

Spring 2018

## Le FORUM, Vol. 40 No. 1

Lisa Desjardins Michaud, Rédactrice

Gérard Coulombe

Jim Bishop

Norman Beaupré

Grégoire Chabot

*See next page for additional authors*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/francoamericain\\_forum](https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/francoamericain_forum)

---

### Recommended Citation

Desjardins Michaud, Rédactrice, Lisa; Coulombe, Gérard; Bishop, Jim; Beaupré, Norman; Chabot, Grégoire; Whitehouse, Martha; François, John; Boutaud, Dominique; Marceau, Albert; Mangin, Julianne; Myall, James; L'Heureux, Juliana; Lacroix, Patrick; and Beebe, Suzanne, "Le FORUM, Vol. 40 No. 1" (2018). *Le FORUM Journal*. 49.  
[https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/francoamericain\\_forum/49](https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/francoamericain_forum/49)

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Le FORUM Journal by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact [um.library.technical.services@maine.edu](mailto:um.library.technical.services@maine.edu).

---

**Authors**

Lisa Desjardins Michaud, Rédactrice; Gérard Coulombe; Jim Bishop; Norman Beaupré; Grégoire Chabot; Martha Whitehouse; John François; Dominique Boutaud; Albert Marceau; Julianne Mangin; James Myall; Juliana L'Heureux; Patrick Lacroix; and Suzanne Beebe

# *Le* FORUM



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

VOLUME 40, #1

SPRING/PRINTEMPS 2018



**Websites:**

**Le Forum:** <http://umaine.edu/francoamerican/le-forum/>

**Oral History:** [Francoamericanarchives.org](http://Francoamericanarchives.org)

**Library:** [francolib.francoamerican.org](http://francolib.francoamerican.org)

**Occasional Papers:** <http://umaine.edu/francoamerican/occasional-papers/>

**Maine’s French Communities:**

[http://www.francomaine.org/English/Pres/Pres\\_intro.html](http://www.francomaine.org/English/Pres/Pres_intro.html) [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**

[http://www.johnfishersr.net/french\\_in\\_america\\_calendar.html](http://www.johnfishersr.net/french_in_america_calendar.html)

**Franco-American Women’s Institute:**

<http://www.fawi.net>





Le Centre Franco-Américain  
 Université du Maine  
 Orono, Maine 04469-5719  
 Lisa\_Michaud@umit.maine.edu  
 Téléphone: 207-581-FROG (3764)

Volume 40 Numéro 1  
 SPRING/PRINTEMPS  
 2018

**Publishing Board**

Don Levesque  
 Paul Laflamme  
 Lin LaRoche  
 Louella Rolfe  
 Kent Beaulne  
 Joe Arsenault  
 Tony Brinkley

**Rédactrice/Editor**

Lisa Desjardins Michaud

**Mise en page/Layout**

Lisa Desjardins Michaud

**Composition/Typesetting**

Lisa Desjardins Michaud

**Aide Technique**

Lisa Desjardins Michaud

**Tirage/Circulation/4,500**

**Imprimé chez/Printed by**

Centre Franco-Américain, Orono, Maine

Publié 4 fois l'an par le Centre Franco-Américain.

*Le Forum* est distribué surtout aux Franco-Américains des États-Unis. Les énoncés, opinions et points de vue formulés dans *Le Forum* sont ceux des auteurs et ne représentent pas nécessairement les points de vue de l'éditeur ou de la rédactrice, ou du Collège des arts et des sciences libéraux à l'Université du Maine.

*Le Forum* is published 4 times a year by the Franco-American Center. *Le Forum* is distributed in particular to Franco-Americans in the United States. Statements, opinions and points of view expressed are not necessarily those of the editor, the publishers or the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences of the University of Maine.

Tous les textes soumis doivent parvenir à — Forward all submitted texts to: Lisa D. Michaud, Rédactrice-en-chef/Editor-in-chief, *Le Forum*, University of Maine, Orono, Maine 04469-5719, U.S., au plus tard quatre semaines précédant le mois de publication — at least four weeks prior to the month of publication.

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

La reproduction des articles est autorisée sans préavis sauf indication contraire — Our original articles may be reproduced without notice unless otherwise indicated.

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,

**Sommaire/Contents**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Lettres/Letters</b> .....3, 26   | <b>James Myall</b> .....14-17   |
| <b>L'État du ME</b> .....4-13,<br>23, 24  | The Woman Who Persisted Against<br>Maine's Political Machine  |
| The Early Years in Maine—<br>Between Rising and Leaving   | Jackman — An International Town Built by<br>(and for) Immigrants  |
| <b>Gérard Coulombe</b>  |   |
| Work in Suspension <b>Jim Bishop</b>  | <b>Juliana L'Heureux</b> .....17,<br>18, 22, 23, 29, 37   |
| “Où es-tu Marie-Ange, Marie-Ange?”  | Merci to Marguerite d'Youville and the<br>Grey Nuns   |
| <b>Norman Beaupré</b>   |   |
| La créativité dès mon bas âge   | Sandord-Springvale Historical Society ~<br>Humble Heroes  |
| <b>Norman Beaupré</b>   |   |
| R'garde-moué donc ça  | French American Immigration – five<br>resource books  |
| Well, would ya look at that   | <b>Patrick Lacroix</b> .....19  |
| <b>Grégoire Chabot</b>  | Au revoir, Jerry  |
| A Special Friendship <b>Martha Whitehouse</b>   | <b>Suzanne Beebe</b> .....20-21   |
| <b>L'État de Louisiane</b> .....24  | He Went About Doing Good  |
| Les Quatre Saisons de Danté Hébert:   | To André-Marie Garin, Le Bon Père   |
| Été — Melon d'eau   | <b>Genealogy</b> .....30-31   |
| <b>John François</b>  | In Search of Lewiston Relatives of<br>Napoleon Coulombe, His Sons And,<br>Possibly, the Grandchildren, also named,<br>Coulombe <b>Gérard Coulombe</b> |
| <b>L'État de New Hampshire</b> .....25, 33  |   |
| La Francophonie in Nashua 2018  |   |
| <b>by Dominique Boutaud</b>   |   |
| <b>L'État du CT</b> .....12-18, 31-33   |   |
| A Brief Guide to Celebrate Lent and Easter<br>with Books Published by the NMDC of<br>Franco-American Literature and Culture |   |
| <b>Albert Marceau</b>   |   |
| From Quebec to Connecticut  |   |
| <b>Julianne Mangin</b>  |   |

*Abonnement au Le FORUM Subscription*  
 Si vous ne l'êtes pas abonnez-vous — s.v.p.  
 — Subscribe if you have not

Nom/Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Adresse/Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Métier/Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Ce qui vous intéresse le plus dans Le FORUM section which interests you the most: \_\_\_\_\_

Je voudrais contribuer un article au Le FORUM au sujet de: / I would like to contribute an article to Le FORUM about: \_\_\_\_\_

Tarif d'abonnement par la poste pour 4 numéros  
 Subscription rates by mail for 4 issues:  
 États-Unis/United States — Individus: \$20  
 Ailleurs/Elsewhere — Individus: \$25  
 Organisation/Organizations — Bibliothèque/Library: \$40  
 Le FORUM

Centre Franco-Américain, Orono, ME 04469-5719



## Lettres/ Letters

### Letter to the Editor

From: Gérard Coulombe

Fairfield, Connecticut

gcoulombe92@gmail.com

### Le Forum

A Few comments on James Myall's excellent article, "Le Page's Comments Remind Us that Civil rights History Isn't Just Blue and Grey."

Myall's piece is subtitled "African Americans, Civil War, Ku Klux Klan, Language, Maine, Politics."

The fact of the matter is that Myall's piece is particularly informative because I am, fully, Franco American, although I hardly ever speak French, anymore. My wife and I may share comments in brief exchanges, particularly, when we want to keep other members of the family out of the conversational loop, but whenever we speak French, when alone, on occasion, our exchanges are usually brief and about some private matter whenever we wish to express our real feelings about a matter.

Back to Myall's excellent piece—He provides a Franco-American reader like me with an often-missing context for some of my feelings about growing up Franco-American in Maine. \*

Whenever I read about Maine's Governor Le Page, I am reminded that in growing up in Maine, I met what I thought were either "dumb Frenchmen," or limited Frenchmen, particularly among the men. The women, I thought, at the time, were much more forward thinking and intellectually minded than were many of the men. Le Page could have been a standard bearer for a Franco American affirmation; instead, he became an old foghorn. I address the instance of the Le Page because Myall talks, briefly, about the Governor.

In other matters, for some of us boys growing up in Maine, it was our eagerness to join the workforce and to think of education as some kind of wasteland in which we would only gather time in some kind of mental jail that would prevent us from advancing in the employment melodrama, in particular. So many of my friends thought that school deprived many of us of the opportunities to get a jump-start which would have helped us out of the poverty that many of our parents had had to and continued to work through life for very little in wages, not

in any amount that would have helped our parents to afford a home of their own or a share of the status that was only nearly available to them and their French speaking kin. Those Franco Americans with money and because of it, had opportunities that higher education provided in medicine, law, and commerce. Franco Americans who owned buildings and the rentals in them were the rent collectors. The rent they collected kept them out of poverty, veritably, benefiting their families. Did I envy them? Yes I did. For, I recall the lady who sat at our dinner table waiting for my mother to gather the rent from her savings accounts distributed in the various places in the kitchen where she hid it. These people had no concept of the tension they created in a household waiting for their cash payments.

Historically, I know that most Franco-Americans in Maine communities went in force to find employment in the textile mills that hired them to work the machines that fabricated the cloth used for whatever, from bedding to clothing and, later, parachutes and tents. Surely, our forefathers came for the work available and for the opportunities that might have gotten them out of the doldrums. If men like my father, who necessarily and silently worked hard to keep us out of poverty, learned before they died that their children would increase in health, wealth and stature, far beyond their imaginings, they would have felt the wonder of it all. Their sacrifices would have felt worthwhile. My mom lived to appreciate it. My father felt somewhat confused by it. I never was sure that he understood the nature of it all. While he never had a home that he could call his own, perhaps his parents did before they came South to Maine from Canada, they were still, when they came, like all others of their kin, immigrants. And were they not all one of a kind with the bones and mind to endure. While my parents never owned a home, all three of us, their children, do, and so do our own children and, for some, their children. And that's the history of Franco Americans in America. I would say, all of us are fully American and French in name only if we have that in our children, at all.

To be both French and Catholic was anathema in Maine and most likely elsewhere, in the States and particularly, where our ancestors gathered in droves, often, like cattle their pens, as our ancestors were in localities at the center of which there was a church steeple and a cross and where the Angelus rang or tolled for the dead in the community.

The start of the Second World War ended any dream that might still have been viable as reported in Maine's French Language newspapers, that of ever returning to "la patrie." The foregoing view is mine. I do not know if it historically fits the pattern, the one around which I once imagined that our French Catholic education goals were all about—which was to return or, at least, at the very least, to establish permanent roots here as living breathing Franco-Americans, bilingual, in America. That was not to be. None of my children, grandchildren speak French or understand it as my wife and I. None of the nieces and nephews speak it; none of their children and their children's children either. French long ago disappeared from whatever memory French speaking families might have had of it. That is the way of evolution.

Throughout my youth, I often thought that our being French-Canadian, and our ancestry, had much more in common with being "black" in Maine than in being white. [I know there is no comparison, but at the time, I thought the idea of it was apt.] There seemed to be, no, there was a pervasive distinction, openly made, between us Franco Americans, by our language, religion, cultural heritage and the social contributions, we were making to the advancement of the overall culture that seemed at odds with the dominant culture and that seemed to me inappropriate and disarmingly other-worldly.

I left Maine because, having been denied a college education by those institutions that my parents adhered to, I found status in the GI Bill and in the college education that I believed we French, who did not have the money, merited. And, for that, I am deeply grateful.

All to say that I found Mr. Myall's piece to be one that filled some of the gaps in my education as a Franco-American who grew up to earn a master's degree in English, much to the astonishment of the Head of the Department.

It is a remarkable surprise to me that I did not become aware of the other Franco-American population, the one upstate, until I met some of the nursing students from those counties who attended Saint Mary's School of Nursing in Lewiston, Maine.

*(More letters on page 26)*





# The Early Years In Maine— Between Rising and Leaving

*From: Leaving Maine\**

*By*

*Gérard Coulombe*

*Born: Biddeford, 1931*

I wonder whatever made me think that I was going to be a writer. If I hadn't taken the step, I would have continued as a "bobbin boy" at the Bates or, most probably, I might have become a union organizer, for I think I had the nerve for it. If, in growing up, I could have developed the smarts to become somebody in one of the shops in my hometown, I would have done so, but I also lacked the smarts to think that way, so well ingrained was the simple idea that it was meant that I work in one of the mills, if and when I ever left grammar school. Many of my grammar school classmates did just that, wait out their lives in grammar school, until they attained the age of sixteen or even earlier, and then, at that magic age, entered the work force, more than likely, at a job in one of the mills, just as their dads had done, out of necessity, for survival sake.

Not only did my parents never own a house, they never owned a car. We rented. All of us in the family walked. No one ever got a driver's license while we lived at home. I know for certain that neither my dad nor my mother ever did. It was for a lack of money that they never owned a car. It was not for a lack of nerve or ambition. Ambition is limited for a lack of money. In those days, it was only a few dollar bills and nickel and dime coins. When it became necessary for my dad to transport us, or his visiting brothers, somewhere, he would rent a car and driver. We never lived in a house of our own or owned a car of our own. We certainly did not miss not having a garage. We managed quite well with the shed, no matter how deep or narrow it was, as long as the oil tank fit in and there was enough space for our dad to have a small workbench.

I was all of twenty something when I bought my first car. I was married with children by then. But, as a high school student I had known little about banking. The mill where I worked, as a junior in high school, gave us cash in an envelope when we completed a week's work. I walked home with the envelope in my coat pocket with

thoughts of handing it to my mother when I got home, but, with father having beaten me home from his midnight shift, when I was just getting home from work. I simply kept the envelope in my pocket and said my, "Bonsoir" to him and went to bed. Few words were ever exchanged with my father, for he was always a "silent man."

The following morning, out of bed and dressed for my long walk to Saint Louis High School, I left the apartment in time to get there for the start of class. It was as I was closing the kitchen door to the shed and before I was opening the porch door that "Maman" extended a hand, forcing me to reach into my pant pocket to place the pay envelope, that I had meant to give her, into her opened hand. I was glad to see her fingers close over the pay envelope and see it slide into her apron pocket for safekeeping. I knew, as I had always known, that she very much appreciated my willingness to freely give her my pay in support of her household needs, for she knew, that, whatever work I did after school, I did in lieu of homework, for, although I would always maintain that I was doing well in school, even though I wasn't—in chemistry or math—the other subjects, English, French, History, and Religion, were easy. The latter, simply, required a reading, while the former, the more difficult subjects, required serious thinking and time, a luxury I did not have.

Certainly, in the late nineteen-forties, there would have been time to engage in more satisfying work in town than having to work at one of the textile mills. There were the Pepperell Mills in Biddeford or the Bates Textile Mill, next City over, on Saco Island. At one time or another, I worked for short periods at both.

As a kid, I had also worked as a corner grocery-store clerk, dispensing ice cream cones, as a dishwasher at an Old Orchard Beach Hotel, as an automatic potato machine operator for a French fry stand. The popular stand was a must stop for the fries, with choice of salt and vinegar. The stand was a

popular stop for those going to or coming from the arcade and bandstand at the far end of the Old Orchard Beach Pier. I also had a job as a milkman, working the running boards of the truck-bed with a rack of bottles of milk in hand, leaping off the boards of the Thidodeau truck on the way to a delivery, as an usher and candy stand candy and popcorn re-order boy at the Central Theatre in Biddeford, now the Police station. Turning sixteen, finally, while a junior in high school, I joined the second shift big boys as a bobbin boy at the Bates Mill because my father was in hospital, very ill.

But there were really no prospect that I knew about for an 18 year old who was unwilling to commit to the mills, as our parents had, with humidity involved so the thread would not break, and the late shift that I was unwilling to work. There was the Saco Lowell that had a school for select high school graduates who wanted to learn the machining trades, for "the Shop," as the Saco Lowell was known. It was in the business of manufacturing the machinery used in mills as far away as Egypt. Some of the graduates traveled to shops here and abroad to repair Saco Lowell spinning and weaving machinery, but I had no knowledge of these opportunities because my father did not work at the shop.

As it was, shortly after graduating from high school, I spontaneously left my hometown of Biddeford to join the military just as the Korean War was going to start, although my friend, Gerard Beaudoin and I, maybe the papers, hadn't heard of imminent war. Upon disembarking from a new recruit train in Texas, our group of new recruits was told that a war had started.

In between my birth in 1931 in Biddeford, Maine and my leaving Biddeford, Maine, in 1950 after graduating from high school, there had been another time when I had announced to my parents that I was leaving my hometown and, in particular, the family, to join a novitiate in Winthrop, Maine, south of Augusta. It was before the War, and I had finished sixth grade when I left home, having decided that I was to become a member of the religious, teaching order, Brothers of the Sacred Heart, or "Les Frères du Sacré Coeur." "Not to worry!" For me, it was an enriching opportunity. I think it pleased my dad more than my mother. My dad had a brother who, at the time, was a still a working member of the order. He was the "portlier" at a collège in  
*(Continued on page 5)*

*(The Early Years In Maine—Between Rising and Leaving continued from page 4)*

Victoriaville, Québec. He had the advantage of opening the door for everyone. I know, for once upon a time, he opened the door for my father and I, after we had rung the doorbell.

A “novitiate” at the time was a training school for boys twelve years of age and older who were preparing to join a holy order. Mine was that of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart, out of Québec, a French Order. The age for admission has increased substantially. But, at the time, in Maine, with the exception of the “big cities,” towns and villages were still, in my imagination, small like Winthrop. They were rural, hill filled, verdant, rising, hilly, fir tree-filled countryside or, snow layered, with undulating, cupcake slopes and plunging grades laced with clumped patches of trees before one’s view reached the barrier green forests.

The countryside, throughout, had spawned streams, rivers and bodies of water, in particular, it had spawned bogs and brooks, creeks and falls, headwaters and inlets, islands, and islets, and some waters flowed into some of my favorites, ponds and lakes. Winthrop was an eye opener. Coming from a textile town, I had never known such beauty as what I saw with my brothers hiking the trails and woods, the contours of lakes and crossings, of rock-filled streams in summer, and, in winter, the clutch of us in our cassocks, boots and heavy, rough cotton jackets walking as an inline column on a frozen lake upon which we saw ski planes landing, taxiing, and, without stopping, hearing the sound of engines revving-up, seeing them take off, again, climbing and turning over fisherman out ice-fishing outside their shacks on Maranacook Lake, one of two mean-sized sister lakes squeezing Winthrop, as if it were sitting in the narrow jaws of a most powerful vise.

As a first year novice, I was halfway through classes and accompanying spiritual exercises required of novices to complete their middle school education before proceeding to higher education. Late in the first term, I happened to be attending classes, when I started suffering from pronounced physical trauma as a result of painful spasms caused by an undetermined physical problem. It was the result of sudden loud bangs such as the one caused by a lifted desktop that was accidentally allowed to fall freely in place, resulting in a big bang sound. The sound from the banging desk had me jumping up, out of my chair from behind my

desk, to stretch my right leg out because of the pain the “bang” sound that was holding my body rigid to endure a run of spasms radiating through my leg.

The pain and, perhaps, embarrassment were such that I have never forgotten that incidental crisis in my life. The accident in the classroom at the novitiate was, most likely, the cause that turned my young life around.

I ended up in the infirmary on the main house second floor until examined by a local doctor and attended by one of the Brothers, who was all things, cook, farmer, horticulturist, and maker of good apple juice, cider, and apple jack. Eventually, with recurrence of the problem, the local physician called and recommended hospitalization. I was taken to the Catholic Hospital in Lewiston where the Brothers had a school and where I could continue both as a patient and a member of the order, as I was their responsibility. My parents did not visit during my stay because without an automobile, they simply could not. They could not afford the cost of a rental car and driver. I stayed in hospital for what seemed a great many weeks before a doctor came along who knew something about the disease and its treatment: Immobilized bed rest to allow the head of the femur to heal.

The rest of the term was spent in hospital. It seemed like a long stay in-hospital. It was a long time for a boy with nothing to do but read, watch and observe the constant comings and goings, and, frequently visitors and doctors going about, to and fro, and patients come and go. It was, what seemed, a very long time achieving full recovery. I unexpectedly returned to the Winthrop Novitiate. The problem I had had, sending me to hospital, had fully resolved itself, or so it seemed to my doctor.

A long time after the nature of my medical situation was discovered, I was feeling sharp pain, and this time I often fell to the ice, pain radiating from my right hip causing me to collapse on the ice the first winter, playing hockey, because of my pre-existing condition. Later still, diagnosed with “Leggs-Calve-Perthes” Disease, a deterioration of the femur and head of the hipbone, there had to be more in-house determination about my stay as well as about my future. This time, the order would not send me to hospital. The Director of novices would send me home.

So, my life had suddenly taken another turn. I did not return to continue on a course that would have had me become a Brother of the Sacred Heart. Instead, I had time to consider my alternative which had

me, so obviously, continue my education. The following year I would enter high school, having skipped ninth grade.

Two consequential circumstances defined who my parents, my two sisters and I were, as residents of Biddeford. First, we were Canadian [Franco-Americans, if naturalized or born in the States], or because of where our ancestors came from in Canada. We were from that part of Québec, North of Maine and South of the Saint Lawrence River, known as the Saint Lawrence Valley. Our grandparents, to improve their standard of living, had come south, into Maine, as farmers or artisans, to seek employment in the textile mills. My grandfather Coulombe had been a shoemaker and continued his vocation in Biddeford on what I believe was Lower Foss Street, at the, corner lower Main Street, opposite the Pepperell’s fortress-like walls.

They all brought their “baggage” with them; literally what possessions they could carry, including their mainstay religion, Catholicism, and all its attributes. In particular, some brought with them an intention to return to their land of birth, Canada, but as families grew and opportunities decreased faster than they might have in Canada due to poor farming conditions, they came to value more what they had in the States than what opportunities they might have found in returning to their land of birth. To return might have brought more uncertain times. That, for a while, persisted in helping them to maintain their faith, language, manners, thinking and ambitions for their families, although the latter grew more complicated the longer they stayed, in the time of my parents, the aim of returning to Canada, or founding a permanent community of Franco-Americans, here, in their adopted land, would soon be absorbed by the longings and changes, incrementally taking place all around them.

If “les Canadiens,” or Franco-Americans, were not to voluntarily assimilate, time, education and more education for the children, would solve the problem, and at some time, along the way, many family groups would decide that it was only natural that they were Americans. As Americans, no longer “Franco-Americans in name, they were to gradually assimilate. They established roots to a point at which there was never to be any more thought among us of ever going back. My father might have died dreaming—not my mother. We had never really felt their memories and desires, *(Continued on page 6)*

*(The Early Years In Maine—Between Rising and Leaving continued from page 5)*

although when we travelled with our parents to Canada, we might have understood better where our dad was coming from. But we were, entirely, of another harbor, another land, altogether. We had never been Canadian. We were already, totally American.

My dad's father and mother, had come down from Québec, perhaps with my dad's sister; my mother's father, named Joseph Coutu, had come down from somewhere in Canada, ending up in New Hampshire before he arrived in Biddeford, whereupon he married the only child of a Franco-American couple. All had brought with them culture, language, and religion to surround themselves with, while their extended families grew in Maine and elsewhere in New England.

Many bought homes of their own, for they were in the States to stay. Thus encouraged by their own progress in property and earnings, they and their descendants stayed. World War II closed the deal between the immigrant Franco Americans and their country when opportunity, better living, better wages, better opportunities, better choices with a little money to spare, better alternatives, all around, became available to all new and older immigrants.

