

Fall 2013

## Le FORUM, Vol. 36 No. 4

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Juliana L'Heureux

Roger Parent

Monsieur Harry Rush Jr.

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# Le FORUM



VOLUME 36, #4

“AFIN D’ÊTRE EN PLEINE POSSESSION DE SES MOYENS”

AUTOMNE/HIVER

THIS ISSUE OF LE FORUM IS DEDICATED IN LOVING MEMORY OF ALICE GÉLINAS.  
ALICE GRACED THE PAGES OF LE FORUM FOR MANY YEARS WITH HER MEMOIRS & POETRY.  
THANK YOU FOR SHARING! MAY YOU REST IN PEACE!



*Alice Dumas Gélinas*

*March 31, 1916 -*

*July 22, 2013*

*WOLCOTT – Alice Dumas Gélinas, 97, of Wolcott, passed away on Monday, July 22, 2013 at Meridian Manor. She was the widow of Dorilla Dumas.*

*Alice was born March 31, 1916 in St. Boniface, P.Q., Canada, daughter of the late Élizée and Désolina (LaVergne) Gélinas. She worked as a seamstress for many years and enjoyed oil painting, reading, and learning anything regarding geography.*

*She wrote stories of the many events in her life, many of which were published and compiled her family tree going back to 1855. Alice had many pen pals and friends, but most importantly, she cherished every moment with her family.*

*She leaves her daughter, Nicole Pelletier and her husband Paul, of Wolcott; her granddaughters, Lynn Rinaldi of Waterbury and her companion Bruno Zavarella, Michelle Cyr and her husband Bob, of Wolcott and Lorie Krol and her husband Tony, of Wolcott; her great-grandchildren, Laura and Stephen Rinaldi, Danielle and Michael Cyr, and Hailey and Alyssa Krol; her cherished nieces and nephews; and her special friends, Rob Rinaldi, Debbie Lusignan, Lisa Michaud and Larry Capozziello.*

*A special thank you to the staff of Meridian Manor for the exceptional care given to Alice.*

*Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year!*

*Joyeux Noël et une Heureuse Nouvelle Année!*



#### Websites:

<http://www.francolib.francoamerican.org/>  
[francoamericanarchives.org](http://francoamericanarchives.org)

other pertinent websites to check out -

**Les Français d'Amérique / French In America**  
**Calendar Photos and Texts from 1985 to 2002**

**The French Connection:**

<http://home.gwi.net/~frenchgen/>



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Les lettres de nos lecteurs sont les bienvenues—Letters to the Editor are welcomed.

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L'équipe de rédaction souhaite que *Le Forum* soit un mode d'expression pour vous tous les Franco-Américains et ceux qui s'intéressent à nous. The staff hopes that *Le Forum* can be a vehicle of expression for you Franco-Americans and those who are interested in us.

*Le Forum* et son staff—Universitaires, gens de la communauté, les étudiants -- FAROG,

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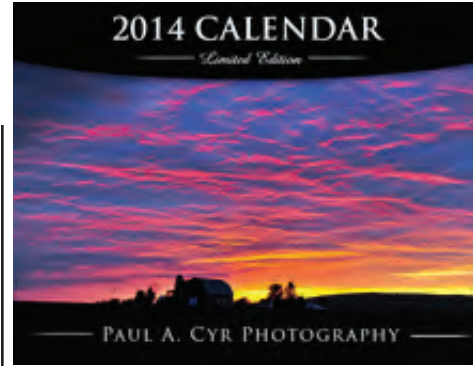
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*Le FORUM*

*Centre Franco-Américain, Orono, ME 04469-5719*

## Dormez bien Madame Gélinas

C'est toujours un jour triste quand quelqu'un meurt. Heureusement, il y a des personnes de qui on peut dire qu'elles ont vécu une vie non seulement longue mais intéressée pratiquement jusqu'à la fin.

Il y a quelques années, Lisa Desjardins Michaud a lancé un appel aux gens qui voudraient communiquer avec une dame âgée du Connecticut. Après avoir perdu sa dernière sœur, Alice Gélinas souhaitait continuer à pouvoir échanger en français.

J'ai commencé par lui envoyer des cartes à Noël ou pour son anniversaire de naissance. Après quelques années d'échange à distance, j'ai profité d'un voyage à l'hiver de 2011 pour aller la rencontrer, sans m'avertir à l'avance. C'est comme ça qu'un après-midi, j'ai cogné à la porte de ce qui était la maison de la fille de Madame Gélinas. Évidemment, Nicole Pelletier était surprise de me voir !

Elle m'a appris que sa mère habitait

dans une chambre d'un manoir pas très loin à Wolcott. Elle l'a appelé pour lui annoncer que son ami d'Ottawa s'en venait la visiter.

Pendant plusieurs heures, nous avons parlé de tout et de rien. Du CD que je venais de lui apporter, de son intérêt à suivre sur une carte les voyages des autres, de mon voyage en cours qui allait me mener à Baltimore et même chez un couple âgé d'amis de baseball qui habitait de l'autre côté de Washington, de son journal dans lequel ma visite allait figurer.

Notre conversation devait être animée parce que, après un certain temps, c'était amusant d'entendre des employées, l'une après l'autre, lui dire qu'elles n'avaient pas vu deux personnes se parler en français comme ça depuis, disons, l'époque de leurs grands-mères. Quand une lui a aussi dit qu'elle avait de la belle visite, Madame Gélinas a roucoulé de plaisir.

En fin d'après-midi, je suis reparti finir

## Sleep well Madame Gélinas

It's always a sad day when someone dies. Luckily, there are people we can say not only lived a long life but also an interested one practically until the end.

A few years ago, Lisa Desjardins Michaud launched an appeal to those who would like to communicate with an old lady from Connecticut. After losing her last sister, Alice Gélinas wanted to continue exchanging in French.

I began my involvement by sending her cards for Christmas or for her birthday. After years of exchanging from a distance, I took advantage of a trip I did in the winter of 2011 to visit her, without letting her know in advance. One afternoon, I knocked on the door what was her daughter's home. Obviously, Nicole Pelletier was surprised!

She told me that her mother was living in the room of a nearby manor not far in Wolcott. She called her to let her know that her Ottawa friend was coming to visit her.

For several hours, we talked about this and that. About the CD that I brought her, about her interest to follow on a map the trips made by others, about my present trip that was taking me to Baltimore and even to an old couple of baseball friends living on the other side of Washington, about the journal in which my visit was going to end up.

Our conversation must have been animated because, for some time, it was funny

to hear employees, one after the other, tell her that they hadn't seen two people speak French like that since, let say, the era of their grand-mothers. When one told her that she was having quite the visit, Madame Gélinas looked like a little bird singing with pleasure.

At the end of the afternoon, I left to continue my journey. Once back at home, I learned that Madame Gélinas was sick. Oh no, did I bring her bad luck? Luckily, she recuperated.

On March 31, 2011, it was her 95th birthday. I promised to Lisa to see if there was an historical book of the area where Madame Gélinas was coming from. Once the book was obtained in Saint-Boniface, I mailed it to her. It helped her remember a lot of memories from another era.

Madame Gélinas, I hope you are in a place where you have found members of your family from Saint-Boniface and that you've started chattering again with them in French. Thank you for sharing with the Forum readers your lifetime memories. Thank you for exchanging with me and for welcoming me that day.

I was happy to see that the French lamp in you was still on. Now, sleep well, you've earned it.

*Your Ottawa friend,  
Yves Chartrand*

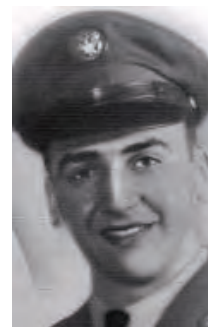
mon voyage. Une fois retourné chez moi, j'ai appris que Madame Gélinas était malade. Ah non, est-ce que je lui aurais porté malchance ? Heureusement, elle a recouvré la santé.

Le 31 mars 2011, c'était son 95e anniversaire de naissance. J'ai promis à Lisa de vérifier s'il existait un livre historique du coin de pays d'où venait Madame Gélinas. Une fois le livre obtenu à Saint-Boniface, je le lui ai posté. Ça l'a aidé à se rappeler beaucoup de souvenirs d'une autre époque.

Madame Gélinas, j'espère que vous êtes dans un endroit où vous avez retrouvé les membres de votre famille de Saint-Boniface et que vous avez repris la jasette avec eux en français. Merci d'avoir partagé avec les lecteurs du Forum vos souvenirs de toute une vie. Merci d'avoir échangé avec moi et surtout de m'avoir reçu. J'ai été heureux de voir que la lampe du français était toujours allumée en vous. Maintenant, dormez bien, vous l'avez mérité.

*Votre ami d'Ottawa,  
Yves Chartrand*

### Robert R. Fournier



Pembroke - Robert R. Fournier, 81, died Sunday, Oct. 20, 2013, at Concord Hospital after a brief illness.

To view full obituary see:  
<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/unionleader/obituary.aspx>

### Richard L. Fortin



MANCHESTER - Richard L. Fortin, 76, of Manchester, died Nov. 7, 2013, at his home after a sudden illness.

To view full obituary see:  
<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/unionleader/obituary.aspx?pid=168021865>



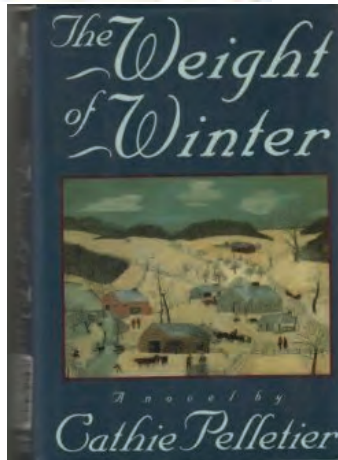
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'down the Plains' is a continuation of examining what does it mean to be Franco-American and growing up in Maine. 'down the Plains' takes the reader on the literary journey in a geography and landscape of the liminal generation that carries the language and culture toward a modern expression.



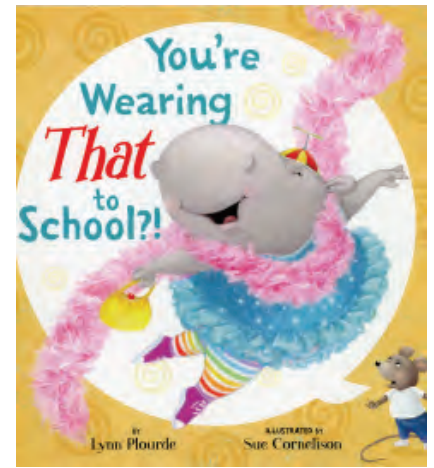
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by Lynn Plourde  
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"Oh, yes, yes!" Penelope is so excited about the first day of school that she's doing her happy hippo dance. She can't wait to wear her rainbow sparkle outfit, bring her favorite stuffed toy for show-and-tell, and share a big picnic lunch with all her new friends.

"Oh, no, no!" says her best pal Tiny, who started school last year. He has a few tips for Penelope about fitting in without sticking out.

The two friends' very different ways of handling peer opinion create hilarious scenes that will erase any anxiety before the first day of school.

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**Mémère Project and the University of Maine's Franco-American Centre**



*Mémère Project* founder Nick Lucey (2nd from left) with (from left to right) Tony Brinkley, Lisa Desjardins Michaud and Jacob Albert of the University of Maine's Franco-American Centre Franco-Américain. The center was founded in 1972 by Franco-American students and community volunteers. Its purpose is to introduce and integrate the Maine, regional and U.S. Franco-American Fact in post-secondary academe. For more information, visit their Facebook page & websites:

<https://www.facebook.com/FrancoAmericanCentre>  
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*Claudia Breton Emond*

# LE PROJET *mémère* PROJECT

## “The Mémère Project”: Heritage from a personal viewpoint

*Posted by Juliana L'Heureux*

“Using my grandmother Mémère Breton Emond as a protagonist, I want to bring national awareness to the Franco-American immigration experience,” says Nick Lucey.

It seemed perfectly normal to Nick Lucey to hear his mother and grandmother speaking French together when he was growing up.

“We stayed with my Mémère in Biddeford when we visited, while living in Wisconsin. I didn’t find it odd for my mother and grandmother to speak French when they were together. But, later, I realized speaking French at home was not common.”

In fact, outside of Maine and New England, it’s rare to find families where French is spoken in the home,” he says. “Many Americans don’t know how French is the first language of many Americans.”

Lucey, 44, is searching for more information about the Franco-American immigration experience. He began “The Mémère Project”. He’s documenting the life of his grandmother, Mémère Claudia Breton Emond (1911-1989).

Breton’s immigration experience brings attention to the history of the approximately 900,000 French-Canadians who immigrated to the US during the last two centuries. He’s particularly interested to learn more about those who arrived in Maine, from Quebec.

“These immigrants are hardly ever heard about outside of New England,” says Lucey.

His Mémère experienced a difficult immigration experience. She was born on November 25, 1911, one of 12 children on a small farm in Thetford Mines, in south-eastern Quebec. Like thousands of others like her, she immigrated to Biddeford in 1927, to find work in the textile mills.

Unfortunately, she was deported back to Canada in 1939, leaving her husband Amedee Emond and their four children behind. This deportation lasted for 22

months. She was eventually reunited with her Maine family following the completion of the required immigration paperwork.

Lucey’s grandfather, Amedee Emond, didn’t experience deportation because his immigration paperwork was, apparently, sufficient, says Lucey.

In spite of the deportation, Mémère Breton Emond later told her granddaughter, who was an oral historian at the University of Maine, that she didn’t feel the victim of discrimination against French-Canadians. Lucey listened to her tape recorded story but he still wants to know more about why his Mémère was deported, in the first place.

Mémère Breton Emond’s story is certainly timely given the public policy focus on immigration, says Lucey. “When immigration is discussed today, most people think of Mexico. Yet, few stop to realize where the world’s largest unarmed border is located between the US and Canada,” he says. He wants to tell the stories about the US-Canadian border. “Using my grandmother Mémère Breton Emond as a protagonist, I want to bring national awareness to the Franco-American immigration experience.”

“In telling Mémère’s story, I want to explore the history of French-Canadian immigration. Americans simply don’t know much about French-Canadian immigration or about Franco-Americans. I’m passionately interested in this amazing story and telling people about the heritage of Franco-Americans,” he says.

Lucey is looking for Franco-American immigration stories that haven’t been told before. He’s collecting stories from both French and English sources, which means he’s been traveling to Canada to find documents and to visit locations specific to his findings.

While writing and publishing stories, Lucey wants to spotlight awareness about Maine’s Franco-Americans and bring a national spotlight to their experiences.

During my conversation with Lu-

cey, he raised the most curious of cultural questions. “Why does New Orleans claim a French heritage but Maine doesn’t?”

As a matter of fact, Louisiana has created an economy around its French heritage and the “Evangeline” story of the Acadians. This cultural mystique is an example of creating history out of myth. In fact, Louisiana was originally a Spanish colony and the iconic heroine Evangeline was a fictional creation of Maine writer and poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Maine, on the other hand, has a French history dating to 1604, when the colony on St. Croix Island was founded off the coast of Calais.

Maine certainly has an opportunity to benefit by embracing the state’s Franco-American history and culture as well, he says.



*Nick Lucey creator of  
The Mémère Project*

**Link to Lucey’s The  
Mémère Project at:**

**[www.memere.org](http://www.memere.org)**

**The article:**

**<http://www.pressherald.com/blogs/FrancoAmerican/228605481.html>**





# From Maine to Thailand

## *The making of a Peace Corps Volunteer* *by Roger Parent*

*Photos courtesy of the author*

*ED. NOTE: This is the third in a series of excerpts from a memoir written by Lille, Maine, native Roger Parent in 2004, tracing the first 24 years of his life, from his childhood in Acadian French-speaking northern Maine to the end of his service as a member of the first group of Peace Corps volunteers in Thailand. This article first appeared in "Echoes"*

### Cussing Sister Simeon in French

Cussing Sister Simeon in any language was not a good idea, but doing so in French was even worse. S. Simeon was my kindergarten teacher, and one of her main tasks was to teach English to me and the other students.

I entered kindergarten speaking only French - Acadian French - as did the other children in Lille. The people of Lille were, and most still are, descendants of French-speaking peoples from New Brunswick, Québec and Nova Scotia (Named L'Acadie by its French Founders). The Acadian French I spoke, with mixed-in English words, made for a unique melange of words and accents.

My parents knew how to speak English, but I never heard them speak it together; they had to speak with an "outsider," which didn't happen often. It was the same in every other Lille home. We spoke French until we left for work in cities such as Boston and Hartford, or for the armed services, or for university.

When I was 6 years old, the only radio station we could pull in easily was a French language station (CJEM) about 12 miles away in Edmundston, New Brunswick. When I was about 12, an English language radio station opened in Caribou, Maine, and an English language television station opened in Presque Isle, Maine. But

in Lille, we continued listening to CJEM, and continued watching French language television from St. John, New Brunswick.

Sr. Simeon was old and losing patience, and I was young and had not yet found patience. One day she was trying to teach English words: chair for *chaise*, snow for *neige*, window for *fenetre*, and I was not paying attention. I didn't want to speak English. She got upset and scolded me harshly. I got upset and whispered, thinking she wouldn't hear, "*Mange de la merde*," a cuss phrase used by some French people to express disgust about a person.

Sr. Simeon's hearing was very good; she overheard my words and asked in a gruff voice, "What did you say?" I did not answer knowing my life was in danger. I didn't understand the full implications of my words, but I knew from her tone I had spoken badly. She had heard, and she punished me by tying me to her apron strings.)

I had to follow her around all day. When she sat at her desk, I had to sit by her on the floor; when she had recess duty, I had to stick by her, and could not play with my friends. I was untied from my "leash" only when she went to the bathroom in the inner sanctum of the convent. I would have preferred a eating with a strap, or a hitting-on-the-fingertips with a ruler.

Until the late 1960s, the teaching of English to French-speaking people in northern Maine was done in what could be most charitably called a sledge hammer approach. Our French was belittled, and we were told it was not true French—that it was inferior. The reality was different: Acadian French is partly ancient French which has not changed much due to isolation from France, Quebec, and other French-speaking peoples.

In the late 1960's and early 1970's, many Maine educators of French background assumed leadership positions in education and began to change the negative attitude about Acadian French. New teaching materials were developed, and our language was taught more fully. Also, the Acadian French of northern Maine became increasingly seen as an asset, particularly by the armed forces, who saw military value in preserving French and other languages spoken by Americans.

Other educators came to recognize that knowing ones' first language well — grammar, vocabulary, reading and writing — makes it easier to learn another language. The experience of French-speaking people and educators in northern Maine is a lesson writ large for those who would demean other people's languages, and who would make English the official language of our country.

My mother tongue is embedded in my flesh and bones. As a child I could not have explained why I resented being forced to learn English, and why I spoke French in school whenever I could get away with it. I resisted learning to speak English until I went to college where I finally became fluent. When I was a Peace Corps teacher in Thailand and taught English, my colleagues joked that my students spoke English with a French accent. I still speak English with a French lilt.

To belittle my language was to discredit my culture, my history and my identity. Still, I learned much from Sr. Simeon, (Continued on page 7)



*Notre Dame du Mont Carmel Elementary School, formerly the Notre Dame du Mont Carmel Church, attached to the "newer" church, now the Musée culturel du Mont-Carmel.*



(From *Maine to Thailand continued from page 6*)

and I hold no rancor in my heart for her. She taught me to respect my teachers and elders as my parents wanted her to do. And she taught me to speak English with a French-Acadian accent.

### Spirituality in a Hammock

On a beautiful Sunday afternoon when I was 15 or 16, I was swaying lazily in a hammock in the shade of trees planted by my father years earlier, feeling dejected and a little sorry for myself. I had missed my ride to Birch Point Beach, Lawrence's General Store (the village social center) was closed, and my par-

ents were visiting Mon Oncle (Uncle) Alfred and Tante (Aunt) Louise on their farm a few miles away. Many people had gone to the beach, others were out for a Sunday drive, or were taking an afternoon nap. I was alone at home and felt alone in Lille and in the whole world. It was quiet as abandoned cemetery.

The sky was a perfect light blue dotted with small grayish clouds, like the picture of the imagined soul, dotted with "sin spots," in Sr. Simeon's classroom. The rapidly flowing St. John River, separating Maine from Canada, glistened in the sunlight about 2,000 feet to my right, and to my left the white blossoms of potato plants drew my eyes to the hills rimming the St. John Valley. A slight breeze carried to me the sweet aroma of the blossoms and fragrance of our lilac tree. And as the hammock swung slowly, I fingered the grass, too long for a lawn and too short for a hayfield.

This bucolic and tranquil scenery was unremarkable to me. What was remarkable



*A Daughters of Wisdom sister and her class at Notre Dame du Mont Carmel*

that day was the growing feeling that I was part of this geography in a way I had never experienced. My body and mind and spirit seemed intimately connected, suffused and intermingled with every thing: the hammock, the grass, the trees, the river, the blossoms, the sky, and the cows nearby. Instead of observing, I was part of my surroundings, and peace flowed through me and around me.

I was dejected no more and did not feel sorry for myself. I felt happy in a way that had nothing to do with things, or with a girl-friend I wanted, or with a car I wished for. The peacefulness and sense of oneness with my surroundings and beyond were exhilarating and calming and reassuring.

At the time I didn't see this profound experience on a beautiful Sunday afternoon as a hint of the deeper and more personal relationship I could have with God. Later I recognized it as such and tried to recapture this experience, but without much success.

My early life was full of religion. In my family, growing up Catholic included more than the usual baptism, first communion, Sunday Mass, and meatless Fridays. It meant family Rosary most evenings, Eucharistic Adoration at 2 p.m. Sundays, special services to honor our Holy Mother Mary during the month of May and no sweets during four weeks of Advent and 40 days of Lent. I heard much about how participation in these religious practices would make me a good Catholic, but not much about building a personal relationship with God.

I shouldn't be surprised; it was not the purpose of these religious practices to build a personal and unique relationship with God. Their purpose was to train me to obey the priest, to follow the rules of the Church, and to shape me into a good Catholic—one submissive to the church.

I remember my early religious practices with nostalgia, but do not adhere to most of them today. I don't fully regret the religious disciplines imposed on me by my parents and my culture; they provided a framework for my life, which served me well for a long time. But I rue the years these practices and disciplines stood in the way of establishing a more mature spirituality and a more adult relationship with God.



*"I was part of this geography in a way I had never experienced."*

*(Continued on page 8)*

# LA BIOGRAPHIE DE SOEUR MARIE DU SAINT-SACRE- MENT, R.S.R. (1892-1965)

*Par Monsieur Harry Rush, Jr.  
Millinocket, ME*

Soeur Marie du Saint-Sacrement de la Congrégation de Notre-Dame du Saint-Rosaire de Rimouski, Québec est née le 24 septembre 1892 à Campbellton, N.-B. Léonie était la 10e dans une famille d'Amateur et Marguerite Audet. Le même jour, son âme s'ouvrait aux rayons vivifiants de la grâce baptismale. L'année 1894 marqua la naissance de Lucie qui deviendrait Soeur Ste-Marguerite-Marie, r.s.r. 1900 marqua le déménagement de la famille Audet pour Amqui. En 1903, Léonie fit sa première Communion et comença ses études de piano au pensionnat des Soeurs de la Charité de Rimouski.

Dès le 8 septembre 1911, elle quitte la famille pour le noviciat du Saint-Rosaire ou Soeur Marie du Saint-Sacrement était calme et paisible, un modèle de fidélité, d'obéissance et de charité. Elle aimait la pensée que "Rien n'est petit pour l'Amour. Nos actes les plus petits...quand ils sont faits pour plaire au bon Dieu, comme cela Le réjouit." Elle a reçu le nom enviable de Soeur Marie du St-Sacrement

le 15 août 1912. Le 15 août 1914 notre chère soeur émet ses vœux de religion.

De 1914 à 1922, elle est missionnaire à Frenchville.

En 1929 quand son père est mort, elle enseignait à Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré. C'était celui qu'elle aimait le plus au monde.

Elle retournera à Frenchville en 1931 à 1934. Bien souvent les vacances de Soeur Marie du Saint-Sacrement se passèrent à donner des cours d'anglais à nos soeurs.

De 1934 à 1935 qu'elle passera au Collège St-Joseph de Portland, ME pour obtenir son B.S.E. (Baccalauréat en Science de l'Éducation.) Elle avait pour compagne Soeur Marie de St-Vincent-Ferrier. Dès septembre 1935, notre vaillante soeur reprend l'enseignement à Frenchville d'abord, puis quelques années plus tard à Millinocket jusqu'en 1950. En 1947, elle a fondé St. Marin of Tours High School sous Père Joseph D. Quinn, le curé de Millinocket. Quel enthousiasme quand elle était supérieure du couvent et directrice de l'école à Millinocket pendant 7 ans. Aussi,



elle donnait des leçons du piano. C'est le sommet de sa carrière d'éducatrice.

L'année 1950-1951 voit Soeur Marie du St-Sacrement de nouveau à Frenchville. C'était une année difficile pour elle en éducation.

L'année suivante 1951-1952, elle est nommée supérieure et maîtresse de classe à notre couvent de St-Jules mais la double charge dépassait les forces déclinantes de notre soeur. Une crise de foie, une pression élevée, l'obligèrent à un peu de repos.

En 1952, elle fut nommée pour Gaspé. Mais, dès le 11 octobre, une chute lui occasionna une fracture au fémur.

En 1954-1955, elle est revenue à Millinocket pour l'année scolaire et en 1956 elle est allée au noviciat de Rimouski pour enseigner aux novices. Mais c'était

*(suite page 9)*



*Roger Parent rereading near his home in Lille, Maine, 1956*

*(From Maine to Thailand continued from page 7)*

**Roger Parent** lives in South Bend, Indiana, where he served as city councilor and mayor in the 1970's and '80's. He is a trustee of the South Bend Community School Corporation and found of World Dignity, a non-profit organization focused on educational programs in Thailand, India and South Bend. In 2005 he assisted victims of the Dec. 26, 2004 tsunami as deputy director of the Tsunami Volunteer Center in Khao Lak, Thailand. He and his wife, Rolande (Ouellette), have four children and six grandchildren.





# Filles du Roy, 350th Anniversary

*By Richard Gay (aka Guay) Blue Hill, ME*

29 July, 2013

In Le Forum 2005 Winter, Part 1, page 3 “Under Cover as a Franco” I had written that a royal proclamation was issued in France by Louis XIV inviting young women to apply for immigration to the New World. From 1663 to 1673, carefully screened for good health and comeliness, upwards of 800 women arrived in the Quebec marriage mart. Madame de Maintenon, a highly respected member of the royal court, who later became the King’s second wife, herself a beauty, was largely responsible for the selection of the prettiest applicants. In the Le Forum article, page 56, I reported that “the eye-catching results were still evident among Laval University coeds.”

This year, 2013, marks the 350th anniversary of the arrival of the Filles du Roy in the New World. In July 2013 a friend and I spent a week in Quebec, he searching for long-lost cousins, and me enjoying the city that had left me enchanted from the moment I first crossed the Quebec Bridge, as a 16 year old Anglophone, in a yellow school bus, with Maine plates. Upon our return to Maine from Quebec, I helped my friend trace his ancestors using French and English historic sources. We found that his immigrant ancestor, who had arrived from Rouen, France in 1665, married one of the Filles du Roy at Trois-Rivières in 1671. We found the lineage, complete with baptismal and marriage records, ninth generations back to la Fille du Roy! Her name was Jeanne Furrier, and his was Francois Noel Vanasse. My friend, Richard Vanasse, of Castine, ME is a retired Eastern Airlines captain, and former WW2 fighter pilot. (F4U Corsairs). He was born and grew up in the Worcester, MA area. His grandfather had moved there from the small farming town of Ste.Boneventure above Drummondville, PQ and we found his Vanasse cousins in the nearby town of St.Guillaume.

During our visit to Quebec City we also discovered there exists a tendency to link Filles du Roi with Filles de Joie. An unfortunate bit of misinformation that is passed on, if nothing more than a catchy pun that rhymes! After exhaustive research, historians and scholars have found no evidence to support that one single Fille du Roy had

been a prostitute in France before migrating to Quebec. Even if there were a snippet of evidence to support the rumor, to repeat the “Filles de Roi=Filles de Joie” quip would be no less distasteful. But there is no evidence. The notion that these pioneer women, who became “les mères de la nation,” were prostitutes rounded up from Paris, is simply false. A case of misinformation, or perhaps a case of disinformation, perpetrated by those who watched in envy over the centuries while Quebec grew and flourished.

The term Filles du Roy, in English Daughters of the King, was first used by Marguerite Bourgeoys, the founder of La Congrégation de Notre-Dame in Montreal. She had arrived in New France prior to 1663, and helped to lodge and accommodate the Filles du Roy who arrived later. The King’s administrator in the Quebec colony, had demanded that only the most healthy and morally suitable women should be sent. The women were morally and physically examined prior to being selected; and scrutinized again on arrival in the colony, by both the administrator and the clergy, to be suitable for marriage. And fit to cope with the climate and rigors of life in the colony, and “able to produce healthy children.” Visiting the United States and Canada 200 years later (1832) Alexis de Tocqueville wrote in his diary about the French Canadians, “The stock (sang) is markedly handsomer than in the United States. The race is stronger, and the women haven’t that delicate and sickly air which characterizes the majority of American women.”

The name Filles du Roy applied only to those women, sponsored by King Louis XIV, who arrived between 1663 and 1673. They were given an allowance from the royal treasury, and were treated as the King’s personal wards, hence the name Daughters of the King. Most of the Filles du Roy were from the Paris region, but many were recruited from Normandy and the west coast of France where the major embarkation ports Dieppe and La Rochelle were located. A few of the Filles du Roy were actually from the nobility, but were left impoverished as inheritances were divided only among male heirs. Most were commoners, from peasant families or poor city

*(Continued on page 10)*



*(LA BIOGRAPHIE DE SOEUR MARIE DU SAINT-SACREMENT, R.S.R. (1892-1965 suite de page 8)*

trop pour elle. En 1956, sonnait l’heure de sa retraite définitive à la maison mère.

La pression élevée provoqua peu à la perte de la mémoire. En septembre 1961, elle prit place à l’infirmierie, s’abandonnant dans la paix au bon vouloir divin. Il est rare de trouver une pareille délicatesse chez une malade.

Le 15 août 1964 marque la date du Jubilé d’Or de cette soeur. Elle a reçu le sacrement des malades le 4 novembre 1961. Elle est morte le 3 décembre 1965 à l’âge de 73 ans. Le 6 décembre 1965, les funérailles sont présidées par Père Raoul Thibeault, chapelain. L’homélie avait pour thème: “Celui qui croit en moi, même s’il est mort, vivra.”

Cette religieuse était constante, humble, agréable, très charitable, très conservatrice, sérieuse éducatrice, un grand amour de Dieu, de Jésus et de Marie. Puisse-t-elle reposer en paix!

(Cet article par Monsieur Harry Rush, Jr., Millinocket, ME est un résumé de la biographie de Soeur Marie du Saint-Sacrement par les Soeurs de Notre-Dame du Saint-Rosaire de Rimouski, Québec.)

(*Filles du Roy continued from page 9*)

dweller, some were widows and many were orphans living in charity hostels of Paris, such as l'Hôpital Général and the renowned Salpêtrière. But none were prostitutes.

Disinformation is from the Russian "disinformatzia" a tool of espionage tradecraft, spread covertly. Misinformation on the other hand, can be purely accidental, from misinterpretation, or from lack of accurate information. In 1703 statements were made by a French baron named de Lahontan, and by others, declaiming prostitutes being sent to the French colonies. In fact, from the 1680s into the 1700s the French police rounded up convicts and prostitutes, including women who were taken from the prison section of La Salpêtrière, which housed up to 300 prostitutes, and boarded them on ships to the colonies.

And there is the unforgettable Manon Lescaut, the Parisian fille de joie who, with her lover the Chevalier des Grieux, sought a new life in the Louisiana colony. Published in 1731, republished in 1753, and since made into dramas, operas, and ballets, the novel Manon Lescaut, written by l'Abbé Prévost, illustrated the pleasure, and peril, of hanging out with a prostitute. Prévost's novel was the product of an era when Parisian prostitutes were much in the news, and much painted on 18th century canvas.

But we must not identify the beautiful Manon Lescaut, regardless her appeal as heroine of operas and ballets, with the beautiful Daughters of the King, who were the heroines of la Nouvelle France. Better to resist the urge to pass on the catchy but misinformed Roi=Joi limerick. Far better to highlight the fact that a) the Filles du Roy went to the Quebec colony, and b)

the convicts and prostitutes went only to the Caribbean islands and the Mississippi valley colonies. Might an adventurous courtesan or two have decided to forsake la gaîté parisienne for life in the New World? Entirely possible, before or after the 1663-1673 Filles du Roy immigration, and if so I'd have to presume they were as pretty, but



much heartier than poor Manon Lescaut who did not survive life in the colonies.

As for "disinformation," the side who wins the war gets to rewrite the history, and change the names. Here is an example. Champlain named the large bay extending eastward from Maine to Canada "La Baie des François." The British renamed it the Bay of Fundy. The British changed names of streets in Quebec City to "Crown Street," "Saint Johns Street," "Maple Avenue," etc. But as the colony grew and flourished, the Quebec street names grew back to their originals: de la Couronne, Saint Jean, Avenue des Erables, etc; and this was years before the province went monolingual.

In a concerted effort to set the records straight, the origins of the Filles du Roy, was taken up as a scientific research by historians and socio-demographic scholars, such as Yves Landry. They reviewed

primary sources, records from prisons, shipping companies, houses of charity, notaries, church parishes, military records, etc, to put an end to the notion: Filles du Roi=Filles de Joie. One of the Filles du Roy in fact became a Quebec prostitute after her husband abandoned her with two kids. But that story, which I find quite intriguing, will be the subject for another article. If anyone is interested in seeking more of the Filles du Roy history, I will be pleased to share references and details too voluminous for this article. As I remarked at the beginning, about the Filles du Roy as the origins of Laval University coed pulchritude, I must not ignore the Acadian origins of the Evangelinesque (new word) beauty of La Vallée! So I will offer as evidence, students of Notre Dame de La Sagesse, (Le Forum, 2004 Vol.31, #3, page 6) in Ste.Agathe, just up the road from Long Lake Sporting Club, where I tried my best, weekends as a high school kid, to learn to dance, and to learn to speak French!

(RAGuay207@gmail.com)

*Richard Gay, aka Guay, is a Maine native, born in Bar Harbor, and attended public schools in Hancock, Washington, and Aroostook counties. An alumnus of l'Université Laval in Quebec, University of Maine, and University of Maryland graduate school, he is a former member of two intelligence agencies, and co-author of a WW2 espionage history published in 2003, and contributor to a 2-volume Encyclopedia of Intelligence and Counterintelligence, M.E. Sharpe, 2005. He has appeared on the Bill Greene Maine show, and is currently writing two, largely autobiographic, historic spy novels.*

*He can be found at [www.DowneastSquadron.com/Staff\\_Profiles/RGay.html](http://www.DowneastSquadron.com/Staff_Profiles/RGay.html)*



*Mona (Levesque) Lynch  
Class of 1956  
(Le Forum, Vol. 31, #3, page 6)*





September 2013  
Volume 1, Issue 1

# Madawaska Historical Society

## Special Interest Articles:

- New Loom Making an Acadian Blanket.
- Albert House Receives A New Porch Roof.
- Society Offers Quilt for Christmas Fundraiser

Prudent Mercure  
Book Sale  
Continues

*Madawaska Historical Society (207) 728-6412*

## A WORKING MODEL of Antique Loom

With a grant from the Maine Arts Commission, the Madawaska Historical Society has accomplished its goal to have a new loom made, replicating the one on display at the Albert Home in the Tante Blanche Historical Complex. The new loom has been researched and created by the skillful hands of Dave Wylie. Having worked on the project for more than two years, it is a wonderful

exhibit and the Society is thankful for Dave's gift of time and talent. Presently it is housed in Fort Kent for expert weaver, Jackie Lausier to work on, making a blanket in the tradition of the original loom. Jackie has been weaving on looms for many years and makes many beautiful items. This is a new challenge for her and she always enjoys a challenge. The Society is anxiously

awaiting Jackie's first efforts with the new loom. Future items will be made on the loom and two apprentices will be taught how to weave on the loom in anticipation of a two month exhibit during the summer of 2014 and the Congres Mondial Acadian.



