to cut the grain with a cradle scythe and then it was time to flail the grain, peas and beans, using the wind to separate the chaff from the grain. Women and children often helped with the haying and with flailing the harvested crops. Farm wives liked the idea that the family was working together and took pride in helping their husbands despite the hard, hot work and long hours.

Along with her help in the fields, Catherine spent much of her day knitting socks, churning butter with a butter churn, gardening and storing or canning vegetables and wild fruits, raising chickens, molding candles, making soap with animal fat and lye made from wood ash, and washing clothes. Hard water, homemade lye soap, and the scrub board made washing clothes a hard and unpleasant chore. In the absence of a well, water had to be hauled from a stream for washing clothes and bathing while, in the winter, snow was melted in a boiler or large tub to provide soft water for laundry. Then the sheets and clothing were hung on the outdoor lines and in the winter brought indoors frozen and stiff. Some clothes were hung in the house, but space was very limited. Catherine would have made most of the clothes her family wore, such as socks, mittens, and caps. Small children generally never had a piece of purchased clothing until they entered school.

In the 1885 census for Lambert, the Toulouse children living with their parents were John (age 24), Georgiana (18), Thomas (15), Jane (14), Katie (12), Nellie (10), Louis (7), and Robert (4). Louis and Catherine depended on the help of their children and might have had difficulty surviving without them. The children were busy plowing the fields, shocking grain, cleaning the barns and chicken coops, splitting wood, drawing or pumping water for the livestock, caring for younger family members, and many other chores of farm life. School started at Lambert in 1882, a short time after the Toulouse family arrived. The children walked to school when the weather and farm chores allowed. Along with helping on the farm, John was active in the community, where his name soon appeared as chairman of road supervisors and sometimes as the person leading frequent meetings planning road and bridge construction in the newly settled area, and he was elected treasurer of the township in 1885. At this time, all men over eighteen were required to give three days labor on highway work and to pay a tax of fifty cents for every one hundred dollars worth of real estate and personal property.

The Toulouses not only raised most of the necessities of life but they also processed them. One of the most difficult problems was keeping a supply of meat on hand as butchered animals had to be consumed quickly. Unless they had a supply of ice, a family could only expect to use fresh meat for a day or two in warm weather. Neighbors often worked together in late November and December to butcher beef and hogs when the temperature was cold enough to prevent quick spoilage. Sausage and meat canning were done on the farm. Catherine spent long days cooking and canning meat, with all the pots and pans in the household filled to capacity. These days were also

spent smoking some of the meat by pre-curing it with special salts and then hanging it in the smoke house where a constant fire was maintained for a period of one, two, or three weeks. All the fat from the animals was saved and rendered into lard, which was used in making lye soap or for cooking. Salt pork was standard meat for many in the area, often boiled, sliced and eaten cold or boiled with beans or peas and served either as a bean or pea soup or made into a bean and bacon hot dish. Farmers generally kept chickens not only for eggs but to provide a variety of meat in the family diet, especially when unexpected guest arrived and needed to be fed.

One of the greatest handicaps farmers like Louis faced was the almost complete lack of tools. Even the simplest tools were not readily available, which presented a hardship since so much of the machinery and furniture were made at home. Whipple trees, eveners, neck-yokes, wagon tongues, wagon boxes and horse drawn sleds were almost always made at home, as were household benches, tables, beds, and other furniture. The tools usually used for building a log house and making repairs around the home consisted of a hammer, an auger and one or two bits, a saw, an axe, and a chisel. Sharing other necessary tools, like a grindstone for sharpening a saw, axe and chisel, was taken for granted.

Farmers used work horses and lumber wagons to go to town for business or for social trips and church. Once the railroads ran up to northern Minnesota, settlers could bring more of their equipment and possessions as well, and life on the farm was becoming easier as mechanical machinery, such as seed broadcasters and binders, started to appear, replacing such homemade machinery as wooden drags. The challenge was to earn enough money to pay for these improvements and many of the farmers who borrowed money at high interest rates to pay for their land and equipment ultimately lost their farms when they were not able to make payments. Wheat by 1880 was \$1.50 per bushel and milling had improved so that hard Minnesota wheat could be ground and shipped by train. Initially wheat was the primary crop but exclusive production quickly depleted the soil and farmers moved toward diversification. Some of the farmers grew discouraged with their meager crops of wheat and formed a stock company to build a cheese factory at Bucktown, two and a half miles southeast of Lambert. The cheese factory encouraged farmers to buy cattle, which thrived on the prairie grass or hay that was cheap, and brought a new spirit and prosperity to area farmers. Barbed wire appeared in 1874 and would soon replace the wooden fences. Hay mowers and the De Laval cream separator also came on the scene in the 1880s.

Life was getting a bit easier for the farm women as well, with sewing machines becoming available by the 1870s but still quite expensive. After Sears, Roebuck and Montgomery Ward and Company came on the scene, they provided catalogues for the farmer's wife which gave her a much improved selection of such goods as school clothes. By this time, mill made woolens, flannels and denims were becoming available and wives did not need to make all the clothing. Still, many women died young due to premature births, stillbirths, and illnesses such as diphtheria and measles.

Communication with the outside world got easier as telegraph lines appeared around this time. Lambert had a post office in 1887 but it would not be until around 1900 when rural telephone lines reached farm homes and electricity would only come to the farms much later. Social life for the farmers was limited by distance, heavy work schedules, and by lack of money. Much of the family's social life consisted in visiting

with the neighbors. Dances, both private and organized, rated high on the list of social pastimes and were frequently attended by the whole family, with coffee and a big lunch usually served at midnight before folks left for home.

Life on the farm never got easy for Louis and Catherine. Droughts reduced grain yields in 1886 and the drought of 1887 was even more severe and some farmers did not harvest their crops that year. The drought of 1888 was localized but generally the crops were less than average. In 1889, the drought was described as “terrible” and caused a great deal of hardship. Low prices in addition to the drought caused some of the farmers to give up their farms. Louis and Catherine remained on their farm, having fulfilled their dream of ownership made possible in Minnesota by hard work and determination.

And what of Catherine’s Irish heritage? She seems to have adapted well to the American frontier life among French-Canadians, but her descendants have continued to claim and take pride in their Irish heritage. Catherine was frugal as she managed her family in their small frame home covered with tarpaper. She had a quiet Irish friendliness, belief in the importance of education, and a strong faith that she shared as spiritual head of the home. Like most American Irish, she no doubt liked parties and such holidays as St. Patrick’s Day. While I picture her in a long dress and apron shredding cabbage or canning tomatoes in a kitchen filled with smells of baking, I also smile as I picture her out picking wild fruits and flowers, where her long skirt must have swept up many wood ticks and briars, much like the woman with a long skirt who picked up nearly 100 wood ticks by walking across our alfalfa field on the Foley farm.

In all, Louis and Catherine gave birth to sixteen children, although several did not make it to adulthood. In 1905, John was living at Brooks, married to Jessie Carle, along with their children, Edward, Rose Ella, Ema, Earl Joseph, Leo Dean, and Dewey. John died in 1926 at Yakima, Washington. Louis, Jr. and his wife, Clara Bernier, farmed at Lambert, raising five children: Thomas, Frank, Albert, Rachel, and Walter. Louis died in Red Lake County in 1944 after a long bout with cancer. Thomas, Frank, Albert and Walter raised families in Red Lake County while Rachel (McDunn) raised her family at Barnesville. Louis and his children were close to Louis’ sister, Nellie, who married Maximillian Perras, my grandfather, and the Perrases started married life on a farm. Marie Toulouse and her husband, William Lachance, started their life together farming at Lambert, added eleven children to the family, and in time moved to Waterville, Maine. Jennie Toulouse married James Miller of Red Lake Falls and, after starting their family in Red Lake Falls, they lived for years in Bemidji, Minnesota, where James was a carpenter, and later moved to Everett, Washington. Rosalie married Eugene Clark from Mower County, Minnesota, and later married John McDonald, also living in Bemidji. Robert Toulouse died at age four in 1887, with the cause of death listed as “headache,” and Thomas died in 1896 at age 26 from peritonitis.

In the 1895 census, Louis was 66 years old, Catherine was 60, with Thomas, Jennie, and Louis, Jr. still living at home, along with 10 year old Ethel Young, a granddaughter. Louis died in 1896, leaving Catherine with several of their children still living at home. Catherine died on July 17, 1905. Louis and Catherine were buried at Lambert.

## VITAL PERRAS AND MARGUERITE PATENAUDE

By the 1800s, the fur trade around LaPrairie and the Richelieu River was diminished as the main route for furs now led to Hudson Bay rather than down the St. Lawrence. In the latter part of the previous century, LaPrairie and the surrounding area received a significant number of Acadian exiles returning from the American colonies, many coming on foot via Lake Champlain. These Acadians harbored memories of their hardships: imprisonment and conditions of slavery in New England, denial of their requests to return to Canada, the death of loved ones as they made the long return journey after escape or release, and struggles to start over with nothing. Back in Lower Canada, they found the seigneurial system largely in the hands of English speaking seigneurs, with those French speaking persons elected to government barred from any power because of their religion and language, and they were ready to join in the French Canadian cause to keep their traditional values. Before long, they found themselves facing poverty and threatened with starvation, while the British government turned a deaf ear to the French Canadian requests. The French Canadians had helped to keep Canada independent from the United States in the War of 1812, but the two decades that followed were filled with dissatisfaction with the political process in Canada. When their dissatisfaction was being expressed in 1837-38 as the Patriote party emerged, issuing a long list of grievances called The 92 Resolutions, the government refused all of their requests and there was talk of rebellion. The British grew nervous and sent a force led by Jean Colbourne, a former Lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada who disliked the French, and he and his men burned whole villages, destroyed hundreds of farms and habitants homes, and arrested thousands, condemning ninety-nine to death (only 12 were hanged), sending almost 60 more to penal colonies in Australia, and imposing martial law. The Durham report given to the British government implied that the deplorable determination of the French to retain their culture was the core of a major problem in Canada. This obviously did not create happy memories for the French Canadians, although in time it would lead to a more responsible government. The uprising in 1838 centered around LaPrairie, Chateauguay, and Napierville, involving many members of the Patenaude and Bourassa families among others. I find the name of Julien Patenaude among the patriots, and judging from his age and the area of conflict, this could be the father-in-law of Vital Perras. The uprising did lead to changes toward a more responsible government but, by now, some folks in this area saw what they believed were advantages offered in the United States.

The village of Terrebonne, Minnesota was founded in 1879 by French-Canadian settlers from the Montreal area of Canada. At this time, Vital Perras was farming at St. Remi on the south side of the St. Lawrence near Montreal but certainly knew a number of these settlers in Terrebonne and the surrounding area. His sister, Emilie Perras, had moved to Popular River with her husband, Louis Boire, and their children in 1865. His daughter Marie Elizabeth Perras and her husband, Moise Thibert, and family had moved in 1877 to Crookston, a newly forming community, where Moise opened a shop to make shoes and harnesses. Vital, the son of Joseph Perras and Elizabeth Giroux, had married Marguerite Patenaude, daughter of Julien Patenaude and Julienne Boucher, at Laprairie, Quebec, on February 19, 1849. In the 1881 Canadian census, Vital is listed as 62 years

old, a farmer and father of thirteen children, of whom nine were living at home, with his wife, Marguerite Patenaude, now 49 years old and still very active. The Perras family now had a tradition of farming for some generations, but land was getting very difficult to acquire, making it unlikely that Vital's sons could follow in their father's footsteps. Most farms had already been divided up among family members and tended to be quite small, allowing at best for subsistence living. In 1880, Vital traveled to Red Lake County with the hope of finding land for his sons and was pleased with what he saw, so he filed a declaration of intention for citizenship on November 6, 1880, an action necessary to get a homestead grant. Returning to Canada, his family booked passage on a steamship across Lake Michigan to Chicago and then by railroad to Crookston. Here they were met by friends, most likely the Thiberts, who took the family by ox cart to a homestead in Poplar River Township three and one half miles from what is now Brooks, Minnesota, just south of the junction of the Hill River and the Poplar River. Most of his neighbors were French-Canadian immigrants who spoke the French language, with surnames such as Leblanc, Berry, Mercil, Lefevre, Pigeon, and Coupin. Vital's son Arthur filed a claim for 160 acres near Brooks and Romuald filed a claim on 80 acres adjacent to his father's land.

Some members of the family, including Prudent, Marie-Elizabeth, and Marie-Elise did not come to Minnesota with the family. Another daughter, the first Marie-Elise, had died as a child in Canada. Marie Elizabeth had already married her husband, Moise Thibert at Napierville, Quebec in 1866, and they were now living at Crookston. Marie Elizabeth Perras' godfather, Louis Boire, had a homestead a mile south of the Perras' homestead in Poplar River Township. Louis and Emilie Boire's daughter, Emilie, and her husband Firmin Boyer settled in Red Lake Falls in 1865. The Boires were parents also of Louis, Francois Xavier, Flavie (Adolph Gagnon), Marguerite (Odilon Bisson), Cesarie (Theodule Menard), Cedulie (Joseph Leblanc), Aimerie, and Vital. My mother spoke fondly of her "Uncle Louis Boire," who was the second generation Louis married to his cousin Alexandria, the daughter of Vital and Marguerite Perras. Louis, Jr., had arrived in Poplar River in 1879 and married Angele Lachance in 1881, with whom he had two children, Joseph and Napoleon, the latter dying in infancy before Angele died in 1884. Louis then married Alexandria Perras in 1887, and they had three children, two dying in infancy and one living daughter, Rose Alma. When Alexandria died in 1893, Joseph continued to live with his father while Rose Alma Boire lived with the Perras family. Rose Alma later married Alex Gackowski and raised four children: Vernon, Catherine, Mildred, and Marguerite, a Benedictine nun.

To cope with the hardships of frontier life required courage and resilience. The Perras family's first task was to build a house and barn of logs. Lumber from sawmills was not yet easily available and Vital could not have afforded it anyway. Fortunately, he had his sons to help erect the buildings and open land for a garden and then for cultivation. Their cabin combined all the activities of a large family in one room and a loft. The squared inner walls of the cabin were whitewashed and lined with pegs for spare clothing and utensils, while dried vegetables hung from the rafters. The cabin was banked with straw or manure in the fall as insulation against the harsh winter but, even so, it was not unusual to wake up on a winter morning with snow that had sifted through the crevices.

. Vital's move late in life meant starting over, clearing brush and timber, and breaking the sod to get crops planted. It was not uncommon, however, for the older generation to move west with younger members of the family, so that their wisdom and labor could aid in establishing new farms and their children could assist them in their old age. With better transportation, the family might have brought more of their possessions, but now they busied themselves making beds and other furniture, finding straw to fill mattresses, cutting wood for the wood stoves used for cooking and heating, and knitting mittens and scarves to survive the winter weather. Wild game, such as deer, rabbits, and prairie chickens, fish from the local rivers, and wild fruit were part of survival since they had no refrigeration. They started a garden as quickly as possible, but a short growing season made it hard to raise some crops, like ripe corn, and families found themselves eating a lot of potatoes, often without salt. Holidays, of course, meant a feast of tourtiere, a favorite Canadian pork pie.

Like the Toulouse family, the Perrases faced the daunting task of opening fields as quickly as possible. Centuries of decaying prairie grasses had laid a cover of deep black soil but prairie sod had very deep roots and was so thick it took a sharp plowshare to cut it, and then had to be left to rot the first year; fortunately, by the time settlers arrived in Red Lake County, light steel plows had been developed to break the prairie sod. While Vital and his sons were anxious to see the broken ground covered with waving grain and the livestock safely fenced in, they must also have noticed the progression of vivid wild flowers covering the prairie, offering a constantly changing scene. As the fields greened in the spring, Indian paintbrushes, prairie anemones, strawberries and wild fruit trees blossomed, breaking the bleakness of winter; then, as summer weather arrived, so did the daisies, purple coneflower, wild bergamot, and the lady's slipper or moccasin flower. High summer added goldenrods, milkweed, brown-eyed Susans, and blazing stars, but these wildflowers added more than beauty to the open prairies, as the settlers had learned to use the stems, flowers, fruits and many roots of prairie plants for food and medicinal purposes. Forced to be self-reliant in times of illness, they used plantain to treat inflammations from insect bites and sting, coneflower to treat poisonous snake bites and to cure thirst when water was not available, and yarrow, popularly called "wound medicine," to stop bleeding and cure wounds. Women often used dried flowers to make pictures and flowers provided many dyes used for dying cloth.

The younger children were needed to help with farm work but also had an opportunity for school. The school year was only five or six months long, going from freeze-up until the fields were ready to be worked in the spring. Winter storms often kept the schools closed. Children carried their lunch to school in one gallon syrup pails or paper bags, walking to school and to most social functions. It was not long before the Perras brothers' stringed orchestra was a popular part of community entertainment and dances. Romuald, the blind brother, was a talented violinist and organist, who played the church organ as well, and his brothers all played stringed instruments. The Red Lake Falls Courier in 1901 called nearby Terrebonne "one of the most progressive and promising towns in northern Minnesota," with the flour mill running night and day. However, the growth of Terrebonne did not continue when it was bypassed by the railroads.

A special bond formed between neighbors, due in part to need and partly from desire for companionship. Neighbors had shared experiences, concerns and hopes as well as shared language and customs, often because friends and neighbors had migrated together. Their word was a bond until it was broken. Families rallied to help out a troubled neighbor and shared labor at such events as threshing time. By the time the Perrases had grain fields growing, farmers in the area were using a grain reaper that swathed the grain, with family members then tying the grain into bundles and shocking it. Farmers relied on a custom thresher who came when the weather was fit, which often meant waiting weeks, so farmers would stack their grain until threshing time, which was a lot of work but threshing was more efficient than the previous method of flailing grain. When the threshing machine arrived, a crew was needed as they had to cut the twine on bundles because the machine could take no more than half a bundle at a time and others were needed to bag the grain in sacks and haul it to the granary. Farm wives provided large meals and lunches for the laboring men.

By the time they moved to Minnesota, the Perrases enjoyed being grandparents. Marie Elizabeth Perras, along with her husband Moise Thibert, who had grown up on a farm at St. Genevieve, Canada, moved to a homestead at Terrebonne in 1882, where they raised their eight children, most of whom married local settlers' children: Marcellin (Lumina Gaudette), Roseann, Raymond (Anne Prenevost), Hosanna (Henry Prenevost and later Harry LaSalle), Laurie (Arthur Founier), Gilbert, Pamela (Onezime LaCoursiere), and Alma (Henry Brouillet). Prudent Perras remained in Canada and married Melina Vegiard dit Labelle. Arthur married a girl from Terrebonne, Antoinette Prenevost, lived for a while in Red Lake Falls, Minnesota, and then moved to Seattle. In 1883, Louisa was married at Terrebonne to a local farmer, Theodule Meunier, son of Olivier Meunier and Josephthe Cadieux, who had come from Canada to the Red Lake Falls area in 1879. Theodule and Louisa later moved to Montana, where they ran a hotel until about 1889, when Theodule allegedly was stabbed in the back by a hotel clerk in a dispute over a gold claim, leaving Louisa a widow with two small children. She later married Albert Bernard at Butte, Montana. Roseann Perras married Roch Lefebvre from Poplar River but died in 1898, leaving him a young widower. Some members of the Perras family died young and were buried at Terrebonne, including Vital (son) in 1891, Wilfrid in 1899, and Joseph in 1907, as well as Alexandria in 1893 and Roseann in 1898..

The Perras and Toulouse families were happily united by the marriage of Maximillian Perras and Nellie Toulouse, my grandparents, in 1894. Max began farming in Lambert Township next to Nellie's family. Their life is the subject of the chapter on Brooks.

In Laprairie, Quebec, there was a hotel named the Perras-Patenaude hotel. Perhaps that sparked Vital's interest in the hotel business as he opened the Central Hotel on 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Champagne Avenue in the Red Lake Falls, date unknown, where the Northern Pacific Railroad and a bit later the Northern Pacific Railroad brought traveling salesmen and other guests to the developing town. In the spring, lumberjacks stayed at the hotel as they brought logs down the river. When Vital died in 1896, members of his family must have taken over the business, as his son, Joseph Perras, was proprietor of "Central House", now more of a boarding house, when he died in 1907. Joseph's obituary states that he came to Red Lake Falls about five years earlier, and "about a year

ago engaging in the hotel business, conducting it satisfactorily up to the time of his illness.” Joseph died at the hotel from hemorrhaging lungs after two weeks of illness.

By the time of his death, Vital had built a new house and fulfilled his dreams of a better life for his children. Marguerite continued to live at home with her children until her death in 1911. After his mother’s death, Romuald lived with Maximillian and Nellie until his death at age 73 in 1925.

## JOSEPH WILLIS AND SUSANNAH DAVIES

Joseph Willis and Susannah Davies add English background to the family history. Susannah was the oldest child of James and Susannah Davies, an affluent English couple living at Southwark, St. George, Surrey, England. In the marriage record for James Davies and Susannah Taylor, where the record states “Rank or Profession,” both James and his father, Thomas Davies, were listed as “Gentleman,” while William Morris Taylor, father of the bride, was listed as a “cooper.” When Susannah Davies was baptized on April 27, 1842, her father was listed as a clerk in a counting house. The 1851 English census listed five children, with James a licensed victualler or innkeeper. The family had three live-in servants, which hints at prestige. One of apparently several inns that James owned was shown on the 1861 census as “Sussex Arms,” an inn and tavern. When Susannah married, her father was listed as owning a brick and tile manufacturing business as well.

Susannah’s brother James, two years younger, died in London in 1912. Emilie, born in 1846, married William Buck, who was listed in the 1881 census as a licensed victualler managing the “Mail Coach” in London. Emilie died in 1898. William Davies, born in 1848, was listed in the 1871 census as a licensed victualler managing the “New Crown,” which apparently belonged to his father and then to William. Susannah’s youngest sister, Clarissa, born in 1851, married William Rowe Sweetser of London, a talented inventor, who died at age 29, and later married Richard Day. Richard and Clarissa are believed to have died in a gold mining accident about 1890, most likely around Johannesburg, South Africa.

Prior to her wedding, Susannah from the age of 17 served as a lady in waiting in charge of the sewing room for Queen Victoria. Susannah married Joseph Willis, a commoner, at St. Matthew’s, Westminster, on January 10, 1869. Susannah and Joseph’s families were both living at the time in the Greater London borough of Islington, an affluent village in Middlesex. Susannah was listed as a 24 year old spinster (she was actually 26) and Joseph was listed as 21 and a bachelor laborer, the son of Charles Willis, also a laborer. Joseph, in actuality, was born April 21, 1849, in Grand Farrington, Berkshire, to Mary Jane Willis, who married Charles Taylor three years later in Saint James Paddington, London. Charles and Mary Jane had eleven more children. In the 1851 English census, Joseph was living with his mother in Farrington Union Workhouse and in the 1861 census he was listed as Joseph Willis Taylor. Charles Taylor, perhaps to avoid embarrassment for his step-son, signed the wedding papers for Joseph and Susannah as Charles Willis.

History records that Queen Victoria was quite upset when one of her ladies-in-waiting married, presuming their first duty was to serve the Queen. No doubt this meant

that Susannah's future in England was jeopardized and notes of Susannah's granddaughters say that she was disowned by her family for marrying a commoner. By that time her two sisters had both married prominent men. Susannah and Joseph were encouraged to leave England, although it is uncertain who encouraged them to leave. They boarded a British Royal Mail steamship, the *Medved*, at London, arriving at Quebec on May 2, 1870, and settled at Woodstock, Ontario, where Joseph worked as a laborer, and where they gave birth to their three children, namely Susannah Jane (Jennie) in 1871, Annabelle on August 18, 1873, and Charles in 1875.

Shortly after Charles' birth, the family moved to St. Paul, Minnesota. This was a boom period in St. Paul, with a massive influx of immigrants. In the 1880 census, Joseph was listed as a lumberman. They were still in St. Paul at the time of the 1885 census. Interestingly, right next to the Willis family on the census records was another family from Clitheroe, Lancashire, England, namely Stephen and Susan Holgate, their children, and Stephen's brother, Thomas Holgate. Whether the Willises and the Holgates knew each other before ending up in St. Paul, they apparently would get acquainted when the Willises lived at 204 Fairfield Avenue and the Holgates at 202 Fairfield Avenue in St. Paul, with both Joseph Willis and Thomas Holgate employed at J. T. McMillan Company.

What happened to the family after this is not clear. Joseph and Susannah moved to Duluth sometime after 1885. Notes of their daughter Annabelle's children suggest that Joseph was forced to join the British armed forces for the Boer War in South Africa by men who came to the home. It is unlikely that Joseph could have been forced to serve the British since he had become a naturalized U.S. citizen while in St. Paul. However, he might well have been coerced to go to South Africa because of his former naval military experience and the opportunities foreseen there when the largest known gold deposit in the world was discovered in 1886 in the Transvaal near what is now Johannesburg.

The First Boer War had already happened in 1880-1881 when the Dutch and German Huguenots revolted against the British annexation of their territory, the Transvaal, fighting hard to keep their fledgling republic from British encroachment. After 1886, the land's rich gold deposits drew waves of foreign adventurers and speculators. British imperialist Cecil Rhodes believed he could use his power and money and that of his business partner investors to pursue his dream of creating a British empire in Africa. He obtained mineral rights from the indigenous chiefs and planned to forcibly seize control of the Boer Republic by armed takeover. Interest in this adventure ran high in the United States and Canada and many from both countries joined the British efforts.

It is unclear if someone did come to recruit Joseph for the South African adventure and whether or not he ever went to South Africa. Joseph and Susannah had kept in contact with her family in England, which might explain Joseph's interest in South Africa since Susannah's sister, Clarissa, and her husband, Richard Day, must have been involved in the rush to mine gold in South Africa. Joseph is listed in the Duluth directory for 1889-90, with Jennie and Charles living with him, but they may have listed him even if he had left by this time. Susannah was allegedly managing a boarding house in Superior when her daughter, Annabelle, a fifteen year old working as a chambermaid in a hotel, eloped and married George Foley on June 10, 1889. Was Susannah living apart from Joseph and several of her children? The Second Boer War did not take place until 1899-1900, long after Joseph's separation from Susannah.

Susannah, a skilled seamstress, continued to raise her children in Duluth, working as a seamstress to support them. Jennie Willis (Susannah Jane) married Stephen Elliot of the Duluth Elliot meat packing family and they had one daughter, Grace. Jennie divorced her first husband and married a second time to George Carroll, a conductor on the Union Pacific, and they had a daughter, Alice, and son, George. Charles Willis grew up on the streets, selling newspapers, shining shoes, and doing whatever jobs he could find to help support his mother. Charles' first wife, Alice, died young leaving him with two daughters, Catherine and Irene. His second wife was Bessie. Charles became a legendary figure in Duluth, fighting in Cuba during the Spanish American War, serving in the United States Navy in World War I, bringing Canadian liquor to the clubs in Duluth during the prohibition, managing the old Duluth city auditorium, and numbering many friends among the prominent citizens of Duluth. Charles died December 23, 1930 when hit by a car on Miller Highway near Duluth.

