

*French-American Heritage Foundation of Minnesota*

# ARTICLE TRIMESTRIEL

## QUARTERLY ARTICLE

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*Painting by Charles William Jefferys, 1925*

Archives Canada C-073710

*Le Statut du Nord*  
French-American Heritage Foundation of Minnesota

Mission Statement: To foster a greater understanding of the rich history and heritage of French-speaking people who helped form what is now Minnesota.

Website: [fahfminn.org](http://fahfminn.org). YouTube: FAHF Minn.



# ONE HUNDRED ASSOCIATES THEN AND 100 ASSOCIATES NOW

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Whoa!! 3000 livres (French currency) to become a partner in the Company of One Hundred Associates? Oops, I'm looking at the wrong 100 Associates.

I'll get to the French-American Heritage Foundation's 100 Associates in a bit, but first a quick look at the Company that gave our Foundation's endowment fund a name.

The French Company of One Hundred Associates (Compagnie des Cent-Associés) was formed in 1627 by Cardinal Richelieu to hold a monopoly on the North American fur trade and to colonize the struggling French communities in North America. Samuel Champlain was a partner, as were persons whose names appear in my family genealogy.

The new Company got off to a rough start. In the summer of 1627 David Kirke, a privateer from England, appeared in the St. Lawrence River and demanded the surrender of Québec. Champlain responded that the settlers would fight to their death rather than surrender, convincing Kirke that the settlement in Québec was stronger than it really was. At that time, the French settlement in Canada numbered less than 100 persons. David Kirke returned to England but came back better armed in 1628.

In early 1628, the Company of One Hundred Associates sent a fleet loaded with supplies and settlers to New France. However, three Kirke brothers had returned to the St. Lawrence, captured the French fleet, and then returned them to France. Consequently, the people of New France had a miserable winter short of food and firewood.

When the Kirkes returned again in 1629, Champlain accepted the conditions for surrender and allowed the Kirkes to take Québec inhabitants back to France. About six families decided to stay in Québec including my ancestors, the Heberts and Couillards, and these families kept the flame of France alive.



In 1632, Québec was returned to the French who quickly faced other problems, including a lack of funds and commitment, wars with the Indigenous peoples, and the emergence of the *coureurs des bois*.

Needing to find new investors, the Company of One Hundred Associates shared portions of their monopoly with subsidizing companies, including the Company of Habitants, in Québec, which brought in new settlers, including more persons in my ancestral heritage.

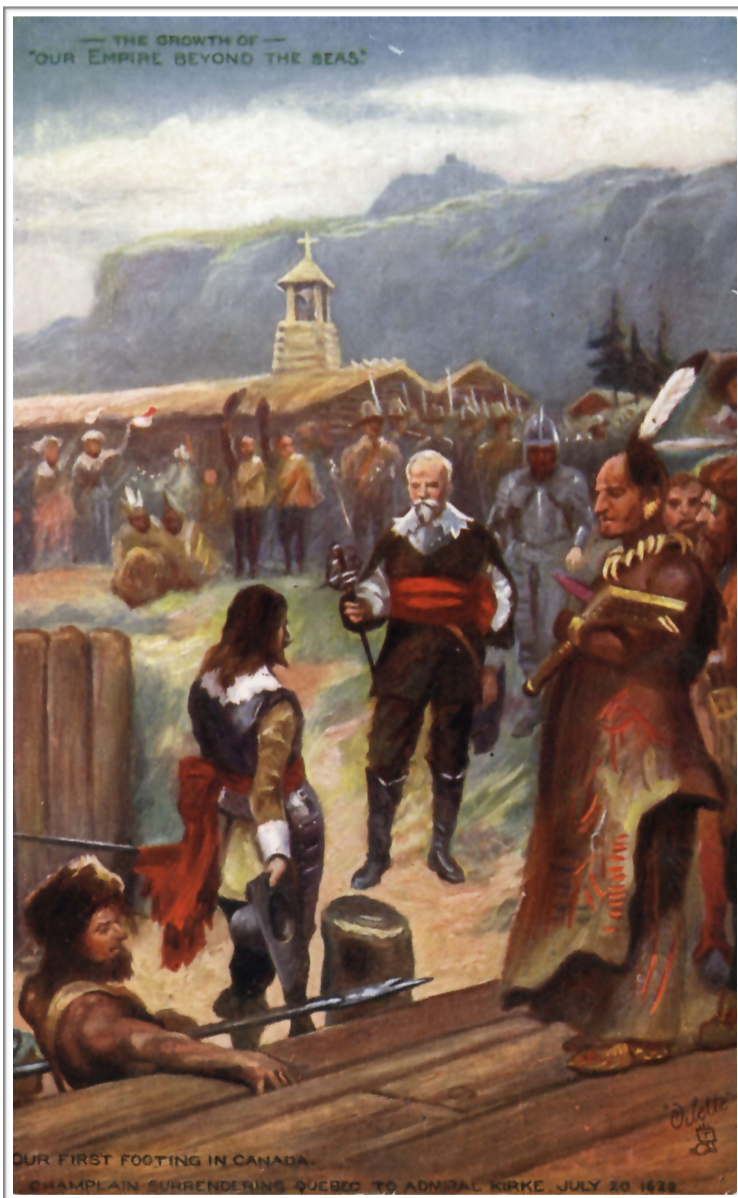
In 1663, the Company of One Hundred Associates and the Company of Habitants were closed by King Louis XIV of France. These companies had existed for investor profits.

In contrast, the French-American Heritage Foundation, and its 100 Associates, have a mission to "foster a greater understanding of the rich history and heritage of French-

speaking people who helped to form what is now Minnesota." The Foundation seeks 100 partners to each donate \$1,000, or more, to the 100 Associates Endowment Fund.

Why is this important? We share an early history of Canada and the United States. Once the English conquered Canada, English became the common language and much of the French history was lost, or suppressed. And, yet through it all, Canada is our nearest neighbor and remains our biggest trading partner.

Because we have a rich history to preserve, the nonprofit French-American Heritage Foundation created an endowment fund that uses the name of the early French fur-trading community. The purpose of the 100 Associates Endowment Fund's earnings is to provide financial support for the Foundation and to fund programs that embrace or feature French heritage in Minnesota and the Midwest. You can find more information about this on our website ([fahfminn.org](http://fahfminn.org)).



*Champlain Surrendering Quebec to Admiral Kirke  
July 20, 1629*

Let me end by noting that history often has surprises. For example, the Kirke brothers' mother was a French woman, by the name of Elizabeth Goudon. David Kirke served as godfather at Elizabeth Couillard's baptism in Québec. David Kirke's daughter was the wife of Pierre-Esprit Radisson, the early French explorer and fur trader who had gone over to the English side in the North American fur trade conflict.

Elizabeth Couillard, granddaughter of the Heberts, married Jean Guyon, one of the founders of the Community of Habitants. Her father Guillaume Couillard was likewise a founder of this enterprise.

The Heberts had also helped raise a Huron/Algonquin girl, Marie Manitouabewich, who married Martin Prevost in the first recorded marriage of an Indigenous person marrying a French settler in Canada. Martin and Marie parented nine children and, after Marie's death, Martin married Marie D'Abancourt, a widow still raising two young sons, Adrian and Louis Joliet. When Louis Joliet and Father Jacques Marquette made their famous exploration trip down the Mississippi, Martin was their chief supporter.

Like these early stories of French families in America, families up to the present hold many interesting and fascinating stories waiting and deserving to be told. They should be told. That's why I am a grateful supporter and member of the French-American Heritage Foundation's 100 Associates. I hope you will consider becoming a partner too.