## Albert House Receives Emergency Facelift

The Madawaska Historical Society discovered earlier in the summer that the porch roof on the historical Albert House had a leak, or actually, several leaks. After reviewing the situation with the preservation contractor, it was determined that the work would have to be done before winter. The roof would not withstand a big snow, and as we all know, that is not something anyone in Maine can predict. So, in order to complete the project with limited funds,

nine members of the Society ventured out to remove the rotten wood shingles to prepare for the repairs. Five members ventured up the ladders, and four others picked up the debris. Five hours later, the job was accomplished.

The repairs were done by T.H. Enterprises, under the direction of Terry Helms. Unfortunately, the wood under the shingles was also in sad shape, requiring replacement. Through donations of materials, in-kind labor

and the remaining money from our Preservation Grant from the Maine Acadian Heritage Council, we were able to complete the work and the Albert House is nicely secure for the winter, and many years to come.



*(Continued on page 12)*



*There will also be second and third place drawings for mystery prizes!*

*"Dedicated to  
Claude "Blackie Cyr"  
1935-1997  
Madawaska, Maine"*

### Quilt Raffle Tickets Available

Featured here, is the quilt to be raffled by the Madawaska Historical Society as a Fall Fundraiser. The Quilt, a collage of many interesting panels titled "Eye Spy in Squares" was created and donated by Madawaska's very own Quilt Maker, Kate Albert. Kate has won many awards for her quilt work and creativity. She heads the Acadian Quilters and offer workshops

throughout the year. The Historical Society is grateful for her donation.

Tickets are available at many locations in the St. John Valley. \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00. Checks may be payable to the Madawaska Historical Society, c/o Madawaska Public Library, 393 Main St, Madawaska, ME 04756. FMI, contact Lois Muller at 207-728-6412. Anyone wishing to help

sell tickets are encouraged to call.

The Drawing will be held on December 15, 2013, in time for shipping for the holidays.

A second place drawing will also be held for a Mystery Item. The quilt is valued at \$200.00. Proceeds from the raffle benefit the preservation of the Tante Blanche Museum. Complex, St. David, ME.

### Book Sale

Are you interested in researching the Acadian story and looking for good information? If you do not have the Papiers de Prudent L. Mercure book in your possession, now is the time to buy it.

This book is filled with much information, regarding the history of Madawaska. It is not a coffee table book, but one that anyone serious about researching the Acadian

history needs to have. Originally, the book sold for \$60.00. For a limited time, the Madawaska Historical Society is offering copies at \$20.00 plus shipping and handling.

This book would also be a great gift for family members working on genealogy projects.

Copies are available through the Madawaska

Public Library, 207-728-3606, The Madawaska Chamber of Commerce, 207-728-7000 and at the Martin Acadian Home-stead, 207-728-6412.







For many years Severin Beliveau has been a Maine leader and for many years he has been a Franco-American leader. On September 12, 2013, Severin spoke to Le Club Calumet about Maine's French reality, past, present and future.

## Remarks of Severin M. Beliveau

### Le Club Calumet

September 12, 2013

*Monsieur le Président, membres et amis du Club Calumet.*

*Merci pour cette élogieuse présentation. Je n'aurais pas su faire mieux.*

*C'est un véritable plaisir, et en plus un honneur d'être ici ce soir avec vous tous pour célébrer le centenaire du Club Calumet ainsi que la dédicace de cette peinture murale représentant l'histoire et l'évolution du Club Calumet ici à Augusta.*

*Votre club et la peinture sont témoins des multiples sacrifices que vous et ceux et celles qui vous ont précédés ont faits afin d'assurer l'avenir de la langue et la culture franco américaine, et pour célébrer et reconnaître la contribution à notre communauté et notre état.*

And now the translation:

Thank you Mr. President, for that generous introduction, which I could not have written any better. It is a true pleasure and honor for me to be here this evening to participate with all of you in the celebration of the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Club Calumet and the dedication of the mural depicting the history and contributions of Le Club Calumet here in Augusta. Your club and the mural are testaments to the many sacrifices that you and your predecessors have made to assure that the Franco-American culture, language, and contributions to our community and our State are recognized and celebrated.

I would like to speak with you this evening about *la réalité Franco du Maine* — the reality of the French in Maine, in which *Le Club Calumet* from the time of its founding in the basement of Morin's Shoe Store in Augusta in 1922, has played such an exemplary role. Incidentally, Pierre Perreault was its first president and annual dues were one dollar a month. The women in Augusta had just earned the right to vote two years earlier, in 1920. But it took the Club a few years to adjust — 83, in fact, since women were not admitted until 2005!

In reviewing the 1972 semi-centennial yearbook, I was greatly impressed with the many events sponsored by the Club ranging

from athletic teams, minstrel shows, Mardi Gras parties, Outstanding Citizens Award, Le Festival de la Bastille to the appearance of then Senator John F. Kennedy in 1959.

The 24 founding members of the Club would be proud of its many accomplishments and its permanent role as an ethnic, social and political force in Central Maine.

I hope to do our story — *notre histoire* — justice. Because Francos in Maine have not always had justice in the past. I speak as a Franco myself, and I speak as a lawyer — un avocat—an advocate.

And I will speak frankly. Apparently our ancestors spoke so bluntly that the word for direct honesty — “frankness” — derives from them.

So speaking frankly, Maine has not always been a friendly place for Francos. For much of the last century Maine was governed by a Republican Anglo-Protestant establishment. The Franco-American identity, the culture, the history, both Québécois and Acadian (both of which I share) was often not welcome in Maine's governing circles. Seventy-five years ago even Maine's public schools, even the University of Maine, played the same kind of role as part of an Anglo-Protestant establishment that the University of Georgia played in its state. In Maine, as in Georgia, the Klan hovered in the shadows, hiding in their sheets. In Maine we were the targets of hate instead of the blacks -- in communities like Rumford, where I grew up. My father, an honorary lifetime member of the Calumet Club, told me often about watching a cross burn above the river near Rumford on a ledge overlooking the tenement buildings occupied by Franco mill workers. This was in the 1930s. It also happened throughout Maine, in Chelsea, Capital Park on Cushnoc Heights, as late as the 1960's.

Forty years ago when students at the University of Maine wanted to learn more about Franco-Americans in Maine, they discovered that the University knew very little. The faculty had other interests. So the students began to do the research



for themselves. They began with a simple question. Where, they wondered, where was French— the everyday language — to be found? They discovered that it was a language in Maine homes: first between couples in the bedrooms, then more publicly in the kitchens, but less in the living rooms and still less outside the home. For many of us, French was the mother-tongue. Why did it hide outside the home?

It turned out there were reasons. For example, in 1919, the Legislature enacted a law, entitled “Relating to duties of State Superintendent of Schools and Providing for the Teaching of Common School Subjects in the English Language.” This law forbade the speaking of French in Maine public schools and in our parochial schools. Even in the French classrooms, students were taught “Parisian” French, and not the “Québécois/Acadian/Maine” French that their families spoke. This is the reason that native French-speaking teachers had difficulty getting jobs teaching French in public schools — the authorities didn't want them to “corrupt” the students. But getting back to the 1919 law — some schools in the Saint John Valley bent the rules and allowed children to speak French in their free time, for example at recess on the playgrounds. But there was always a danger that the state's school inspectors might visit. So when a school inspector was sighted in town—you could always tell who they were—the children were warned to be careful and—because they did not want to make a mistake—they stopped speaking altogether. So try to picture the state inspector coming up to a school, and finding a playground of silent children.

The 1919 law was repealed in 1969. I was in the Legislature then. I remember when my friends Elmer Violette and Émilien Lévesque sponsored “An Act Permitting Bilingual Education.” The playgrounds in  
*(Continued on page 14)*

(Le Club continued from page 13)

the St. John Valley were never silent again. The repeal was also remarkable for the fact that Violette and Lévesque, in speaking for the bill, spoke French on the floor of the State Legislature. They were the first ever to do so. That was an important day in our history. There have been others, some of whom are here this evening, who have represented Augusta and other Maine communities at the legislature and Town and City Councils. Franco-Americans are now leaders in businesses and professions statewide. It is particularly noteworthy that the Maine legislature is the only one in the U.S. to conduct a legislative session in French. I am pleased that the Club is a strong supporter of this effort.

When Mike Michaud was elected in 2002 to represent Maine's Second Congressional District in Washington, he may not have been the first Franco-American in Maine's federal delegation (the first was Margaret Chase Smith of Skowhegan. Her mother's name was Caroline Morin from the Beauce region in Québec), but Mike was the first Franco-American to run as a Franco. In 2010, Paul LePage became the first Franco-American governor of Maine, and let me assure you that after 2014, Maine's governor will also be Franco-American.

In Québec as a result of the 1759 conquest, the French used to say: *On est né pour être petits pains, on ne peut pas s'attendre à la boulangerie*—"we were born to be little breads, we cannot expect the bakery"—but now we've added some yeast to our expectations, and we do expect the bakery.

My father taught me to be proud of my heritage. I remember walking with him down Lisbon Street in Lewiston, and a man approached and introduced himself as James Baker. "No," my father replied, "Your name is really Boulanger. You've anglicized it." Then there was the man named Fisher, who my father pointed out really was Poisson. He wanted them, and me, to be proud of our heritage, and not try to hide it. Every night at dinner we spoke *en français*.

Today Maine is the most "French" state in New England. And all of us are making great contributions to the present and future of Maine. We are now established. It wasn't always so. When Francos came from Québec to Maine and to the rest of New England, where our Diaspora began, it was not an easy move. Quebec was unhappy—often angry, some even felt betrayed—to see us leave. As a political leader said at the time:

*Laissez les partir, c'est la canaille qui s'en va*; "Let them go, it's the riffraff that's leaving." Many of us hoped that Maine and New England would be a temporary home. Many

of us settled temporarily. For many of us, home remained Québec. We were also Americans, proud citizens of this state and of the United States—many of us died in its wars, beginning with the Civil War—but we had another home nearby. If France had been the cradle for French Canadians, Québec was the source and cradle for us. I am using English translations for the French words *berceau* and *sources*. Some of you may notice how poorly these translations convey what the French words can mean, *des mots qui touchent au coeur*—words that touch the heart. But with all respect and affection for Québec and France, for Franco-Americans today, Maine is our home. Maine is our source for *des mots qui touchent au coeur*. Because here is where our stories are. Maine has become our New France.

This brings me back to my subject, to Maine's French Reality and, to enlarge the scope of the conversation, to the French Reality in our region, in New England in particular, *c'est la même grande famille*.

We are still discovering what that reality is, not only as a past, but as a present, and particularly as a future.

Here are some things that we know today that we did not know before. In 2012, the Legislature formed a task-force on Maine's Franco-American reality. In support of the task-force's work, the University of Maine's Franco-American Centre, conducted the first detail demographic study of Franco-Americans in Maine. We now know more about Maine's Franco-Americans than about any other demographic group. (How different the University's mission today from what it was forty years ago. Even the faculty have begun to learn something.) We are just beginning to analyze the more than 25,000 data-points that the study offers, and here is some of what we have discovered. Some of it is unsettling, some hopeful, but all produce the ground for a future we can make work together.

Here is a little of what we learned:

- Almost 25% of Maine's citizens identify themselves as Franco-American (perhaps an additional 10% are Franco-Americans but do not identify themselves as such).

- Almost 70% of Francos between 18-25 identify themselves as unemployed,

a figure which includes those who are not in the labor force. Is that because they are in college or is that because they have not found a job? These figures are comparable to census data for all Mainers between 16 to 24, where approximately 65% are either unemployed or not in the labor force.

- Francos from 18-25 have the highest high school graduation rate of all Franco-Americans in Maine (81%). However almost 90% of Francos between 18 and 25 are not sure or don't think that education matters. An over-riding concern are very high rates of tuition for higher-education. While college attendance for all Mainers between 18 and 25 is quite low (less than 30%), for Franco Americans in this group it seems to be somewhat lower.

- Over 30% of Francos in Maine feel that they speak French adequately or fluently (the numbers for fluent speakers is significantly larger for older Franco-Americans than for the 18-25 group).

- Economic success in life for Franco-American seems most likely for those with a strong cultural identity and significant cultural knowledge. This suggests that assimilation is not in itself enough. When I engage others in business, for example, I am likely to be most powerful if I have a strong sense of my roots. In an American tradition, this is what Emerson meant by self-reliance.

All of these figures are preliminary and require further study, as all of us can see, what important roles *Le Club Calumet* can play. Here are a few:

- Good jobs today require higher education. *Le Club Calumet* plays an essential role by supporting college scholarships for Franco-American students through the Calumet Education Foundation. The Club can also work to find jobs for young Franco-Americans.

- Cultural knowledge requires active, community-based research like the recent demographic study. There is much more to be done in this area and it can be the basis of effective policy in Augusta and throughout the state. The Club can participate in and support this research.

- French—by which I mean Franco-American French—is alive in

(Continued on page 15)





## We are so screwed - Part 3

### Pickled tongue

by  
**Greg Chabot**  
South Hampton, NH

#### Introduction

I apologize. It's because of me that these articles are appearing ... again. I should have tried to discourage him, lead him in another direction, perhaps. But I was silent, and now we're all paying for it.

In my defense, his attempts at writing pieces like this had led nowhere in the past. They had started with the same level of near-manic enthusiasm, but had always frittered away to nothing. The final "product" was typically a few paragraphs that seemed to create obstacles that prevented any further progress. There would be occasional attempts at opening the Word file and completing something. Maybe one more sentence. But these attempts ended badly, often accompanied by soft mutterings and even softer sighs. There was no reason for me to expect that this time would be different.

But it was. He actually finished the piece that was in the last issue of the

*FORUM*. He wanted me to read it before he sent it off. I was too busy, I said, but was sure it was fine. I should have taken the time. It was awful. Maybe you were able to make some sense of his ramblings - René Lévesque, deadly license plates, old men leaning on canes, doctoral students, we are Québec, Québec is us - but I sure wasn't. I have no idea what he was trying to say. I'm not sure he has either.

The damage would have been somewhat contained if it had stopped there. But seeing his words on the print and electronic pages of the *FORUM* seemed to give him renewed hope and enthusiasm. He quickly set to writing what appears below. Worse still, he sees at least three or four other articles coming in the near future. "A ground-breaking series," he now calls it. Right. As if.

The priority now is to stop this thing before it gets any further. I'm sure the arti-

cle in the last issue of the *FORUM* and the one below have already bored and annoyed loyal readers. They are also not doing the writer's reputation any good, serving primarily as a source of embarrassment and ridicule. It must end, and it's up to me - as the one who facilitated its start - to end it.

It won't be easy. He won't even take the time to talk to me anymore. About a minute into any conversation I start with him, he exclaims, "An inspiration!" and runs off into his office, slamming the door in my face if I try to pursue. All I get is his voice mail. He won't answer my emails. But I WILL keep trying. My legacy will NOT be that I permitted this "ground-breaking series" (Right. As if.) to proceed any further and wreak more confusion and irritation than it already has.

One way or another, I will make sure that there is no "Part 3." You have my word on it.

A.E. , July 2012

### “Ma tante Aurélie ‘le boudin’ Boutin”

It was a shock the first time it happened. I was six or seven. I was playing  
(Continued on page 16)

(Le Club continued from page 14)

Maine but it needs to be particularly alive for young Franco-Americans. The Club has—and can—support the after school conversation programs sponsored by the University of Maine at Augusta.

We have come a long way in 90 years. From its beginning in 1922 in the Morin Shoe Store in Augusta to this impressive Clubhouse and from 24 founding members to a current membership of over 900, and from no statewide elected officials to two candidates for Governor of Franco descent from the two major political parties, we know that our presence and influence will continue to grow in the next 100 years.

Let me finish by saying that the future for Maine's Franco-American reality depends on work that we have been doing and that we must continue to do. In other words, it is *our* future and it is there for *us* to create. As my son's boss Barack Obama once said: "We are the future we are waiting for".

Again, my thanks to Le Club Calumet for having the vision to commission this extraordinary mural by the talented artists Jane Burke, Lisa Lancaster and Corliss Chastain.



(We are so screwed - Part 3 continued  
from page 15)

with my extended family cousins at the extended family camp during a typical extended family party. We were having a great time inside because the adults who kept telling us we were wasting a beautiful day and that we should be playing outside were all outside. This left us free to do what we wanted inside while they were all trying to figure out what it was that we were doing in there and why we weren't outside.

Suddenly, ma tante Aurélie comes storming around the corner, stops right in front of us, and stares menacingly at us. We all thought she was going to give us hell for transforming a new bag of Castonguay potato chips into a soupy mess by crushing the chips in a bowl and adding Pepsi to them. Instead, all she said was, "En français!" before staring coldly at us again and heading back outside.

We were puzzled. Of course we were speaking English to each other. Ever since we had started going to school and watching the television that had one day appeared in our living rooms, the cousins had determined (rightfully so) that English was the language of the young and the future. The French that we had used exclusively when we didn't know any better, was for the old and the past. We didn't mind using French to speak to the old, like our parents and ma tante Aurélie, but there was no way we'd use it to communicate with anything new and future-oriented like our cousins. This was all so obvious and so right to us that we thought the whole world understood and approved of the distinction we had made. Apparently, ma tante Aurélie did not. Many of the other outside adults didn't either, but only ma tante Aurélie came inside that day and thus became the "enforcer."

Tony "the revolver" may have been bigger. Guido "the banana" with that scar

on his face might have been uglier. 350+ pound Guiseppi "the cheese" may have been more intimidating. But 85-pound, 4 foot 10 ma tante Aurélie "le boudin" (as we took to calling her) Boutin was more stubborn and determined than any Mafia enforcer. With the motto, "Qui perd sa langue perd sa foi" as her weapon, she was also sure that le Bon Dieu was on her side. This made her an adversary to be feared and respected.

So after the first couple of times that "Le boudin" surprised us and demanded an immediate switch to "en français," we took to assigning a lookout for every time the extended family cousins played together at extended family parties. It wasn't a tough job. There was nothing to do for the first half-hour or so when the adults pretty much forgot about us. It was only when they started asking themselves and each other where we were and what the hell we were doing that the enforcer made her first appearance. Our lookout would catch sight of her heading our way. We'd then all be quiet until she checked on us and went on her way again.

We also had to be careful around meal-times when all the old were mobile, and "Le boudin" could hide her comings and goings by blending in with them, darting suddenly into the room where we were playing to see if she could catch us using that despised language. She did. A couple of times. And the accusatory "en français" would echo throughout whoever's home it was.

We got better at detecting "Le boudin's" approaches. After a while, poor ma tante Aurélie was reduced to quickly shouting out "en français" every time she passed the door of the room we were in because she assumed (correctly) that we were always speaking English.

The extended family cousins always won when we played the "en français" game with "le boudin." Even the times when she would catch us. Never ... not even once ...

did her interventions and admonitions result in our speaking French. In response to "en français," we would shut up, stay quiet, not say a word. We would then resume our conversations "en anglais" the minute she left. As she and others pushed "en français" more, we responded with "en anglais" more, eventually using it even to talk to the old and the past. The old would speak to us in French. We would reply in English. They would respond with "en français." We would ignore.

It's tough to climb into another person's mouth. Even if you succeed in getting in there, it's next to impossible to make changes to it and what's coming out of it if the person doesn't want those changes to happen. Resorting to some sort of intimidation or force as did "Le boudin" is usually counterproductive, especially if that person perceives that what you want to come out of the mouth is not in their best interests, useless, or ... well ... old.

It's a lesson that's tough to learn because it seems counter-intuitive. If they don't want to learn what we want them to learn, we'll force them to do it through legislation, demonstrations, official Offices and other sorts of pressures. That'll do it.

But it doesn't. And while setting up a language police like ma tante Aurélie "le boudin" Boutin sounds like a great solution to counter the gradual loss of a minority language in favor of the North American continent's majority one, it represents a microcosmic initiative that prevents people from making the macrocosmic changes needed to achieve the desired results. Often, all it really does is annoy most speakers of both languages, invites ridicule, makes non-compliance a virtue, and postpones the inevitable. Look at what it did for us.

Sometimes, I wonder why our cousins to the north don't get that. But I suppose the whole thing is hard to understand unless you've had a ma tante Aurélie in the family.

Y avait pas grand monde alentour. Personne parlait. Personne braillait. La mort enlève la parole quand elle est présente et en train de faire son travail. Une fois qu'elle finit pi elle décolle pour aller tuer un autre, là, on peut se mettre à parler pi à a brailler si on veut. Mais pas avant.

Après un quinzaine de minutes, Je réalisai qu'une foule s'était réunie. Pas composée de personnes vivantes, mais d'ombres et de fantômes. Elle fut difficile à voir, mais à travers, j'apercevais des vieux souliers bien cirés et des collets blancs bien  
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## V'là du sort – Troisième partie

### Langue de bois

par  
**Greg Chabot**

#### Introduction

Je me retrouvai avec deux briques, une dans chaque main. Je ressentis un désir presque irrésistible de les tirer vers quèqu'un ou contre quèque chose.

Ç'avait pas commencé comme ça. J'tais venu pour voir une partie de la destruction d'une partie de l'église. J'devais ça à une gang de monde que j'avais connu qui étaient allés à c't'église-là. Y étaient tous partis. J'tais encore icit. C'tait mon devoir de porter témoin.

(V'là du sort — Troisième partie de page 16)

épaisés pi des tabliers récemment nettoyés.

C'tait une foule d'anciens paroissiens et paroissiennes. Morts. Mortes. Venus pour faire ce qu'ils pouvaient, face à la destruction de quèque chose qui leur avait été cher. Et qui avait été cher.

J'entendis leurs voix qui me parlaient tous à la fois de colère et de déception et d'angoisse. C'est à ce moment-là que je retrouvai les deux briques. J'étais le seul qui pouvait porter ce geste nécessaire, me murmuraient les voix.

Vivants, ils se seraient tus. Leur rôle était d'obéir. Leur récompense et leur vengeance et leur voix viendraient après et plus tard, leur permettant de louer le Seigneur pour toute l'éternité tandis que d'autres ...

Mais ils avaient découvert « qu'après » ressemblait pas mal à asteur. Y avait pas de place en avant ... proche du Seigneur ... pour eux-autres, leur avait-on dit. Y avait tellement de monde et tellement de morts qui voulaient être en avant. Les seules places qui restaient – pour le moment – se trouvaient en périphérie, où on ne voyait qu'un p'tit brin d'un pâle reflet des rayons de la splendeur divine.

Quand « pour le moment » semblait devenir permanent, ils trouvèrent enfin leur voix. Des plaintes et des menaces menèrent à de minuscules améliorations. On allait continuer la campagne avec grèves et manifestations, dès leur rentrée. Mais maintenant, il fallait faire quèque chose icit, sur terre, contre les destructeurs.

Ils avaient crié, hurlé, sacré même, en arrivant. C'était leur église. Construite avec des cennes qu'ils auraient pu prendre pour acheter un peu plus de manger chaque semaine ou un loyer pas si proche de la rivière et ses senteurs. L'église et l'école et le presbytère leur avaient coûté des années de travail et de sacrifice. Pi on allait jeter tout ça à terre dans deux ou trois jours. Hurle! Crie! Sacre!

Hélas, la belle voix qu'ils avaient retrouvés au paradis ne pouvait rien contre ces montres terrestres qui menaient tant de bruit. Bulldozer, back-end loader, dump truck, bobcat, jack hammer. Les machines n'entendaient rien. Même si elles avaient entendu, elles n'auraient rien compris.

C'est à ce moment-là qu'ils avaient pensé aux briques. Tire. Brise. Blesse. Arrête. Incapables de même porter les briques dans leur mains d'ombres, ils me choisirent comme avatar. Tire. Brise. Blesse. Arrête. Mais contre qui ou quoi allai-je tirer mes missiles?

Les machines? Ça ne les arrêterait pas mieux que les mots. Et elles ne comprendraient toujours pas.

Les hommes des machines? Ils ne faisaient que leurs jobs, gagnant leurs petites cennes aujourd'hui, tout comme les ombres l'avaient fait il y a un siècle.

Le clergé? Ils comprennent encore moins que les machines. Et comme elles, ça ne les arrêterait pas.

Et, mes chères ombres, voulez-vous vraiment empêcher la destruction de quèque chose qui vous a enlevé la parole pendant si longtemps. Et qui, comme les machines et le clergé, ne vous a jamais compris?

Ne sachant vraiment pas quoi faire, je tirai mes deux briques en l'air. Elles y sont restées. Flottantes. Suspendues.

Elles y sont peut-être toujours. Je ne suis pas retourné. J'ai peur qu'elles vont me tomber sur la tête.

### *Langue de bois*

Mon oncle Dieudonné parlait jamais. Jamais. Y avait rien à dire. Si on voulait qui dise quèque chose, fallait y donner un couple de drinks. Là, la langue se détortillait pi la bouche s'ouvrait pi – mirabile dictu – des mots en sortaient. Même là, mon oncle avait toujours rien à dire. Mais après une ou deux (ou trois ou quatre) bonnes ponces, il le disait quand même. C'est dans ce temps-là qu'il se rapprochait le plus de nous autres, le reste de l'humanité.

Faut dire qu'à l'époque, il y avait pas mal d'hommes franco-américains qui ressemblaient à mon oncle Dieudonné. Y passaient toute la semaine à pas dire un mot. Mais vraiment, là, quoi c'est que vous voulez qu'ils disent? Qu'ils haïssaient leurs jobs pi y allaient en trouver une neuve? Une meilleure? Voyons donc, voyons doc. Y avait personne d'autre qui les voulait. Pi y allaient certainement pas laisser un job steady pour prendre quèque chose d'autre pi risquer de se faire clairer pi se mettre à misère. Qu'ils allaient changer leur char pour une belle char neuve quand les nouveaux modèles sortaient à l'automne? Voyons donc, voyons doc. Y avaient même pas de vieille char laide pour changer pour une belle char neuve. Qui allaient se présenter pour les élections prochaines pi changer les affaires en ville? Voyons donc, voyons doc. Tout le monde aurait ri d'eux-autres. Pi y a pas un Franco qui aurait voté pour un « p'tit

français, » comme on les appelait. Y étaient pas si bêtes que ça, après tout, les Francos.

Ça fait que mon oncle Dieudonné (et les autres) se taisait, de peur de paraître bête. Ou, du moins plus bête qu'il ne le paraissait déjà. Sa femme, ma tante Ruth, l'appelait même "l'air bête" parce qu'a trouvait que le caractère de son cher époux était pas mal comme ses conversations ... c'est-à-dire, inexistant(e). Pour pouvoir entendre le son d'une autre voix humaine de temps à autres, ma tante Ruth s'était mise à parler assez pour trois personnes. Ceci rendit possible des auto-conversations fascinantes – quelques fois passionnés – au cours desquelles elle réussit à se faire rire et pleurer, tout en admirant la sagesse de ses propres propos.

Le succès de sa femme rendit le pauvre Dieudonné jaloux de temps à autre. Crime de câline de batège de tabarnouche de cibole de charge de sapristie de tapince de torvis, se disait-il. J'comprends pas comment que j'peux pas faire aussi ben qu'elle.

Il savait bien qu'il avait besoin de ses ponces pour la concurrencer. Ça fait que quand le dimanche et la soirée de famille arrivait, il enlevait rapidement son chapeau et son manteaux en arrivant et courra presque pour aller se mettre dret ben en avant de celui ou celle en charge faire les drinks, jusqu'à temps que lui ou elle (le plus souvent, c'était ma tante Rose, ça fait que j'va dire "elle") lui pose la question magique: "Veux-tu une drink, toué?" Là, y en buvait une après l'autre. Ma tante Rose l'aidait dans son buvage parce qu'elle aussi aimait son p'tit coup. Quand a se rendait dans la cuisine pour faire une drink pour autrui, elle profitait de l'occasion pour prendre un couple de shots pour elle-même. Ça fait que le plus que mon oncle Dieudonné buvait, le mieux que ma tante Rose aimait ça.

J'ai jamais réussi à conter combien de drinks ça prenait pour "dé-bêtir" mon oncle Dieudonné. Mais ça marchait à merveille. Tout d'un coup, mon oncle se mettait à maîtriser la langue parlée. Il devenait à la fois charmant, fascinant, intelligent. Mais, ce beau moment ne durait jamais longtemps. Mon oncle ne pouvait pas s'arrêter. Dans sa tête, il était convaincu que si "x" drinks le rendaient smarte, x+1 drinks feraient de lui un vrai philosophe comme Cierge Pascal.

Hélas, ce "x+1" fit le contraire. Des abat-jours apparurent sur sa tête. Il oublia les mots de cette belle chanson qu'il avait si bien chanté une demi-heure avant. On avait d'la

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(*V'là du sort — Troisième partie de page 16*)

misère à le comprendre. Il avait d'la misère à marcher et s'enfargeait régulièrement dans toutes sortes de choses. Souvent, on voyait que le devant de ces culottes était tout mouillé et que sa fly était complètement ouverte quand il revenait de la toilette, sans doute parce qu'il avait essayé de trouver (sans succès) une façon plus efficace d'accomplir la routine bien établie de «dézip ta fly, sort ton affaire de tes culottes, pisse, remet ton affaire dans tes culottes, rézip ta fly.»

Mais au moins, il réussit à ouvrir sa gueule pi à parler un peu. Autrement, y aurait pas osé.

C'est pas difficile à parler dans les endroits où la langue joue son rôle normal et naturel. Après tout, elle ne représente qu'une très petite partie de l'être humain en entier. Et dans la plupart des pays du monde, la langue fait ce qu'elle est supposée de faire. Elle sert d'outil ... une façon d'arriver à des buts précis. On encourage les gens à mieux connaître l'outil pour pouvoir mieux s'en servir. Ceci leur aide à mieux faire, que ce soit dans des petites affaires comme indiquant aux pèlerins où se trouve Notre Dame de la Salette, ou dans des affaires légèrement plus importantes, comme la vie elle-même. Dans ces pays-là, la langue appartient à tous et chacun, et tout le monde, y inclus les mon oncles Dieudonné, se débrouillent assez bien.

C'est pas la même chose dans gros des

pays et régions francophones. Là, la langue existe plutôt pour se faire servir et adorer. On passé notre temps à bâtir des oratoires pour elle et à construire des offices dédiées à elle et à créer des comités pour s'occuper entièrement d'elle et à maudire les gens qui osent ne pas se servir d'elle. La langue n'est pas un outil qui existe pour aider le peuple à faire quèque chose ou à réaliser des rêves. Plutôt, elle est devenue ce qui doit être fait et le rêve qui doit être réalisé. De son piédestal au-dessus du maître autel de sa cathédrale, elle nous impose ses commandements qui nous enseignent la différence entre le bien et le mal, le beau et le laid. Ces règles indiquent clairement ce qu'on doit dire, écouter, et considérer, pas selon le contenu du message mais selon sa forme. Tout ce qui est dit en français est bon et louable. Tout ce qui est dit dans une autre langue – surtout si c'est en anglais ou en espagnol – est déformé et méprisable. Et quand à la personne qui parle, c'est encore la langue dont elle se sert, plutôt que ce qu'elle communique, qui indique la valeur du message. Cette langue-Déesse n'appartient pas au peuple, mais au clergé linguistique qui prêche, prescrit, et damne.

Avec tout ça, ça devrait pas être une grosse surprise de constater que cette langue n'existe presque plus en Nouvelle Angleterre où elle fut autrefois la langue maternelle de milliers de Franco-Américains. Mon oncle Dieudonné et les autres Francos de l'époque s'occupaient trop d'autres parties du corps pour plaire à la Déesse. Mon oncle avait

d'la misère avec ses jambes parce qu'il avait passé des années debout au moulin de coton. Pour mon oncle Louis, c'tait les poumons qui enfin s'étaient mis à se plaindre après quarante ans de fumage. Ma tante Laura avait des maladies de coeur partout dans sa famille et il y en avait une qui s'intéressait à elle. Pi mon oncle Lévite (qui était plutôt un cousin, mais qu'on appelait "mon oncle" parce qu'il était ben plus vieux que nous autres) avait les doigts tout de travers à cause de l'arthrite. Presque chaque membre de la famille avait de la misère avec une partie du corps qui menaçait sa job, sa santé ou même sa vie. Et c'est de ça qu'on parlait quand on se mettait ensemble. La langue n'y était pour rien, ça fait qu'a s'est mise en criss pi à décollé.

Ceux et celles qui sont convaincus que le peuple est le serviteur de la langue croient que cette disparition est une tragédie. Ceux et celles qui pensent le contraire – que la langue existe pour servir le peuple – seraient plutôt tentés de dire « bon débarras. » Mais gare à vous, car même si la Déesse de la Langue est affaiblie, il serait dangereux de sous-estimer les effets de sa colère et sa vengeance. La perte d'un royaume après l'autre l'a rendue féroce. Son clergé également. Sachez qu'on vous traitera de traîtres à une cause et à un héritage et à ne culture qui, selon eux, n'appartient qu'à eux et pas à vous ... parce que, selon eux, c'est pas à vous de décider ce que vous voulez faire avec et dans quelle langue vous voulez le faire. Donc, prudence.

## The Use of Hand Forged Iron Crosses as Cemetery Markers

### Les Croix en Fer du Cimetière

*Par Kent Beaulne dit "Bone"  
habitant et Créole de Missouri*

*"Gold is for the mistress. Silver for the maid. Copper for the craftsman, Cunning at his trade. Good! said the Baron, sitting in his hall. But iron, cold iron, is master of them all."*

— Rudyard Kipling

In the older cemeteries of this continent can sometimes be found ancient hand forged iron crosses. Although visible from the road, they often go unnoticed by travelers and the locals. They stand like a forest of trees, silent memorials to ancestors buried there. Many are leaning, have fallen over, or have parts missing due to time, neglect, or vandalism. There is often a depression in the ground in front of the cross or head stone.

This depression was caused by the collapse of a rotting, wooden coffin, reminding us of the reality of death in the days before embalming, steel coffins, and concrete vaults.

The cross is one of the most ancient and universal symbols known to man. It was a religious symbol in its various forms to the Egyptians, Phoenicians, Chinese and many peoples of the ancient world. In the time of the Roman Empire it came

to represent crucifixion, one of the most horrible forms of execution of its day.

The symbol for the Christ used by Christians during the time of persecution was the Greek letter X (chi), the first letter of the Greek word for Christ (ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ). Later, the letters P and T were combined to form the Chi-Rho (There should be an X combined with the P). This letter is still seen on altars of Catholic Churches. After the conversion of the Roman Emperor Constantine (306-337) to Christianity, the persecution of Christians ended. (A question that comes to mind is: was crucifixion as a form of execution at this time also abolished or simply became less common.) Eventually the symbolism of the cross evolved from that of a horrible death, to one of hope, and salvation, in fact a sacred symbol. Imagine modern Christians wearing a miniature noose or guillotine around their necks.

The two most common cross types of  
(Continued on page 19)



*(The Use of Hand Forged Iron Crosses as Cemetery Markers continued from page 18)*

European Christianity are the Latin and the Greek cross. The upright of the Latin cross is taller than its crossbar. The upright and crossbar of the Greek cross are of equal length. The crosses discussed here are of the Latin type.

It was during the Middle Ages, the time of the Crusades and the advent of heraldry that cross types exploded into hundreds of types. At that time a cross, boldly displayed on armor or a flag, was the simplest means



of communicating who you were to troops on the battlefield. These cross types were often named and registered. For example, the pointed end is known as the Cross Urdée.

Seven centuries later, and an ocean away, many of these same designs were being hammered out by hundreds of forgerons of different cultural and national origins, in isolated villages across North America. Somehow these medieval motifs had been passed down through generations of blacksmiths, and were still being reproduced, well into the 20th century.

The iron cross isn't a New World Development born of necessity in isolated, overseas colonies, nor a sign of poverty. They are a cultural phenomenon, transplanted to North America by Europeans, who in spite of their diversity, shared a common religious history, rooted in Catholicism and Chivalric Heraldry dating back to the time of the Crusaders. One of the most interesting observations here is the variety of end motifs and other decorative embellishments, which served several purposes. Some are structural and some are simply, pretty.

While the idea of visiting cemeteries and studying these iron crosses may seem like a morbid fascination with death to some, in reality it is the craftsmanship and art of the

living that we discover in the Blacksmiths labor. As with any occupation, some were more devoted or talented with their art work.

Although the custom of using hand forged iron crosses as grave markers may be continent wide, it seems to be limited to certain ethnic and religious populations (Spanish, French & German Catholics) and historical periods. In regions where they do exist the locals may not be aware of just how unique they are.