After allegedly waiting for a time to hear from Joseph, Susannah married a second time in St. Paul on September 21, 1892, to Thomas Holgate, a meatcutter in South St. Paul, whom she and Joseph had known when they lived in St. Paul. Thomas was born at Clitheroe, England on September 28, 1846 and came to St. Paul in 1879. Thomas and Susannah made their home at 228 Fairfield Avenue in St. Paul. Thomas' brother, Stephen Holgate, was godfather to Susannah's grandson, William Stephen Holgate Foley, in 1898. In the 1900 census, Susannah's granddaughter, Grace, was living with Thomas and Susannah. Thomas died in St. Paul on August 8, 1900.

After Thomas' death, Susannah lived for several years with George and Annabelle Foley at Finlayson. Then, on September 21, 1902, she married Charles William (Will) Harris at Superior, Wisconsin. Will was the father of Mary Elizabeth Harris married to John Wilkins. In Violet Peck's diary, Mrs. Wilkins and her children are often at the Foley home in Finlayson. Later, when Anna Belle Foley Moser died in 1945, the obituary listed Mrs. Elizabeth Wilkins of Mishawaka, Indiana, as Anna Belle's half sister. These two friends apparently claimed to be sisters after their parents married. In her diary, Violet also calls Finlayson residents Elmer and Mary Bates uncle and aunt, while she is friends of their twin school teacher daughters, Edna and May Bates, and the Bates and Foley families were close friends but I have not discovered a blood relationship.

What happened to Joseph Willis? If he ever left for South Africa, he came back to North America within several years and likely made contact with his birth family. Did he also have contact with his children and find out that Susannah had already married again? Charles and Mary Jane Taylor brought their family to Canada in 1871, arriving in Quebec and living in Selkirk, Manitoba. Mary Jane died in 1891 and Charles Taylor in 1908, both in Manitoba. Whether Joseph had contact with his family after leaving England is a question, but he likely knew their whereabouts. Joseph married a second time to Olive Helen Smith, a native of England, in Chippewa, Michigan, on August 9, 1895. At the time he was listed as living at Sault Ste. Marie. Sometime after their marriage, Joseph and Olive returned to England, where their daughter, Isabelle, was born in April, 1898. The family returned to Canada on the Yorkshire in 1898, landing in Quebec. A son, William Willis, was born in 1901 at Thunder Bay, Ontario. In the Canadian census for 1901, Joseph is listed as a farmer in Ontario and he applied for land in northern Alberta in 1902, agreed to clear the land and build a house on it.

Unfortunately, he had an accident before the house was built and died at Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. The Edmonton Bulletin of January 15, 1903 reported that "Mr. Willis, of Riviere Qui Barre, died on Wednesday (January 14) at he public hospital as a result of an accident which occurred on Tuesday, the 6<sup>th</sup>. He was skidding house logs and must have tripped and fallen so that a log rolled on him and crushed his skull. He was insensible when found and did not recover consciousness until he reached the hospital. He was a pensioner of the royal navy and was about fifty-five years of age. He leaves a widow." Olive Helen Smith remarried in 1906 to James Francis Sumner and died in Idaho in 1940.

## GEORGE FALLU/FOLEY

Joseph George Fallu was born on September 9, 1863 at Campbellton, New Brunswick. Growing up on his father's farm, he went to work at age 16 on a fishing boat. The next year, he and his half-brother, Richard, took a boat down the St. Lawrence and ended up in Chicago, where George worked for perhaps three years for his brother Richard as a carpenter before heading west to Minnesota to work in the woods. Perhaps he chose Duluth, Minnesota, because his uncle, Daniel Fallu, was working there as a railroad engineer. Like many young men of the time, he likely worked in the woods during the winter and then looked for other seasonal employment in the summer. He bought a saloon in South Superior, where he was busy cleaning the floors and serving at the bar, while living in a boarding house where he fell in love with the manager's daughter, Annabelle, a chambermaid. Annabelle Willis was 15 and George Foley was 25 when they married on June 10, 1889 in Superior, Wisconsin. Annabelle hated the bar and her mother gave permission for the marriage only if George would settle down, to which he agreed if Annabelle would live on a farm. George took a homestead in Pine County near Finlayson but it would be several years before he could build a house and barn and open land to settle there. As a result, their first three children were born in Superior.

When a railroad line from St. Paul to Duluth was completed in 1870, it opened Pine County to settlement. This was an area of beautiful white pine and evergreen stands interspersed with hardwoods. The Finlayson area started logging and lumbering about 1880 when a Scotchman named Finlayson started a sawmill there. Settlers followed soon after, homesteading on the cutover lands but, with the slashing left by the loggers, tough stumps, and rocks, this was not easy land to open. Much of the area was poorly drained; the tote road from Finlayson to Big Pine Lake was mostly corduroy.

George spent the summer of 1894 on the farm. He built a house and was finishing a barn, with the help of his brother-in-law, Charles Willis, when the Hinckley fire destroyed his buildings and wiped out the town of Finlayson. Only two inches of rain had fallen between May and September of that year and daytime temperatures had consistently been in the 90's when a major fire burned a large area and killed 418 people. George and his neighbor, Joe Kramer, had gone to Sandstone for lumber for his house when the depot agent told them that he had a telegraph from Hinckley saying that the town people were going to Skunk Lake to try to save themselves. Skunk Lake was near the railroad track four miles north of Hinckley and passengers from a train and other refugees immersed themselves for hours in a morass of mud and water. George and Joe

had just started for home when the fire caught up with them. They unhitched their horses and buried themselves in a newly dug potato field, but their faces and hands were badly burned, while the horses were badly burned and blinded and had to be shot. The men walked back to Sandstone where a train had been backed up from Superior to pick up survivors. All but one building was destroyed at Sandstone. Just north of Sandstone, the bridge over the Kettle River was on fire, but the engineer opened the throttle and crossed the bridge five minutes before it collapsed. Taken to a hospital in Superior, George was heading toward his home in Superior with his face all bandaged when he met his wife and children. His wife did not recognize him but the children knew his voice and ran to meet him. As soon as possible, George returned to his homestead to start over building a house. He would suffer from that time on in hot or cold weather because the skin on his face and hands were very tender.

Charles Willis saved the lives of an elderly couple who lived next door from the fire by insisting that they leave their home to seek refuge in a nearby lake, where wild animals also found refuge alongside the people. 85 persons were reported to have saved their lives near Finlayson by crowding into a lake. George had tied a cow to a rail fence around a haystack because he did not have pasture. The fence burned but the cow and haystack were okay. The fire delayed the family move to the farm at Finlayson. That's the subject of the next chapter on the Foley's life in Pine County.

## MINNESOTA EH!!

I could easily have grown up a Canadian as did so many of my cousins, which certainly would have been okay but would have meant a different language and customs. I did not know any of these good folks who came out of Canada to pursue dreams of owning their own land or bettering themselves in Minnesota except several who came as children with their parents, like my Grandfather Max Perras and my Grandmother Annabelle Willis. . It took a courageous pioneer spirit to leave family and friends to make the slow journey to the unknown of Minnesota. I am happy that they chose this state newly opening up in the west, where they could see stars peeking through the night darkness, dancing northern lights, tiny wildflowers, huge pine trees, and lots of lakes and wildlife. With a lot of hard work to open their farms, they were able to feed and raise large families who would contribute to the future of the state and the nation.

In talking about the Perras family moving to Minnesota, I mentioned the turmoil in the LaPrairie/Richelieu River area in 1837-1838, when the French Canadians were unhappy with the government of Quebec and some looked toward uniting the area with the United States. I mention this because as a young adult, I was at one time president of the Red River Valley Historical Society and the Canadian members gave me the impression that Louis Riel, who tried to bring Manitoba into the United States before it was part of greater Canada, was a dangerous rebel. I remember visiting Riel's grave at St. Boniface and thinking what a difference his dream might have made for someone who grew up just south of the Canadian border. At the time I had no idea that I shared a common background of several generations of French Canadians with Riel. Had I known this, I would have likely searched for a better understanding of his vision and the resistance that led to his condemnation and death. I enjoyed the friendship of our

Canadian brothers and sisters in the Red River Valley Historical Society and viewed it as a random matter of history that the border dividing the United States and Canada marked so little difference in geography and outlook. Louis Riel, like so many others who pursued their dreams, represents to me the unfolding pioneer spirit that I inherited from my ancestors who eventually settled on the south side of the border. Susannah Davies was gutsy enough to defy her family and her queen to marry a commoner, an assertiveness that she passed on to future generations of her family. Vital Perras, at an age where he might have considered retiring, instead chose to give his sons a better future than they might have where land was now too limited, just as had been the situation earlier for many who left Europe for North America. Reflecting on the name of my early French Canadian ancestor, Nicolas Paternoster, I realize how appropriate that I utter an occasional paternoster (Our Father) in gratitude for the lives of these special folks whose DNA flows through my veins.



Daniel Fallu family



Richard Foley and Belle at Val d'Amour Church George attended



Honore Savoie and Helene Fallu



Catherine Rochford Toulouse



Mary Jane Willis Taylor



Susannah Taylor Davies



Rose Alma Boire



Vital Perras Hotel, Red Lake Falls, MN



Marguerite Patenaude Perras family



Thomas and Catherine Toulouse Family, Lambert



Vital Perras Family, Poplar River



Louisa Perras



Prudent Perras



Pierre Patenaude



Eunice Toulouse



Eunice Toulouse Webb



Louis Toulouse



Mathilda Toulouse



Thomas Toulouse

By the time George Foley had rebuilt his buildings after the Hinckley Fire and was ready to move his family to Pine County, he and Annabelle had three children, Violet, George, and Susan. The Foleys were moving to an area recently cut over and now open for settlers, where they would have to contend with pine stumps and brush. George was no stranger to farming, having grown up on a farm in Quebec. In the 1900 census, George listed his occupation as carpenter. These skills, which he had learned working with his father and grandfather, would serve well as he built his farm buildings and furniture and as he did carpentry for others to support his growing family. The transition to farm life was likely more of a challenge for Annabelle, who had spent her life thus far in urban settings.

Finlayson had only been incorporated in 1895 and did not have a hospital, so Annabelle went to Duluth or St. Paul for the delivery of her babies. By the time her daughter Myrtle was born in 1892 and son William in 1898, Annabelle's mother was remarried to Thomas Holgate and was living in St. Paul so Annabelle went there for several childbirths. Annabelle also lost three sets of twin boys, born prematurely, and four daughters died in childhood. Myrtle, born in 1893, died at age nine of a heart condition; Loretta, born in 1899, was born prematurely and lived only a couple weeks; Alice, born in 1901, died during a diphtheria epidemic in 1904; Genevieve, born in 1905, died of pneumonia in 1908.

George and Annabelle raised six children to adulthood. Violet, born in 1890, married Ocie Peck in 1917. George, born in 1891, married Mabel Larson in 1916. Susan, born in 1893, married David Downey in 1913. Richard, born in 1897, married Therese Mader in 1921. William married Alma Perras in 1928. Pearl, born in 1903, married Jack Srok in 1921.

George had a limited school education but both he and Annabelle believed strongly in the importance of schooling. Before many years in Finlayson, George donated land on which a rural schoolhouse was built. The children could walk to school and come home for lunch if they chose. George served for some years as chairman of the school board and he and Annabelle frequently attended school conventions and local school activities. Finlayson did not have a high school, but several of the children boarded elsewhere to go to high school and Susan to attend a business college. By the time their youngest daughter, Pearl, was finishing high school, a high school had opened in Finlayson and Pearl went to Finlayson in a horse drawn school bus.

Church was much a part of the family life in Finlayson. The first three children had been baptized in Duluth in George's Catholic faith, but now the family became active in the Methodist Church. Family members often walked to Groningen and Finlayson for church services, Sunday school, prayer meetings, revival meetings, choir practice, and Sunday services. The ministers who served their churches were frequent guests at meal times. Violet's diary recorded that she was organist for church and Sunday school, taught Sunday school, and was sometimes in charge of programs like the church' Christmas program. Violet and her brothers Bill and Dick sang in the choir. George and Annabelle also walked or took a horse-drawn vehicle to church quite regularly. The church played a significant role in the family's social life as well, with basket socials, masquerade parties, ladies aid meals, and speakers. Violet was a member of the Ladies Helping Hand Club

and served for a time as its secretary. George was busy shingling the church roof in 1916. The lives of many of their friends were also shaped by church membership and events. Annabelle's obituary indicated that she was a founding member of the church in Finlayson.

## HOME LIFE

Life in the Foley home cannot have been dull. George was a hard working farmer, a man who frequently helped his neighbors, and frequently worked outside the home as a carpenter or laborer to support his family. He and his children were involved in many activities to earn the income needed for family life. After working hard to open fields, George was busy with plowing and dragging fields, planting and harvesting potatoes, oats, corn, and vegetables. As soon as the sons were old enough, they worked with their father in the fields and woods as well as helping the neighbors. Violet's daily diary notes the men's activities, such as butchering pigs and salting the meat, shocking and husking corn, hauling cream to Groningen, and hauling loads of potatoes, oats, ducks, and other products to town for sale. In the winter, George had a contract to provide ice for people of Finlayson and he and his sons spent several weeks cutting, hauling, and packing ice annually. George also spent a lot of hours in the woods, hauling logs, posts, and lumber, harvesting wood for their home, for the school, and for neighbors, and sometimes working in logging camps and sawmills. George and his sons frequently helped Mr. Roose install and maintain telephone lines around McGrath. Violet noted on one occasion that George (son) and Richard had been digging a well for three days and at 20 feet had not yet hit water. At times these activities kept the women of the family busy too, preparing meals for fifteen or more men helping with threshing or sawing wood, and then going to neighboring farms to help feed the crews when they worked there. In between, Annabelle helped at times with bunching and stacking hay or picking and sacking potatoes, and sometimes drove a team pulling a farm vehicle to town.

Annabelle was gone from home quite often because was often called upon by the doctors and neighbors to help with the sick. The family depended on her nursing skills as well, for example when her brother Charlie was badly burned and she went to care for him, when she cared for her niece Grace's crippled child, Jeneveve, at the farm, or when she was expected by her children to assist at the birth of her grandchildren. The local doctors were often at the Foley table at mealtimes, which suggests a close working relationship with them. During World War I, Annabelle served as a Red Cross nurse. Pearl described her mother's absence to care for the sick:

“Mother was quite often gone in the years when I was growing up and I imagine Dad was trying to compensate so I would have all the love a growing child needs. My mother was always called upon to nurse the seriously ill patients in our neighborhood. She delivered a lot of babies before the doctor could get there. She also closed a lot of eyes in death and mourned along with the family because she was known as the Florence Nightingale of our community. The local doctors would send her with a critically ill patient to the University Hospital in Minneapolis and she would have to ride in the express car with her patient on a

stretcher and be met by an ambulance in Minneapolis to be taken to the hospital. One was a 17 year old neighbor boy with a ruptured appendix. In the ambulance going to the hospital he asked my mother to help him sit up so he could look at the city. He had never been off the farm before. Mother held him up so he could look out the window and he said: 'Ain't it wonderful – all this traffic.' He laid back and was dead before they got to the hospital – but he had seen the city.”

When Annabelle was home, she was very busy sewing, mending, and embroidering for the family and for others. She did a lot of cooking and baking bread, pies, cakes, donuts, and cookies, making fudge and other treats. Violet's diary notes her mother out picking strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, juneberries, blackberries, cherries and other fruits, and then busy making sauces and jellies. At other times she busied herself working in the garden and flower beds, canning tomatoes and other vegetables to be stored in the root cellar under the house until winter, baking fruitcakes for people in town, or cooking at church and civic suppers.

Pearl's memories captured some of the busyness of the Foley home:

“How well I remember the old farm kitchen. We had a wood cook stove and heater, washed clothes on a washboard and ironed with flat-irons heated on the cook stove, and we had kerosene lamps. We used a wood heater in the winter and open windows in the summer. I can still remember lying in bed, listening to my Dad shake down the ashes in the old oak heater and putting in birch bark and cedar kindling to build a new fire to warm our cold farmhouse. Then he would build a fire in the kitchen range and put on a teakettle full of water to heat so mother could make coffee and hot cereal for breakfast when she got up a little later. He would then go out to check the barns and chicken coop to see if all was well and give the stock and chickens some feed to keep them busy until he went out to milk and do the rest of the chores.”

“I remember waking up early in the morning to the sound of the old coffee mill grinding our morning coffee. No need for an alarm clock when the smell of home cured bacon and sourdough pancakes came creeping into the frosty bedroom. We would all crowd close to the stove to dress, then after washing in cold water at the old washstand, we were ready for breakfast. We had a long table with benches along the sides for our large assembly of kids, and a chair at each end for mother and dad. We had outside plumbing. Our soap was made from ` waste fat and lye water. The lye water was made by pouring water into a barrel half full of hardwood ashes. This we also used to boil white clothes – no detergents in those days. We ironed our clothes with the sad iron, properly named if anyone who remembers them has sad memories of the scorched shirt or one soiled by a fleck of soot from the old stove heated iron.”

“My father was a kind man who loved all living things. He put tin around the trunks of trees so the cats couldn't disturb a nest in a tree and stakes around a ground nest so he wouldn't run over it with the hay mower while mowing. I remember sneaking out to the garden at five a.m. to help my Dad hoe the rows of vegetables growing bright and green in their nice straight rows. I remember trudging behind my Dad, admiring each little flower and bird as we went to bring in the cows from the pasture for milking, then having a cup filled with warm foamy milk squirted right from the cows and drank warm and sweet. I

remember tramping behind Dad as we looked for and found beautiful large blueberries that would later wind up in fruit jars for winter consumption. We ate the first dish of berries floating with a heavy cream and sugar.”

With Annabelle often away from home caring for others and also quite often sick, the Foleys’ were fortunate to have Violet living at home through her young adulthood. Violet prepared a lot of the meals, canned food for the winters, sewed for family members and neighbors, fed peddlers and jobless folks who stopped by the home, and amused herself by painting pictures, reading a book every couple of days, writing articles for publication, and playing music. She was also much a part of the social life with her siblings.

## SOCIAL LIFE

For persons used to being entertained by television, the Foley’s social life seems very busy and quite enjoyable. Almost daily, someone visited or shared meals at the Foley house or members of the family were visiting at other’s homes. Most of these meant walking trips, while they sometimes used horses with a cutter, sleigh or sled locally, and traveled to towns in the region and to Duluth or the Twin Cities by train. Violet notes Billie going to town on his bicycle to get the mail and her parents driving a horse and cutter to Duluth and back. They had no car of their own while at Finlayson, but enjoyed auto rides when available with Uncle Charlie, son George, and others who had already purchased cars. Family members walked frequently to Groningen, a mile and a quarter away, for mail until rural delivery started in 1913. Annabelle, Violet, and most members of the family were avid readers and made frequent trips to the library.

The Foley home was a welcome place for youth and adults. Pearl stated that “ours was always a loving happy home where I was proud to bring my friends. My mother often fed a group of young folks who had come to play ball or whatever. She would make a big bowl or freezer of ice cream to serve with homemade cake.” The farm home was always near a lake and young people came swimming, skating, boating and fishing at Miller Lake and later Little Pine Lake. The family had a pony for pony rides and often hosted sleigh rides for youngsters and adults. Reporting on a sleigh ride, Violet noted that “there was only one drawback and that was the sleigh was so full the girls had to sit on the boys laps, but the boys seemed to be well satisfied.”

As much as young folks were around the Foley home, adults visits were every bit as frequent. They enjoyed not only meals but evenings of card playing, story telling, and parties. George and his friends liked to have a smoke and talk. Music was much a part of family life; Violet played the guitar, piano, and organ, often accompanying family and community members in singing. She loved to play music with other young musicians who brought their violins, accordions, and other instruments. Violet noted, for example, in her diary for December 29, 1910: “We had a lot of music again last night. Augustus Burklund, Verner Burklund, and Frank Barnick were all down and spent the evening. Augustus is a swell pianist and Verner had his violin and I, my guitar. We had some swell music and Frank Barnick sang. He is a dandy singer.” Rarely a week went by without at least one dance in the area, either at someone’s home or in public places, attended by the younger Foleys and often by their parents as well. Violet noted many

times that she had danced until 5:00 a.m. or until sunup. Parties for birthdays, weddings, farewell parties, welcoming folks returning from out of town, and most any reason for getting together were frequent in the area. Some families, like the neighboring Carmen family, were like family and in and out of the Foley home almost daily, and the Foley children often called Mrs. Carmen "Aunt." Grandma Carmen had grown up as Cora Kramer, a childhood friend of Annabelle, and it was her father who went through the Hinckley Fire with George. Blood relatives did visit often from Duluth, Eveleth, and other Minnesota towns. George, who grew up in Quebec speaking French, loved it when Mrs. John Arth visited and they could talk in French.

This active social life created a lot of good memories. Some that Pearl shared include:

"I remember getting up in the morning and sitting on Dad's lap and he would sing French songs to me. I remember riding to town in the winter in a sleigh, with the sleigh bells merrily jingling with each jog of the horse. I was wrapped snugly in our old buffalo robe, knowing that the storekeeper would have a penny bag of candy for me to take home for my brothers and sisters. I remember fishing from the flat bottomed boat as my Dad rowed slowly around Miller Lake and then catching a large northern too big for me to land."

George and Annabelle celebrated the marriages of their daughters, Susan and Violet, at the farm home with many invited guests. Pearl recalled:

"Susan had a pretty garden wedding on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June, 1913. It was also my folks' 24<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Dad made a green bower under the trees on our farm lawn. Violet fashioned a large white bell of tissue paper and pink roses. There was a false bottom of tissue paper above the rose clapper, and as the minister pronounced Sue and Dave man and wife, my brother, George, pulled the clapper and a shower of rose petals fell down upon the bride and groom. The evening was filled with music and singing."

Violet shared memories of her wedding to Ocie Peck on June 27, 1917:

"The wedding ceremony was held in the archway between the living room and dining room which was heavily decorated with greens and a large bell symbolic of the happiness which the vows are to bring. There were about 50 guests at the wedding, and about 160 for the first supper which was served in our barn. We had the barn decorated just swell, also the house. After the first supper we went to Heirbrands and danced as Annie, my bridesmaid, gave a dance for us up at her place, then a second supper was served down at our place again at two o'clock to 180 guests."

As the boys grew older, they shared an interest in sports. Summer Sundays meant a ball game between neighboring villages and George sometimes accompanied his sons to these games. Bill moved from watching the local team play basketball to playing on the Finlayson team as they competed with Groningen, Sandstone, and other nearby teams. George liked deer hunting, rabbit hunting, and fishing and his sons shared this interest. Annabelle's brother, Charles, often brought his friends from Duluth to join in the hunt, including an annual trip to a deer hunting camp some 26 miles away.

## HOLIDAYS

With their love for social gatherings, the Foley family celebrated holidays with style. Every birthday called for a decorated cake, ice cream, and guests. Violet wrote on July 9, 1909:

“It’s a beautiful evening out. Tonight is Susie’s birthday party. It’s seven o’clock and we’re waiting for guests to arrive and I am all dressed. The lawn looks just grand. We have red, white and blue bunting draped from tree to tree all over the lawn and under each tree we have Japanese lanterns hung. It will soon be time to light them and when we have supper at 12 o’clock we are going to have it in the new barn which has never been used. We also have the barn decorated in bunting. Flags, green boughs, ferns and Japanese lanterns. I hear a rig coming now.”

Bill’s birthday was in November so it was not celebrated outdoors, but Violet noted the crowds of young folks, taffy pulls, and large pans of fudge marking his birthday. The Carmen family and others were usually invited to join in the festivities on holidays at the farm home. Other occasions, such as the fourth of July and Memorial Day, were celebrated with the larger community. Pearl had great memories of the 4th of July celebrations:

“My favorite holiday was the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, which was really a big day and was celebrated with gusto. About the middle of June we would start preparations for it. For mother it meant making new dresses for all the girls and shirts for the boys. Everything had to be in order for the 4<sup>th</sup>. All our crops were cultivated and weeded and debugged. I spent many an hour in the potato field picking potato bugs for which my dad paid me a penny a hundred. This is how I earned my spending money for the 4<sup>th</sup>. If I was lucky, I was able to buy a cap pistol. For five cents I could get a single shot cap pistol but, if I saved enough pennies, for a few more cents I could buy a repeating revolver that used rolls of caps.

“Early on the morning of the 4<sup>th</sup>, after the chores were done, we all got dressed in our new clothes, and Mother would pack baskets of food, and Dad would make a freezer of homemade ice cream. The horses were hitched to a big old lumber wagon, all the kids tucked in the back with the lunch, while Mother and Dad rode up front in the spring seat. It was a long, dirty ride from the farm to Pine Lake but our anticipation of the glorious day ahead and meeting old friends along the way made the time pass quickly. Once at the lake, Dad would find a shady spot to unload our picnic supplies and then find a spot to tether the horses for the day.

“We kids were then free to roam around and find old friends and if lucky Dad would rent a boat and take us out on the lake for a boat ride. We always spent the holidays with the Carmens and people thought we were related because we spent so much time together. Our picnic lunch was usually shared with some close friends and recipes were shared after some new dish was discovered. My Mother was one of the first to introduce potato salad and over the years she became an expert in her variations of the dish. No one has ever been able to duplicate her fried chicken. She was also an expert with baking powder biscuits.

“After dinner a prominent politician would deliver an inspiring public address and that meant a lot more to us in those days. Many an immigrant shed a tear remembering the oppression of the land they had left. Following the speech the Finlayson band would strike up a lively tune and that was the signal for the older couples to start dancing. The kids would dance as well. About five o’clock, after more to eat, Dad would hitch up the team for the trip home and chores.”

Thanksgiving was another special holiday for the family. Again, Pearl shared a memory of this event:

“The day before Thanksgiving had been spent baking bread and pies, cleaning the turkey and stuffing it, making cranberry sauce, and my special job of churning butter in the old churn. Every once in a while I would check my progress by lifting up the dasher and dipping my finger in the heavy whipped cream, then it would begin to form small curds of butter and soon a solid ball of yellow butter would form. Then Mother took over washing it clear of buttermilk. We kids weren’t through, we would drink huge glasses of buttermilk and there always seemed to be ginger bread to go with it. We made our own mincemeat, picked our own cranberries, and raised our own turkeys and vegetables. Even our flour was ground from our own wheat, rye, barley or corn.”

Violet wrote in her diary for Thanksgiving, 2012:

“It’s a crisp, frosty morning out. It smells like Thanksgiving alright. The mince and pumpkin pies are baking and Mama is stuffing the chickens for the oven. The boys are on the ice skating. Ralph (George’s friend) walked to the lake to set some muskrat traps. We are having the Carmens and the Cooks for dinner. Then we’re all going to Cooks for supper. (Afternoon) Our married folks are all in the dining room playing ‘Pedro’ and having a big time. George and the boys are down at the lake skating, all except Ralph and Richard, who are hunting rabbits.”