And still much later there was Jean-Louis Lebris de Kérouac and other French Canadians born, in the year, 1922, in Massachusetts. Who was this kid, seemingly born on the wild side? He was Franco-American. Growing up, I did not learn about him until I was in graduate school.

As time in the mills wore on, local mills and the women and men who worked in them were affected by mercantile events worldwide. The actual work in the mills had never held any promise of a permanent job. There were those who, at first agitated for a raise and were fired, and, later, there were those who joined a union and they were laid off, and then, when productivity increased because war and with foreign demands after these wars, the demand on our productivity and products increased even more; as more products and greater demand increased, textile mill workers got raise increments. But these raises were slow in coming, even in good times. Workers, although steady and self-reliant, there was never enough in the paycheck of those who stayed in the mills to render them self-sufficient. As time and demand made the market highly profitable

for manufactures, employees felt that raises would last only as long as the need for their products continued to exist.

Of course, international recovery after the wars meant better and even more production here than abroad. However, the brakes were on. Textile manufacturing slowed to a whistle stop and other nations, with increasing populations and industrialization returned to manufacturing, adapting to and adapting in-country manufacturing to meet their own needs and to sell abroad. Our markets for textile goods collapsed and our industries started moving abroad where textile production had shifted from subsistence manufacturing to include major export manufacturing at costs that better accommodated American and other designers but at the expense of generations of American workers. This event forever affected the lives of textile mill workers here in the States and, particularly, here in Maine. There was not one Maine textile mill that was not affected. My niece's husband closed the last mill in Biddeford and he and his employees, reduced to a few employees, compared to the old days, was out of a job. Biddeford and "Factory Island" mill buildings became the living ghosts of a lively, noisy, bygone era.

Our ancestors, as had others in different industries, lost their living as they were forced off mill floors and the like happened all over our country. All this simply to say: My father as did others wanted me to work at an honorable job in the textile mill that had kept on going, although fitfully, on and off for over forty years. Had I gone into the mills and not followed my wish for a better education, my life might have ended, not without some despair, on the factory spinning room floor. When my dad stopped working, he was so tired that he was never the same again.

On Cutts Street, Biddeford, Maine, there were a few friends. We lived on the second floor, which my grandfather had turned into an apartment for our small family of five. He might have converted the second floor of his duplex to accommodate his eldest son, who, I think, now, was probably still married at the time. I don't know when the two married or when she died, actually. I remember the cemetery plot he had with his wife, her name on the step-up in the granite type surround there was on the plot with a step engraved with the family name on the step up to the plot. But in later years, it seemed to me, when I last looked for it, to have disappeared. It's important to note

that my mother's view of her marriage was that they, my Mom and Dad, had taken the late train in getting married. That weighed on her for a great many years, well until I left home because, after I left, I knew less than I ever had about the family.

When I was in the Service, following high school, mail came from my mother, but it was infrequent. She was busy with the two girls. And father still worked second shift, and he continued to work the dismal second shift until he retired, exhausted and unprepared for an alternate life after retirement. He had great talents as a fixer-upper, but for him, the small repair shop around the corner, downtown, had yet to be invented; he was far too exhausted. I know that for a certainty. For sure, he could not have afforded the rent on a shop, even as low as it might have been for the year and place. When he retired, my dad had already suffered and recovered several times with long struggles with meningitis. There were months, many months when I was a junior in high school when father had had to be hospitalized. That's when I did both attended high school as a junior, and worked second shift myself. My schoolwork suffered as a result.

When my sisters and I were born we were living with my grandparents. Living with them was an adventure in age, culture, space, and developing preferences. My mother was living with her parents, essentially. The upstairs made no difference. My grandparents had inherited another family, smaller than theirs, but too young for their age; although from my point of view, my grandfather was all there was, as far as I was concerned because he was my friend as well as my grandfather, and he raised me while my mother raised the girls while my father was employed by the WPA and was gone for at least twelve hours a day.

If our mother, Clara, had had a peaceful relationship with her sister, our Aunt Éva, before mother married, and had their relationship grown through the years, life in our family might have been more expansive. [Éva had been mother's bridesmaid.]

As it was, through the years, their estrangement was both difficult and unpleasant for our family life, which might certainly have been better because there would have been more visits to our grandparents throughout the years that followed our leaving grandfather's where all of mother's, siblings were born.

For many, many years, I had not

*(Continued on page 7)*



*(The Early Years In Maine—Between Rising and Leaving continued from page 6)*

learned how many there had really been. They seemed to come out of the grave, which some did. All of mother's older and younger sisters and two brothers had been born when she married. Had the two sisters managed to share peace rather than fights, we might have all enjoyed life and relationships more fully, had the frequent quarrels between the two been resolved before our mother left home. Obviously, nothing happened that might have changed that. I never knew whether it was just that our aunt was more quarrelsome than protective of her role as housekeeper and caregiver for our grandparents, particularly, our grandmother who had been blind most of her life.

The years my mother had the family in her parents' house, relationships were raucous. They had to have been tortuous for Mom because, as I listened to almost all conversations and most chicanery and laments bouncing off the walls, it was very clear that my aunt and mom were at odds over how to raise children. Maybe that is how it all started.

Since my aunt had never, never married, in order as to take care of her parents, it was not until the year before I left home, the second time, that there was any attempt on my mother's part to tolerate her sister Éva, in our parents' apartment on Freeman Street. The rent was in the other French parish on Freeman Street, perhaps too far for my aunt to walk. She either had little money before she sold the house after our grandfather died. And she had never visited the rent we had on Bradbury Street, before Dad had moved us once again--this time, to get away from the Irish. Our dad had learned to dislike them at work. Of course, our father never spoke English at home, so, for a long time, I never knew more than what I believed. That our father and mother spoke only French at home. Mom spoke English with a strong accent. My Dad never spoke anything, but French—Canadian, though it was. Whenever he spoke, he was eloquent if not grandiose.

It is not to say that there were fewer or more Irish in Saint Joseph's Parish than there were in Saint Mary's Parish. But anyone could have easily been confused by the fact that there were more Irish named people, and some Irish speaking ones as well, living in the area around Saint Joseph's Church, situated on lower Elm Street, near Main, than were living around the Irish

Church further down where a mix of French Canadians lived as well on "mixed origin" street blocks. "Dommmage!" What did it ever matter? I never knew, really.

For my dad, it was an abominable thing that the English speaking Irish had the better jobs in the mill, got to be bosses, while he, who had worked to improve for all of his working life over the years to that moment--master, and developer, that he was, without recognition for the improvements he continued to make to his machine, a type that he had made altogether his to improve with major developmental changes going to the manufacturer. At the time, it was probably common practice. But for him, there was no defense of the practice because the company and manufacturers of the machine got all of the benefits while all he got were, temporary—no income, layoffs.

I had had a great time living on Bradbury Street, unsupervised. There was a Bradbury Public School on our block, no more than two hundred feet down the street. I don't believe any French Catholics attended school there. No. We attended Saint Joseph's Elementary, many blocks away, almost across town for us elementary school first graders. There was Emery Elementary on our Street where the Irish kids of that particular neighborhood also attended school. There was also public grammar and a high school in town.

A Catholic order of French nuns taught elementary, grammar schools and high school for girls. Girls and boys were separated in elementary, grammar and high school. When I was in high school, the girls had one side and we, boys, had the other, a wall separated us. Saint Emery's had its own grammar school adjacent to its own church. I don't know what kind of people taught the Irish kids. They often caused mischief wherever they lived, played or were schooled. [Today, I'm sure that I am making this up.] Fighting was always an Irish game, no matter the game.

I did not always have a great time living on Bradbury Street. There were times when we were taunted, principally because families in the neighborhood were Irish, and in the majority, and we, French, were in the minority. My fault, perhaps, because I was unaccustomed to find myself playing with youngsters who only spoke English. Maybe they spoke Irish. I did not know. It was also hard because I did not understand what they shouted at me when they pitched a bat, handle first to pick sides. When I took a side, I noticed that I never managed to catch

it near the top of the bat handle. The bat often slipped through and out of my right hand. Therefore, I ended up being on the side sure to lose a game. That's why I never liked the way they picked kids to play on their side. I never stopped to think what they thought about me. They always shouted. And they never understood what I said, either. I was a loser at street, stick baseball.

Bradbury Street's unfinished extension was a jump across South Street where South crosses Bradbury. The short extension stopped at a roadblock of a rock-faced hill. The hill in heavy winter snow provided imperfect but thrilling sledding. The unfinished portion, where it climbed a rocky, precipitous face that had been jackhammered into a wide path to climb, preparatory to reducing and leveling it to pave, was, in winter, a hill with a challenge for kids with a sled.

With our pilot crammed into a snow-suit on his tummy, with his snow-shoed feet acting both as rudder and brake prepared to take off from the top as his bombardier with a bag of snowballs, ran from behind for momentum once he got on, slid the bottom of his snowshoes onto the sled's runners. Propelled by the forward momentum of the bombardier, the craft took off in a sudden leap forward and moved as fast as forward thrust permitted downhill at an increasingly faster pace, unless a collision with an opponent's Irish team would send one or the other crashing into snow accumulation in front of the snow sled's path.

Thus refreshed by the snow that had entered the neck of our snowsuits. We picked up our sled, turned around and climbed to the top to start all over again. In imagining aerial combat in the snow, we never missed anything, including going home to mother for sled repairs or for a crewmember to be patched up. As I recall, the worst of these accidents, involving a need for medical attention, was the time that two sliding slats accidentally caught my penis in between them. As my mother calmly said at the time, "Phew! Mon petit! Tu n'a pas perdue ton bijou," she said in French, and applied Mercurochrome to the bleeding gem.

The Fourth of July was explosive on Bradbury Street. Fireworks were filled the front windows of the news vendor just around the corner on South. All kinds of explosive devices were available, the most popular were the kind that ones that did not need to be lit. They came in a box filled with sawdust and were spherical, the size  
*(Continued on page 8)*

*(The Early Years In Maine—Between Rising and Leaving continued from page 7)*

of nickel and one needed to do to set the off was to throw them to the ground were they exploded on impact.

We were so flush in fireworks that we could afford to light a string of them and throw them where we thought it safe for them to land. Some were short fused, so that they were just coming down in an arc when they exploded in the air—one long and linked fuse igniting a stick, one after another in a repetitive, exploding sound of emanating fire and smoke. We sent cans of all sizes up into the air; how high they went depended on the size of the firecracker we placed under the can with its fuse sticking out. Light the fuse, and in less than a second, it went, BANG, and up into the air, depending on the cant of the can. All varieties were dangerous not only to those setting the off but also to unwary or alert enough to be extra precautions in their environment around firecracker, no matter the size or purpose.

Following Christmas, there were Christmas trees to collect for the bonfires that were built and lit on George Washington's Birthday. The challenge for boys gathering them was to find a place safe not from fire, necessarily, but from rival gangs of local kids gathering as many as they could for their own bonfires, even it meant stealing them from under the noses of rival groups in a competitive gathering to see who would have the largest fire in town. The plan also involved gathering tires, as many as could be found in backyards, mostly behind sheds or garages where they were saved to bank the soil in the garden where one's flowers often grew where there was little soil.

There was also Gerry Shaws' Woods, which we reached by walking the Boston and Maine tracks from behind our houses in the shoe shop area, three blocks West of Bradbury to and from the small spring filled pond in the woods was a hike. Our only way was made easy by walking the tracks down the line and cut right at a switch signal to follow a trail to the swimming hole. At the swimming hole under the tree, we dropped our coveralls but not our skivvies and climbed the tree leaning strongly over the water, walked out on a sturdy branch and jumped, feet first. All knew well enough that it was not at all that deep, Deep enough to go down to your nipples, but no deeper than that.

When my best friend and I started elementary school, first grade, we walked together only because our mothers had ar-

ranged it. Saint Joseph's Elementary was on Emery Street. We had Route One to cross, not an easy task. There were no crossing guards, and worst of all, we had to walk in front of what we considered to be a haunted house because all the many windows in this old Victorian were covered with stacks of **Biddeford Daily Journals**. Further more, we did not want to break anyone's back, so we were very careful to avoid the joints in the sidewalk. We had an altogether weird apologetic rhyme to recite for having accidentally violated the rule before we running away.

First grade was also an occasion to become an altar boy. To join, I had to learn the server's responses to the priests prayers and invocations spoken during the Mass. My mother taught me by incremental repetition. I was still stumbling if I were not paying attention to the priest. Altar boys like me developed a tendency of speaking the responses aloud and fast, sometimes, too fast. There was one priest who had me start the longest ones over and over again. In those instances I was as embarrassed as I might have been, for it was usually during the earliest masses when I was hardly out of bed and awake.

In First Grade, I was chosen as the altar boy to serve the priest saying Mass at the convent adjacent to the grammar school. The convent's property was extremely large. The school itself was half a block long, well, almost, and the convent was wood instead of brick. But the convent was a huge estate-like nineteenth century building with the chapel at its far-end center. Walking to the convent to be the altar boy for six a.m. Mass was a frightening experience. Walking through the grounds had me running all the way to the manor house's portico at 5:45 a.m. The nun answering the door was huge in her habit, coifed as she was in her black headdress bordered by a narrow and pointed white wimple framing a huge, ruddy face. I stepped aside to allow her to close the door, and then she led me through the chapel doors to the side of the altar so I could don my cassock and surplice.

The summer that followed first grade, my father decided we should move to the parish that he had frequented when his parents joined him and other relatives who resided in Biddeford. My father's parents had long been dead by the time he married. Or I guessed they had been, for we knew nothing more than where they had lived, which was mentioned only once in passing by there going down Foss Street. And we

had known where they were buried because we had visited the graves on Memorial Days to be reminded where their names were engraved on a man-made headstone in their own cemetery plot. These are no longer there.

If you were to drive through Biddeford, today, you might find driving or visiting easy. Drive from Five Points East to the Catholic cemetery on West Street. Anyone who has ever visited or stayed at Biddeford Pool or Granite Point would know the cemetery from driving by. Interesting to note about what's there is that ninety-nine percent of the names on the plaques, tombstones, and crosses are French names. Nearly all buried here are descendants of French Canadians whose ancestors came from France to Canada in the 1600's, individually, or families, or they travelled west into the lands beyond existing borders, as we had, often with their families. They and their descendants spread far and wide along the Saint Lawrence and far beyond, west, north and south of other river banks down other rivers and tributaries, up crossing the Great lakes and overland to the far reaches of the Great Northwest but many, too, significantly, crossed over, especially, to Maine's heartland and the shores south. Others had already been there, in the Provinces east of Québec. All they had to do was step over the border—at least those who would for life and living.

Saint André's Parish spread east and west along the south banks of the Saco River. Along the river's banks were built water powered textile mills, and there was shipbuilding below the falls along the River's edge, on both sides of the Saco. The mouth of the River was some seven or so miles down the Saco River as in flowed its snaky path along its curving banks, filling shallows and deep waters along the waterways with small islets spotted along the sides until the waters disgorged the full flow into Saco Bay and then into the channel where the waters flowed out to sea. At low tide, the Saco's waters having flowed out, in their timely fashion, according to an eternal plan, the receding waters near the islands and peninsula enclosing Biddeford Pool were left with the whole of the islands including their skirts, so that many water ways were almost bereft of moving waters, depending on tides, leaving some boats high and dry, while some others in pool waters in the circumspect pool remained safe from whatever might have been threatening.

There, in Biddeford, as kids who  
*(Continued on page 9)*

# WORK IN SUSPENSION

By

**Jim Bishop**

*(N.D.L.R. this submission first appeared in the Puckerbrush Review, VI, 1.*

*Used with the author's permission.)*

My father's teeth. He must have lost them in much the same way he lost his name — his real name that is, the one he was born to.

Daddy and Uncle Louis were about twelve on their first day of junior high. I try to imagine them that morning, more than the usual first-day nerves, knowing they would be crossing the bridge into town after five years in the island grammar school. My father feels the comb slightly off the line he would have made as my grandmother defines a part down through his hair. There is too much water in the comb — there is always too much water in the comb — and two fat drops splash down into his face. "Stay still. Stay still," his mother says in French — it sounds like "trahn-kill" — a bit more urgency in her voice than last year.

Their father long gone, I can't quite picture what they are wearing, how she would have kept them and their brothers and sisters — There were five — in food, much less clothes. The compulsory sweaters, I suppose, crudely darned at the elbows, and somehow white shirts for the first day. And their accents, far less pronounced than my grandmother's, than the islanders' of her generation. The d's for th's, the present tense constructions for past, the gratuitous pronouns: "When I come up dere, me, I..." The little "me's", always stuck somewhere in the middle of a sentence, or at the end. But most of that would have been ironed out of them by the time they were twelve.

Still, dirt poor, talking a little funny, and coming into a new school — it doesn't add up to a lot of confidence on their part. So I can understand how they would be too embarrassed to protest when the teacher took away their name, the one they had always thought was theirs anyway. But maybe that only held true on the island, they might have figured, when she told them their real name was White, the Anglo translation for LeBlanc. It's not hard to hear the sweet condescension in her voice as she had them write their new names at the top of a sheet of yellow lined paper. "Frederick White. Louis White. Yes, yes. That's right." Outside, a gorgeous September day, and they

had just learned their first lesson of the new school year.

And amazingly enough, it stuck. I wonder if they even told memay about it when they got home. What was she going to do about it anyway, go down and give 'em hell in French? But of course, she had to find out eventually. And then? Was it anger she felt, looking at the front of Fred White's first-term report card? Or something more like a swift punch, a stun, before she looked away and put the card down on the kitchen table without opening it. More likely, by that time, she was just so imbued with the knowledge of her place on the bank of a river she could never enter, that it seemed their right, they who navigated the mainstream, not only to name the game but to name also any who would come to them, aspiring to play.

So that by the time I arrived, a laundered and approved name was vouchsafed me, along with the powder and the oil. And I never put it together as a kid, even though there was the evidence — my grandmother, living just across a small field bordering the river — staring me right in the face. Not once do I remember wondering why her surname was different from daddy's and mine. That was just the way it was, a given. As was it given that my father's teeth were not his own.

I would see them sometimes sitting in a saucer on the kitchen counter, or maybe in a glass of water. That unnatural pink of the gums, the sheer strange fact of them. Here, after all, were the innards of my father's mouth, sitting exposed on the kitchen counter, with a clock ticking hardly perceptibly from the other room and the light falling through the high kitchen windows onto exactly the same places and in the same patterns across the linoleum as if the glass or the saucer on the counter were just another dirty dish waiting to be washed by my mother when the sun touched just the right place on the floor. Here was my father's mouth; if I had wanted to, had dared to, I could have reached up, stuck my hand down into the water, which must have been quite clear actually, though my hand, my adult hand, even now at the thought of

it, becomes slimy — and wrapped my small fingers around everything but the missing tongue of it. Had it right there in my hand.

But I never did. Maybe I was too good a little boy. Or lacked the imagination; or the balls. More likely, it was just another given that my father's teeth should sit that way on the kitchen counter in one slant of light or another. It was a given in the house that would largely be my world that my father's teeth would not always be in his head. Nor would my mother's, nor my grandmother's, nor, as I remember, any adult's in the larger household of my blood. What was given, more precisely, was a lack of givens, as such a simple word is usually understood. I learned that names and teeth were not a given after all. That just about anything could be lost or translated or uprooted or reproduced in some strange color by whoever was out

*(Continued on page 10)*

*(The Early Years In Maine—Between Rising and Leaving continued from page 8)*

frequently visited mother's long married sister and her lumberjack husband and five children in their late teens to mid twenties, whom I remember. Together with her brother-in-law, also a lumberjack who lived in the house they had built on a rural street around the corner from West Street, we often went to the pool in a lumber hauling truck with picket held sides. We all got into the back and stood holding to the sideboards as my uncle and his wife with his brother in the middle with the shift stick between his legs; my uncle drove down the old Pool Road to Hill's Beach where we unloaded along the beach road and walked down an access path to the beach where, at low tide, we dug for clams which we washed and put in the pot to steam over a driftwood fire close to the dry sand where our beach blankets lay as a carpet for us to gather on, mostly to chat in stories of past weeks lived and of things to come and news that was told as well as secrets revealed for as many times as these were worth reviving.

Meanwhile the war in Europe was raging, and the young men were unaware of the greater war to come, involving them.

**Leaving Maine**—an unpublished memoir written over three years for a class offered by the Fairfield, Connecticut, Library, taught by Louise Maccormack.

I am now at work on a book about how my wife and I helped raise our triplet grandchildren who are now going on twenty and attending different colleges.

(WORK IN SUSPENSION continued from page 9)

there in charge of such things. And that was that. And so long as I could go outside and the river rolled by without any name that mattered and I had the wild apple tree to sit in, what difference did it make, was I guess the way I received it all in what now seems, looking back, a wide-eyed and ongoing state of suspension.

\* \* \*

Dad liked math, playing with numbers I mean, though he hadn't had much schooling in it. Every week he used to receive a union newspaper in the mail. It had his name, Frederick White, and our address printed on a gummed label in the corner of the front page. I remember, every issue would have some kind of numerical puzzle in it; you know, the kind of problem that asks you to figure where two trains would meet if one started in New York travelling at sixty miles an hour and the other from Boston averaging fifty, each starting at different specified times. I'm not sure how daddy managed to solve these; he'd never had even elementary algebra. But he seemed to have a knack for them. He'd work away with a stubby graphite pencil, using some combination of simple math, common sense, and trial-and-error, and eventually he'd come up with the solution. It gave him real satisfaction, you could tell.

As I got older, sometimes he'd read me the current problem, pausing to give each term of the hypothesis its proper weight: "Mary is half as old as John (pause); John is as old as Mary will be when John is one-and-a-half times her age (pause); how old are Mary and John now?" The final pause was most prolonged, and gave me plenty of time to register my genuine mystification (this was before I got to X's and Y's in school). Then my father would produce the answer. "Mary is five and John is ten. When Mary becomes ten, John will be fifteen — one-and-a-half times her age." Sure enough, his answer was incontrovertible, even I could see that. I remember the last time my father ever talked to me about a puzzle. I was in high school. No doubt he had been stumped at times before, but he'd never mentioned any of these to me. I think it was the subject of this particular puzzle that made it so difficult for him to let it go unsolved. It concerned baseball, one of his real passions.

He'd probably knocked himself out trying to solve it before he read it to me. The problem read, "A regulation baseball diamond is, in reality, a square with 90-foot

sides. The pitcher's rubber is 60-feet-6-inches from home plate. If an imaginary line is drawn from first base to third base, will the pitcher's rubber be in front of or behind that line?" The worst of it was that my father damn well knew the answer. He knew from experience that the pitcher checking first base over his shoulder was slightly forward of the bag. He could feel the slight discrepancy in the angle from the pitcher's eye to the mitt of the first baseman. He knew this as any kid would who'd grown up swatting and chasing balls until it was too dark to really see them. He knew the answer, but he couldn't prove it. No numbers would come to his defense.

He didn't read me the problem this time — he seldom did by then — but he made a point of mentioning that there was a mistake in this week's puzzle, that they hadn't included enough information to solve it. This spoken quite casually as he laid the paper down on the table next to where I was sitting. Of course, I was immediately sucked in. You don't know, you don't really know,

---

*He had certain phrases, spoken with almost the metric of verse "We shall See what We shall See"-*

---

what urges take over in a moment like that. Maybe it was just the baseball thing that hooked me. Anyway, as soon as I saw the diamond as a square, those two right triangles jumped right out at me, and in a few minutes, using the Pythagorean Theorem, I had it solved. "Yes," I told my father, "the rubber is about (so many inches, or feet, I forget exactly now) forward of the line from first to third." As I demonstrated the proof, square of the hypotenuse and all, he said nothing. When I'd finished, he took the paper on which I'd worked it out and continued to stare at it for what seemed a long time. Finally, he shook his head, almost as if he had detected an error. Still he didn't say anything. Then he put the paper down and gave me just one little sidelong look as he walked away. "That's right," is all he said, "it's closer to home."