During the Colonial Period, with the exception of lead, much metal stock was imported from Europe making it scarce and expensive. The wrought crosses of the forgeron, hammered out in each village should not be confused with the cast iron, ornate crosses made of molten iron poured into molds at distant foundries of St Louis or Chicago. There are none at Old Mines but I have seen them mixed among forged crosses at some of the German settlements.

Les forgerons-blacksmiths were very important people in their respective villages. These were not the simple man who only



shod horses as portrayed in movies. They made the hand tools necessary to civilization and in an age when one didn't go buy a new pick or shovel just because it was dull, they sharpened them. Door hinges, hasps, nails, wagon parts, candle holders, chandeliers were a few of the products they made. By heating the metal in his forge and using a variety of tools, the blacksmith cut and rolled metal on his anvil to create a diversity of designs. As a result, these *croix en fer*, vary from two pieces of lapped, square ended stock, to multiple, ornate pieces.

In Québec, ancestral home of many Illinois - Missouri Créoles, there were *les artisans spécialisés*, artists in iron work. In the book *L'Artisan Forgeron* which deals with the Quebecois blacksmith and his art, there are some very ornate iron crosses

dating from the 1700s. There were probably some iron crosses in Upper Louisiana at that time but it would be difficult to document the age of most. There is an iron cross on the steeple of the 1799 L'Eglise de la Sainte Famille at Cahokia, IL. Does it possibly date from the earlier church?

The black smith probably didn't make the iron stock they worked with. It came from foundries via the traditional trade routes of the time. For the inhabitants of Washington County, there was an iron smelter in adjacent Crawford County and iron mines south in Iron County. According to Eli Robart of Fountain Farm, by 1900 the stock was coming from Chicago via railroad to the depot at nearby Cadet.

The majority of cemetery crosses are made of a standard, stock, flat iron, which varies in width from one and a half to three inch, quarter inch thick stock. A few are made of tire iron, which is round on one side and was bent around wooden wheels, to form a tire. (from Middle English tyre) The crosses are on average two to four feet tall. On the grave of a WW II veteran, blacksmith is a cross six foot tall. I have a feeling he made for his own grave.

In the lead mining district, a hole was drilled in a block of limestone, the cross set in the hole, and molten lead poured in to secure it. Lead was abundant and the livelihood of most of the Créole habitants of Washington and St François Counties.

The crosses are of three types. In Washington County MO, they are constructed of a single upright and a single crossbar which was lapped with two rivets



holding them together. At cemeteries in the neighboring counties two other methods are used as well which may have been a way to use up short pieces of scrap. The upright can two pieces of stock, butt welded to a  
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# From Farm to Factory: The Franco-American Experience in Claremont, NH.

*By Charles John Emond*

From a land of harsh winters and a rural isolation that had served to intensify their fierce devotion to family, faith and tradition, the Franco-Americans came to New Hampshire from Quebec during the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The *habitants*, “pioneers of industrial America,” saw the opportunity to rescue themselves from lives of degrading poverty and to provide for their children and grandchildren the benefits of life in a new and thriving land. This remarkable historical coincidence; this singular and significant marriage of labor and capital featured within it both the best and the worst of such relationships. Using a variety of historical sources, this article examines the profound effect this had upon the city of Claremont, New Hampshire. It begins with a careful look at the geography of the area and the first settlements. It follows the development of the area along the Sugar River that eventually became the town of Claremont. The initial efforts of local investors to join the industrial revolution in building mills along the Sugar River and the eventual success of these mills as the *habitants* arrived to work in them forms a major part of this story. The paper covers the production of various textiles and the development of other mills, the population of the town and the building of the various notable buildings and concludes with a look at the development of St Mary’s Church and a glimpse of life in the Franco American community of Claremont at the turn of the century.

## THE TOWN

### Setting the stage

The natural setting for the town of Claremont is a basin formed by five large hills which surround a gentle rolling plain on the banks of the Connecticut River. To the north of this basin, roughly five miles in diameter, is an upland area and two large mountains, Bald Mountain and Green Mountain. To the south is Bible Hill and to the east, on the banks of the Connecticut River, is Barber’s Mountain. From every part of this wide, natural bowl, majestic Mount Ascutney, just across the Connecticut River in Vermont is visible.

This area is traversed by the Sugar River, flowing from Lake Sunapee in the east and gently winding west to join the Connecticut River just north of Barber’s Mountain. Smaller brooks join the Sugar River all along its course. Four of the larger brooks, all flowing from the north, are Walker Brook, Blackwater (Redwater) Brook, Stevens Brook and Grandy Brook.

Precisely, halfway between the northern highlands and Bible Hill to the south, and equidistant from Barber’s Mountain to the west, is Twistback Hill. This double peaked rise, interrupting the wide, gently rolling hills of the basin, is the location of the first settlement in this area in West Claremont, called The Plains. The natural setting, once covered by forests, saw the gradual spread of rough dirt roads and clearings for the farms of the first settlers in this area.

### The powers that be

There are thirteen mill privileges on the Sugar River as it falls some three hundred feet on its way through Claremont to the Connecticut River three miles away.<sup>1</sup> It is this excellent source of power that attracted the earliest mills and eventually drew the town center from The Plains. It is these sources of power which encouraged the building of the paper, machinery and textile mills in Claremont.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, four towns grew up around Claremont. To the south are Charlestown and Unity, to the east is Newport and to the north is Cornish. To the west, of course, is the Connecticut River and Vermont. The main roads come into town from every direction, beginning with the road from Newport to the east. Two other roads from the east run through this wide gap between Green Mountain and Bible Hill, one of them connecting with Unity. On the other side of Bible Hill run two roads from the south and Charlestown. Four roads run north into Cornish and one runs west and crosses a toll bridge into Ascutney, Vermont.<sup>2</sup>

### A magic carpet made of steel

Halfway through the 19<sup>th</sup> century in addition to the increasing use of water power, the spreading network of roads and

the growing population and prosperity of the village, there came another change, which played a key role in the economic development of Claremont. The first railroad into Claremont, the Sullivan Railroad,<sup>3</sup> was built to run from Bellows Falls to the south, along the Connecticut River. It came closest to Claremont at the foot of Barber’s Mountain, just south of The Plains, and created Claremont Junction, about two miles from the village center. This amazing arrival changed the village almost overnight. With this fast, cheap, reliable connection to the other cities of New England, Canada and the world, economic expansion became a viable and exciting proposition.

Two major engineering feats had to be performed to build this railroad Line. The most visible of these is the high bridge which crosses the Sugar River, near The Plains, between Barber’s Mountain and the highlands on the opposite Side of the Sugar River. The main road to Ascutney also passes under this bridge. Six miles or so north of this, another bridge carries the rail line across the Connecticut into Windsor, Vermont and connects it to White River Junction, Vermont and points north.

Twenty years later, the Claremont and Concord Railway<sup>4</sup> connected with this line from the east, running roughly parallel to the Sugar River from Newport. This completed the infrastructure necessary for the period of economic growth that followed.

### The town in 1880

In 1880, the town of Claremont is described as being bisected by the Sugar River into two nearly equal parts.<sup>5</sup> Two major bridges joined these; the Lower Village Bridge on Lower Main Street, and the Broad Street Bridge near the Upper Falls. A third, smaller “wire bridge” later joined the factory areas about halfway between the other two. The part of the town on the southern bank was bounded by Broad Street and Mulberry Street. South Street and the cemetery marked the southern boundary of the town proper although even South Street was more country than town.<sup>6</sup>

Washington Street marked the end of town on the northern bank and led to farms and countryside along its length. North Street and the Lower Village were well built up, but not much beyond a block or two. Despite the earlier rivalry between the upper and lower “villages” and despite the mills and stores in the Lower Village,

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the upper village had, by mid-century, definitely emerged as the town center.

As a largely rural and agricultural community throughout the 1860's and 1870's the prosperity of the farms in the area impressed visitors. "Many of the farms, in this favored town," writes one visitor in 1880, "have been held in the same family for generations. Well-tilled fields, good fences, picturesque outbuildings, and substantial homesteads maintain the claim for Claremont of having the choicest farms in the State."<sup>7</sup>

The village itself is described as having stately homes and mansions along its tree lined streets.<sup>8</sup> It had several well-designed and attractive churches and a commercial center or two and three story blocks along Pleasant Street, mainly on the eastern side, and around Tremont Square. The Usual assortment of businesses, from the ornate building of the Claremont National Bank, to the Belmont Hotel and the Boston Store in the Haywood Block, to the Sing Lee Chinese Laundry on Tremont Street, to the Drug Store on the corner of the square, gave the downtown a substantial and prosperous look.<sup>9</sup>

### Boom town Claremont

With a population holding steady at around 4,000<sup>10</sup> for the decades between 1850 and 1880, the town had stabilized its economic growth and expansion and in both of these had proceeded slowly. But along with the tremendous success of the factories and the resulting influx of more and more mill workers from the north, the rapid expansion that began in the 1880's produced a building boom the results of which still define the shape of Claremont today. Within the 25 year period between 1880 and 1905, Claremont's population almost doubled to over 7,000.<sup>11</sup>

Within the fifteen years, from 1890 to 1905, many of the major buildings were constructed. The present Opera House/Town Hall was completed in 1897,<sup>12</sup> the Hotel Claremont, which stretches majestically along the northern side of Tremont Square was built in 1892,<sup>13</sup> the Fiske Free Library building was built in 1903, the Hunton Block, in 1893, and the Hunton Block on Sullivan Street in 1899.<sup>14</sup> Given the expansion going on at all the Mills and the building of tenement housing and private homes for the increase in population, Claremont experienced a building boom which changed its appearance almost overnight.

### The electric trolley

One of the crowning achievements of this burgeoning community was the construction of an electric railway through town. The formation of the company, which soon came to be known as the Claremont Railway and Lighting Company, came about through the substantial investment of local funds.<sup>15</sup> Construction was begun in the summer of 1902 by "an army of Italian coolies." The attendant power house, built in the Lower Village on the western bank of the Sugar River was also an impressive engineering accomplishment.<sup>16</sup>

The system included rail spurs to the major factories and, in addition to its passenger service, handled freight to and from the main railroad lines. When the trolley line opened the following year, it ran five miles from Claremont Junction through the town center to West Claremont, very near to The Plains where the town had begun.<sup>17</sup>

### From farm to factory

Thus Claremont completed the transition from a mainly agricultural village, set in a countryside of farms, to a small industrial city with factories as the mainstay of its economy and most of its inhabitants either working directly for the mills or dependent upon mill workers for their business, as were the boarding houses, stores and suppliers of other goods and services. As a political, social and economic entity, Claremont had itself made the transition from the farm to the factory.

## THE MILL

### In the beginning

In 1836, during the textile boom which hit New England, several entrepreneurs in the upper Claremont area decided upon a similar venture. They were encouraged by the tremendous success of such mills as those in Lowell and Manchester. They were also encouraged, one might say prodded, by the growth of industry in the lower village.<sup>18</sup>

As a first step towards getting the better of their lower village rivals, Dr. Leonard Jarvis procured a charter in 1831, for the formation of the "Upper Falls Company" under the name of the Sugar River Manufacturing Company. Along with other wealthy citizens like Paran Stevens, Joseph T. Adams and Russell Jarvis,<sup>19</sup> he gathered together a capital fund of \$25,000 and proceeded to purchase land on the upper falls and to erect a large four story factory building and a ten-

ement house for the expected workers.<sup>20</sup> This mill building, Mill Number One,<sup>21</sup> was built on the southern bank of the Sugar River. The tenement house was just across the street and up toward Broad Street.<sup>22</sup> These buildings were built between 1836 and 1839.<sup>23</sup>

### Not enough money

Unfortunately, the young company had to use the last of its capital in putting on the roof and installing windows. No money remained for the machinery and the material to begin actual manufacturing operations. They went bust and the buildings were unused and empty until 1843.<sup>24</sup> One can sense the embarrassment of the local promoters in whose failure the rival lower village businessmen must have taken great delight.

In that year, the Boston based company of Parker, Wilder and Parker bought the mill for \$3,000 brought in textile equipment and, with Henry Russell as their agent began the production of cotton ticking, sheeting and drilling in 1844.<sup>25</sup> It was incorporated as the Monadnock Mills Company two years later, in 1846, and continued the production of textiles until it closed for good in 1932.<sup>26</sup>

At the mid-century mark, with Jonas Livingston as manager,<sup>27</sup> the young textile company occupied both sides of Water Street and had, in addition to the four story factory and the tenement house, two overseer's houses directly across the street from the mill.<sup>28</sup> In 1853, after several successful years, another mill was built close to

Mill Number One next to the river, along with a boiler house in back of it. It equaled the original mill in general size but was five stories in height.<sup>29</sup>

The village of Claremont, in 1867, had a population of around 4,500<sup>30</sup> and a small but growing population of French Canadian factory workers. With the railroad connections already well established for some twenty years by this time, with only the addition of the Claremont and Concord rail link to be completed in 1872,<sup>31</sup> the stage was set for economic expansion and population growth unlike that of any other period.

### Marseilles Quilts

Jacquard looms were installed in 1870. These produced the first Marseilles quilts in the country and began a production line that included, "Marseilles and Satin quilts manufactured of fine selected cotton. . . in all the various quantities and all the sizes . . . (in) a great variety of entirely original designs in Damask, Em-

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broidery, Point Lace and Floral effects.”<sup>32</sup>

In the 1870’s, the expansion of the mill complex continued with the construction of the Wheel and Pump House. In 1874, the “old” Bleach House in 1875, and the Weave Shed in 1876. This shed, attached to Mill Number Two on the Main Street side, was built to house the Jacquard looms which were used to weave the bedspreads for which the Monadnock Mills became very famous. These delicate quilts with flower patterns were eventually ordered for the White House and for such hotels as the Biltmore and the Waldorf- Astoria.<sup>33</sup>

### Expansion

In 1879, the Monadnock Mills employed 330 men and women and was noted as paying about one-tenth of the town’s taxes...“without grudging.” Production of mixed flannels for this year was 220,000 yards with a value of \$36,000. Production of tablecloths, napkins, bedspreads, etc., used up about 800,000 pounds of cotton and had a value of \$200,000 for this year. The company, with \$200,000 in capital, ran 16,000 spindles in 1879, and owned 27 tenements and dwellings. The factory itself covered eight or nine acres and formed a connected row of buildings between the Sugar River and Water Street that ran 575 feet.<sup>34</sup>

In 1880, a Warehouse for storing cotton was built across the street from this impressive line of mill buildings, and next to it, in 1881, the Office Building was built.<sup>35</sup> It was in this year that the number of spindles increased to 17,000 with a reported planned increase to 20,000 the following year. The number of employees had risen to 450.<sup>36</sup> Daniel W. Johnson is listed as the agent during this period of expansion.

The production of bedspreads was expanded with the construction of Mill Number Three, built in 1892, right next to the Weave Shed. This mill features a grand stair tower and was built as a four-story building with the fifth floor being added on in the next century.<sup>37</sup> This was the last of the major building construction projects undertaken by the company with the exception of the Bleachery which was built in 1902 at the other end of the factory row.<sup>38</sup> The Monadnock Mills now extended the entire length of Water Street from Main Street to Broad Street.

In summary, the success of the Monadnock Mills Company can be measured by the growth of its physical plant throughout the last quarter of the 19th century. It can also be

measured by the success of its product lines, some of which became quite famous. As well, the company’s capital increased from \$25,000 in 1836 to \$250,000 in 1894. In 1874, the company employed 300 people<sup>39</sup> and seven years later, in 1881, employed 450.<sup>40</sup> Employment eventually rose as high as 600 in the early part of the 20th century.<sup>41</sup>

### Other Mills

There were also other mills that attracted French-Canadian workers, notably the Sullivan Machinery Company just down the street from the Monadnock Mills.<sup>42</sup> In the 1920’s, the Sullivan Machinery Company outstripped the textile mill to become the town’s largest employer.<sup>43</sup> From a workforce of about 50 in 1870,<sup>44</sup> this company, which produced machinery for mills, and later mining machinery, grew to employ 325 in 1900.<sup>45</sup>

Next in size and in employment of French-Canadian workers was the Maynard and Washburn Shoe Factory, just down the river from both the Monadnock Mills and the Sullivan Machinery Company.<sup>46</sup> This firm employed 50 hands when it began in 1883 and expanded to employ 225 hands by 1893.<sup>47</sup> There were other smaller establishments, including the Sugar River Paper Mill Company, but not as many French-Canadians worked for these concerns.<sup>48</sup>

In 1893, out of a population of 6,500, about 1000 were said to work in the factories, machine shops and mills.<sup>49</sup> The Claremont Directory of 1901 lists the names and occupations of, presumably, all of the townspeople. A cursory glance at the obviously French names and their listed employment reveals the largest number working for the Monadnock Mills while the other mills combined to employ about half that number. Many other occupations are also listed for French-Canadians. There are several farmers, blacksmiths, and carpenters, but there is also Joseph H. Theriault, a physician, Frederick Lariviere, a dentist, John Lafarier, a clerk at the Hotel Claremont, Eugene Millette, a barber, Peter Nolin, a grocer, and O.P. Cassavant, a boarding house proprietor.<sup>50</sup>

### Here to stay

In summary, the workplace for these French-Canadian immigrants tended to be the textile mill, especially in the beginning, but with the expansion of other nearby factories, obviously the opportunities to work were likewise expanded. These factories also needed the steady, hard-working people that the French-Canadians proved to be. It is interesting to see, in the Directory of

1901 which lists families, that very often the various members of a family would work in two or three different mills. With the growth in size of the French speaking community came opportunities to open stores, blacksmith shops, and barber shops and the community diversified. The majority had left the farm far behind for the attractions of living and working in a growing city, just as they had left their ancestral land for the challenge of living in a new nation.

## THE CHURCH

### In the Beginning

St Mary’s Church, the first Catholic church in the state, was built in 1824 in the part of Claremont called “The Plains”. The simple brick structure was built with funds raised in Canada during the winter of 1823 by Fr. Virgil Barber.<sup>51</sup> This Jesuit priest was the son of Daniel Barber, an Episcopal minister, whose entire family converted to Catholicism. He built this church on his father’s property and his mother was the first person to be buried in 2 St. Mary’s Cemetery.<sup>52</sup> The parish which he served for only two years, until 1827, numbered about 150 people.<sup>53</sup>

In addition to the church, he began a “school of higher learning,” the Claremont Catholic Seminary, which met in the upstairs rooms of the little church. The students stayed in Daniel Barber’s house and paid a dollar a week for board and tuition. This school, the first such in New England, taught Latin, Greek, French and religion.<sup>54</sup> In 1827, when Fr. Barber was assigned to other duties by his superiors, the Catholic community was only intermittently served by travelling missionary priests for the next 40 years or so.<sup>55</sup>

### Leaving the Plains

St. Mary’s was set up as a mission church of St. Bernard’s in Keene in 1862.<sup>56</sup> By this time, the town center had moved away from The Plains to the present location on the banks of the Sugar River, and this dictated a more central location for the parish. The increase in the number of Catholics was also a factor in the establishment of the new parish. The railroad had become a fact of life by the end of the 1860’s. The population of the town had risen to over 4,000, and the mills were beginning to build and expand at a rapid rate.

The first pastor to be assigned to St. Mary’s, Fr. George Derome,<sup>57</sup> purchased the land on Central Street and engaged a builder and an architect.<sup>58</sup> In August of

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1870, they laid out the foundations for a church 120 feet long and 45 feet wide. The lumber for the church came from Unity and timbers were dragged in by oxen. Fr. Derome himself played an active role in going out with the parishioners to cut down the trees.<sup>59</sup> The frame of the steeple was raised in August of 1871 and was the highest in town. Work on the interior continued slowly as the attempt was made to pay for the building as it was constructed.

The first Mass was said in the unfinished church in October of 1871 by Fr. Goodwin, who replaced Fr. Derome. In fact, it took a total of five years, and as many pastors to finish the project.<sup>60</sup> On Sunday, July 18th, 1875, the Bishop of Portland, ME, the Rt. Rev. James Healy, formally dedicated 11 St. Mary's Church.<sup>61</sup>

### Father Finnigan

In 1881, an Irish priest who was to have an important role in the building of this French parish was appointed pastor, Fr. Patrick J. Finnegan took up residence in the two story brick rectory attached to the back of the church, and served St. Mary's for the rest of the century. Fr. Finnegan was a short and very dignified man of stately bearing, well remembered by his French parishioners.<sup>62</sup> He was an accomplished organist who gave the inaugural recital on the two manual Woodbury & Harris Organ in 1895.<sup>63</sup> He was also much admired for his ability as an ice skater.<sup>64</sup>

During Fr. Finnegan's pastorate, the three bells were installed in the steeple, in 1899, after being blessed by Bishop Bradley on the ground.<sup>65</sup> They were rung for the first time in October of that year. In 1889, Fr. Finnegan made a very important investment in the future of St. Mary's Parish by purchasing the three beautiful, white-columned Greek Revival industrialist's mansions across the street from the church. These had been built during a previous boom in 1835-1836.<sup>66</sup> The first of these became the rectory, the next became the school, which opened in 1890, and the third became the convent, occupied by the Sisters of Jesus-Mary from 1890 to 1895 and by the sisters of Mercy from 1896 on. A fourth such building was purchased in the 1920's to house the high school.<sup>67</sup>

### From French to English

The population of the parish increased rapidly during these decades at the end of the 19th century, and the need for another priest

was felt in the 1890s, Fr. Melancon, who was later to serve as pastor, served as curate during these years.<sup>68</sup> The school opened with 180 students, a move which necessitated the closing down of two of Claremont's public 19 schools,<sup>69</sup> and, except for a brief hiatus in 1895, showed a steady yearly increase in enrollment to nearly 700 by the 1920's.<sup>70</sup> The one year break in 1895 came about because of a language problem. The Canadian order which had opened the school was accustomed to teaching in French and felt increasingly uncomfortable with having to teach in English as well. They were replaced a year later by the Sisters of Mercy, an order founded in Ireland, which staffed St. Mary's School from 1896 on. One of the ways that they coped with the language problem was to separate the sodality into two sections, one for French-speaking students and the other for those who spoke English.<sup>71</sup>

The French influence in the parish was strong in the 1870's and grew stronger with every passing year through the turn of the century, but the enmity between the French and the Irish, so prevalent in the larger cities like Manchester, never took hold in Claremont. This could have been due to the presence of the Irish priest, Fr. Finnigan, who served during the time when many of the French families arrived and who worked with a French curate at the turn of the century. It could also have been the influence of the nuns, who seem to have provided for the French-speaking children and worked hard at integrating them into the English-speaking mainstream. It could also have been due to the sheer numbers of French-Canadian families who called St. Mary's Church their own. However, it is very clear that the firm French-Canadian belief in "la foi, la langue, la culture," as an integral part of their life experience dictated their playing an active role in the life of the parish.

### Social Life

Two benevolent societies were formed in the early 1880's to promote the appreciation of French culture and the feeling of brotherhood and unity, especially as several such societies existed for the non-French residents of Claremont. Both "La Societe St. Jean Baptiste" and the "Societe L'Union Canadienne-Francaise of Claremont" list Fr. Finnegan as their chaplain. The names of several other men also appear 22 for both societies.<sup>72</sup> They had a hall in the Union Block, called the French Lodge Hall, where dances were held.<sup>73</sup>

As the oldest of the French-Canadian

organizations in Claremont, La Societe St. Jean Baptiste reached a peak membership of 450 in the early decades of the 20th century. There were several other organizations which had as their focus and source of membership the French-Canadian community. The Sodality of Ste. Anne was founded in 1900, the local chapter of the Catholic Daughters of America was begun in 1884, and the Court Montagnards 21 and the Villa Marcia, of the Association Canado-Americaine, were founded in 1901.<sup>74</sup> All of these sponsored a wide variety of activities for their membership and the community at large including dances, stage performances at the town hall, festivals, suppers, picnics and concerts.<sup>75</sup>

The first *habitants* to make the long journey from the harsh winters and a rural isolation of their ancestral farms in Quebec made it easier for each succeeding family and individual, drawn by the flourishing mills, to adapt to life in a new land. The newspaper accounts of the day, as well as the personal interviews, paint a picture of the warm, active and vibrant life in the French-Canadian community of Claremont which sustained them. Indeed the *habitants*, "pioneers of industrial America," through their diligence and effort provided for their children and grandchildren the benefits of a better life in a new and thriving land.

### AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY



*Charles John Emond is a lecturer in English and History currently teaching at Webster University in Hua Hin, Thailand. He was born into the Franco-American community of Claremont, NH within the sound of the bells of St Marys where*

*he was educated through high school. He started his post-secondary education at Emerson College, Boston, later transferring to Queens College, Flushing, NY where he received his Bachelor of Arts Degree in English & Art History.*

*After spending fifteen years teaching high school in Belize, Central America, he moved to Vermont and earned a Master's Degree from Dartmouth College in 1975 and a Master's Degree for Teachers from Keene State College in 1991 focused on teaching history and Spanish. For the past 20 years he has taught history courses online for the Vermont State Colleges. He has been teaching in Thailand for ten years.*

**NDLR: This article was submitted with footnotes and are available on request. They have been omitted because of space constraints.**



# A SUNDAY AFTERNOON

by Jacqueline Chamberland Blesso  
Patterson, NJ

Willie Cyr used to drink his cocktail of vanilla extract poured into a bottle of Pepsi while hiding between my parents' general store and one of our warehouses at Gérard B. Chamberland's in Ste-Agathe, Maine. *Le bonhomme Willie*, as we called him, had been gassed in France during World War I, "The war to end all wars." Deemed unfit to manage his own affairs, as he would spend his entire pension on alcohol at the beginning of the month, Armand Lagassé had stepped up to serve as Willie's legal guardian. Since Willie was not permitted to buy alcoholic beverages, he started buying

week catechism class in preparation for their first communion and confirmation, and subsequently became friends in high school.

When we were young, Armand would come to the store in the evening and stop to talk with us on the front porch of our house, which was attached to the store. He would regale us with stories of their mischief in high school, such as spitting their chewing-tobacco juice into the inkwells. He graduated from Aroostook State Normal School in Presque Isle in 1935. Armand taught school in Ste-Agathe and Sinclair, and in 1943 was elected to serve in the Maine



*Remise des diplômes en 1930 – Gérard, le premier à droite, Armand, le troisième.*

*1930 graduating class – Gérard, first from right, Armand, third.*

bottles of extract, preserved in 35% alcohol. Once my father, Gérard, realized this, my mother, Eva, hid the vanilla under the counter instructing us to tell Willie that "we did not have any to sell." Meanwhile, we would write up his purchases in the account book, and Armand would reimburse us at the end of each month. This was also the arrangement with the other stores in town.

Armand Lagassé and my father, Gérard Chamberland, were among the three men and ten women who graduated, in 1930, from Notre Dame de la Sagesse High School of Ste-Agathe, the public school administered in conjunction with a private Catholic boarding school at the convent of the Daughters of Wisdom. They were born in 1912 – Gerard on May 3 and Armand on July 4. Of short stature with light curly hair, Armand had been a polio victim when he was young. An orthopedic brace on one leg caused him to limp. Gérard attended a one-room schoolhouse in *les concessions* where he grew up, and Armand attended school at the convent. They met for the first time during the two-

House of Representatives. He was President of the Ste-Agathe Board of Selectmen in 1944-45. On June 26, 1946, he married Léonie Marin. She served as Town Clerk and Town Treasurer in 1946-47. He was also the sales representative for Birds Eye Foods, a subsidiary of General Foods, Inc.

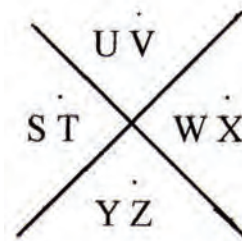
Several years earlier, when Armand was contemplating becoming Willie's guardian, his father, Eloi, had warned him against doing so, saying: "*c'est un vieux chétif cet homme-là.*" Armand had laughed at his father's labeling of Willie as a wicked old man, as Armand was not afraid of Willie.

Willie was born in Ste-Agathe on April 11, 1895. He was inducted into the army on May 27, 1918, and served until March 4, 1919. He claimed that he married the "widow" of a missing French soldier who had presumably been killed during the war. After the armistice, however, the soldier returned home. Willie left and never (re)married. The details of his exposure to gas were murky; and as is the case with many returning veterans, it may have been

compounded by some level of what we now call Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Willie re-inserted himself into our village in the middle of the 1950s. Little is known of his intervening years. He limped and leaned on a cane, and almost always wore a grey-zippered bomber jacket over dark clothing, a safari hat and dark glasses due to an eye operation. Of medium build and round-bellied, he would come to our store, two doors up the road from where he lived (in the second-floor apartment he rented from Armand), accompanied by his little white mongrel dog.

Willie was pleased when my mother would invite him into our living room to play the piano. While he rarely smiled, he could be quite garrulous. Whenever I waited on him at the store, he would often linger to talk – sometimes about the war. He told me how he had served as a translator in France, and claimed to have invented a military code based on the "tic-tac-toe" grid and an "X".



Two letters are placed in each position of the grid. Each one of the letters in the second position within each grid has a dot on top. To write a B, all that was needed was to create a left angle with a dot inside:  $\cdot \_ \_$ , and a C and D (with a dot over the D) would be drawn  $\_ \_ \_$ , with or without the dot, etc. So,  $\_ \_ \_$ ,  $\cdot \_ \_$  and  $\_ \_ \_$  represent A, B and C. The letters S to Z would be written the same way around the open positions of the "X".

On August 31, 1958, my parents and younger siblings were in Québec on their annual pilgrimage to Ste-Anne-de-Beaupré. Days after beginning my senior year, I

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# UN DIMANCHE APRÈS-MIDI

*Jacqueline Chamberland Blesso  
Patterson, NJ*

Willie Cyr buvait son cocktail d'extrait de vanille versé dans une bouteille de Pepsi en cachette entre un de nos entrepôts et le magasin général de mes parents, "Gérard B. Chamberland," à Ste-Agathe, Maine. Le bonhomme Willie, comme on l'appelait, avait été gazé en France pendant la première guerre mondiale – "La guerre pour terminer toutes les guerres." Comme il ne pouvait pas gérer ses affaires, parce qu'il aurait dépensé toute sa pension sur la boisson au début du mois, Armand Lagassé s'était présenté pour servir de gardien de Willie. Puisque Willie n'était pas permis d'acheter des boissons alcooliques, il s'est mis à acheter des bouteilles d'extrait de



*Armand  
Lagassé*

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from page 24)*

considered myself too grown-up for such a family outing! Having picked some lettuce and shallots from the garden to make a sour-cream salad, I cooked chicken in the rotisserie and invited my two best friends, Pat and Rachel Michaud (who, coincidentally, were Armand's nieces) to join me for a noonday dinner. We had just finished our meal, when a gunshot tore into the tranquility of that sleepy Sunday afternoon.

Corinne Albert, our visibly shaken neighbor, arrived at our house.

"Call the police!" Corinne exclaimed. We had a phone because of the store; but like many households at that time, the Alberts did not. She hesitated for a moment when she saw that the Michaud sisters were visiting, but blurted out:

"Willie Cyr has shot Armand Lagassé!"

I called Deputy Sheriff, Donat Daigle. He advised us to call the State Police, who would be coming from Caribou or Presque Isle, 40 to 50 miles south. In the meantime, a small crowd had assembled at the scene of the crime. Armand, 46, lay stretched out

vanille, préservé avec 35% d'alcool. Quand mon père, Gérard, s'en est aperçu, ma mère, Éva, a caché la vanille sous le comptoir et nous a donné des ordres de dire à Willie "on en a plus à vendre." Entre temps, on inscrivait les achats de Willie dans le livre de compte et Armand nous remboursait à la fin de chaque mois. C'était le même arrange-



*Les noces  
d'Armand et  
Léonie*

*Armand  
and Leonie's  
wedding, 1946*

on the veranda in a pool of his own blood having been shot in the head at close range. Willie, 63, was pacing back and forth in front of Armand, guarding his victim like a sentry with Armand's single-barrel 20-gauge shotgun over his shoulder.

We soon learned that Willie had taken the gun from Armand's garage which was between the two houses. The Alsime and Églantine Lagassé family (no relation to Armand) lived downstairs from Willie in the first-floor apartment on the left. Armand had an adjoining office on the right, but lived with his family in his house next door. When Willie tried to shoot him, 68-year-old Alsime ran from the premises and jumped a fence in the back of the house. Églantine fled from the bathroom just before a shot penetrated the room.

Rev. Valmont Gilbert, the young vicar of the parish, arrived and gave Armand the last rites. Father Gilbert then engaged Willie in conversation. Taking advantage of this distraction, Réginald Tardif, a young man from the parish, snuck up behind Willie and took the gun away from him. The State Police later arrived and placed Willie under arrest. At Armand's funeral, the church was packed with people

ment avec les autres magasins du village.

Armand Lagassé et mon père, Gérard Chamberland, étaient parmi les trois garçons et dix filles qui, en 1930, ont reçu leurs diplômes de Notre Dame de la Sagesse High School à Ste-Agathe, l'école publique du district administré conjointement avec le pensionnat catholique du couvent des Filles de la Sagesse. Ils sont nés en 1912 – Gérard le 3 mai et Armand le 4 juillet. De petite taille avec des cheveux clairs bouclés, Armand avait été victime de la polio très jeune et il portait un appareil orthopédique sur une jambe, ce qui le rendait boiteux. Gérard avait été écolier dans une école d'une pièce dans les concessions où il avait grandi, et Armand avait étudié au couvent. Ils se sont rencontrés pour la première fois

*(Suite page 47)*



*Armand avec  
ses fils, Paul (à  
gauche) et Jean  
(à droite)*

*Armand with  
sons Paul (left)  
and Jean (right)*

from the parish in sympathy with Léonie and her two sons, Jean 10 and Paul 5.

There had never been a homicide in Ste-Agathe.

On December 18, 1958, William Cyr pleaded "not guilty" in front of the judge of the Superior Court in Houlton. A doctor from the Augusta State Hospital testified that "Cyr did not know the difference between right and wrong at the time of commission and he was criminally insane." The jury brought in a verdict of not guilty for reason of insanity. The judge sent him to the asylum in Augusta. William Clovis Cyr died there on January 24, 1961, at the age of 65. His death certificate recites that he suffered from schizophrenic reaction and paranoia.

Léonie Lagassé passed away on September 10, 2012, at the age of 93.

*In war, there are no unwounded soldiers.*

Jose Narosky

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Thank you Maude, T.O. Francine and  
Renée.

*N.D.L.R. Ceci est le neuvième installment de Waterbury L'exilé par Alice Gélinas. Voir la prochaine édition de Le Forum pour plus.)*

# Waterbury

## L'exilé

par  
Alice Gélinas  
Waterbury, CT

En dépit des fatigues du voyage, nous étions contents d'être revenus avec papa, Armand, Irène et Rosélia.

Les souvenirs que j'avais conservés furent ceux de la rue où nous demeurions, étant jeune. L'école avait été rebâtie. Au temps de notre enfance, elle était en bois.

Tout avait été prévu pour nous accueillir. Irène et Fernand nous ont hébergés pendant quelques jours, tandis que Rosa et sa famille se sont faits une place chez Armand.

Ils nous avaient déniché un petit deux pièces sur Mill Street. Nos hommes se sont trouvés du travail immédiatement. D'abord, à la boulangerie ensuite, Frisé s'est placé à la U.S. Rubber Company in Naugatuck. C'était un emploi stable. Alex est entré à la Waterbury Company, là où Ralph et Fernand travaillaient. Plus tard, il est entré à la Silver Company à Meriden.

Nous avons refait connaissance avec nos amis du temps passé, ainsi que de nombreux cousins.

Notre vie s'est vite améliorée. Nous avons habité des logements plus beaux et plus grands. Je me rappelle d'un, en particulier, situé sur la Pond Street, un cinq pièces, avec des fenêtres chaque bord et un grand perron.

La paie était bonne, comparé aux emplois incertains qui avaient été notre lot jusque là... En plus, les magasins, banques étaient à notre portée. Je descendais dans le bas de la ville pour visiter ma famille, et le trajet se faisait aisément à pied. Nous vivons près de l'école et de l'église.

Chez Rosa ont occupé, pour un temps, le logement que nous avons habité, étant jeune. Celui dans lequel, notre mère avait vécu. Ça faisait étrange de se retrouver après tant d'années dans le même logis qu'autrefois.