As the older children of the family grew to adulthood and worked away from home, they almost always came back to Finlayson for family holidays. Whether working at Duluth or Eveleth, they always seemed to be able to take off several days and come home by train, with George and his younger sons busy meeting trains to pick up the absent family members and their friends. Somehow, the family found a place for all the guests to sleep, just as they hosted neighbors overnight very often. Pearl remembered the family Christmases:

“I remember as a child waking up on Christmas morning when my Dad blew a tin horn. I rushed into the living room where a Christmas tree glowed with wax candles and Santa had been there while I slept. My father took me in his arms and whispered, ‘Merry Christmas, Babe.’ Mother came from the bedroom rubbing the sleep from her eyes and the rest of the family, Violet, George, Sue, Dick and Bill emerged also half asleep. I don’t remember what all was under the tree, but I will never forget the large golden haired doll that was to be my constant companion for a good many years, that was until my big brothers decided to perform surgery to find out what made her sigh ‘Mama’ each time she was turned upside down.”

Violet recorded memories of Christmas in 1914:

“We sure did have a lovely time Christmas day. Carmens, Cousin Grace and her children were here all day, in the evening Mr. and Mrs. Peck and Spray Peck came. Mr. Foster and Fritz and Otto Peitry all came in time for supper and spent the evening. Annie and Mary Heirbrand also came down. Us young folks took possession of the parlor, blew out the lamps and lit up the Christmas tree. We played games, sang songs, played the organ and guitar. We ate candy, cracked nuts, etc. in the light of the candles, while the older folks played cards, joked, etc. in the dining room. We had a midnight supper and all went home. I wish George and Susie could have been home as it is the last Christmas on the old farm.”

## AS THE YEARS GO BY

As the years passed, George and Annabelle hosted large crowds at their farm home to celebrate their 25<sup>th</sup> and 35<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversaries. Meanwhile, their children, who had learned good work habits at home, reached out beyond the home community for work. Violet’s diary switches from notes like “Willie is helping Gifford Carmen dig potatoes” and “Richard is working for a neighbor” to entries such as “Dick has gone to Duluth to work,” “Brother Willie has gone to Sandstone to work and I’m afraid that now he’s started working, he’ll keep it up,” or “George has gone to Redlands, California picking oranges.” Violet made trips to Minneapolis and to Duluth to work but always seemed to end up back on the farm after a time until her marriage. The iron ore mines in Duluth were a handy source of work for the family, with Dick, Bill, and their brothers-in-law, Dave Downey and Ocie Peck working there frequently.

Fires played a major factor in the changing family scene. As noted earlier, George was badly burned and lost his farm buildings in the Hinckley fire of 1894. A second tragedy would strike in 1911, another extremely dry year in Pine County. The lake nearby had dried up and George had built a fence to keep the horses in their pasture and two of his best cows had died of swamp fever after drinking swamp water. Pearl describes the loss of their home in this second fire:

“I still remember the day well. It had dawned bright and clear and dry. It was early September and Mother said she was going to start fall house cleaning, as Dad and Dick were going to Sandstone with a load of hay and Bill and I would be in school. School was only a half mile away, so we came home for lunch.

“I went back to school early, and Bill and a couple of his friends from school were in the barn looking at a new baby colt, when Bill looked toward the house and saw the whole roof was on fire. About the same time, us kids at school spotted the fire and ran to see the excitement.

“Bill organized his friends into a chain and they saved all of mother’s canned goods through the outside cellar entrance; something Bill won our praise for all through the long, hard winter that followed. All our family possessions were lost. Mother had priceless first edition books from England that had belonged to her mother, and much glass and china. All was lost, except a few family pictures and a canary bird, that called my mother’s attention to himself with his chirping when Mother tried to phone for help.

“Dad was on his way home from Sandstone when he was told of the fire, so he arrived home with the horses foaming with sweat, but too late to save anything. Mother was sitting on the lawn with a large, heavy bedspread wrapped around her, and tears streaming down her smoke-smudged face. Dad helped her remove her headgear and kissed her and told her not to cry over spilled milk. I’m sure he was near tears himself, facing winter without a roof over our heads....My dad was a broken man after the fire.”

The loss of their home was made worse by the dry summer and loss of income. Finances were tight and George had reduced the fire insurance on the house to \$500 when the premium was due. With winter approaching, he needed to get a new house built quickly and had to hire a lot of the work done by others, which cost him \$2000. Fortunately, Mrs. Forbes, who was their teacher and a widow, offered the family a place to stay until they were able to move into a vacant house while waiting for theirs to be completed. Annabelle and Pearl stayed with Mrs. Forbes, but George and his sons, Dick and Bill, preferred sleeping in the barn to be close to their work, while eating meals at the Forbes home. George, Violet and Susan were working in Duluth at the time and helped when they could; for example, George had a wood range shipped to his mother. The family moved into their new home in December, 1911.

George had to mortgage the farm to build the new house and these were depression years. He was never able to pay off the mortgage and in 1915 he was forced to sell the farm. The family rented the Grunly farm near Little Pine Lake and tried to start over, with an agreement that the family would care for Charley and Gunda Grunly, while George sometimes working away from home in lumber camps or other places to support his family. Violet noted that “this place is just beautiful. We’re in a valley with big high hills all around us and a beautiful lake in front of the house and around to one side.” The family began recovering, as Violet noted the yard was full of chickens, ducks, geese and turkeys, while George was using his potato digger to dig his potatoes for market and to help neighbors with their harvest. He also continued to be active in community affairs, such as serving as township treasurer or helping at the voting place during elections.

## WORLD WAR I YEARS

When World War I started, Violet’s diary reflects the concern of Americans that the United States would get drawn into this conflict. Bill was working in Eveleth when he joined the army in 1917 and continued to work and train with his unit until the United States entered the war, then went off for training and deployment to France with the Army Artillery. A few months later, Richard joined the army while living at Kelliher and, after military training, he was off to war but his ship was torpedoed on the way to England. Dick and all aboard the troop transfer were rescued and he also ended up fighting in France. In the summer of 1918, Ocie and Violet moved to Eveleth so Ocie could work for the mining company.

Meanwhile, George learned that his sister, Mary Anne Esther, had been killed in a war related accident called the Halifax Explosion. On December 6, 1917, the city of Halifax was devastated by the huge detonation of the *SS Mont-Blanc*, a French Cargo

ship loaded with wartime explosives, which collided with the Norwegian *SS Imo* in Halifax Harbor. About 2,000 people were killed and 9,000 more injured in the explosion and the fires and building collapses that followed. Mary Anne Esther's daughter and granddaughter were seriously injured in the same tragic accident.

In September, 1918, a flu pandemic hit Minnesota and the entire world. Killing 12,000 in Minnesota, it hit most families, and primarily the younger generation. Doctors had few options but bed rest and fluids. George, Jr. and his wife Mabel were both very sick, as was Pearl, and for a time it was doubtful that George would survive. Ocie Peck's sister, Spray Peck, was among the casualties.

Just when the flu was taking its toll, another fire causing the greatest disaster in Minnesota history occurred. The Cloquet/Moose Lake fires in October of 1918 swept through a large area of Minnesota, including parts of Pine County. About 500 people died in this fire, another 11,000 lost their homes, and 2,100 persons were treated for injuries. This fire had a tremendous impact on the people, including George Foley, who almost lost his farm buildings again and was traumatized. By this time, George was also having health problems though still very busy.

Violet noted the excitement of November 11, 1918 when armistice was declared and the family then waited eagerly for Bill and Dick to return home. Bill appeared back at the family home on May 25, 1919 and Dick finally got home in July. Both Bill and Dick went back to work at Eveleth again and boarded with Violet and Ocie Peck. Pearl was also in Eveleth attending high school and then returned to Finlayson to work as a telephone operator.

The Downey's moved to Deerwood, Minnesota, Dave's home town, in 1919. Another tragedy happened as Dave's father, Robert Downey, was helping him clear land and was killed while blasting stumps, always a danger for persons trying to clear land in those days. In April, 1920, Mrs. Carmen, who had been like a family member to the Foley's, died at Finlayson.

Meanwhile, the three Foley sons were concerned for George after the Cloquet fire and decided it was time to get him away from Finlayson. They acquired land for George and Annabelle at Kelliher, where most of the Foley family now lived, and built them a new house and barn. In July, 1920, Bill left Eveleth to go to Kelliher with George while Dick went home to help with the haying. George and Annabelle moved to Kelliher in October, 1920, after 26 years in Finlayson. The folks at Finlayson had a big party and dance for them before they left. Pearl went to Kelliher with them and they also took Jeneveve Beeman to live with them. In November, George had surgery to repair bladder problems and was bedridden for a time. Bill was living with his parents in the summer of 1921 when he was injured in a hunting accident. He heard a wolf howl and jumped on a log to see it, but the shotgun slipped off the log, shooting his thumb off, breaking three fingers, and piercing his cheek, which had to have stitches.

Violet described her parents' new home as a nice little house with a big screened in porch where the family ate and Bill slept. By 1921, all members of the Foley family were living in Kelliher except Pearl, who was now in Minneapolis. That summer, Violet noted that Susan and Dave Downey had "a nice little bungalow" and "George and Mabel's house is certainly nice." Dick bought some furniture for his new house as he was about to be married. Pearl was working as a nurse at the Veteran's Hospital in Minneapolis married a severely wounded veteran in November of that year. Jack Srok

had come to the United States from Yugoslavia to avoid being drafted by the Germans in World War I, fought in five major battles, and was wounded with a bayonet in hand to hand fighting and also had head wounds from shrapnel and had been exposed to mustard gas. Soon Pearl and Jack acquired 80 acres near the Foley farms which Jack was busy clearing. The social life of the Foleys continued to center on the family getting together frequently, especially for holidays, so much so that people of the area thought of them as clannish.

It must have been difficult for George and Annabelle to start over with farm life at an advanced age; yet life at Kelliher was quite similar to that at Finlayson. This was a recently cut over area of beautiful pine where George again faced the task of clearing and breaking farm land. One day Violet noted that her father had gone to Shooks with a team of horses to pick up lumber while she had accompanied Bill to town with a horse and buggy. The family was busy picking wild fruits and berries. In 1922, Annabelle canned over 70 quarts of wild strawberries, lots of raspberries and cherry jelly. Bill had helped his parents get settled on the farm and in 1922 returned to Eveleth to work in the mines.

Jack and Pearl Srok's first baby, born at Kelliher on January 10, 1923, died the next day. The local store had coffins only for adults so Pearl's brother, George, made a little pine coffin and Violet cut up her white satin wedding dress to line it. George drove a horse and cutter through the blowing snow while his father sat with the little wooden coffin on his lap as members of the family headed to the Kelliher cemetery. Pearl recalled how her father had always taken care of the cemetery graves for his daughters at Sandstone, decorating the graves with geraniums and a white wooden cross. She remembered that her father would buy a snack for the trip home as the horses plodded slowly along the road pulling an old lumber wagon.

George and Annabelle's time at Kelliher would be short because cancer ended George's life on September 16, 1926. During his illness, his brother Richard from Chicago and his sister Helene (Savoie) from Campbellton, New Brunswick, came for a visit. This was likely the first time that George had seen his sister since he left Canada at age 17. Helene would only have spoken French, which was okay because George reverted mostly to his native French language at the end of his life. Bill was back with his parents to help at this time and recalled calling the priest from Blackduck to visit at his father's request. George was buried in Kelliher. Sometime after George's death, Annabelle accompanied Richard Foley for a visit with the Foley (Fallu) relatives in Quebec and New Brunswick, bringing back pictures of the homes and church which were part of her husband's childhood. Annabelle moved back to Duluth soon after the death of her husband.

Because farming conditions at Kelliher were difficult, some members of the family left the area after a few years. The next generation George and his wife, Mabel, lived in Duluth and other cities, including time in California during World War II where George served as a watchman. Susan and Dave Downey farmed at Kelliher for a few years and ended up farming in Superior, Wisconsin. Susan continued the Foley tradition of hospitality while raising a family four children. Richard and Teresa Foley returned to a farm in Finlayson after their children were born. Richard was active in community affairs while working as a farmer. Richard's health was compromised by being exposed to mustard gas in France during World War I and he ended up in ill health the last ten

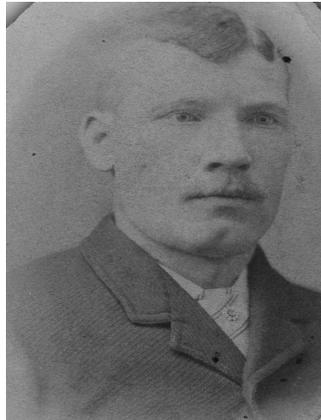
years of his life. Pearl and Jack Srok farmed for eight years at Kelliher and then moved to Duluth. In 1951 they moved to Chino, California because of Jack's health problems, where Pearl worked as a private duty nurse and Jack worked as a stationary engineer for Orange Exchange. After Jack died in 1967, Pearl moved back to Minnesota, where she married George Goebel, a man she had been engaged to before meeting Jack, and this marriage lasted over seven years before George died of a heart attack. Pearl then moved to Park Rapids, where she ended up living with her son Jack and his wife Marge after an illness, then two years later moved back to Kelliher for twelve years before moving on to spend her last days with her son Tom and his wife Nyla on a lake near the Appalachian Mountains at Waleska, Georgia, where she died at age 99 in 2002.



George and Annabelle Foley's Family. Back Row: William, Pearl, Violet, Richard.  
Front Row: George Jr, George, Annabelle, Susan



House where George Foley grew up



Grandpa George Foley



Red Cross Nurse



Bill Foley, WWI



Richard Foley, WWI



WW I, Bill, Sue and George Foley



35<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary,  
George and Annabelle Foley



George Foley after house in Finlayson burned



Bill, Sadie Carmen, Dick, Pearl



Pearl and Sue Foley



Another generation ending



3 Brothers: William Fallu and Anne Letourneau,  
George/Annabelle, Richard and Margaret Meehan



Charlie Willis WWI



The Foleys, 1954: Richard, Pearl, Violet,  
George Jr, Susan, William



Christmas 1918, Grandpa hauls the  
Christmas tree



Killing the Christmas goose



George with Pearl & Susan



Grandma and Pearl



Richard Laviolette Foley Family, Chicago



Four Generations: Ardyce (Haglin), Clarence David Haglin,  
Susan Downey, Annabelle Foley



3 generations George  
Foley



Annabelle Willis Foley



Violet, George & parents



Richard and Violet Foley



George and Mabel Foley



Dick and Tress Foley, Dave and Sue Downey



The Jack Srok Family



Downey Family: Lyle, David, Roy, Ardyce, Susan, Delphine



John Moser and Annabelle



Susan Downey's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday

Max Perras and Nellie Toulouse both came to Red Lake County as children accompanying their parents. By the 1885 census, Max was no longer listed with the Perras family. At age fifteen, he had gone off to work near Red Lake Falls for 50 cents a week, later migrated to the wheat fields of North Dakota for harvesting, then went on to work in the gold mines of Montana, and finally headed west to Washington state to work in the logging camps.

Soon after Max returned from working in the west, he met Nellie Toulouse and the couple were married at Terrebonne in 1894 by Rev. J. Roy. When the federal government opened more land for homesteading at Lambert in 1895, Max and Nellie settled on a farm near the Toulouse family in Lambert Township, where the 1895 census lists Max as age 25 and Nellie age 20. By the 1900 census, they had added three children to the family: Nellie, Ester, and Maximillian. Max likely shared his time with other French Canadians at Lambert as they built a church completed in 1898.

Max and Nellie lived in a log cabin, where they gave birth to seven of their eight children. Their daughter Ester died of diphtheria as a five year old child. Max farmed during the summer months and traded with the Red Lake Indians in the winter, hauling loads of beef and pork by sled for the local telephone company in exchange for telephone poles. He also brought back fence posts which he sold to local farmers. The climate and location of this region added a pioneer experience in which hardship and struggle persisted, causing some farmers to sell their lands and move to Yakima, Washington, where small farms were thriving in irrigated fruit country. The Lambert area experienced crop failures between 1905 and 1908. Max supplemented his income by working as township assessor in the early 1900s, getting paid about thirty dollars annually. By 1906 he was also bonded as the town clerk, which added a few more dollars to his income. Max's notes in the Lambert records are interesting, done in small, beautiful handwriting rather than as the scribbled notes of other town clerks. At the 1907 town meeting, Max asked the board to appoint his replacement as a town clerk since he intended to leave the town of Lambert in the near future. What his plans were is uncertain.

Perhaps Max had ideas of moving to Yakima, Washington, as many of his neighbors and relatives were doing. A massive second move of Canadians who had settled in Polk and Red Lake Counties occurred in the 25 years between 1895 and 1920, encouraged by French Canadians like George LaBissioniere, who, after farming and serving as town clerk and county commissioner at Red Lake Falls, had left the area for Washington, perhaps tired of the harsh weather, low grain prices, and bad harvests. The Northern Pacific Railroad promoted this emigration through publicity and by making land available in the Yakima area. Max and Nellie had relatives in this group of sojourners to Washington, with names such as LaChance and Patnode, who through their correspondence were encouraging others to migrate.

Education of their children was always important to the Perrases. During their years on the farm, Max also served as clerk of the Lambert school. Perhaps a sign of the changing scene at Lambert, the township purchased the old Lambert school in 1907 to serve as a township hall.

After Max's father, Vital, died in 1896, his mother moved to Red Lake Falls with the children who remained at home. Red Lake Falls was now a growing community, which shortly after the turn of the century had four flour mills, a large lumber yard, four grain elevators, twelve saloons and, in 1902, the Sisters of St. Benedict opened St. Joseph's School with 150 students. When Max's mother, Marguerite, died of pneumonia in 1911, Max's blind brother, Romuald, came to live with Max and Nellie.

The early pioneers thought first of feeding and clothing their own families from the produce of their farms and usually had only a bit of produce to sell. But by the time Max started farming, farmers were devoting more of their energy and production for outside markets and now also purchased goods for their family from nearby stores or mail order houses. Farming methods were changing, demanding more acres of land and more horse drawn equipment, which also led to a surplus of farm products. Despite periods of hard times on the farm, life was in many ways becoming easier. Max and Nellie were raising their family in a nice two story house. The railroad and rural telephones had lessened the isolation of scattered farms. In the 1910 census, Max was listed as a grain and stock farmer.

The Soo Line railroad came through Brooks in 1904. Before the railroad, the only building in Brooks was the saloon, but land values boomed after the railroad arrived and buildings came up quickly in Brooks. By the time the main business section of town on Main Street burned in 1918, Brooks had become a prosperous little farming community with two general stores, a grocery store, bank, hardware store, butcher shop, blacksmith shop, livery barn, lumber yard, community hall, a good sized hotel and two saloons.

To the north, the town of Plummer was also growing and Catholic settlers built a church there in 1913. Meanwhile, the community of Lambert began to fade as some of the settlers moved on. In 1910, there were 16 buildings on the Lambert town site, but that year, two of the stores and the post office were moved to Oklee. When the parish at Lambert was divided into two in 1916, the Lambert church and rectory were moved to Oklee. Some of the other businesses and homes were also moved to Oklee in 1917.

Max had already been trading with the Indians and local farmers and must have seen an even greater opportunity in trading with the area farmers, so he and Romuald bought the Brooks Hardware from the Hunt Brothers in 1911. Noting that an implement repair and dealership would be added, the Red Lake Falls Gazette reported in April, 1911, that "the purchasers are Max and Romuald Perras and the new proprietors are now in possession. Perras brothers are well and favorably known in Brooks and will probably enjoy the good business the store has enjoyed in the past. Frank Cyr, who has been a faithful clerk at the store for years, will remain with Mr. Perras." The next issue of the Gazette stated that Max Perras had moved his family to Brooks, renting a house formerly owned by A. E. Sorenson. Max likely recognized the growing demand for new farm machinery like mowers, dump rakes, and reapers, which also required purchase of more parts for maintenance than farmers' previous equipment. Travel was still limited, which meant farmers would need to depend on local merchants to serve their needs. Many of the farm families were French-Canadian, and Max's bilingual skills would serve him well.

Max quickly took an active role in community affairs in Brooks, serving as clerk of Poplar River Township and as a member of the school board. When the Lambert church was moved to Oklee, the parish of Brooks, consisting of about 90 families, was

carved out of the parishes of Lambert and Terrebonne. Max had been treasurer of St. Francis Church in Lambert and, at a general meeting on August 16, 1916, F.J. Demonaz and Max Perras were elected trustees of the new parish. Max was on the building committee when a church was erected in 1917 and a rectory in 1922.

Max and Nellie continued their interest in education, sending four daughters to board at St. Joseph's Academy in Crookston so they could attend high school. Three daughters later attended teachers' college in Bemidji and Rose and Alma taught for a number of years until they married. Son Max went off to Union Commercial College in Grand Forks, North Dakota, became an accountant, and worked at first at the Red Lake County State Bank in Red Lake Falls. Raymond went to high school at Techny, Illinois, for three years and then lived with his brother Max in Virginia, Minnesota, to finish high school. Ray then helped his father in the hardware store until he took a job for ten dollars a week at the Red Lake County State Bank in 1934, when he was preparing to marry Hazel Noyes at the height of the Great Depression. Evelyn then became her father's main helper in the hardware store, as Florence was away serving for a time as a priest's housekeeper, but when Florence returned to Brooks at the beginning of 1935, she became the principle clerk.

After World War I, two returning servicemen, Benjamin "Harry" Hallas and Ray Vague, opened a gas station at Brooks. Harry's family had moved from Nobles County to Red Lake County to homestead. Max and Nellie's oldest child, Nellie Mae, married Harry at Brooks in 1923. Harry later drove a delivery truck as bulk oil agent for Standard Oil. Nellie supplemented their income by working as a cook at the school and meeting trains at the local depot while raising six children. After teaching at Gentilly, Rose Perras married Frank Corbin, a local farmer whose parents had come from Winona County to homestead at Gentilly. In time, Frank, Rose, and their son, Francis, all ended up in the state of Washington. Rose married a second time to Lou Wall. The Perrases provided a home for Romuald until he went to live at the Little Sisters of the Poor residence in St. Paul for the last four months prior to his death at age 73 in 1925.

For many years, the Perras' family living quarters were above the hardware store. A community pump in the street near the hardware provided water which the family carried upstairs for cooking and laundry. Behind the store was a woodshed and outhouse. Years later, when I visited my grandparents as a nine year old, I remember grandfather sitting in the outhouse with the door open so he could read the newspaper.

The hardware business was never easy for Max. When the Brooks fire of 1918 destroyed eight buildings on the opposite side of Main Street, including the Demonaz store, the heat was so intense that it shattered every window at the hardware and First State Bank. The United States was pulled into World War I not long after Max bought the hardware store and, at first, trade in farm products boomed as other countries looked to the United States for food and supplies. American families were urged to cut their own use of wheat, meats, and other foodstuffs and to raise Victory Gardens, and wheat prices jumped from one dollar to three dollars per bushel.

After the war, farmers were confident that the Twenties would be prosperous. However, the bottom dropped out on the agricultural market and farmers found themselves with large surpluses which they could not sell at prices to meet their overhead. The growth in farm population slowed down after World War I and then declined in large numbers in the 1920s. Between December 1919 and December 1920,

wheat prices dropped from \$2.15 to \$1.44 per bushel. Prices for other crops were also falling, and by 1923 wheat sold for 84 cents per bushel. The prices farmers had to pay for machinery and supplies after the war were much higher while the income for crops was declining. Taxes were also high. Those who had bought land found it very difficult to make interest and principal payments; many of the smaller farmers lost their farms through mortgage foreclosures or sold and even abandoned them. Many rural banks failed in the period from 1921 to 1929, depriving farmers of whatever savings they did have. Farmers in those days did not have ready cash and extended their credit as far as possible to avoid going to the bank to borrow money at the customary rate of ten or twelve percent. When their crop was sold, farmers paid their bill, but no harvest meant continuing to run up the bill for another year and, when farmers did go to the bank for a loan, many were turned down. At this time farmers did not yet have electricity to utilize such new technologies as refrigeration and milking machines that were becoming available. Mail order catalogues coming to every home offered to send supplies such as paints and horse harnesses directly to the farms. Farmers were making the transition in the 1920's from horse-drawn machinery to steel wheeled tractors. As the 1920's ended, the use of automobiles began to connect farm families to area towns, changing the lives of farmers and of small town businesses like the Brooks Hardware.

## THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The stock market crash in October, 1929, marked a fall into the greatest depression in world history. Tragically, farmers, who had shared very little of the prosperity of the twenties, were particularly hard hit as the depression changed the lives of farmers, including those of Northwestern Minnesota. At first, farmers tried desperately to maintain their already low income despite falling prices by producing a bigger surplus, even though demands for their products were declining. Weather played its part too; there was a terrible drought in all of 1932 to 1934, and an even more severe seven year drought began in the summer of 1934. Much of the wheat crop was destroyed. When the dryness and heat as well as grasshopper invasions destroyed the crops, farmers were left with no money to buy groceries and farm equipment let alone to make farm payments.

The roots of the depression on farms actually began in the 1920s when low prices for farm products led many farmers to borrow money to fill the void or to buy improved equipment, especially tractors and trucks. In the spring of 1933, farm products brought only 40 percent of the 1926 level, when prices had already been low. Rye prices were the lowest in 30 years. By 1932, farmers were getting 38.3 cents per bushel for wheat and wheat prices later dropped to 25 cents, forcing farmers to leave their crops in the field because the cost of harvest was more than the crops were worth, or to use their crop for animal feed as this was more efficient than hauling it to the market. Meat, however, was a luxury for most Americans and beef and pork prices fell to the point where the farmer sometimes got less money for his livestock than it cost to ship the livestock to market. Eggs, at one point, sold for three cents per dozen. While some folks were returning to the land, where they could raise their own food to survive, many farmers

were also losing their land as small rural banks closed and the banks which had not closed began to demand the repayment of loans which many farmers could not repay. The bank which had opened in Brooks in 1920 closed in 1933. After the First State Bank in Red Lake Falls closed in October, 1931, the Red Lake Falls Gazette finally reported in 1933 that the depositors got a ten percent payment on their deposits. That October, the Gazette noted that millions of acres were going back to the state as tax delinquent lands, with 48,730 acres in Red Lake County scheduled to revert to the state. Many of the young men left the farm to work in President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal government programs like the Civilian Conservation Corps or programs to build roads and bridges. Others left for the cities. Before long, many Americans were living in shacks put up with whatever people could find and scrounging around in garbage cans for food and fuel. Homeless unemployed men were drifting across America riding the rails looking for work and food any place they could find it. Americans were upset when President Roosevelt reduced crop production acreage to enhance crop prices in a time of hunger.

Most farm families did not have money to buy new clothes or supplies let alone farm machinery. Women mended socks and patched clothing, while the younger children got hand-me-downs. Families used the flour and feed sacks they brought home to make clothing and the companies selling their products in these sacks soon caught on and put patterns on the sacks as an incentive for families to buy their specific products. Barter increasingly took the place of money transactions; government surplus foods came concealed in unmarked containers soon recognized by everyone, but folks were embarrassed and tried to hide these food products as they brought them home.