\* \* \*

Daddy had his little store of charm. Little spurts of conviviality and pizzaz that

would bubble out now and then in greetings and light banter when he was out "in public." I think "in public" meant away from the factory or home, the times he felt freer but strangely more obliged to assume a personality. He had certain phrases, spoken with almost the metric of verse—"We shall See what We shall See" — which suggested a more confident and willing engagement with the universe than my father most times gave out. Sometimes his "personality" moments got mixed up with his fumbling sense of propriety. Like when the two women with fur collars and heels came to the door one day. My father had heard the sound of their car on the gravel drive which led down to our house and had caught a peek at them through the curtains as they got out of their car. He stood behind the door, his back quite straight, waiting for the knock. When it came, he opened the door, and before the two women could introduce themselves, he said, "What is the object of your mission?" I think my father realized, in the awkward moment of silence before the women could collect themselves and respond, that he had miserably misfired.

\* \* \*

It is his last year in the island school, which has not as many rooms as the years he has attended, so that first and second grades share a room, as do third and fourth, and fifth and sixth; only the "baby grade", as the older children call it, has its own room, where, looking just licked clean, the babies sit around low tables and color, and sometimes find cause to cry, and drink their half-pints of milk through straws at recess from glass bottles kept cold on the window ledge or the fire escape on winter mornings. If left too long, the milk freezes upward, popping the paper top off the bottle and rising in a perfectly cylindrical white column an inch above the lip.

In his last year in the island school, daddy still has his name and his own teeth, though one of the bottom ones has been chipped. It happened right here in fifth grade. Calvin, a stocky, square-faced boy, hauled off and socked my father right in the mouth as they sat at a table, supposedly sharing a map of the Malay Peninsula. My father, stunned, threw his hand up to his mouth and caught the chip just as he spit it out. I don't know if it was the shock of the unexpected punch or the sight of the chip in his hand that made him cry.

In the room was a framed reproduction of a painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds. An (Continued on page 11)

(*WORK IN SUSPENSION continued from page 10*)

American flag hung from a thin wooden staff attached at a rather nice angle to the door frame. In this room, with its slate boards, black and dusty, not yet become green, and overseen by a wall clock without a red second hand, ticking still, not sweeping the hours down, my father got hit mid-morning I think it was — and he took it. Square in the mouth, and cried. And did not hit Calvin back. So, it makes me wonder all the more about what she said to me about daddy, years and years later. "He doesn't hit," she said, "but don't let him grab you. That's how he does it."

\* \* \*

It is Friday night and I don't know that I am even born yet. Surely a Friday though, and on the jukebox a western song is playing. Not as odd as it seems that in Bill's tonight, here at the edge of the northern wilderness, a western song should be on the jukebox. A country song, I should say, speaking of heartache and lonely nights, lost love in a place without meridian. My mother and father are sitting with another couple I almost recognize. The four of them are squeezed into a wooden booth in a room much longer than it is wide. The lights in the room, appropriately dim, and the smokiness, seem in keeping with the drift of the song, whose words penetrate only in snatches.

I am surprised, and aroused slightly I admit, by the sight of my mother. Neither her petiteness nor the very proper cut of her five-and-dime white blouse distract from some very nice curves. Her complexion and her blueblack hair suggest maybe some Indian blood. But the gestures, the mobility of the face, are decidedly French-Canadian. You can see the others in the booth look to her to keep it rolling and are ready to laugh when she opens her mouth.

My father is wearing a white shirt open at the neck and a standard gray sport coat. A compact, well-knit man, not really young but short of middle age, whose laughter and body movements seem more residual, more "kept up", than truly spontaneous. But it is Friday night after all, and they are "out" together, and he has had a few beers. Something growing and darker in him can have been let go for now. And so my father laughs too, more than he ever would in daylight or on weeknights, I can tell.

I don't recognize him at first, the man who stops by the table to banter and enter in, but I am the son of my father, and right away I don't like him. He laughs in all the right

places, but his eyes, when the conversation turns away from him, sneak hungry glances.

It comes back to me — the curly hair and a certain set of the shoulders — he is the man who will later father a moose-like, slack-jawed son, luckily years younger than myself. He is leaning into the table now, addressing my mother directly in what is meant to pass for playful — including my father every so often with a sidelong wink in his direction.

"I can tell a good dancer when I see one. I bet she's a good one, hunh, Fred? Why don't you dance with her, Fred?" And again to my mother, "Doesn't he like to dance, him?"

The man across the table from my father seems to be trying to give my father a way to ignore the intruder. He keeps talking as if the other man were a temporary inconvenience they will just have to bear. My father is halfway going along with this but a small muscle in his jaw keeps flexing as if he is grinding something with his back teeth.

"Well, a woman like you... she should be dancing, right, Fred? I'm going to play a good song and I want to see you and Fred

---

### *The boys-will-be-boys tone of dismissal...*

---

dancing now when I get back here."

My mother is trying to laugh the whole thing away. As the man gets up to go to the jukebox, he turns back. "You get Fred ready now. If the old man won't dance, I'll have to dance with you myself."

As he moves toward the jukebox, my mother says something in French to the woman opposite her in the booth. It means something like, "I guess Emile (that's the name she uses) has had a few too many." The boys-will-beboys tone of dismissal is meant for my father to pick up on, but he doesn't turn his head in her direction; he is still chewing on something.

Even though my father and his friend both know they're only pretending to talk now, the subject has come round to the mill, not a Friday night subject. My father has apparently given up whatever pretense has kept this Friday night separate from whistles, bosses, and unfair numbers. The talk becomes spiked with obscenities, English and French. A different tone enters in. The women have no choice but to talk between themselves. I can't make out what they are

saying, but there is the sense of filling in.

Which is when Emile arrives at the table. The trip has apparently caught up with him, too much sway in his swagger, but he's caught the jukebox in a down moment and pretty well times his entrance to coincide with the opening bars of his selection.

"I bought some Re-e-e-ed ROses for a Blueooooo LAdy / Sent them to the Sweetest gal in Town..."

"With his right palm, Emile is holding an invisible partner in tight to his chest and, bent forward at the waist, is swinging her around in his best mime of what, in my time, was broadly labeled Foxtrot on high school dance programs.

"Re-e-e-ed ROses," he is crooning into her invisible ear, his own eyes swooning shut. "Okay, blue lady," he says, still shuffling in a little half-circle at the edge of the booth, "on va dancer. Fred, lah, y'l est trop fatigué pour ca, unh Fred? Viens, viens, Eva. On vah y montrez comment faire ça. Ben vientanh! On n'peut paw danser sur Les fesses!"

My father has been chewing on whatever it was for too long. The word "fesses," or backside — but given the plural form in French, seeming to describe more than denote — is the toenail across the line my father needed. In one quick move he jerks himself out of the booth and onto his feet. Emile, who has probably not been clear all night whether he's wanted to fuck or fight, is caught with his jaw hanging open, his left arm still up there over his slightly cocked head, his right hand to his breast in what now seems an awkward salute. Just as he lowers his left arm and straightens himself, my father grips him around the bicep with his right hand. "We don't want you here. Get back where you were or get out."

My father's "where you were," said in a voice at the margin of control, sounds more like "where you came from" and carries with it some very dark insinuation.

For a long moment the abrupt silence in the bar overwhelms even the song from the jukebox, which must still be playing. Emile tries to pivot away from my father's grip but has neglected to plant his feet and almost falls into my father instead. Whether to catch his balance or to lock my father in his grasp, Emile's right arm moves to catch my father around the neck, but my father intercepts it and steps forward with all his weight, shoving Emile backward. Emile's feet can't catch up with his momentum, he lands flat on his ass ten feet down the aisle. (*Continued on page 12*)

## Le Grenier des Souvenances de Norman Beaupré

# “Où es-tu Marie-Ange, Marie-Ange?”

Souvent après trois ans et demi de rubriques avec le “Courier”, je viens à m’apercevoir que les idées et les sujets pour mes écrits tarissent. Alors, il me faut faire un effort extraordinaire pour capter un sujet qui se liera bien à mes rubriques. Je viens de publier mon dernier livre, “Souvenances d’une Enfance Francophone Rêveuse” dans lequel je trouve maintes histoires qui conviennent à mes écrits de journaux. Alors, en voici une que je trouve intéressante et même un peu frisant l’humour. Elle s’intitule, “Où es-tu Marie-Ange, Marie-Ange?” La voici.

Marie-Ange est un nom souvent employé chez nous surtout dans les années après l’émigration de nos ancêtres canadiens-français. Ils ont sans doute emporté ce nom du Québec et ils l’ont plantés fermement et solidement aux États. Moi, j’ai connu Marie-Ange Demers, Marie-Ange Desruisseaux, Marie-Ange DesRoberts, Marie-Ange Lemelin, Marie-Ange Martel et plusieurs autres qui ne me viennent pas à l’idée. On sait bien que le nom simple de Marie fut utilisé dans presque tous les baptêmes des petites filles bébés. On disait que c’était pour honorer la Vierge Marie que l’on donnait le nom de Marie à toutes les petites filles baptisées. Pour les petits garçons c’était le nom de Joseph. Est-ce qu’on donnait le nom de la Vierge Marie à Marie-Ange? C’aurait été Marie Marie-Ange alors. Quelle répétition. D’ailleurs le nom de Marie-Ange avait les deux noms, celui de la Vierge et celui des anges. Un nom vraiment spirituel et transcendant, à mon avis. Les gens de ce temps-là voulaient tout probablement assurer le salut et le futur du bébé baptisé, surtout des petites baptisées avec le nom Marie-Ange.

Avec les années on a commencé à perdre le goût de ce nom parce qu’on avait maintenant les noms des “stars” du cinéma, des télé-romans, et des sports. On recherchait la renommée de ces vedettes afin d’effectuer un reflet sur l’enfant né en pleine modernité. Troy, Rock, Tab, Tammy, Sonya, Molly, et bien d’autres s’ajoutèrent aux noms longtemps employés ou bien ils remplacèrent les noms en décroissance. Marie-Ange en fut un

de ces noms mis de côté pour un nom moins angélique et virginal. J’avais une amie qui s’appelait Marie-Ange et qui voulait changer de nom parce qu’elle ne voulait plus se faire appeler un nom “canuck”, disait-elle. Pourtant sa mère lui disait que son nom venait de la souche canadienne et lui rappelait son héritage. Marie-Ange ne voulait pas entendre parler d’héritage. C’était vieux jeu, disait-elle. Sa mère tenta de la convaincre que son nom faisait partie de son identité et qu’elle perdrait non seulement son prénom français mais son âme qui était trempée dans la francophonie, une francophonie qui lui donnait la vertu et le sens d’être française d’origine et française dans son parler. Elle dit à sa mère qu’elle n’en voulait plus de cela, et qu’elle était américaine née aux États-Unis de l’Amérique du Nord. Marie-Ange, après plusieurs démarches de sa part, changea de prénom. Elle se faisait appeler dorénavant, Barbie, d’après la fameuse poupée aux vêtements multi-genres. Tous ses papiers officiels portaient le nom BARBIE à l’exception de son baptistère que le curé refusa de changer. Il lui dit qu’une fois baptisée, rien ne change surtout le nom donné en héritage par ses parents et son parrain et sa marraine. Il lui dit qu’il ne pouvait pas, il ne voulait pas réinventer un baptême accompli. Elle déchira son baptistère et se fia dorénavant sur le certificat de naissance issu de l’hôtel de ville de son village.

Combien de jeunes filles ne portent plus de noms français chez nous surtout des noms de saints en témoignage des patrons effectués dès la naissance. En tous cas, le nom de Marie-Ange est presque disparu chez nous. Peut-être un jour on redécouvrira l’importance de ce nom et son caractère de francité. On ne change pas de nom comme on ne change pas de peau, dis-je.

On apprend qu’une Marie-Ange a le caractère d’une femme extrêmement agréable. Elle est enjouée, chaleureuse et drôle. Elle se fait appréciée de tous ceux qui croisent son chemin. La communication est son fort. Et puis, on ajoute que Marie-Ange est séduisante au naturel. Voilà quelques

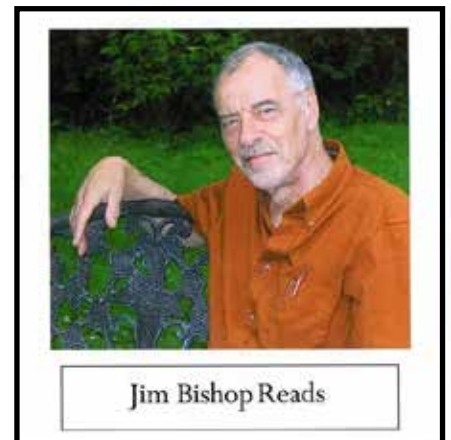
(Suite page 13)

(WORK IN SUSPENSION continued from page 11)

My father and Emile seem equally stunned. For a moment they are frozen, my father standing there, Emile sitting, his legs fully outstretched in the aisle just staring at one another. Emile utters a curse in English. He struggles to right himself just as Bill makes it from behind the bar and steps in front of him. Two guys at the end of the bar swivel in and clamp on.

My father’s friend — christ, my godfather — jumps up and stands in front of my father, who shows no sign of moving anyway. Bill, who has apparently had an eye on the proceedings all night, tells one of the men to get Emile’s coat and escorts him to the door. My father sits down again in the booth. How do I know his legs are shaking, he’s not letting on. My mother is leaning across the booth, trying to say something to him, but he’s looking straight ahead, straight through. The man who will be my godfather does what he can think of to do. He turns to the bar and orders another round. He doesn’t have to raise his voice to make himself heard. The song has stopped playing.

Copyright © 1984 by Jim Bishop  
All rights reserved



Jim Bishop has published a book of his poetry, *Mother Tongue* (Contraband Press, 1975), a CD of his work, *Jim Bishop Reads* (Vox, 2006), see <https://m-etropolis.com/blog/jim-bishop-reads-vox-audio/>, and has edited and introduced a collection of essays by his former student Stephen King and his classmates at UMaine in the late ‘60s, *Hearts in Suspension* (University of Maine Press, 2016). He lives in Bangor, Maine, with his wife Joanna Young and their Golden Retriever puppy, Moxie.

COURIER # 66 Le Grenier des  
Souvenances de Norman Beaupré

## La créativité dès mon bas âge

Plusieurs lecteurs/lectrices me demandent où je pêche toutes mes idées. Je leur dis que ça sort de ma mémoire et de mon imagination. Que toutes mes idées sont le sujet de souvenances mises en arrière de ma tête pour qu'elles, un jour, sortent afin de me munir de sujets pour mes écrits. Croyez-moi ou non, c'est le fait d'un écrivain comme moi qui se met à l'oeuvre pour écrire des textes ou des récits. Je pêche mes idées et ensuite mes écrits de mon réservoir d'expériences alors que je grandissais ici à Biddeford dans les années quarante. Ceci fait longtemps n'est-ce pas? Mes souvenirs sont quelques fois un peu "rouillés" mais ils semblent fort intéresser mes lecteurs/lectrices.

Je dois monter au début de mes expériences d'écrivain et de raconteur alors que je n'avais que huit ans, je crois. J'étais dans la classe de Soeur Dieudonnée au "bébé grade" à l'École Saint-André. La soeur nous avait donné comme travail de classe, un devoir par écrit et nous, les élèves, nous étions tous penchés sur nos cahiers et nous étions absorbés dans notre travail d'écolier. La salle de classe était tout à fait transis de silence. La religieuse passait dans toutes les allées silencieusement alors que le seul son fut le bruissement de sa longue soutane noire sur le plancher. Elle examinait de ses yeux guetteurs chaque cahier où était l'écriture de l'élève en train de faire son devoir. Chaque élève sentait bien sa présence tout près de lui, j'en suis sûr. Soudain, la soeur s'arrêta tout près de moi. Elle prit mon cahier, l'examina, et dit d'une haute voix, "Regardez ce beau cahier, c'est du Beaupré." Je fus un peu gêné de ses belles paroles à mon égard et surtout à l'égard de mon écriture. Ce n'était pas au sujet de la substance de mon écriture mais de l'écriture et la propreté de mon organisation en tant qu'écrivain. J'ai toujours été un enfant bien rangé et propre tout comme maman me l'avait montré, inculqué même dans mon être d'enfant. Dès l'âge où je savais mettre des lettres sur papier, je dois admettre que je ne savais pas être écrivain, qui veut dire, je ne savais pas composer. C'est plus tard que j'ai pris le tour de mettre mes idées sur papier.

Je ne sais pas qu'est-ce que c'est la créativité mais je sais bien qu'est-ce qu'elle fait chez moi. Elle m'autorise d'écrire, c'est-à-dire, de mettre mes idées sur papier [aujourd'hui c'est de mettre ces idées sur l'ordinateur], d'organiser ces idées et de les mettre assez bien rangées afin que les lecteurs/lectrices puissent en capter l'essence. La créativité exerce un don d'écrire et de se faire comprendre. Elle puise ses dons de l'imagination et surtout de l'âme même de l'écrivain, car je sens que ce talent vient de Dieu, le Grand Créateur et le Grand Écrivain suprême. En tant que Créateur, il inspire et puis il donne les talents d'imaginer et de créer à chacun de nous. Il suffit de les faire fructifier et de les nourrir par notre intelligence et notre persévérance. Un écrivain n'est pas né écrivain; il devient écrivain par son talent exercé de jour en jour. Je remercie Dieu à tous les jours de m'avoir donné mes talents. Je ne les ai pas gagnés de moi-même car ils me furent donnés gratuitement. La créativité elle aussi est donnée mais il faut bien la faire fructifier par le domaine de l'éducation et de l'aménagement de l'imagination qui elle sait répondre aux exigences de la créativité. C'est-à-dire, l'imagination grandit dans la pleine puissance de sa collaboration avec chaque talent et chaque vertu de s'établir en tant qu'être humain. Nous avons tous des talents et nous avons tous de l'imagination. Il suffit de les trouver au-dedans de nous car ils existent. C'est vrai que chacun d'entre nous nous en avons en différente mesure, mais ils existent. Il ne faut pas les cacher avec de la fausse humilité ou de la gêne. Le Bon Dieu Créateur ne voudait certainement pas que nous les éliminions ou de les faire mourir sous l'influence de la passivité ou de la négligence.

Je remonte donc au très début de ma carrière d'écrivain. La première fois que j'ai mis mes idées sur papier pour un autre, c'est la fois où j'ai pris l'essor de participer dans un petit concours pour le "Reader's Digest" au sujet des expériences vécues. C'était un court essai qui se portait sur mes expériences avec un militaire que j'avais connu dans la réserve. Je ne me rappelle pas de son nom. Il avait été rétrogradé de sergent au grade de "Private" car on lui avait enlevé son rang mais pas sa fierté d'homme. Il était toujours joyeux et plein de vie. Je l'admirais beaucoup et j'ai donc voulu écrire à propos de lui. Mon entrée ou ma participation dans ce concours fut issue de ma volonté d'écrire et, on sait bien, de gagner une petite somme d'argent. On rejeta mon essai mais on m'en-

voya une lettre me disant d'essayer encore puisque j'avais du talent. J'ai encore cette lettre qui date des années cinquante. J'ai refusé de laisser aller mon talent d'écrivain et avec les années je l'ai fait fructifier et par l'éducation et mes expériences vécues.

Mes expériences dans l'éducation continuèrent au niveau du secondaire au Juvénat des Frères du Sacré-Coeur de Winthrop, Maine. Nous étions affiliés à l'École secondaire Saint-Dom's de Lewiston d'où j'ai reçu mon diplôme en 1952. Je me souviens d'un essai/histoire que j'avais écrit dans une de mes classes d'anglais. J'avais choisi d'écrire sur la fable de La Fontaine ou d'Ésope à propos du lièvre et la tortue. J'ai voulu lui donner une version dramatique, genre d'histoire racontée par un observateur. J'ai fait parler les deux bêtes et je leur ai donné à chacun une vie. J'ai cru bon mon essai de donner de la vie à mes écrits. Si bien que mon confrère d'à côté de moi en classe m'a demandé de lire ce que j'avais écrit. Il trouva mon essai bien écrit et bien imaginé. Et puis, je reçus une très bonne note de mon professeur. Il y a eu un très long hiatus entre mes années du secondaire

(Suite page 14)

*"Où es-tu Marie-Ange,  
Marie-Ange?" suite de page 12)*

qualités qu'on observe d'elle. Beau caractère et belle personnalité. C'est dommage qu'il y en ait de moins en moins des Marie-Ange. Peut-être il faudrait en fabriquer d'une manière ou d'une autre. Où es-tu Marie-Ange, Marie-Ange? La Francophonie a besoin de toi et ton nom.

[Et bien mes lecteurs/lectrices, celle-ci est ma dernière rubrique après trois ans et demi de travail de journal populaire. Je vous souhaite la bonne aventure de la lecture en français et peut-être je vous reviendrai un jour. Merci de votre persévérance et de votre amabilité.] AUREVOIR!

*Norman Beaupré est natif de Biddeford et il a enseigné plus de trente ans à l'Université de la Nouvelle-Angleterre. Son doctorat vient de l'Université Brown. Le Docteur Beaupré a beaucoup voyagé en France et ailleurs en plus d'avoir pris deux congés sabbatiques à Paris. Il est l'auteur de vingt et un livres publiés en français et en anglais. Sa dernière oeuvre s'intitule, "Souvenances d'une Enfance Francophone Rêveuse", un recueil d'une trentaine de contes et d'histoires qui sortent de son imagination active.*

# The Woman Who Persisted Against Maine's Political Machine

March 11, 2018 Lewiston-Auburn, Maine, Politics, Women

**By James Myall**

*"I hear you're thinking of running for the House. I can tell you right now they you're not going to win. Now, if you're interested in politics, you should start by joining the County Democratic Women's Club. They're getting ready for a card party as a fund raiser. You can help them set the tables. That's where you start."*

That was Georgette Bérubé's introduction to Maine state politics in 1970. Although women had been serving in the legislature ever since women gained the right to vote, her candidacy was still something of a novelty fifty years later. This was especially true in Lewiston's Democratic Party, which was dominated by men. A classic "good old boys club," as Bérubé herself described it. The city had never sent a woman to the state house before, and wouldn't elect a woman as mayor until Lillian Caron's bid in 1975.

Franco social clubs around town.

At the head of the party in Lewiston, and indeed the state, was Louis Jalbert, who had called Berube with the ominous message one evening. Such was Jalbert's political clout that he was known as "Mr Democrat." When he made "suggestions," party members took notice. In her autobiography, Bérubé alleged that the Lewiston machine was mobilized against her in that first run, with sheriff's deputies taking down lawn signs at dusk, and supportive businesses threatened with losing their licenses if they openly endorsed "that broad."

a call from Jalbert. He was told to "keep the little woman at home to take care of the kiddies." Instead, he told the veteran legislator to tell Georgette that to her face. He was sticking with his wife. Bérubé alleged that Jalbert tried to follow up on his threat years later by having Gerry fired from his job.

Gerry, along with Georgette's brother, Maurice, supported her throughout that first campaign, including replacing lawn signs as fast as her opponents could remove them. Her mother was more wary when told of Georgette's plans to run – "why would you want to do that? They're not honest people!" Georgette's father had died when she was young, but her experience with Maurice, of running the family business (Beauparlant's Furniture) may have contributed to her sense of self-confidence.

Undaunted by the overt hostility from the establishment, Bérubé ran a grassroots campaign, pressing the flesh with voters across the city (before 1978, Maine's cities and large towns elected multiple representatives at large instead of by wards). Even gruff mill workers were won over by her earnest efforts. "Une femme? Pourquoi pas?" said one prospective voter. Georgette's campaigning paid off, and she finished third in the primary of 14 Democrats, enough to take her to the general election, where democrats were elected to all six of Lewiston's state house seats that year. Of the six Lewiston Democrats, Georgette finished first that November (besting Jalbert by a single vote).