Cependant, celui qu'elle a aimé le plus, s'est trouvé sur la rue West Clay. Tant qu'à Irène, elle a toujours été bien logée, car Fernand et son frère avaient leur propre triplex sur la West Clay.

Armand et Laurette habitaient sur la rue Jewelry, et leurs trois garçons:

Jacques, Roger et André allaient à l'école Ste-Anne. Charlie, Ralph et Michael: les fils de Rosélia fréquentaient aussi cette école, de sorte que notre fille avait beaucoup de cousins qui l'entouraient.

Rosélia et Ralph s'étaient achetés un triplex sur la South Main Street, là où leurs trois garçons gradissaient. Ils avaient perdu un quatrième fils qui avait vécu quatre jours. Nous avions tous été au cimetière, et ce fut une grande tristesse pour toute la famille, et pour les parents: le coeur brisé. Il est enterré au Calvary Cemetery.

Papa travaillait comme aide-sacristain. Nous allions lui rendre visite presque chaque soir.

Tous les matins, Rosa et moi, nous allions faire nos emplettes au magasin d'Elzéar et Cécile Descôteaux. Nous apportons une tarte pour le dessert.

J'aimais me sentir responsable de la marche de la maisonnée. Être une épouse et une mère était l'affaire la plus importante pour moi. La vie prenait tout son sens.

Tout était parfait! J'avais un frigidaire, un poêle à gaz, le téléphone!

Le plaisir de tenir un ménage, de préparer à manger pour les autres, de coudre les vêtements de Nicole, de remplir le thermos de Frisé, afin qu'il puisse manger la même chose que nous, aux trois repas, c'était plaisant!

À l'heure de son retour à la maison, j'avais fait couler l'eau pour son bain, en vérifiant la bonne température. Des serviettes propres étaient bien placées, en attendant qu'il puisse s'en servir.

Lorsqu'il était sur l'autre chiffre, je lui préparais une bonne soupe qu'il mangeait en lisant son journal à onze heures.

Je lui coupais les cheveux moi-même. Je le dorlotais. En passant près de lui, je lui donnais un petit bec sur la joue. Avant qu'il parte pour l'ouvrage, j'aimais qu'il me serre dans ses bras. Je n'en demandais pas davantage. Avoir autour de moi, les êtres que j'adorais, me procurait un sentiment de satisfaction intense.

Je mettais des petites notes dans sa boîte à lunch:

**L'amour commence par un baiser  
Il finit par un bébé**

ou bien

**L'espoir est une étoile  
Dans le ciel de la nuit**



Je ressentais l'amour que nous avions l'un pour l'autre, et tous les deux, nous chérissions Nicole.

À mille petits faits, comme se prendre la main, ou bien avoir ma jambe contre la sienne, entrelacés, étaient pour moi des instants précieux. Je garde le souvenir de ces beaux jours: ma tête inclinée sur son épaule, récitant une prière.

Quoiqu'il puisse arriver, cette image resterait à jamais gravée dans mon coeur.

Ce fut au tour d'Émile et Gertrude de plier bagages et de venir nous rejoindre. Ils avaient obtenu leurs visas.

Nous leur avons trouvé un logement et son ménage arriva par camion. Leur fille, Lise, fut inscrite à l'école avec les autres.

Émile travailla à Waterbury Company pour un certain temps et lorsque papa a pris sa retraite, il le remplaça à l'église Ste-Anne. Notre église, où beaucoup de Gélinas sont allés prier, avait une grande importance pour nous. On y allait pour les neuvaines, les neuf premiers vendredi du mois, les chemins de croix, etc.

Rosélia et Ralph ont contribué pour un bon montant, pour défrayer les réparations.

Je suis retournée au moins trois fois à New-Bedford, Massachusetts, avec Irène, Rosa et Émile, là où elle avait demeuré, le port de mer où grand-père Alphonse Lavergne aimait voir arriver les bateaux.

La dernière fois que j'y suis allée, c'était bien changé. Toute la rue, où maman avait demeuré, n'existait plus et il n'y avait plus l'usine de COTON où elle avait travaillé. Tout était remplacé par des bâtisses neuves et la rue principale était devenue une Plaza.

Maman ne se serait pas reconnue. J'ai regardé dans l'annuaire téléphonique pour voir ce qui nous restait de parenté par là. La veuve d'Oscar Lavergne, frère de Lidouri, était encore là. Les autres cousins de ma mère étaient retournés à (Suite page 27)

(Waterbury L'exilé suite de page 26)

St-Paul du Minnesota, U.S.A., et leurs descendants dans l'Ouest South Dakota, etc.

Nous devenions des Gillinasse (Gélinas), Irène: une Libronne (Lebrun) et Rosa: une Languevine (Langevin). Pourtant les noms, c'est beau en français.

Aux Fêtes, nous reprenions les traditions canadiennes françaises. On se regroupait pour manger nos pâtées à la viande, plottes (plat régional: viande enrobée de pâte, et déposée dans un ragoût de pattes de cochon), etc. On jouait aux cartes, on prenait un verre. C'était le fun. Papa, son chapeau sur le bord de la tête, entonnait une chanson. Il aimait encore conter des histoires drôles pour faire rire le monde. Émile et Armand chantaient à leur tour. Ils avaient un beau timbre de voix. Frisé faisait sa part en chantant sa chanson., toujours la même. Il buvait un peu trop, mais tant que notre loyer était payé et que nous n'étions privés de rien...

Papa a vécu chez Rosélia, chez Rosa et aussi chez moi. Pour se sentir à l'aise, il tenait à nous donner un montant de sa pension de vieillesse.

La nuit, alors que tout était calme et tranquille, j'entendais Nicole lui dire: "Chante, Pépère, chante une chanson, j'aime ça, même si tu chantes mal!"

Le matin, j'exigeais qu'elle termine son déjeuner, mais elle rechignait, alors papa l'aidait à finir son assiette.

Papa aimait tous ses petits-enfants, mais il avait un faible pour les enfants de Rosélia: Charlie, Ralph et plus tard, Michael. Il les promenait partout.

Un jour, Nicole, les filles de Rosa et celles d'Émile lui ont dérobé les bonbons qu'il gardait en réserve pour les enfants de Rosélia. Elles ont mangé tout le sac de bonbons pour ensuite, les remplacer par des "beans". C'était pour jouer un tour, car il avait du bonbon pour tous ses petits-enfants.

Frisé s'était trouvé un deuxième emploi, afin de s'acheter une auto. Le jour où il arriva avec sa Chevrolet à deux portes, il était tout fier. Chez Rosa et Émile ont eu, eux aussi leur auto.

Nous allions en pique-nique toutes les familles ensemble. Les enfants étaient fous de joie. Nous allions à Lake Quassy, Lake Compound, Black Rock, mais notre endroit préféré était Momaguine: une plage près de l'océan New-Heaven.

Papa était avec nous partout où nous allions.

Richard et Rita Beaulieu, Hervé et Anne Lebrun, Freddy et Valéda Bard,

madame Lebrun venaient avec nous et ça virait en un gros party sur la plage.

Denise, la fille d'Irène, était malade en auto, mais elle venait. Papa la prenait sur ses genoux tout le long du voyage. Elle était bien spéciale pour lui. Il l'appelait sa petite fille à deux couleurs, parce que la couleur de ses cheveux était un mélange de doré et de roux.

Nous avions du plaisir, mais le soleil m'a toujours incommodée. Même sous un parasol, Irène et moi, l'air salée de la mer nous brûlait.

Rose avait maintenant trois enfants: Lise, Hélène et Marcel. Bébé Marcel avait douze ans de différence avec sa soeur Hélène.



Photo prise à New Bedford

Debout: Dézolina

Assis: Rébecca, Alphonsine

À genoux: Angéline

*Tous ceux qui me voient danser*

*Parlent de ma gaieté*

*Depuis que tu m'as quitté*

*Je ris pour cacher mes pleurs*

*Qui tombent sur mon coeur*

*Car je t'ai toujours aimé*

*Je dis que l'amour est fou*

*Qu'il n'est pas fait pour nous*

*Pourtant, je veux tes baisers*

*Et les gens en m'écoulant*

*Se disent que je suis heureuse*

*En souriant, je ferme les yeux*

*Et je murmure tout bas*

*Chéri, ne veux-tu pas oublier le passé  
(chanson que j'ai souvent chantée)*

A trente-quatre ans, je me suis découverte une bosse sur le sein gauche. L'opération s'imposait.

Deux mois durant, Irène est venue s'occuper de moi chaque jour. Elle m'aidait à enfiler mes vêtements. J'avais des exercices à faire avec mon bras qui ne fonctionnait plus.

Je guéris tout à fait de cette maladie. Frisé m'avait demandé de ne jamais lui faire voir cela, et c'est ce que je fis: Il n'a jamais vu ma cicatrice.

Après ce fut Nicole. Elle se plaignait d'un mal de jambes et elle signait du nez assez souvent.

Un jour, comme elle faisait de la fièvre, je suis allée consulter le docteur Charles Audet Sr. Elle avait une fièvre rhumatismale. Elle devait se reposer beaucoup, dit le médecin, autrement, son coeur risquait d'avoir des dommages.

Elle demeura à l'hôpital une couple de semaines. J'ai pleuré, ébranlée jusqu'au fond de mon être. Je me faisais des reproches. Pourquoi, n'avais-je pas été voir le docteur plus tôt?

Mes inquiétudes prirent fin. Après quelques mois, tout danger était écarté. J'avais eu peur!

Elle retourna à l'école. Elle apprenait bien, et elle obtenait les premières places. Je demeurais vigilante, et le médecin la suivait de près.

En août 1955, un vendredi matin, nous nous sommes levés et nous entendions un drôle de bruit. Comme des "cossins" ou des débris qui frappaient contre le building.

Nous sommes allés voir dehors...La rue était pleine d'eau!

Nous n'avions aucune idée de ce qui se passait. La radio et la télé ne mentionnaient rien à ce sujet.

Frisé a dit: "Je vais aller mettre mon char en haut de la côte sur la South Elm Street". L'eau montait si vite qu'il est revenu sur ses pas, et au lieu de revenir, il piqua au plus court et il entra chez Irène et Fernand. Ils se tenaient sur le perron et ils agitaient la main vers nous.

Papa était avec moi. Nicole avait si peur qu'elle s'es couchée sur le divan avec un oreiller sur la tête. Pour un enfant de dix ans, c'était terrifiant. Elle pleurait. Nous vivions au troisième étage.

Des barrages avaient cédé, et l'eau s'était répandue dans la ville. Des soldats secouraient les gens, en les faisant embarquer dans de petits bateaux.

Émile, en nageant, a fait as-

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soir Lise dans un canot pneumatique et il l'a sortie de l'eau, ensuite, il a fait la même chose pour Gertrude.

Nous étions terrorisés. Papa a dit: "S'il le faut, je vais enlever une porte, et nous en servir pour flotter".

Les soldats sont enfin arrivés pour nous secourir. Ils nous ont dit qu'ils prendraient Nicole et moi en premier. Papa est resté seul sur le perron. Ils sont allés le chercher!

Nous étions tous sauvés! Papa avait soixante-dix ans. Rosa et Alex vivaient dans un bas. Ils furent rescapés par des soldats qui les firent gravir sur le toit de leur duplex, et là, ils ont placé une planche pour leur servir de passerelle, afin d'atteindre l'autre building. Ils avaient tout perdu, tout.

Sur la Riverside Street, les maisons à appartements, ont été englouti, sans qu'on puisse sauver les gens qui y habitaient.

Puis, l'eau est redescendue et nous sommes retournés chez nous où rien n'avait

été endommagé. Mais chez Rosa, quel désastre! L'inondation avait tout ravagé

Nous n'avions pas d'eau ni de gaz. Les magasins d'alimentation étaient noyés, tout flottait. Il y eut pénurie de nourriture et le ravitaillement a commencé à arriver par camions.

Vêtements, draps et couvertures s'empilaient dans le sous-sol de l'église Ste-Anne. Il y eut du pillage.

Les prêtres l'église Notre-Dame de Lourdes ont livré du pain aux sinistrés, et finalement Rosa a reçu de l'aide des fonds de secours de la Croix-Rouge.

Beaucoup de personnes ont laissé leur vie dans cette catastrophe. Sous le coup des événements, tout était confusion.

Des tombeaux émergeaient du cimetière, les rails de la voie ferrée se détachaient du sol. Les hélicoptères ramassaient les gens réfugiés sur les toits ou grimpés dans les arbres.

La U.S. Rubber a demandé à ses employés de participer à une opéra-

tion de nettoyage. Les hommes ont commencé à déblayer les décombres.

Le travail de Frisé consistait à trouver et à ramasser les animaux qui avaient péri. Il fouillait dans la terre avec un long manche. Tout partout, il y avait des cadavres de chiens et de chats. La ville était transformée en un immense bourbier. Frisé avait toujours peur de trouver des gens englués dans la boue.

La puanteur qui se dégageait nous prenait à la gorge, et le dégoût nous incommodait. Nous avons reçu un avis, nous demandant de nous rendre en des endroits précis pour recevoir une piqûre car une épidémie aurait pu se déclarer.

Le temps qui suivit fût cruel. Le glas de toutes les églises a résonné pendant des jours.

Aucun mot ne pourra jamais traduire nos sentiments et tout ce que je raconte est petit en comparaison de ce que nous avons vécu. Même si il y a eu des secours et de l'entraide, ce fléau est demeuré inoubliable. Tant bien que mal, la vie reprit son cours.

## French Canadian-American Day Now A Law in Conn.

*By Albert J. Marceau, Newington, Conn.*

On Tuesday, June 25, 2013, the Governor of Connecticut, Dannel P. Malloy, signed Substitute House Bill No. 6671 into Public Act No. 13-210, entitled "An Act Concerning Government Administration," and among the clauses within the act is the creation of "French Canadian-American Day" in Connecticut. It should be noted that the new law has only one hyphen, between "Canadian" and "American."

The new law that celebrates and acknowledges Franco-Americans will be published in the 2015 edition of the *General Statutes of Connecticut*, volume three, Section 10-29a, subdivision 65, as follows: "The Governor shall proclaim June twenty-fourth of each year to be French Canadian-American Day to honor Americans of French Canadian ancestry, their culture and the great contribution they have made to this country. Suitable exercises shall be held in the State Capitol and elsewhere as the Governor designates for the observance of the day."

Three other ethnic groups are also acknowledged under new clauses that were made into law on June 25, 2013 under Section 10-29a, and they have their own month for celebration. Under subdivision 62, March is designated as Irish-American Month, while October is designated as Italian-American Month under subdivision 63, and November is designated as Native

American Month under subdivision 64. Each of these new clauses are expansions of ethnic days already recognized by the Connecticut General Assembly, for in the *General Statutes of Connecticut*, subdivision 15 is the recognition of Irish-Americans on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, while Italian-Americans are recognized in subdivision 13 through Columbus Day, which is celebrated on the second Monday of October, and Native Americans are recognized on Indian Day, subdivision nine, on the last Friday of September.

The bill passed through the State House of Representatives at 3:14PM on May 30, 2013, and of the 150 representatives, five were absent, 26 voted against it, and 119 voted in favor of it, 46 votes beyond the necessary 73 votes for passage of a bill. State Rep. Russell Morin (Dem., 28th District) advocated for the subdivision 65 for French Canadian-American Day.

Before Gov. Malloy signed the bill into law, State Senators Gary LeBeau (Dem., 3rd District) and Steve Cassano (Dem., 4th District) both issued the same press-release on their websites in celebration of the passage of the bill through the State Senate at 1:44 in the morning of June 5, 2013. (For the sake of convenience, the press-release is dated June 4, 2013.) The vote in the State Senate was nearly unanimous, for 35 out

of 36 State Senators voted for the bill, with one abstention, Eric Coleman, who was not present for the vote. (For the sake of convenience, the vote is called "unanimous" in the press-release.) It was acknowledged in the press-release that State Sen. LeBeau is of "French-Canadian heritage," and that he has advocated the passage of the bill since 2006. LeBeau gave his reasons for the bill in the press-release: "It's absolutely fitting and proper that Connecticut take one day out of the year to recognize the contributions that French-Canadians have made to our state. So much of our history, our culture, our success as a society here in Connecticut is due to the hard work and sacrifice of immigrants like the French-Canadians. One day to look back and pay homage to these people and their lasting influence here in Connecticut would be fun and informative for everyone." It was acknowledged in the press release that State Sen. Cassano is of "Portuguese and Italian decent" and that he has advocated for the passage of Irish-American and Italian-American months since 2010. Cassano gave his reasons for his support for the passage of the bill in the press-release, the most concise is: "When you look back in Connecticut history at some of our best-known politicians and religious leaders and soldiers and entertainers and athletes, it is

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# The 14th Annual April in Paris at Cinestudio, Hartford

By Albert J. Marceau, Newington, Conn.

The fourteenth annual French film festival named "April in Paris" was shown at Cinestudio in Hartford, Conn., from Sunday, April 7 to Saturday, April 13, 2013. Like the thirteen previous festivals, it was a joint effort of Cinestudio (James Hanley, Peter McMorris and Christine McCarthy McMorris) and the Department of Language and Cultural Studies of Trinity College (Karen Humphreys, Jean-Marc Kehres, Sara Kippur and Sonia Lee).

The theme of the Fourteenth April in Paris was "La Ville au Cinema," or "Tales of Cities." The nine films at the festival were: *Au Bonheur des Dames* directed by Julien Duvivier, France, 1930, 85 min.; *Playtime* directed by and starring Jacques Tati, France, 1967, 155 min.; *Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle* directed by Jean-Luc Godard, France, 1967, 87 min.; *Halfaouine: l'enfant des terrasses* directed by Ferid Boughedir, Tunisia, 1990, 98 min.; *Sans Soleil* directed by Chris Marker, France, 1983, 100 min.; *Impardonnables* directed by André Téchiné, France and Italy, 2011, 111 min.; *Caché* directed by Michael Haneke, France, 2005, 117 min.; *Une vie de chat* by Jean-Loup Felicoli and Alain Gagnol, France, 2010, 70 min.; and *La Fille de Montréal* directed by Jeanne Crépeau, Canada, 2010, 92 min.

*Au Bonheur des Dames* by Julien Duvivier (1930) is among the last of the films of the Silent Film Era since the first

sound film, *The Jazz Singer*, was released in 1927. The film is based upon the novel of the same name by Emile Zola, published in 1883. The central character, Denise Baudu (played by Dita Parlo) moves from the countryside of France to work at her uncle's linens store in Paris, but she later finds work at the nearby competition, the large department store named *Au Bonheur des Dames*. Hence, one plot element is family loyalty versus personal advancement, for *Au Bonheur des Dames* is putting the small stores out of business, like Denise's uncle's store, and like the big-box stores of today are forcing small businesses to close. Of course there is a love-triangle at *Au Bonheur des Dames*, with Denise in the triangle, and a happy ending, but one can question the true meaning of the ending of the film.

The performance on the piano by Patrick Miller of the Hartt School of Music, University of Hartford, truly made the experience of seeing the silent film enjoyable. He is a classically educated pianist who plays musical motifs and themes on the piano, in support of character and theme development on the screen. He is also able to create sound-effects on the piano, such as the use of parallel fifths for the tolling of bells. I would recommend to anyone who enjoys piano music to hear Miller's future performance next year during the silent film at the opening of the Fifteenth April in Paris in 2014.

*Playtime* by Jacques Tati (1967) is the only Francophone film at the festival that was officially released with a title in English. The film is a tour de force by Jacques Tati, who wrote and directed the film, and starred in his role of the kind-hearted and often bumbling character of Mr. Hulot. It is an unusual comedy that moves several times into a social commentary on the emptiness of society in a big city. The most striking example is in the middle of the film when we, the audience, see two families watch television in their apartments, which are more like window show-cases of the traditional department stores, while the sound of car traffic becomes increasingly louder until the end of the scene. Jean-Marc Kehres led the discussion after the film, and he said that the buildings and streets in the film are not in Paris, but an enormous set designed by Jacques Tati, and while the film was being shot, reporters sarcastically called it "Tatville."

*Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle* by Jean-Luc Godard (1967) is about Juliette Jeanson (played by Marina Vlady) who leaves the suburbs of Paris for a day, and work as a prostitute to earn extra cash in the city. The form of the film is a documentary, coldly narrated by Godard himself, and photographed impersonally as one would see on a television news show, but with the characters periodically talking to (Continued on page 30)

(*French Canadian-American Day Now A Law in Conn. continued from page 28*)

chock-full of Irish and Italian surnames."

The first official and legal French Canadian-American Day will be held at the Connecticut State Capitol on Tuesday, June 24, 2014. Helene Labrecque of the French Social Circle in East Hartford is the leader of a group of volunteers who are organizing the festivities for the day. Some of the other volunteers who are working with her are: Odette Manning (also of the French Social Circle), Daniel Boucher (traditional French-Canadian fiddler), Germaine Hoffman (of the French-Canadian Genealogical Society of Conn.), Benoit Simoneau (of the Knights of Columbus, Council 6119, in West Hartford), Deacon Gaspard Leblanc (of the Shrine of St. Anne in Waterbury), and Fr. Alvin Leblanc (the

current pastor of St. Ann's in Bristol).

The tentative and current schedule of events for the first French Canadian-American Day at the Connecticut State Capitol on Tuesday, June 24, 2014, are as follows: a flag-raising ceremony with the flag of Quebec flying on the Connecticut State Capitol; the official and unofficial anthems that will be sung are "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "Au Gens du Pays." There will be traditional French-Canadian music, performed by Josee Vachon and Daniel Boucher, and possibly other musicians. There will be traditional French-Canadian foods. French-Canadian organizations can have a booth at the event in order to promote their organizations, but not to sell items. There will be speeches by State Sen. LeBeau and State Rep. Morin, Gov. Malloy, and other politicians or their representatives. Fr. Leblanc will likely say the opening and closing

prayers for the events at the State Capitol.

Before the events at the Connecticut State Capitol, there will be a Catholic Mass in French for the feast day, the Nativity of St. John the Baptist, at St. Joseph's Cathedral, 140 Farmington Ave., Hartford. The main celebrant likely will be Fr. Robert Rousseau, a former pastor of St. Ann's Parish in Bristol.

The reader should note that the tentative schedule does not have exact times when the events at the State Capitol or at the cathedral will begin for the day. A more complete schedule will be published in a future report of *Le Forum*.

Helene Labrecque can be contacted directly for more information about French Canadian-American Day that will be held on Tues. June 24, 2014 at the Connecticut State Capitol either by e-mail at [heleneLabrecque@hotmail.com](mailto:heleneLabrecque@hotmail.com) or by telephone (860)-896-1096.

(The 14th Annual April in Paris at Cine-studio, Hartford continued from page 29)

the camera, in justification of their actions. In criticism that I found on the internet, Godard viewed the theme of prostitution as either symbolic of, or intrinsic to, the consumerist culture that was growing in the suburbs of Paris at the time, which he saw as enslaving women more than liberating them.

*Halfaouine: l'enfant des terrasses* by Ferid Boughedir (1990) takes place in the quarter of the City of Tunis named Halfaouine, within in the country of Tunisia. The central character of the film is Noura, a boy of thirteen years, who is between the cold and demanding world of men, as seen by his

father who is more than willing to slap his children around, versus the caring world of woman, as seen by his mother, who is still willing to take him to the women's section of the public baths, where he was washed like all the other children by their mothers. Of course, Noura is starting outgrow his childhood, which is another plot element. The nurturing father figure to Noura is a tinsmith who is also a musician, and who gets himself into trouble after writing political statements on a wall. Sonia Lee led the discussion after the film, and she said that although Tunisia was a dictatorship when the film was made in 1990, there was greater artistic freedom in the country, and such a film would not be made in the Muslim world today because of the rise of Islamic Fundamentalism. Lee also spoke of her personal experiences in the women's public baths in

Tunis, which are places of relaxation and conversation, effectively protected by social custom from the domineering world of men. Lee summarized the dilemma of Noura, who finally understands his childhood as a paradise lost, for in the end, he cannot return to the nurturing and protective world of his mother. I mentioned during the discussion that Halfaouine seems more like a village than a city, for we the audience, see various craftsmen with small-businesses, which I associate with rural populations. Although the film has very little dialogue in French, it is clear that it was chosen because of its setting, and the theme of the festival, Tales of Cities.

*Sans Soleil* by Chris Marker (1983) is possibly one of the more odd selections for the April in Paris film festival, since the

version of the documentary was shown with an English narration by Alexandra Stewart. Also, the narration is not about life in Francophone cities, but philosophical musings on modern life, as seen by a world traveler, from the City of Tokyo to the fields of Africa. The best point concerning Tokyo is the narrator's surprise at the mix of ancient and modern in Japanese society, as noted in words and on the screen of a Shintoist shrine to the dead on a street in Tokyo is next to a modern skyscraper. (While I saw the film, I thought of a parallel setting, but in a Western and Christian culture, that of the Prudential Building in Boston, a skyscraper built in 1964, is on the same street as the Old South



"Ira Braus (left) of the Hartt School of Music, University of Hartford, and Karen Humphreys (center) of Trinity College, congratulate Patrick Miller (right, and also of the Hartt School), after his performance of piano accompaniment to the silent film, *Au Bonheur des Dames*, that opened the 14th Annual April in Paris at Cinestudio, Hartford, on Sun. April 7, 2013. Photo by Marceau."

Church, Boylston Street, built of stone in 1874 in the Venetian Gothic Style, and home to a Congregationalist parish that started in 1669.) The disgusting point from the fields of Africa is grainy film-footage of the killing of a giraffe by a hunter with a high-powered rifle, killing the animal only to leave it rot. The use of computers for the creation of images is mentioned in the film, with the philosophical question of how people in the future will be able to tell the age of images, if the images can be displayed in the timeless dimension of electronics. Since the film is 30 years old, we the audience can see the primitive level of computer generated images in the film. Jean-Marc Kehres led the discussion after the film, and he noted that Chris Marker created the genre of documen-

tary called "film-essay" with *Sans Soleil*. He also revealed that Chris Marker is the pseudonym of Chrétien François Bouche-Ville-neuve, who died in Paris on July 29, 2012.

*Impardonnables* by André Téchiné (2011) is based upon the novel of the same name by Philippe Dijon. The central character is Francis (played by André Dussollier) who is a French writer of crime novels who resides in an apartment in Venice while writing his next book. During his search of greater peace and quiet in order to complete his novel, he meets a real-estate agent, Judith (played by Carole Bouquet), who tells him of a house available for rent on the island of Sant'Erasmo, which is off the coast of

Venice. Francis agrees to rent the property with the proviso that Judith reside with him, and she agrees to the proviso. Although Francis and Judith are initially happy together, the need of Francis to control other people becomes increasingly apparent, first when he inquires directly to Judith concerning her whereabouts, and later when he hires a private detective, Anna Maria (played by Adriana Asti) to investigate her. The repeated defense from Judith is that she must report to her work as a real-estate agent on a regular basis, while Francis, as a novelist, has the luxury of time. When the suspicions about Judith are not fulfilled by Anna Maria, Francis hires her son, Jérémie (played by Moura Conte) to trail Judith while she is in Venice. There are subplots concerning the daughter and granddaughter of Francis that

are not summarized here, in a film that is loaded with intersecting characters that are sometimes exhausting to follow. In the end, Francis completes the manuscript to his novel, but the viewer can ask to what cost, since he cannot trust the people around him. The setting of the City of Venice for a story of intrigue and suspicion has literary precedent, for one can recall two of Shakespeare's plays, "Othello, the Moor of Venice," and "The Merchant of Venice." In the former, Othello is driven to murder his wife, Desdemona over the suspicion of her infidelity, and the later, Antonio is nearly murdered by his creditor, Shylock, over a bizarre clause in a business contract, to pay the bearer on demand of one pound of his (Antonio's) flesh. (Continued on page 31)



(The 14th Annual April in Paris at Cinestudio, Hartford continued from page 30)

*Caché* by Michael Haneke (2005) is the most disturbing film of the festival, with the themes of stalking, rumor, insinuation and revenge. The central character, Georges Laurent (played by Daniel Auteuil) is stalked by someone in his past who is leaving him video-tapes of him, Georges Laurent, leaving and entering his apartment. As the film progresses, Georges Laurent is able to confront the man who has been sending him the videotapes, Majid (played by Maurice Bénichou), whom Georges Laurent knew in his childhood years. Majid denies making and sending the videotapes, and he has

plausible deniability in all of his actions. Through insinuation, Majid is able to make the life of Georges Laurent into a nightmare. Sonia Lee led the discussion after the film, and she argued that the film is an indictment of European civilization exploiting the Third World, as personified by the privileged, European child, Georges Laurent, versus the underprivileged, exploited Algerian child, Majid, who is expelled from the home of the Laurent family as a child. Furthermore, Lee said the film has a reference to the Paris Massacre of October 17, 1961, in which the Paris police attacked and killed 40 to 200 Algerians who were demonstrating for Algerian independence while on the streets of Paris. The incident is cited once by Majid in the film,

but it is not the reason parents of Georges Laurent expelled him from their home. Lee polled the discussion group, and asked if Majid were the victim in the film, to which a majority agreed, and she asked if Georges Laurent were the victim in the film, and I was one of two white men who raised their hands, a minority within the group. Although I did not argue my point then, Majid cannot be thought of as a victim, since his ultimate act of revenge against Georges Laurent is to commit suicide in such a way as to insinuate that Georges Laurent murdered him. The criticism that I found on the internet did not argue the film in such a manner, and the readers of *Le Forum* should decide for themselves, after seeing this disturbing film.

*Une vie de chat* by Jean-Loup Felicoli and Alain Gagnol (2010) is a fun film. The

central character is Dino le Chat, who stays in an apartment with a girl named Zoë by day, and at night, he runs with Nico, an acrobatic thief, a profession better known as “cat-burglar.” A complication in the life of Dino is Zoë’s mother, Jeanne, who is a detective at the local police station, who is trying to solve the burglaries in the area. As she investigates the burglaries, Jeanne begins to discover the identity of the real crime boss, who also may be responsible for the death of her husband. Of course, Dino le Chat and Nico give her the most help in her investigations. It is a fun detective story.

Before the feature of *Une vie de chat* was shown on Saturday afternoon, April 13, 2013, Cinestudio projected another animated



“Jean-Marc Kehres (left), Jeanne Crépeau (center) and Karen Humphreys (right) smiling for a snap-shot after the close of the 14th Annual April in Paris at Cinestudio, Hartford, on Sat. April 13, 2013. The film festival culminated with a question and answer session with film director, Jeanne Crépeau, after her film, *La Fille de Montréal*, closed the festival. Photo by Marceau.”

film, *The Extinction of the Saber-toothed Housecat* by Damon Wong and Daila “Dee” Boyd (2010), which is another fun film, and the title summarizes the entire plot. There is no French spoken in the animated short film, because it is set in 40,000 B.C.

*La Fille de Montréal* by Jeanne Crépeau (2010) is possibly the best film from the Province of Quebec since the Eighth April in Paris Film Festival when *C.R.A.Z.Y.* by Jean-Marc Vallée (2005) was shown on Fri. April 6, 2007. The story line of *La Fille de Montréal* is rather ordinary, for the central character, Ariane (played by Amélie Grenier) is forced to leave her apartment in Montreal within six months, although she has rented it for more than the previous 25 years. The reason for her eviction is because the owner of the building wants his son to

move into the apartment. Despite the mundane storyline of leaving the apartment and the sometimes comedic search for a new residence on the part of Ariane, (and the lack of compassion on the whole situation from her significant other, Mireille, played by Marie-Hélène Montpetit), the interest of the movie is in the remembrances of Ariane, as she remembers the events of her life at the apartment, while she packs her things for the new residence, which is not certain until the last scene of the film, where her new neighbors call Ariane “The Girl from Montreal,” or in French “La Fille de Montréal.”

Among the remembrances by Ariane is her connection to Le Théâtre de Quat’sous, (which is on 100 avenue des Pins in Mon-

treil), when she remembers performances by singers, poets and plays when she handles old programs. Through Ariane’s remembrances, we the audience can see how the performing arts evolved in Quebecois society. The culmination of Ariane’s connection to Le Théâtre de Quat’sous is near the end of the film, when the audience can see live and somewhat grainy videotape of the demolition of the theatre, which occurred on Feb. 6, 2008. The demolition of the theatre is another instance of the theme of endings in the life of Ariane.

Possibly the most striking remembrance by Ariane occurred in September 1984, when she remembers having dinner with friends, who are talking about the then recent visit by Pope John Paul II to the Olympic Stadium in Montreal on Sept. 11, 1984 where more than 100,000 people were in audience. One of the friends of Ariane expresses his personal shock at the number of practicing Catholics at the stadium, for he said: “100,000? I don’t know enough Catholics to constitute a hockey team!” Clearly, Ariane and her circle of friends are not practicing Catholics.

After the film was shown, and Jeanne Crépeau stood before her audience, it was possible to see tears in her eyes, for everyone enjoyed her film, as heard by their applause. During the question and answer period, I asked about the plot of the eviction, Jean-Marc Kehres said that in the Province of Quebec, as well as France and other Francophone countries, there are

(French version continued on page 47)

# BOOKS/ LIVRES...

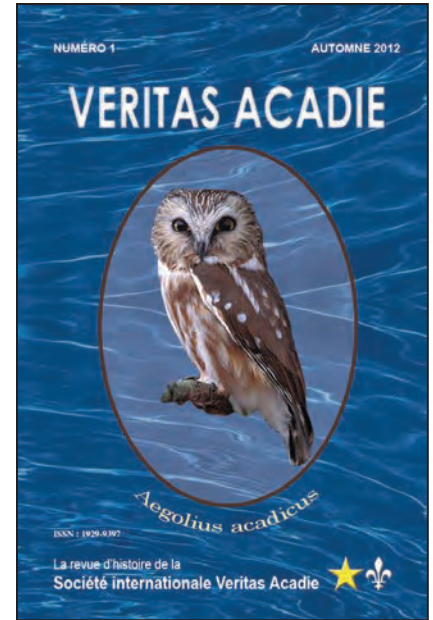


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## Acadian Deportation Reconsidered by Roger Paradis

Few regions of the world have provoked more political debate and scholarly research than the upper St. John River Valley, known historically as the Madawaska Territory.<sup>1</sup> In 1783 the region became a veritable bone of contention between Great Britain and the United States, the object of the longest and most vexing boundary dispute in Anglo-American history. Moreover, the founding settlers were Acadian refugees who had escaped the deportation from Nova Scotia in 1755, the remnants of a fugitive people who were the victims of an egregious crime de "lèse-humanité".<sup>2</sup> Here are the elements of a highly controversial and intriguing history. Why was the Madawaska Territory so hotly contested? Who were those people so roundly despised by the authorities and subjected to so much cruelty and dissipation, yet immortalized in poetry and song; who sought refuge in a wilderness Zion only to be caught in another power struggle that left them permanently divided? For answers to those troubling questions, we must return to old Acadia when that colony was inhabited by a prosperous, tranquil and contented people.

The pre-diaspora Acadians occupied the largest, unbroken expanse of tidal marsh land along the Atlantic seaboard, fertile in perpetuity and sometimes reaching a depth of forty feet. They were on consistently good terms with the Micmac Indians with whom

they had "a valuable fur trade" that they brokered with New England.<sup>3</sup> The bay fisheries were only a secondary occupation, though by no means unimportant. By mid-century they had vessels of fifty-tons burthen, built by themselves, though most were between fifteen and twenty-five tons. Nicholas Gauthier was a rich Acadian merchant with as many as three ships engaged in the West Indies trade, but he was an exception. From Acadia these vessels carried cattle, fish, furs, lumber, and wheat; they brought back cane sugar, molasses, rum, and tools. From the bay they took hake, shad and flounder in quantity; the Annapolis Acadians were also involved in the Canso fisheries as early as 1734.