Many farmers could not make payments for any machinery they had purchased. The railroads owned the grain elevators and were charging high shipping fees. Like other Americans who were giving up during the depression, farm families started to migrate west to California or Washington in the hopes they could find work on large farms or as day laborers to survive the difficult times. I remember Evelyn Perras relating that her father had lots of unpaid debts for machinery and repair parts sold on credit to local farmers. Max's income from the hardware store must have been very meager; he could do some bartering for milk, butter, eggs and meat to feed his family but he had no way to replenish hardware supplies unless most customers paid cash. Florence noted on January 16, 1936 that the store was quiet, with only one or two dollars worth of sales that day.

With Florence watching the store, Max was able to travel to pick up repairs or to attend hardware conventions, machinery shows and county fairs. Auction sales were frequent and Max seems to have attended most of them; at other times he was busy setting up binders and other machinery. Florence noted the sale of two binders in 1936 and another two in 1937 along with two frigidaires. In 1937, Florence noted that Max had bought a new two door Lafayette. She also noted that many horses in the area were dying of sleeping sickness. Meanwhile, Florence was busy meeting salesmen, writing orders and business letters, selling fishing and hunting licenses, collecting light bills for the community, pumping gasoline, setting up such displays as one of Aladdin lamps, and caring for customers' need for twine and other supplies. She had also taken over writing the Brooks news for the Red Lake Falls Gazette.

The Perrases kept close contact with Louis Boire after Max's sister, Alexandria Perras, died, and they then raised Alexandria's daughter Rose Boire; my mother talked of "Uncle Louis Boire" as part of the family. The Red Lake Falls Gazette reported on January 4, 1934:

"Louis Boire of Brooks, age 87 and one of the pioneers of Red Lake County, died Thursday of a heart attack. Louis came to Minnesota in 1879 and took a homestead in Poplar River Township. In 1881, he married Angele LaChance and of this union two children were born, Joseph, of Bruce, Wisconsin, and Napoleon, who died in infancy. Angele died August 14, 1884. In 1887, he married a second time to Alexine Perras. Of this union three children were born, Mrs. Alex Gackowski surviving and the other two died in infancy. Active until the time of his death, he died splitting wood and was discovered by his daughter, Rose Gackowski, when she called him for lunch. He was still standing but she noticed he was in distress and called for help." (Obviously, the call for help was too late to save Louis' life.)

The Gackowski's opened a restaurant in Red Lake Falls during the depression. Florence noted that Miggs (Marguerite) Gackowski entered the Crookston Benedictines in 1936 and made her first vows in 1937. The Gackowski's Knotted Pine Inn in Red Lake Falls burned in August, 1937. 1936 and 1937 were busy as well because Laura Ann Hallas was gravely ill with what Florence called "heart rheumatism." Laura spent considerable time at the University of Minnesota hospital and her parents made trips back and forth to be with her. Laura died at age eight on June 16, 1937.

Although times were tough, Florence and the Perras family managed a fairly busy social schedule. Without television, radio provided entertainment as they listened to boxing championship fights and baseball World Series. Card games were frequent. Florence had a couple men friends with whom she went to movies several times in most weeks or to watch Ray play baseball for the local team. She received and wrote letters almost daily, hurrying often to mail them as the Flyer made its brief stop at the Brooks depot. The Perrases had frequent visitors at their home and traveled to visit relatives around northern Minnesota or to attend church bazaars and community plays. Florence made a long list of relatives visited when she and several members of the family drove west to Washington in 1936.

## WORLD WAR II

The Great Depression lasted throughout the 1930s; however, the farmers' lesson in frugality which led to their tendency to save everything would continue to be useful for many years. The Roosevelt administration had been trying to help farmers through the Agricultural Adjustment Act, which sought to raise farm prices by paying farmers to produce less and to retire excess acres, but it had not yet helped the average farmer very much. Production did not stop and the 1937 crop built the largest surplus ever. Then the United States was pulled into World War II and life changed again on the farm. Most farm families who had to put up with hardships in the 1930s now had to put up with more hardships during the war. In the 1930s people did without because they didn't have money to buy food and clothing; now there was a greater demand for farm products

as the American farmers shouldered the load of feeding much of the world and not just those on the home front in the "Food for Defense" program, but farmers also faced rationing of rubber, gasoline, and many other products as well as loss of the younger generation of farm help. Since farm production was vital to the war effort, farmers got extra rations of gasoline and other staples; yet the mood in the United States was "If you don't need it, don't buy it" or "wear it out, make do," so hardware retailers like Max Perras continued to suffer from lack of sales. It was very difficult to get new machinery and appliances as factories turned out jeeps rather than trucks, tractors, or hay rakes. Even though farmers were producing more, their income was limited when the U.S. government put price ceilings on farm products, and the rising cost of farm supplies absorbed much of any increased income. Farmers participated readily in drives to collect household fats to make glycerin for explosives; readily adding copper, rubber, and aluminum to the scrap iron drives as they emptied their farmyard groves of discarded machinery. In 1940 only one-fourth of Minnesota farms had electricity. Those where the Rural Electrification lines had already been established began to set up their own repair shops with electric welders and other tools rather than head for town to purchase new parts, even if they were available.

Through these hard times, Max continued to be very devoted to his hardware business and his customers. For convenience of the farmers, he would open the store before and after church on Sundays. He would lock the door just on time to get to church services, where folks joked that Mass could start when Max had arrived. After church services, he hurried home to open up for any customers in need. Max would miss supper with his family to keep the hardware open, and then would eat by himself while one of the children watched the store. Many of the farmers spoke French with Max and, although the Perras children did not all learn the French language, they understood enough to help customers in the store. In the evenings, Max would leave the door open in case someone needed machinery parts, binder twine, or paint. I remember seeing him sitting alone at the top of the stairs leading to the store, listening for anyone who might come for supplies while he played solitaire and enjoyed a beer or a chew of tobacco. His spittoon sat on the floor next to his card table. His asthma attacks must often have left him very tired.

During store hours Max was often busy assembling machinery that arrived at Brooks in parts. He rented a building next to the hardware to store supplies, but the hardware was also crammed from floor to ceiling with paint, tools, parts, horse collars and even caskets. Max traveled quite a bit to purchase supplies for the store. As a kid, I was impressed by how fast he seemed to drive his car, so he must have been frustrated during World War II when the speed limit for cars was 35 miles per hour and everywhere one saw signs warning "Is this trip really necessary?"

During the war years, Evelyn continued to be her father's helper in the hardware store. Florence was now working in Red Lake Falls and her plans in 1941 to marry Fred Lang, the principal of the Brooks school, fell through when Fred's army unit was suddenly deployed to California. It appears that Fred backed away from marriage at this time as he was still in California in 1943 and then sent overseas for several years, so their marriage was delayed until 1946. Nellie reviewed the life of the Perras family during World War II in a letter she wrote on October 5, 1943:

“[Yeoman] Ray is stationed in New London, Connecticut, doing office work on the Sub base. On July 21, Florence entered the Crookston Hospital for an operation for a five pound tumor. She was a very sick girl so some of us went to be with her each day, then she also came here for two and a half weeks before going back to work at her office only four hours a day as she tires easily. Rose is teaching again this year five miles from her home. Alma has a baby girl since August 6<sup>th</sup>; she now has two girls and five boys with five children going to school.

“Harry came home last week after being in the hospital nine months. His right arm and hand is pretty bad with neuritis and arthritis in his fingers. He won’t be fit for work for a long time. Nellie has worked all summer; she put in a half acre of garden cultivated all by hand and has canned one thousand quarts of vegetables for the school. She serves the hot noon lunches to three teachers and forty pupils, canning tomatoes and making sauerkraut in the afternoons. She had a most wonderful garden. Nellie’s two oldest girls are five hundred miles from home at St. Nazianz, Wisconsin, both typists in an office. Lowell is in second year high school in Plummer and Patsy and Vincent attend grade school in Brooks.

“I have canned a lot again this year – peas, beans, carrots, corn, beet pickles, sauerkraut, strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, peaches, pears, jellies and jams. Butter and eggs are high and farmers are paying ten cents per bushel for potato pickers. The Crookston High School boys and girls were let out for two weeks to pick spuds as there is such a shortage of help. Wages have been very high for help in the fields with so many called into the army and many men and women gone to defense work.

“Max, Jr., has just maneuvered hard enough that he got back to St. Paul to live again and is still working for the government. Ferne and baby stayed at her Mother’s in La Crosse, Wisconsin, for a couple weeks while he found a house to live in. We are very happy that he could get back there as its home for them. Max is such a proud papa; he was so happy to come home and show us his son. Eve has worked plenty hard doing all she can up and down stairs and for others. She waited on Florence hand and foot while she was home convalescing.”

Nellie’s letter also inquired about relatives who had moved west. “How are Uncle Joe Lachance’s? Joe must be an old and feeble man by now.” (Joe died at Yakima in 1945.) She asked questions about various members of the Jim Miller family who had moved some time after 1920 from Bemidji, Minnesota to Everett, Washington, which was the family of her sister, Jennie Toulouse, adding “So Jim is on the job. He’s too ambitious not to work. Well, he has a good job.”

Nellie and Max were close to the family of her brother, Louis Toulouse, and in this letter, Nellie mentioned that Walter Toulouse was overseas with the army, while Clara Toulouse had recently been to the University of Minnesota hospital for surgery, leaving Louis to care for himself for several weeks. Louis and Clara’s adult children, Tom in Oklee and Frank in Red Lake Falls, were also solicitous for Max and Nellie. Nellie’s sister, Rose, who had first married Eugene Clark and later John McDonald, raised her family in Bemidji.

Max suffered a great loss during the war years when Nellie died of coronary thrombosis due to high blood pressure and generalized arteriosclerosis on August 14, 1944. Max and Nellie had just celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary at Brooks on June 4<sup>th</sup> of that year, which also included a celebration of Bill and Alma Perras Foley's 16<sup>th</sup> anniversary and Ray and Hazel Perras' 8<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Red Lake Falls Gazette stated that "[Nellie] had been in failing health for several years but up and around and doing her housework and canning until Tuesday, the night of the storm which blew in a window and a portion of the roof in the upstairs of the store occupied as the family residence. This was too much of a shock for her condition." Nellie had been a good partner for Max during their years together. She was a hard worker, frugal, patient, gentle, and a person who could manage the children while Max was busy with his hardware business. Guests somehow found a way to be present at mealtimes as Nellie was known for her cooking. She had a strong faith and saw to it that one of the family members rang the Angelus daily at their church.

## FINAL YEARS

America made a swift and sometimes painful transition to a peacetime economy when World War II ended. New technologies emerged during the war that revolutionized farming as the war industries now tried to find civilian uses for these new technologies. Moreover, small town America, where people clung to their roots and stayed within their ethnic and social groups with a sense of security in rural living, had faded into history. Millions of Americans had left their farms and hometowns to work in the war industries or to serve in the military, enjoyed a new sense of freedom, and would not return to their former homes. The war had disrupted community ties and created a new identity beyond the neighborhood or community as Americans. Americans were now much more mobile and America was fast changing from a rural to an urban nation.

Now it was easy for farmers from Brooks to shop in the urban centers for parts and supplies; they would especially look to larger dealerships for tractors, trucks, combines, and other large machinery. As the REA rapidly electrified farms before 1950, folks were likely to leave their small towns to purchase consumer items such as refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, wash machines and lawn mowers. The small town dealerships could not compete with those with more volume. Farm families might stop by for a paintbrush or bolts but not for high cost items. Small towns were fading away as government policy cut out the small farmer, farms grew rapidly in size so there were fewer rural residents, agriculture became less diversified and many farmers eliminated animals altogether so they could leave the harsh Minnesota winters, railroads abandoned small towns, grain elevators closed, and rural schools merged into larger ones. Many of the farmers were supporting their farms by working off the farm, which also took them away from the small town stores for shopping.

In the years prior to World War II, the Red Lake Falls paper often noted that Max Perras had been in town that week on business. Now the rural gravel roads were tar roads and Max and his friends talked about driving on "the pave." Brooks was still a community of folks with a shared culture, and a common response to a question like

“How are you related to Pierre?” often evoked the answer “We’re a little bit cousin!” In reality, most of the French Canadians had come from the same areas and could trace their roots back to shared ancestry. A belief that small town America was the ideal, where everybody knew everybody else and people cared for and helped each other, still existed but this American tradition was fading fast. Folks in the area frequently commented that the greatest resource that northern Minnesota now offered to the rest of the country was not their crops but their youth who migrated to distant urban centers.

Max continued to manage the hardware store with the help of his daughter Evelyn until he sold it to Armand Champagne and Russell Noyes in 1946. Reporting the sale, the Red Lake Falls Gazette noted that both men were from Brooks, where Champagne had farmed for several years and Noyes was recently discharged after serving in the Japanese and Chinese theaters of war, and that Max would remain in Brooks for the time being to help the new proprietors become acquainted. Unfortunately, the conditions just cited would lead to closure of the hardware store several years later.

Max was now 76 years old. Evelyn had been asked to come to Red Lake Falls to work at Sam Hunt’s hardware store, and Max moved with her to an apartment in Red Lake Falls. It was evident that Max had trained Evelyn well in the hardware business as she soon was purchasing agent for the Our Own Hardware Store, valued because she knew the needs of local people, and shared a warm and genuine concern for her customers. When a customer explained a problem in need of a solution, Evelyn usually quickly identified what was needed and knew where to find it in the store. After Evelyn died in 1971, many customers commented that it just did not seem the same in the store anymore and loyal customers frequently went to shop in the other hardware stores in town. Evelyn also served as the first President of the St. Joseph’s Hospital auxiliary in Red Lake Falls.

Max enjoyed his retirement years in Red Lake Falls, walking downtown almost daily while Evelyn was working to play cards and have a beer at a local pool hall/tavern. He could stop at the Red Lake County State Bank on his way to chat with his son, Ray Perras, or stop on his way home at the General Motors garage to see his cousin, George Thibert. He loved his family and took pride in talking about his “boys,” Max, Jr. and Raymond. After his stint in the Navy in World War II, Ray had a career at the Red Lake County State Bank, while his wife, Hazel, worked at the local doctors’ office. Ray, like his father, was very involved in community activities. Max Jr. worked until retirement for the Internal Revenue Service in St. Paul and his wife Fern taught music privately and in a Catholic school. Max and Ferne raised three children, Gregory, Colleen, Geraldine in St. Paul.

Meanwhile, Max’s daughter, Rose Corbin, had moved to Seattle and Florence had married after the war and now lived in Minneapolis, where she worked many years as treasurer at the Minnesota Soldiers’ Home while her husband, Fred, had an outstanding career as a teacher in the Minneapolis Public Schools. He turned away from offers to serve as an administrator to remain in the classroom, where his objective was to give children the beautiful experience of loving to learn. Finishing his teaching career as a kindergarten teacher, Fred was popularly called “Mr. Kindergarten” as it was rare for men to teach at this level. Max’s daughter, Nellie Hallas, was still in Brooks caring for her ailing husband, Harry, who died in 1959, after which she would move to St. Paul to

be near her children. Max died in 1958 and was buried next to his beloved Nellie at the Brooks cemetery.

Max Perras was a second generation immigrant who kept the pioneer tradition of hard work and of helping others alive. A society changing from horses to mechanization along with difficult times for farmers constantly challenged him to find creative ways to meet other's needs and to face new problems. I judge that he was often more concerned about another person's needs than about a sale. I remember him as one who loved to listen to those who came into the store and to share his ideas with them. Max continued the American tradition of deep concern for others and commitment to build a healthy community.



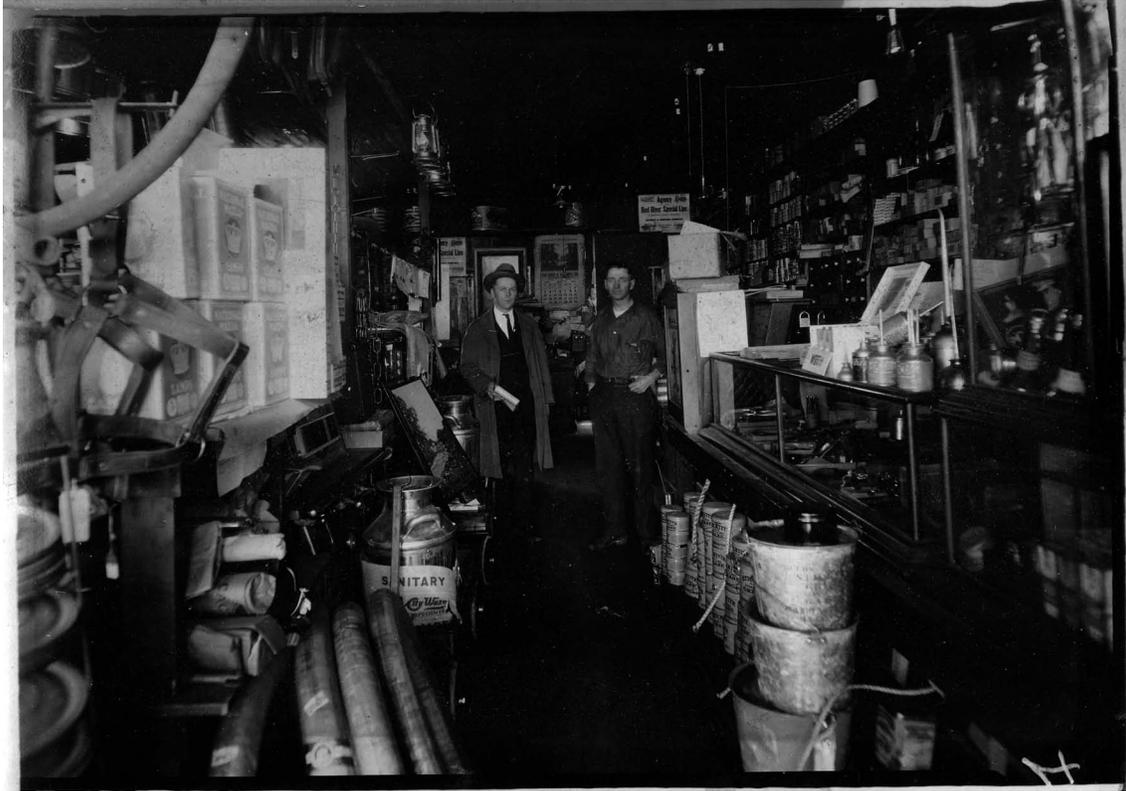
The Perras Family. Top row: Maximillian, Evelyn, Rose, Alma, Raymond. Bottom row: Florence, Max, Nellie, Nellie Ann.



Frank Corbin and Rose Perras



Mr. Kindergarten, Fred Lang



Max Perras' Brooks Hardware Store



4 generations: Peggy Hallas, Susan Kittleson, Max, Nellie



Nellie pumping gas



Max and Nellie's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary  
Rose Gackowski and Louis Toulouse



Fred and Florence Lang with Grandpa Max



Florence Perras, Patricia Hallas,  
Evelyn Perras



Max and Ferne Perras family, Gregory,  
Geraldine, Colleen



Max Perras



Evelyn Perras



Francis Corbin with Rose



Hallas Family: top: Lowell, Mickey, Peggy, Patricia. Bottom: Harry, Vincent, Nellie



Ray and Hazel Perras



Alma Perras- teacher at Gentilly

At the turn of the Twentieth Century, the area around Shooks and Kelliher was still covered with virgin forests of white and Norway pine and red cedar, claimed by some to have been the most beautiful stand of evergreen in Minnesota. The Crookston Lumber Company built a logging camp at Shooks in 1898 and another logging camp and store south of Bullhead Lake, later Kelliher, in 1902, the year before the railroad reached Kelliher, beginning a rapid harvest of timber and soon altering the landscape to pine stumps and new growths of poplar and birch. From 1907 to 1921, the north side of Bullhead Lake was an extensive cedar yard and more cedar products were shipped from Kelliher than any other place. This was the last area of virgin timber in Northern Minnesota to be logged, with the harvest reaching its peak in 1916 and ending in 1923, the period when the Foley clan and many other settlers came to homestead on the cutover lands in Shooks Township and the surrounding area. The timber companies and railroads were anxious to sell their cutover land to get it off their tax rolls and, perhaps unwisely, the state publicized the advantages of farming on cutover land.

Kelliher became a boom town after 1904 and by 1910 had ten saloons, hotels, stores, gambling halls, churches and schools. When an opera house was dedicated at Kelliher in 1916, the town had about 700 residents plus about 2000 lumberjacks and growing numbers of farmers in the hinterlands. 1,734 carloads of timber were shipped from Kelliher in January, 1914, a monthly figure typical for the eight years of logging prosperity. Shooks had also grown once the railroad passed through, soon boasting a depot, hotel, town hall, and store, with a post office added in 1912, a school in 1914, and a Catholic church in 1923 after fire destroyed the church in Kelliher.

As logging ceased, many lumberjacks had no place to continue their occupation and stayed to homestead in the region, joining the settlers coming to claim land of their own, likely unaware of the difficulties they would face in clearing the land of pine stumps and rocks to open fields. By the time most got land opened and cattle herds built up, the United States was deep into an agricultural recession and soon a major depression. Members of the Foley family came with the intention of farming but soon realized that clearing the land by hand and trying to survive on 160 acres was a path to ongoing poverty so they began to abandon their claims in the 1920s. Many other settlers hung onto their claims, knowing that no place offered much better economic conditions at the moment and that marginal farming at least let them eke out a subsistence that offered an abundance of game and fish, wild fruits and berries, and some chance to supplement their income by cutting pulpwood, cedar or firewood on their property or heading to the woods in the winter to earn a meager support for their families.

#### BILL AND ALMA FOLEY

George Foley died of cancer on the farm at Kelliher in 1926. His son William, my father, had returned from the mines at Eveleth to help his parents on the farm and managed the farm after his father's death. Alma Perras had graduated after three years at St. Joseph's Academy in Crookston, where she was co-captain of the baseball team and

active in school affairs. She then attended Teachers' College in Bemidji, where she made a lot of friends with whom she would be active prior to her marriage. Alma taught in rural schools including Riverside school near Bemidji, at Gentilly with her sister Rose and, after Rose married Frank Corbin, at Tamarac school between Stephen and Argyle, and then ended her teaching career at Shooks from 1926 to 1928. Living at the Henry Dahlstuhl home near Shooks, Alma drove her own car, arrived at school early to do such janitorial chores as carrying water, sweeping floors, shoveling snow, and starting a fire in the wood stove, as well as purchasing books and supplies and teaching eight grades of school. When Alma agreed to direct a community play at Shooks, some folks suggested Bill Foley for the lead role, so she wrote him a letter asking that he come to talk to her about the play. Bill not only won the lead role in the play, but he played the lead role in Alma's life from then on until her death in 1981. At Bill's proposal of marriage, Alma stated that she would not marry someone who was not Catholic, to which Bill responded "But I am a Catholic," surprising Alma that he had taken instructions from Father Trudeau and joined the church without telling her.

My parents, Bill and Alma, married at Brooks on June 4, 1928, over the objections of Dad's mother, Belle, who wrote to Mom: "...I will try to come but you know how I feel about Bill being married. I just can't get over it although I know it is awful selfish and he is getting up in years but I have had him to myself so long it makes it that much harder and then losing my husband so recently it sure breaks me all up now. Alma, don't think it is anything about you I don't like, for if an angel from heaven came down to take him I would feel the same for he is one of the best boys a mother ever had." Married women could not teach at this time so Mom's contract at Shooks ended and, even though she dreamed for years of returning to teaching some day, the responsibilities for her large family would prevent this.

Dad and Mom headed off in Alma's car for Arizona, California, Oregon, and ultimately for Yakima, Washington for their honeymoon as Alma had relatives there, and ended up staying in Washington for more than a year when Bill found employment in a shipyard at Hoquiam, Washington, the hometown of Alex and Rose Gackowski, Mom's godmother, at a time when farming income was hitting a new low. Pictures show them visiting with Alma's aunts Jennie, Mattie, Eunice, and Rose as well as many cousins. Alma's close friend during her years of teaching, Mary Williams, was also living in Washington and Bill and Alma visited with her. When their first child, William (Billie), was born in Hoquiam on March 12, 1929, Dad came home from the night shift and wrote excitedly to Alma's parents, "I sure was surprised when I came home and learned I was papa to an 8 lb. 1 oz. son. Was not long getting up to see the family I'll tell the world." Likely they planned to stay in Washington but, not long after Billie was born, Bill and Alma moved back to Duluth, Minnesota at the urging of Grandma Foley because Bill's brother, George, had been seriously injured in an accident, and Bill found work in a match factory.

When Dad was laid off at the match factory, he and Alma moved back to the farm at Kelliher, where they could at least eke out a survival and, fortunate or not, a severe draught over much of the United States led the government to send cattle north for feeding. In the summer of 1933, Dad worked as a cowboy, riding a white work horse to graze a herd of cattle along Battle River. Several thousand cattle had been brought by rail to Kelliher from the "Dust Bowl" and local farmers were paid one dollar a month per

head to care for them. When the New Deal created jobs for young men, Bill joined the Civilian Conservation Corps and worked on the Iron Range of Minnesota in a reforestation project. The CCC wages were thirty dollars a month, of which twenty-five dollars was sent directly home to the worker's family. As a small child, I remember Dad coming home for a weekend visit, rocking his infant daughter Mary on his lap while singing "My little girl, you know I love you and I long for you each day," happy to be home for the moment but realizing he needed to head back to the CCC camp again so his family could be fed. On the Iron Range, Dad was also busy picking wild blueberries, always in a hurry, which meant family members had to sort the leaves from the blueberries Dad sent home in dynamite boxes. Isolated at the end of a farm road without a car, no longer surrounded by members of the Foley family as they already had left their homesteads, Alma cared for the children, raising a garden in the summer, canning and storing food for the winter, and depending on occasional help from the neighbors. In her years as a school teacher, Alma had taken pictures with her box camera, continued to do so occasionally now, but never with money to get the film developed. Bill had sold his herd of thirteen milk cows for \$100 before heading west to Washington, fortunate perhaps for Alma, who had not grown up on a farm or cared for farm animals but had become a good cook, baker and homemaker while providing for herself in the teaching years.

When Dad left the Civilian Conservation Corps, he returned home, gradually getting back into farming, able occasionally to sell some wood products off the farm and to exchange farm work with neighbors. For a time we did not have a car and I remember my excitement as a small child when Dad came home with an older used car. With need for more open crop land, Dad spent almost every summer evening blasting pine stumps, pulling up the roots with horses, and burning stump piles. As he began to build up a herd of milk cows, he soon was paying more for each cow than the price he received for his entire herd a few years earlier. The old log barn with a haymow was torn down when I was fairly small, and our cattle barn afterwards was the lean-to previously attached to the barn. If machinery or equipment wore out or broke down, money was lacking to replace it. These continued to be subsistence years, growing a bit of wheat that Dad would haul to a mill in Bemidji and exchange for the year's supply of flour, hauling cream to Kelliher one cream can every few days, and quickly spending any income for groceries to feed the growing family. The family size grew quickly with Jerry (1932), Mary (1933), Larry (1934), Raymond (1937), Michael (1939), Patricia (1943) and Alan (1946), all still growing up in a two bedroom home. About the time that Alan was born, my brother Bill directed the construction of two more rooms to our house, a bedroom for the girls and a kitchen.