*(Continued on page 15)*

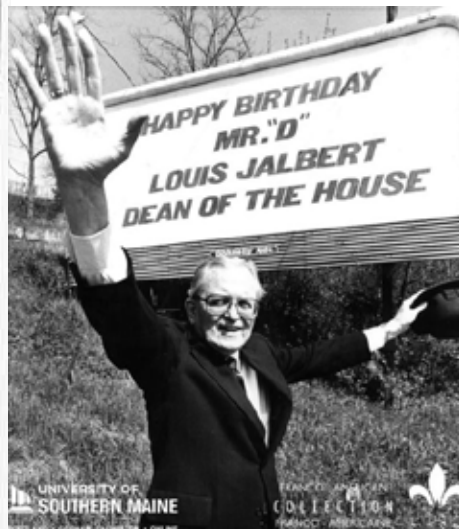
*(La créativité dès mon bas âge suite de page 13)*

et mes années universitaires. Je vous parlerai de cette transition et des mes écrits publiés dans le prochain numéro.

*Le Grenier des Souvenances de Norman paraît toutes les deux semaines et ces articles sont basées sur les souvenirs de Norman Beaupré alors qu'il grandissait à Biddeford dans les années 1930 et 1940. Ils sont ancrés dans les expériences culturelles franco-américaines. Le Docteur Beaupré a son doctorat de l'Université Brown. Il a enseigné plus de trente ans à l'Université de la Nouvelle-Angleterre avant de prendre sa retraite en l'an 2000. Il a ensuite voyagé considérablement et a écrit des romans et d'autres livres en anglais et en français.*



Georgette Bérubé, 1981. Image: Maine Historical Society / Maine Memory Network



Louis Jalbert, ca. 1980. Image: University of Southern Maine, Franco-American Collection.

By the 1970s, Franco Americans dominated the Democratic Party in Lewiston, and the city was such a Democratic stronghold for most of the 20th century that the party ran city politics. In fact, Francos ran something of a political "machine" in Lewiston before WW2, in the mold of similar operations in Chicago, Boston, or New York. At least some of the exclusion of women was probably due to the fact that politicking took place in the male only

Georgette was not so easily dissuaded. As she later recalled, she wanted to "make policy, not coffee." In fact, part of what had spurred her to run in the first place was a feeling that some local politicians were either corrupt or negligent. Presumably this introduction from Jalbert only confirmed that suspicion.

What she lacked in support from local politicians ("what would a woman know about politics?" one told her) however, she gained at home. Her husband, Gerry, also received



*(The Woman Who Persisted Against  
Maine's Political Machine continued from  
page 14)*



*John McKernan canvassing paper workers  
in Westbrook, 1982. Image: Maine Historical  
Society/Maine Memory Network.*

Likely encouraged by this popular mandate, Georgette built a reputation as an independently minded lawmaker in Augusta, breaking with her party on many issues. One of the first was the set of electoral reforms pushed by Republicans in 1972, which eliminated straight ticket voting via the “big box” system, abolished the at-large districts. Since both these mechanisms were thought to advantage Democrats, Georgette’s crossing of party lines was a big deal. Nonetheless she saw it as a way to improve accountability for legislators. Likewise, she was one of few incumbents who openly supported the 1996 constitutional change to impose term limits on state representatives, even though it led to her being forced out.

Given her experiences in her first run for office, Georgette may have understood more than most the value of disrupting the established political order.

She would continue to make waves with unorthodox alliances. She was ostracized from the local party when she supported Republican Bill Cohen’s successful 1978 effort to unseat the incumbent US Senator, Democrat Bill Hathaway. Not only did Berube endorse Cohen, she actively encouraged him to enter the race against her fellow Democrat with a press conference at her house! That earned her a primary challenge in her own district (which she easily saw off) and demands she be stripped of her committee chairmanship. Democratic House Speaker

John Martin, however, defended her to his own caucus members.

The rebellious streak culminated with an unsuccessful 1982 primary challenge to incumbent Democratic Governor Joseph Brennan. Along with Republican Sherry Huber (who also lost her primary bid), Bérubé was the first woman to run for Governor of Maine.

Bérubé attributed her centrism to a combination of being genuinely open to working with Republicans and concern about what she saw as the leftward drift of her fellow Democrats. Looking back, she said she “felt that my party, the party of Roosevelt, Truman, and Kennedy, was bent on a more liberal course that the majority of enrolled Democrats wanted.” Change, she thought, “must come from within.” She was also a fiscal hawk, an outlook she attributed to her Franco-American background:

*“They worked for a pittance  
in the textile mills, and yet they  
managed to accumulate real estate  
wealth simply by hard work. So as  
a result, they were conservative,  
fiscally conservative.”*

As chair of the legislature’s audit committee, she oversaw efforts to trim government waste.

Her approach and philosophy certainly seemed to resonate with her constituents. Bérubé served 13 combined terms in the Maine house and senate, a record for any woman. (John Martin holds the all-time record, with more than 40 years of legislative service).

Bérubé’s long career represented a shift in Maine state politics. When first elected, she was one of just 14 women at the state house. Today there are more than 60 (about a third of the total membership). As a centrist from Lewiston, she foreshadowed the city’s drift away from being reliably Democratic. She also represents a similar trend among Franco-Americans statewide.

When Bérubé passed away in 2005, she was praised by leaders from across Maine’s political spectrum, including Susan Collins, Mike Michaud, and John Baldacci. Not bad for the woman who, half a century earlier, had been told to stick to setting the table.

Sources: The bulk of the material for this piece comes from Georgette Bérubé’s 2005 autobiography, *Thank You, Georgette*, part of which is reproduced in *Voyages: A Franco-American Reader* (Tilbury House: 2007). Bérubé also participated in a 1999 oral history interview housed Bates College.

# Jackman – An International Town Built by (and for) Immigrants

*January 25, 2018 Alcohol,  
Home, Jackman, Ku Klux Klan,  
Logging, Maine, Religion*

*By James Myall*

The remote western Maine town of Jackman, has been in the headlines recently for some of the worst reasons. On Friday it was revealed that the town’s new town manager held white supremacist and racist views. What makes this revelation particularly troubling is that Jackman, because of its status as a border community, has long been a destination for newcomers and immigrants.

From its very beginning, Jackman has been intricately connected with its neighbors in Canada. The first permanent settlers in the town followed the construction of the Old Canada Road from Augusta to Quebec City. Although the route had been in use for decades, perhaps centuries, previously (including by Native Americans), settlement along the road only followed its formal laying out and clearing by the state of Maine and the colony of lower Canada in 1829.

The first inhabitants of Jackman – which was named for one of the captains to survey the road – eked out a living through hunting and timber harvesting but primarily taking advantage of the plantation’s location along major new England-Canada “highway.” As commerce grew along the new road, Jackman and the other communities on the road grew in size and importance.

Some of that commerce was illicit, including in alcohol during Maine’s long dry period. The posting of a US customs agent at the border did little to stem this, as a newspaper reported in 1885:

*(Continued on page 16)*

*(Jackman – An International Town Built by (and for) Immigrants continued from page 15)*

*Pack peddlers and others, after traveling several miles in Maine can, on coming to the custom house, simply make a detour around the official residence and then keep on, unmolested.*

The brazen flaunting of the regulations, in spirit, if not in law, is exemplified by the “line house” which straddles both sides of the border and was a haven for dubious characters and activities. It was first erected by a Mr Jones (described as a counterfeiter and rum-runner), but later operated by Amédé Rancourt and, after his death, by his widow Clementine. This flow of goods was inevitably company by the movement of people. The Old Canada Road was the route taken by all Maine’s earliest Franco American immigrants. Although most of them made their way to larger towns, such as Skowhegan and Waterville, there are also signs that some French Canadians settled in Jackman in the early decades.



*Jackman Line House, 1913 (Zilla Holden/Ruth Reed/Francomaine.org)*

There were certainly a number of Canadian-born settlers among the town’s early families, the majority of whom were originally of Irish and Catholic origin. Being a Catholic in the 19th century New England was not easy, not only were new arrivals often isolated from their home communities, but they also faced hostility and prejudice from some of their new neighbors in much the same way that Muslims are regarded by “right “today. The missionary journey of Moïse Fortier from Québec to this part of Maine in illustrates some of those challenges.

It’s clear from Jackman’s official

histories, as well as unidentified newspaper articles, that Franco-American immigration to Jackman gathered pace with the boom in the lumbering industry in the region, shortly followed by the arrival of the railroad. Then, as today, many of the early migrants were seasonal workers came to Maine for the hay office early in the summer, would return to the back for the fall and be back again in the winter for the lumbering season:

*These industrious people are now returning from their annual incursion into Maine in pursuit of employment in the hay fields. They strike at first for Waterville, as they say, and will not stop short of it. As the haying season recedes northward they work back along the road, reaching their homes by mid August, still in time to take care of their own hay crops.*

The migrant worker life – then, as now was hard:

*They come for a little money, and get not much, fifteen to twenty days being the average length of their employment here....But it costs them little or nothing to live on the way. They come over the border on buckboards, or rude wagons, drawn by one horse, with from three to five men on each, but they lighten the load by invariably walking up the hills. They patronize no hotels, bring-*

*ing their food with them, camping by the roadside and turning their horses out to graze. They travel by night and throw themselves on the ground to sleep as the sun rises, that they may profit by its warmth.*

1884

But despite their rough and ready appearance, journalists painted a favorable picture of the newcomers.

*It is not unusual to see a family from four to eight children, fenced in, on the rear end of a buckboard, without hats or shoes, tugging away at a lump of maple sugar, with some oat bread sandwiched in, while their beloved parents occupy the front seat and each take their turn at wielding the lash. In this way they get rid of their only “surplus” in Canada and help to fill up the void in the hearts of our great and free loving people of the United States*

1889

The arrival of the railroad through Jackman made this journey easier but it also want families to come anymore to settle on a permanent basis. As small town as it was (even at its height in the 1910’s, the population of Jackman and the surrounding townships only consisted of some 1,500 people), Jackman even had its own designated “Little Canada” section. Peter Kiah (aka Thibodeau) was one of the first to build a house in that area, operating a boarding house sometimes called the “Franco-American House.”

By 1892, the population of French Canadians and other Catholics in the region was large enough that a pastor was sent to establish a formal parish for the first time. Reverend Joseph Forest, a French Canadian, would be the community’s curé until his death 48 years later. Due largely to Father Forest’s efforts, the community rapidly solidified, building in a short succession a church (1893), a school (1914), and a convent (1907) for fifteen nuns of the Order of St. Joseph of Lyon, who were invited from *(Continued on page 17)*

*(Jackman – An International Town Built by (and for) Immigrants continued from page 16)*

France. In 1952, the sisters even helped create a hospital for the town.

Relations between the town's Yankee and Franco populations were not necessarily easy. Plenty of anecdotal evidence and individual testimony points to scuffles and many of the same tensions as seen in other Maine towns, though written accounts are hard to come by. The influence of the Ku Klux Klan in nearby Greenville points to the area's troubled history.



Father Joseph Forest, 1905. Image: *La Presse (QC)*, June 6

Father Forest was also involved in the modernization of the town his role as president of Jackman Water Power and Light Company. While the involvement of the parish priest this might seem unusual to Americans, it was very much in the tradition of the curé's involvement in all matters of parish life in Quebec. In the days of New France, the priest had acted as joint landlord of the parish with the secular authority, the seigneur. Along with Father Forest, the officers of the company were all Franco-Americans, including Forest's younger brother, Arthur, who was also ordained, and served as Forest's vicar in the parish. The Water Company ran into trouble when it attempted to draw water from, and drain sewage to, the same body of water outside the town, leading to contamination of the water supply. The Maine Public Utilities Commission, investigating the problem, noted that Forest "did not create the plant for the purposes of profit but rather to the end that his people and the other people of Jackman might have a reasonably good supply of water for domestic

and municipal use."

This long history still resonated today. Jackman, like the rest of Maine, is often wrongly described as "monocultural" or "homogeneous." By one measure, Maine is certainly the "whitest" state in the US. This surface measure, however, hides greater diversity, and plays into the hands of racists like the former town manager. According to the US Census, nearly half of Jackman's residents identify as French or French-Canadian; another one in five of Irish descent. To assume, as the "alt-right" likes to, that there's a distinction between "western" immigrants and "others" is no less accurate than the distinction between white and non-white, especially historically, as the experiences of Franco Americans shows.

The Town of Jackman its residents quickly denounced the white supremacist in their midst and fired him from this position of authority. For a town built on welcoming the unknown and building links across borders, you'd expect nothing less.

*Sources: Most of the information for this article, including the unattributed newspaper articles, comes from The History of the Moose River Valley, published by the Jackman Bicentennial Book Committee in 1976.*



*About James Myall: While I currently work for an Augusta-based non-profit, I spent four years as the Coordinator of the Franco-American Collection at the University of Southern Maine. In 2015, I co-authored "The Franco-Americans of Lewiston-Auburn," a general history of that population from 1850 to the present. I was also a consultant for the State Legislative Task Force on Franco-Americans in 2012. I live in Topsham with my wife and two young daughters.*

<http://myall.bangordailynews.com/>

## Merci to Marguerite d'Youville and the Grey Nuns

January 6, 2018 *Franco-American News and Culture* Androscoggin County, Grey Nuns

**By Juliana L'Heureux**

Visiting the d'Youville Pavilion located on the St. Mary's Medical Center campus in Lewiston, Maine, was a pleasing opportunity to observe families who were visiting loved ones and friends, being well cared for at this facility, during the frigidly cold New Year's holiday.



*Marguerite d'Youville commemorative poster located in the foyer of the d'Youville Pavillion of St. Mary's Medical Center*

A friend was temporarily a patient at the St. Mary's d'Youville Pavillion, while receiving extended rehabilitation care, following orthopedic surgery. The visit raised a renewed awareness about the health facility's name. In fact, the "d'Youville", as it is locally called, is an important reminder about the compassionate contributions of the Grey Nuns and their founder, Saint Marguerite d'Youville, provided to the Lewiston and Auburn areas of Maine. They *(Continued on page 18)*

*(Merci to Marguerite d'Youville and the Grey Nuns continued from page 17)*

were a French-Canadian religious order that dedicated their energies and resources to improving the well being of Androscoggin County's people, particularly for the 18th and 19th century immigrants, who came from Canada.

In the foyer of the health care center, a picture of Saint Marguerite d'Youville caught my eye. It was a commemoration poster, recognizing the 25 year anniversary of the beatification of Marguerite d'Youville. She was the foundress of the "Grey Nuns", the friendly name of the religious order formally named The Sisters of Charity of Montreal. It was their dedicated care for French Canadian immigrants and the people in the community that created St. Mary's Hospital, as well as other charitable institutions in Androscoggin County. Saint Marguerite d'Youville (1701-1777) was canonized by Pope John-Paul II in 1990, the first native-born Canadian to be declared a saint. In fact, the historic poster is a reminder about her journey toward canonization, when she was declared to be "blessed", one of the steps toward canonization..



*Saint Marguerite d'Youville was canonized a saint in the Roman Catholic Church in 1990, by Pope John Paul II*

Her biography describes how she was born Marie-Marguerite Dufrost de Lajemmerais in 1701, at Varennes, Quebec. Her father died when she was a young girl. Despite her family's poverty, at age 11 she was able to attend the Ursuline convent in Quebec City for two years, before returning home to teach her younger brothers and sisters. On August 12, 1722 at Notre-Dame Basilica in Montreal, she married François d'Youville, a bootlegger who sold liquor illegally to Indi-

ans in exchange for furs. They had six children before 1730, when her husband died. By age 30 she had suffered the loss of her father, husband and four of her six children, who died in infancy. Marguerite experienced a religious renewal during her marriage. She overcame many challenges to organize the religious sisters and to provide health care for all who needed help. Saint D'Youville's vision to provide health care for everyone, regardless of their ability to pay, is credited with giving rise to the Canadian health care system, as it provides universal coverage for all their nation's citizens today.

Lewiston's Franco-Americans recognize the Grey Nuns as the dedicated group of religious women who came to the area from Quebec in 1878, to provide charitable social services, health care and children's welfare programs. There was a need for these caring programs to be available to the thousands of French-Canadian immigrants who were moving to the Lewiston area, to find work in the area's mills.

A permanent exhibit about the history of the Grey Nuns and their services to the people of the Androscoggin County is open to the public at the Franco-American Heritage Center, on Cedar Street, in Lewiston.

The first Grey Nuns arrived in Lewiston in 1878 at the behest of the Reverend Pierre Hevey, a Roman Catholic priest and native of Saint Hyacinth, Quebec, who saw the many dire needs of the local working poor, the majority of whom were from French-speaking from Canada. Although the first French-speaking immigrants to the industrial cities of Maine arrived in the 1860s, French-Canadians seeking work came in increasing waves from the 1880s until the 1930s, mostly via the Grand Trunk Railroad..

In 1878, Father Hevey saw the rising need to help people living in Lewiston's Little Canada, where the immigrants established French-speaking communities. He turned to the Sisters of Charity, of Saint Hyacinth, Québec for good reason. Marguerite d'Youville's own life experience as a fatherless child, a neglected wife, a widow and single mother supported the mission of the Sisters of Charity ~ to serve the poor in whatever way necessary.

In her lifetime, she worked with disabled soldiers, the elderly, the mentally ill, foundlings and orphans. When the Sisters of Charity of Saint Hyacinth, Québec accepted Father Hevey's request, they were willing to take on new tasks such as education, in addi-

tion to their work as sister-nurses. The Grey Nuns grew the institutions they founded as Lewiston's community developed.

Mary Rice-DeFosse is a Bates College professor and a Board member of the Franco-American Collection, a special archives located at the University of Southern Maine Lewiston Auburn College, in Lewiston. She researched the biographies of people who were helped by the Grey Nuns. Her interviews are taped in an audio-visual history of the Grey Nuns- "Les Soeurs Grises: Elles Son Venues-Elles Ont Servi", a documentary and oral history about the Sisters, available for viewing at the Franco exhibit, on Cedar Street.

*Merci to Saint Marguerite d'Youville and the Sisters of Charity of Montreal and Saint Hyacinth!*



**About Juliana L'Heureux:**

*Juliana L'Heureux is a free lance writer who publishes news, blogs and articles about Franco-Americans and the French culture. She has written about the culture in weekly and bi-weekly articles, for the past 27 years.*

<http://francoamerican.bangordailynews.com/author/jlheureux/>



# Au revoir, Jerry

*Patrick Lacroix*

C'est par une sombre et froide journée de décembre que nous avons fait halte à Mountain View. Avec l'aide d'un bénévole qui tient aux affaires du cimetière, mon épouse et moi avons découvert le lieu d'inhumation de Jerry, un homme trépassé bien avant notre temps. Plusieurs générations nous séparent; il est pourtant devenu « mononc Jerry ». Voilà la pierre : avec ma *better half*, je me suis arrêté. Longtemps ignoré, puis oublié, enfin Jerry recevait des visiteurs. Enfin, à notre manière, nous communions avec nos aïeux.

Ce qui nous est parvenu de la vie et de la mort de Jerry Cross est tragique — c'est ce qui nous a poussé à le trouver, comme si nous lui devions ce qu'il n'avait obtenu de son vivant ou encore à sa mort. Mais, avec lui, ce n'était pas simplement la découverte d'une responsabilité morale. Avec lui, nous avons découvert une tranche de la diaspora canadienne-française trop souvent occultée. L'histoire de ce personnage nous a permis d'aborder les zones liminales, aussi ignorées et oubliées, de la franco-américanité.

Jerry Cross, c'est d'abord Jérémie Lacroix, né à West Brome, dans les Cantons de l'Est, en 1855. Sa génération et celle qui la précède témoignent des débuts de la « grande saignée » : une première vague d'expatriation chez les Canadiens français. Au cours des années 1840, le nombre de Canadiens qui s'éloignent de leur écoumène ancestral, dans la vallée du Saint-Laurent, croît rapidement. Les Lacroix sont de ce nombre. Ils quittent les environs de Saint-Hyacinthe et de Sorel pour s'établir aux confins des seigneuries, à Saint-Césaire. Les parents de Jerry, Edouard et Zoé, sont parmi les premiers francophones à pousser cette frontière culturelle dans le sud des « Townships ». Bien avant la guerre de Sécession, l'écoumène s'étend aussi vers le sud, la frontière politique entre Canada et Etats-Unis ne pouvant contenir l'émigration. A sa naissance, quatre et peut-être cinq oncles paternels de Jerry habitent le Vermont.

Jeune homme, Jerry s'exile à son tour. Il quitte la ferme familiale pour œuvrer comme journalier et accumuler les moyens qui lui permettront de fonder son propre foyer. A l'âge de dix-neuf ans, en 1875, il épouse à St. Albans, au Vermont, Sophie Brosseau, native de l'endroit. Le comté de

Franklin, occupant le nord-ouest de l'état, comprend une population canadienne substantielle dès 1850. C'est toujours le cas vingt ans plus tard. En 1900, on retrouve les Lacroix à Lowell — mais non la *spindle city* du Massachusetts. Alors qu'une vaste chaîne migratoire lie les villes de la périphérie industrielle de Boston au Québec, la migration entre régions rurales connexes se poursuit : c'est à Lowell au Vermont que s'implantent Jerry et Sophie. Comme bien d'autres Canadiens français, ils poursuivent aux Etats-Unis la vocation agricole de leurs ancêtres. La famille est à Coventry, près de la pointe sud du lac Memphrémagog, en 1910. La fille aînée, Clara, veuve bien que toujours dans la trentaine, est revenue au bercail. Elle se fiancera à un homme de Newport au printemps suivant.



La famille se déplace encore. En 1917, Jerry vit auprès de son fils Fred à Killingly, dans le Connecticut. Chez les historiens, cette région est mieux connue pour l'affaire de Danielson, une confrontation entre les partisans de la survivance et l'évêque de Hartford. Dans les années 1890, l'élite franco-américaine de l'endroit milite pour un curé de sa nationalité et une plus large part pour l'enseignement en français à l'école catholique. Tout cela est bien loin de la vie étatsunienne des Lacroix, qui ne semblent pas hésiter à se dire La Cross ou Cross. Jerry a grandi dans le sud des Cantons de l'Est lorsque la population était encore à grande majorité anglo-saxonne; comme son épouse et ses enfants, il a baigné dans un environnement biculturel. Leur appartenance à l'Eglise catholique, cet autre champ de bataille des apôtres de la survivance, est également loin d'être zélée. Lorsque Clara marie Arthur Barbeau en 1911, c'est au *parsonage* de l'église congrégationaliste de Coventry. Sont-ils parmi les traîtres contre qui les élites québécoises ont tant fait couler leur encre? Avant la survivance, les Cross devait penser à leur survie, ce qui a dicté

leurs choix. Et peut-être ont-ils préféré la vie aux Etats-Unis — ce n'étaient pas là des idéologues nationalistes et on le comprend en voyant leurs humbles circonstances.

En 1917, à la veille de l'entrée des Etats-Unis dans la Première Guerre mondiale, la législature du Connecticut autorise un recensement des ressources de l'état. Nous en retirons enfin un portrait de Jerry. Il est alors cultivateur qu'on dit âgé de 63 ans (62, en réalité); homme qui, de ses 5'7" et 150 livres, est de modeste stature. Il sait mener une équipe de chevaux, mais les machines à vapeur, la télégraphie, l'électricité et l'automobile sont toutes au-delà de son expérience. Fred, pour sa part, appartient à un nouveau monde : suite à la guerre, il sera ouvrier dans une filature. Eventuellement, il retournera au Vermont et reprendra son occupation agricole.

Jerry et son épouse (on doit croire qu'elle l'a accompagné au Connecticut) retournent dans le nord du Vermont probablement à l'automne 1917. C'est à ce moment qu'une fracture se produit. Sophie Cross quitte. Comment expliquer cette séparation du couple, après plus de quarante ans de mariage? Pour l'instant, l'histoire ne nous le dit. Madame Cross emménage auprès de la fille aînée et du gendre. Ils semblent habiter à Newport un certain temps. Dès 1921, ils sont dans la vallée du Saint-Laurent. Sophie décède à Saint-Lambert quelques années plus tard.