Husbandry was the principal industry of the Acadians. By dint of effort and working collectively they reclaimed thousands of acres from Baie Française (Bay of Fundy). This was accomplished through an elaborate network of dikes with an aboiteau that opened at low tide and closed when the tide rushed in. In this way a field could be drained for cultivation in about two years. This was a laborious task, but once they were built they became part of the landscape, unless they were broken by gale force winds or invading forces. Yankee visitors to Acadia concluded that the Acadians were indolent because they did not cultivate the highlands. The highlands were inferior soil that needed manuring, and any extensive clearing of the

forest would have frightened the game away and created trouble with the Micmacs. Dikes were more labor intensive than clearing the forest, but it was also safer and wiser. When the curtain fell on the colony, plans were in progress to reclaim another one hundred thousand acres of marshland from the ocean at Chignectou. The soil yielded twenty bushels of cereal an acre compared to twelve for Massachusetts. Not only was the soil of great natural fertility, but the livestock produced tons of manure every winter that was spread over the land. The people raised a species of black cattle, and nearly as many sheep and swine.\* They also raised poultry, including geese, chicken and pigeons. Thousands of acres were cultivated in corn and other cereals for feed grain and export. They also had large orchards of various types of apples, cherries, pears and plums. New England traders wondered why the Acadians produced no cider for export, and concluded that they were "unenterprising". Apples make good cattle feed and the swine were fed on apples for three weeks before the autumn slaughter, in the belief that this sweetened the meat. They speculated that their cattle were inferior because they gave little milk; beef cattle rarely do, which also explains why they produced no cheese. Some Yankee merchants thought the Acadians were slothful because it seemed

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1) Partially taken from the preface of *Papiers de / Papers of Prudent L. Mercure Histoire du Madawaska, Société historique du Madawaska, Maine, 1998, with permission, and revised by the author.*

2) Thomas Albert, *Histoire du Madawaska, Imprimerie française missionnaire, Québec, 1920, p. 69.*

3) *Journal of Colonel John Winslow, Nova Scotia Historical Society Collections, 4, Halifax, 1885, pp. 179-80, Winslow to Halifax, June 27, 1755.*

*(Acadian Deportation Reconsidered  
continued from page 32)*

to them that they allowed the manure to accumulate rather than spread it on the land. Obviously they were not into husbandry or they would have understood that manure has to be moved every year. With some fifteen to a hundred heads of livestock per unit the accumulation, after a few years, would have barred access to the stables and engulfed the homestead, not to mention the stench. Acadia, in 1755, was well on the way to becoming the bread basket of the northeast. The Acadians traded extensively with the French fortress at Louisbourg, especially in livestock; with New England the trade included fish, furs, wool, some livestock, and lumber, and only in coin. They lived simply and their needs were few. Their imports included firearms, powder and ball ammunition for hunting, iron tools, sugar and molasses; they occasionally indulged in a few luxuries, such as brightly colored ribbons and imported cloth, crockery, French wine and cosmetic accessories. It was said that this tight-fisted and mostly self-sufficient people were “fond of specie”. One thing is certain. After the conquest in 1713 they consistently benefitted from a favorable balance of trade that made them rather unique in Anglo-French North America. The deportation netted over a hundred thousand heads of livestock – cattle, horses, sheep, and “hogs in plenty”. This plunder was used to feed the troops, or parceled out among the Protestant settlers in the province. It devastated the colony and left it a charred and ghoulish wasteland, except for the pounding of the surf and the sigh of the breeze that blew across the tall prairie grass, and comely orchards that were mysteriously spared by the troops.

New England contrasted sharply with Acadia. It had a burgeoning population that increased annually by 5%, and the price of land was at new heights. The soil was stingy and had to be routinely fertilized; the colony had difficulty feeding its people, and famine was no stranger to Boston. A yeoman economy offered limited employment opportunity outside the family farm. The chasm between rich and poor was growing, and poverty was a problem. The sea peddlers from New England that sailed to Acadia in search of trade could well envy the “superstitious”, “perfidious”, “bigoted”, “litigious”, “proud”, “unambitious”, “obstinate”, “intractable”, “disaffected”, “unskillful”, “frolicsome”,

“indolent”, “slothful”, “rebellious”, “recusants”, and “papists” that cultivated this fair land; “a pest and an incubus”. The prejudices against the Acadian people were as many as they were profound, an illwind that presaged their future calamity.

The “final resolution”. The Acadians became subjects of Great Britain by right of conquest, which was confirmed in 1713 by the Treaty of Utrecht. The treaty specified that the people who chose to remain in the colony as faithful subjects could enjoy their property and “the free exercise of their religion”. Weeks later Queen Anne went further with a proclamation that stated that the people who chose to remain British subjects could “retain their soil lands, tenements without any molestation as fully and freely as our other subjects do, or may possess their lands or estates, or to sell the same if they should rather choose to remove elsewhere”. The requirement of an unqualified oath of loyalty as a condition for being considered faithful subjects was not a provision, either of the treaty or the royal proclamation. It came as an afterthought to colonial officials who were closer to the danger zone that the authorities in London. The faith of treaties requires that mental reservations may not be read into international agreements. A treaty would become a “mere gross quibble”, a vacuous “piece of knavery”, if nations could elude their obligations by some subtle “artifice” or “fraud”. The contracting nations must “express their intentions clearly”, after which they are held bound. “Mental reservations”, says Monsieur de Vattel, “are eminently odious and dishonorable in all international proceedings”.

On January 13, 1716, thirty-six Port Royal Acadians swore an oath of loyalty to George III, on condition that they could withdraw “wheresoever” and whenever they wanted with all their “movable goods and effects”. Elsewhere, however, the representatives of the peninsula Acadians refused to take the oath unless they were excused from bearing arms “neither against His Britannic Majesty, nor against France, nor... their subjects or allies”. In 1720 serious thought was given to the removal of the obdurate people from the colony. The Colonial Office was agreeable to this, but only after reinforcements had been sent to the colony, and they warned Governor Richard Philipps against such a move without “His Majesty’s positive order for that purpose”. In 1726 Major

Lawrence Armstrong became administrator of the colony and called upon the inhabitants to take the loyalty oath. The people refused unless they were excused from bearing arms. Armstrong reported to London that, on the advice of his council, he granted that a clause “be written upon the margin of the French translation” whereby they would be exempt from bearing arms. With this the Annapolis Royal Acadians “took and subscribed” to the oath in both languages. Only the English copy was sent to London, but the authorities were fully informed of the condition under which the people had taken the oath. And there the matter stood for two more years.

On January 3, 1730, Governor Richard Philipps reported to the Duke of Newcastle that the adult population of Port Royal seventeen years old and over had subscribed to the prescribed oath of allegiance without any reservations. On April 24, 1730, “Representatives of the recusants of Minas Basin and other rivers dependent thereon” submitted to the same unqualified oath of allegiance. Philipps informed London on November 26, 1730, that all of the Acadian parishes had “taken the oath of allegiance”. The governor accomplished this master stroke by convincing them with verbal promises that they would be exempt “from bearing arms and fighting in war against the French and the Indians”, and they promised “never to take up arms in the event of war against the Kingdom of England and its government”. This was the same concession of neutrality that Armstrong had made in writing to the Acadians of Annapolis Royal four years earlier. Philipps did not report this to London, but the accommodation was later confirmed by the executive council at Annapolis Royal. On November 8, 1745, the council reported that the Acadians of Annapolis Royal had voluntarily taken the oath, but that those of the other more remote and “numerous settlements” had “absolutely refused” with some “assurance from the General’s hand that they should not be obliged to bear arms”. Upon further expostulation, they “extorted” the promise of neutrality from the governor and took the oath, and the Annapolis Acadians considered themselves “to be included in the same condition”. At Whitehall the Board of Trade was unhappy with the oath and quibbled over a comma, but when Philipps declined to redo his assignment, they accepted it. The *modus vivendi* with the Acadians (Continued on page 34)

\* The cattle may have been left-over stock brought over by Sir William Alexander in 1629; from the description, probably the Galloway.



*(Acadian Deportation Reconsidered  
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was also known to colonial officials. On April 6, 1747, Governor Paul Mascarene reported the arrangement to Governor William Shirley of Massachusetts: That although a neutrality clause was not “inserted” with the oath, “this was promised to them”.

The Law of Nations, which is also the law of nature, recognizes the right of a people to remain neutral in time of war for reasons of consanguinity. This right was later accorded to New England settlers as a condition of their settling on vacant Acadian lands. The storm clouds of revolution were gathering in the Thirteen Colonies and, like the Acadians, they feared that in the event of war they could be forced into arms against their New England kin. Although Massachusetts was close and in the van of revolutionary sentiment in America, they were willing to take an oath of loyalty to Great Britain on condition that they could remain neutral if war broke out with her Thirteen American Colonies because, they said, “it would be the highest of cruelty” to take up arms against their own. This was also the reason that Britons were loath to volunteer for service in America during the revolution, and why Hessian were recruited to help Britain fight the war. A sacred oath is the most solemn compact that can exist between a prince and his subjects, and it is mutually binding. The Phillips Oath was an official act by the King’s official representative in Acadia. It was never officially and publicly repudiated by the King, as it would have had to have been to absolve him of his obligation to his Acadian subjects, and it remained, therefore, binding on all parties. The oath issue simmered quietly for another generation. Even during the menacing years of King George’s War (War of the Austrian Succession), 1744–1748, when three invading forces were in their midst “far superior to what could be opposed to them”, the Acadians could not be shaken from their oath. The Annapolis Acadians actually provided Mascarene with unneutral assistance to strengthen the defense of the fort, which he confessed he could not have held without their help.

The people were misled. At the height of the war in 1746 rumors were rife that a general deportation was contemplated by the authorities. Governor Shirley reassured Mascarene that the allegation was unfound-

ed, and that if this was the intention of “His Majesty”, he would know about it. In a dispatch to Newcastle dated November 21, 1746, Shirley asked for “New assurances” from “His Majesty” that no measures were planned against the Acadians. Shirley did not agree with Admiral Knowles’ recommendation that all the Acadians should be driven out of Acadia. Shirley thought that Knowles meant to drive the people to Canada, and he argued that the French would be strengthened by such a move, and it would make the Indians more intractable. Moreover, he doubted that such a policy would be “a just usage of them”.<sup>4</sup> He reminded the prime minister of the “exemption of not bearing arms” that was granted to them by Philipps and that, under the circumstances, expulsion might be “deemed too rigorous a punishment”. Governor Paul Mascarene of Nova Scotia agreed with Shirley that it would be an injustice to remove them unless further evidence would be offered of their belligerence, or on “Positive Orders” from home.<sup>5</sup> Shirley complained that deportation to France or to the Thirteen Colonies would be too expensive, especially with a faltering economy, and especially in light of his “reiterated and detailed instructions to economize”.

Shirley proceeded with “plans for the security of the province”, which he communicated to Newcastle early in 1747.<sup>6</sup> Shirley was to keep a record of the “whole expense” and when it was “fully adjusted and liquidated”, it was to be sent to Newcastle “with proper vouchers” to be presented to Parliament for reimbursement...<sup>7</sup> The war with France was winding down, however, and it was becoming increasingly clear at the Foreign Office that even a limited removal of the Chignectou Acadians could be problematic and would require careful planning. In October Newcastle wrote that “His Majesty therefore, upon the whole, thinks it right to postpone anything of this kind for the present, tho His Majesty would have you consider in what manner such a scheme may be executed, at a proper time, and what precautions may be necessary to be taken to obviate the inconveniences that are apprehended from it”.<sup>8</sup> Newcastle instructed Shirley to reassure the populace that “His Majesty” considered the rumors to be without substance, and that it was “the King’s pleasure” that he should make a formal public statement that there was no



*Governor William Shirley*

reason for them to fear such a measure. It was rather “His Majesty’s resolution” to protect them, and as long as they remained faithful to “His Majesty”, they could remain in possession of their property and enjoy freedom of religion. The royal edict was explicit and left nothing to be desired. It was communicated to the people who had every reason to be confident and to feel reassured.

As lately as June 15, 1748, Mascarene testified to the loyalty of the people and the invaluable assistance that they had rendered in the defense of the province in 1744 against a force of 300 Micmacs and 900 Canadian militia led by Duvivier. He told the Duke of Bedford that the enemy had failed to “prevail” in their efforts “to entice or force into open rebellion the Acadians”. Seven years later and in time of peace, the perfidious monarch concluded that the time was “proper” to “extirpate” and deport the people to the Thirteen Anglo-American Colonies.

Peace returned to Acadia on October 18, 1748, with the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. On July 12, 1749, Edward Cornwallis became the new governor of Nova Scotia, and the capital was transferred from Annapolis Royal to Halifax. The governor was attended by a retinue of line officers, and with him arrived 2,500 Protestant settlers. This represented a significant change of policy from one of penury and neglect to one of generous financial support. The governor’s instruction with regards to the Acadians were detailed. He was to issue a proclama-

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4) N.S., 83, 259 passim., A30, 22, Shirley to Newcastle, Nov. 21, 1746.

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tion in the king's name and give them three months to take an unqualified oath or forfeit their property and rights. In the event of Acadian intransigence, however, he was to refer the matter to the Home Government and wait for further instructions.<sup>9</sup> The Acadians refused. They reminded the governor of the Philipps Oath and the condition under which they had subscribed to it, and the recent proclamation from the King. If the governor persisted in his demand they were prepared to emigrate from the province. The possibility that the Acadians could leave the colony had a sobering effect on the governor. The French would be strengthened by their numbers, and Nova Scotia would be seriously depopulated. Moreover, it was unlikely that other settlers could be attracted to the colony because of the hostility of Wabanakis Indians, especially the Micmacs who were at war with the British. These unpleasant realities put a damper on the governor's enthusiasm. Cornwallis could fuss and fume that Philipps had not done "his duty" toward the King when he promised them neutrality in return for their oath of allegiance, but the compact between King and subjects was not less binding for being unpopular.

It is a maxim of international politics that in time of peace, prepare for war. Nova Scotia became an armed camp under Cornwallis. Halifax was fortified and secondary military installations were also constructed at Grand Pré, Pisiquid, Baie-Verte, Canso, La Have, and minor repairs were made to the fort at Annapolis. The French constructed a fort at Beaubassin and a small armory at Gaspareaux. Cornwallis stepped down and was replaced by Captain Peregrine Hopson on August 3, 1752. Hopson returned to England sixteen months later and left Colonel Charles Lawrence in command. Lawrence was appointed lieutenant governor on September 17, 1754. Shortly after his appointment, Lawrence reminded the Acadians of their oath and declared that if found in arms, they would be treated as rebels. The British Lords warned Lawrence

to exercise "great caution" with the Acadians "to avoid giving any alarm and creating such a diffidence in their minds as might induce them to quit the province, and by their numbers add strength to the French..." It should be noted that every provincial administrator since the conquest, including Cornwallis, was kept on a tight leash by the Home Government regarding the ultimate disposition of the Acadians. The Lords of Trade guarded against any restraint of the royal prerogative, even to the appointment of militia officers. In all matters of foreign policy the buck stopped at the Court of St. James, and that included Charles Lawrence.

Lawrence doubted that the province could ever be settled by Protestant subjects as long as the Acadians possessed "the best and largest tracts of land". On August 1, 1754, he sent another dispatch to the British Lords that rekindled the ambers of deportation. If the Acadians persisted in refusing to take an unqualified oath of allegiance, it would be "much better... that they were away". He hastened to add, however, that he "would be very far from attempting such a step without Your Lordship's approbation".<sup>10</sup> The Lords wrote back on October 29, 1754, that they could not "form a proper judgement or give a final opinion" on what measures to take with regard to the Acadians until they had "laid the whole state of the case before His Majesty and received his instructions upon it..."<sup>11</sup> The possibility of even a limited deportation raised serious questions about property rights and the Lords recommended that an opinion be solicited from Chief Justice Johnathan Belcher of Boston. London was not wanting for the legal talent to do this, but it obviously wanted to distance itself from this dishonorable affair and to shift the responsibility to colonial officials

Exactly when the Acadian "case" was brought to the king to receive his word on it is impossible to say. British authorities began to formulate secret plans for the conquest The Acadian Deportation Reconsidered 85 of Canada sometime late in 1754, probably in November. The strategy called for six campaigns in 1755 that included the

capture of the French fleet that was intended to sail for America in the spring, a naval blockade of Louisbourg, attacks against Forts Duquesne, Carillon (Crown Point), Niagara, and Beauséjour. The latter was to be invested by New England troops, but commanded by Colonel Robert Monckton and other British officers. The troops were not to be discharged after the surrender, which normally would have been done to spare the Exchequer of needless expense. Instead they were to remain in the province on garrison duty while "the noble and great project" of expulsion was "hatching". The Acadians occupied "one of the best soils in the world", reported an epistolary from Halifax on the eve of the Deportation. "If they could be banished from Nova Scotia it would be one of the greatest deeds the English in America ever achieved," because they would "place some good farmers on their homesteads." \*

The attack against Duquesne was led by General Edward Braddock. Arrived in Nova Scotia, he weighed anchor at Annapolis Royal where he deposited 2000 stands of muskets, 400 barrels of powder and ball ammunition, and the heavy ordnance for the siege of Beauséjour. Sailing on to Virginia, he suffered a crushing defeat at Monongahela (La Rivière Mal enguelée). His private papers were captured and sent to Quebec where Governor Vaudreuil made an annotated list of the documents. From his reading of the captured documents, the governor learned about British plans for the conquest of Canada, and concluded that the Acadians were to be reduced to "death and slavery". Braddock's papers were sent to Versailles, along with Vaudreuil's notes, and later deposited in the National Archives.<sup>12</sup> The Braddock papers subsequently disappeared from the archives, but Vaudreuil's annotated list remains. They confirm that the colonies did not act independently, but in concert with and on specific instructions from Whitehall.

In January 1755 the lieutenant governor charged Judge Charles Morris to develop a secret plan to take the people by "stealth" and disarm them so as to avoid an  
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5) C.O. 5, 901, F102, 107 V.

6) C.O.5, 901, F. 99 V, Shirley to Newcastle, Feb. 27, 1747.

7) Ibid., Newcastle to Shirley, May 30, 1747.

8) Ibid., ff. 157-8 V. Newcastle to Shirley, Oct. 3, 1747

9) Nova Scotia Archives, I, 495-706; Nova Scotia Hist. Soc., Coll. VII, Halifax, 1895, and P.A.C., 1905, II, App. C, pp. 47-52.

10) N.S., A55, pp. 187 passim.

11) N.S., A56, p. 76.

\* This statement was wrongly attributed to Colonel Winslow which is false. The correspondence is dated at Halifax on September 4th, 1755. On that date Winslow was at Grand-Pré, not Halifax. Winslow's correspondences were always dated at Grand-Pré during the Deportation and the colonel did not leave for Halifax until December 1755. As Winslow could not be at two places at the same time, someone else penned this letter. The most likely author was Thomas Pichon, the French traitor at Halifax during the Deportation and still on government payroll.

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“insurrection” when they were “removed from the province”.<sup>13</sup> Shortly afterwards Monckton left for Boston with a letter of “unlimited credit” on the House of Apthorp and Hancock and other financiers to pay for the Beausejour expedition. The transports were rented from local merchants and manned with officers and crews from Massachusetts. Of the Thirteen American Colonies only Massachusetts knew about the planned deportation, and of the six military campaigns planned for that year, only the Beausejour expedition and deportation were to be funded locally. The British Lords were determined not to sully their escutcheons with this sordid business, but to pass the buck to Lawrence and his council. Suffice to say that Lawrence could not have pledged the “unlimited credit” of his province for the Beausejour expedition and the Deportation project without having first received the approbation of His Majesty’s Ministers. Beausejour fell to the British on June 16, 1755, where over three hundred Acadians were found in arms. They had papers from the commander, however, that this was the result of duress and not from a freewill. Accordingly, under Article Four of the Reddition, Lawrence agreed that they would be “pardonné”. On June 28, 1755, the lieutenant governor reported to London that he had given orders to drive the “deserted Acadians... out of the country”, because he doubted that they would ever be faithful subjects. By “deserted Acadians” Lawrence was obviously referring to the unfortunates who had been burned out of their farms in the Cumberland Basin by the Indians and gone over to Ile St-Jean (Prince Edward Island) or to the Bay of Chaleurs. Disappointed with their situation and pining for their former homesteads, hundreds of starving refugees had returned home. Lawrence wrote to Monckton that the Chignectou Acadians were not to be allowed to take the oath “as this would tie up our hands and disqualify us to extirpate them”.<sup>14</sup> Secretary of State

Thomas Robinson lost no time in replying to Lawrence and, in so doing, he read things in the governor’s letter that were not there. He complained that it was not clear from his letter whether he meant to drive out only the “deserted French inhabitants” or all of the Peninsula Acadians. He was concerned about the possibility of an insurrection by “the whole body of the French Neutrals” and that they could be driven over to the French which, “by their flight”, would give a significant “additional number of useful subjects... to the French King”. This cryptic letter was Robinson’s way of washing his hands of the deportation, while informing Lawrence that a limited deportation of the “deserted” Acadians was out of the question, and that what he expected was a general deportation of “the whole body”. The lieutenant governor was expected to draw the logical conclusion: That since the Acadians were not to be driven over to the French, the only alternative was to deport them to the English colonies. Conveniently, this letter did not reach Lawrence until November 9, 1755, when the deportation was already in progress. Weeks before, things had begun to happen automatically.

On July 3, fifteen Acadian representatives were jailed when they declined to take the prescribed oath, but nothing was said about driving them out or deporting them from the province. However, five days later on July 8, 1755, Admiral Boscawen arrived with “Secret Instructions” from the King, with an accompanying letter from Secretary Robinson. Lawrence, normally cautious and prudent, promptly summoned his council for the 14th to consider the “Means” by which to rid themselves of the Acadians “with the greatest security and effect”.<sup>15</sup> The next day he apprised Admirals Boscawen and Mostyn that “procedures” had been adopted by the council with regards to the French neutrals. They would be obliged “to take the said oath or leave the country”. On July 18 he reported the same to London.

On July 22 the Acadians gave Lawrence their final response. They had taken

an oath under Governor Phillips in 1730 in return for the privileges of remaining neutral. They had received explicit guarantees of security from Governor Shirley in 1746, and again in 1747 from His Majesty through the intermediary of the British prime minister and the governor of Massachusetts. They reaffirmed their loyalty to the British Sovereign, but added that they would never “commit the inconstancy of taking an oath which changes so much the conditions and privileges in which our Sovereign and our fathers placed us in the past”.

The die was cast, and the fate of the Acadians was sealed. The oath that the people thought was their bond of security became the instrument of their doom. The authorities had every reason to expect that they would decline to take an unqualified oath in light of the formal assurances they had received in 1747, and since they were still bound by the Philipps Oath; moreover, they had repeatedly resisted taking an unqualified oath for nearly half a century without retribution, even in time of war and actual invasion. This time, however, their refusal provided the authorities with the legal fiction of rebellion that the British Court needed to justify their deportation and to confiscate their property. They had been hushed into a false sense of security by repeated assurances of goodwill from officials, high and low, including the Sovereign. The British knew well and from long experience that for reasons of kinship and self-preservation, the Acadians could not and would not take a second oath that afforded them less security than the first. This would provide the British Court with the pretext that they needed to condemn them as rebels.

The deportation of the Acadian people was “His Majesty’s final resolution”.<sup>16</sup> It began in 1755 and lasted eight years until the Treaty of Paris. The first year of the removal alone, together with the siege of Beausejour, cost in excess of £100,000. This was more than double the entire administrative budget of the province for that year. Nova Scotia  
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12) Vaudreuil à Machault, 10 octobre 1755, Archives coloniales, F3, 124 : 189-99, and F. Bigot à Machault, 27 août 1755, 134 v. The operations against New France and the Acadians were so secret that in November 1754 when James Johnson went to Boston to apply for money from Governor Shirley to redeem himself and other captives from the Wabanakis, he was not permitted to return to Quebec from fear that the plans could be leaked to the French. See New York Colonial documents, 6:519, and Susannah [Johnson] Hastings, *A Narrative of the Captivity of Mrs. Johnson*, N.Y., 1841, pp. 64-69.

13) Abbé Henri-Raymond Casgrain, *Collection de documents inédits: Documents sur le Canada et l’Amérique*, 1, Documents sur l’Acadie, Québec, 1888-90, p. 130-137. See also “Judge Morris’ remarks concerning the removal of the Acadians”, Nova Scotia Historical Society Collections, (1881), and Morris’ “Reflections” in Doc. Ined., I in Brown Ms, 19071, ff. 31 passim. Morris’ “Plan” for the “final resolution” must be reckoned one of the vilest pieces of literature ever written. It was followed almost to the letter except for the tonnage allowed for each deportee. Morris had planned on 4 tons per person, but the shortage of vessels required that they double their tonnage.

14) Nova Scotia Arch., 54-57, Northcliff Coll., Nova Scotia State Papers, v.

15) N.S.H.S.C., II, p. 82, Lawrence to Winslow, August 11, 1755.

16) James Martel, “The Second Deportation of the Acadians”. *Dalhousie Review*, 13 (1933-1934), pp. 359-371.



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was the poorest of His Majesty's North American provinces, including Georgia. Only John Bull had the deep pockets to guarantee the credit of the province for such a mammoth project. Indeed, a special "deportation fund" was created to defray the cost of the "Bay of Fundy expedition", and the removing of the French inhabitants and carrying on the works at Fort Cumberland.<sup>17</sup> The expenditure of this fund was later the object of a special parliamentary investigation. After the first year, needless to say, all pretext of funding the deportation on the good name of the province was dropped.

Once the "Final Resolution" was endorsed by His Majesty's council, it only remained for Lawrence "to consider what means" the deportation could be effectuated, and to give the "necessary orders and instructions" to implement what had already been "solemnly determined".<sup>18</sup> This, however, made him an accessory to the crime, along with Morris who planned the removal, Hancock who provided the vessels, Jonathan Belcher who wrote the legal falsity for the confiscation of Acadian property, Monckton who commanded the troops used for the embarkation, and Governor Shirley who endorsed and abetted the entire project. Lawrence was never more than a willing tool in this despicable affair, the *bête noire* of the deportation. To imagine that the lieutenant governor of a province, a mere colonel of the army, would presume to deport some eight thousand of the king's subjects on his own authority is patently absurd. Lawrence was a soldier, not a politician, and he well understood the rigidity of the chain of command. On his own he had nothing to gain from this infamous deed because even if it succeeded, and that was anything but certain, he would still have had to face a court-martial for usurping the royal prerogative. This was the ultimate political crime, and it automatically carried the death penalty. Lawrence did not even receive a reprimand. Instead, he and his henchmen were promoted. That was the

pay-off for dutifully and efficiently executing His Majesty's instructions. Blind and faithful service has its rewards. Normally Lawrence was a cautious and conservative administrator who would not even deign to repair the dilapidated blockhouse at Grand Pré on his own initiative. Similarly, he would not make minor repairs on the military installations at Pisiquid, Beaubassin, and River St. John without instructions from above. Lawrence may have been a knave, but he was no fool. That he was eager to serve is only too evident. That he was ambitious for promotion and willing to ingratiate himself to his superiors is likewise obvious. Whatever may be said of Lawrence, however, he was no usurper, and he understood that British officers never take the name of their King in vain. Lawrence, like other colonial officials, was a cipher in a gigantic geo-political struggle that began and ended at the Court of St. James.

On September 2, 1755, Colonel John Winslow, commander of the Grand Pré deportation, called on all of the male inhabitants to the age of ten to repair to the parish church to hear "His Majesty's intentions", exactly as they had been given to "His Excellency" Lieutenant Governor Charles Lawrence. Three days later before a packed church, Winslow announced that they were all prisoners of the King. He then read the decree of deportation: "Gentlemen, I have received from His Excellency Governor Lawrence the King's instructions, which I have in my hand. By his orders you are called together to hear His Majesty's final resolution concerning the French [Acadians]..." He told them that the duty he was now upon was "very disagreeable" to him, but it was not his "business to animadvert" on his orders, "but to obey them". Without further hesitation he read the decree: It was "His Majesty's instruction and commands", "the peremptory orders of His Majesty", "His Majesty's goodness", "His Majesty's service", and "His Majesty's pleasure", that they should be deported, and that their property was to be confiscated to the Crown".<sup>19</sup>

The people also understood this to be a proclamation from the king, and they said so in a petition to Winslow. They wrote, "as you have given us to understand that the king has ordered us to be transported out of this province..., we implore you to intercede with His Majesty, that he may have a care for those amongst us who have inviolably kept the fidelity and submission promised to His Majesty". In less than a decade three proclamations were issued under instructions from the king by three different provincial governors: Shirley in 1747, Cornwallis in 1749, and Lawrence in 1755. On the day of embarkation the people refused to march. Winslow told them "that the King's command" was "absolute" and must be "absolutely obeyed". All this Winslow confided to his Journal. The proclamation of deportation reported in the Winslow Journal is proof positive that King George II sanctioned and decreed the deportation as, indeed, only the king could do. The crime was greater because the people were "kept in the dark as to their destination"; because they were deported to the enemy, an alien land with a foreign language, culture, and religion; because the colonies were not apprised of their arrival and unprepared to receive them; because families were broken up, never to be reunited; because ships doubled their tonnage and became overcrowded, plague-ridden floating hells that often had to be quarantined until the plague burned itself out before the survivors were allowed to disembark; because some vessels were unseaworthy and sank, carrying hundreds of innocent victims to a watery grave. By what authority could Lawrence have imposed thousands of refugees on the other colonies except by the king's "commands".<sup>20</sup>

The Acadian people were the innocent victims of a sinister plot that was conceived and sanctioned at Court. The evidence is conclusive. The leading role in this macabre drama was played by Lawrence. Morris wrote the script. The other members of the cast, from Halifax and Boston, played only supporting roles. Originally Shirley had

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17) P.R.O., "Abstract of the money which is to be accounted for, for the expedition of the Bay of Fundy under Colonel Monckton and the removing of the French inhabitants and carrying on the works at Fort Cumberland", 9 May, 1758, Board of Trade, Nova Scotia, 16: 1-66. The budget of Nova Scotia in 1755 was £49,418; in 1754, £58,447. See Chalmers Mss., f. 29

18) Nova Scotia Historical Society Collection, II, p. 82, Lawrence to Winslow, August 11, 1755.

19) "Journal of Colonel John Winslow", Nova Scotia Historical Society Collections, 3 (1882-1883), Halifax, 1883, pp. 94-95. The Acadian deportation was a matter of *Rex est Lex; Lex est Rex*; or, as Louis VIX said, "L'État c'est moi". In his *Six Books on the Commonwealth*, p. 576, Jean Bodin wrote: "The principal mark of sovereign majesty is essentially the right to impose laws on subjects without their consent". That was precisely what George II did in 1755 in his "Final Resolution" of the Acadian question. To say that Lawrence "had no authority from London" is unsupported by the weight of historical evidence. Clark, *Acadia...*, Univ. Wis. Pr., Mad., 1968, p. 363.

20) *Ibid.*, p. 242, Lawrence to Murray, August 9, 1755.

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opposed a general expulsion as too rigorous. Until the arrival of the king's "Secret Instructions", colonial officials, including Lawrence, were thinking in terms of a limited removal to French territory, not a general deportation to some strange and distant land. Winslow loathed the prospect of a general deportation to the Anglo-American colonies. He did not learn the details of the deportation until late summer. On July 3, five days before the arrival of "Secret Instructions" from "His Majesty", Winslow complained to Lawrence that the troops were "restless" and that they "should not be kept in indolence" indefinitely. A subsequent letter to Lawrence dated July 23 shows that Winslow was still thinking in terms of a limited expulsion from "part" of the province only. "It seems probable", he wrote, "that we are going to continue at Chignectou for some time... in case it should be thought convenient to settle any part of this province by people from New England which by them is expected". It was not until August 11 that Lawrence informed Winslow about the meeting of his council to consider ways and means to execute the deportation. Winslow was bound to obey his orders, but he found them disagreeable to his nature and temperament.<sup>21</sup>

The Acadians were a peaceful people, true to their oath, and neutral to the bitter end. They were deported for reasons of state. They were the innocent victims of a policy of imperialism that called for a British North America. They could not be assimilated, therefore, they would be eliminated. The hope was entertained that in the Thirteen Colonies, they would be absorbed by the general population and cease to exist as a people. The word for this, I believe, is genocide. The war was not declared until 1756, almost a year after the initial deportation. In 1758 the French fortress of Louisbourg capitulated and the deportation policy was extended to include the insular Acadians on Île Royale (Cape Breton Island) and Ile Saint-Jean, those of the Bay of Chaleurs and Memramcook region, and the St. John River Acadians.

Unlike Nova Scotia the islands were French colonies. The Island Acadians had not been deported in 1745 when Louisbourg fell to William Pepperell. This time, however, they were swept in the maelstrom, and no one bothered to give reasons. Admiral Boscawen estimated that there were 4,100 Acadians of Ile Saint-Jean in 1757, and most of them had surrendered their weapons. The argument of military necessity, especially after the fall of Beauséjour, is too far fetched to be credible.\* The deportation of a tranquil civilian population from conquered enemy territory was a major escalation of the conflict, and a serious breach of the rules of civilized war, the more so when we consider that they were unarmed and bound by an oath of loyalty to the sovereign. Lawrence, now elevated to a full governor and a brigadier general, could not have proceeded with this second phase of the deportation any more than the first without authorization from above. Until evidence can be found to the contrary, we must conclude that His Majesty's "peremptory orders" were all inclusive, wherever this much persecuted people could be found in Acadia. The fact is that neither Lawrence nor his successor could halt the deportation because that authority remained with the king.

The requirement of an oath from a conquered people was not unprecedented in America. The Finns and the Swedes were the first to be swept by the British, followed by the Dutch of New Netherlands. They received generous terms. The Dutch, under Sir Richard Nicolls, could leave the colony with their personal belongings or they could remain, and title to their land would be conferred to them. Those who stayed were required to take the so-called Test Oath of Allegiance, Succession and Supremacy and Abjuration but they could remain neutral in the event of a war with Holand for reasons of consanguinity. The people were permitted to trade directly with the homeland and the Dutch Reformed Church was accorded religious freedom. Moreover, English law was declared applicable only where the English outnumbered the Dutch. Like the Catholic minority in Maryland, they were granted full religious freedom including suffrage and the

right to own property. The Acadians were not so favoured. As Catholics, they could not subscribe to the Test Oath required of them beginning with Cornwallis without abjuring their faith which they would not do. The Dutch, unlike the Acadians, were not the least likely to be forced into arms against their own nationals. With the Acadians the oath was a device to justify a predetermined policy of deportation. The deportation frenzy continued even after the surrender of Quebec and Montreal. Lawrence died on October 19, 1760. It could be reasonably supposed that if Lawrence ordered the deportation, it would have ceased at his death, but it continued. George II died six days after Lawrence, and George III ascended the throne a week later, but the deportation order was not rescinded. In 1762 hundreds of refugees were embarked from Halifax and deported to Massachusetts over the protests of General Jeffery Amherst who was commander in chief of the British forces in America, and governor-general of British North America. The Bay Colony declined to receive them. Lieutenant Governor Jonathan Belcher wrote to the Earl of Egremont, Secretary of State, that he dreaded even the scattered remnants of the Acadians. The war ended on February 10, 1763, with the Treaty of Paris. Nine months later on November 21, 1763, Amherst wrote to Lieutenant Governor Wilmot of Nova Scotia that the province would have to bear the expense of sending the Acadians to Boston and bringing them back to the province. Wilmot was powerless to act. He wrote to the Earl of Halifax on December 10, 1763, about a plan to settle the Acadians at Miramichi. He was opposed to this, he wrote, "As I never received any orders from the Lords of Trade touching this matter", and he recommended that they be sent to the West Indies.<sup>22</sup> On March 24, 1764, he advised against settling any of the Acadians in the region as the safety of the province depended "on their total expulsion". Left to colonial officials the deportation would have continued until every last Acadian had vanished from the Maritimes, because they were powerless to act. The nightmare ended just as it had  
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21) N.S.H.S. Co., II, p. 82, Lawrence to Winslow, August 11, 1755; Ibid. p. 210, Winslow to Lawrence July 3, 1755, id. - id., July 23, 1755.

\* The military rationale is that the Acadians had been forced into arms once at Beauséjour, and they could be forced again. That argument is unconvincing, because after Beauséjour passed safely under the Cross of St. George and became Fort Cumberland, there was no other French fort in Nova Scotia where the Acadians could be driven and forced into arms. Condemning an entire population for the actions of a few is reminiscent of St. Ours, France, during World War II. British fortifications now included Fort Cumberland, Fort Lawrence, Fort Edward, a major naval base at Halifax, Fort Anne at Annapolis Royal and four minor military installations elsewhere in the province, to guard 8,000 unarmed men, women, and children. The rapist argument of blame against the victim, all too common in crimes against humanity, is equally incredible.

22) The closing years of the deportation is discussed at length in Beamish Murdoch, A History of Nova Scotia, or Acadia, II, Halifax, 1865-67, pp. 426-42.