Life in the Foley household was typical for frontier families at this time. Dad built benches for family meals, and a double bunk bed for his sons, who slept on straw tick mattresses, wore mostly hand-me-down clothes, and went barefoot all summer. We children learned at an early age to work and to feel good that we were needed, weeding the garden, milking cows, using a cream separator to save the cream while feeding the skim milk to calves and pigs, churning butter from cream in a large glass jar bounced on our knees, hauling the family water supply in a pail that sat in the kitchen with a dipper for drinking, rocking a new baby, feeding the chickens, sheep, and other farm animals. Fortunately, our area was rich in wild fruits and berries, such as plums, cranberries, chokecherries, raspberries, blueberries, and Juneberries, which we learned to harvest at

an early age for Mom to turn into jams, jellies, and sauce for winter use. In the depression and war years, our garden was a major source of sustenance even though we had a relatively short growing season. As children, we often ate fresh vegetables at the garden, such as a stalk of rhubarb or a carrot or radish wiped on our overalls. After a summer of fresh vegetables, much of our food supply was canned vegetables, fruits, eggs and meats, sauerkraut made in a five gallon crock, potatoes, turnips, and carrots stored in a root cellar under the house which flooded every spring. Canning was a lot of work, but a special time as we helped wash empty jars, then Mom checked each one by running her finger around the rim to be sure it was smooth enough to seal properly, placed the jars filled with whole tomatoes, corn cut off the cob, beans, or pickles in a large canner on the woodstove, and finally sealed them. For a few weeks there were tantalizing rows of jars on the counter filled with vegetables or with halved peaches, pears, and apricots that Mom canned by the crate. Our family could not afford to eat what beef was available from our herd, needing to sell whatever livestock possible for survival, so we often ate venison, much of it that mother had canned as patties buried in tallow. While we shared most tasks, each of us had our own chores, with mine feeding the chickens and hauling armloads of firewood into the house from a pile that each fall seemed enormous but disappeared over winter.

Life wasn't all work, of course, as we enjoyed a rare treat of homemade ice cream or a watermelon for the Fourth of July, a cool drink of homemade root beer chilled in the icehouse once or twice a year, and the annual orange in our Christmas stockings along with a few nuts and hard candies. We escaped work occasionally to play with neighborhood kids, enjoying a swim in tiny Battle River or playing hide and seek or tin can alley, but more often we played games such as monopoly, checkers or cards with our siblings and parents. I was very proud of a toy bobsled my dad made for me, perhaps as a reward for hauling wood to the house, and my brother Mike played for hours in the sandbox with a toy wooden tractor that got passed down from one child to another. Winter nights often meant skiing, checking our trap lines for weasels, or building a snow fort. As we grew older, we occasionally left the farm to attend parties, the North Beltrami County fair, or wedding dances with Borghild Erickson's band.

This simple farm life offered rich experiences, exploring the wilderness area, learning creativity in both work and play, working alongside our parents or Uncle Ocie Peck, sometimes helping on neighboring farms or assisting with such special projects at home as when Rudy Smischney came annually to shear our sheep or, later, Fred Miller came to grade mink. Summers meant long hours of work in the hayfields, hoeing weeds out of the corn, potatoes and family garden, herding sheep, milking cows, piling stumps in the pastures. Since most of the farm work was done with horses, we learned early to lead a horse pulling a cultivator, to drive a team raking hay or pulling a wagon, and eventually to drive a tractor, which I first experienced when plowing at age eleven with a steel-wheeled International Harvester. While horses had to be rested, tractors got work done faster as they could run for twenty-four hours.

One of the more exciting events was grain threshing time, when the boys got to work with the neighborhood men loading wagons, sacking grain, and sharing in the meals as we listened to local farmers talk about their crops and activities. It was exciting to work around the hammering noise of the threshing machine powered by a long belt driven by the flywheel of a big tractor. The machine coughed up a large pile of straw that

we would use throughout the winter for bedding of animals and sometimes for animal feed. As a child, I first got to help with sacking grain, then moved to loading bundles on wagons in the field, and finally was trusted to drive horses as they nervously approached the threshing machine, where I then could also pitch bundles into the machine. Women had their share of work in threshing time too, providing enormous meals of meat, potatoes, pies and cakes, as well as several lunches a day. Unfortunately, when the threshing machine was replaced by combines, farmers became more independent and some of the neighborhood camaraderie also passed. Once the lakes froze solidly, it was time to cut blocks of ice, haul them home by sled, and bury them in sawdust in the ice house until ice was needed to cool food in the ice box during the summer months.

Fall, of course, meant a return to school. We had been sheltered enough on the farm that I remember having to ask how to use the flush toilets and drinking fountain at school my first days there. In my first year of school, John Hufnagle was our bus driver, hauling us in his car in good weather but during the winter months taking us to school in a horse-drawn sled with a wooden cab and benches, John frequently wiping the small glass windshield with a salt bag to clear the frost. At least we now had transportation to school, as schools in the Depression often could not afford transportation, resulting in one room neighborhood schools scattered over Beltrami County so that students could walk to school. Starting in my second year, we went to school in Roy Waldo's minibus, often late for school as we were the second of Roy's two bus routes morning and evening. In the dark winter months we did chores such as milking cows, filling the mangers with hay, and cleaning the barn by light from a kerosene lantern. On school days, this meant rushing to change from work clothes to school clothes, then eating a quick but hearty breakfast such as pancakes with rhubarb sauce and whipped cream in time to board the school bus; evenings meant a quick after-school snack (we were fortunate to have Mom home to treat us with freshly baked or fried bread with lard or jam), then a quick change of clothes to do another round of chores. We often tried to linger long enough in the house to listen to the Lone Ranger or other radio programs, once Dad bought us a radio in 1939 on the promise that we would do more chores, but Dad was more interested in us completing the chores. After chores, we enjoyed a generous farm supper, and then it was time for school homework as we gathered around the dining room table by the light of a kerosene lamp.

Dad and Mom, meanwhile, put in long hours of work each day, trying to make ends meet and be good parents, depending on help from their children. I remember following the stone boat to pick rocks off the fields, walking with Dad to mark his path as he broadcast oats by hand or with a hand-cranked cyclone seeder, riding a drag and later a road grader as we maintained our gravel roads as part of the township poll tax, shocking grain behind a horse-drawn binder, hand pumping a lot of water from a dug well to water livestock, and heading off into the woods to find the cattle at milking time. Mom had few modern household conveniences, so the weekly wash day meant a lot of work hauling pails of water from the well or gathering snow to heat in a large copper boiler on the wood stove, washing clothes on a washboard in a large tub, putting them through a hand wringer and into rinse water, then another pass through the hand wringer before hanging them with wooden clothespins on an outdoor clothesline even in the winter months, and then sometimes using the soapy wash water to scrub hardwood floors on her knees with a scrub brush. Perhaps around 1940 she got a gasoline powered wash

machine, as we still had no electricity. She spent many more hours altering used clothing, mending clothes, darning socks, turning flour sacks into dish towels, pillow cases or curtains, ironing clothes with a flat iron heated on the wood stove, canning, cooking, and baking homemade bread, which she first had to kneed and let rise in the warming oven for several hours. Saturday evening meant heating water for baths, with the children taking turns in the tub using the same water. Dad cut his sons' hair in the earlier years and then turned that job over to Mrs. Groehler, a neighbor lady who also cut her sons' hair. We were poor but, with the richness of life on the farm, did not usually recognize our poverty, even though I have memories of a long unsuccessful search for a quarter that Mom dropped or having to ask for a five cent refund when I missed a class play due to sickness. If it bothered my mother more, as she had experienced a bit more comfortable life, I don't recall her complaining about it, even though she regularly got to visit with her family. We were poor but so were all those around us.

Our farm was on the continental divide, which meant water flowed both north to Hudson's Bay and south to the Mississippi River, but also meant some of the coldest winter weather in Minnesota, with temperatures sometimes falling to more than 40 degrees below zero, requiring banking the house with straw or snow, thawing the outdoor pump with hot water, bringing the car battery into the house when not in use, placing a pan of coals under the car to warm the oil, carrying water into the barn for the cattle, wearing heavy outdoor clothing but still suffering cold hands despite our leather choppers with woolen liners, and making hurried trips to the outdoor toilet, where the wooden seats were cold and mail order catalogues served as toilet paper. Fire in the stoves burned out overnight, and once Dad had lighted a new fire with a birch bark torch, we children would dash to the warmth of the stove to dress on cold winter mornings. Our family vehicle was a pickup, so in summer some of us kids rode to church in the back but on cold winter days as many as could scrunched into the cab. The famous Armistice Day blizzard in 1941 left our country roads high with snow banks and, when another blizzard occurred the same winter on March 11, the roads were so plugged with snow that snowplows could not break through. We finally cleared a path through the woods to get our pickup to plowed roads so that the family would have transportation, but it meant longer walks to meet the school bus or for any family outings.

## COMMUNITY LIFE

As farming conditions declined in the late 1920s and costs increased for mechanized machinery, the cheap land around Kelliher became a refuge for persons who were poor, jobless, or social misfits. It was possible to survive in a cabin in the woods despite the economic hardships; consequently, the population of the rural area around Kelliher increased by one-fourth between 1927 and 1935. Many of these new settlers could be described as "characters," but my parents taught us that every person had dignity and were to be treated with respect, a lesson I valued much in life. A number of these folks were guests at our table, often arriving just in time for a meal. James McChesney (Mac) was an educated man from out East who lived in a small shack just south of our farm, earning enough money to survive by occasionally helping farmers cut wood or stack hay. Mac walked wherever he went, frequently coming to our house for

supper and a chance to listen to the news on radio, enjoying conversations with my parents, and sometimes pooling his money with my mother to buy such books as *Gone with the Wind*. I have always felt that someone should have written a book about Mac and other folks who were friends of our family, such as Bruce Burgess, a bachelor and alcoholic from a well known family, or Leo Hoben, another recluse bachelor who had a clubbed foot horse and later used a milk cow to pull his wagon. Charlie Link, on the other hand, was a successful farmer struggling with the economy like everyone else, who shipped a good crop of potatoes to the Twin Cities as the Depression was underway only to find that no one would pay as much for his potatoes as the cost of freight to ship them, an experience frequently repeated when farmers shipped livestock to markets for less than the sale price. Charlie and Carrie were friends of my parents, but Charlie and Dad were also known for their pranks to get one up on each other, as when Charlie had our neighbor, Harvey Webster, deliver a box of fresh walleye to Dad which turned out instead to be dead piglets. It did not take Dad long to get even by sending Charlie a box of bricks COD. Dad's humor occasionally got him in trouble, for example, when a whippetree broke as he worked with horses and smashed across his face, causing ugly bruises and a good black eye, and when the young female clerk at Collin's grocery store asked him what had happened, he jokingly claimed that he ducked when Mom threw a frying pan at him, only to hit his face on the corner of the cook stove. The clerk delighted in telling others about his mishap, which embarrassed Mom so much that she would not go to town for several months.

When my cousin Roy Downey brought his new bride to meet my parents, Dad came in from work with dirty overalls, stating that he would need to take his pants off before giving the young woman a hug, thus invoking a shocked look from an unsuspecting bride who did not know that Dad had another pair of pants under his overalls. Mom was not beyond her own humor either, putting cotton balls into biscuits that Dad unwittingly delivered to his boss or serving horse steaks when Uncle Ocie was at supper, knowing that Dad could say nothing because of Ocie's love for horses. On a visit to our farm, Mrs. Murphy learned that we frequently enjoyed tame rabbit meat and she swore she would never eat rabbit, but soon after unknowingly shared rabbit meat served by my parents as a "turkey dinner." Another time, Dad brought two furry baby rabbits to the post office in his coat pocket, set them on the counter, and commented to the two postal clerks that toys certainly looked real nowadays, while the naïve clerks marveled as the bunnies hopped around and blinked their eyes before Dad put them back in his pocket and left with his mail.

Despite difficult times during the Depression, Dad and Mom involved themselves in affairs of the community. Dad served on the Shooks Township Board, for some years as clerk, attending meetings and supervising elections, sometimes also issuing permits for the use of dynamite and for burning brush piles and meadows. In 1941, Dad was elected to the Kelliher Public School Board, a position he held for many years, taking a very active role from the start of his tenure. Dad had a dislike for labor unions, perhaps because he saw the effects of labor unrest while working in the iron ore mines after World War I, but he valued involvement in civic affairs. He was a Republican, who disapproved of many of Roosevelt's decisions, warned about the dangers of communism, and was not a strong supporter of cooperative movements like the National Farmers' Organization. Dad was a grateful veteran who supported the American Legion, serving

in a number of roles such as commander of the local chapter and a chaplain at burials. Mom played an active role in the American Legion Auxiliary, attended state conventions of the Auxiliary at Brainerd in 1936 and 1937, but got more active in later years when she was not so involved in parenting, and also helped with rationing during World War II, served as a 4-H leader for neighborhood kids, and helped with church activities.

Because of farm needs, poor roads, and lack of transportation, the family did not always get to church, but our parents were determined that we would benefit from released time classes during the school year and catechism classes when the Sisters came to teach for two weeks in the summer. Much of the time we had to walk the three and a half miles each way for catechism classes at church. Mom had a strong faith, and I remember Dad taking Mom to town on the wagon so she could go to confession and attend Mass, leaving her to stay overnight with Mrs. Ernest Miller, and then picking her up with the wagon the next day because we did not have a car at the time. I also remember walking to Kelliher to serve Mass when Ferdinand Neft and Christine Parochka were married, following step by step behind my older brother Bill through sixteen inches of fresh snow and muddy roads. St. Patrick's in Kelliher at the time was a mission parish with Mass twice a month. I was the only Catholic kid in my grade in school, as most of the local folks were Scandinavian Lutherans.

Dad and Mom was determined that their children would get a good education. The year I was to enter the seventh grade, Dad invited me to ride to town with him on Labor Day. On the way, I jokingly commented that it would be back to prison the next day, only to have Dad stop the pickup and explain for half an hour that he had only an eighth grade education because no high school existed in Finlayson when he was growing up, why I would benefit from further education, and that if I did not appreciate school I too would end up a farmer. Youth by this time were required to attend school until age sixteen, after which some of the boys dropped out to help with farm work, while girls often were not encouraged to finish high school. The bookcase at home contained a set of encyclopedias that were useful for school work, and some interesting books, like *All Quiet on the Western Front*, which we were not allowed to read but today would seem a harmless novel. My parents were proud that most of their kids were honor students in school and all advanced beyond high school, even Rick who was bored in school but later got a college degree and worked in high security programs for the government.

My sister Mary grew up surrounded by brothers, including most of the neighborhood kids who were boys, and felt cheated by not always being able to take part in our activities. She complained that the boys were better off because they worked out of doors while she had to help with housework and dishes, believing as well that she had all the indoor work alone while several boys shared the outside chores. When Bill built a spring loaded cannon that shot potatoes, we boys played war games in the woods and, when Mary tried to join in games that obviously seemed only for boys, we pushed her into the goat pen, only to have her land on a hornets' nest. Her brothers got stung many times but Mary was unscathed, which Dad thought was justice. Mary claimed that Dad favored the boys, as she and Dad sometimes locked horns, perhaps because of Mary's stubborn defiance.

Due to farm work, we did not take family vacations, nor did we see distant relatives very often. Neither Mom nor Dad talked much about their family backgrounds, so we did not get to know most relatives very well. Grandma Foley visited occasionally,

and my memories are of the supply of candy she usually brought and the impression I had that she browbeat her second husband, John Moser. When my twin cousins, Olive and Opal Peck, got married, my parents and Bill went to the wedding, but others of us were needed at home to milk the cows. Dad and Mom took a couple of the younger children when they went to celebrate my grandparents fiftieth wedding anniversary, which was also my parents sixteenth wedding anniversary, but the older ones of us stayed to do chores, which was also the case for the funeral of my Grandmother Perras. Dad did rent a car once to take the family to Brooks, and one year hired Roy Waldo to take us to my grandparents for Christmas, only to have an ice storm cause slick roads which sent Roy's car rolling into the ditch, but fortunately none of us were hurt. Occasionally some of us walked to see the local baseball team play on Sunday afternoons, and later we played on local softball and baseball teams ourselves. 4-H provided opportunities for us to attend the Beltrami County fair and, if lucky, sometimes to win a trip to the Minnesota State Fair. We shared the excitement of deer hunting season, listening to the hunters who camped on our farm as they spun their stories of hunting exploits. When Mom had goiter surgery at the Mayo Clinic about 1940, Mary Nistler came for a few days as our babysitter, the only time I can remember a babysitter as we grew up.

Doctor Coarse and later Doctor Loucks practiced medicine in Kelliher but we rarely visited a doctor, in part due to costs, but also because most pioneers had learned home remedies. If we had a cold, we drank a glass of milk with a tablespoon of Watkin's lineament added and went to bed to sweat it out. Lineament was great for sore muscles and had a warning "For external use only," but I believe it helped colds more than any of the over-the-counter medicines. We knew that we could treat an insect bite or sting with the leaves of plantain. My mother had me harvest alder bark, from which she made a tea for me to drink, although I have forgotten the medical reason.

Dad loved to sing and on occasion sang publicly. As a youth he sang in the Methodist Church choir at Finlayson and at home when Violet led singing on the guitar or piano. I have fond memories of him singing Irish songs as he worked on the farm, singing love songs to Mom as they went for a walk together and returned with Mom carrying a bouquet of wildflowers Dad had picked for her, or surprising me by knowing and leading Bill and I in singing hymns from a booklet that Bill found when we Catholics did not regularly sing in church at the time. When he sang a concert for the Kelliher school students, I was very proud of my father. Somehow he seemed to know all the words to many songs and was generally in a singing mood, a trait apparently passed from Grandfather Foley to Dad's siblings as well.

The Foley farm was a menagerie of wild and tame animals, including many that we kids dragged home and our parents tolerated, including some that Mom let run in the house. Dad brought home a motherless fawn that we enjoyed until "Billie" began to use his sharp front feet against us. We had pet foxes, raccoons, crows, a ferret that lived in the house and, my favorites, two young woodchucks that also lived in the house and were very playful as they ran to hide or peeked out from behind furniture. We had our domestic pets like bottle lambs, bantam chickens, and rabbits, as well as the farm animals and birds, including turkeys, geese, ducks, chickens, and our treasured riding horses. My brother Bill had a pony that was unreliable, had hurt Dad's shoulder when it bucked him, continually broke out of the fences, and one day Bill told me I could have the pony if I would take care of it. We shook hands on the deal and Bill went off to work elsewhere

that day, only to have the local horse trader show up that morning and ask to buy the pony. Dad stood by and let me sell it because I now claimed it as mine, but the sale did not set so well with Bill and Dad made me invest all the money in U.S. Savings Bonds. Bill also had goats, which entertained us by running on the roof of our icehouse, but when they came running and jumped on the fender, then the hood, and finally the top of the school bus, our bus driver Roy Waldo was not as amused. When Dad was hospitalized with Malta fever from drinking goats' milk, the goats disappeared from the Foley zoo. Our cats and dogs were useful farm animals and stayed outdoors or in the barn. Some of the animals in the farm yard were not domesticated, like the two wolves that stared at me through the window of our house when I was six, the bobcats that came looking for food, the foxes that treed our turkeys, or the bear that looked in every window of our home, scratching the siding as he lowered himself back unto all fours. Deer enjoyed the alfalfa fields and haystacks, and I remember counting more than sixty deer grazing on our fields at one time.

Julius Benson (Ben), a divorced man and polio victim, bought the place where Uncle Jack and Aunt Pearl Srok had lived and started a mink ranch there in the later thirties. Dad started working part time for Ben about 1942 and later worked full time on the mink ranch, finally starting also to raise mink at home about 1946. Horses were readily available for mink food in these years as farmers moved from horse drawn equipment to tractors, so we had a herd of horses in our corral which daily required pumping a lot of water and hauling many forkfuls of hay. At first Ben helped with butchering the horses but, after he saw Dad wash his hands in the snow on a very cold day, decided that Dad could handle this task by himself. Ben became a favorite of the Foley kids, who delighted in riding on the wagon or sled when Dad fetched Ben to spend holidays at our house, knowing that Ben would bring us toys and games which our parents could not afford, and who occasionally treated us to ice cream when Dad drove to Kelliher for supplies. Ben loved to read and sometimes exchanged books with Mom. He had the first ball point pen that I remember and, like our parents, valued education as he paid for a university education for his two daughters and encouraged us to think of college.

## THE WAR YEARS

Social life in the rural area gradually got easier as technological advances came to our homes. Because we lived a sheltered life at the end of the road, we kids would run to tell our parents when an occasional car came down the road or an airplane appeared in the sky. Many times the oncoming car brought Felix Jaracz, the local Watkins salesman, or Harvey Webster, our neighbor stopping by to borrow a tool. Kelliher had a rural telephone switchboard, where the local operators were expected to have answers to many questions, while the rural party lines helped put people in touch, were great for emergency messages, and also allowed neighbors to know others' business by "rubbering" in on phone conversations. We had no rural delivery mail service, so as school children we went to the post office to pick up the mail, while the local postal clerks would call patrons when day old chicks or fragile plants arrived so that they could be picked up right away. Several times a year we shared the excitement of a package arriving from Sears or Montgomery Wards with new clothes for school or church.

Crystal sets and then battery operated radios made it possible to be entertained by Fibber McGee and Molly, George Burns and Gracie Allen, or to listen to the heavyweight boxing championship matches, as well as national news. Kelliher also had a weekly newspaper for folks who could afford it. The Rural Electrification Administration started bringing electrical power to farms in the 1930s but World War II interrupted this project and the Foley farm did not get electricity until 1949, thus we depended on a wind charger to charge batteries for our radio, car and tractor but continued to use kerosene lanterns for chores and Aladdin lamps for studying.

World War II changed the lives of most families, as young men went off to serve in the armed forces, others went to work in the war industries, and even some of the farmers left their farms to work in distant cities. On the day that the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, I was the oldest one at home as my parents and Bill had gone off to buy geese and then stopped at Pecks. I waited for the Japanese to attack us, expecting to see airplanes appearing at any time, and then listened to the radio with my classmates the next morning as President Roosevelt declared that we were at war with the Japanese. Before long, we began seeing young men in uniform home for a leave before going overseas, hearing of the combat deaths of young men from Kelliher, and feeling much a part of the war effort as we participated in gas and food rationing, used recapped tires, fixed old machinery because new was unavailable, hauled scrap metal to town, and bought war bonds. Mom helped people sign up for rationing and for the draft during the war, as well as helping with inoculations and vaccinations of school children. When many local mechanics were drafted, making it difficult to keep machinery working, Kelliher hosted a mechanics school one night a week, which accepted teenagers including my brother Bill. We learned a lot about the world during the war from Life magazine, the radio, and newsreels at the beginning of movies.

Kelliher schools, like those of many rural towns, were impacted by the war. Younger female teachers often went to the larger cities to teach when a shortage of teachers developed, while many of the men ended up in military service. Fortunately, a number of rural women who had not taught for some years while raising their families came forth to teach as best they could, but our school was deprived of special classes like band, singing, and art as well as athletics. These extracurricular activities would only gradually be restored after the war. When a class in physics was not possible in our school, Bill enrolled in a correspondence course offered by the University of North Dakota. After the war, as transportation improved and requirements for science and mathematics grew more stringent, rural schools in the area gradually merged into a consolidated school at Kelliher.

Once the war ended many of those who had left for military service or jobs elsewhere chose not to return to Kelliher. Jobs were available in the post-war era as the American economy boomed and most paid better than jobs at Kelliher.. Many of the women who had worked in the war industries were now content to become housewives and raise a family. Life in the rural area was changing as well. Farmers, who could again purchase cars, tractors, machinery and household appliances usually drove right through Kelliher on their way to Bemidji or larger urban centers to purchase major items. Shopping habits changed too as families now bought more of their groceries, clothing, and supplies rather than producing them on the farm. Dad opened more fields, but now in place of dynamite he hired Art Espe with his brush cutter, a caterpillar powered device

like a snow plow with sharp blades that cut the poplar trees and old pine stumps, after which Espe piled them with his caterpillar. We started using gypsum on our fields as well as cow manure for fertilizer but soon had to deal with acreage limits on crops set by the government. It was time, too, for a drilled well rather than the shallow dug well that gathered run off and sometimes went dry. We had started out milking cows of several breeds, but Dad changed to Brown Swiss cattle, getting stock from his nephew, Roy Downey, and later added Herefords after buying another 160 acres of pastureland across the road in Koochiching County. When Harvey Webster decided to retire from farming, Dad added his 80 acres to the family farm.

By now the Foley kids were reaching adolescence and available to help when Dad started his own mink ranch. The boys were able to do a lot of the work in the mink corral, preparing a mink feed of meat and cereal, feeding and watering the mink, cleaning cages, and helping Dad at pelting time. By the early 1950's, Dad had added to his mink herd by purchases elsewhere and in time won first prize at the Minnesota State Fair for a white mink. Since mink pelts were sold once a year, Dad had to each fall ask Oliver Latterell, the local banker, for a loan to keep going. Adding mink to the Foley animal menagerie also brought more visitors as folks came to view the mink, perhaps fascinated by the image of mink coats. Welcome visitors included Freddie Phillips, who came with a truck to buy hides and grease, often giving us a cherished bushel of apples as part of the payment.

When he was sixteen, my brother Bill took up flying, knocking on doors in Kelliher to sign up members for a flying club so that flight instructors would come to Kelliher, where they landed on Bullhead Lake or on the Foley farm. Before long Bill and I purchased a World War II Piper Cub airplane together. Bill was working in Kelliher as projectionist at the local theater while going to high school, a job I inherited from him when he went off to college. We were paid seven dollars a week as projectionists, hardly enough to pay for Bill's motorcycle and flying lessons, let alone compensate for frequently having to walk to Kelliher to help at the movies. At home Bill sometimes landed the plane on our fields although it was kept at the airfield in Northome. Sometimes we headed off to fly at 4:30 in the morning so we could be back home in time for chores. One cold Christmas, when the temperature was forty below zero and some of the family headed for Midnight Mass at Blackduck, the pickup froze up and Mom froze her legs walking back home, but that did not stop her from flying to Brooks with Bill on Christmas day to visit her father and relatives. When an air show came to Bemidji, we hired Melvin Samuelson to take some of us kids, and he must have been amused as we shouted excitedly "There's another one" every time another plane appeared in the sky.