Et Jerry? Voilà l'aspect tragique. Seul et semblant avoir vieilli au-delà de ses jours, il emménage chez les Bousquet à Lowell. Le 6 juin 1918, il décide de son sort. *The Burlington Free Press* rapporte les faits : « *Jerry Cross, aged about 70 years, committed suicide last Thursday morning by hanging himself . . . At breakfast he appeared as usual, going from the house, directly after the meal, to the barn, where he committed the deed* ». Il imite ainsi ce qu'un autre résident du village, Truman Lockwood, a fait six mois plus tôt, dans des circonstances très semblables. *The Monitor*, publié à Barton, précise, « *being in poor health [Jerry Cross] became despondent and committed suicide Thursday . . . His family has been separated for some time and none of the near relatives were able to attend* ». C'est le ministre congrégationaliste qui voit à son inhumation.

Cent ans plus tard, que reste-t-il de Jerry Cross? Si la dernière année de son existence offre toujours de nombreuses (Suite page 21)

# He Went About Doing Good

© 2017, Suzanne Beebe

On upper Merrimack Street in Lowell, not far from the splendid city hall that stands at the edge of downtown, you will see a former church building that was once the home of the first French-Canadian parish outside the downtown area. In front of the church you will see a large statue of the parish's founding priest, Fr. André Garin. If you look closer, you will see engraved on the pedestal his dates of birth and death and the words "He went about doing good." And below those words you will see the words "Erected by the people of Lowell."

The two sentences are intimately connected, of course. While he lived, Fr. Garin did so much good for so many in Lowell that when he died, not only Catholics and others of Lowell's immigrant communities, but members of the city's Yankee establishment as well contributed to this memorial dedicated to one man's leadership and love.

André Garin was born in France in 1822, entered the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1841, was sent as a missionary to Quebec in 1844, was ordained a priest there in 1845, and spent 13 years ministering to native peoples as far north as James Bay and as far east as the outer bank of Gulf St. Lawrence. Traveling much of the time by canoe, he encountered physical hardships and danger, mastered English and Cree, and helped write and publish devotional books and a catechism for use with the Cree people. In a subsequent five-year assignment at Plattsburgh, New York, he began to demonstrate his considerable skills in bringing people together— particularly French-speaking and English-speaking Catholics — to create Christian communities and institutions. Later, in Buffalo, he again proved masterful in establishing trust, reconciling divisions, and finding ways to get things done in pursuit of his goals and vision.

He was ready for Lowell — the city of ever-expanding textile mills and an ever-growing immigrant population to serve them. When Bishop John Williams of Boston asked the Oblates of Mary Immaculate for priests to serve the French-Canadian as well as Irish Catholics of Lowell, Fr. Garin was sent with a companion to begin this

major mission of his life. In April of 1868 — 150 years ago this April — he arrived in the city to preach a mission for French Canadians at St. Patrick's, the historic Irish parish in Lowell's Acre neighborhood, and he never left.

What did he do for almost 30 years in Lowell? With contributions from the French-Canadian mill workers and their families, he bought a former Unitarian church building in downtown Lowell and began the first French-Canadian parish in the city: St. Joseph's. Negotiating legal and institutional obstacles of every kind, he purchased sufficient land and raised sufficient funds to supervise construction of Immaculate Conception church and its parish school on the east side of Merrimack St. for the mostly Irish Catholics living there. He added worship space to St. Joseph's, then formed a second French-Canadian parish, St. Jean Baptiste, and initiated construction of the church of that name where his statue now resides. He had already built schools for the French in the Little Canada neighborhood where St. Jean Baptiste was erected. He began mutual aid and insurance societies for the French Canadians, and purchased land for a cemetery in Chelmsford to receive their dead. He founded a church in the neighboring town of Billerica. He responded to requests for Oblate priests to preach missions throughout New England. And always, he was a pastor to his people, whether French-Canadian or not. (Disclosure: he presided at the wedding of my maternal grandmother's parents.)

Wherever he served, he won people over with kindness, respect, and an ability to see and respond to the other's point of view. Whatever his goal, he pursued it with energy and a refusal to be sidetracked, derailed, or discouraged. He is quoted as saying, "One must take the weather as it comes, the people as they are, and money when it is available..." He knew how to do all three and was loved for the charm with which he did it.

On the 50th anniversary of his entering the Oblates, a parade that included parish societies from throughout and beyond Lowell marched through the city in his honor. At his death in February of 1895, an estimated 30,000 people filed past his open casket at St. Jean Baptiste Church. On the day of his funeral, many of Lowell's businesses closed their doors, and the streets through which the funeral cortege passed were draped in black bunting. Archbishop Williams presided at



the funeral Mass, numerous clergy from as far away as Canada attended (as did the mayor of Lowell, its city council, and many of its wealthy and influential citizens), and almost all of Lowell's French Canadian citizens were there to say goodbye to their "Bon Père." The suggestion was floated that day that a statue be erected in his honor, and so it happened. A committee was formed; money was donated by Catholics and non-Catholics alike; and less than two years later, with its unveiling on October 22 of 1896, the statue stood proudly outside St. Jean Baptiste Church on upper Merrimack St.

It was a different time and a different city, of course. The ethnic groups of that day continue to fade away with the deaths of their elderly and the assimilation and moving away of their young. Newer ethnic groups have replaced them. St. Jean Baptiste parish no longer exists, its church building now converted for secular use. But Père Garin's statue remains, with its epigraph taken from the apostle Peter's description of Jesus in Acts 10:38: "He went about doing good."

Not a bad summary of any man's life anywhere, anytime.

*Information in this article can be found in the books *The Man Lowell Remembered* (a translation and editing by Fr. Lucien Sawyer, OMI, of the book *L'Inoubliable Fondateur*, by Fr. Gaston Carriere, OMI) and *Saint Jean Baptiste and the Franco-Americans of Lowell, Massachusetts*, by Fr. Richard Santerre (translated from the French by Claire Quintal and Fr. Lucien Sawyer, OMI). Both books can be obtained by calling St. Joseph Shrine in Lowell at 978-458-6346.*

## To André-Marie Garin, Le Bon Père

You went about doing good — the  
 Monument inscription says so  
 Beneath the statue of you raised  
 So eagerly by citizens of Lowell:  
 Not just the French, not only Catholics,  
 But all those who watched you, year  
 After year for almost thirty years  
 Extend yourself to all — both rich  
 And poor — you'd come to love and know.

They saw the threadbare coat you wouldn't  
 Throw away. They heard the sermons  
 Preached with care to touch faint hearts.  
 They saw you tireless in planning,  
 Building, gathering funds to meet  
 The needs of people seeking new  
 Lives in a new land— not always  
 Welcomed by those who came before.

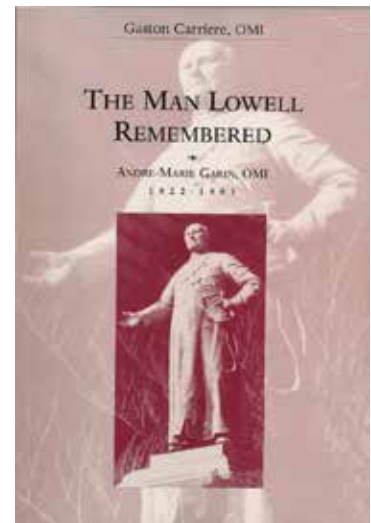
You served your Christ and gentle Mary,  
 Whose name you bore along with that  
 Of Andrew, the apostle, fervent  
 Missionary like yourself — you  
 Who served the Cree in Canada  
 For thirteen years, mastering  
 Their language and compiling books  
 Of prayer and teaching meant to feed  
 A new devotion and belief.

Born in France, you gave your life  
 To this New World, not looking back, but  
 Urging, welcoming, inviting —  
 With plans in hand — the people of  
 Your flock to live with faith the dreams  
 That brought them to this land and Lowell.  
 And they loved you for it, as the  
 The statue guarding Merrimack Street —  
 Outside the church you built — still shows.

© 2017 Suzanne Beebe



Street photo of former St. Jean Baptiste



(Au revoir, Jerry suite de page 19)

questions, si ses derniers mois invitent une réflexion plus émotionnelle qu'historique, ses circonstances permettent de reconsidérer une histoire franco-américaine, tant attachée aux Petits Canadas, aux filatures et aux combats ethniques. A l'instar de milliers de Franco-Américains, mon épouse, native de Nashua dont les ancêtres ont aussi œuvré à Lewiston, est héritière d'un univers historique bien connu. Avec Jerry, un jour de décembre, près de la rivière Missisquoi, nous nous sommes arrêtés pour reconnaître un récit bien différent.

Ce « mononc » nous met sur la piste d'une multiplicité d'expériences canadiennes aux Etats-Unis. Au début du vingtième siècle, des dizaines de milliers Franco-Américains vivent en milieu rural ou dans les petites villes éclipsées par les Nashua, Lewiston—et Lowell, *Massachusetts*. Il nous appartient de rendre justice à ces *forgotten francos*, sinon par compassion, alors dans l'intérêt d'un récit historique plus complet.

*Patrick Lacroix, Ph.D., a native of Cowansville, Quebec, is a graduate of the University of New Hampshire and an instructor at Phillips Exeter Academy. He has authored numerous articles, including studies on Franco-Americans published in the Catholic Historical Review and the Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. His latest article, appearing in the American Review of Canadian Studies, analyzes Henry David Thoreau's writings on colonial-era Canada.*

# Sanford-Springvale Historical Society ~ Humble Heroes

March 23, 2018 *Franco-American News and Culture* Anzio, Australia, Franco-American Veterans, Lloyd Clark, Maine Baseball Hall of Fame

By **Juliana L'Heureux**

SPRINGVALE, Me – Although thousands of Franco-American families sent their sons off to the military during World War II, very few sent five brothers, who fought on the Two Fronts of the War, in Europe and in the Pacific. In Springvale, I was invited to speak about one family.



Walter L'Heureux with George Roberts in Australia 1944

Walter L'Heureux served in the Pacific during World War II. He was stationed in Australia when this photograph was taken. Pictured on the right is his comrade George Roberts, who lives in Alfred Maine. Gratitude to his wife Gladys Roberts, for sending me this photograph.

Albert and Blanche L'Heureux of Sanford were Silver Star parents, five times. All five of their sons were at war at the same time, each serving in different places in Europe, the Pacific and other places. Robert and Henry received Purple Hearts for their war wounds in France and Italy. Henry, in particular, was engaged in hand to hand combat at the Battle of Anzio, during the Allied invasion of the beach head.

The Sanford-Springvale Historical Society hosted the presentation. The Society works in conjunction with the Sanford Historical Committee, to collect, preserve, and display artifacts, documents, records, photographs and other materials and objects of historical interest to the town.

Congratulations to Harland Eastman, Claire Auger, Paul Auger and all who are

involved in bringing this familiar and historic building to life, with finesse. Indeed, Springvale's Main Street is enhanced by the Historical Society's successful preservation project! In the past, it was the Springvale Town Hall and then, when my sons were growing up in Sanford, the building was a wonderful place for kids to go to summer basketball camp. In other words, the Sanford-Springvale Historical Society has taken what's old and made it new again.

Today, the Sanford Springvale Historical Society is a completely renovated historic addition to the proud history of this special area of York County.

In anticipation of the 250 year celebration of the founding of Sanford and Springvale, the Historical Society is preparing a series of programs to be announced in support of other celebrations and events.

On March 15, I was honored to be the guest speaker at the public program to tell the L'Heureux veterans oral history. They are my husband's first cousins. In the interviews, conducted several years ago, the four surviving brothers (at the time, Robert, Walter, Arthur and Henry) spoke candidly about their front line World War II experiences. I was able to convey some of what they told me during the one hour Historical Society presentation. A fifth brother, Leo, had died before the interviews were conducted.

A copy of the slides used in this historical presentation are available at this public link [here](#).

Previously, a blog describing the history of the L'Heureux brothers in World War II was posted on the Bangor Daily News bloggers page.

Learning about the Allied invasion of Anzio in January, 1944, was a lesson experienced, with the horror of the battle, told by Henry's account of the invasion.

With vivid recall, Henry's description

of the landing was horrific. Indeed, the devastation he described in the oral history session was also chronicled in the historical account of the battle, "Anzio: Italy and the Battle for Rome – 1944", by Lloyd Clark.

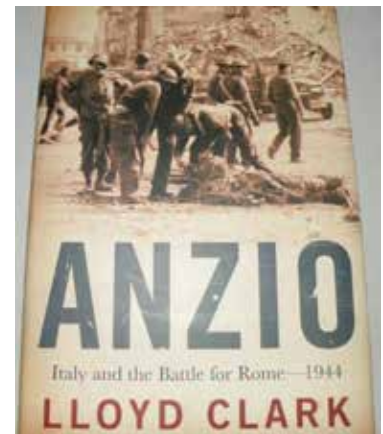
"In January 1944, about six months before D-Day, an Allied force of 36,000 soldiers launched one of the first attacks on continental Europe at Anzio, a city located about 35 miles South of Rome, on the Tyrrhenian Sea. The assault was conceived as the first step toward an eventual siege of Rome. Although the Allies captured the beach, the indecisive leadership of General John Lucas and his boss General Mark Clark, failed to break through the Nazi's formidable defenses and the advance stalled, completely."



Henry L'Heureux Purple Heart

Henry L'Heureux received a Purple Heart for wounds he endured at Anzio. His brother Robert also received a Purple Heart for wounds he received in France.

In fact, Henry was among the troops that were corralled by the Germans and held up for months, while the Nazi General Field Marshall Albert Kesselring's forces defended against the invasion. Miraculously, Henry survived, but nearly all of his comrades, at the time, were killed in the Anzio battle.



(Continued on page 23)



# R'garde-moué donc ça

par Grégoire  
Chabot

J'l'ai vu l'autre jour. J'l'ai quasiment pas reconnu. C't'ait pas sa face qui avait changé.

Non.

J'ai ben su tout de suite en le voyant que c'tait lui. Mais toutes les autres affaires avaient changé ben mal. La façon qui parlait. La façon qui r'gardait alentour. La façon qui essayait de montrer qui était hip en dansant avec la musique. Toute ça, c'tait quèque chose qui avait appris en dehors.

Pi c't'a bière-là qui buvait. Ç'avait un drôle de nom pi une drôle de senteur pi un drôle de gout. Y voulait m'en acheter une. Ça aussi, c'tait différent. Y m'avait offert ça en faisant des gros gestes pi en parlant ben fort pi en m'appelant son vieil ami. Ça arrive souvent, ça, avec le monde qui reviennent d'en dehors. Y veulent montrer qui ont pas changé pi qui sont pareils comme nous autres. Ça fait qui veulent toujours nous payer quèque chose. « Ouais, ouais. R'garde comment que ch't'un bon gars, moué. »

Mais ça marche pas. On a vu qui était pu comme nous autres la minute qui a entré. Même après une douzaine de « Hay, t'en souviens-ti quand on a .... » On voyait ben qui voulait montrer qui était mieux que nous autres en essayant en même temps d'être un de nous autres. C'est pas comme ça que ça marche. Faut choisir. Un ou l'autre. Pas tous les deux. J'pense qui savait ça mais y

a essayé quand même.

Ça me faisait d'la peine un peu parce que c'tait vraiment pas de sa faute. C'est ses parents qui l'ont envoyé à l'école en dehors en quèque part. J'pense pas qui savaient où c'est qui ça allait tout aboutir, c't'affaire-là. Lui non plus. Nous autres non plus. On le voyait quand y revenait en vacances. On se reconnaissait. On se parlait. Mais peu à peu, les choses ont commencé à changer. Pour nous autres, y devenait de plus en plus étrange et étranger. Après une secousse, on avait plus grand-chose à se dire, lui pi nous autres.

---

*Tu me parles d'un choix.  
Pi qui c'est qui a mieux choisi  
dans tout c't'affaire-là ? Icit ?  
Là-bas ? En dehors ? En de-  
dans ? Étrange ? Étranger ?*

---

Quoi c'est que tu veux. La place ayoù c'est qu'on l'a envoyé lui enseignait du stuff qui pourrait jamais usé icit. L'algèbre ? La seule chose qu'on a besoin de conter nous autres c'est les heures qu'on travaille chaque semaine. La grammaire ? Pourquoi passer toute son temps à savoir comment ce qu'on dit quèque chose quand on a ainque besoin de le dire. L'histoire ? Des hommes morts peuvent-ti me montrer comment débloquer la toilette ? Pi y se demandait comment ça se faisait qu'on comprenait pas quoi c'est qui nous disait. Ça fait qui a fallu qui reste là-bas, yoù c'est qu'on le comprenait.

Y a disparu pendant longtemps. Pi pendant c'temps-là, nous autres, on a continué à rester icit pi à faire nos affaires d'icit pi à devenir « icit ». Quand j'l'ai vu l'autre

jour, j'pense qui voulait essayer une dernière fois de reconnecter. Y aurait du savoir que ça marcherait pas. Qu'il y avait plus d'espace entre nous autres que jamais. Y a essayé quand même. Pi après ça, y est reparti.

Y pourra pu revenir. Y a pu de place pour lui icit. J'sais pas si la place qui avait icit quand y était jeune a disparu ou benon qu'a été pris par un autre. J'sais ainque qu'a est pu icit.

Comme ça, on le verra pu. Y a perdu sa place. Pi c'est de valeur, j'trouve.

Mais c'est ça la vie. On se fait une place pi faut y rester. Nous autres, y a pas de place pour nous autres ayoù c'est qui va, notre ancien chum. On a choisi icit, nous autres. Pi on est devenu icit.

On aimerait ben penser qu'on peut aller n'importe où pi faire n'importe quoi. Mais comme j'ai dit, c'est pas comme ça que ça marche. Faut choisir. Un ou l'autre. Pas tous les deux. On choisit un, pi l'autre disparaît. Pi on devient celui qu'on a choisi.

Icit.

Avec ses moulins pi ses bières du matin pi ses karaoke country-western du mardi soir où un peut gagner cinquante piastres qui nous paie un rêve de dix minutes où tout s'étend à perte de vue. Avant qu'on se souvienne que la seule ouverture icit mène ainque à la messe de six heures pi au restaurant des Syriens sur la Temple St. qui nous sert d'la poutine quand on en veut.

Tu me parles d'un choix. Pi qui c'est qui a mieux choisi dans tout c't'affaire-là ? Icit ? Là-bas ? En dehors ? En dedans ? Étrange ? Étranger ?

Aucune maudite idée. No tengo la minor idea. Cerveza, por favor.

(Sanford-Springvale Historical Society ~  
Humble Heroes continued from page 22)

Anzio Battle for Rome chronicled in detail by Lloyd Clark.

During the history interview, the brother Arthur, who served in the Pacific and Philippines said, "We prayed a lot".

After the war, Henry and Walter enjoyed playing semi-professional sports. Both of the men are recognized in the Maine Baseball Hall of Fame.

Since the interview, only Robert is alive. He attended the historical presentation with his youngest brother, Norman, who had been too young to be drafted during World War II.

All veterans give up their most productive and youthful years to serve with humble pride in our military. I can honestly say that I've never met a boastful veteran. This is especially true when describing the five brothers, sons of Albert and Blanche L'Heureux, of Sanford. Their family are among Sanford's Franco-American humble heroes. Thank you to Robert and Norman L'Heureux, for attending this program.

#### About Juliana L'Heureux:

Juliana L'Heureux is a free lance writer who publishes news, blogs and articles about Franco-Americans and the French culture. She has written about the culture in weekly and bi-weekly articles, for the past 27 years.



<http://francoamerican.bangordailynews.com/author/jlheureux/>

# Well, would ya look at that

by Grégoire Chabot

I saw him the other day. Almost didn't recognize him. His face hadn't changed  
Nope.

The minute I saw that face, I was pretty sure who it was. But everything else had changed. The way he talked, The way he looked around, The way he tried to be oh so cool when he danced. It was all from away.

And that beer he was drinking. Funny name, funny smell, even funnier taste. He said he'd buy me one. That was different, too. He was talking too loud and moving his arms all over the place and calling me ol' buddy as much as he could. That happens a lot with people from here who go away. They try to prove that they haven't changed and that they're just like us. So they always want to buy us something. "Sure, sure. Look at what a great guy I am. Still."

Doesn't work. We knew he wasn't just like us the minute he walked in. Even after dozens of "Hey, remember when the both of us ... " We knew he was trying to show he was better than us while he tried to be just like us. Doesn't work that way. You have to choose. One or the other. Not both at once. Pretty sure he knew that but thought it was worth a try.

I felt bad in a way. It wasn't really his fault. It was his folks who packed him off to school somewhere away. Don't think they realized what would come of it all. Neither did he. Neither did we. We'd see him every once in a while when came back for vacation. We'd recognize him. We'd talk. But little by little, things changed. He became stranger and a stranger to us as time wore on. After a while, we found nothing to say to each other.

What do you expect ? What they were teaching him there was stuff he could never use here. Algebra? The only thing we have to figure is our hours at the end of the week. Grammar? What's the use of knowing why we say things the way we say them when it's so much easier just to say them? History? Can a bunch of dead people show me how to fix a blocked up toilet? And he wondered why we couldn't understand what he was trying to tell us. So he decided to stay there where people did understand him.

---

*How's that for a choice?  
And who made the right choice,  
the best choice after all that?  
Here? There? Inside ? Outside ?  
Strange ? Stranger still ?*

---

He stayed out of sight for the longest time. And during that time, we stayed here, doing our here things, and turning ourselves into here. When I saw him the other day, I figured he trying one last time to reconnect. He should have known it wouldn't work. That there was more of a gap than ever be-

tween us. Even so, he tried. And then he left.

He won't be able to come back now. There's no place for him here any more. Don't know if the place we had for him when he was young disappeared or if it was taken by somebody else. All I know is that it's not here any more.

So we'll never see him again. He's lost his place. And that's too bad.

But that's life. You make a place for yourself somewhere for who knows what reason and that's where you stay. For us, there's no place for us where our "ol' buddy" is going to end up. We chose here. And we've become here,

I'm sure we'd like to think that we could go anywhere and do anything. But like I said, doesn't work that way. You have to choose. One or the other. Not both at once. You choose one and the other disappears. And we become our choice.

Here.

With its mills and its after graveyard shift beers and Tuesday night karaokes where you can win fifty bucks that buys a ten minute dream where everything opens up as far as the eye can see. Until you remember that the only thing that opens up here takes you to six o'clock mass and to the Lebanese restaurant on Temple St. that will serve you poutine whenever you want it

How's that for a choice? And who made the right choice, the best choice after all that? Here? There? Inside ? Outside ? Strange ? Stranger still ?

Damned if I know. No tengo la minor idea. *Prendre un p'tit coup c'est agréable. Prendre un p'tit coup, c'est doux. .*

chaoui. Mais, elle aurait aimé plutôt manger de la viande de rat de bois, mais Danté aimait pas trop cette bétaille, parce qu'il connaissait bien les choses pourries que les rats de bois mangent. Alors, quand il faisait nuit, Danté a pris son fusil à deux coups, sa lampe de carbide, et son sac de chasse, et à la porte, il dit. "Reste pas debout pour moi, parce que je connais pas à quelle heure je reviens."

Quand Cousin Dud, son vieux chien de chasse, l'a vu avec le fusil, il a commencé à sauter et japper et faire les quatre cents coups pour aller à la chasse avec son maître. Mais Danté l'a vite renfermé dans hangar où il a aussi laissé son fusil et sa lumière. Il avait seulement besoin du sac de chasse pour ce qu'il avait à faire.

"Reste ici, Dud, et tais-toi!" il dit au chien, qui se plaignait.

Quand il a parti, il a fait comme s'il  
(Suite page 25)

## Les Quatre Saisons de Danté Hébert par John François Été

### Melon d'eau

Quand Danté Hébert a vu Valsin Boudreau dans son clos de melons le trois de juillet, il a vite grimpé dans le grenier de son hangar pour le guetter. Il connaissait bien quoi Valsin faisait. Il cherchait le plus gros melon d'eau qu'il pouvait trouver. Et tout d'un coup, il a vu Valsin se pencher pour examiner un gros melon barré vert.