## BOOKS/

## LIVRES...

# Nouveau Regard sur la Déportation acadienne

par Roger Paradis

Peu de régions du globe ont suscité plus de débats politiques et de recherches universitaires que la Vallée du cours supérieur de la rivière St-Jean, autrefois appelé le territoire de Madawaska.<sup>1</sup> En 1783, la région est devenue un véritable brandon de discorde entre la Grande-Bretagne et les États-Unis, l'objet du différend frontalier le plus long et épineux de l'histoire anglo-américaine. De plus, les pionniers fondateurs étaient des réfugiés acadiens qui avaient échappé à la déportation de la Nouvelle-Écosse en 1755, les réchappés d'un peuple fugitif victime d'un effroyable « crime de lèse-humanité ».<sup>2</sup> Voici les éléments d'une histoire intrigante et hautement controversée. Pourquoi le territoire de Madawaska a-t-il été aussi chaudement disputé? Qui étaient ces gens franchement détestés par les autorités, soumis à de multiples cruautés et vexations, et pourtant immortalisés dans des poèmes et des chansons? Ces gens

qui avaient trouvés refuge dans un Zion sauvage uniquement pour retomber dans une autre lutte de pouvoir qui les a séparés de façon permanente? Pour trouver des réponses à ces questions troublantes, nous devons nous reporter à l'ancienne Acadie, à l'époque où cette colonie était habitée par un peuple prospère, tranquille et heureux.

Les Acadiens de la pré-diaspora occupaient le plus vaste marais littoral ininterrompu le long de la côte de l'Atlantique, perpétuellement fertile et atteignant en certains endroits 40 pieds de profondeur. Ils étaient depuis toujours en bons termes avec les indiens Micmacs avec qui ils faisaient le commerce lucratif des fourrures qu'ils revendaient en Nouvelle-Angleterre.<sup>3</sup> La pêche dans la Baie venait au second rang seulement de leurs occupations, mais elle n'en était pas moins importante. Vers le milieu du siècle, ils possédaient des navires d'une portée de 50 tonnes, qu'ils construisaient eux-mêmes,

bien que la plupart des vaisseaux de leur flotte oscillaient entre 15 et 25 tonnes. Nicholas Ganthier était un riche marchand acadien propriétaire de trois navires faisant le commerce avec les Antilles, mais c'était l'exception. À partir de l'Acadie, leurs navires transportaient du bétail, du poisson, des fourrures, du bois d'oeuvre et du blé; ils ramenaient chez eux de la canne à sucre, de la mélasse, du rhum et des outils. Ils pêchaient dans la baie du merlu, de l'alose et de la limande à queue jaune en quantité. Les Acadiens d'Annapolis exploitaient aussi les pêcheries de Canso dès 1734.

L'agriculture était l'industrie première des Acadiens. Au prix de nombreux efforts et d'un travail collectif, ils ont récupéré des milliers d'acres de la Baie française (Baie de Fundy). Ils ont réussi cet exploit en créant un réseau élaboré de digues dotées d'un aboiteau qui s'ouvrait à marée basse et se fermait à l'arrivée de la marée haute. Cette méthode permettait de drainer un champ en vue de le cultiver en l'espace de deux ans environ. C'était une tâche laborieuse, mais une fois les digues construites, elles sont devenues partie intégrante du paysage, à moins de se rompre sous la pression des bourrasques ou des forces d'invasion.

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1) Tiré partiellement de la préface du livre *Papiers de / Papers of Prudent L. Mercure Histoire du Madawaska*, Société historique du Madawaska, Maine, 1998, avec permission, ainsi que revu et corrigé par l'auteur.

2) Thomas Albert, *Histoire du Madawaska*. Imprimerie française missionnaire, Québec, 1920, p. 69.

3) *Journal of Colonel John Winslow*, Nova Scotia Historical Society Collection, 4, Halifax, 1885, pp. 179-180, de Winslow à Halifax, le 27 juin 1755.

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started, on instructions from the Lords of Trade, in September, 1764, that "His Majesty" had decided to permit the Acadians to "become settlers in Nova Scotia".

Great Britain lashed at New France for a century and finally scored in 1713. The deportation of the Acadians was just another stroke in its quest for a British North America. The Canadiens would likely have suffered a similar fate except that they were

too numerous, and the cost of the Acadian deportation far exceeded the expectations of the British Court. After the conquest, London counted on an influx of Yankee settlers into Canada to accomplish through assimilation what had been accomplished in Nova Scotia through deportation. Both policies failed and left ugly scars. For the Acadians, however, the deportation was devastating.<sup>23</sup> The proposition that the Deportation project, including the siege of Beauséjour, was mainly a colonial enterprise is at least arguable. The "noble and great" project was endorsed

at Whitehall for an entire year before it was effectuated. The arms and munitions arrived directly from Great Britain. Only Winslow of the six commanders was a colonial officer. The commander-in-chief was Admiral Boscawen who sailed from England in early 1755. Approximately 25% of the ground forces that were involved in the investment of Beauséjour were British Regulars, and the funding for the operation was guaranteed by the British Parliament. As a minimum, the Deportation project was a combined British colonial military operation.

23) Brown Mss., N.S.H.S. Coll., II, 131-133, 146-49. "On this subject see also M. Hamer, "The Fate of the Exiled Acadians", *Jnl. St. Hist.*, 4 (1938), 199-208, and R.H. Hudnut, et. al., "Acadian Transients in South Carolina", *A.H.R.*, 43 (1938), 500-13. A comprehensive study is R. Rumilly, *Histoire des Acadiens*, II, Montreal 1955. It is estimated that 1,300 perished on their way to France. How many more fell to the musket, the scalping knife, starvation or to disease on the plague ships, that carried them to the Thirteen Colonies, may never be known.

House of Commons Debates (electronic sources) : Thanks to Charles Walker, Procedural Clerk, Journals Office, The Senate of Canada, Ottawa.

Wednesday, October 3rd, 2001

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?DocId=1227965&Mode=1&Language=F#Int-54790>

Friday, September 19th, 2003

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?DocId=1055124&Mode=1&Language=F#Int-680966>

Thursday, February 6th, 2003

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?DocId=681467&Mode=1&Language=F#Int-407850>



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Les visiteurs américains en Acadie ont conclu que les Acadiens étaient indolents parce qu'ils ne cultivaient pas les hautes terres. Mais les hautes terres étaient constituées d'un sol de qualité inférieure nécessitant l'épandage, et un déboisement considérable de la forêt aurait chassé le gibier et créé des problèmes avec les Micmacs. La construction de digues exigeait davantage de main-d'oeuvre que le déboisement de la forêt, mais c'était aussi une activité plus judicieuse et plus sûre. Lorsque le rideau est tombé sur la colonie, ses habitants planifiaient d'arracher à l'océan 100 000 acres additionnels de marais maritime à Chignectou. Le sol produisait 20 boisseaux de céréales l'acre comparativement à 12 au Massachusetts. Non seulement la terre était naturellement des plus fertiles, mais le bétail donnait chaque hiver des tonnes d'engrais que l'on répandait ultérieurement sur les terres. Les habitants élevaient une espèce de bovins noirs et un très grand nombre de moutons et de porcs.\* Ils élevaient également des volailles, y compris des oies, des poulets et des pigeons. Des milliers d'acres étaient consacrés à la culture du maïs et d'autres céréales pour le fourrage et l'exportation. Il y avait également d'immenses vergers où poussaient divers types de pommes, de cerises, de poires et de prunes. Étonnés de ce que les Acadiens ne produisaient pas de cidre pour l'exportation, les commerçants de la Nouvelle-Angleterre les ont jugés peu entreprenants. Les pommes sont d'excellents aliments pour le bétail. En outre, les porcs étaient nourris de pommes pendant trois semaines avant d'être abattus à l'automne car on croyait que cela adoucissait la viande. Les Américains croyaient le bétail des Acadiens inférieur car ce dernier produisait peu de lait; mais les bovins de boucherie en produisent rarement beaucoup; cela explique également pourquoi les Acadiens ne produisaient pas de fromages. Certains marchands américains ont aussi cru les Acadiens paresseux parce qu'ils laissaient l'engrais s'accumuler au lieu de le répandre sur leurs terres. Manifestement, ils ne connaissaient pas grand chose à l'agriculture, sinon ils auraient compris que l'engrais doit être changé de place chaque année. Avec quelque 15 à 100 têtes de bétail par exploitant, l'accumulation après quelques années aurait empêché l'accès aux étables et enseveli la propriété familiale, sans compter la puanteur que cela

aurait engendré. En 1755, l'Acadie était en bonne voie de devenir le grenier du Nord-Est. Les Acadiens avaient de nombreux échanges avec la forteresse française à Louisbourg, particulièrement pour ce qui est du bétail. Quant au commerce avec la Nouvelle-Angleterre, il englobait le poisson, les fourrures, la laine, un peu de bétail, et du bois. Les paiements se faisaient uniquement en espèces sonnantes et trébuchantes. Les Acadiens vivaient simplement et avaient des besoins modestes. Leurs importations englobaient des armes à feu, de la poudre et des balles pour la chasse, des outils en fer, du sucre et de la mélasse. À l'occasion, ils se payaient quelques petits luxes comme des rubans de couleur vive, des tissus importés, de la vaisselle, du vin français et des produits de beauté. On a qualifié ce peuple économe et pratiquement autosuffisant, de « grippe-sou ». Une chose est sûre : après la conquête en 1713, les Acadiens ont constamment bénéficié d'une balance commerciale favorable, ce qui les rend assez uniques dans l'Amérique du Nord anglo-française. La déportation a permis de recueillir un cheptel de plus d'une centaine de milliers de têtes – des bovins, des chevaux, des moutons et des porcs en grande quantité. Les dépouilles de ce pillage ont servi à nourrir les troupes ou ont été réparties parmi les colons protestants dans la province. Ce saccage a dévasté la colonie, laissant derrière lui une terre dévastée et silencieuse à l'exception du bruit des vagues et du son de la brise soufflant sur les hautes herbes des prairies, ainsi que de magnifiques vergers mystérieusement épargnés par les troupes.

La Nouvelle-Angleterre contrastait de façon marquée avec l'Acadie. Elle comptait une population en plein essor qui croissait au rythme de 5% par année et le prix des terres y atteignait des niveaux sans précédent. Le sol était pauvre et devrait être constamment fertilisé; la colonie avait du mal à nourrir sa population et la famine sévissait à Boston. Une économie de maîtres-tenanciers offrait des occasions d'emploi limitées hormis l'exploitation de la ferme familiale. Le fossé entre riches et pauvres se creusait, et la pauvreté était un problème. Les marins de la Nouvelle-Angleterre qui accostaient en Acadie pour faire le commerce avaient bien des raisons d'envier les habitants « superstitieux », « perfides », « étroits d'esprit », « chicaniers », « fiers », « sans ambition », « obstinés », « intraitables », « dissidents », « malhabiles », « folâtres », « indolents », «

paresseux », « rebelles », « réfractaires » et « papistes » qui cultivaient cette bonne terre; « une plaie et un cauchemar ». Les préjugés contre le peuple acadien étaient légion autant qu'ils étaient profonds, en somme, quelque chose qui présage une calamité future.

La « résolution finale ». Les Acadiens sont devenus sujets de la Grande Bretagne à la suite de la conquête, ce qui a été confirmé en 1713 par le traité d'Utrecht. Ce traité précisait que les personnes qui choisissaient de demeurer dans la colonie en tant que sujets loyaux de Sa Majesté pouvaient jouir de leur propriété et « de la libre pratique de leur religion ». Quelques semaines plus tard, la reine Anne est allée plus loin dans une proclamation en stipulant que les habitants ayant choisi de rester sujets britanniques pouvaient « conserver leurs biens fonciers et immeubles sans crainte d'être importunés, aussi pleinement et librement que tous nos autres sujets ». Ils pouvaient également « acquérir des terres ou des domaines ou encore les vendre s'ils décidaient plutôt de déménager ailleurs ». L'obligation de prêter un serment de loyauté inconditionnel pour être considéré comme sujet loyal n'était pas précisée, que ce soit dans le traité ou la proclamation royale. Cette idée est venue après coup aux dirigeants coloniaux qui étaient plus prêts de la zone de danger que les autorités à Londres. La foi dans les traités suppose qu'aucune restriction mentale ne soit pratiquée dans le cadre d'ententes internationales. Un traité deviendrait simplement une source d'arguties, un exercice inepte de filouterie si les nations pouvaient se soustraire à leurs obligations par quelque « artifice » ou « subterfuge » subtil. Les nations contractantes doivent « exprimer leurs intentions clairement », après quoi elles sont liées. D'après Monsieur de Vattel, la restriction mentale est « éminemment odieuse et déshonorable dans toutes affaires internationales ».

Le 13 janvier 1716, 36 Acadiens de Port-Royal ont prêté un serment de loyauté à Georges III, à condition qu'ils puissent se retirer à l'endroit et au moment de leur choix avec tous leurs biens meubles et effets. Ailleurs, cependant, les représentants des Acadiens de la péninsule ont refusé de prêter serment à moins d'être exemptés de l'obligation de prendre les armes « que ce soit contre Sa Majesté britannique, contre la France ou... leurs sujets ou alliés ». En 1720, on a sérieusement envisagé de déporter de la *(Suite page 41)*

\* Le bétail aurait pu être du cheptel vif apporté par Sir William Alexander en 1629; probablement d'une description de Galloway.

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colonie ce peuple obstiné. L'Office des colonies était d'accord avec cette mesure, mais uniquement après que les renforts eurent été envoyés dans la colonie, et ses représentants ont conseillé au gouverneur Richard Philipps de ne pas prendre une telle initiative en l'absence d'un ordre ferme de Sa Majesté en ce sens. En 1726, le major Lawrence Armstrong est devenu administrateur de la colonie et a exigé de ses habitants qu'ils prêtent le serment de loyauté. Ces derniers ont refusé à moins qu'on leur accorde de ne pas être appelés sous les drapeaux. Armstrong a rapporté à ses supérieurs à Londres que sur les instances de son conseil, il avait fait écrire en marge de la traduction française une annotation précisant que les habitants seraient exemptés de servir dans l'armée. Satisfaits, les Acadiens d'Annapolis Royal ont prêté serment dans les deux langues. Seule la version anglaise a été envoyée à Londres, mais les autorités ont été pleinement informées des conditions auxquelles le peuple acadien avait accepté de prêter le serment de loyauté. Les choses sont restées ainsi pendant les deux années subséquentes.

Le 3 janvier 1730, le gouverneur Richard Philipps a fait savoir au duc de Newcastle que la population adulte de Port-Royal, soit les habitants de 17 ans et plus, avait accepté de prêter inconditionnellement le serment d'allégeance prescrit. Le 24 avril 1730, des représentants des réfractaires du bassin des Mines et d'autres rivières connexes ont accepté de prêter le même serment inconditionnel d'allégeance. Philipps a informé Londres le 26 novembre 1730 que toutes paroisses acadiennes avaient prêté le serment d'allégeance. Le gouverneur a accompli ce coup de maître après les avoir persuadés, avec des promesses verbales, qu'ils ne seraient pas obligés de servir dans l'armée et de participer à une guerre contre les Français et les Indiens. En contrepartie, ils ont promis « de ne jamais prendre les armes dans l'éventualité d'une guerre contre le Royaume d'Angleterre et son gouvernement ». C'était là la même concession de neutralité qu'Armstrong avait consentie par écrit aux Acadiens d'Annapolis Royal quatre ans auparavant. Philipps n'a pas communiqué cela à Londres, mais cet arrangement a plus tard été confirmé

par le conseil exécutif à Annapolis Royal. Le 8 novembre 1745, le conseil a fait savoir que les Acadiens d'Annapolis Royal avaient volontairement prêté le serment, mais que les habitants de nombreux autres hameaux reculés avaient « carrément refusé » à moins d'obtenir « l'assurance signée de la main du général qu'on ne les obligerait pas à prendre les armes ». Après bien des protestations, ils ont « extorqué » une promesse de neutralité du gouverneur et prêté serment; les Acadiens d'Annapolis se sont considérés comme « inclus dans le même arrangement ». À Whitehall, le Board of Trade n'était pas satisfait du serment et a ergoté sur des questions de détail, mais lorsque Philipps a refusé de le réviser, ils l'ont accepté. Ce *modus vivendi* conclu avec les Acadiens était également connu des autorités coloniales. Le 6 avril 1747, le gouverneur Paul Mascarène a communiqué cet arrangement au gouverneur William Shirley du Massachusetts, lui précisant que même si une clause de neutralité n'avait pas été « intégrée » au serment, cela leur avait été promis. Le Droit des gens, ou les Principes de la loi naturelle, reconnaît à un peuple le droit de rester neutre en temps de guerre pour des motifs de consanguinité. Ce droit a été accordé ultérieurement aux colons de la Nouvelle-Angleterre installés sur les terres acadiennes laissées vacantes. Les lourds nuages de la révolution s'amoncelaient dans les Treize Colonies et comme les Acadiens, leurs habitants craignaient qu'advenant une guerre, ils soient obligés de prendre les armes contre leurs parents en Nouvelle-Angleterre. Bien que le Massachusetts fut proche et dans la mouvance du sentiment révolutionnaire en Amérique, ils étaient disposés à prêter un serment de loyauté à la Grande-Bretagne, à condition de pouvoir rester neutres si la guerre était déclenchée avec ses Treize colonies américaines car, d'après eux, « ce serait une extrême cruauté » que de prendre les armes contre les leurs.

C'est également pour cette raison que les Britanniques répugnaient à se porter volontaires pour servir en Amérique au cours de la révolution et que des Hessiens ont été recrutés pour aider la Grande-Bretagne à livrer cette guerre. Un serment est le contrat le plus solennel qui puisse exister entre un prince et ses sujets, et il est mutuellement contraignant. Le serment du gouverneur Philipps était un acte officiel du

représentant officiel du roi en Acadie. Il n'a jamais été officiellement et publiquement répudié par le roi, comme il aurait dû l'être pour le délier de ses obligations à l'égard de ses sujets acadiens. Par conséquent, il est demeuré contraignant pour toutes les parties. Le problème du serment a mijoté tranquillement pendant une autre génération. Même pendant les années menaçantes de la guerre du Roi George (la guerre de la Succession d'Autriche), de 1744 à 1748, lorsque trois forces d'invasion les entouraient « en nombres bien supérieurs à ceux que nous pouvions leur opposer », les Acadiens n'ont pas dérogé à leur serment. En fait, les Acadiens d'Annapolis ont prêté à Mascarène une aide dénuée de neutralité pour renforcer la défense du fort; il a avoué qu'il lui aurait été impossible de tenir sans leur aide.

Le peuple a été trompé. Au plus fort de la guerre, en 1746, les rumeurs allaient bon train : les autorités envisageaient une déportation générale. Le gouverneur Shirley a rassuré Mascarène en lui disant que cette allégation était fautive et que si c'était là l'intention de « Sa Majesté », il aurait été mis au courant. Dans une dépêche envoyée à Newcastle le 21 novembre 1746, Shirley a demandé à « Sa Majesté » de « nouvelles assurances » voulant qu'aucune mesure ne soit planifiée contre les Acadiens. Shirley n'était pas d'accord avec l'amiral Knowles qui recommandait de chasser tous les Acadiens de l'Acadie. Shirley croyait que Knowles voulait les envoyer au Canada et il a fait valoir que les Français se trouveraient renforcés par une telle initiative et que cela rendrait les Indiens plus intraitables. Qui plus est, il doutait qu'une telle politique constitue « un bon usage des Acadiens ». <sup>4</sup> Il a rappelé au Premier ministre « l'exemption de servir sous les drapeaux » que leur avait accordé Philipps et que, dans de telles circonstances, l'expulsion semblait « une punition trop rigoureuse ». Le gouverneur Paul Mascarène de la Nouvelle-Écosse convenait avec Shirley qu'il aurait été injuste de les expulser, à moins d'avoir d'autres preuves de leur belligérance ou d'obtenir « des ordres fermes » de la mère patrie. <sup>5</sup> Shirley s'est plaint de ce que la déportation vers la France ou les Treize Colonies serait trop coûteuse, particulièrement dans le contexte d'une économie chancelante, et à la lumière de « ses instructions détaillées et réitérées d'économiser ». *(Suite page 42)*

4) N.S., 83, 259 passim., A30, 22, de Shirley à Newcastle, le 21 novembre 1746.

5) C.O.5, 901, F102, 107 V.

6) C.O.5, 901, F99 V. de Shirley à Newcastle, le 27 février 1747.

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Shirley met en oeuvre « les plans pour la sécurité de la province » qu'il a communiqués à Newcastle au début de 1747.<sup>6</sup> Shirley devait prendre note de « toutes les dépenses » et, après les avoir « entièrement ajustées et liquidées », il devait faire parvenir à Newcastle « les pièces justificatives appropriées » destinées au Parlement afin d'obtenir un remboursement...<sup>7</sup> La guerre avec la France tire à sa fin, il devient toutefois de plus en plus évident au Foreign Office que même une déportation limitée des Acadiens de la région de Chignectou pourrait causer un problème et exiger une planification minutieuse. En octobre, Newcastle écrit que « Par conséquent Sa Majesté, dans l'ensemble, croit qu'il convient de reporter toute chose de genre pour l'heure qu'il est, et qu'elle vous demande de déterminer de quelle manière un plan de ce genre peut être exécuté, en temps opportun, et quelles précautions peuvent être nécessaires pour prévenir les inconvénients que cela risque d'entraîner »<sup>8</sup>. Newcastle ordonne alors à Shirley de rassurer la population en lui disant que « Sa Majesté » considère les rumeurs sans fondement et que selon « le bon plaisir du roi » il devrait annoncer officiellement à la population qu'il n'y avait aucune raison de craindre une mesure de ce genre. C'est plutôt « la volonté de Sa Majesté » de les protéger et que tant qu'ils resteront loyaux à « Sa Majesté », ils peuvent conserver leur propriété et pratiquer leur religion. L'édit royal est explicite et ne laisse rien à désirer. On le communique à la population qui a toutes les raisons d'avoir confiance et de se sentir rassurée.

Pas plus tard que le 15 juin 1748, Mascarène témoigne de la loyauté de la population et de l'aide inestimable qu'elle a fournie pour la défense de la province en 1744 contre une force de 300 Micmacs et de 900 miliciens canadiens sous la direction de Duvivier. Il déclare au duc de Bedford que l'ennemi n'est pas parvenu, en dépit des efforts déployés, à « amener les Acadiens à se rebeller ouvertement ». Sept ans plus tard et en temps de paix, le monarque perfide en vient à la conclusion que le temps est propice à « l'extirpation » et à la déportation de la population dans les 30 colonies anglo-américaines.

La paix revient en Acadie le 18 octobre 1748 avec la signature du traité d'Aix-la-Chapelle. Le 12 juillet 1749, Edward Cornwallis devient le nouveau gouverneur de la Nouvelle-Écosse et la capitale est transférée d'Annapolis Royal à Halifax. Le gouverneur et sa suite d'officiers de ligne arrivent accompagnés de 2 500 colons protestants. Voilà ce qui constituait un changement important d'une politique de pénurie et de négligence à une politique offrant de généreux appuis financiers. Les directives du gouverneur à l'égard des Acadiens sont détaillées. Il doit rédiger une proclamation au nom du roi et leur donner trois mois pour prêter un serment sans réserves ou renoncer à leur propriété et à leurs droits. En cas d'intransigeance de la part des Acadiens, toutefois, il doit renvoyer la question au gouvernement de la métropole et attendre d'autres directives.<sup>9</sup> Les Acadiens refusent. Ils rappellent au gouverneur le serment de Philipps et les conditions qu'ils avaient acceptées de même que la récente proclamation du roi. Si le gouverneur persiste dans sa demande, ils sont prêts à émigrer de la province. La possibilité que les Canadiens puissent quitter la colonie fait réfléchir le gouverneur. Les Acadiens iraient grossir les établissements français et la Nouvelle-Écosse serait grandement dépeuplée. En outre, il est peu vraisemblable que d'autres colons puissent être attirés dans la colonie étant donné l'hostilité des Indiens abénaquis, surtout les Micmacs, qui étaient en guerre contre les Britanniques. Ces réalités désagréables freinent l'enthousiasme du gouverneur. Cornwallis peut rager du fait que Philipps n'a pas fait « son devoir » à l'égard du roi lorsqu'il leur avait promis qu'ils seraient des sujets neutres en retour de leur serment d'allégeance, mais l'entente entre le roi et les sujets, en dépit de son impopularité, n'en était pas moins exécutoire.

Il existe un proverbe selon lequel en politique internationale, en tant de paix il faut se préparer pour la guerre. La Nouvelle-Écosse est devenue un camp armé sous le gouvernement de Cornwallis. Halifax a été fortifiée et des installations militaires auxiliaires ont été construites à Grand Pré, Pisiquid, Baie-Verte, Canso, La Have et de menus travaux de réfection ont été effectués au fort d'Annapolis. Les Français ont construit un fort à Beaubassin et un petit

manège militaire à Gaspereaux. Cornwallis est parti, remplacé par le capitaine Peregrine Hopson le 3 août 1752. Hopson est retourné en Angleterre 16 mois plus tard, laissant le commandement au colonel Charles Lawrence. Lawrence a été désigné lieutenant gouverneur le 17 septembre 1754. Peu après sa nomination, Lawrence a rappelé leur serment aux Acadiens et leur a déclaré que s'ils étaient trouvés armés, ils seraient traités comme des rebelles. Les Lords britanniques ont averti Lawrence de faire preuve d'une « grande prudence » avec les Acadiens, « pour éviter de les mettre en alerte et de les inciter à la dissidence, ce qui pourrait les pousser à quitter la province et, par leur nombre, à accroître les forces des Français... ». Il convient de souligner que tous les administrateurs des provinces depuis la conquête, y compris Cornwallis, étaient tenus étroitement en laisse par leur gouvernement en ce qui touchait le sort des Acadiens. Les Lords of Trade guettaient bien toutes mesures qui contribueraient à restreindre la prérogative royale, voire même les nominations aux postes dans la milice. Pour tout ce qui concernait la politique extérieure, l'autorité ultime relevait du tribunal de St-James, et Charles Lawrence n'en était pas exempt.

Lawrence doutait que la province puisse jamais être colonisée par les sujets protestants tant et aussi longtemps que les Acadiens possédaient « les meilleures et les plus grandes étendues de terre ». Le 1er août 1754, il a envoyé une autre dépêche aux Lords britanniques, laquelle a ranimé les tisons de la déportation. Si les Acadiens persistaient à refuser de faire sans réserve un serment d'allégeance, il « vaudrait beaucoup mieux... qu'ils soient ailleurs ». Il s'est empressé d'ajouter, cependant, qu'il était bien loin de prendre une telle mesure sans avoir préalablement obtenu l'aval des Lords.<sup>10</sup> Dans leur lettre du 29 octobre 1754, les Lords ont répondu qu'ils ne pouvaient se faire une idée précise ou une juste opinion des mesures à prendre en ce qui concernait les Canadiens tant qu'ils n'auraient pas exposé toute la situation à Sa Majesté et reçu ses instructions à ce sujet...<sup>11</sup> L'éventualité d'une déportation, même limitée, soulevait de graves questions sur les droits de propriété et les Lords ont recommandé qu'on demande l'avis du juge (Suite page 43)

7) Ibid., de Newcastle à Shirley, le 30 mai 1747.

8) Ibid., ff. 157-158 V. de Newcastle à Shirley, le 3 octobre 1747.

9) Nova Scotia Archives, I, 495-706; Nova Scotia Historical Society, Coll. VII, Halifax, 1895 et P.A.C., 1905, II, App. C, p. 47-52.

10) N.S., A55, p. 187 passim.

11) N.S., A56, p. 76.



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en chef Johnathan Beleher de Boston. Londres ne manquait pas de juristes compétents capables de formuler une telle opinion, mais elle voulait manifestement se distancer de cette déplorable affaire et laisser les officiels coloniaux en assumer la responsabilité. Il est important de savoir à quel moment exactement « l'affaire » des Acadiens a été portée devant le roi pour obtenir son avis. Les autorités britanniques ont commencé à dresser des plans secrets pour la conquête du Canada vers la fin de 1754, probablement en novembre. La stratégie prévoyait six campagnes en 1755, et engloberait la capture de la flotte française censée prendre la route de l'Amérique au printemps, un blocus naval à Louisbourg et des attaques contre les forts Duquesne, Carillon (Crown Point), Niagara et Beauséjour. Ce dernier serait investi par les troupes de la Nouvelle-Angleterre, mais sous le commandement du colonel Robert Monckton et d'autres officiers britanniques. Les troupes ne devaient pas être libérées avant la capitulation, comme cela aurait dû normalement se faire pour épargner d'inutiles dépenses au Trésor public. Au lieu de cela, elles resteraient en garnison dans la province tandis que « le noble et grand projet » d'expulsion prendrait forme. Les Acadiens occupaient « l'un des meilleurs sols au monde », rapportait un messenger de Halifax, à la veille de la Déportation. « S'ils pouvaient être bannis de la Nouvelle-Écosse ce serait une des meilleures décisions que les Anglais aient pu prendre en Amérique » parce qu'ils auraient « placer de bons fermiers sur leurs propriétés ». \*

L'attaque contre Duquesne a été menée par le général Edward Braddock. Arrivé en Nouvelle-Écosse, il leva l'ancre à Annapolis Royal où il déposa 2 000 plateformes pour mousquets, 400 barils de poudre et munitions à ball et l'artillerie pesante en vue du siège de Beauséjour. Appareillant pour la Virginie, Braddock subit une cinglan-

te défaite à Monongahela. Ses documents personnels ont été saisis et envoyés à Québec, où le gouverneur Vaudreuil en a dressé une liste annotée. À la lecture des documents saisis, le gouverneur a appris le projet des Britanniques de s'emparer du Canada et a conclu que les Acadiens seraient réduits à « la mort et l'esclavage ». Les documents de Braddock ont été envoyés à Versailles avec les notes du gouverneur Vaudreuil, et seraient plus tard déposés aux Archives nationales.<sup>12</sup> Les documents de Braddock ont par la suite disparu des archives, mais la liste annotée de Vaudreuil subsiste. Elle confirme que les colonies n'ont pas agi indépendamment, mais de concert avec Whitehall et sur ses instructions spécifiques.

En janvier 1755, le lieutenant-gouverneur a chargé le juge Charles Morris d'élaborer un plan en vue de s'emparer de la population « par la ruse » et de la désarmer afin d'éviter une « insurrection » au moment où ils seraient « expulsés de la province ».<sup>13</sup> Peu après, Monckton est parti pour Boston, muni d'une lettre de « crédit illimité » auprès de la société Apthorp et Hancock et d'autres financiers pour payer l'expédition de Beauséjour. Les moyens de transport ont été loués auprès de commerçants locaux et équipés d'hommes du Massachusetts. Des 13 colonies américaines, seul le Massachusetts était au courant de la déportation qui se préparait et, des six campagnes militaires planifiées cette année-là, seule l'expédition et la déportation à laquelle devait procéder Beauséjour devait être financée à l'échelle locale. Les Lords britanniques étaient déterminés à ne pas souiller leur blason avec cette sordide affaire et à laisser plutôt Lawrence et son conseil en assumer toute la responsabilité. Il suffit de dire que Lawrence n'aurait pas pu fournir un « crédit illimité » de sa province pour l'expédition de Beauséjour et la Déportation sans avoir initialement reçu l'approbation des ministres de Sa Majesté.

Beauséjour est tombé sous les Britanniques le 16 juin 1755, et plus de 300

Acadiens y ont été trouvés armés. Ils étaient munis de documents émanant du commandant, cependant, selon lesquels ils avaient été contraints à prendre les armes et qu'ils ne l'avaient pas fait de leur libre arbitre. Par conséquent, en vertu de l'article 4 de la Reddition, Lawrence a accepté de leur accorder le « pardon ». Le 28 juin 1755, le lieutenant-gouverneur a déclaré à Londres qu'il avait donné ordre d'amener les « Acadiens déserteurs... hors du pays », parce qu'il doutait qu'ils puissent jamais être de fidèles sujets. Par « Acadiens déserteurs » Lawrence désignait manifestement les malheureux qui avaient été chassés par les Indiens de leurs fermes incendiées, dans le Bassin de Cumberland, et qui s'étaient réfugiés à l'île Saint-Jean (Île-du-Prince-Édouard) ou à la Baie des Chaleurs. Déçus de la situation et souhaitant ardemment revoir leurs anciennes fermes, des centaines de réfugiés affamés étaient retournés chez eux. Lawrence a écrit à Monckton que les Acadiens de Chignectou ne devaient pas être autorisés à prêter serment car « cela nous lierait les mains et nous empêcherait de les expulser ».<sup>14</sup> Le secrétaire d'État Thomas Robinson a répondu sans attendre à Lawrence et, ce faisant, il a vu dans la lettre du gouverneur des choses qui n'y étaient pas. Il s'est plaint qu'il n'était pas clair, dans cette lettre, si on voulait ne chasser que les « habitants déserteurs français » ou tous les Acadiens de la péninsule. Il craignait l'éventualité d'une insurrection de l'ensemble des « French Neutrals » et qu'ils pourraient être poussés vers les Français qui, « grâce à leur fuite », grossiraient d'un nombre important de sujets utiles les troupes du roi de France. Par cette lettre codée, Robinson se lavait les mains de la déportation tout en informant Lawrence qu'une déportation limitée des Acadiens « déserteurs » était hors de question, et qu'il attendait la déportation générale de toute la population. Le lieutenant gouverneur n'a pu en tirer que la conclusion logique: puisque les *(Suite page 44)*

\* Cet énoncé a été attribué à tort au colonel Winslow ce qui est faux. La correspondance date de Halifax le 4 septembre 1755. À cette date Winslow était à Grand-Pré et non à Halifax. Les correspondances de Winslow ont toujours été datées à Grand-Pré pendant la Déportation et le colonel n'a pas quitté Grand-Pré pour Halifax avant décembre 1755. Puisque Winslow ne pouvait pas être en deux lieux en même temps, quelqu'un d'autre a écrit cette lettre. La personne la plus probable était Thomas Pichon, traître français à Halifax pendant la Déportation et toujours rémunéré par le gouvernement.

12) De Vaudreuil à Machault, le 10 octobre 1755, Archives coloniales, F3, 124:189-199 et F. Bigot à Machault, le 27 août 1755, 134 v. Les opérations contre la Nouvelle-France et les Acadiens étaient si secrètes qu'en novembre 1754 lorsque James Johnson est allé à Boston faire une demande d'argent au Gouverneur Shirley pour s'acquitter, lui et autres captifs des Wabanakis, il ne lui fut pas permis de retourner à Québec par peur qu'il pourrait y avoir une fuite des plans à l'avantage des Français. Voir les New York Colonial Documents, 6:519 et Susannah (Johnson) Hastings, A Narrative of the Captivity of Mrs. Johnson, N.Y., 1841, p. 64-69.

13) Abbé Henri-Raymond Casgrain, Collection de documents inédits : Documents sur le Canada et l'Amérique 1. Documents sur l'Acadie, Québec, 1888-1889, p. 130-137. Voir aussi les remarques du juge Morris à propos du renvoi des Acadiens, Nova Scotia Historical Society Collections (1881) et les "réflexions" de Morris dans Doc. Inéd., dans I dans Brown Ms, 19071, ff. 31 passim. Le plan de Morris pour la "résolution finale" doit être considéré l'un des morceaux de littérature les plus ignobles jamais écrits. Il a été mis en vigueur presque à la lettre sauf le tonnage alloué pour chaque déporté. Morris avait planifié 4 tonnes par personne mais la pénurie de vaisseaux nécessita qu'ils doublent le tonnage.

14) Nova Scotia Archives, 54-57, Northcliff Collection, Nova Scotia State Papers, v.

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Acadiens ne devaient pas être poussés vers les Français, la seule autre solution était de les déporter vers les colonies anglaises. Fort à propos, cette lettre n'est parvenue à Lawrence que le 9 novembre 1755, alors que la déportation était déjà entamée. Les choses s'étaient mises en marche d'elles-mêmes quelques semaines plus tôt.