Bill graduated from high school in 1947, received a Navy ROTC scholarship to the University of Minnesota, and went off to pursue his dream of aeronautical engineering, taking the airplane with him. I remember this as a difficult time for Mom as she no longer had all her family around her, while I and my siblings had to pick up on tasks that Bill had done previously, like fixing tractors and chauffeuring Mom when Dad was busy. Family size dwindled fairly quickly as the older boys followed Bill to the University of Minnesota, Mary and Alan attended Bemidji State Teacher's College, and Pat joined the Sisters of St. Joseph in Crookston. The Foley house perhaps seemed a bit empty so Dad and Mom adopted Beverly (Beaver), a six year old in 1951 when she became part of our family, a high spirited and beautiful girl who sometimes challenged

Dad and Mom's parenting abilities, and who has continued to be a cherished member of the family. After the adoption, Mom served for several years on the board for Catholic Social Service Association. When the folks at Kelliher decided to open a hospital, Dad added his efforts on a committee working to obtain permission and funding for this venture but, lacking a doctor, in time this became the Kelliher Nursing Home.

When Dad and Mom replaced the old house with a new one in 1953, seeking a construction loan from the Farmers' Home Administration, the agent asked Dad why, with his farm, he did not have money to finance the new house. Dad reminded him that he could have paid for the house with money he had already spent on his children's college education. The new home had electricity, hot and cold running water, a wash machine, an indoor toilet and bath, and was heated with fuel oil rather than wood, likely welcome additions for sons of several friends who came from urban homes to help during summers on the farm. Not long after this, Dad started to have heart and back problems and Mike came home from the University to help, living at first in a trailer home on the farm with his wife, JoAnn, and then taking over the farmhouse when Dad and Mom moved to an apartment in town. Mike farmed for a few years before realizing that at best farming would offer a subsistence living and that he would never get out of debt, then returned to the University of Minnesota to finish a degree in agriculture and became an adult agricultural education teacher. In time, Dad sold 320 acres with the farmstead for \$11,000.

For many years Dad and his brother Dick did not visit or talk with each other even though they had been close as young men. Dad did not seem to know why this wall existed between them. It may be that Grandma Belle Foley, who loved to talk about family affairs and who did not like Dick's wife Tress for some unknown reason, was an instrumental cause of the misunderstandings. Sometime after Grandma's death, Dad and Richard were reunited, shared in family reunions together, and visited at each other's home frequently. When I searched through photos where both men were present in their latter years, I did not find Grandma in any of these pictures.

## LAST YEARS

Once Dad and Mom moved to town, Mom got a job clerking at the local Hartz grocery store, while Dad kept busy with civic involvement. He served as vice-mayor in Kelliher, where his major duties were overseeing the construction of senior housing and a new liquor store. He volunteered at the nursing home, leading bingo and other activities, offered his time as a handyman for some of the elderly and chauffeured folks who needed transportation. Dad played an active role in building a new church at Kelliher and later was helping Vance Kohlbinger build a stone chimney on the new parish rectory, using stones Dad had hauled from the farm and was now carrying up a ladder to the roof, when he had severe heart pains and Mom insisted on taking him to Dr. Brink for medical attention. When the doctor scolded him, reminding him that he knew better than to do this type of work with his poor heart, Dad simply said it was the Lord's work he was doing and headed back to haul stones that same afternoon.

Retirement also offered our parents a chance for some of the hobbies not possible during life on the farm, especially after they purchased a house in Kelliher. Dad had

promised before their wedding that he would not drink alcohol, but now his homemade plum and apple wines became a treat for family members, while his vegetable and flower garden was the envy of folks in town and a cabin near Shotley on Red Lake renewed his interest in fishing. He was always a lucky fisherman, using a bamboo pole because he had shot the thumb off his right hand, making it difficult to use a reel, and enjoyed taking family members and relatives fishing. Back in 1947, we had convinced Mom to go with us on the opening day of fishing on Red Lake, capsized the boat in a storm as Dad tried to row it to shore, been rescued by the only other boat still on the lake, and survived with only the loss of our catch of fish and equipment, but could not get Mom into a boat with us again. Finally Mom began to accompany Dad when he was alone, reading a book while Dad fished. The lake place also offered a haven for grandchildren, which Dad and Mom treasured. When Larry became principal and later superintendent of the school in Kelliher, our parents rejoiced to have grandchildren near at hand. They also became very attached to a small dog, Pal, usually found sitting on the lap of one or the other until it was killed by a large dog, causing a lot of sadness for both Dad and Mom.

In 1965, Alma was nominated for Mother of the Year in Minnesota by the American Legion Auxiliary. She had served at least eight years as president and fifteen years as secretary of the local chapter of the Auxiliary, served as secretary-treasurer for the Sixth District American Legion Auxiliary, served as president for two years and trustee for three years with the Bemidji World War I Auxiliary, and served as president of the 11<sup>th</sup> District Ladies Auxiliary of World War I. When the governor honored the nominees at a banquet in St. Paul, Alma was named a Merit Mother or runner-up. The Kelliher community gathered to acknowledge this recognition, scheduling a potluck supper at the Legion Hall filled with townsfolk and farmers. After folks enjoyed a meal together, a few persons were asked to speak. The mayor shared what she had done for the community, usually in projects with Bill; their pastor talked about all the years Alma had served as chairman of the Ladies Guild, taught religious education, and cleaned the church; the school superintendent cited her involvement in the PTA and the school. When Bill was asked if he had anything to say, he simply smiled and quipped: "Didn't I make a good woman out of her though!" Folks knew he was kidding, but that there was truth in his comments. When Bill left the farmhouse to do chores or head for town, he first took time to visit with Alma in the kitchen, often showing his affection by giving her a kiss, a hug, or a waltz around the kitchen. When he returned from town or the fields, this ritual was repeated. Before the Kelliher gathering, Mom shared with me about the Minnesota Mother of the Year banquet with the governor, naming Mrs. Hessian and Mrs Saetre as the other two mothers honored, and she seemed surprised when I named and knew personally the adult children of both other honorees, so I jokingly asked, "Mom, how do you think you mothers got this honor? It was because of the accomplishments of your children."

Dad was honored as Beltrami County's Senior Citizen of the year in 1969. The citation from the Governor's Council on Aging said "The contributions which you have made to your community and county have benefited the entire state as well." The Bemidji Pioneer listed among Dad's accomplishments that he had been active in community and county affairs for forty years as "vice chairman of Beltrami County's Agricultural Committee, a member of the Kelliher School Board for 16 years, clerk of Shooks Township for 10 years, past president of the Kelliher P.T.A and of the

Commercial Club, a director of the EZ-TV Corporation, Chairman of the Kelliher Hospital Association, Commander of the American Legion, and was currently active as a member of the Village Council, chairman of the Kelliher Development Corporation, chairman of Urban Housing, treasurer of St. Patrick's Church, President of the Cemetery Association, and membership chairman for the Commercial Club, as well as active in many other organizations."

As parents, Dad and Mom took pride in their children's growing families. At the wedding reception when Alan married Jane Neft, Dad told me that "the most important concern in the lives of parents is to see that their children are married well." I knew how happy he was on this occasion to welcome Jane into the family. Our parents celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary with a large outdoor Mass in the yard at Kelliher, followed by an overflowing crowd of relatives and friends for a meal at the Legion Hall. Shortly after this they moved into the new senior citizens' apartments that had just opened, where they were surrounded by friends of many years.

Although Dad's health was poor in these later years, Mom died suddenly on November 28, 1981. On the morning after her funeral, some of us were still home and eating breakfast with Dad when he started to cry and said "I really have to thank God for answering my prayers." I asked "What prayers, Dad?" to which he replied: "For the fifty-four and a half years your mother and I have been married, I have prayed every day to live longer than her so I could take care of her. I never wanted her to be alone." I wondered if Mom knew about these prayers, remembering only later that Dad had watched his mother suffer in her aloneness after Grandpa George's death and didn't want Mom to go through a similar experience. The plaque on the wall near the table that morning included the words from First Corinthians: "Love is not self-seeking."

Mom's death meant that Dad with his compromised health could not live alone in the apartment at Kelliher. Several family members offered him a home with them, and he went to live with Larry's family in Wadena. Later he broke his hip so he could no longer live with them and spent his last days in the nursing home next door to Larry's house, surrounded by Larry's family. Dad died on August 22, 1987 and was buried next to Mom and his parents in the cemetery at Kelliher.

Unfortunately, neither Mother nor Dad talked much to us about their families or family life as they grew up, something I believe would have been a gift to their children. For example, Larry and I visited in 1986 with Aunt Pearl, now back from California and living in the senior apartments at Kelliher, and Pearl shared about her grandmother serving as a lady-in-waiting in charge of seamstresses for Queen Victoria. I later asked Dad at the nursing home if he had known his grandmother, Susannah Davies Willis, and he shared that she used to come to the Foley home at Finlayson, stayed with the family for a time before illness set in, and died, he thought, when he was about 11. He knew the story of her experience as lady-in-waiting, marrying a commoner, and asked to leave England, even though it was not something he shared with his children. Perhaps this reflected the traditional aloneness of our ancestors as immigrants, *coureurs des bois*, and farmers. Irish poet, Michael Coady, in his memoir *All Souls*, wrote that genealogy "should not be the next assembly of pedigree culminating snugly in self, but it's exact opposite: the extension of the personal beyond the self to encounter the intimate unknown of others in our blood." A good reason for family history!

## OCIE AND VIOLET PECK

Violet Foley married Orestes Charles (Ocie) Peck at Finlayson on June 27, 1917. Ocie and Violet moved to Kelliher on August 8, 1917, where George and Mabel Foley were already living. Violet was fascinated by the beauty of the woods, while Ocie spent most of their first months east of Kelliher working in these woods around their home, cutting and hauling wood and railroad ties into Kelliher. Violet also noted in her diary that Ocie and George Foley were part of a building bee erecting a small house for Mr. McChesney. Growing up on Manitoulin Island in Lake Huron, Ocie had no formal education while Violet loved to read, to write stories that she sometimes had published, and frequently read books to Ocie in their first years together. Fortunately, Violet could entertain herself in this way as Ocie would be gone from home much of their early years together. Eking out a living in the woods was difficult, so Ocie took a job as watchman on the Minnesota's Iron Range in June of 1918, soon brought his family to live in rented homes there, and worked there for two years until he went to Rochester for treatment of a hand crippled by tuberculosis. Ocie spent some months in Rochester, helping to pay for his care by working on the Mayo farm, while Violet moved the family back to Kelliher. By this time, the family was growing, with Loyal born in 1918, Madelyne in 1920 and identical twins Opal and Olive in 1922.

Ocie was gone from his family during the Depression years, working as a watchman at the coal docks in Superior from 1928 to 1936. Laid off from the coal docks, Ocie, who had first gone to the woods at age thirteen driving a team of his father's horses, now went to work at a logging camp at Popple Island, taking Loyal to work with him. From that time on most of Ocie's life would be spent in the woods, working winters in logging camps and summers in the woods around home. Ocie was always at home in the woods, estimating the board feet in a good tree, ready to help others learn woodsman skills, finding God in the forests. Ocie was a favorite person in the lives of the Foley boys at Kelliher, where working with "Uncle Ocie" was a special and sought after privilege.

Much of Ocie's time in the woods also involved horses, another of his talents as horses seemed to know his love and respect for them and at his verbal commands performed for him as they would for no one else. I watched in amazement as Ocie brought a whole herd of horses through the streets of Kelliher by himself. I have memories of him currying his horses, feeding them out of his hat, talking to them as he worked around them, able to judge the qualities of a horse like some folks can judge the character of a person.

Like the horses, kids were drawn to this quiet and gentle man and soon were sitting on his lap or listening to his stories. Ocie was a good storyteller, sharing stories from the logging camps or from his family life, teaching us as he sharpened our Swede saws and axes along with his, and always interested in his listeners. We trusted Ocie's word, like when he assured us as kids that black bears would be more afraid of us than we should be of them, telling us not to worry if we met a bear and thus inspiring us with macho courage at an early age. As a child I had earaches and remember Uncle Ocie blowing warm smoke from his pipe into my ear to ease the pain. His famous comment about children, no matter how well or poorly behaved, was "God bless their dear little hearts!"

While my brothers and I hovered around Ocie, seeking chances to work with him at tasks on the farm or in the woods, my sister Mary was very fond of Violet and sought chances to be with her. Violet was a very social person who had learned the skills of cooking, baking, and sewing as she took care of her parents and siblings at Finlayson, enjoyed a chance to share her home with visitors, and was ready to help others learn her skills. Violet, or “Babe” as Ocie usually called her, was colorful with her red hair piled up on her head, an apron covering her dress, busy cooking over her wood stove, always ready to serve lunch to anyone who entered the house, while exhibiting some of that spunk which must have empowered her grandmother to defy the English Queen and her parents when she chose to marry against their will. As a girl Violet had played the piano and guitar and now her piano sat in the living room with music sheets open though I rarely heard her play the piano because she was busy in the kitchen serving guests. She did, however, entertain her grandchildren and my sister with her music. Violet had a love for her indoor and outdoor plants, a bookshelf full of books, and lots of knick-knacks. As a child, I remember Violet saying that she did not want to grow old so she hoped to die before age forty, which later got changed to age fifty, and likely still much later in life as she became a grandparent. My dad and Violet had been close as children and continued to enjoy each other’s company. For years our family had a tradition of spending Christmas Day evening with the Pecks, enjoying Violet’s special baking and cooking, including the plum pudding that was her specialty. I realize now that plum pudding likely was a traditional treat that her English mother passed on to the family, just as my family enjoyed tourtiere at Christmas as a tradition from our French ancestry.

Much of the time the Pecks lived in rented houses. Dad loved to tell about when Ocie wanted to rent the Anderson house but Violet resisted, so Ocie moved anyway and told her to call when she was ready to move. Several days after he left Violet made the call. Violet had a lot of interesting stories to share. We all laughed one day when Peck’s home phone continued ringing on the party line and Violet finally commented “I wonder who has the same ring as we do”, not realizing someone was trying to call them. Or we smiled as Violet looked for her glasses, which all the time were perched in her hair. Olive and Opal enjoyed confusing their mother as identical twins, just as they sometimes fooled teachers and even their fiancées, while I could always tell them apart by their smiles. Years later, when Olive and Opal married in a double ceremony, my dad had them worried that the minister might confuse their identity and marry them to the wrong husbands.

Each of my brothers could share numerous stories about working with Ocie as he cut and skidded pulpwood or logs in our pastures. Ocie wore a brace on his crippled hand but that did not stop him from hard work and, when handling pulpwood with him, we would lift our end of the stick so Ocie could get his arm under the other end to lift. Watching him put the brace on his arm before heading out to work, I always marveled at what he could do with his crippled hand. I loved my two weeks cutting cedar with him in the middle of winter, thinking the beauty of the snow covered cedar with the sun peeking through must be like heaven, wrapped in heavy clothing while Ocie was dressed in a sweater even though the temperature was sometimes minus 20 degrees. By this time Ocie was in his 70’s and still not slowing down. Another time he and I were in the woods cutting pulpwood during deer hunting season, standing next to each other when a rifle bullet screamed between us, and Ocie shouted “down” as he fell to the ground. I wasn’t

so sure I wanted to continue cutting that day but we did.

The Peck children attended grade school at Saum and high school at Kelliher. Loyal was drafted early in World War II, spent several years in North Africa and Europe, returned home in 1945, and then rented a farm to start farming only to have this enterprise fail when his cows were diagnosed with Bang's disease. Loyal married Lorraine Krueth in 1946, parented three children with her, worked in the woods and then in Duluth, Bemidji and Minneapolis before ending up back in Kelliher later in life. Madelyne first married Alan Vanhouse at Bemidji in 1941 but Alan died of cancer soon afterwards, leaving her a widow with Patricia born in 1942. It was the war years and Madelyne went to work in the Twin Cities, leaving Violet and Ocie to raise Patty until Madelyne married Lester Sanders in 1945. Born in Norway, Lester was a veteran of World War II who tried farming but had to abandon the farm due to a back injury from his war experiences, and ended up spending years as a milk inspector in Superior and Duluth. Lester and Madelyne added four more children to the Peck family. Opal and Olive married Arnold Rustad and Albert Wallin in a double wedding ceremony at Battle River Baptist Church in 1944, only to have Opal die soon after in a tragic house fire when a stove exploded burning 85 percent of her body, taking her life after three weeks in the hospital. Albert and Olive had seven children who got to enjoy Ocie and Violet living next door almost all of their growing years. Violet and Ocie, meanwhile, were very fond of their children's spouses, who quickly became cherished members of Bill and Alma's family as well.

Ocie was still working in the woods at age 80, cutting pulpwood by axe and saw and skidding with horses at the time when power saws and power skidders were entering the woods. My brother Bill remembers Ocie at age 81 complaining that he could not work a full day in the woods, meaning from sunrise to sunset, and now he was taking some time for himself rather than working so hard in the woods. An aggressive card player, he loved his Pedro and pinochle games with Albert, my Dad and any family members who would play with him. Through the years Ocie had learned to read and in his later years he spent many evenings sitting on the sofa reading his bible, eventually reading the entire book three times, while Violet sat in a big easy chair reading her books. He and Violet loved to attend the community church nearby and had a special relationship with Max Cheney, the pastor.

A mystery with a happy ending remains part of the story of Ocie and Violet Peck. Growing up on Manitoulin Island in Lake Huron, Ocie, a son of American emigrants to the Island, married Mary Burnett on August 29, 1904. After the marriage, he worked for his father-in-law but found this to be an intolerable situation. Despite Ocie's pleading, Mary was unwilling to leave her family and move off the island. Ocie left the Island for two years but returned several times to convince Mary to come with him. Meanwhile, they had sons Lawrence born in 1905 and Jack born in 1907, who remained with their mother. With Ocie's love for children, his heart was no doubt broken as he left his two sons and ended up joining his parents, who by now were living in Pine County and were friends of the Finlayson Foleys. Violet had dated Ocie's brother, Louis, and was close to the Peck family, so it is difficult to know when Violet first knew of Ocie's sons and whether she kept a secret with him for the first years of their marriage. With Ocie's honesty throughout his life, it seems unlikely that he tried to deceive her. Violet certainly saw a letter that Ocie's sister, Mary, who was married to the brother of Ocie's first wife,

wrote to Ocie in 1943 telling him that his two sons were both now married and living on the island and that his former wife was unmarried but doing well on her father's farm.

In October, 1969, after Ocie's death, Lawrence and Jack Peck appeared at Olive's door seeking their father, whom they had finally traced to Minnesota. Finding that Violet was then staying with Lester and Madelyne Sanders in Duluth, Lawrence and Jack stopped to meet her and found that she knew of Ocie's first marriage and of his sons by this time. The discovery of siblings led to a close relationship between all of Ocie's children, with ongoing visits both in Minnesota and on Manitoulin Island. In 1976, the Kelliher Pecks hosted a Thanksgiving Dinner at the Legion Hall in Kelliher to introduce Lawrence and Jack and their spouses to other relatives. Unfortunately, Olive obeyed her mother's request that she burn the love letters written between Ocie and Violet in their courtship days, while the later editions of Violet's diary, which she kept most of her life, were destroyed by water damage, so it may never be known when Violet first learned of Ocie's previous marriage in Canada.

Ocie Peck was always a gentleman even though he worked with tough laborers and loggers. With his easygoing temperament, he made many friends in the Kelliher area as well as in the logging camps. Ocie died December 17, 1967 and was buried near his daughter, Opal, in the Kelliher Cemetery. Violet was buried next to Ocie after she died on March 7, 1972. Fortunately, the life of these family stalwarts has been recorded by Loyal's widow, Lorraine, for those who were not as fortunate as I to know them.



Young Bill Foley



Bill and Alma's courtship days – Red Lake

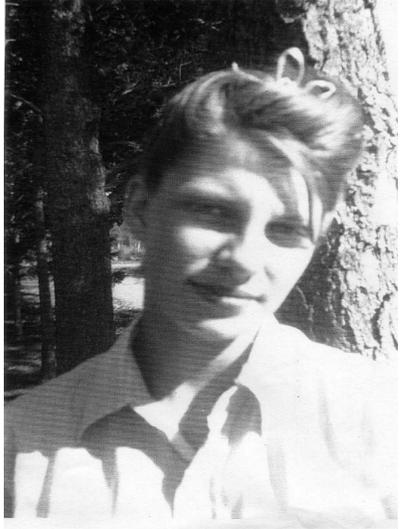


Alma, Shooks Teacher

Goodbye Brooks – off to WA Newlyweds, Bill and Alma



Foley Family. Top: Bill, Jerry, Mary, Larry, Ray. Bottom: Bill Sr., Mike, Alan, Pat, Alma. Beverly is missing.



Beverly Foley



Mary, Jerry, Billie in front of home sweet home



Log Barn Jack Srok built – Foley icehouse



James McChesney with Richard, Vallee, and June Foley - 1927



Larry, Dick Hufnagle, Billie, Jerry, Mary



Peck Twins with Foley Kids



Alma – Merit Mother of the Year 1965



Bill and Alma Foley



Ocie, Violet, Loyal Peck



Violet and Ocie Peck - 1956



Kelliher in 1916



Jack Srok, WWI



Three's a crowd – or is it?



Larry Foley



Who's this with curls?



Rick Foley with his hair cut



Mike Foley



Patricia Foley



Alan and his dog!!!



Beverly and her horse



1954 Jerry painting new house

Initially, I intended to conclude this family history with my parents' generation, as my grandparents had all found their way to Minnesota and my parents were first generation Minnesotans. By the time the Foley families homesteaded at Kelliher, one in three Americans were still living on the farm but America was already rapidly becoming an urban society, a change that would be accelerated by the Great Depression and World War II. During the depression years, many young men left home, refusing to be a burden to their families, too often ending up riding the rails and filling the hobo jungles. After the war, however, farm youth were sought after because of their ethic of hard work and creativity in finding solutions to problems.

For years, the Foley family has held reunions that brought together a lot of the descendants of George and Annabelle Foley. I have been impressed over and over by my generation of cousins, recognizing that they took a pioneer spirit with them as they left the farms and small towns. I have also been impressed by their children and grandchildren, who continue to manifest the virtues of the family and make their mark in American life.

### THE GREATEST GENERATION

Tom Brokaw wrote about THE GREATEST GENERATION, those men and women who grew up during the Great Depression, reached adulthood in the 1940's, defended our country in military service or in the war industries during World War II, and afterwards recreated American society with "their values of personal responsibility, duty, honor and faith." World War II, Brokaw argued, pulled America together in a common goal. The older cousins of my generation were among this noteworthy group.

George and Mabel Foley's five sons all served in the navy during World War II. The parents had left the farm in Kelliher after a few years, moving to Duluth, where the Foley boys were raised. Bob, the third son, was working in the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1940 when, on a visit home to Duluth, his older brother Byron suggested that they join the U.S. Navy. Bob took a reduction in pay from his thirty dollars a month from the Civilian Conservation Corps to twenty-one dollars as a recruit in the navy. Bob and Byron were both in the navy for the extent of World War II, continuing on for careers of twenty years active duty and ten years in the naval reserve. Early in the war, the Pecos, the ship that Bob was on was torpedoed and sunk off Java; rescued after five hours in the water, Bob one of 58 survivors. Hearing news that the ship had sunk, Bob's parents thought he was among the casualties until he surprised them with a letter and later by showing up at home one day en route to Philadelphia to join the crew of a new vessel about to be launched. While waiting for the ship to be readied, another of the crew introduced Bob to his sister, Hilda Mary Doyle, who later become Bob's wife of more than sixty years. Bob and Byron served mostly in the Pacific Theater during World War II, with the ship Bob was stationed on hauling troops out of France to the Philippines. When the war ended, this ship picked up dignitaries in the Philippines to witness the surrender of Japan in Tokyo Bay. By this time, Byron, who had served during the war on

the Enterprise, an aircraft carrier, and the U.S.S Woodward, a destroyer, was a Chief and his ship was also at the surrender ceremonies. Bob retired in southern California, working as a trouble man for Southern California Edison and later got involved in lots of volunteer work. Byron served for 35 years with the navy in the Pacific.

George Arnold, the oldest of the five Foley boys, was assigned to the Seabees and sent to Newfoundland to build airstrips, disappointed that he did not get out to sea. After the war, George would return to Duluth to work as a mechanic. Jim joined the navy in 1944 and was assigned to a convoy hauling troops and supplies to England, while the youngest brother, Joe, lied about his age to also enter the navy in 1944, seeing action in the invasion of Normandy. Joe joined the naval reserves after the war and saw action in the Korean War, as did Bob. Jim had a promising career in creating floats for festivals which was cut short by cancer and an early death.

Lyle Downey was farming with his brother Roy near Superior, Wisconsin, when he entered the U.S. military in 1942, and was stationed at Elgin Air Force Base in Florida, serving as an aerial torpedo technician until November, 1945. Returning to Superior after the war, Lyle served on the selective service board until it closed, was very active on the Tri-State Fair Board for over 50 years, served as a 4-H leader for many years, and in 1951 became a field man for Twin Ports Dairy, formerly part of the American Milk Producers' Association. Lyle and Roy showed registered Brown Swiss cattle at the Tri-State Fair for years. Lyle was also a beekeeper and a quarter horse enthusiast. Farmers were needed during the war and Roy stayed to take care of the family farm, married Dolores DeMoss in 1944, and made farming his lifetime task. Roy and Dolores parented three children.

Serving with the U.S. Army in North Africa and in the invasion of Italy, Loyal Peck received the Purple Heart Medal, five bronze battle stars for participating in five specific battles, and the brave arrowhead medal for participating in the amphibious landing in Italy. After his military service, Loyal married Lorraine Krueth, with whom he raised three daughters while living and working in Duluth, Bemidji, St. Paul and Kelliher.

Jack Srok, the eldest child of Jack and Pearl Srok, served as a Sergeant in the U.S. Army during World War II. After military service, Jack logged over 4.5 million miles without an accident as a long distance trucker, married Marjorie Adair and helped raise her daughter, Janice, and died at Nevis in 1996.

A number of spouses of family members also saw military service during World War II. Lloyd Sears, husband of Delphine Downey, was drafted in 1941, serving first for 18 months in statewide training, followed by a year in the Pacific Theater, and another 18 months in Europe. Lloyd served as a communication chief in the field artillery, supporting General Patton's 4th armored division from Normandy to Czechoslovakia. Returning home, Lloyd worked as a milk processor for Twin Ports Dairy, later as a locomotive fireman for the Great Northern Railroad, and then 27 years for Head of the Lakes Electric Cooperative, serving his last thirteen years as general manager. Lloyd and Delphine raised five children at Superior, with Lloyd dying in 2009, preceded in death by Delphine in 2003.