"Aha!" Danté se dit, "ç'est ça le melon."

Tous les ans, Valsin cassait son plus gros melon pour l'apporter chez les Héberts. Danté savait que c'était une autre manière de dire à Émilie qu'elle avait pas marié le meilleur homme.

"Il va pas me faire ça encore cette année," Danté se disait tandis qu'il marquait bien la place où Valsin était.

Danté plantait des melons aussi, mais n'importe quoi qu'il essayait, ses melons étaient jamais aussi gros que ceux de Valsin. Et chaque quatre de juillet, quand Valsin arrivait avec son melon en traîneau, Danté aurait pu se mordre les fesses, à force qu'il s'enrageait.

Alors, ce soir-là, Danté dit à Émilie, "Chère catin, je crois que je vas aller essayer de nous tuer un chaoui. Demain, pour le quatre, on va faire un 'tit barbeque."

"Oh, j'aimerais ça beaucoup," sa chère catin dit. Elle aimait bien la viande de

*(Les Quatre Saisons de Danté Hébert suite de page 24)*

s'en allait vers le bois, en tout cas qu'Émilie le guettait. Pas longtemps après ça, il a viré vers le clos de melons à Valsin. Il s'a caché dans les grandes herbes près de la barrière du clos. Quand il a vu la lumière s'éteindre chez son voisin, il a vite foncé dans le clos, a trouvé le melon que Valsin lui aurait apporté le lendemain et l'a mit dans son sac. Quand il est arrivé chez lui, Cousin Dud a commencé à hurler et se garocher contre la porte de l'hangar.

"Maudite carcasse de puces!" Danté a jurait. "S'il se tait pas, Émilie va sortir voir quoi y a." Au même temps, il a entendu Émilie sauter du lit. Alors, il s'est vite caché avec le melon sous la maison. Émilie a sorti sur la galerie en essayant de comprendre quoi c'est qu'il se passait avec le chien.

Elle a crié, "Qui est là?"

Dud a commencé à jappé plus fort, et à grafigné la porte.

"Mais, ça sonne comme si le chien est dans l'hangar," elle se dit. Émilie se dépêche pour voir, et quand elle ouvre la porte, Dud sort et a fait un 'beeline' pour la maison. C'est là qu'Émilie a vu le fusil et la lampe de carbide. "Mais, jamais de la vie," elle dit. "Danté a renfermé le chien, et là, pauvre bête, il a oublié son fusil et sa lampe!"

Tout ce temps-là, Dud jappait sous la maison. Émilie a pris le fusil, et a avancé pour voir quoi le chien était derrière. Elle a entendu comme une tape, et le chien a lâché un petit cri et a sorti du dessous de la maison avec la queue entre les jambes.

"Quoi y'a, Dud? Quoi y'a eu?"

Et Dud, encouragé par les mots doux de sa maîtresse, a retourné sous la maison.

Émilie s'est accroupie pour mieux voir quoi le chien était derrière. C'est là qu'elle a vu comme une grosse bête avec une grosse tête ronde.

"Viens ici, Dud!" Émilie a crié en peur. Quand le chien a sorti, Émilie a pointé le fusil vers la grosse tête de la bête, et en tremblant, elle a halé la gâchette. Au même temps, Danté a poussé un cri, mais c'était trop tard. Elle avait tiré.

Étonnée, elle dit, "Oh, Bon Dieu, je crois que j'ai tué quelqu'un!" Au même temps, Cousin Dud se retourne sous la maison.

"Pour l'amour de Dieu, Émilie!" Danté crie, "c'est moi!"

Émilie, plus étonnée que jamais, dit, "Danté?"

Faiblement, il dit, "Ouay."

"Mais quoi tu fais sous la maison?"

"Arrête. Laisse-moi sortir. Dud, arrête de me licher la figure!"

Quand il a sorti, Émilie a commencé à crier de nouveau. Elle pouvait voir que Danté était couvert de sang. "Oh, yé yaille! Oh, Bon Dieu! Je t'ai frappé! T'es couvert de sang!"

Danté se passe la main à la figure. "Non, je crois pas c'est du sang. C'est des morceaux de melon."

"Mais, jamais de la vie! Je connais pas quoi croire. Tu peux bien m'expliquer quoi tu fais sous la maison avec un melon?"

Danté a essayé d'expliquer le mieux qu'il pouvait. Quand il a fini, Émilie dit, "T'as volé un des melons de Valsin? Mais, pourquoi? On a des melons. On a pas besoin de voler les siens."

"Je connais ça, mais guette, demain il va venir avec son melon, et je voulais lui montrer que les miens sont aussi gros que

les siens. Tu comprends, asteur?"

Quand Valsin est arrivé en traineau le lendemain avec un de ses gros melons barrés verts, il a demandé si Danté avait tué quelque chose hier soir, parce qu'il avait entendu un coup de fusil autour de dix heures.

Émilie a pris la parole. "Non, c'était pas Danté qu'a tiré. C'était moi. J'ai trouvé une grosse bête puante sous la maison."

"Mais, Émilie," Valsin dit, "comment brave tu es. Mais, pourtant, je sens pas d'odeur de bête puante. C'était peut-être un chaoui? Et tu l'a tuée?"

"Non, j'ai manqué, mais peut-être tu peux sentir quelque chose d'autre. Je crois que je lui ai fait assez peur qu'il a fait caca!"

Valsin a commencé à rire, mais là, il voyait que Danté avait la mien très sérieuse. "Alors," il dit, "hier soir, quelqu'un m'a volé un de mes plus gros melons. Danté, t'as pas peut-être vu quelqu'un dans mon clos?"

"Non," Danté dit, "mais, t'es chanceux quand même, juste un melon. Moi, les voleurs ont tous pris mes plus gros! Tout qui me reste sont les petits. Pourtant, j'en avais qui étaient plus gros que ton melon-là."

Émilie a rit. "Peut-être les voleurs, c'était des grosses bêtes puantes."



# LA FRANCOPHONIE IN NASHUA 2018

*by Dominique Boutaud*

In 2018, La Francophonie (the French-speaking world) came to Nashua, New Hampshire and together they created a rich cultural experience worth sharing.

As we know, the French language is spoken in many countries around the world, and each has much to teach us about their culture. Over the past month, several events were held that attracted immigrants, francophiles and those who were simply curious to

learn about and participate in those cultures.

Fittingly, the Francophonie program began with the ceremonial flag raising at City Hall. A number of public figures addressed the crowd that morning, including the Mayor of Nashua, Jim Donchess. Laurence Gagnon of the Quebec Delegation and Amandine Lebas from the French Consulate also spoke highlighting the importance of the French language and culture in New

Hampshire. In the end, when event organizer and artist Dominique Boutaud rose to speak, she had a considerable list of people to thank for their help and participation.

All month, the Nashua Public Library displayed an installation of panels, which told the history of the Franco-American people starting from origins in Quebec. These powerful historical panels, originally from the "Oui Francos are still here" exhibit at the Castle in the Clouds, are the product of considerable work done by Jo-Ann Belanger and brought to Nashua by the Franco-American Centre of New Hampshire.

March also saw three separate open-to-the-public French conversation groups, including an extension of the Franco-American *(Continued on page 33)*



# Lettres/ Letters

Dear Le Forum,

On March 12th, I, along with several other community members was fortunate enough to attend a gathering at the Franco Centre at the University of Maine. The gathering was for some visiting students of a French program from NYU accompanied by their professor and his assistant. The students came from places like Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Tennessee and China, the places I can remember.

They were on an excursion to learn more about the Franco-American Heritage and their plans included interviewing members of the community. Their first stop before the Orono campus was in Lowell, Massachusetts a mill town built around the French who migrated from Canada. After a visit to Orono, stops were planned for Quebec City and Montreal before heading back to school.

The time spent at the Franco Centre included a presentation about a small island located in Old Town, Maine called French Island that was settled by French immigrants mostly from the Quebec region. The speaker, Amy (Bouchard) Morin was one of a group who interviewed families that lived there and produced a book of those interviews. People wanted to buy it, so the group put together the interviews along with

the history of the island into a book called, "Nos Histoires de l'Île" [History and memories of French Island, Old Town, Maine]. The book sold out and still people wanted copies. To raise money to produce more copies a cookbook was produced called "Nos Histoires de l'Île livre de cuisine" [A Collection of Recipes from French Island in Old Town, Maine]. Authentic Franco recipes were copied from their mother's and grandmother's recipe boxes and organized by season. Amy also had a slide presentation with lots of pictures from the days of living on French Island and their families.

After this wonderful program, Lisa Desjardins Michaud served a wonderful meal of Acadian Chicken Stew, ployes, cookies, tea or coffee. Entertainment also was provided with fiddle playing by Lionel Doucette accompanied by Germaine Cormier on the piano. Then it was time for the interviews.

Despite the fact I lacked the ability to speak French it intrigued the students as to why. I grew up in a home with only one parent who could speak French at one time. During my father's growing up years French was only spoken in the home. Outside the home it was a stigma, it was bad enough having a French surname and being Catholic, but to speak French could get you into a lot of trouble. You see my father grew up during the time when the KKK (Ku Klux Klan) was active in the state of Maine, and they were here because they didn't like "French Catholics". It wasn't as bad for me but then the French language from

Quebec was considered a "slang" because the instructors were teaching Parisian French and that usually got me into trouble. The Catholic Church and school I attended had at one time been only for Irish Catholics, but slowly times were changing.

I was asked questions by several students but the one I was intrigued by was the young man from China. He spoke four languages and was not only curious about my Franco-American heritage, but of the fact my maternal side had been in Maine for 12 generations and I was very involved in my ancestry. He spoke to me about his ancestry and how it is passed down from generation to generation and I told him about my research into both my French and English sides and what a great collection we had here at the Franco Centre for researching our French roots. He was also interested in knowing about life in Maine and about getting to see Quebec City and I told him about places I had seen up there and hoped to see again.

As usual the time there ended way too soon and our guests needed to continue their journey, but what a great way for different generations to mingle together and discuss a common subject. I have learned so much since becoming a member of the Franco Centre, I can research and learn about my Franco-American roots, attend events and talk with the French students who attend the University of Maine. I hope the University realizes what an asset the Franco-American Centre is to the students and community.

Thank you Lisa Desjardins Michaud for organizing this fantastic event!

Debbie Roberge, Old Town, ME



# A Special Friendship

by Martha Whitehouse  
Hamden, ME

As a hospice volunteer in 2014, I was assigned to visit a hospice patient in her mid-nineties one day a week for a couple of hours. When I first met Kay, she was living with her son and daughter-in-law. Later, when her health needs increased, I had weekly visits with her at a comfortable assisted living residence nearby. Kay was legally blind by then, but she wasn't going to let that stop her. "I can still see shadows." Kay was outgoing, witty, fun to be with, and I learned much about life from her. I enjoyed those weekly visits with that lovable friend for well over a year before she died, and precious memories still make me smile four years later.

On one weekly visit to the assisted living residence, Kay confided to me that she wasn't exactly 'fitting in' with the other ladies who sat with her at their shared table in the dining room. The others would talk about their Maine childhoods, favorite recipes, especially seafood recipes, and the Boston Red Sox. Kay, on the other hand, spent her childhood in the Bronx, didn't much like their kind of fish, and loved her Yankees. So Kay was a bit lonely at mealtimes. But the person who concerned Kay the most was Bertie, who sat across the table from her. Bertie wasn't friendly or outgoing either, but Kay told me she also seemed disgruntled at times. Kay thought Bertie might really be unhappy, so she told me that she had lately been working at being Bertie's friend at mealtimes. She told me it hadn't been easy but, after a while, Bertie

began to open up. She finally told Kay, "I used to speak French with my father and my sister, but that was a long time ago."

Kay finished her story by asking me, "Will you meet with Bertie to speak French with her since you can speak French?" I told her that my degree in 'classroom French' nearly fifty years earlier, followed by six months in France, would probably not be the best match for Bertie's Canadian French. Then I told her about a wonderful, caring friend of mine who, like Bertie, grew up in Maine speaking French. Kay immediately asked, "Would you please introduce her to Bertie? She needs a friend who can speak her French!" "Yes, I will see if she can come next week."

My friend Lisa met with Bertie, not just one time as I had requested, but on a weekly basis from then on. They spoke the French that Bertie remembered from long ago. For a long time, Bertie didn't know what to make of Lisa. "Why are you coming every week to see me?" It was almost as if she didn't believe that anyone but her own daughter could care about her.

Lisa continued to look forward to visits with this hesitant new friend. Little by little, those visits became important to Bertie, too. After a while, if Lisa missed a week, she'd hear from Bertie, "Where were you?" There was always a good reason why her new friend hadn't shown up, but the sad thing was that Bertie never gave Lisa her phone number so she could be reached. Was Bertie being cautious to avoid getting too close to someone only to lose that person, too? Lisa didn't know but she always respected Bertie's wishes and boundaries.

Their special friendship has lasted four years and continues to this day. Lisa excitably told me last week that Bertie would be 100 years old on March 15th, and that she had been invited to the birthday celebration by Bertie's daughter!

I just happened to be watching the evening news on March 15th and was surprised to see that Bertie and her 100 year birthday milestone was being featured at the end of the 6 o'clock news on Channel 2! The very next day I got an email from Lisa, wanting to share the beautiful photo of the two of them at the party. Bertie was seated with a crown on her head, a corsage on her bodice and a celebratory birthday sash across her shoulder. Lisa was

sitting next to her, smiling, with her arm across the back of Bertie's 'throne'.

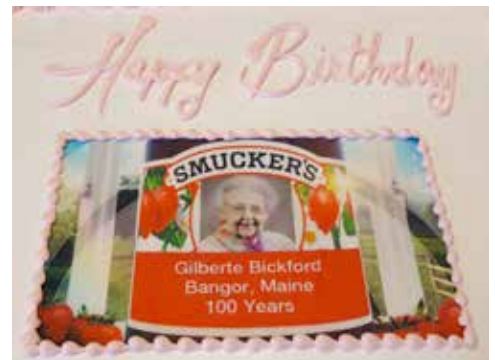
Bertie's forever friend, Lisa Desjardins Michaud, is the long-time Editor of *Le Forum*, which she pulls together, prints, and sends out (with help from some friends) four times a year to 1500 French, French origin and French loving people throughout the United States and beyond. I would add that she has also been the unofficial 'maitresse de la maison' at the Franco-American Center at the University of Maine for the last 22 years, which means a whole lot of us who have visited the Center have experienced her welcoming smile.

Lisa is advisor of the FAROG (Franco-American Resource Opportunity Group) student group as well as lead organizer for the Centre's community group when the university is in session. There are lots of films to be watched and other topics to discuss. She is quick to assist any and all who arrive at the door looking to trace their French ancestry. With the help of friends she has organized and set up a special French genealogical library of many volumes and resource materials. Lisa plans and carries out programs that include holiday parties, kitchen parties, visits from authors, genealogists, musicians, singers, dancers, visitors from Africa, raises funding for Centre initiatives and more that I'm probably just not remembering. Lisa is also great at planning day and overnight trips around Maine, and even into Quebec and New Brunswick. If there is a French program or celebration anywhere within driving distance, Lisa is game. You are always welcome at the Franco-American Center at the University of Maine if you are French, a little bit French, or not a bit French but you've heard it's a great place to visit.

And Lisa still has time for work, family, friends, church... and her dear friend Bertie!



Lisa and Bertie





BOOKS/

LIVRES...



# The Acadian - Return of the Dagger

by PHILLIP DAIGLE



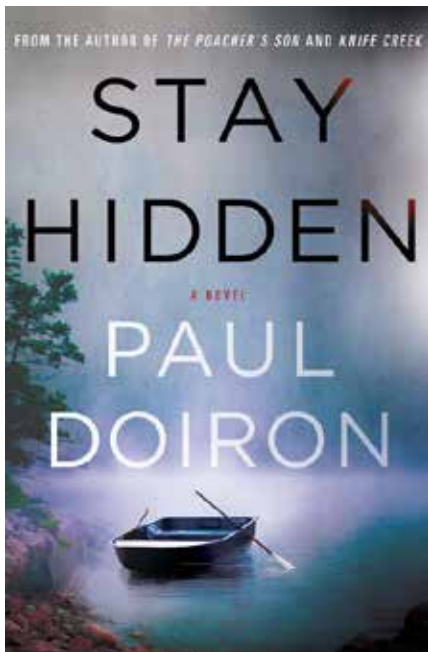
### What's it take to be a hero in the New World?

It's 1661 in Eastern Canada where a handful of French colonists hang on to a piece of paradise called Acadia. Deep in the woods, an orphaned eighteen-year-old enters a man's world in a remote logging camp where he witnesses an atrocity that changes the course his life. The brilliantly researched and rendered historical setting creates a unique slice of time and place full of significance. The action is fast moving and the characters rich in nuance and emotion.

<https://kindlescout.amazon.com/p/1D6DWG63L1GF>

## COMING JULY 3, 2018!

### PRE-ORDER STAY HIDDEN NOW



**A supposed hunting accident becomes a dangerously complicated murder investigation in this intricately-plotted new thriller featuring Maine Game Warden Mike Bowditch.**

A woman has been shot to death by a deer hunter on an island off the coast of Maine. To newly promoted Warden Investigator Mike Bowditch, the case seems open and shut. But as soon as he arrives on remote Maquoit Island he discovers mysteries piling up one on top of the other.

The hunter now claims he didn't fire the fatal shot. Bowditch begins to suspect the secretive community might be covering up the identity of whoever killed Ariel Evans. The controversial author was supposedly writing a book about the island's notorious hermit. So why are there no notes in her rented cottage?

The biggest blow comes the next day when the weekly ferry arrives and off steps the dead woman herself. Ariel Evans is alive, well, and determined to solve her own "murder" even if it upsets Mike Bowditch's investigation and makes them both targets of an elusive killer who will do anything to conceal his crimes.

**PRE-ORDER NOW**



Photo Credit: Mark Fleming

*"Doiron has an ability to draw you in to the story with an atmospheric prose and well-rounded characters.... Retribution and justice is eventually served, and to more people than expect it. You won't see the ending looming in this fine and well-balanced thriller."*

— Criminal Element

<http://www.pauldoiron.com/>

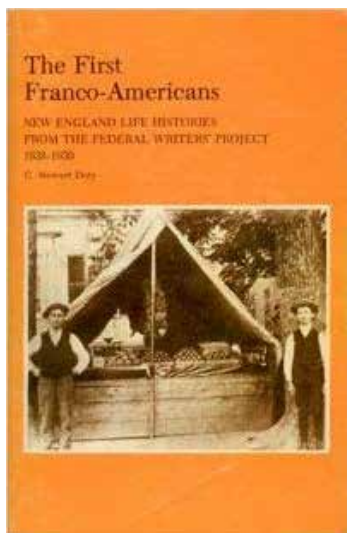


## French-American immigration – five resource books

February 8, 2018 *Franco-American News and Culture* C. Steward Doty, *Federal Writers Project, Felix Albert, Francoise Furstenberg, University of Maine at Orono Press, Why They Came*

By **Juliana L'Heureux**

C. Stewart Doty wrote in the introduction of *The First Franco-Americans: New England Life Histories from the Federal Writers' Project 1930-1939* (published in 1985, by University of Maine at Orono Press): “French speakers immigrated to New England from Quebec and Acadia (Nova Scotia). Surprisingly, we still know very little about their experiences in the new land. Thanks to census studies, we do have a good idea where these immigrants came from and where they settled.” It’s noteworthy to read how Doty dedicated this collected history, “For the Franco-American students of the University of Maine; that they might better know their heritage.”

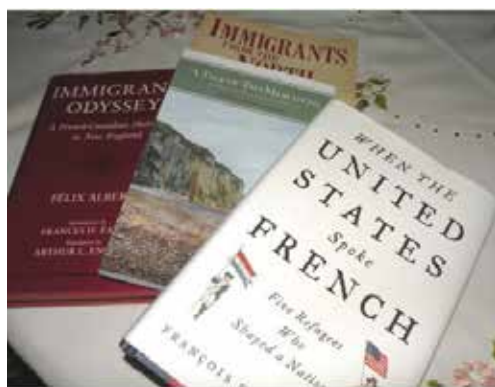


*The First Franco-Americans- New England Life Histories from the Federal Writers Project 1938-1939*

America’s immigration news continues to be a trending topic, but the history about French-American immigration is seldom mentioned in the complex “great melting pot”. A recent blog about “Why They Came”, was a retrospective about the roots of Franco-American immigration, updated with information about our newest French-African immigrants.

Expert writings and lectures by the late Professor C. Stewart Doty (1928-2011), provided context about the impact of the Franco-American immigration experience. Nevertheless, the motivation for the French immigration waves, beginning with colonial settlements in Quebec and Nova Scotia, are usually written in French. Unfortunately, many are not widely read, unless they happen to be published in an English translation.

In my growing library, including dozens of books collected about the French in North America, I quickly pulled out five histories about French-American immigration and the influence the immigrants, some of them refugees, had on our nation’s history.



*My growing library of histories about Franco-Americans includes the stories about refugees and immigration.*

As an original source reference, not reported through a third person, “*Immigrant Odyssey: A French-Canadian Habitant in New England*”, is the compelling history about the pride of one particular Franco-American immigrant named Félix Albert. It’s also titled “*A bilingual edition of histoire d’un enfant pauvre*” (History of a poor child.) This memoir was originally written in the French vernacular, spoken by Hebert, when he told his story to the narrator. In The University of Maine Press edition, published in 1991, the history is translated

into English, by Arthur L. Eno, Jr.

The importance of Hebert’s memoir is explained in the book’s introduction, written by Frances H. Early. “*Why is the life of Félix Albert important?*” In fact, his autobiography was almost lost to history, until it was discovered by a local historian Richard Santerre, in a Lowell, Mass. attic. It’s a life history of about “plain people”.

Although men and women who achieved greatness were often the subject of memoirs, the North American immigrants, the French-Canadians, almost never wrote their stories because most of them were, unfortunately, illiterate. Hebert told his memoir to an unknown scribe (probably a priest) in the context of the dire economic situation that existed in Quebec in the second half of the 19th century.

At the time of the immigration to the US from Quebec, the French-Canadian society was undergoing tremendous change. Its population experienced a demographic-agricultural crises of enormous proportions, as well as the beginnings of large-scale industrialization. Those developments brought about changes to older, rural-based economic, and social structures and values. As a result, an exodus of French-Canadians occurred. They were motivated to make the very difficult decision to leave their homes and families in Quebec, and start a new life in Maine and New England.

My “go to” book about French-Canadian immigration is “*Immigrants from the North*”, written by the students at the Hyde School in Bath, Maine, with an endorsement by Edmund S. Muskie, former Maine governor and Secretary of State for President Jimmy Carter. In this excellent and concise publication, the student authors learned how the French-Canadians were struggling to survive on their Quebec farms when the opportunity arose to find employment in New England’s industrializing cities, during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Each well written chapter describes a segment of the French immigration history, including the assimilation of the culture into America’s melting pot.

“*A Tale of Two Migrations: A French Canadian Odyssey*”, by Patricia Demers Kaneda, is a family history written in fictional narrative. In the book’s dedication, Kaneda writes, “...this book is dedicated to those who are gone but not forgotten”. In the introduction, she adds, “If you are one of the over five million descendants of those original ten thousand (ie, immigrants) who settled  
(Continued on page 37)

# In Search of Lewiston Relatives of Napoleon Coulombe His Sons And, Possibly, the Grandchildren, also named, Coulombe

By  
*G rard Coulombe*



When I was twenty-two, intent on marrying the girl who would be my wife, she was a student at Saint Mary’s School of Nursing, and, as I wanted to visit with her on occasion, on weekends, I did what I, as a veteran of the Air Force, had learned to do which was to find an economical place to stay on visits to Lewiston to visit her, preferably, at no cost to me. I had a construction job that summer, lived in a tent at the time, to save money which I did not have, but I dug into wet clay with a spade and slung a hammer to drive in a spike.