Le 3 juillet, 15 représentants acadiens ont été emprisonnés pour avoir refusé de prêter le serment exigé, mais rien n'a été dit au sujet de leur éventuelle déportation hors de la province. Cependant, cinq jours plus tard, le 8 juillet 1755, l'amiral Boscawen est arrivé chargé de « directives secrètes » du roi, accompagnées d'une lettre du secrétaire Robinson. Lawrence, d'une nature circonspecte et prudente, a promptement convoqué son conseil pour le 14, dans le but d'examiner les moyens de se débarrasser des Acadiens « en toute sécurité et avec la plus grande efficacité ».<sup>15</sup> Le lendemain, il a annoncé aux amiraux Boscawen et Mostyn que des « mesures » avaient été prises par le conseil au sujet des French Neutrals. Ils seraient forcés « de prêter ledit serment ou de quitter le pays ». Le 18 juillet, il a répété cette déclaration pour Londres.

Le 22 juillet, les Acadiens ont annoncé à Lawrence leur réponse définitive. Ils avaient prêté serment sous le gouverneur Philipps en 1730 en échange du privilège de rester neutres. Ils avaient reçu des garanties explicites de sécurité du gouverneur Shirley en 1746, puis à nouveau en 1747 de Sa Majesté par l'entremise du premier ministre britannique et du gouverneur du Massachusetts. Ils réitéraient donc leur loyauté au souverain britannique mais ajoutaient que jamais ils ne commettraient l'illogisme de prêter un serment qui modifiait à un tel point les conditions et privilèges que leur avaient accordés leur souverain et leurs pères dans le passé.

Les dés étaient jetés et le sort des Acadiens scellé. Le serment que la population avait pensé être sa garantie de sécurité est devenu l'instrument de son malheur. Les autorités avaient toutes les raisons de croire qu'ils refuseraient de prêter serment sans

réserve à la lumière des assurances formelles reçues en 1747, puisqu'ils étaient encore liés par le serment de Philipps; de plus, pendant près d'un demi-siècle ils avaient à maintes reprises résisté à la perspective de prêter un serment sans réserve sans rien obtenir en retour, même en temps de guerre et d'invasion réelle. Cette fois, cependant, le refus donnait aux autorités le prétexte légal de rébellion qui suffisait au tribunal britannique pour justifier leur déportation et confisquer leurs biens. Leur silence avait été obtenu par un faux sentiment de sécurité qu'avaient suscité les assurances répétées de bonne volonté reçues d'officiels de tous les grades, y compris du souverain. Les Britanniques savaient fort bien et de longue expérience que par solidarité et pour se préserver, les Acadiens ne pouvaient prêter et ne prêteraient pas un second serment qui leur offrait moins de garanties que le premier. C'est tout ce qu'il fallait au tribunal britannique comme prétexte pour les condamner comme rebelles.

La résolution définitive de déporter le peuple acadien est venue de Sa Majesté.<sup>16</sup> La déportation a été entamée en 1755 et s'est poursuivie pendant huit ans, jusqu'à la signature du traité de Paris. La première année de déportation à elle seule, avec le siège de Beauséjour, a coûté plus de 100 000 livres, soit plus de deux fois le budget administratif attribué à la province cette année-là. La Nouvelle-Écosse était la plus pauvre des provinces nordaméricaines de Sa Majesté, plus pauvre même que la Géorgie. Seul John Bull (l'Angleterre) était assez riche pour permettre à la province de réaliser un projet d'une telle envergure. De fait, un « fonds spécial de déportation » a été créé pour couvrir les frais de « l'expédition de la Baie de Fundy » et de l'expulsion des habitants français, et pour effectuer les travaux à Fort Cumberland.<sup>17</sup> Les dépenses ont plus tard été l'objet d'une enquête parlementaire spéciale. Après la première année, il est inutile de dire que toute velléité de prétendre que la province assumait le financement de la déportation a été abandonnée.

Une fois la « résolution définitive » adoptée par le conseil de Sa Majesté, il n'est resté à Lawrence qu'à « réfléchir aux moyens » de procéder à la déportation et à donner « les ordres et instructions néces-

saires à la mise en oeuvre de ce qui a déjà été solennellement déterminé ».<sup>18</sup> Cependant, il devenait ainsi complice du crime, mais aussi Morris, qui planifiait l'évacuation, Hancock, qui fournissait les navires, Johnathan Belcher, qui rédigeait les faux documents juridiques pour la confiscation des biens des Acadiens, Monckton, qui commandait les troupes qui procédaient à l'embarquement et le gouverneur Shirley qui avalisait et appuyait tout le projet. Lawrence n'a jamais été qu'un instrument de bonne volonté dans cette affaire déplorable, la « bête noire » de la déportation. Il est tout simplement absurde de supposer que le lieutenant gouverneur d'une province, un simple colonel d'armée, prendrait sur lui de déporter quelque 8000 sujets du roi de sa propre initiative. Lawrence était un soldat, pas un politicien, et il connaissait parfaitement la rigidité de la chaîne de commandement. De lui-même, il n'avait rien à gagner de cette entreprise abominable parce que même s'il réussissait, et c'était loin d'être certain, il lui aurait encore fallu affronter la cour martiale pour avoir usurpé la prérogative royale. Cela aurait été un acte politique criminel impardonnable entraînant automatiquement la peine de mort. Lawrence n'a pas reçu la moindre réprimande : au lieu de cela, lui et ses acolytes ont été promus. C'était la récompense de l'exécution soumise et efficace des ordres de Sa Majesté. La loyauté aveugle et fidèle porte ses fruits. Normalement, Lawrence était un administrateur circonspect et qui n'aurait même pas osé réparer de son propre chef le fortin de Grand Pré. De même, il n'aurait pas fait la moindre réparation aux installations militaires de Pisiquid, Beaubassin et rivière St-John sans avoir reçu des directives de ses supérieurs. Lawrence n'était peut-être qu'un valet, mais il n'était pas bête. Il n'est que trop évident qu'il était bien disposé à servir. En outre, il était manifeste qu'il était ambitieux et désireux de s'insinuer dans les bonnes grâces de ses supérieurs. Quoi que l'on puisse dire de Lawrence, cependant, il n'était pas un usurpateur et il savait que les officiers britanniques n'invoquaient jamais leur roi en vain. Lawrence, à l'instar d'autres officiers coloniaux, n'a été qu'un pion

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15) N.S.H.S.C., II, p. 82, de Lawrence à Winslow, le 11 août 1755.

16) James Martel, "The Second Deportation of the Acadians," *Dalhousie Review*, 13 (1933-1934), p. 359-371.

17) P.R.O., "Abstract of the money which is to be accounted for, for the expedition of the Bay of Fundy under Colonel Monckton and the removing of the French inhabitants and carrying on the works at Fort Cumberland," le 9 mai 1758, Board of Trade, Nouvelle-Écosse, 16 :1-66. Le budget de la Nouvelle-Écosse en 1755 était 49,418 livres; en 1754, 58,447 livres. Voir Chalmers Mss., f. 29

18) Nova Scotia Historical Society Collection, II, p. 82, de Lawrence à Winslow, le 11 août 1755.

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dans une gigantesque lutte géopolitique entamée et achevée à la Cour de St-James.

Le 2 septembre 1755, le colonel John Winslow, commandant de la déportation de Grand Pré, a demandé à tous les habitants masculins âgés de 10 ans et plus de se rendre à l'église paroissiale pour y entendre les « intentions de Sa Majesté », telles qu'elles avaient été énoncées à « Son Excellence » le lieutenant gouverneur Charles Lawrence. Trois jours plus tard, devant une église bondée, Winslow a annoncé qu'ils étaient tous les prisonniers du roi. Il a ensuite lu le décret de déportation : « Messieurs, j'ai reçu de Son Excellence, le gouverneur Lawrence, les instructions du roi, que j'ai ici en main. Selon ses ordres, vous avez été rassemblés pour entendre la « résolution définitive » de Sa Majesté au sujet des [Acadiens] français... ». Il leur a annoncé que le devoir qu'il devait maintenant assumer lui était « très pénible », mais que ce n'était pas son rôle de contourner les ordres mais plutôt d'y obéir. Sans plus d'hésitation, il a lu le décret par lequel « Sa Majesté a donné l'ordre et le commandement », selon « les ordres péremptoires de Sa Majesté », par la « bonté de Sa Majesté », pour le « service de Sa Majesté » et « le plaisir de Sa Majesté » ils devraient être déportés et leurs biens confisqués pour être remis à la Couronne.<sup>19</sup>

Le peuple ayant aussi compris qu'il s'agissait d'une proclamation du roi a adressé une pétition à Winslow dans ces termes : « Comme vous nous avez fait comprendre que le roi a ordonné que nous soyons déportés de cette province..., nous vous implorons d'intercéder auprès de Sa Majesté au nom de ceux qui, parmi nous, ont tenu de manière inviolable la promesse de fidélité et de soumission faite à Sa Majesté ». En mois d'une décennie, trois proclamations ont été émises selon les instructions du roi par trois gouverneurs provinciaux différents. Shirley, en 1747, Cornwallis, en 1749 et Lawrence, en 1755. Le jour de l'embarquement, le peuple a refusé d'avancer. Winslow a déclaré

que le commandement du roi était absolu et qu'il fallait absolument s'y soumettre. On retrouve tout cela dans le journal de Winslow. La proclamation de déportation rapportée dans le journal de Winslow et la preuve que le roi George II a sanctionné et décrété la déportation puisque, effectivement, seul le roi était en mesure de le faire. Le crime a été d'autant plus grand que les gens ne connaissaient pas leur destination; qu'ils ont été déportés en territoire ennemi, étranger, dont ils ne connaissaient ni la langue, ni la culture ni la religion; que les colonies n'avaient pas été informées de leur arrivée et n'étaient pas prêtes à les recevoir; que les familles ont été démantelées pour ne jamais plus s'unir; que les bateaux ont doublé leur tonnage, se retrouvant ainsi surpeuplés, frappés par la peste et devant souvent être mis en quarantaine jusqu'à ce que la peste disparaisse, avant que les survivants ne soient autorisés à débarquer; que certains navires n'étaient pas en état de naviguer et semblaient, ensevelissant par les eaux des certaines de victimes innocentes. Cependant, comment Lawrence aurait-il pu imposer des milliers de réfugiés aux autres colonies si ce n'était en observant les commandements du roi?<sup>20</sup>

Le peuple acadien a été la victime innocente d'un complot sinistre conçu à la cour et sanctionné par elle. Les preuves sont concluantes. Dans cette macabre tragédie, Lawrence a joué le rôle principal, Morris en a écrit le scénario, tandis que les autres membres de la distribution, de Halifax et de Boston, n'ont tenu que de seconds rôles. À l'origine, Shirley s'était opposé à une expulsion générale, prétendant qu'il s'agissait d'une mesure trop sévère. Avant l'arrivée des instructions secrètes du roi, les personnalités coloniales, y compris Lawrence, avaient envisagé un déplacement limité vers le territoire français, et non pas une déportation générale vers quelque terre étrangère et éloignée. Winslow répugnait l'éventualité d'une déportation générale vers les colonies anglo-américaines. Il n'a pas été mis au courant des détails de la déportation avant la fin de l'été. Le 3 juillet, cinq jours avant l'ar-

rivée des instructions secrètes de Sa Majesté, Winslow s'est plaint auprès de Lawrence que les troupes étaient agitées et qu'il ne fallait pas les laisser sombrer dans l'indolence. Une autre lettre adressée à Lawrence, datée du 23 juillet, indique que Winslow continuait d'envisager une expulsion limitée d'une partie de la province seulement. « Il semble probable », écrit-il, « que nous allons continuer quelque temps à Chignectou – au cas où il serait jugé commode d'établir des gens de Nouvelle-Angleterre dans une partie de cette province, comme ils s'y attendent ». Ce n'est pas avant le 11 août que Lawrence a informé Winslow de la réunion du conseil tenue dans le but d'envisager les moyens voulus pour mettre la déportation à exécution. Winslow a été obligé d'obéir à ses ordres, alors qu'ils ne convenaient ni à sa nature ni à son tempérament.<sup>21</sup>

Les Acadiens étaient pacifiques, fidèles à leur serment et sont restés neutres jusqu'au bout. Ils ont été déportés pour des raisons d'État et ont été les victimes innocentes d'une politique d'impérialisme réclamant une Amérique du Nord britannique. Ne pouvant être assimilés, il fallait les éliminer. On a espéré que dans les 13 colonies, ils seraient absorbés par la population générale et cesseraient d'exister en tant que peuple. Il s'agit, à mon sens, de génocide.

La guerre n'a pas été déclarée avant 1756, presque une année après la déportation initiale. En 1758, la forteresse française de Louisbourg a capitulé et la politique de déportation s'est étendue aux Acadiens insulaires de l'Île Royale (île du Cap-Breton) et de l'île Saint-Jean, à ceux de la baie des Chaleurs et de la région de Memramcook, ainsi qu'à ceux du fleuve Saint-Jean. Contrairement à la Nouvelle-Écosse, ces îles étaient des colonies françaises. Les Acadiens insulaires n'avaient pas été déportés en 1745 lorsque Louisbourg était tombée aux mains de William Pepperell. Cette fois-ci toutefois, ils ont été entraînés dans le tourbillon et personne ne s'est soucié d'en donner les raisons. Selon les estimations de l'amiral *(Suite page 46)*

19) "Journal of Colonel John Winslow," Nova Scotia Historical Society Collection, 3 (1882-1883), Halifax, 1883. p. 94-95. La Déportation acadienne était une question de Rex est Lex; Lex est Rex; ou comme Louis XIV le disait, "L'État c'est moi." Dans ses Six Books on the Commonwealth, p. 576, Jean Bodin écrivait "La marque principale de la Majesé souveraine est essentiellement le droit d'imposer des lois sur des sujets sans leur consentement." C'était précisément ce que George II a fait en 1755 dans sa "Résolution finale" à propos de la question sur les Acadiens. Dire que Lawrence "n'avait pas l'autorité de Londres" n'est pas soutenu par le poids du témoignage de l'histoire. Clark, Acadia..., Univ. Wis. Pr., Mad., 1968, p. 363.

20) Ibid., p. 242, de Lawrence à Murray, le 9 août 1755.

21) N.S. H.S. Collections, II, p.82, de Lawrence à Winslow, le 11 août 1755; Ibid., p. 210, de Winslow à Lawrence, le 3 juillet 1755, id., - id., le 23 juillet 1755.

\* La logique militaire est que les Acadiens venaient juste d'être forcés à prendre les armes une fois à Beauséjour, et qu'on pourrait leur forcer de nouveau. Cet argument est peu convaincant parce que Beauséjour passa sans heurts sous la croix de saint Georges et est devenu le fort Cumberland, il n'y eut plus de forts français en Nouvelle-Écosse où les Acadiens pouvaient être motivés et forcés à prendre les armes. Condamnant toute une population pour l'action de quelques-uns rappelle le cas de St-Ours en France pendant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale. Les fortifications britanniques comprenaient maintenant les forts Cumberland, Lawrence, Edward, une base navale à Halifax et quatre installations militaires dans la province, pour défendre 8 000 hommes non armés, femmes et enfants. L'argument du violeur de blâmer la victime, trop courant dans les crimes contre l'humanité, est également incroyable.



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la Déportation acadienne suite de page 44) eux avaient rendu les armes. L'argument de nécessité militaire qui a été avancé, surtout après la chute de Beauséjour, est trop tiré par les cheveux pour être crédible.\* La déportation d'une population civile pacifique d'un territoire ennemi conquis a été le début de l'escalade du conflit et a gravement enfreint les règles de la guerre telle qu'elle doit être menée, d'autant plus lorsque l'on sait qu'il s'agissait d'une population non armée et liée par un serment de loyauté envers le souverain. Lawrence, alors promu au grade de gouverneur à part entière et de brigadier général, n'aurait pas pu donner suite à cette seconde phase de la déportation, tout comme à la première, sans l'autorisation d'en haut. À moins de preuve du contraire, il faut en conclure que les ordres préemptoires de Sa Majesté visaient tous ces gens fort persécutés, peu importe où ils se trouvaient en Acadie. Le fait est que ni Lawrence, ni son successeur, ne pouvait mettre un terme à la déportation, puisque c'était le roi qui en avait ainsi décidé.

Un serment d'allégeance exigé de la part d'un peuple conquis n'était pas sans précédent en Amérique. Les Finlandais et les Suédois avaient été les premiers visés par les Britanniques, avant les Hollandais des nouveaux Pays-Bas. Ils reçurent de conditions généreuses. Les Néerlandais pouvaient quitter la colonie avec leurs effets personnels ou ils purent rester, le titre légal de leur propriété leur étant alors accordé. Ceux qui restèrent furent obligés de prendre le serment du Test (d'allégeance, de la succession, de la suprématie et de l'abjuration) mais ils pourraient rester neutres advenant une guerre avec les Pays-Bas pour raison de consanguinité. Le peuple fut permis de faire du commerce directement avec la mère patrie et la liberté de religion fut accordée à l'Église néerlandaise réformée. En plus, le droit anglais fut déclaré applicable seulement où les Anglais étaient plus nombreux que les Néerlandais. Comme la minorité catholique au Maryland, ils

furent accordés la pleine liberté religieuse y compris le droit de vote et à la propriété. Les Acadiens ne furent pas privilégiés de la sorte. En tant que catholiques, ils ne purent souscrire au serment du Test que l'on exigeait d'eux à partir de l'époque de Cornwallis sans abjurer leur foi ce qu'ils ne pouvaient faire. Les Néerlandais, contrairement aux Acadiens, n'avaient sûrement pas été obligés de prendre les armes contre leurs concitoyens. Dans le cas des Acadiens, le serment est ce qui a permis de justifier une politique prédéterminée de déportation. La frénésie de la déportation s'est poursuivie même après la capitulation de Québec et de Montréal. Lawrence est mort le 19 octobre 1760. On pourrait raisonnablement supposer que si Lawrence avait ordonné la déportation, elle aurait cessé au moment de sa mort; or, elle s'est poursuivie. George II est mort six jours après Lawrence et George III est monté sur le trône une semaine plus tard; l'ordre de déportation n'a pas été révoqué. En 1762, des centaines de réfugiés ont été embarqués à Halifax à destination du Massachusetts malgré les protestations du général Jeffery Amherst, commandant en chef des forces britanniques en Amérique et gouverneur général de l'Amérique du Nord britannique. La colonie de la baie a refusé de les recevoir. Le lieutenant-gouverneur Jonathan Belcher a écrit au comte d'Egremont, secrétaire d'État, indiquant qu'il redoutait jusqu'aux derniers Acadiens. La guerre s'est terminée le 10 février 1763 par la signature du traité de Paris. Neuf mois plus tard, le 21 novembre 1763, Amherst a écrit au lieutenant-gouverneur Wilmot de Nouvelle-Écosse lui indiquant que la province devrait supporter les dépenses liées à l'expédition des Acadiens à Boston et à leur retour dans la province. Wilmot n'a rien pu faire. Il a écrit au comte de Halifax le 10 décembre 1763 au sujet d'un plan visant à installer les Acadiens à Miramichi. Ce dernier s'est déclaré contre, écrivant qu'il n'avait jamais reçu d'ordre des Lords of Trade à cet égard; il a alors recommandé de les envoyer aux Antilles.<sup>22</sup> Le 24 mars 1764, il a indiqué qu'il valait mieux

ne pas établir d'Acadiens dans la région étant donné que la sécurité de la province ne pouvait être assurée que s'ils étaient tous expulsés. Laissée à la discrétion des personnalités de la colonie, la déportation se serait poursuivie jusqu'à ce que les derniers Acadiens aient disparu des Maritimes. Le cauchemar s'est terminé tout comme il avait commencé, soit sur ordre des Lords of Trade, en septembre 1764, indiquant que Sa Majesté avait décidé d'autoriser les Acadiens à s'établir en Nouvelle-Écosse.

La Grande-Bretagne s'est acharnée sur la Nouvelle-France pendant un siècle pour finalement avoir le dessus en 1713. La déportation des Acadiens n'était qu'un volet de la conquête d'une Amérique du Nord britannique. Les Canadiens auraient probablement subi le même sort, sauf qu'ils étaient trop nombreux et que le coût de la déportation acadienne avait dépassé de loin les prévisions de la Cour britannique. Après la conquête, Londres a compté sur l'afflux de colons yankees au Canada pour accomplir par le truchement de l'assimilation ce qui avait été accompli en Nouvelle-Écosse par celui de la déportation. Les deux politiques ont échoué, laissant de terribles cicatrices. Pour les Acadiens toutefois, la déportation a été dévastatrice.<sup>23</sup> La notion que le projet de la Déportation, y compris le siège de Beauséjour, fut principalement une entreprise coloniale est du moins contestable. Le « grand et noble » projet fut appuyé à Whitehall pour une année entière avant qu'il soit mis en vigueur. Les armes et les munitions sont arrivées directement de la Grande-Bretagne. Des six commandants, seulement Winslow fut un officier colonial. Le commandant en chef était l'amiral Boscawen qui fit le voyage de l'Angleterre tôt en 1755. Environ 25 % des forces terrestres qui étaient impliquées dans la prise de Beauséjour furent des militaires de carrière britanniques (British Regulars) et le financement de l'opération fut cautionné par le Parlement britannique. Au minimum, le projet de la Déportation fut une opération militaire coloniale britannique combinée.

22) Les dernières années de la Déportation sont discutées longuement dans Beamish Murdoch, *A History of Nova Scotia, or Acadia*, II, Halifax, 1865-1867, p. 426-442.

23) Brown Mss., N.S.H.S. Coll., II, 131-133, 146-149. Sur ce sujet voir aussi M. Hamer, "The Fate of the Exiled Acadians," *Jrnl. St. Hist.*, 4 (1938), 199-208, et R. H. Hudnut, et. al., "Acadian Transients in South Carolina," *A.H.R.*, 43 (1938), 500-513. Une étude exhaustive est celle de R. Rumilly, *Histoire des Acadiens*, II, Montréal, 1955. Il est estimé que 1 300 périrent en mer lors de leur déportation en France. Combien plus ont péri au mousquet, au couperet du cuir chevelu, à la famine ou à l'épidémie sur les vaisseaux qui les emmenaient aux Treize Colonies, on ne le saura jamais.

Débats de la Chambre des communes (sources électroniques) : Toute notre gratitude à Charles Walker, Greffier à la procédure, Bureau des journaux, Le Sénat du Canada  
**le mercredi 3 octobre 2001**

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?DocId=1227965&Mode=1&Language=F#Int-54790>

**le vendredi 19 septembre 2003**

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?DocId=1055124&Mode=1&Language=F#Int-680966>

**le jeudi 6 février 2003**

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?DocId=681467&Mode=1&Language=F#Int-407850>

*(The 14th Annual April in Paris at Cine-studio, Hartford continued from page 31)*

laws that state a land-lord can evict a tenant within six months, if a relative of the land-lord is in need of a residence. Someone from the audience asked Crépeau if Ariane were based upon her life, and Crépeau acknowledged that she has lived in the same apartment in Montreal for more than 25 years, but she has not been evicted from it. Karen Humphreys led the discussion, and she interpreted the end of the film for the discussion group, when Ariane's new life is paralleled by her witnessing the birth of a calf on the farm next to her new residence.

On May 16, 2013, Jeanne Crépeau responded to my e-message to her that I sent concerning the songs in her movie. (She also clarified for me the name of the theatre in the *(UN DIMANCHE APRÈS-MIDI suite de page 25)*

à la classe de catéchisme de deux semaines en préparation pour leur première communion et confirmation et sont devenus amis au high school. Remise des diplômes en 1930 – Gérard, le premier à droite, Armand, le troisième. Quand nous étions jeunes, Armand venait au magasin le soir et il s'arrêtait pour bavarder quand nous étions assis sur le perron devant notre maison qui était attachée au magasin. Il nous régala d'histoires de leurs espiègleries au high school comme quand ils avaient craché leurs chiques de tabac dans les encriers. Diplômé de l'Aroostook State Normal School de Presque Isle en 1935, Armand a enseigné l'école à Ste-Agathe et à Sinclair. En 1943 on l'a élu à la Maine House of Representatives et il a été Président de la Ste-Agathe Board of Selectmen en 1944-45. Le 26 juin 1946, Armand a épousé Léonie Marin. Elle a servi de Town Clerk et Town Treasurer en 1946-47. Armand était aussi vendeur pour Birds Eye Foods, une filiale de General Foods, Inc.

Plusieurs années avant, quand Armand avait considéré de devenir gardien de Willie, son père, Éloi, l'avait conseillé de ne pas servir, disant "c'est un vieux chétif cet homme-là." Armand avait trouvé ça drôle. Il n'avait pas peur de Willie.

Willie est né à Ste-Agathe le 11 avril 1895. Appelé à l'armée le 27 mai 1918, il a servi jusqu'au 4 mars 1919. Il prétendait avoir épousé la "veuve" d'un soldat français disparu; on croyait qu'il avait été tué pendant la guerre. Mais, après l'armistice, le soldat est revenu chez lui. Willie a quitté l'endroit et ne s'est jamais (re)marié. Les détails de

film, which I mentioned earlier.) She wrote that there are four songs in the film, and she gave some information about each song. She wrote that the song sung by Ariane's friends around the dinner table is "Sensation" by the Quebecois singer Robert Charlebois, who composed the music to a poem by the 19th Century French poet Arthur Rimbaud. The song "Couchés dans le foin" was composed by French composer Jean Nohain in 1932, and it is sung by Ariane and Mireille while sitting on the sofa. Crépeau noted in her e-message that a famous recording of the song was made in 1957 by the famous French singing duet Pills et Tabet (Jacques Pills and Georges Tabet). The song "Sure Enough" was originally recorded by the Montreal band Angela Desveaux and the Mighty Ship, and it is performed by a cover-band while on a roof-top in the film. The fourth song in the movie is "Va-t-en" by the 1990s

quand et comment il a été exposé au gaz sont obscures; et comme le cas des vétérans d'aujourd'hui, il souffrait probablement du Trouble de Stress Post Traumatique.

Willie s'est réinséré dans notre village au milieu des années 1950. On ne sait pas grand chose à propos d'où il se trouvait dans les années qui s'écoulèrent entre temps. Il boitait et s'appuyait sur une canne, et portait presque toujours un blouson d'aviateur gris à fermeture éclair par dessus des vêtements sombres, un chapeau de brousse et des lunettes noires à cause d'une opération oculaire. De taille moyenne et pansu, il venait à notre magasin, à deux portes de chez lui (au deuxième étage dans un appartement qu'il louait d'Armand), accompagné de son petit chien blanc.

Willie était content quand ma mère l'invitait dans notre salon pour jouer du piano. Même s'il souriait rarement, il aimait jaser. Quand je servais de commis au magasin, il restait souvent pour parler – de temps en temps à propos de la guerre. Il m'a raconté qu'il avait servi de traducteur en France, et il prétendait avoir inventé un code militaire basé sur la grille "tic-tac-toe" et un "X".

Deux lettres sont mises dans chaque position de la grille. Chaque lettre en deuxième position dans chaque grille a un point au

Montreal band, Marie et ses quatre maris, and the song is heard when Ariane plays it on a small record player for a young man.

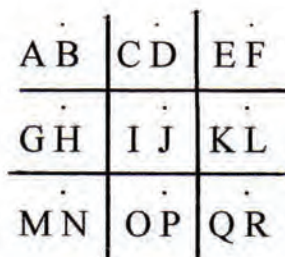
The Fifteenth April in Paris French Film Festival will be shown from Sun., March 30 to Sat. April 5, 2014 at Cinestudio on the campus of Trinity College in Hartford, Conn. The theme of the festival will be 'fantaisie/fantasy,' but Sara Kippur, who helped organize the 14th April in Paris, would not tell me any of the titles of the films in the festival, because none of them were confirmed when I interviewed her on Tues. Nov. 5, 2013 while in her office in Seabury Hall at Trinity College. She did confirm that Patrick Miller will accompany the silent film that will be shown on the afternoon of Sunday, March 30, 2014. She also told me to check the website for the festival, [www.aprillin-paris.org](http://www.aprillin-paris.org) for the schedule of films in 2014.

dessus. Pour écrire un B, on a seulement besoin d'un angle gauche avec un point dedans: ·\_], et un C et D (avec un point au dessus du D) seraient dessinés [ \_], avec ou sans le point, etc. Alors, [ \_ ], ·\_ ] et [ \_ ] représentent A, B et C. Les lettres S à Z seraient écrites autour des positions ouverte du X.

Le 31 août en 1958, mes parents, mes soeurs cadettes et mon frère cadet étaient en pèlerinage à Ste-Anne-de-Beaupré au Québec. Quelques jours après avoir commencé mon année finale au high school, je me considérais trop adulte pour une telle excursion de famille! Après avoir cueilli de la laitue et des échalotes dans le jardin pour faire une salade à la crème sûre, j'ai cuit un poulet au rôtissoire et j'ai invité mes deux meilleures amies, Pat et Rachel Michaud (qui, par hasard, étaient les nièces d'Armand) de venir me rejoindre pour le dîner du midi. Nous avons justement fini notre repas quand un coup de fusil a déchiré la tranquillité d'un dimanche après-midi somnolent.

Corinne Albert, notre voisine, manifestement bouleversée, est arrivée chez nous.

"Appelez la police"! s'est-elle exclamée. Nous avons un téléphone pour le magasin; mais comme beaucoup de familles à l'époque, les Albert n'en avaient pas. Elle a hésité pour un moment quand elle a



*(Suite page 51)*



## Coin des jeunes...

# Moose at Pumpkin Hollow

By Virginia  
Sand

It was an eerie Halloween night in the small farming village of Pumpkin Hollow, with high winds briskly blowing clouds in front of the full moon. The moon seemed to flicker, coming into full view whenever the winds dispersed clouds or blew them so thinly, like a veil cloaking Grandmother Moon. However, there was enough moonlight to guide the footsteps of certain trick-or-treaters and animals lurking around country roads and fields.

In fact, just before sunset, a Bull Moose named Ben, wearing a huge rack of antlers, came out of the woods searching for something different to munch on. Ben was getting tired of browsing on twigs,

leaves, and bark. Then there, at the edge of the village, Ben caught a glimpse of a large, lofty, green garden filled with giant orange globes illuminated by Grandmother Moon. Ben suddenly became curious. He thought to himself, "Could this be a new kind of bark for me to browse on?" Ben drew closer, and then noticed large vines stringing the orange globes together. This intelligent moose then figured out that these orange globes were edible. His keen sense of smell also picked up on a succulent, sweet aroma coming from these globes. Then Ben said to himself, "These globes look something like bark on a smooth tree trunk. I'm going to do a little taste-test. They smell so appetizing." So Ben picked out one of the orange globes and began gnawing on it. "Yummmmm," Ben vocalized, with all the

sounds of satisfaction. While browsing, he mumbled to himself, "I like this orange bark. It's sooOO succulent. I'm so glad I got the courage up to come out of the woods in search of something new to eat."

Ben kept nibbling on that one huge "pumpkin" until his tummy was full. Afterward, he felt so tired that he yawned and laid down right there in the middle of Farmer Roy's Pumpkin Patch, quickly falling asleep under the bright globe in the night sky, Grandmother Moon.

Meanwhile, in the village center, Claire (12 years old) and her brother, Yvon (10 years old), were getting ready to go trick-or-treating, now that it was sundown. Claire was dressed as a princess and Yvon wore a green frog costume. Since Pumpkin Hollow was such a tiny village, Claire and Yvon quickly found their way to the edge of town, after trick-or-treating at 20 houses. Before returning home with their two sacs full of candy and apples, Yvon said to Claire, "Sis, let's go see if Farmer Roy has any pumpkins left in his field. It's right around the corner." Claire responded, "Well, since we're so close to it, why not? Let's go!"

Every fall, that's where Claire and Yvon's parents buy their Jack-o-lanterns, at Farmer Roy's Pumpkin Patch. So Claire and Yvon quickly made their way to Farmer Roy's Pumpkin Patch. At the edge of the patch, they set their heavy bags of Halloween treats on the ground, looked up at the sky, and noticed Grandmother Moon flicker-  
*(Continued on page 49)*



# L'Orignal à Pumpkin Hollow

Par Virginie SAND

C'était un soir de l'Halloween étrange dans le petit village agricole de Pumpkin Hollow, avec des vents forts soufflant vivement nuages en face de la pleine lune. La lune semblait vaciller, venant en pleine vue lorsque les vents ont dispersé les nuages ou les ont soufflés si transparents, comme un voile révélant Grand-mère Lune. Cependant, il était assez clair de lune pour guider les traces de certains trick-or-treaters et les animaux qui rôdent autour des routes de campagne et des champs.

En fait, juste avant le coucher du soleil, un orignal mâle nommé Ben, portant une énorme porte de bois, est sorti de la forêt à la recherche de quelque chose différent à grignoter. Ben était fatigué en broutant sur les rameaux, les feuilles, et l'écorce. Alors là, à la lisière du village, Ben a attrapé un aperçu d'un grand champ élevé et vert rempli de globes oranges géants illuminés par Grand-mère Lune. Ben est soudainement devenu curieux. Il s'est dit : « Serait-ce une nouvelle forme d'écorce pour moi de brouter sur ? » Ben s'est rapproché, et alors remarqué les grandes vignes enfilant les globes oranges ensemble. Puis, cet orignal intelligent a compris que ces globes oranges étaient comestibles. En plus, son sens aigu de l'odorat a senti un arôme sucré succulent venant de ces globes. Puis Ben s'est dit : « Ces globes ressemblent à quelque chose

comme l'écorce d'un tronc d'arbre lisse. Je vais faire une petite dégustation. Ils sentent si appétissant. » Donc, Ben a choisi l'un des globes oranges et a commencé à le ronger : « Yummm, » Ben a vocalisé, avec tous les sons de satisfaction. Pendant qu'il broutait, il s'est marmotté : « J'aime cette écorce orange. C'est tellement succulent. Alors, je suis content d'avoir eu le courage à sortir de la forêt à la recherche de quelque chose de nouveau à manger. »

Ben grignotait sur celle-là énorme citrouille jusqu'à ce que son ventre était plein. Par la suite, il se sentait si fatigué qu'il a bâillé et s'est couché juste là au milieu du jardin de citrouille de l'agriculteur Roy, tombant rapidement endormi sous le globe lumineux dans le ciel de nuit, Grand-mère Lune.

Pendant ce temps, dans le centre du village, Claire (12 ans) et son frère, Yvon (10ans), se préparaient à aller trick-or-treating, maintenant que c'était le coucher  
*(Suite page 49)*



*(Moose at Pumpkin Hollow continued from page 48)*

ing like a candle in the wind. Then their eyes fell upon the pumpkin patch, noticing dozens of pumpkins still there, illuminated by the moonlight. In amazement, Yvon exclaimed, "Wow, I can't believe how many pumpkins Farmer Roy has left." Claire then responded, "I wonder what Farmer Roy plans to do with all those leftover pumpkins?"

All of a sudden, Yvon curiously murmured, "Hey, Claire, look at that big branch in the middle of the pumpkin patch!" Claire caught sight of it and said, "Yah, I see it, whatever it is. You can't miss it with all the moonlight shining over the pumpkin patch." Yvon then declared, "I'm going to check it out."

Before Claire could respond, Yvon darted off like a rabbit, hopping over and around pumpkins to the center of the pumpkin patch. Claire followed while yelling, "Wait for me, Yvon. Be careful!" Finally, Yvon and Claire arrived at the large branch. Claire stated to Yvon, "It looks like an unusually wide branch." Then, both Claire and Yvon reached down and grabbed a part of the wide branch to see if it would budge. Suddenly, the branch moved and both children lost their grip on the branch. Then, with amazement, they saw the branch lift itself into the air. It happened so fast they were caught by surprise. Claire and Yvon both screamed in fear, with faces white as

*(L'Original à Pumpkin Hollow suite de page 48)*

du soleil. Claire était habillée comme une princesse et Yvon, lui, portait un costume de grenouille verte. Depuis Pumpkin Hollow était un si petit village, Claire et Yvon ont rapidement trouvé leur chemin vers la périphérie de la ville, après trick-or-treating à 20 maisons. Avant de retourner chez eux avec leurs deux sacs remplis de bonbons et de pommes, Yvon a dit à Claire : « Claire, allons voir si l'agriculteur Roy a laissé des citrouilles dans son domaine. C'est juste autour du coin. » Claire a répondu : « Eh bien, puisque nous sommes si près de lui, pourquoi pas? Allons-y ! »

Chaque automne, c'est là que les parents de Claire et Yvon achètent leurs Jack-o-lanterns, au champ de citrouille à l'agriculteur Roy. Alors, Claire et Yvon ont rapidement fait leur chemin vers le jardin de citrouille de l'agriculteur Roy. Au bord de la pièce, ils ont mis leurs lourds sacs de friandises d'Halloween sur le terrain, ont levé les yeux au ciel, et ont remarqué

a ghost, they turned around and headed towards Farmer Roy's barn. They ran as fast as they could, tripping over pumpkins, and forgetting about their two large sacs of Halloween treats. Once at the barn, Claire and Yvon caught their breath, and peeked around the corner to Farmer Roy's Pumpkin Patch in the distance. Claire nervously whispered, "Yvon, I see something huge moving in the center of the pumpkin patch." Yvon stated, "I see it too." Looking back at the country road, Claire cried, "Yvon, let's scramble out of here, and run fast!" Claire ran toward the village road with Yvon trailing on her heels, both children scared out of their wits.