Lester Sanders, husband of Madelyne Peck, was born in Norway but grew up on a farm near Kelliher. His father died when Lester was quite young, leaving eight children, and Lester helped support the family until he was drafted into the army in 1939, ending

up in the thick of fighting in the Pacific Theater, where on a reconnaissance mission behind enemy lines he fell and seriously injured his back, an injury that would permanently trouble him. He tried farming after leaving military service but the physical handicap interfered, so he took a job as Federal Milk Inspector in Superior and later as a milk inspector for Minnesota. Madelyne went to the Twin Cities to work during the war and, during that time, she was my family's image of "Rosie the Riveter." Lester and Madelyne raised five children at Fond du Lac, with Lester dying in 1995 and Madelyne in 2004.

Loddy Brabec, the husband of June Foley, served in the army in World War II, then returned home to farm and run a service station in New Richmond, Wisconsin. June worked in a bank after high school and later helped Loddy with his business. Palmer Carlson, married to Vallee Foley, was needed on the farm during the war.

The spouses of the Peck Twins, Albert Wallin and Arnold Rustad, were farm youth who remained in the Cormorant area during World War II. Unfortunately, with Opal's death in the first year of marriage, Arnold soon left the farm and was separated from the Foley family. Albert and Olive Wallin were pillars of the Cormorant community, with Albert serving as a skilled and trusted mechanic, Olive busy raising their seven children, and both dedicated to their family, relatives, and neighbors. Like Ocie and Violet, they were two of my parents' favorite people. Albert died in 1987 and Olive in 2008.

On my mother's side, Lowell Hallas served in the Navy at the end of World War II. Peggy Hallas' two husbands, Vern Kittleson and Paul Schneider, both served in the army, with Paul in both World War II and the Korean War, while Pat Hallas' future husband, George Schiner, served in the navy, as did my uncle, Ray Perras. Peggy and Mickey Hallas both worked as secretaries during the war years. After her marriage, Peggy was employed as an executive secretary and secretary to the Board of Directors of a company in the Twin Cities. Mickey was employed as an office manager in St. Paul. Patricia Hallas finished her career teaching computer skills at the college level.

Before the war, most families lived in one place, which gave them a certain stability. As service men and defense workers returned to the farms and small villages after the war, they found that not much there had changed, while they had been transformed from youth to adults quite suddenly, and many were ready to move on. On the farm, women were partners in the work and often bore a greater burden than the men. Some of the women who had joined the military or worked in defense were happy to return to homemaking, but many chose to go on working for pay.

## TAIL END OF THE GREATEST GENERATION

Before America's entrance into World War II, our nation was almost completely disarmed; most Americans did not believe that the war concerned them and they opposed any effort to get involved. We had heard President Roosevelt's promise in the 1940 campaign that "your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign war." I remember Dad talking with Harry Hallas and other veterans of the First World War as they remembered the horrors of that experience and did not want to see their youth go through another war. Later, on the other hand, many of us boys who grew up during the war

years had a patriotic spirit as we saw service men in uniform home on leave, read Life magazine, watched newsreels before the movies, and learned about new places like the Bataan Peninsula, Guam, and Iwo Jima. At school, we were taught by retired local teachers pressed back into service (sometimes referred to as “retreads”), which often meant we were deprived of music, art, and coaches for sports. Travel was curtailed during the war years; I visited my grandparents in Brooks in 1941 and did not get far away from home again until I went with Uncle Ocie and Loyal Peck, the latter recently returned from military service, to visit the Downey farm at Superior in 1946. It was rare that any relatives from a distance visited us on the farm during war years as well.

Those of my generation who were not old enough to serve during the years of World War II were still shaped by the values of the depression and war years. We were part of the recovery after the war, clinging to such values as thrift, strong family ties, and appreciation of rural living. Most of us had lived through the last years of the depression and valued hard work, creativity, useful tasks like breaking sod, building houses, repairing machinery, and raising a garden, and we had a deep trust in people learned in the rural setting. We had learned to share and were usually generous, focused on the needs of others as much as on ourselves.

After World War II, our society was much more mobile and changes accelerated. At first, the joy of settling down again as families was stressed in movies like THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES, but folks who remembered the depression years wanted a better life for their families, which led to a massive shift from rural living to life in the suburbs and urban centers. Most of my siblings married spouses who had grown up on farms, but none of us ended up farming.

My brother Bill led the way to college as oldest of the Foley children. After getting his degree in aeronautical engineering from the University of Minnesota, Bill was hired for a program called Svoboda, sending propaganda messages by balloon into Communist Europe. A naval ROTC graduate as well, Bill was pulled into the navy to write the technical reports for the navy’s first nuclear missile submarine, the George Washington. Returning to graduate school at Stanford, Bill completed his PhD at a university then looking at space travel and went on to work for United Technologies in the early days of the space race. When the Russians launched Sputnik in 1957, I wrote a letter to Bill asking why the Russians were ahead of us in the space program, to which he replied that America had the capability to land men on the moon if the U.S. government would let them go ahead with the space technology already developed. Bill spent some years directing research into space travel at United Technologies, rejoiced when some of the hardware his company had designed was left behind on the moon by astronaut Neil Armstrong and his Apollo II crew in 1969, and continued to direct the research labs until United Technologies bought Otis Elevators, at which time he was reassigned to direct engineering for the elevator company. Being a country boy, I innocently wrote Bill about Otis Elevators at that time, assuring him that I knew of Cargill and several other companies that I named but had never even heard of Otis grain elevators. When Bill retired from United Technologies, he formed a company with his son Charles to provide a team of people who could provide technical expertise for smaller companies, believing these companies offered a better hope for the future than did large corporations. Continuing his interest in flying throughout his lifetime, Bill had formed a company that imported European sailplanes for many years. To this day, he continues his hobby of

building and remodeling airplanes. Bill married Cele Winker, a farm girl and they raised four sons.

Mary Foley started her career as a teacher for some years and later worked in secretarial and finance positions. Mary's husband, Jack Kennedy, grew up on a farm but worked in the Twin Cities, where they raised five children. Mary was always very active in volunteer work, especially among the poor, even when she did not have a lot at home. She died in 2011.

My brother Larry devoted his life to the education of children. After completing his degree in agricultural education at the University of Minnesota, Larry started his teaching career at Goodridge, Minnesota, and then returned to the University for graduate studies before working as a school counselor at Elbow Lake, Minnesota. Larry later accepted an invitation to serve as principal at Kelliher, going on to become superintendent, leaving his hometown when there was talk of closing the school at Kelliher to become superintendent at Byron, Minnesota. Larry moved on to Wadena as superintendent in 1972 and, after his retirement in 1995, filled in as interim superintendent in Wadena, Park Rapids, Verndale, and Herman. As one of his friends noted, "Whenever schools got into a jam, he pulled them out." Larry was very involved in community life in Wadena, prompting a person who served with him on the Tri-County Hospital Board to comment that "Larry was a pillar of a small community, one of those people looked to for direction and advice, and provided some great leadership for the Board." Named an unsung hero by the Pioneer Journal in 1995, he was described by an anonymous writer as "A man of integrity, commitment and faith, a reflection of our basic character, our basic goodness as a community." Larry had married a local girl, Yvonne Erpelding, in 1958, raised a family of eight children, and died of a brain tumor in 2000.

My brother Raymond (Rick) was a pioneer and genius in computer technology. About the time I learned what a computer was, I marveled as Rick and another computer expert talked on and on in a language that I did not understand. Rick traveled the world as a Unisys Systems Analyst for the U.S. Naval Defense System. Rick had a love for flying and had dropped out of flight training in the U.S. Air Force when it became mandatory for pilots to sign up for a career in the military, but ended his Unisys career spending his last ten years at Hill Air Force Base in Clearfield, Utah. Raising five sons with his wife, Gladys Mary Legner, Rick spent years in leadership with the Boy Scouts and Civil Air Patrol. Rick and Mary were very active in helping others in the community and in their church. Rick's retirement dream of a log cabin in the pine woods was fulfilled when he moved back to northern Minnesota but cut short by his death in 2008.

The other members of Bill and Alma's family also continued the family spirit. I (Gerald) served as a priest; Mike managed the family farm for a few years and then had a career as an adult vocational agriculture instructor and, after marrying a local farm girl, JoAnn Smischney, added another five Foley's to the family; Patricia started her adult life as a Sister of St. Joseph, then switched to a lifelong career as a social worker and, with her husband, John Ruffing, a farm lad from Adrian, Minnesota, raised five children; Alan served first as a teacher and then as a school principal and superintendent, also married a local farm girl, Jane Neft, and added five Foley's to the clan; and Beverly had a career as a barber, avid hunter, and mother, choosing to live in rural Wyoming with her husband, Houston Ars.

The problems we faced as a nation after World War II were staggering. World War II ended after America dropped the Atomic Bomb on Japan, and we would live from that time on with awareness of the dangers of a nuclear war. America kept a strong military so many of our generation, their spouses, and their children served in the American occupation forces scattered around the world or were involved in the Korean and Vietnam wars. A number got their military start by participating in ROTC programs while in college. In my family, Bill served in the Navy during the Korean War, and Larry served in the Army and Rick in the Air Force during peace times.

Richard Srok served in the U.S Air Force from 1947 to 1953, then went on to work as a field engineer for General electric, married June Johnson, with whom he raised four children, and died at Park Rapids in 1991. The youngest of the Srok boys, Tom, served as a pilot in the Vietnam War, worked as an engineer for General Electric, married Anita Nyle Crowley, with whom he raised four children, and lives in Georgia. Their sister, Darlene Srok McDonald worked as a police officer in Los Angeles County while raising seven daughters. Georgia Srok Pomroy worked as a registered nurse in Minneapolis.

Richard (Buzz) Foley, a Minnesota farm boy, served in the army and later served as postmaster at Bruno for 27 years. Buzz was active in Republican politics, and operated a restaurant in McGrath for a time with his wife, Irene Passow, with whom he also parented five children.

Francis Corbin, another farm boy, served in the army and then spent years working with heavy equipment in construction around Seattle, much of it in constructing freeways. The Corbins raised seven children.

John Garing, the husband of Geraldine Perras, was a career man in the U.S. Air Force, retiring as a Colonel working at the Air Force Headquarters in Washington, D.C., and then went on to work more years at the Pentagon. John had a number of prestigious assignments, such as Presidential Trip Officer for the White House Communications Agency and staff officer in the International Military Staff at NATO in Brussels, Belgium.

All three children of Max and Ferne Perras had professional careers. Geraldine, the youngest sibling, had a degree in nursing and worked as business manager of a clinic after following her husband for some years on his military assignments around the world. John and Geraldine raised four children. Gregory Perras was an accountant, managing his own accounting and tax preparation business. Greg and his wife, Mary Dumas, parented two children. Colleen Perras spent much of her adult life working in Urgent Care medical practice. Her husband, Thomas Smith, worked in corporate management for Exide in Atlanta and together they raised three children.

Tom Brokaw said about this generation that "it is, I believe, the greatest generation any society has ever produced." Their military valor has been celebrated in many books and movies. In reality, one could make a similar argument for those who opened up the nation's farms or those who continue to build a more responsible and compassionate America today.

## THE NEXT GENERATION

“I remember how shocked I was the first time I saw a \$1.00 price tag at Woolworth’s” (Pearl Foley Srok). Pearl’s shock is reflected in the conversations many adults have about the younger generation today. When older folks gather, the conversation often leads to subjects such as the materialism of youth today, the drop in church attendance, the use of drugs, smaller families, the television society, inflation, and the failure of public education. The rate of change has been a bit overwhelming for many of my generation. Kelliher, Finlayson, and Brooks all have empty buildings, lack of employment, and decreasing populations. Railroads have left many rural towns, leading to closure of the grain elevators, then the closing of schools and stores. I remember my sad feelings when the school at Saum closed, merging into the public school at Kelliher; the article in the Minneapolis newspaper referred to this as progress, while citing the careers of some of the graduates, such as the current chief justice of the state supreme court, making me wonder if closing this school really did reflect progress. The farm that I grew up on and once dreamed of farming is now farmed by Paul Weidenborner, who lives over a mile north of our home place and farms all the open land on both sides of the road between these farms.

Older generations in the past also worried about their children and grandchildren’s future. While many of our ancestors left home and even traveled across the ocean to begin a new life, I doubt that they had to deal with such overwhelming changes and challenges as our young do today. In spite of the challenges, I am highly impressed with most of the next generation in our family when I meet them at family reunions and other gatherings. Interestingly, I note that while many of the Greatest Generation members are liberal, many of the younger members tend to be conservatives. Above all, I witness their commitment to service, their generosity, and their talents, which assures me that the spirit we inherited continues to be passed on.

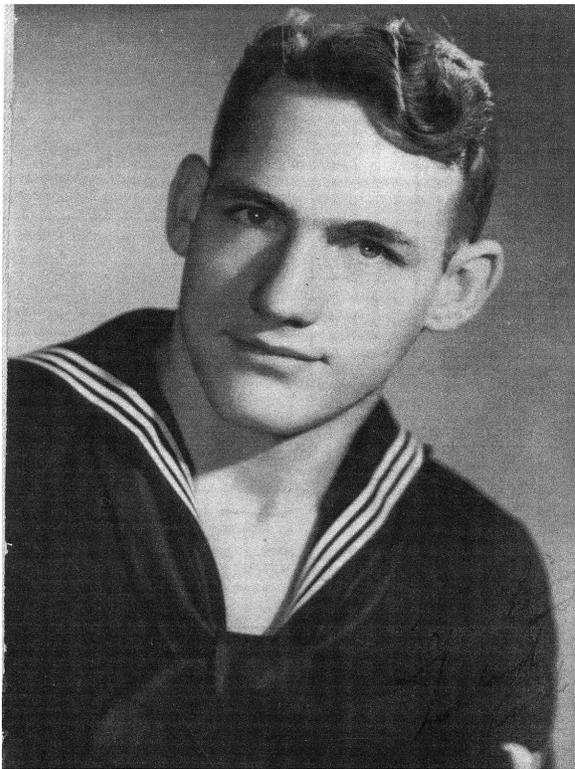
Americans were disillusioned in 1946 when the Russians developed an atomic bomb, but perhaps even more so when they launched Sputnik, the first spacecraft, in 1957. The Russian’s success spurred a renewed interest in science and math, with President Kennedy urging Americans on in the race to the moon. America’s moon landing in 1969 showed our nation’s determination, scientific and technical skills, and enabled advances in computer technology, electronics, and much more. Many members of the next generation of our family continue to advance knowledge and technology today in fields like medicine, research, and education. That’s the subject of the final chapter, “Into the Professions”.



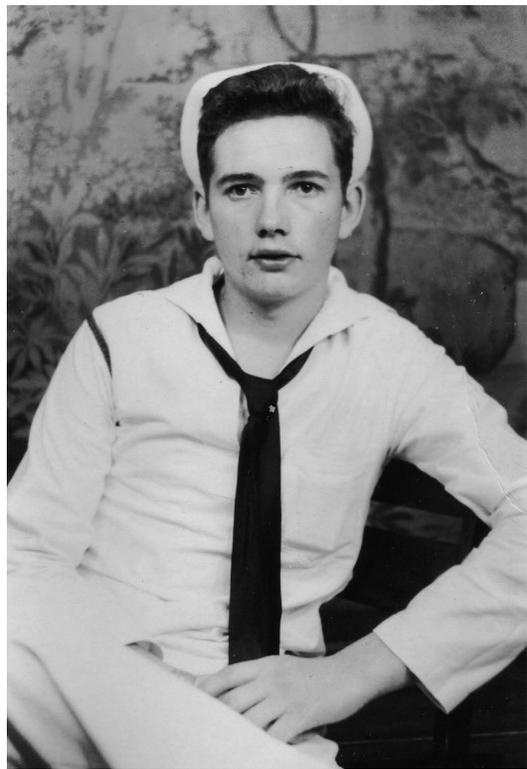
Lyle Downey, WW II



Byron and George Foley, WW II



Bob Foley, WW II



Lowell Hallas, WW II



Jim Foley, WWII



Joe Foley, WW II



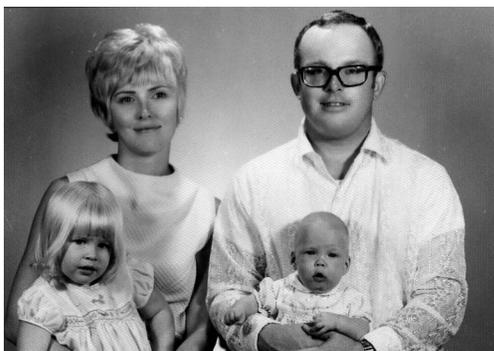
Dick Srok in Korea



Roy and Dolores Downey,  
Clarence and Ardyce Haglin



Jack and Marjorie Srok



John and Geraldine Garing



Arnold Rustad with Peck Family



Twins Olive and Opal Peck



Lester and Madelyne Sanders



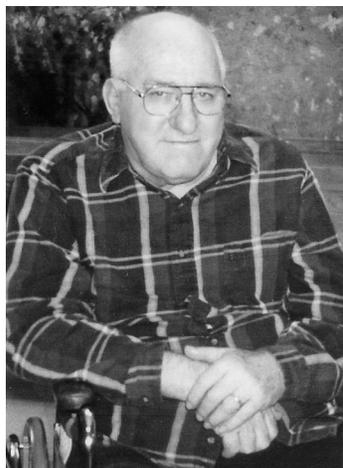
Palmer and Vallee Carlson



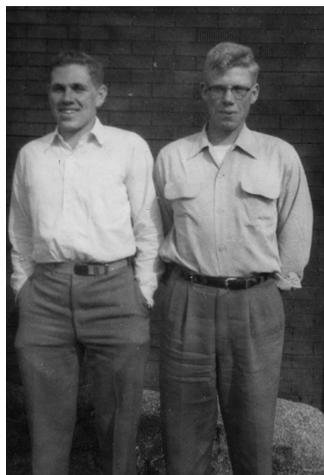
Francis and Rose Corbin



Geraldine Perras, Beverly Foley, Colleen Perras, Susan Skwarek



Richard "Buzz" Foley



Jerry and Larry Foley



Mary Foley



Lloyd and Delphine Sears



Mike and JoAnn Foley



Bette Srok Ringstad,  
Norma and Gloria



Bill Foley



Jerry, Ray and Mary Foley with Olive



Olive Wallin, Loyal and Lorraine Peck



June Foley Brabec and Bob Foley  
House where June was born at Kelliher



George Foley, Bob and Hilda Foley

In a eulogy for his mother, Mary Foley Kennedy, Kevin Kennedy referred to their family pilgrimages to “visit Grandpa and Grandma Foley on the end of their lonely dirt road at Kelliher.” A sign now marks the road where all the members of the Grandfather George Foley’s family once lived as “FOLEY ROAD NE.” At the end of that “lonely dirt road” was a valuable school of learning that prepared my siblings for life beyond the farm. Toward the end of the eulogy, Kevin added: “I want to mention how important giving was to my mother...large vats of soup that we would bring down to Branch Two and serve to homeless people...sandwiches handed out...shopping at Cub Foods for Store-to-Door...respite care for shut-ins...lap robes for veterans.” This trait not only passed down to Mary’s children but seems to permeate the broader family.

Almost all of those I referred to as the “Next Generation” of our family in the previous chapter were born in the era called the “Baby Boom Generation,” which embraced those born between 1946 and 1964. Most of their lives reflect continuity with the values of their Greatest Generation parents, even though their lives have been shaped by the rapid changes in society since World War II. This generation was just moving toward adulthood when they were inspired by President John F. Kennedy’s words: “Ask not what your country can do for you but ask what you can do for your country.” They went through the turbulent 1960s, witnessing the shootings of John and Ted Kennedy and Martin Luther King, the Vietnam War, the civil rights and anti-war protests, and later the Watergate Scandal, which took away some of their optimism and engendered cynicism and a distrust of government. While many entered into professional life, they also embraced social causes and have continued to value service, commitment and hard work. One major difference between those who grew up in the Greatest Generation and their children and grandchildren today is reflected in annual Christmas letters telling where around the world each family has vacationed, while previously farm families were strapped with daily chores and lack of money and rarely got away from the farm for any kind of vacation. Since this generation of the family numbers about 150 persons, I will not attempt to chronicle all their lives but will share the story of several families and then cite certain individuals who represent this trend into the professions among our family.

I begin with the families of my first two siblings to die, namely Larry and Rick Foley. Larry and Vonnie’s life was marked by strong family values, stress on education, and care for others. David, their eldest, became a cardiologist at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, married a lovely widow, and together they have parented four children and been quite involved in community and school affairs. Several others in Larry’s family followed the medical profession, with Gary working as an emergency room doctor in Duluth and Tom as Senior Consultant in Cardiovascular Radiology at the Mayo Clinic. Mark got his PhD in biochemistry and also works at Mayo designing diagnostic computer software. DeeAnn, the older daughter, applied to the University of Minnesota Medical School the year she married Dwayne Stenlund, but was not accepted on the basis that being a first year medical student and newly married wife would be too stressful. The sexist mentality was apparent when her brother, Gary, applied under similar conditions and was accepted, even though he then chose to wait a year to enter medical school.

DeeAnn works as a medical technologist and has also taught school. Steven also works in the medical field in food research for the Department of Agriculture.

Debbie Foley Sauer especially reflects the value of family life. After college, Debbie worked for a time at a home for indigent persons, then obtained her master's degree in nutrition at Iowa State University, where Jeff Sauer was studying to be a veterinarian. The Sauers have ten children, all of them home schooled by Debbie. Debbie and Jeff have been heavily involved in community activities in Long Prairie, such as 4-H, as have their children. The oldest three children are at this time students at North Dakota State University. The family's Christmas letter each year is an impressive litany of the children's many activities.

James Foley, another of Larry's sons, started his career as an officer in the Army but was forced to leave that calling for medical reasons. He returned to graduate school and now works as an insurance executive. Each of Larry and Vonnie's eight children has at least a master's degree, all are married to spouses with college degrees, and all eight couples are involved in community service along with their professions.

Ray and Marie Foley's children have taken diverse paths. The eldest, John, is a college professor in the New York State University system. Richard is Worldwide Production Manager for SAS, traveling internationally for this South Carolina corporation. Philip is a fireman in Couer d'Alene, Idaho, where both he and his wife, Gretchen, are also Emergency Medical Technicians. Patrick works as a computer expert for the United States government. Gerald is vice president of a bank in Phoenix. As Patrick Foley said at his father's funeral, "Dad had a lifelong passion for helping out...The legacy of Raymond lives on in five strong sons that have given home to the retarded, assisted those less fortunate, saved lives, and continue to serve a community that may not always give back."

On the Perras side, the oldest of Max and Nellie Perras' grandchildren, Peggy Hallas, had one daughter, Susan Kittleson Skwarek, who works as a paralegal in a financial office. The youngest of Max and Nellie's grandchildren was Geraldine Perras, whose four children are all professionals. Geraldine reported in her 2011 Christmas letter: "Chris has a new job developing a recruiting department in her new company" (she previously was a recruiter for the U.S. Government). "Stacy is still at Hewlett-Packard. Kevin (Stacy's husband) is the liaison of the TSA at Dulles Airport. Matt is a consultant with Microsoft, Kathryn (Matt's wife) is a programmer with Marriot Hotels. Nicole is in her seventh year of teaching hearing impaired kids and Mike (Nicole's husband) is a program manager and engineer at GSA." Even though Geraldine is the youngest member of the Greatest Generation in our family, Geraldine and John Garing have six grandchildren.

## ALL OVER THE WORLD

When I was involved in the Red River Valley Historical Society, a college professor told us about a study showing that youth from Northwestern Minnesota and Eastern North Dakota had achieved above the national average, were often in leadership positions, and had relocated around the world. I believe this is reflected in our family. Many share the independent spirit of farmers, learned by working alongside their parents,

and were motivated to seize the opportunities presented in the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Most grew up in two parent families and, with the longevity of life at this time, had grandparents to help in their formative years.

The field of medicine has advanced greatly, from the discovery of Penicillin and Sulfa during World War II and the pharmaceutical advances afterward, the development of medical technologies, and Medicaid and other insurance programs. Many besides those already mentioned have embraced the medical and health field. Charlie Foley, Bill's son, is a reconstructive surgeon in Maine. Francis Corbin, Jr. had his chiropractic clinic in Seattle. Kelly Foley, Buzz's son, is a registered nurse in Kirksville, Missouri, and Carmen Foley McClennan, Mike's daughter, is a registered nurse working in psychiatric care for children and adolescents for the State of Minnesota. Mike's daughter, Michelle Foley Fleming, has her own nutritionist consulting business. Darcy Foley Engelhart, Alan's daughter, works as a dental technician in Moorhead. Dick Srok's daughter, Linda Oas, is a nurse and his daughter, Angela Smith, is a medical lab technician. Dick's son, Tony, is a chemical dependency counselor. June Foley Brabec's daughter, Rita, is a hospital lab technician on the Iron Range of Minnesota and her son Tyrone is a medical supplies logistics supervisor in Lincoln, Nebraska. Sandra Sears Hepburn is a Swedish Massage therapist in Maple, Wisconsin.

Minnesota has a reputation for good public education, is a leader in training teachers, and is blessed with access to colleges and universities. Education was important to immigrants, e.g. those coming from some areas of Canada had very little schooling but were strong proponents of schooling once they reached Minnesota. Education is perhaps the most common professional choice of family members. Jennifer Foley, Alan's daughter, works as Director of Applied Research for the Department of Science and Engineering at St. Cloud State University. Dennis Sears works in the University of Wisconsin system, Lyle Wallin, Olive Peck Wallin's son, teaches on the Red Lake Indian Reservation. Three of Mary Foley Kennedy's children are teachers; Kelly (Gaughlin) went to France to teach English, married there, and teaches at an English speaking school in Fountainbleau, Tara works in Special Education for the Minneapolis Schools, and Kevin teaches at Shattuck Academy in Faribault, Minnesota. Traci Smith Ruth works in Kinder Care in Atlanta.

It is obvious in reading the diaries of Violet Foley and Florence Perras that church life was integral to previous generations of our family. Women generally were not allowed in politics and in the professions, but they were very active in church work and ministries in the community. Even though attendance at church has dropped off for this generation, church ministry and spiritual care still occupies a number of family members. Lee Downey works with Six Seasons Ministry as an evangelist at motorcycle and snowmobile rallies; his wife, Marilyn, is also ordained and works with Lee. Pat Sanders Aspling and her husband, Bob, are ordained ministers working in Duluth. Carol Wallin Olson attended Oak Hills Christian College along with her husband, Paul Olson, who is now a pastor in Northern Minnesota. Shawna Foley, Alan's daughter, is a Presentation Sister, currently working as a youth minister at St. James Cathedral in Jamestown, North Dakota, and also as Vocation Director for the sisters. Valdeen Peck, Loyal's daughter, and her husband, Art Hanks, are very involved in music ministry in their church and community. This love for church and worship appears to pass on to many in yet another generation beyond these folks.