My parents were still living at the time, but I do not recall ever telling them, that I was taking advantage of a relative of my dad’s. I recalled even after so many years, exactly where the gentleman and his wife lived. I supposed they were relatives because my dad, when he was an old young man, was in the habit of visiting “relatives” whose relationships were not always known to me, exactly. They were, in my mind, related, but my father never bothered to explain to me just exactly how these relations, who were always very welcoming people, were related, exactly.

And so, on one of those trips to Lewiston, I walked up a sidewalk for a very long walk from downtown Lewiston along a road toward which a place I hardly remembered knowing, except that my “relatives” lived in a house at the corner of a side street across which there stood a big Catholic Church and behind the church there was an equally big Catholic elementary school.

I found the house exactly where I thought it would be. I re-introduced myself. I was welcomed. And, however, related to me they were or might have been, they became my hosts and, I, their guest on those weekends when I could leave work on a bridge construction that summer to visit with my wife to be.

Both, Napoleon and his wife, whose name, I do not recall, were very generous. I did not have a car at the time. My girlfriend and I walked everywhere we went.

When I was young, I frequently forgot

that I had younger siblings. I practically grew up with that feeling, which I think, in retrospect, might not have been uncommon for young boys, in those days, to grow up with the foreknowledge that it would be, more than likely, my future to grow up and then help support my parents and siblings as soon as I turned sixteen and could apply to work in the mills.

I do have two sisters who were younger; one, the oldest has passed, and the youngest, now in her early eighties, lives in Vermont--her home sandwiched between mountains. The older of my two sisters, Th r se, was married to Raymond Collard, 86, of Biddeford. They had six children, all grown themselves; their children are adults with children of their own, and, now, even some of their children have married and have children of their own, but unlike our parents, all of them own their own homes. The younger of my sisters is named Julianne. She married G rard Asselin, the latter a college graduate. Together, they had six children, all grown, with children of their own. All of the children have done well for themselves.

Our parents never owned a car. They simply never did. My father worked the second shift all his life, which practically made him an absent partner to my mother while he worked, in silence, nearly all his life and never forgot to say his prayers after midnight

Of the several trips I took, just me and my Dad, one was to Hartford on two occasions when my Canadian uncles were visiting, together, with my father in Biddeford, and I accompanied them in a rental car that my father paid for out of the little savings he had for this purpose, possibly. We went on those occasions to Hartford, Connecticut to visit my aunt, my father’s sister and, of course, sister to all the other boys on the trip. She lived with her husband and son near the capitol building and across the street from a hospital. What I recall is that I was impressed by the fact that I had heard that my Uncle Bouthet had been gassed during the First World War. Their son later died in

Iraq during World War II.

On other occasions, my dad would rent a car and driver; he would never take a bus, to Lewiston, Maine, where he had a cousin, uncle, whatever? All I knew is that we were related and that somehow, sometime, this Napoleon, as this was his name, had had some trouble with the law--something I was told by my mother I believe, for it is something my father would never have said. For, he was never that loquaciously interested in small talk.

My uncle, maybe my father’s cousin, I do not know to this day, which one he was, and his wife had two sons. And as this was when the Second World War was going on, they were both on active duty in the Air Force.

One was aboard a B-24, newly constructed, on a flight to Hawaii. A member of the crew, I believe he was, maybe the radio operator. I am not certain of this, although I am in possession of the “accident” report prepared by those who did such things during the war. I know that his name is inscribed on a big board in San Francisco, a park, near the Golden Gate Bridge, listing the names of all those who went down at sea while ferrying or moving their aircraft toward deployment bases in the active Pacific Island War Zones. My wife and I happened to have read his name and said a prayer one day when we happened to be visiting San Francisco, having attended a conference in San Diego previously, and deciding that we should extend our vacation, we had to do so by train, traveling along the coast.

There was the first the Coulombe brother mentioned above, this sibling, also named Coulombe, of course, I do not recall his first name, was in the U. S. Army Air Force at the same time as was his brother. He was stationed in North Africa during WW II. I had learned this about but I had not heard of the other passing in the war.

*(Continued on page 31)*



# From Quebec to Connecticut

by *Julianne Mangin*,  
March 30, 2018

Originally appeared in <https://julianmangin.com/2018/03/27/from-quebec-to-connecticut/>

I have spent the last six years researching and writing about the five women in my family tree who were mentally ill and committed to state hospitals. Along the way, I learned that they were descended from French-Canadians who immigrated to the U.S. in the late nineteenth century. Throughout the preceding fifty-five years of my life, I knew very little about my Quebecois heritage.



*Quinebaug Mill and canal, ca. 1901. Danielson, Connecticut.  
Courtesy Killingly Historical and Genealogical Society*

The Quinebaug Mill in Danielson, Connecticut is where several of my French-Canadian ancestors worked, after leaving their Quebec villages. These photos, from the collections of the [Killingly Historical and Genealogical Society](#), offered me a window into what my great-grandparents' working lives were like.

## My French-Canadian Heritage

It was no secret to me that my maternal grandmother, Beatrice, was of French-Canadian descent. She was born in Connecticut in 1901, but was surrounded by an extended family who had been born in Quebec and who maintained many of their French Catholic customs. Until I began researching the family tree, I didn't know much at all about her cultural heritage. This is not surprising, given the disintegration of my mother's family. While Mom was

growing up, Beatrice was committed to Norwich State Hospital, diagnosed with schizophrenia. Mom was put in the county home because her Anglo-American father couldn't take care of her. No relative from her mother's family offered Mom a place in their home, effectively cutting her off from French-Canadian culture and traditions.

When I finally got around to tackling the family history, one of the first things I learned was why my French-Canadian ancestors ended up in Danielson, Connecticut. I had always thought that it was an individual decision on their part to leave Quebec. I was surprised to learn that they were swept up in a mass migration of French-Canadians who came to New England, mostly seeking work in textile mills -- 900,000 between 1840 and 1930.

These numbers represent a staggering population shift, one that was never mentioned in any American history course I ever took. This omission may have been more of a factor in my not knowing about my heritage than Mom's estrangement from her French-Canadian relatives. Writer and researcher David Vermette goes in great detail on this subject in his blog *French North America*, in particular his post entitled, "Why Are Franco-Americans So Invisible?" Among the several good points he made, is the fact that many Americans are indifferent to Canada, its culture, and its history.

## My Immigrant Ancestors

In 1879, my great-great-parents, David and Rosalie Metthe immigrated to the

*(Continued on page 32)*

*(In Search of Lewiston Relatives of Napoleon Coulombe His Sons And, Possibly, the Grandchildren, also named, Coulombe continued from page 30)*

The second brother, named Coulombe, whose father was also Napoleon Coulombe, also served in the same war but had been stationed in either the African or European theatre [maybe both]. His job was also that of a radio operator and gunner, for so I read somewhere, and survived 50 missions. [This is a big number of missions to survive whose mission it was to fly aboard an aircraft, which missioned to fly low over enemy ground forces or installations.

Although designed as a bomber, the objective of this aircraft was to fly low in order to avoid radar and to hit enemy ground

forces and their installations by surprise, bunkers, tanks, convoys, trains and the like. I thought or I might have just imagined that my cousin flew in a low flying, two engine attack bomber called the A-20 on a low-flying mission against ground, military targets.

But I thought that I read, when I came across a front-page piece of his death in a Lewiston paper when my "cousin" died some years ago, that he had actually flown as either a radio/operator, gunner, during the war, over European shores and against enemy land forces and not in Africa as I might have imagined the war as a young boy enthralled by the idea of flight in war at the time

All the while, when I was young watching the "Movietone News" at the movies deflate all aspects of war that I had ever imagined from the books had enjoyed

looking paging through on visits to an aunt's house in the country. Maybe my relative, [so I have thought of him and his brother] flew crew on USAF aircrafts, the A-Two and the B 25, for all I know. In any case, 50 is a lot of missions for a survivor in a low flying aircraft against enemy ground forces, more than likely, targeting the aircraft that my cousin flew in as a crew member in the early and later years of the war was the enemy, then. His brother in a B-24, a jinxed four engine high wing twin rudder bomber was a jinxed aircraft from its very beginning.

[I would appreciate hearing from readers familiar with this story about my relatives, such as it is. There was, I have heard, a front-page obit in one of the Lewiston Maine, newspapers. Descendants can also contact me by email at [gcoulombe92@gmail.com](mailto:gcoulombe92@gmail.com).]

*(From Quebec to Connecticut continued from page 31)*

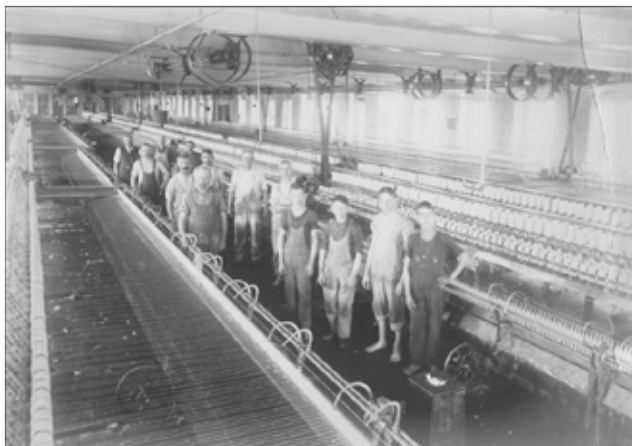
U.S. They left the village of Saint-Sébastien for Danielson, Connecticut with two small children. One of them was my great-grandfather, Philippe.

In 1885, my other French-Canadian great-great grandparents, Pierre and Azilda Bonneau, left Quebec and settled in Danielson as well. They brought with them four young daughters, including Graziella, my great-grandmother.

Before they left Canada, the Metthe and Bonneau families had lived in rural villages not far from the U.S.-Vermont border. David was a farm worker and Pierre was a butcher. I think both of them would have been happy to stay in Quebec, were it not for an agricultural economic crisis that threatened their livelihoods and their families' well-being. They followed the stream of Quebecois to New England, hoping for a better life.

### Graziella's Mental Breakdown

My great-grandmother Graziella was the first of my ancestors to be committed to Norwich State Hospital. As I learned more about the family history, I could see that she'd had to adapt to significant changes in her circumstances. She had come from an insular community populated by people sharing the same customs, language, and Roman Catholic faith. By the beginning of the twentieth century, however, she was living in Danielson, where Anglo-American customs prevailed, the predominant language was English, and many of their neighbors attended a Protestant church. Her ancestors had farmed in Quebec for decades, but at the end of the nineteenth century, she and her parents were in the U.S., working in a textile mill.



*Spinners and overseer, Quinebaug Mill, ca. 1901. Danielson, Connecticut. Courtesy Killingly Historical and Genealogical Society*

In 1899, Philippe Metthe married Graziella Bonneau, when they were in their early twenties. According to the 1900 U.S. Census, both of them worked in a textile mill, probably the Quinebaug Mill Company. If they were typical mill employees, they would have worked twelve- or thirteen-hour days, six days a week. If they were lucky, Saturday might have been only half-day, although a half-day in 1900 would almost be as long as what we would consider a full day of work in the twenty-first century.

Philippe Metthe worked as a spinner, tending the machines on which wool or cotton fibers were converted into thread. Dozens of whirling bobbins gathered up the thread under his watchful eye. Whenever a bobbin became full, Philippe would have to snatch it from the running machine and rapidly replace it with an empty one. Depending on the number of spinning machines he was responsible for at any one time, he might have had to rely on young boys known as "doffers" to exchange the bobbins for him. Once a new bobbin was in place, a doffer would start the thread on it, and the process would begin anew. Philippe may have been on his feet all day, except for his lunch break.

Meanwhile, his wife Graziella sat at a machine that knitted hosiery, hour after hour, performing the same repetitive motions to produce ordinary black socks. In the early twentieth century, immigrant workers such as Philippe and Graziella fueled the textile industry, and were rewarded with long hours, low pay, and the feeling that they were only nameless cogs in an enormous machine.

I don't know for sure why Graziella became mentally ill. Maybe she was emotionally ill-equipped to deal with the grind of working in a textile mill. Although she probably stopped working at the mill once she started having children, this may have caused her a different kind of stress. She gave birth five times in the space of seven years. She and Philippe were so poor that they had to move in with her parents. Pierre and Azilda had no room for their daughter's family in their small house. The only accommodations they could offer Graziella, Philippe, and the children was the shed in the backyard.

### Philippe the Prodigal Father

There was another possible contribution to Graziella's deteriorating mental state: her husband Philippe was a rogue. By following up on clues in Graziella's patient record from Norwich State Hospital and by searching digital newspapers, I learn about some of his activities -- everything from his bowling scores, to his service on the board of the local Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste, to a scandal that caused him to be banished from my grandmother's young life.

All Mom had ever told me about my great-grandfather was that he had deserted his wife and children and returned to Canada. What really happened was much more complicated. How my French-Canadian family handled the difficulties they faced were kept secret from me, my mother, and

*(Continued on page 33)*



*Women drawing in warp threads, Quinebaug Mill, ca. 1901. Danielson, Connecticut. Courtesy Killingly Historical and Genealogical Society*

(LA FRANCOPHONIE  
IN NASHUA 2018 continued from page 25)



ican Centre's typically Manchester-based "Pret à Parler" and one by the "La Coterie" discussion group organized by Lee Caron. Here people were able to connect more personally and exchange ideas on a number of different subjects and enjoy some time together in French.

The Nashua Public Library also transformed itself into a French cinema for the month of the Francophonie. "Un Rêve Américain," a film in collaboration with Franco-Ontarian musician Damien Robitaille, took the audience along for a trip across the United States in a voyage of discovery for French-Canadian descendants in the places where they now live. "Le Choix de Theo" by Thomas Cauvin, a French man living in Louisiana, showed how people in Louisiana have tried to keep their French language over the years and the difficulties they've faced along the way.

The film series culminated with a very special screening of "Cassures." This movie by Cassandre Thrasybule, a Haitian woman living in New York, follows the paths and complex situation of a Haitian family that is separated, with some moving to the United States and others staying in Haiti. Supported by Garry Merveille from the Haitian consulate in Boston, the filmmaker herself was there in person to present her movie and respond to audience questions.

The capstone for the month was an event of diverse demonstrations, discussions, and music.

John Tousignant, executive director of the Franco-American Center of New Hampshire, acted as master of ceremonies. He took to a festively decorated stage of francophone flags, panels from local French clubs, baskets, an Eiffel tower, and a hand-made birch bark canoe by historian and proud Franco-American Henri Vaillancourt.

M. Tousignant turned the group's focus to the upcoming generation of French speakers. He showed a collection of French student videos from the 2017 YouTube con-

test by the Euclide Gilbert French Language Foundation. French Teacher Susan Mead of Pelham Memorial School also read some of her students' thoughts about the French language to show how impassioned they are by the French language.

From there the group took an international tour.

Marcel and Martine Rukema from the Congo sang, told stories and answered questions about their home country. Roger L'Heureux played the French and American national anthems on his accordion. Brazilians Sandra and Miles Regina Da Rocha Pratt explained the meaning of the Brazilian Flag and held a small soccer demonstration, Glenn Davison shared his knowledge of the kites of France and French Canada, complete with examples, demonstrations and lighted kites for night flying. Pascal D'Amboise, originally from Quebec, did a comedy routine, and local French radio personality Roger Lacerte discussed the history of people from Quebec living in New England.

To close the celebration, the talented Josée Vachon took the stage serenaded the crowd with beautiful music and energized the crowd with her signature combination guitar and clogging.

It was an eye-opening, fun, and inspiring day that is truly difficult to put into words.

The celebration of La Francophonie in Nashua was in many ways a renewed acknowledgement of that city's rich French history and the discovery of its vibrant French present. With the enthusiasm and joy we experienced, many are asking to participate next year, and we hope to have more countries involved, showing the very simple and interesting activities of daily life throughout La Francophonie.

Le mois de la Francophonie in Nashua was possible thanks to the support of the Mayor of Nashua, Jim Donchess; OneGreater Nashua; the Nashua Cultural Connection Committee; the Nashua Public Library; The Nashua Telegraph; Laurence Gagnon of the Quebec Delegation in Boston; Amandine Lebas, Deputy Consul General of France in Boston; M. Garry Merveille, Consul General of Haiti in Boston; The Franco-American Centre located in Manchester; the Nashua Richelieu Club; La Coterie; Roger Lacerte and his radio program "Chez Nous"; our volunteers. Most of all, it was made possible by the francophone and francophile people of New Hampshire and Massachusetts who made it a success.



(From Quebec to Connecticut continued  
from page 32)

my grandmother. Being kept in the dark about the family history had repercussions from my grandmother's generation down to mine. By writing the family saga, I not only reveal old secrets, but I show how their very existence affected the dynamics of my family. I also propose that exposing the family's past trauma is a way of ensuring that it does not carry on to future generations.

#### Sources Consulted

Lavoie, Yolande. L'Émigration des Québécois aux États-Unis de 1840 à 1930. Québec : Éditeur officiel, c1979.

Vermette, David. "Why Are Franco-Americans So Invisible?" French North America [blog] <http://frenchnorthamerica.blogspot.com/2016/03/why-are-franco-americans-so-invisible.html>. Accessed 28 March 2018.

Belanger, Damien-Claude, and Claude Belanger. Readings in Quebec History. "French Canadian Emigration to the United States 1840-1930." Last revised 23 August 2000. Accessed 24 March 2018. <http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/quebechistory/readings/leaving.htm>

Chartier, Armand. The Franco-Americans of New England: A History. Translated by Robert J. Lemieux and Claire Quintal. Revised and edited by Claire Quintal. Manchester, NH : ACA Assurance ; Worcester, MA : Institut français of Assumption College, 1999.

Dunwell, Steve. The Run of the Mill: A Pictorial Narrative of the Expansion, Dominion, Decline and Enduring Impact of the New England Textile Industry. Boston: David R. Godine, Publisher; 1978.

Moran, William. The Belles of New England: The Women of the Textile Mills and the Families Whose Wealth They Wove. New York: Thomas Dunne Books, St. Martin's Press, 2002.

# A Brief Guide to Celebrate Lent and Easter with Books Published by the NMDC of Franco-American Literature and Culture

By Albert J. Marceau, Newington, Conn.

The natural season of Spring and the Catholic liturgical seasons of Lent and Easter are the subjects of my second installment of Franco-American literature and culture, as published by the National Materials Development Center for French, abbreviated as NMDC. Like the first installment, the ten books that are examined for the article are: *Nothing Went to Waste in grandmother's kitchen/Rien n'était gaspille dans la cuisine de ma grand-mère* by Betty A. Lausier Lindsay, and the nine-volume set entitled: *Anthologie de la littérature franco-américaine de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*.

Since Lent is a penitential season that is effectively bracketed by two days of fasting and the abstention of eating meat – Ash Wednesday and Good Friday – it is awkward to think of a celebration of Lent, but “celebration” is chosen over “participation,” which has a weak sound to it. In contrast, it is easy to think of a celebration of Easter, when the penance, the fasting and abstention are over, and the Christian, in particular, the Roman Catholic, can enjoy a hearty Easter dinner, with the family, after they all have gone to the Mass, having celebrated the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the core belief of Christianity. Easter as a liturgical season lasts forty days, from Easter Sunday to Ascension Thursday. The archdioceses and dioceses of the New England States have retained the practice of Ascension Thursday, while the archdioceses and dioceses in the Province of Quebec have shifted the feast day to the following Sunday. Ten days after Ascension Thursday is the Feast of Pentecost.

Since food is an intrinsic part of Lent and Easter, I will first examine the Franco-American cookbook, and then the Franco-American literature.

## The Franco-American Foods for Lent and Easter

Betty A. Lausier Lindsay wrote a cookbook in French and in English with the title of *Nothing Went to Waste in grandmother's kitchen/Rien n'était gaspille dans la cuisine de ma grand-mère* which was

published in 1983 by the NMDC. Her cookbook was the last book that was published by the NMDC, according to Roger Lacerte, the well-known Franco-American book vendor and owner of La Librairie Populaire in Manchester, N.H. Aside from the collection of recipes, Betty A. Lausier Lindsay wrote briefly about her remembrances of life on a farm in Grand Isle, Maine, before the advent of electric stoves and refrigerators, when a farm was a self-sustaining unit of society, maintained by a family. As I wrote in my first installment, the cookbook does not have a specific chapter of recipes for any single holiday, but on page 25 of both the French and English sections of her cookbook, is the page with the title of “Holidays,” and “Les



Fêtes.” The page has only three paragraphs of text, and they can be best classified as brief remembrances of life on the Lausier family farm in Grand Isle. The sentence in English about Easter is: “At Easter, the special item on the table would have been a ham that came from a slaughtered hog, and had been smoked in a local smokehouse.” The same sentence in the French section is: « À Pâques, le jambon était la viande spéciale provenant d'un porc abattu et qui avait été fumé à un endroit local. » The one sentence is the recipe for the Easter ham, which was smoked, and neither cooked, nor boiled.

Betty A. Lausier Lindsay did not spec-

ify her recipes for fish could be in support of Lent and its abstention of meat, it is possible to do so, since the seven recipes for fish on pages 60 and 61 fulfill the Lenten practice of the abstention of meat on Fridays. Since her cookbook has an air of nostalgia, it should be noted that Catholics before the implementation of the decrees of the Second Vatican Council, which began on October 11, 1962, and closed on December 8, 1965, commonly abstained from meat on all Fridays throughout the year. Some readers of *Le Forum* may remember in the early 1970s that parish calendars were printed with a fish symbol in red ink on all Fridays of the year. Sometime in the mid-1970s, Catholics abandoned the practice of the abstention of meat on Fridays, but in the early 1980s, the Catholic bishops in the U.S. attempted to revive the former common practice, but limited it to Lent. Yet, the Code of Canon Law by the Catholic Church, clearly states in paragraphs 1249 to 1253 that Friday is a day of abstinence throughout the year, and if one decides to eat meat on Friday, then one is obligated to do another form of penance. Since I went to seven years of Catholic school – three years at St. Mary's Middle School in Newington, Conn., (Sept. 1976 to June 1979), and four years at St. Thomas Seminary High School in Bloomfield, Conn., (Sept. 1979 to May 1983) – I can assure the readers of *Le Forum* that the Code of Canon Law was never mentioned once in religion class in either school. Also, I remember in my junior year at STSHS when the Rev. Joseph Donnelly, the Spiritual Director of the school, became adamant to fulfill the new policy of the Catholic bishops in the U.S., and suddenly, fish filets and tartar sauce became the norm in the refectory at lunchtime for all the Fridays of Lent in the Spring of 1982.

## The Franco-American Authors

Dr. Georges Alphonse Boucher, (1865-1956), the author of three books of poetry – *Je me souviens* (1933), *Sonnets de guerre* (1943), *Chants de Nouveau monde* (1946) – wrote a sonnet entitled: « Résurrec-

(Continued on page 35)

(*A Brief Guide to Celebrate Lent and Easter with Books Published by the NMDC of Franco-American Literature and Culture continued from page 34*)

tion » which is found in pages 166-167 of volume seven of the *Anthologie*. The sonnet itself is from *Sonnets de guerre*, and it is about the future resurrection of the county of France, which was either occupied by Nazi Germany, or a vassal state to Nazi Germany, better known as Vichy France during World War Two, when the poem was published.

Rev. François-Xavier Burque, (1851-1923), was the second pastor of St. Louis Church in Fort Kent, Maine, from 1882 to 1904, and the author of *Élévations Poétiques, Volume Deux* (Quebec, 1907), and two poems from it are published in the *Anthologie*, tome deux – « Il faut souffrir, » on pages 48 to 50, and « Le Christ agonisant, » on page 51. « Il faut souffrir » has the theme of the natural world of Springtime versus a spiritual longing for peace in the human heart, to begotten by prayer and communion with the Divine. The form of the poem is composed of ten sestets, with a rhyme scheme of aabccb. « Le Christ agonisant » has the subtitle of « pour le Vendredi-Saint » in the original printing. It is truly about the Passion of Christ, and it is written in four sestets, with a rhyme scheme of aabbab.