Meanwhile, Ben stood up in the middle of the pumpkin patch, sleepy and groggy, wondering what had nudged his antlers. He cautiously perused over to the edge of the pumpkin patch where the moonlight illuminated two large white sacs. Ben caught a glimpse of these sacs and slowly moved toward them. He thought, "Hmmm, I wonder if there is anything new and different to eat in those bags there. My nose is catching a whiff of something sweet." Ben then managed to empty something from one of the bags by lifting it from the bottom with his teeth. All of a sudden, two apples rolled out onto the ground, along with a few packets of candy. Ben's nose now filled with all kinds of delectable, sweet aromas as he began munching on an apple and exclaimed, "This is the most wonderful apple I've ever tasted!"

Grand-mère Lune vacillante comme une bougie dans le vent. Puis, leurs yeux sont tombés sur le champ de citrouille, remarquant des dizaines de citrouilles toujours là, illuminées par le clair de lune. Dans la stupéfaction, Yvon s'est exclamé : « Oh là là, je ne peux pas croire combien de citrouilles que l'agriculteur Roy a laissé. » Puis, Claire a répondu : « Je me demande ce que l'agriculteur Roy a l'intention de faire avec le reste de toutes ces citrouilles-là ? »

Tout d'un coup, Yvon a curieusement murmuré : « Hé, Claire, regarde cette grosse branche au milieu du champ de citrouille ! » Claire l'a aperçu et a dit : « Ouais, je la vois, quelle qu'elle soit. On ne peut pas la manquer avec tout le clair de lune brillant au-dessus le champ de citrouille. » Yvon a ensuite déclaré : « Je vais la vérifier. »

Avant Claire puisse répondre, Yvon s'est élancé comme un lapin, en sautant sur et autour de citrouilles au centre du champ de citrouille. Claire a suivi en criant : « Attends-moi, Yvon. Sois prudent ! » Enfin, Yvon et Claire sont arrivés à la grande

After finishing the apple, Ben gathered up the two white sacs, one on each antler, and escaped back into the woods, not knowing that he had a better Halloween than did Claire and Yvon. Ben had discovered all kinds of new and different foods to browse on in Farmer Roy's Pumpkin Patch on that eerie Halloween night.

Claire and Yvon, on the other hand, finally arrived safely back home. Before entering the house, Claire and Yvon nervously looked at each other, when Claire finally broke the silence by saying, "Yvon, we can't tell Mom and Dad that we left our Halloween treats in Farmer Roy's Pumpkin Patch. They'll scold us for going into Farmer Roy's yard." Yvon answered, "But Sis, what are we going to tell Mom and Dad when they ask us to show them our Halloween treats? We've been gone two hours in our Halloween costumes. They'll expect something." Looking sad and disappointed, Yvon further added, "Claire, this is the worst Halloween of my life." Claire exclaimed, "Mine too, Yvon."

All of a sudden, Claire had an idea: "Yvon, let's tell Mom and Dad that we left our Halloween bags at a friend's house and will pick them up tomorrow. Then, tomorrow we can return to Farmer Roy's Pumpkin Patch, during daylight of course, and get our Halloween treats back." Yvon responded, "Great idea, Sis. Let's do it!"

Next morning, Claire and Yvon snuck *(Continued on page 50)*

branche. Claire a constaté à Yvon : « Elle ressemble à une branche exceptionnellement large. » Puis, tous les deux Claire et Yvon se sont penchés et ont saisi une partie de la branche large pour voir si elle bouge. Soudain, la branche s'est déplacée et les deux enfants ont perdu leur emprise sur la branche. Puis, avec étonnement, ils ont vu la branche à se soulever dans l'air. C'est arrivé si vite qu'ils ont été pris par surprise. Claire et Yvon ont crié dans la peur, le visage blanc comme un fantôme, ils se sont tournés autour et se sont dirigés vers la grange de l'agriculteur Roy. Ils ont couru aussi vite, en trébuchant sur les citrouilles, et en oubliant leurs deux grands sacs de friandises de l'Halloween. Une fois à la grange, Claire et Yvon ont repris leur haleine, et ont regardé du coin au jardin de citrouille à l'agriculteur Roy au loin. Claire a nerveusement murmuré : « Yvon, je vois quelque chose d'énorme se déplaçant dans le centre du champ de citrouille. » Yvon a constaté : « Je le vois aussi. » En regardant *(Suite page 50)*

(Moose at Pumpkin Hollow continued from page 49)

over to Farmer Roy's Pumpkin Patch and were baffled at their discovery. Standing there at the edge of the Patch, Claire exclaimed, "Yvon, here's the spot where we left our Halloween sacs. You can see an apple and three packages of chocolate here where our bags were." Yvon asked, "Do you think Farmer Roy found the bags and brought them inside his house?" Claire disappointedly answered, "Well, we certainly can't go ask him. He might scold us for going into his pumpkin patch, and then he might tell Mom and Dad. Let's face it, Yvon, this Halloween the "Trick" is on us." Yvon sadly declared, "Now I know why it's called Trick-or-Treat." Claire replied, "Let's just tell Mom and Dad that we decided to give our Halloween treats to charity." Yvon exclaimed, "Great idea, Sis. Let's do it!"



(UN DIMANCHE APRÈS-MIDI suite de page 47)

vu les soeurs Michaud; mais, elle a lâché: "Willie Cyr a tiré sur Armand Lagassé!"

J'ai appelé le sheriff de notre village, Donat Daigle. Il nous a dit de téléphoner la police de l'État du Maine, qui viendrait de Caribou ou Presque Isle, de 40 à 50 milles au sud. Entre temps, une petite foule s'était assemblée à l'endroit du crime. Armand, 46, était étendu sur la véranda dans une mare de son sang. Un coup de feu de tout près l'avait descendu. Willie, 63, marchait de long en large devant Armand, gardant sa victime comme un sentinelle avec le fusil de chasse à un canon de 10 calibre d'Armand sur son épaule.

On a vite appris que Willie avait accaparé le fusil du garage d'Armand situé entre les deux maisons. La famille d'Alsime et Égline Lagassé (non pas apparentée à Armand) habitait en bas de Willie dans l'appartement au premier étage à gauche. Armand avait un bureau à coté à droite, mais vivait avec sa famille dans la maison voisine. Quand Willie

(L'Original à Pumpkin Hollow suite de page 49)

en arrière sur la route de campagne, Claire s'est criée : « Yvon, sortons d'ici, et cours vite ! » Claire a couru vers la route du village avec Yvon arrière sur ses talons, les deux enfants ont peur de leurs esprits.

Pendant ce temps, Ben s'est levé au milieu du jardin de citrouille, somnolent et titubant, se demandant ce qui avait poussé du coude sa ramure. Il a prudemment parcouru sur le bord du champ de citrouille où le clair de lune a éclairé deux grands sacs blancs. Ben a attrapé un aperçu de ces sacs et déplacé lentement vers eux. Il a pensé : « Hmmm, je me demande s'il y a quelque chose de nouveau et de différent à manger dans ces sacs là-bas. Mon nez attrape une bouffée de quelque chose de sucré. » Alors, Ben a réussi à vider quelque chose de l'un des sacs en le soulevant par le bas avec ses dents. Tout d'un coup, deux pommes se sont déployées sur le terrain, avec quelques paquets de bonbons. Le nez de Ben a maintenant rempli avec toutes sortes de délicieux arômes sucrés, comme il a commencé à grignoter sur une pomme et s'est crié : « Oh là là, c'est la pomme la plus merveilleuse que j'ai jamais goûté ! »

Après avoir terminé la pomme, Ben a ramassé les deux sacs blancs, un sur chaque ramure, et s'est enfui dans les bois, ne sachant pas qu'il avait une meilleure fête d'Halloween que fait Claire et Yvon. Ben avait découvert toutes sortes d'aliments nouveaux et différents pour brouter dans le champ de citrouille à l'agriculteur Roy sur cette étrange nuit d'Halloween.

Claire et Yvon, d'autre part, sont finalement arrivés sains et saufs à chez eux. Avant d'entrer dans la maison, Claire et Yvon ont nerveusement regardé les uns les autres, quand Claire a finalement brisé le silence en disant : « Yvon, nous ne pouvons pas dire maman et papa que nous avons

a essayé de tirer sur lui, Alsime, 68 ans, s'est sauvé de l'endroit et a sauté une clôture en arrière de la maison. Égline a fui la salle de bain juste avant qu'un coup pénètre le mur.

Le Révérend Valmont Gilbert, le jeune vicaire de la paroisse, est arrivé et a donné les derniers sacrements à Armand. Le père Gilbert est entré en conversation avec Willie. Prenant l'avantage de cette distraction, un jeune homme de la paroisse, Réginald Tardif, s'est faufilé derrière Willie et lui a enlevé le fusil. La police de l'État du Maine est arrivée et a arrêté Willie. Aux funérailles d'Armand, l'église était remplie

laissé nos friandises d'Halloween dans le champ de citrouille à l'agriculteur Roy. Ils vont nous gronder pour avoir entré dans la cour de l'agriculteur Roy. » Yvon a répondu : « Mais Claire, qu'est-ce qu'on va dire à maman et papa quand ils nous demandent de leur montrer nos friandises d'Halloween ? Nous avons fait deux heures à nos costumes d'Halloween. Ils vont attendre à quelque chose. » Triste et déçu, Yvon a ajouté : « Claire, c'est le pire Halloween de ma vie. » Claire s'est exclamée : « Moi aussi, Yvon. »

Tout d'un coup, Claire a eu une idée : « Yvon, nous allons dire maman et papa que nous avons laissé nos sacs d'Halloween à la maison d'un ami et nous allons les prendre demain. Puis, demain, nous pouvons revenir au champ de citrouille à l'agriculteur Roy, à la lumière du jour bien sûr, et reprendre nos friandises d'Halloween. » Yvon a répondu : « Bonne idée, Claire. Faisons-le ! »

Le lendemain matin, Claire et Yvon se sont faufilés vers le champ de citrouille à chez l'agriculteur Roy et ont été déroutés à leur découverte. Debout au bord de la pièce, Claire s'est exclamée : « Yvon, voici l'endroit où nous avons laissé nos sacs d'Halloween. Tu peux voir une pomme et trois paquets de chocolat ici où nos sacs ont été. » Yvon a demandé : « Penses-tu que l'agriculteur Roy a trouvé les sacs et les a apportés à l'intérieur de sa maison ? » Avec désappointement, Claire a répondu : « Eh bien, nous ne pouvons pas certainement aller lui demander. Il pourrait nous gronder pour entrer son champ de citrouille, et alors il pourrait dire maman et papa. Avouons-le, Yvon, cet Halloween-ci le truc est sur nous. » Yvon a tristement déclaré : « Maintenant, je sais pourquoi on l'appelle Trick-or-Treat. » Claire a répondu : « Disons maman et papa que nous avons décidé de donner nos friandises d'Halloween à la charité. » Yvon s'est exclamé : « Bonne idée, Sœur. Faisons-le ! »

de gens de la paroisse en sympathie avec Léonie et ses deux fils, Jean 10 et Paul 5.

Il n'y avait jamais eu de homicide à Ste-Agathe.

Le 18 décembre 1958, William Cyr a plaidé "non coupable" devant le juge de la Cour Supérieure à Houlton. Un médecin de la Augusta State Hospital a témoigné que "Cyr ne connaissait pas la différence entre le bien et le mal quand il a commis cet acte et qu'il était fou." Le jury a rendu un verdict de non coupable pour raison de démence. Le juge l'a envoyé à l'asile à (Suite page 51)





# BOOKS/ LIVRES...

## The Making of a Peace Corps Volunteer:

From Maine to Thailand  
*by Roger O Parent (Author)*

This is a different book about the Peace Corps experience. It shows how the author's growing up in Acadian French-Speaking Maine prepared him for service as one of the very first volunteers in Thailand. His unique background in the Acadian French culture of Northern Maine helped him to work effectively in Udorn, Thailand, and thereby helped to shape the Peace Corps in the vibrant organization it is today. Extended Description Growing up in the small Acadian French-speaking village of Lille, Maine, learning English as a second language, being in a strong family, training in carpentry with his father, attending the internationally minded St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia - all helped to prepare the author for Peace Corps service. Along with other pioneer volunteers, the author helped to shape the Peace Corps into a vibrant organization. Selected Chapter Titles: "Wild Ride in a Helicopter with Sargent Shriver". "Cussing Sister Simeon in French"; "Spirituality in a Hammock"; "Peace Corps? Christian Brothers? Soldier?"; "What's a Peace Corps Volunteer?"; "Fried Bananas"; "China Says Peace Corps Volunteers are Spies"; "Becoming the Peace Corps Volunteer I wanted to Be"; "Too Drunk to Ride My Bike"; These stories are suggestive of the author's growth and development from a nascent sense of self and consciousness embedded at birth to the end of his service as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Thailand 1, 1961 to 1963.

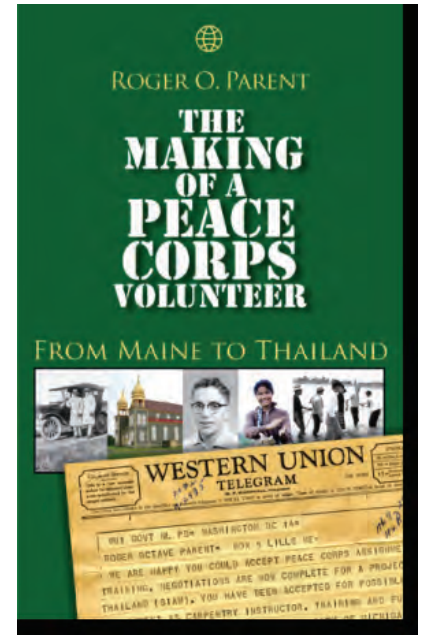


Roger Parent Second from right with students, Udorn, Thailand, circa 1962



<http://www.amazon.com/Making-Peace-Corps-Volunteer-Thailand/>

<http://www.rogerparent.org>



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(UN DIMANCHE APRÈS-MIDI suite de page 50)

Augusta où William Clovis Cyr y est mort le 24 janvier 1961, à l'âge de 65 ans. Son certificat de mort mentionne qu'il souffrait de réaction schizophrène et de paranoïa.

Léonie Lagassé est décédée le 10 septembre 2012, à l'âge de 93 ans.

In war, there are no unwounded soldiers. Jose Narosky

[En temps de guerre, il n'y a pas de soldats sans blessures.]

\*\*\*\*\*

Merci Maude, T.O. Francine et Renée.

[Traduction de l'auteur d'un article dans la Newsletter de la Ste-Agathe Historical Society]





## Transcendent Sky

### A Spiritual Journey of Poetry

*Authored by Mr. Noel P. Parent*

After a long journey of writing, Soul-searching, and awakening, my new book of yogic and inspirational poetry entitled *Transcendent Sky* is now available in paperback at my E-store on Amazon.com and also as an e-book for Amazon Kindle and through Smashwords for all other e-book versions, including Barnes and Noble Nook, Sony, Kobo, Apple, and even a PDF for your computer!

I appreciate your support and goodwill for this special book, my first to be published. Here is a short description of the book below. I hope you will find an interest in it and give me feedback as you feel inspired to do so!

*Transcendent Sky* is a collection of poems that explore the spiritual essence of life and inspire the awakening of the Soul and Spirit towards greater enlightenment and self-awareness. Through a unique offering of inspiration, contemplation, and insight, this book of poetry expresses some of the author's inner experiences and personal reflections along the spiritual journey. It is a journey that evokes the Oneness of all of Life and the Divine Presence that dwells uniquely within each person. A meditation of words flow through these poems with the power to uplift, transform, and transport one's Being to inner realms of Light, Love, Beauty, and Consciousness.

Order your paperback edition of *Transcendent Sky*, available through my E-store on Amazon.com, which is also available through Amazon.com UK.

Also available now on Amazon Kindle as an e-book.

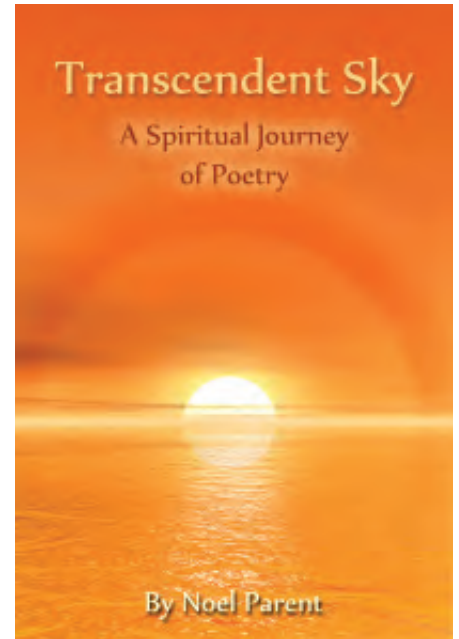
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Thank You!!

With Love and Light for All,  
Noel Parent

Poems in this collection include: Human Unity, Twin Flame, A Dance Called Yoga, Spirit of Change, Sunshine Dreams, Child, and Moonlit Contemplation.

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#### *About the author:*

Noel Parent is a writer of poetry, children's stories and other contemplative and inspirational articles. He grew up in South Bend, Indiana, attended the University of Notre Dame, and currently lives in Auroville, India, an international township that seeks to build greater Human Unity in the world. He has done research work on Peace and Consciousness, and has experience working in nonprofit organizations with focus on refugees, adult and family literacy, the environment and trees, education, and children. He has been a Reiki practitioner since 1999 and has practiced various forms of Yoga and meditation, among other spiritual practices, for over 15 years. He is a vegan, a cyclist, a minimalist, a truth-seeker, a lover of Life, and aspires to always be a Hero-Warrior to help transform the world towards its hidden Greatness. He welcomes personal connections with people and Souls who aspire for a New World and a change in the Consciousness of humanity and the Earth. He aspires for Light, Love, Truth, Beauty, Peace, and the awakening of the great Something Else that lies Beyond, and Within, all of us - the intimate Divine Essence which is at the Heart of Life.

<http://truthyoga.wordpress.com/books/>

<https://wwwcreatespace.com/4260741>

# BOOKS/ LIVRES...

## A review of: *Contemporary Attitudes of Maine's Franco Americans*

I read *Contemporary Attitudes of Maine's Franco Americans* while visiting the Saint John Valley this past spring. It proved to be most interesting and the ideal companion to my trip home. I'm a Van Buren native who left Maine 37 years ago, after college and no job prospects in Maine, never mind the Valley. Yet Maine, the Saint John Valley and Van Buren are home and always will be. That includes the New Brunswick side of the river - I've always felt almost Canadian.

Every trip back home has to include a long, leisurely drive up one side of the river and down the other, from Grand Falls to Fort Kent. It has to start in Cyr Plantation; the Caribou Road and Madore Road offer the best panoramic views of the Van Buren area. On a sunny day, hills and potato fields and forest and river and Canada seem to go on forever. It's a view that both takes my breath away and makes my heart beat faster; this is where home begins. Likewise, my drive has to include the Trans (as the Trans Canada Highway is known locally). I believe some of northern Maine's most spectacular views can only be seen from the Trans.

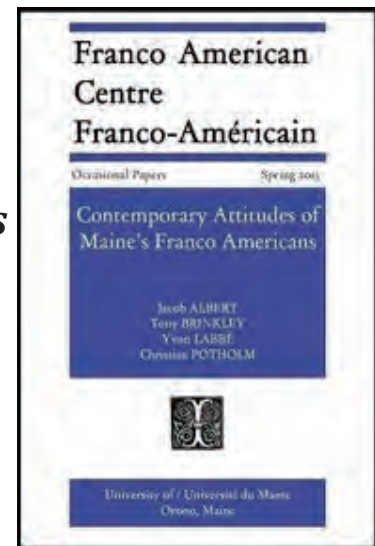
This - my own, very personal Tour de la Vallée - is my time to observe and survey the changes to the physical and cultural landscapes. It's not like I've never seen this before. In fact, I've taken this drive many, many times. In part, the physical and cultural landscapes are a fundamental part of who and what I am today. The language, culture, history and, yes, the river itself are part of my identity. Yet, I need to be reminded of it again every time I come back. And I like to see how change has been incorporated, been adapted to, and sometimes, sadly, been destructive. This spring, the most obvious change in Van Buren was the new Customs and Immigration facility, and it's moose sculpture (more about these later).

So what does any of this have to do with *Contemporary Attitudes of Maine's Franco Americans* published by the University of Maine's Franco American Centre Franco-Américain? Well, it's very similar to my observations on my drive through the Valley. *Contemporary Attitudes* presents

the results of a survey of Maine residents who identify/describe themselves as Franco American. It is a scientific study, perhaps the first of its kind, commissioned by the Maine Legislature to examine Maine's Franco Americans, who account for about 24% of the state's population. The goal was to investigate Franco Americans' attitudes regarding heritage, culture, language, economic and educational circumstances, employment, and politics. The survey results are most interesting, even if at times disturbing. We learn, for example, that 28.5% of Maine's Franco Americans say they are fluent in French, that 17.3% say they can read and write French well, and that 36.3% are extremely proud of their Franco American heritage. But we also learn that fewer Franco Americans have college degrees, that unemployment rates are higher, and that they seem to fare less well in terms of overall economic standards. Like the results of any well-constructed and well-conducted survey, *Contemporary Attitudes* provides answers and raises questions.

The importance of this survey is the picture that it paints of Maine's Franco Americans based on their attitudes about themselves. Only Franco Americans can accurately describe themselves and get to the very core of their identities, which are by no means identical. This project has succeeded in capturing that. Previous descriptions of Maine's Franco Americans have too often been based on anecdotal evidence and observations that were incomplete, skewed, biased, or just plain wrong.

Obviously, Maine still has a vibrant and numerous Franco American community. We know that about 24% of Maine's population of 1.3 million self-identify as Franco Americans. That's about 312,000 people. If 28.5% of those are fluent in French, that translates to approximately 88,920 French speakers in Maine. That's certainly an impressive number! While that doesn't necessarily mean that all have extensive vocabularies, obviously it's been enough to keep French alive and functional. After all, one doesn't need to know how to conjugate



le subjonctif passé, or read Victor Hugo or Anne Hébert, in order to speak French. Language is about communicating, and the French speakers I know in Maine are certainly able to communicate quite effectively. But exactly how much of our French language will we need to retain in order to still be speaking French in 20 years, or 50 years? Certainly, it will take much more than *mémère*, *pépère*, *tourtière* and *tabarnak* to keep French alive in Maine. But how much more? This also raises questions about the role of the French language in the Franco American identity. Is the French language necessary for Franco American identity?

On my driving trips through the Saint John Valley I am able to survey the present physical and cultural landscapes and compare to that of the past. As such, the formation of an identity is an ongoing process. I'm certain it would be quite revealing and interesting if we were able to compare the results of *Contemporary Attitudes* with similar survey results from 10, 20 and 30 years ago. But that would only tell us where we've been. It won't tell us how to move forward. And moving forward is what should be most important to Franco Americans. What we think of ourselves, how we understand ourselves, is fundamental to our future. What a culture thinks of itself is fundamental to its evolution. This survey helps Maine's Franco Americans understand where they are today. Hopefully it can also provide guidance as they set their agenda for the future, especially regarding language, which is so fundamental to identity.

In closing, I'd like to return to my earlier mention of Van Buren's new Customs and Immigration facility. Actually, it's way  
(Continued on page 55)



*(The Use of Hand Forged Iron Crosses as Cemetery Markers continued from page 19)*

single crossbar, or two pieces of crossbar butted to a single upright. On the back is a fourth short piece which connects the two short sections, overlapping the long piece of metal. This strengthens and otherwise weak butt weld. This was the second time my helper Josh Colman pointed out the obvious to me. At places such as Zell, there is ornate scrollwork attached to the crosses.

More recently crosses have been made of stainless steel square stock, concrete



reinforcing rods, and four pieces of one inch galvanized water pipes connected with a tee, and capped with a screw on finial.

With improved transportation of the late 19th century, stone marker became cheaper, yet iron crosses hung on well into the 20th, as grave markers. It was custom, more than cost and availability which accounts for the continued use of these crosses. But ultimately I believe, it was the decline of the blacksmith that forced people to abandon the custom. In a lot of cases this resulted in graves being left unmarked.

At first I only looked at French ethnic settlements for these crosses but found them in German settled areas. Much to my surprise I discovered that the Germans were using the same end designs as the French who predated them by a century. It didn't make sense that the Germans would not have their own designs. After looking at a book on Heraldry, it became apparent that both groups owned the designs, as a result of a shared European Catholic heritage. A question that needs to be answered is; do the protestant French and Germans use the iron cross as cemetery markers?

To date I have found forged crosses from the St Laurent River Valley of Eastern Canada, a Metis town in Saskatchewan, eastern Missouri and western Illinois, and

the Cajun and Creole towns of Louisiana. I have reports of these crosses in Iowa, North Dakota, Texas, Wisconsin, the Kankakee Valle of Illinois, Nova Scotia, Austria, Germany and France. According to Zimelli the polychrome wrought iron cross is found in cemeteries throughout Germany and Austria. A drawing of a very ornate cemetery iron cross dating from the 17th century is included in the appendix.

The idea for this study was planted in my head as a child. On Decoration Day, I was dragged by the parents to the graveyard to visit dead people. As a short kid, I found myself standing amongst what seemed like six foot tall, iron and wooden crosses. Many were leaning and the much of the cemetery was grown up in brush. That day we would meet grandparents, tantes and n'oncles, cousins et cousines, and other relatives who were also visiting dead people. There would be some French thrown about and they would tell stories at each grave about an ancestor



who fought in the Civil War, came over from Ste. Genevieve or down from le Canada. Years later, when I became interested in these crosses, I wondered where all the tall ones had disappeared to. This is also when I noticed there absence at other cemeteries.

I was often told by the older folks at Old Mines that each blacksmith had his own design and this was the reason for the variety of cross designs. Upon visiting other cemeteries, some hundreds or a thousand miles away, and seeing many of the same designs there as well, I realized this couldn't have been the case. There are designs unique to each grave yard, but many of them are found in other cemeteries, some in the same county or a country away. The pointed and diamond ends are almost universal in the cemeteries I have visited.

The villages and neighborhoods of northern Washington County date from

early 18th century lead mining settlements and camps. The area claims a founding date of 1723, based on the Philippe Renault land grant. . Where the lead miners of the French and Spanish Colonial Period are buried, is unknown. Known cemeteries date from early 1800s. According to a letter of John Boullier, priest at St Joachim, written in the mid-1830s. Pere Henri Pratte of Ste. Genevieve began coming to the mining camps on a regular basis in 1816 and built a log church at the Old Mine in 1820. The Parish was established in 1828.

There are three Mother Parishes serving Northern Washington County's' mining district. St James of Potosi-Mine au Breton, St. Joachim of the Old Mine-la Vieille Mine, and St. Stephens of Richwoods-Ritchoud. There is only one surviving iron cross at St James, over 200 at St Joachim, and some at St Stephens. This disparity is not based on population density as the Breton Mines has maintained the greater population since its establishment in the mid-1700s. Richwoods is a more compact village, than the straggling Old Mines settlement, with a main street of businesses. The establishment at the Old Mine was always a collection of cabanes and maisons along the creek of the same name, and voisinages (neighborhoods) in the surrounding hills and hollers. Catholic churches at Mineral Point and Tiff were created from two of the Mother Parishes in the early 20th century.

While driving past the Masonic Cemetery near the defunct, once booming



settlement of Blackwell, with my 18 year old helper, Josh Coleman, I was informed by him that there were iron crosses in there. I told him that was impossible because the masons were a Protestant organization and they didn't practice the custom of putting crosses on graves. "OK, I'm stupid and blind he told me." So a few days later we went back and checked it out. "OK I'm  
*(Continued on page 55)*



*(The Use of Hand Forged Iron Crosses as Cemetery Markers continued from page 54)*

stupid and blind” I told him. There were indeed crosses in there. Hmmm I found it strange that there were religious icons at the protestant Masonic Cemetery, let alone French Catholics buried there. But my knowledge of that organization is limited. Possibly this was simply considered a neighborhood cemetery run by the Masons. Several questions to ask here. The two nearest church cemeteries are at DeSoto or Old Mines, some twelve miles away.

I haven't yet found the cemetery at Mineral Point.

In order to understand the multitude of crosses at la Paroisse de St Joachim de Vieille Mine, they must be seen in the greater North American context. Although there are many parallels with crosses of other regions, each site also has its own distinct designs.

The majority of iron crosses at St Joachim's are located in the oldest of the three cemeteries. By the 1940s many had rusted through at their stone base and fallen onto the ground. Over time, some were covered with sod where they remain hidden. Oth-

ers were stacked along the fence line and soon covered in vines. This grave yard is surrounded by woods on three sides. The situation was different in cemeteries located inside of a town or open fields. The fallen simply dissapeard. In the 1980s while at the oldest grave yard in Ste. Genevieve, I counted two and a half crosses there. An old fellow who lived nearby told me that when he was a boy, there were lots of iron crosses there, but over time they dissapeared. Before mechanized mowing cemeteries often were grown up in brush. Often the family would cut a path through the brush to their lot to bury their dead. The tractor mower proved to be a mixed blessing. The head and foot stones and crosses became obstacles to the guy on the brush hog. Several twisted examples testify to the power of the brush hog. Putting sheep in a fenced cemetery may have been a viable and cheaper alternative.

In 1993 as part of a general cleanup of the cemetery, the idea for a restoration and documentation developed. Many of the head and foot stones were broken, in danger of falling over or had been piled in an overgrown corner of this four- acre lot. It was at this time that the diversity and crafts-

manship of these croix en fer became obvious. There were lots of different designs.

At least a third of the lot had been grown up in brush as well as the creek banks in front of the cemetery. The rear was covered in native trees that had crossed the fence line during a period of neglect in the 60s and 70s. To the west side was a jungle of introduced Paradise Trees from India. They spread by root runner like the poplar tree and have a smell similar to walnut trees. There was a Paradise Tree on a patio of a club in St Louis I went to a few times. The root suckers were controlled and this specimen was huge, making a great shade. But like the panting of bamboo, it can be a big mistake.

Since that time much information concerning this ancient cemetery has been collected from church records and interviews with the older members of the community, descendants of those buried there. A photographic catalogue and repair work began on the stones and crosses. There were initialed footstones that had been taken up by the grass cutters to make their job quicker. I learned that one of the biggest offenders in removing crosses from graves was a certain priest.



To view Kent's presentation see: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tVSQXsT\\_IJA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tVSQXsT_IJA)

*A review of: Contemporary Attitudes of Maine's Franco Americans continued from page 53)*

more than that - it's a commercial port of entry, which should be a big deal for Van Buren. Except that it seems jarringly out of place and out of context. It is huge and out of proportion to everything else in the physical and cultural landscapes of Van Buren. Its sidekick, the moose sculpture - well-intentioned to be sure, but almost comic, almost tragic - also seems to have missed the mark and looks strangely out of place. As with past representations of Franco Americans

by others, this sculpture appears to be some non-native's representational view of Maine, the Saint John Valley and Van Buren. The problem is that it appears they googled every possible symbol of Maine and saddled the poor moose with a Maine Coon Cat, Moxie and all the rest. Was there not a local artisan who could have created something more meaningful and appropriate? The point here is that when one doesn't get to set one's own agenda, one gets someone else's agenda, sometimes with comic results, and often far worse. When we don't define ourselves, others will define us as what they think we are, or what they think we should be.

I've long felt that part of Maine was a little, lost island of French America slowly sinking into an Anglophone sea. Not quite French enough to play with its big sister, Québec; yet not quite English enough to play with its American cousins. Contemporary Attitudes made me realize that the island is much bigger that I thought possible, maybe not even an island at all. Consequently, French is still very much alive in Maine. There's no better time for Maine's Franco Americans to take stock of the present and chart their own course for the future. It's the only way to avoid the unfortunate moose sculptures!



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**THE FRANCO AMERICAN CENTRE  
 OF THE  
 UNIVERSITY OF MAINE**

The University of Maine Office of Franco American Affairs was founded in 1972 by Franco American students and community volunteers. It subsequently became the Franco American Centre.

From the onset, its purpose has been to introduce and integrate the Maine and Regional Franco American Fact in post-secondary academe and in particular the University of Maine.

Given the quasi total absence of a base of knowledge within the University about this nearly one-half of the population of the State of Maine, this effort has sought to develop ways and means of making this population, its identity, its contributions and its history visible on and off campus through seminars, workshops, conferences and media efforts — print and electronic.

The results sought have been the redressing of historical neglect and ignorance by returning to Franco Americans their history, their language and access to full and healthy self realizations. Further, changes within the University's working, in its structure and curriculum are sought in order that those who follow may experience cultural equity, have access to a culturally authentic base of knowledge dealing with French American identity and the contribution of this ethnic group to this society.

**MISSION**

- To be an advocate of the Franco-American Fact at the University of Maine, in the State of Maine and in the region, and
- To provide vehicles for the effective and cognitive expression of a collective, authentic, diversified and effective voice for Franco-Americans, and
- To stimulate the development of academic and non-academic program offerings at the University of Maine and in the state relevant to the history and life experience of this ethnic group and
- To assist and support Franco-Americans in the actualization of their language and culture in the advancement of careers, personal growth and their creative contribution to society, and
- To assist and provide support in the creation and implementation of a concept of pluralism which values, validates and reflects affectively and cognitively the Multicultural Fact in Maine and elsewhere in North America, and
- To assist in the generation and dissemination of knowledge about a major Maine resource — the rich cultural and language diversity of its people.

**LE CENTRE FRANCO AMÉRICAIN DE  
 L'UNIVERSITÉ DU MAINE**

Le Bureau des Affaires franco-américains de l'Université du Maine fut fondé en 1972 par des étudiants et des bénévoles de la communauté franco-américaine. Cela devint par conséquent le Centre Franco-Américain.

Dès le départ, son but fut d'introduire et d'intégrer le Fait Franco-Américain du Maine et de la Région dans la formation académique post-secondaire et en particulier à l'Université du Maine.

Étant donné l'absence presque totale d'une base de connaissance à l'intérieur même de l'Université, le Centre Franco-Américain s'efforce d'essayer de développer des moyens pour rendre cette population, son identité, ses contributions et son histoire visible sur et en-dehors du campus à travers des séminaires, des ateliers, des conférences et des efforts médiatiques — imprimé et électronique.

Le résultat espéré est le redressement de la négligence et de l'ignorance historique en retournant aux Franco-Américains leur histoire, leur langue et l'accès à un accomplissement personnel sain et complet. De plus, des changements à l'intérieur de l'académie, dans sa structure et son curriculum sont nécessaires afin que ceux qui nous suivent puisse vivre l'expérience d'une justice culturelle, avoir accès à une base de connaissances culturellement authentique qui miroite l'identité et la contribution de ce groupe ethnique à la société.

**OBJECTIFS:**

- 1 – D'être l'avocat du Fait Franco-Américain à l'Université du Maine, dans l'État du Maine et dans la région.
- 2 – D'offrir des véhicules d'expression affective et cognitive d'une voix franco-américaine effective, collective, authentique et diversifiée.
- 3 – De stimuler le développement des offres de programmes académiques et non-académiques à l'Université du Maine et dans l'État du Maine, relatant l'histoire et l'expérience de la vie de ce groupe ethnique.
- 4 – D'assister et de supporter les Franco-Américains dans l'actualisation de leur langue et de leur culture dans l'avancement de leurs carrières, de l'accomplissement de leur personne et de leur contribution créative à la société.
- 5 – D'assister et d'offrir du support dans la création et l'implémentation d'un concept de pluralisme qui value, valide et reflète effectivement et cognitivement le fait dans le Maine et ailleurs en Amérique du Nord.
- 6 – D'assister dans la création et la publication de la connaissance à propos d'une ressource importante du Maine — la riche diversité