A number of family members have either gone into business for themselves or work in the business field. Mike Foley's daughter, Julie Foley Stracka, works in the finance office for St. Benedict's College in St. Joseph, Minnesota, and his son, Brian, travels in and beyond the United States as a bank examiner. Bill Foley's Son, Chris, has a business working with race cars, and his son, Neal, runs an organic cooking school in Maine. Jonathan Ruffing manages his job in advertising from Panama, where he and his wife, Yaneth, have chosen to live. Greg Foley, Alan's son, works for Artspace. Christopher Perras, Greg's son, manages a Target store in Wisconsin, and Pam Smith Johnson, Colleen Perras' daughter, works for an insurance company. Timothy Brabec works in airline management. Mark Carlson, the son of Palmer and Vallee Carlson, has a greenhouse at Finlayson and his sister Paulette's husband, Donald Lafferty, is a pork producer. Dawn Sears Koski owns Kreation by Dawn, serving art and craft shows, and Dan Wallin does similar work in California. Ronda Foley Stewart, George A. Foley's daughter, is an independent design professional. Daniel Sears is a director for SSA and Company, a business consulting firm.

Military life has also been a choice or fate of several family members. James Foley, Jr, the son of James and grandson of George Foley, died in Vietnam when he stepped on a land mine. Melanie Foley, Alan's daughter, and her husband, Alan Schuller, completed ROTC training for the Marines; Melanie served her term and then retired to be a housewife and mother while Alan continues as a Marine lawyer. Trent Brabec served several tours of duty in Iraq with the National Guard. Three of his siblings also had military experience – Timothy in the Navy/Air Force, Ted in the Air Force, and Tyrone in the Navy.

What about other family members? Jackie Sanders Farm works as a lawyer in the Twin Cities. Tammy Wallin Jedlicka is employed as a hospital social worker in Bemidji. Becky Ruffing Walther works as a financial analyst for a CIA contractor in Virginia. Barry Kennedy works with the Boy Scouts. Rich Smith works in the Engineering Lab at Exide in Atlanta. Wendy Wallin Krueth provides day care in her home. Lynn Foley, Mike's daughter, works in child day care in St. Cloud. Georgia Srok Pomroy's son is an engineer while one of her daughters is a college teacher and the other a business woman. Bob Foley's son, Tom, worked on railroad engines and his daughter, Sharon Eastvold, is a speech pathologist. Todd Brabec is a custodial engineer for the hospital in New Richmond, Wisconsin. Bill Carlson is an electrician for the State of Minnesota.

With six percent of the world's population in 1960, the United States accounted for two thirds of the world's manufacturing output. After that, America began a long process of deindustrialization, moving many of the manufacturing and service jobs to third world nations. Consequently, we have also seen a high rate of unemployment around the United States. Fortunately, most members of our family were not employed in factory work and jobs that went overseas. The creativity, hard work, and personal determination learned in farm and small town life has served us well. While the older generation still talks about the "good old days" as farm families, we are at the same time grateful for the conveniences and opportunities provided to those who have left the land

## CONCLUSION

Saudi Arabian astronaut Sultan bin Salmon al-Said, a member of an international space crew, shared an important insight: “The first day we all pointed to our own countries. The third day we all pointed to our continents. By the fifth day, we were all aware of only one earth.”

This history recalls how persons from a number of countries found their way to Canada and later came together in the microcosm of Northern Minnesota. Ours is very much the typical story of North America’s past; however, we became Minnesotans who had little memory or recognition of our roots elsewhere. I started this story by sharing the words of Cicero: “To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain always a child. For what is the worth of human life, unless it is woven into the lives of our ancestors by the records of history.” Writing this history has made me deeply grateful for those ancestors who helped create our family today.

In doing some of the research for family genealogy and history, I had the joyful experience of walking where family members walked on Ile d’Orleans, around Quebec, LaPrairie, Beauce, and other places in Canada and in the United States. I came to appreciate the sacrifices our ancestors made: Louis Hebert and Marie Rollet, coming as the first permanent French settlers in Canada more than 400 years ago; Michel Bergeron and other Acadians avoiding capture and traveling for months through the forests to reach Quebec; the Coureurs des Bois as they celebrated their freedom and love for adventure in the woods of North America; Susanne Willis as she gave up her comfortable and prestigious position to follow her heart; Violet Foley Peck as she abandoned her busy network of family and friends to move to the woods of Kelliher to begin married life. These folks were survivors who defined our family traditions of hard work, commitment, and strong family values. There is much more to their story – our story – than I have been able to capture, yet I hope that our lives “woven into the lives of our ancestors” might instill a confidence and family loyalty that will serve us well in the future. “Unless the grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains but a grain of wheat...”

“[Marie Rollet], and she alone, has to speak to us today for the countless hundreds of silent French-Canadian frontierswomen who shared with their husbands the hardships and dangers of the early life, and at the same time brought up those large families of sons and daughters that have ever been the pride of their nation...She was a thrifty, provident, hospitable matron, an excellent manager of her house and her resources. She was ambitious and a woman of strong character...” (Isabel Skelton, *The Backwoodswoman*).

“Well, we landed here (Kelliher) last night about ten o’clock...I think we are going to like it here quite well. We’re entirely surrounded by woods. We have a cozy little four roomed cabin. I wish I wasn’t so far from home though, 198 miles.” Violet Foley Peck, August 8, 1917.

“They call us pioneers, our group is getting small.” (Pearl Foley Srok) From Pearl’s memorial: “Pearl was a spunky little lady who did a lot and saw a lot during her 99 years. She has 21 grandchildren scattered everywhere with an unknown count of great- and great-great-grandchildren.”

“...but if it dies, it produces much fruit” (John 12:24).

## GENEALOGY of the FAMILY

- 5) Philip Fallu
- 4) George Fallu (Jersey Island)
  - 5) Susanne Lafavre
- 3) Brochet George Fallu
  - 6) Edouard McIntyre (Scotland)
  - 5) John Baptiste McIntyre (Scotland)
    - 7) Patrick McKenzie
  - 6) Bridget McKenzie
    - 7) Marie Hare (Scotland)
- 4) Genevieve McIntyre
  - 8) Barthelemy Bergeron (France)
  - 7) Michel Bergeron
    - 9) Jean Serreau (France)
    - 8) Genevieve Serreau
      - 9) Marguerite Boileau (France)
  - 6) Etienne Bergeron Damboise
    - 10) Abraham Dugas (Fr)
    - 9) Martin Dugas
      - 11) Germaine Doucet (Fr)
      - 10) Marguerite Doucet
        - 11) Marie Bourgeois (Fr)
    - 8) Abraham Dugas
      - 10) Claude Petitpas (Fr)
      - 9) Marguerite Petitpas
        - 10) Catherine Bugaret
  - 7) Marie Dugas
    - 11) Jean Claude Landry (Fr)
    - 10) Rene Landry
      - 11) Marie Salle (Fr)
    - 9) Claude Landry
      - 10) Perrine Bourg (Fr) 1620-86
    - 8) Marie Madeleine Landry
      - 11) Jean Terriot (Fr)
      - 10) Claude Terriot
        - 11) Perrine Bourg (Reau) (Fr)  
(1611-72)
      - 9) Marguerite Terriot
        - 11) Francois Gauterot (Fr)
        - 10) Marie Gauterot
          - 12) Pierre Lejeune (Fr)
          - 11) Edmee Lejeune
            - 12) MicMac Indian
  - 5) Reine Bergeron
    - 9) Pierre Couroit
    - 8) Pierre Couroit
      - 9) J. Saint-Vincent
    - 7) Pierre Couroit
      - 9) Robert Varin
      - 8) Marie Varin
        - 9) Marie Lapotre
    - 6) Claire Couroit
      - 10) Leonard Vautour (Fr)
      - 9) Andre Vautour

- 10) Marie Codbac (Fr)
- 8) Joachim Vautour
  - 10) Jean Cherlot (Fr)
  - 9) Catherine Cherlot
  - 10) Jeanne Mansion (Fr)
- 7) Angelique Vautour
  - 10) Jean Maranda (Fr)
  - 9) Michel Maranda (Fr)
  - 10) Jeanne Cousin (Fr)
- 8) Marie Madeleine Maranda
  - 11) Yves Jeanne
  - 10) Robert Jeanne
  - 11) Marie Duschene (Fr)
- 9) Marie Jeanne
  - 11) Simon Savard (Fr)
  - 10) Francoise Savard
  - 11) Marie Hourdouil (Fr)
  
- 2) George Foley (Fallu)
  - 4) Richard Manwarren
  - 3) Marie Manwarren
  - 4) Mary Ann Murray
- 1) William Foley
  - 3) Joseph Willis (England)
  - 2) Annabelle Willis
  - 3) Susannah Davies (England)
  
- 8) Pierre Perras dit Lafontaine (Fr)
- 7) Jean Perras
  - 8) Denise Lemaitre (Fr)
- 6) Andre Perras
  - 8) Pierre Roy (Fr)
- 7) Madeleine Roy
  - 9) Jean Duchesne (Fr)
  - 8) Catherine Ducharme (Fr)
  - 9) Anne Lelievre (Fr)
- 5) Etienne Perras
  - 8) Francois Leber (Fr)
- 7) Francois Leber
  - 8) Jeanne Testard (Fr)
- 6) Catherine Leber
  - 8) Jean Magnan (Fr)
  - 7) Marie Ann Magnan
  - 8) Marie Moitie (Fr)
- 4) Joseph Perras
  - 8) Mathieu Gervais (Fr)
- 7) Mathieu Gervais
  - 9) Hugues Picard (Fr)
  - 8) Michelle Picard
  - 9) Ann Deliercourt (Fr)
- 6) Jean Baptiste Gervais
  - 9) Andre Robideau (Spain)
  - 8) Joseph Robideau
  - 9) Jeanne Denote (Fr)
- 7) Marie Joseph Robidoux

- 9) Francois Seguin (Fr)
    - 8) Jeanne Seguin
    - 9) Jeanne Petit (Fr)
  - 5) Marie Josephte Gervais
    - 9) Etienne Demers (Fr)
    - 8) Joseph Demers
    - 9) Francoise Morin (Fr)
  - 7) Jacques Demers
    - 9) Jacques Guiteau (Fr)
    - 8) Marguerite Guiteau
    - 9) Marguerite Rebours (Fr)
  - 6) Marie Ann Demers
    - 9) Denis Brosseau (Fr)
    - 8) Pierre Brosseau
    - 9) Marie Madeleine Hebert (Fr)
  - 7) Marie Barbe Brosseau
    - 9) Jean Bourbon (Fr)
    - 8) Marie Barbe Bourbon
    - 11) Francois Benoit (Fr)
    - 10) Paul Benoit
    - 11) Dimanche Chatellain (Fr)
    - 9) Anne Marie Benoit
    - 10) Elizabeth Gobinet (Fr)
- 3) Vital Perras
  - 9) Toussaint Giroux (Fr)
  - 8) Raphael Giroux
  - 9) Marie Godard (Fr)
  - 7) Pierre Francois Giroux
    - 9) Paul Vachon
    - 8) Marie Madeleine Vachon
    - 10) Noel Langlois (Fr)
    - 9) Marguerite Langlois
    - 10) Francoise Grenier (Fr)
  - 6) Jean-Baptiste Giroux
    - 10) Jean Maheu (Fr)
    - 9) Pierre Maheu
    - 10) Michelle Chauvin (Fr)
    - 8) Charles Maheu
      - 11) Robert Drouin (Fr)
      - 10) Robert Drouin (Fr)
      - 11) Marie Dubois (Fr)
    - 9) Jeanne Drouin
      - 11) Zacharie Cloutier (Fr)
      - 10) Anne Cloutier
      - 11) Xainte Dupont (Fr)
  - 7) Marie Angelique Maheu
    - 9) Charles Garnier (Fr)
    - 8) Marie Charlotte Garnier
    - 9) Louise Vezina (Fr)
- 5) Marcel Giroux
  - 8) Pierre Fobert
  - 7) Pierre Robert
  - 8) Angelique Ptolomee
  - 6) Veronique Robert
    - 11) Francois Benoit (Fr)
    - 10) Paul Benoit

- 11) Dimanche Chatellain (Fr)
- 9) Laurent Benoit
- 10) Elizabeth Gobinet (Fr)
- 8) Etienne Benoit
- 10) Louis Tetreau (Fr)
- 9) Marie Francoise Tetreau
- 10) Marie Noelle Landeau (Fr)
- 7) Marie Reine Benoit
- 9) Etienne Campeau (Fr)
- 8) Jeanne Campeau
- 9) Catherine Paulo (Fr)
- 4) Isabelle (Elizabeth) Giroux
- 7) Pierre Pinsonneau
- 6) Pierre Pinsonneau
- 10) Marin Deneau (Fr)
- 9) Charles Deneau
- 10) Louise Lebreuil (Fr)
- 8) Charles Deneau
- 10) Jean Clement (Fr)
- 9) Madeleine Clement
- 10) Madeleine Surget (Fr)
- 7) Genevieve Deneau
- 10) Etienne Demers (Fr)
- 9) Joseph Demers
- 10) Francoise Morin (Fr)
- 8) Marie Anne Demers
- 10) Jacques Guitault (Fr)
- 9) Marguerite Guitault
- 10) Marguerite Rebours (Fr)
- 5) Isabelle Pinsonneau
- 9) Louis Robert
- 8) Francois Robert
- 10) Jean Baptiste Bourgery (Fr)
- 9) Marie Bourgery
- 10) Marie Gendre (Fr)
- 7) Jacques Robert
- 10) Jean Lanctot (Fr)
- 9) Francois Lanctot
- 11) Etienne Vien (Fr)
- 10) Marie Vien
- 11) Marie Denote (Fr)
- 8) Marie Lanctot
- 10) Jacques Menard dit Lafontaine (Fr)
- 9) Marguerite Menard
- 10) Catherine Fortier [Forestier] (Fr)
- 6) Marie Marguerite Robert
- 9) Jacques Martimbeau (Fr)
- 8) Jean Martin Martimbeau
- 10) Valiquette dit Laverd (Fr)
- 9) Helene Veliquette
- 10) Renee Loppe (Fr)
- 7) Marie Margaret Martimbeau
- 9) Jean Gareau (Fr)
- 8) Marguerite Gareau
- 9) Anne Talbot (Fr)
- 2) Max Perras

- 9) Nicolas Paternostre (Fr)
- 8) Jean Paternaude
  - 9) Marguerite Breton (Fr)
- 7) Jean Francois Patenaude
  - 9) Andre Robidoux (Fr)
  - 8) Marie Robidoux
    - 9) Jeanne Denote (Fr)
- 6) Jean Baptiste Patenaude
  - 9) Charles Boyer (Fr)
  - 8) Antoine Jacques Boyer
    - 9) Marguerite Tenard (Fr)
- 7) Marie Boyer
  - 8) Marie Perras
- 5) Andre Patenaude
  - 8) Jean Francois Pasquier (Fr)
- 7) Noel Paquet
  - 8) Marie Marguerite Marcoux (Fr)
- 6) Marie Paquet-Lariviere
  - 7) Marguerite Baudet
- 4) Julien Patenaude
  - 8) Georges Cadoret (Fr)
  - 7) Francois Cadoret
    - 10) Marin Boucher (Fr)
    - 9) Pierre Boucher
      - 10) Perrine Mallet (Fr)
    - 8) Barbe Boucher
      - 10) Pierre St. Denis (Fr)
      - 9) Marie St. Denis
        - 10) Vivien Brunelle (Fr)
- 6) Jean Francois Cadoret
  - 9) Rene Lanceleur (Fr)
  - 8) Rene Lanceleur
    - 10) Mathurin Langevin (Fr)
    - 9) Elizabeth Langevin
      - 10) Marguerite Mahey (Fr)
- 7) Francoise Catherine Lanceleur
  - 8) Marie Anne Ferre
- 5) Marie Madeleine Cadoret
  - 9) Augustin dit Hebert (Fr)
  - 8) Ignace Hebert
    - 9) Adrienne DuVivier (Fr)
- 7) Joseph Hebert
  - 9) Michel Messier (Fr)
  - 8) Jeanne Messier
    - 9) Anne Lemoine (Fr)
- 6) Marguerite Hebert
  - 9) Rene Girard (Fr)
  - 8) Pierre Girard
    - 9) Marie Besnard (Fr)
- 7) Marguerite Girard
  - 10) Claude dit Bouchard
  - 9) Claude Bouchard
    - 10) Marie Ferney (Fr)
  - 8) Marguerite Ursule Bouchard
    - 9) Marguerite Bernard (Fr)

- 3) Marguerite Patenaude
- 9) Marin Boucher (Fr)
  - 8) Pierre Boucher
  - 9) Perrine Mallet (Fr)
  - 7) Prisque Boucher
    - 9) Pierre St. Denis (Fr)
    - 8) Marie St. Denis
    - 9) Vivien Brunelle (Fr)
  - 6) Michel Boucher
    - 9) Pierre Miville (Fr)
    - 8) Francois Miville
    - 9) Charlotte Maugis (Fr)
  - 7) Marie Francoise Miville
    - 8) Jeanne Sauvenier (Fr)
  - 5) Louis Boucher
    - 9) Robert Boulay (Fr)
    - 8) Paul Boulay
    - 9) Francoise Grenier (Fr)
    - 7) Louis Boulay
      - 9) Maurice Paquet (Fr)
      - 8) Marie Francoise Paquet
      - 9) Marie Forget (Fr)
    - 6) Genevieve Boulet
      - 9) Gabriel Samson (Fr)
      - 8) Ignace Louis Samson
      - 9) Francoise Durand (Fr)
    - 7) Angelique Samson
      - 9) Francois Hubert
      - 8) Madeleine Hubert
      - 9) Ursule Turbar (Fr)
  - 4) Julienne Boucher
    - 8) Claude Guerin (Fr)
    - 7) Jacques Guerin
      - 9) Jean Cusson (Fr)
      - 8) Marie Jeanne Cusson
      - 9) Marie Foubert
    - 6) Francois Guerin
      - 9) Jean Senecal (Fr)
      - 8) Pierre Senecal
      - 9) Catherine DeSeine (Fr)
    - 7) Marie Anne Senecal
      - 10) Jacques Pinsonneau (Fr)
      - 9) Francois Pinsonneau
        - 11) Francois Bourassa (Fr)
        - 10) Marie Bourassa
        - 12) Francois Leber (Fr)
        - 11) Marie Leber
        - 12) Jeanne Testard (Fr)
      - 8) Marguerite Pinsonneau
        - 10) Francois Leber
        - 9) Anne Laber
        - 10) Francoise Lafrancoise (Fr)
    - 5) Desanges Guerin
      - 9) Jean Sabourin (Fr)
      - 8) Jean Sabourin
      - 9) Mathurine Renaud (Fr)

- 7) Jean Baptiste Sabourin
  - 9) Guillaume Chartier (Fr)
- 8) Catherine Chartier
  - 9) Marie Faucon (Fr)
- 6) Marie Anne Sabourin
  - 9) Jean d'Quenneville (Fr)
- 8) Antoine Quenneville
  - 9) Denise Marie (Fr)
- 7) Marie Barbe Quenneville
  - 9) Jacques Bourdon (Fr)
- 8) Marie Bourdon
  - 10) Jacques Menard (Fr)
  - 9) Marie Menard
  - 10) Catherine Forestier (Fr)
- 8) Guillaume Cressac (Fr)
- 7) Pierre Cressac
  - 8) Marie Rose (Fr)
- 6) Pierre Cressac dit Toulouse
  - 8) Thomas Subvanne (Fr)
- 7) Catherine Subvanne
  - 9) Jean Paillac (Fr)
- 8) Domenge Paillac
  - 9) Catherine Masse (Fr)
- 5) Charles Toulouse
  - 9) Pierre Vincent (Fr)
- 8) Michel Vincent
  - 10) Denis Gaudet (Fr)
  - 9) Anne Gaudet
  - 10) Martine Gauthier (Fr)
- 7) Pierre Vincent
  - 9) Michel Richard (Fr)
- 8) Marie Richard
  - 9) Madeleine Blanchard (Fr)
- 6) Catherine Vincent
  - 10) Pierre Comeau (Fr)
  - 9) Pierre Comeau
  - 10) Rose Bayol (Fr)
- 8) Abraham Comeau
  - 10) Antoine Bourg (Fr)
  - 9) Jeanne Bourg
  - 10) Antoinette Landry (Fr)
- 7) Anne Comeau
  - 9) Jeanne Pitre (Fr)
- 8) Marguerite Pitre
  - 10) Isaac Pesseley (Fr)
  - 9) Marie Pesselet
  - 10) Barbe Bajolet (Fr)
- 4) Jean Toulouse
  - 9) Jean Quirion
- 8) Julien Quirion
  - 9) Francoise Quirlet (Fr)
- 7) Joseph Quirion
  - 9) Francois Lavergne (Fr)
- 8) Marie Anne Lavergne
  - 9) Francoise Lefrancoise (Fr)

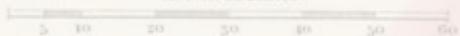
- 6) Ignace Quirion
  - 8) Charles Giroux (Fr)
  - 7) Marguerite Giroux
    - 9) Rene Bruneau (Fr)
    - 8) Marguerite Bruneau
      - 9) Anne Poitreau (Fr)
- 5) Therese Quirion
  - 9) Charles Pouliot (Fr)
  - 8) Jean Pouliot
    - 11) Rene Meunier (Fr)
    - 10) Mathurin Meunier
      - 11) Marie Leroux (Fr)
    - 9) Francoise Meunier
      - 10) Francoise Fafard (Fr)
  - 7) Jean Pouliot
    - 9) Nicolas Audet dit Lapointe (Fr)
    - 8) Madeleine Audet
      - 9) Madeleine Despres (Fr)
- 6) Marguerite Pouliot
  - 8) Pierre Denis (Fr)
  - 7) Anne Denis
    - 8) Marie Godin (Fr)
- 3) Louis Toulouse
  - 9) Nicolas Verieul (Fr)
  - 8) Nicolas Veilleux
    - 9) Marguerite Hyardin (Fr)
  - 7) Augustin Veilleux
    - 9) Pierre Duchesne (Fr)
    - 8) Marie Anne Duchesne
      - 9) Catherine Rivet (Fr)
  - 6) Francois Veilleux
    - 9) Julien Quirion (Fr)
    - 8) Joseph Quirion
      - 9) Marguerite Lavergne (Fr)
    - 7) Francoise Quirion
      - 9) Charles Giroux (Fr)
      - 8) Marguerite Giroux
        - 10) Rene Bruneau (Fr)
        - 9) Marguerite Bruneau
          - 10) Anne Poitreau (Fr)
  - 5) Louis Veilleux
    - 10) Jean Elie (Fr)
    - 9) Jean Helie dit Breton
      - 10) Jeanne Musnier (Fr)
    - 8) Pierre Helie
      - 9) Jeanne Labbe (Fr)
    - 7) Joseph Philippe Helie
      - 9) Robert Pepin (Fr)
      - 8) Rosalie Marie Pepin
        - 10) Jean Crete Fr)
        - 9) Marie Crete
          - 11) Vincent Gaulin (Fr)
          - 10) Marguerite Gaulin (Fr)
          - 11) Marie Bonnemer (Fr)
  - 6) Marie Helie (Genevieve Breton)
    - 9) Etienne Corriveau (Fr)

- 8) Guillaume Corriveau
  - 9) Catherine Bureau (Fr)
- 7) Marie Josette Corriveau
  - 9) Francois Remillard (Fr)
- 8) Marie Remillard
  - 10) Louis Gaboury (Fr)
  - 9) Ann Gaboury
  - 10) Nicole Souillard (Fr)
- 4) Archange Veilleux
  - 10) Louis Gagne (Fr)
  - 9) Louis Gagne
  - 10) Marie Michel (Fr)
- 8) Pierre Gagne
  - 10) Jean Gagnon (Fr)
  - 9) Marie Gagnon
  - 10) Marguerite Cochon (Fr)
- 7) Pierre Gagne
  - 10) Claude Poulin (Fr)
  - 9) Ignace Poulin
  - 10) Jeanne Mercier (Fr)
- 8) Marguerite Poulin
  - 10) Robert Pare (Fr)
  - 9) Marguerite Pare
  - 10) Francoise Lehoux (Fr)
- 6) Louis Gagne
  - 9) Jacques Bluteau (Fr)
- 8) Etienne Bluteau
  - 9) Clare Pare (Fr)
- 7) Marie Reine Bluteau
  - 10) Gregoire Deblois (Fr)
  - 9) Joseph Deblois
  - 10) Francoise Viger (Fr)
- 8) Marie Deblois
  - 10) Symphorien Rousseau (Fr)
  - 9) Marie Margaret Rousseau
  - 10) Jeanne Sinellon (Fr)
- 5) Marie Gagne
  - 11) Zacharie Cloutier (Fr)
  - 10) Zacharie Cloutier
  - 11) Xainte Dupont (Fr)
  - 9) Charles Cloutier
  - 10) Madeleine Barbe Aymard (Fr)
- 8) Francois Cloutier
  - 10) Guillaume Thibault (Fr)
  - 9) Anne Thibault
  - 10) Marie Madeleine Francois (Fr)
- 7) Zacharie Cloutier
  - 10) Jacques David (Fr)
  - 9) Jean David
  - 10) Marie Grandry (Fr)
- 8) Marguerite David
  - 11) Martin Prevost (Fr)
  - 10) Louis Prevost
  - 12) Roch Manitouabeouch  
(Huron)
  - 11) Marie Olivier Sylvestre

- Manitouabeouich  
12) Outchibahabanouk Oueou  
(Algonquin)
- 9) Marie Anne Prevost  
10) Francoise Gagnon (Fr)
- 6) Marie Jeanne Cloutier  
10) Paul Vachon (Fr)  
9) Noel Vachon  
11) Noel Langlois (Fr)  
10) Marguerite Langlois  
11) Francoise Grenier (Fr)
- 8) Noel Vachon  
10) Toussaint Giroux (Fr)  
9) Monique Giroux  
10) Marie Godard (Fr)
- 7) Claire Francoise Vachon  
11) Francois Belanger  
10) Nicolas Belanger (Fr)  
12) Jean Guyon (Fr)  
11) Marie Guyon  
12) Mathurine Robin (Fr)
- 9) Paul Belanger  
11) Paul de Rainville (Fr)  
10) Marie de Rainville  
11) Roline Poete (Fr)
- 8) Marie Jeanne Belanger  
10) Pierre Maheu (Fr)  
9) Jeanne Maheu  
12) Robert Drouin (Fr)  
11) Robert Drouin  
12) Marie Dubois (Fr)  
10) Jeanne Drouin  
12) Zacharie Cloutier (Fr)  
11) Anne Cloutier  
12) Xainte Dupont (Fr)
- Alma Perras Foley and siblings  
2) Nellie Toulouse  
4) Thomas Rochford (Ireland)  
3) Catherine Rochford  
4) Catherine Bellew (Ireland)

# LOWER CANADA.

American Miles.



Rail Roads  
Canals

***History is a gift that connects us to our roots.  
The story of these families is a telling reflection  
of what was happening in North America  
over the past four centuries and a reminder  
that we continue to create history today.***



***The author, Jerry Foley, is the boy standing in front of his mother, Alma, in this picture of the Foley family at Kelliher in 1934.***