Rosaire Dion-Lévesque, the nom de plume of Leo-Albert Lévesque (1900-1974), the author of several books of poetry, three of which are the source of four of the five poems which are selected here – *Les Oasis* (Rome: 1930), *Solitudes* (Montreal: 1949), and *Quête* (Quebec 1963) – and all of his poems are found in volume nine of the *Anthologie*. The poem « Mater Dolorosa, » on page 136, was earlier published in *Les Oasis*, and the quote after the title is from the poem “Ante Arman” by the British poet Rupert Brooke (1887-1915). « Mater Dolorosa » is a sonnet, and the title in Latin is itself a title for the Virgin Mary, originally in reference to her witness of the crucifixion of her son, Jesus Christ. It is also in reference to the apparition of the Virgin Mary in La Salette, France, which occurred in 1846. Dion-Levesque evoked the image of the Virgin Mary with her title of Our Lady, Queen of Saints, as referenced in the ninth line, but the last line of the sonnet has the curious allusion to Classical Greco-Roman Mythology: « Niobé de mon ciel, ô Dame des Douleurs! » which means in English: “Niobe of my heaven, O Lady of Sorrows!” Niobe, the daughter of Tantalus, the King of

Sipylus, made the mistake of boasting about the number of her children before the goddess Leto, who only had two children, and so, Leto had all the children of Niobe killed before her. « Pâques lointaines » on pages 246-7, was earlier published in *Solitudes*, and it is written in free verse. It is about the Easters of his youth, when his unnamed father was alive, whose name is Edmond Lévesque. The poem has a recurring image of water, the waters of baptism. Two poems are from *Quête*: « O Christ! » on page 132, and « Tædium Vitae » on pages 232-3. « O Christ! » is in free verse, and it is inspired by the famous painting by the Surrealist Artist, Salvador Dali (1904-1989), who completed the painting in 1951, and it is entitled: “Christ of St. John of the Cross.” St. John of the Cross (1542-1591) was a Carmelite friar and priest who wrote two major poems in Spanish – “The Spiritual Canticle,” and “The Dark Night of the Soul” – the title of the latter is the origin of the now common phrase. « Tædium Vitae, » Latin for “weariness of life,” is composed in free verse, and it is almost a retelling of the complaint of Job. The sole reference to crucifixion is in the last line of the poem: « Et je suis comme un dieu mort, hanté par sa croix. » The translation is: “And I am like a dead god, haunted by his cross.” Clearly, Dion-Levesque did not write about orthodox Christianity in this poem. After the title of the poem is a quote from a poem by the French Symbolist poet, Stéphane Mallarmé (1842-1898), entitled « Brise marine, » from his book *Vers et Prose*, (1893). The fifth poem by Rosaire Dion-Levesque is « Soir de printemps, » which was previously published in Montreal on July 18, 1967, in the periodical *L'information Médicale et Paramédicale*. It is dedicated to his wife, Alice Lemieux (1905-1983), and it is written in three quatrains of rhyming couplets. The central image is the night sky in the Spring, just after sunset, when the planet Venus can be seen, and the constellations begin to appear.

Anna Duval-Thibault, (1862-1951), is the author of the book of poetry, *Fleur du printemps* (Fall River, Mass., 1892), and a poem from it is found on pages 232-233 in volume two of the *Anthologie*. The poem is entitled « Souvenirs du printemps » and it is a description of Springtime in the month of May, when the snows of Winter have melted, and the fields are a deep green of grass. The poem has the metaphoric meaning of the harshness of sin (Winter), released in the warmth of forgiveness (Spring). The form

of the poem is in nine quatrains with a rhyme scheme of abba.

Anna Duval-Thibault also wrote a short story entitled: « À l'orgue, » which is found on pages 211 to 215 of volume two of the *Anthologie*. The setting of the story is a parish choir, with Rosalie as the central character within the parish choir, and the story begins during the last week of Lent, when the choir is practicing for the Mass on Easter Sunday. The story ends sometime in May, after the litanies were sung for the Virgin Mary. The story was first published on Friday, June 3, 1887 in the Franco-American newspaper *L'Independant* of Fall River, Massachusetts, as cited on page 249 of the bibliography. Her short story demonstrates that the laity fully participated in the Mass before the Second Vatican Council, and before the reform of the liturgy with the *Novus Ordo Missae*.

When Anna Duval-Thibault published her short story, her Franco-American readership would have immediately understood that the elongated words: “Kýrie elésion” in the second paragraph of her story, were from the Roman Rite of the Mass, which did not significantly change until 1963, when the *Novus Ordo Missae* began to be used. “Kýrie elésion” would have been sung at all High Masses throughout the liturgical year, and words are Greek, meaning: “Lord have mercy.” The following words to the prayer are also in Greek: “Christe, elésion,” meaning: “Christ have mercy.”

In the fifth paragraph on page 212 of the short story, where the reader is introduced to Mr. Beauchemin, the new tenor in the parish choir, the word “credo” is used by Anna Duval-Thibault. Again, when she wrote the story, she knew her readership would immediately understand the reference to what is known in the *Novus Ordo Missae* as the Profession of Faith. “Credo” means: “I believe” in Latin, and the opening words to the profession is: “Credo in Unum Deum...,” meaning: “I believe in one God...” At a High Mass, the priest would intone the quoted words, and the choir would start to sing the remainder of the creed. It should be noted that the priest would be in the sanctuary at the foot of the altar when he intoned the words, and at the opposite end of the church, in the choir loft, the choir would start to sing, projecting their voices over the heads of the congregation. The placement of the priest and choir, which was standard before the Second Vatican Council, is in con-

(Continued on page 36)

(A Brief Guide to Celebrate Lent and Easter with Books Published by the NMDC of Franco-American Literature and Culture continued from page 35)

trast to what one may find at the Folk Mass of today, where the priest and the folk group are both in the sanctuary, where the priest has his microphone at the free-standing altar, and the folk-group is huddled around their own microphone.

In the fourth full paragraph on page 213 of the short story, Anna Duval-Thibault used the word: « l'aspergès, » which in English is: “the asperges,” and it is the opening antiphon for a High Mass in the Old Roman Rite of the Mass, which has been called, since Pope Benedict XVI, the *Missa Extraordinariae Formae*, the Mass of the Extraordinary Form. After the priest has entered the sanctuary, he would turn towards the people, and intone the words: “Aspérge me, Dómine,” and the choir would then sing: “...hyssópo, et mundábor: lavábis me, et super nivem déalbábor.” The translation of the prayer in Latin, which is taken from Psalm 51, is: “Sprinkle me, O Lord, with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed, wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” As the choir would sing, the priest would exit the sanctuary and walk in the central aisle of the church, also known as the nave, and towards the vestibule, and bless the people to his left with holy water. The holy water itself is cast from a device called an aspergillum, which the priest would hold in his right hand. Usually, two altar servers, formerly called acolytes, would walk with the priest, and both would hold his cope, while the one to his right would also hold a bucket of holy water, called an aspersorium. Periodically, the priest would dip the aspergillum into the aspersorium in order to refill the aspergillum with holy water. Once the priest and the altar servers reached the far-end of the nave, at the doors of the vestibule, the priest would turn, and bless the people to his left on the other side of the nave with holy water, as he would walk toward the sanctuary. The act is known as the aspersion of the holy water, and it is usually seen today only on the Mass for Easter Sunday.

Anna Duval-Thibault did not identify the composer of the music for the Mass on Easter Sunday, which is part of the background to the story, but it is possible to hear what the old rite of the Mass sounded like when she wrote her short story, with the various parts of the Mass sung by the choir, and intoned dialog between the choir and the

priest. The compact disc is entitled “Solemn Mass of Easter Sunday,” with music composed by Palestrina, (ca. 1525-1594), and the recording was produced by the St. Gregory Society in New Haven, Conn. The compact disc is available for purchase through their website: <http://saint-gregory.org/>.

Anna Duval-Thibault also did not identify the composer of the music for the vespers, which are referenced in the seventh full paragraph on page 213, where she wrote the clause: « Le soir, durant les vèpres... » which means in English: “The evening, during vespers...” The practice of vespers on Sunday evening at your local Catholic parish church faded away after the Second Vatican Council, and are today effectively forgotten. On Thurs. March 1, 2018, I spoke with D. Michel Michaud of Lynn, Mass., who has been a church organist since 1968, and I asked him about vespers. He said that vespers were practiced on Sunday evenings at the local Catholic parish, and would last from about 20 minutes to an hour, depending on the length of the composition. By 1968, the practice of vespers at his parish were beginning to fade, and by the mid-1970s, the practice was effectively non-existent. He noted that the documents of the Second Vatican Council did not forbid the practice of Sunday vespers at the local parish, but he also noted that the pastors did not encourage the practice either. As an organist, D. Michel Michaud would use parts of some compositions of the Sunday vespers by various composers, and play them as a communion hymn at Mass. Later the same day, I also spoke to Roger Lacerte, who remembered when he was an altar boy, he would serve during the vespers on Sunday evenings at his parish of Ste-Jeanne d'Arc Church in Lowell, which had a full choir, and organ accompaniment. One set of well-known Catholic vespers are the *Vesperae in Festis Beatae Mariae Virginis*, meaning: “Vespers in the Honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary,” by Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643), and they are better known in the Anglophone world as the *Vespers of 1610*. More than 160 years later, Amadeus Wolfgang Mozart (1756-1791) composed two sets of vespers, the *Vesperae Solennes de Dominica* (Solemn Vespers of Sunday) in 1779, and his most famous *Vesperae Solennes de Confessore* (Solemn Vespers of the Confessor) in 1780. Mozart was commissioned to compose the vespers by the Archbishop of Salzburg, Austria, for the parish choir. The three examples of Sunday vespers are cited here

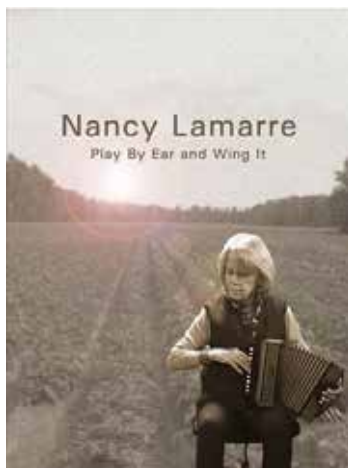
for their fame, and availability to be heard either on a recording, or in the concert hall.

Rev. Louis-Alphonse Nolin, omi (1849-1936), was a professor of literature at the University of Ottawa from 1874 to 1892, and he fulfilled his ministry as a priest at the Parish of St. Joseph in Lowell from 1901 to the time of his death in 1936. In 1924 he published a booklet of poetry in Lowell entitled *Vers les cimes*, which was expanded in a second edition in 1933. A portion of his writings is found in volume seven of the *Anthologie*, and three of his poems are selected here: « Les larmes d'une mère, » on pages 74 to 75, « Le printemps, » within the poem « Giboulée, » on pages 93 to 94, and « Résurrection » on pages 117 to 118. « Le printemps » is the first section of the poem « Giboulée, » meaning: “a sudden shower,” and the only clear religious reference in the poem is the quote after the title of the poem, from Mark 7:37, which in English is: “He has done all things well.” The “He” in the quote is Jesus Christ, who just healed the deaf-mute in Tyre, near the Sea of Galilee. The narrating voice of the poem addresses the season of Winter as one of the monsters of Classical Greek and Roman Mythology, the Gorgons, in the seventh line: « ton oeil de Gorgone, » meaning: “thy eye of the Gorgon.” Also, the narrative voice sarcastically addresses Winter in the 29<sup>th</sup> line as: « Aimable et bon comme un Tartare, » meaning: “As friendly and amiable as a Tartar.” The last six lines of the poem compares the harshness of Winter against the flowering of Spring in the month of May, which the narrator calls in the 36<sup>th</sup> line: « Mon pieux mois de mai, » meaning: “My pious month of May.” In Catholic tradition, the month of May is dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and since Rev. Nolin wrote the poem for a Franco-American readership, the reference to May would instantly recall the well-known French hymn « C'est le mois de Marie, » that was composed by Rev. Louis Lambillotte, S.J. (1796-1855). « Le printemps » within « Giboulée, » is written in ten quatrains with a rhyme scheme of abab. « Les larmes d'une mère, » meaning: “the tears of a mother,” is a meditative poem about the Virgin Mary as Our Lady of Sorrows, and it is written in five octets, with a rhyme scheme of ababcdcd. « Résurrection » is a meditative poem about the death and the resurrection of the body, and it is written in nine quatrains with a rhyme scheme of abab.

Dr. Joseph Hormisdas Roy, (1865-  
(Continued on page 37)



## Music/ Musique



Nancy's love of Acadian French music and the accordion has reinvigorated her. She loves to entertain her audience, relishes seeing their feet tapping, and takes pride in knowing that she is keeping the tradition alive.

Regardless of the setting, Nancy has always loved to make people smile, always found a way to make others feel better about themselves and to forget their daily worries. Playing the accordion has been a natural extension of her personality allowing her to breathe a little love into the community she has called home for the last four decades.

**"I'm pretty excited about my new CD--some of them are coming in this afternoon, if you would like to order a copy! Upbeat music that will bring you joy, this is traditional music that I learned when I was young and I recorded this music on my French accordion to preserve the Franco-American Tradition!"**

To Order

Call: 947-3875

Email: [NancyLamarremonami@gmail.com](mailto:NancyLamarremonami@gmail.com)

\$20.00 per CD

*(French-American immigration – five resource books continued from page 29)*

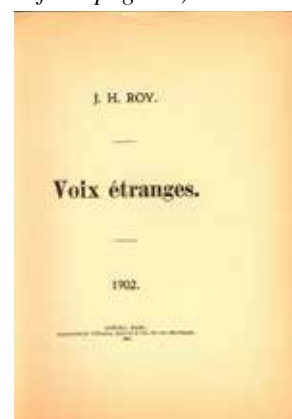
Quebec, and called themselves Canadiens, this may be your story. For others, it's a little known piece of the American mosaic."

Another description of "forgotten history" is chronicled in the book "When the United States Spoke French", by Françoise Furstenberg. In fact, the book is a researched reminder about how the French influenced early American history. It puts five refugees from France, prominent men who fled the tyranny of the French Revolution, into the heart of Philadelphia during the formative years of the American nation. Furstenberg describes the American adventures that were experienced by the prominent refu-

gees, as they integrated themselves into Philadelphia, when the city was our nation's temporary capital. Their stories include the histories of their time, like interactions with George Washington, the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804), the 1803, Louisiana Purchase and America's westward expansion. The five refugees Furstenberg followed were: Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, La Rochefoucauld, duc de Liancourt, Louis-Marie, vicomte de Noailles; the writer Médéric Louis Élie Moreau de Saint-Méry, and the philosopher Constantin-Françoise de Chaseboeuf, comte de Volney.

These five books add to our growing knowledge about French and American history, while underscoring the important contributions made by immigrants and refugees to our nation's history.

*(A Brief Guide to Celebrate Lent and Easter with Books Published by the NMDC of Franco-American Literature and Culture continued from page 35)*



1931), is the author of the book of poetry entitled *Voix étranges* (Lowell, Mass., 1902), and three poems from it, and from volume three of the *Anthologie*, are selected here. The three poems are: « Une aube nouvelle, » on page 206, « Fin d'avril, » on pages 207-8, and « Voix du printemps, » on page 209. Each of the three poems are about Springtime, without any religious significance. « Une aube nouvelle, » and « Voix du printemps » are both sonnets, while « Fin d'avril » is in seven quatrains with a rhyme scheme of abba.

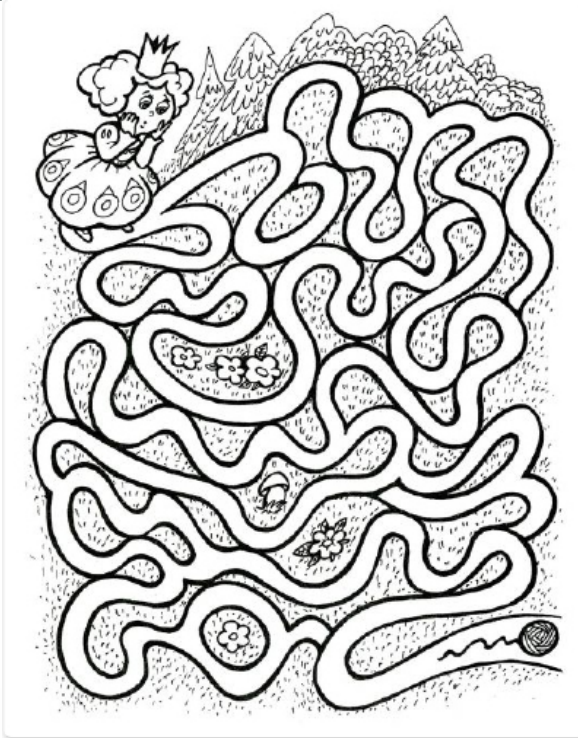
Joseph Arthur Smith, (1869-1960), who was the editor of *L'Etoile* of Lowell from 1905 to 1921, and *Le Journal de Haverhill* from 1928 to 1955, wrote a poem of 30 lines in the form of rhyming couplets about the death of Jesus Christ, which is remembered on Good Friday, and it is entitled: « Le Mort du Christ. » The poem is found on pages 32 and 33 in volume three of the *Anthologie*. The poem was first published in *L'Etoile* of Lowell, on April 2, 1915, as cited on page 257 of the bibliography section of the book. With the use of a perpetual calendar, April 2, 1915 fell on Good Friday, for two days later was Easter Sunday.

### How to Purchase the Books

The best means to purchase copies of the cookbook, *Nothing Went to Waste in grandmother's kitchen/Rien n'était gaspillé dans la cuisine de ma grand-mère*, as well as any of the nine-volume set, *Anthologie de la littérature franco-américaine de la Nouvelle-Angleterre*, is to contact the Franco-American book vendor, Roger Lacerte, the owner of La Librairie Populaire, 18 rue Orange, Manchester, NH 03104-6060. His business phone number is (603)-669-3788, and his a business e-mail address is: [libpopulaire@yahoo.com](mailto:libpopulaire@yahoo.com).



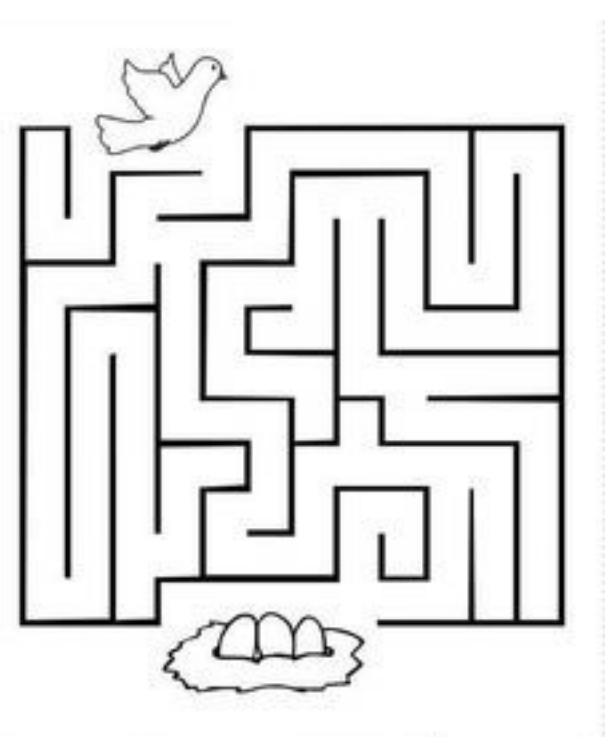
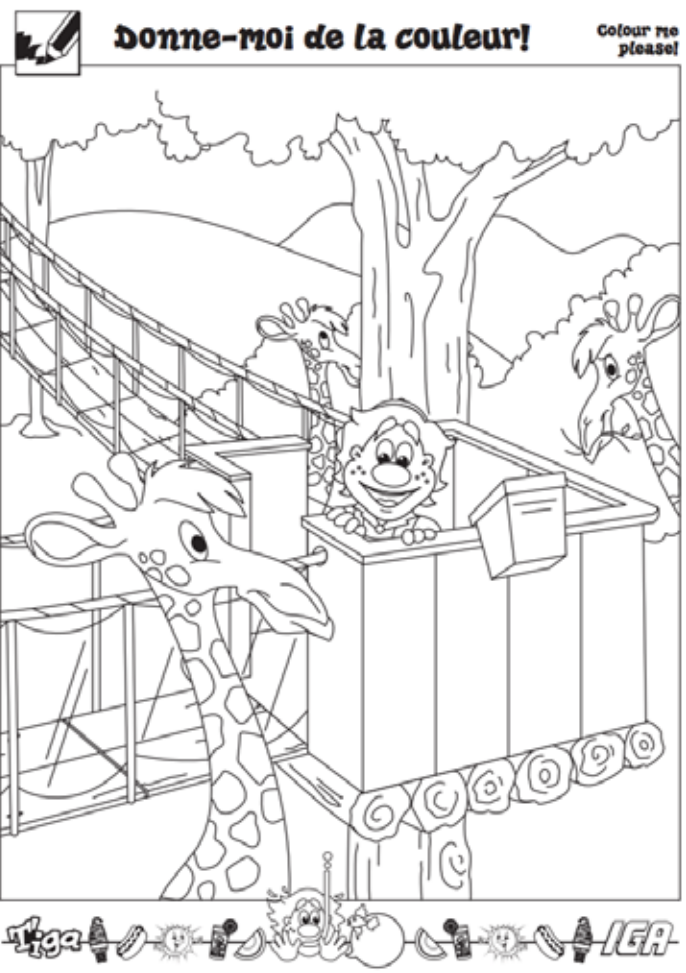
# Coin des jeunes...



## Je me sens ...



- |              |           |            |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| À L'AISE     | FÂCHÉ     | PRESSÉ     |
| AGITÉ        | FURIEUX   | SURPRIS    |
| AMOUREUX     | GÉNÉ      | TRANQUILLE |
| CALME        | HEUREUX   | TRISTE     |
| CONTENT      | IMPATIENT |            |
| DÉÇU         | INQUIET   |            |
| DÉTENDU      | IRRITÉ    |            |
| EN COLÈRE    | JALOUX    |            |
| ENCHANTÉ     | MALADE    |            |
| ÉNERVÉ       | NERVEUX   |            |
| ENTHOUSIASTE | PRÉOCCUPÉ |            |







**FREE!**

*The Franco-American Programs at the University of Maine in Orono invite you to our Genetic Genealogy Workshop*

**Genetic Genealogy ~ How When Where and Why**

New to the idea of DNA testing for genealogy research? Learn about the three major test types, Y-DNA, mtDNA, and atDNA. Find out what each test offers and which might be the best tool to help with your research.

Genetic DNA testing can give clues to the origins of your paternal and maternal lines. It can prove or disprove a genealogical problem. This testing can help find unknown family lines in cases of adoption or other separations from biological lines. It will find relatives with whom you share a common ancestor. DNA is a wonderful new tool to be used with traditional genealogical research.

**FREE!**

**Saturday, May 19th, 2018**

**10:00 a.m.**

**FREE!**



*Nancy Milliken Mason is a genetic genealogist who has been doing traditional genealogy research for over 30 years. She travels when and wherever she can to attend workshops and conferences and to give presentations about genetic genealogy. Nancy was born in Portland, Maine and grew up in Cumberland. She has many stories to share about using DNA to assist with traditional research.*

To Register: Contact Lisa Desjardins Michaud at [Lisam@maine.edu](mailto:Lisam@maine.edu) or 207-581-3789. / The Franco-American Centre is located at Crossland Hall (across from the Alford Arena), University of Maine, Orono

*This workshop is made possible by a generous donation on behalf of the Adrien Lanthier Ringuette Library and Franco-American Programs.*



Université du Maine  
**Le FORUM**  
Centre Franco-Américain  
Orono, ME 04469-5719  
États-Unis  
*Change Service Requested*

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Orono, Maine  
Permit No. 8

### 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