



This picture found on the Amos Historical Society website is titled Robitaille Family. It was taken in Abitibi around 1930 and, according to the description, the people on this photo are, from left to right: Ernest Robitaille, Mélie, Rose, grandma Alma Robitaille, baby Michelle Robitaille, grandpa Robitaille, Solande Robitaille (in the car), Eugène Robitaille, young Micheline Robitaille, Ector Robitaille, Gérald Robitaille and young boy? Robitaille.

(Photo : Amos Historical Society – Fond Bernard Cossette)

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## A Word from the President

Greetings to all our members,

We are currently experiencing an extraordinary global event. Despite two months of confinement, how have you been doing?

We hope all is well and that your spirit is good. We will all have to gain a positive experience from all this, particularly in our family ties. This pandemic reminds us of the fragility of our health and subjects our loved ones to restraint, given the easiness of transmission of this virus.

In this context and as we are the most vulnerable clientele, our general assembly will have to be postponed.



We will look at the different opportunities with which we could present our agenda and the financial statement. We will inform you of the arrangements we will take in order to distribute our information.

Our team is always looking for good articles and if you know someone whose actions have helped people through this dark period, we would be grateful to hear of those actions of devotion.

*Your president  
Marc Robitaille*

DO YOU HAVE A COMMENT OR ANYTHING RELATED TO YOUR FAMILY THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE?

WRITE US AT [INFO@ROBITAILLE.ORG](mailto:INFO@ROBITAILLE.ORG)

# Automobile Pioneer

A newsclip from Québec City's newspaper *Le Soleil*, 6 August 1946

*Have you ever owned a 1907 two cylinder Ford? A 1903 one cylinder Packard? Then you are one of the first pioneers of the gasoline automobile. It's the case for M<sup>r</sup> Cyprien Robitaille, 165 Christophe-Colomb street, Québec, whom, with the late Doctor Casgrain, dentist, owned in our city at the turn of this century, the first car of this type. In the last few days, M. Robitaille had his two brothers, Adélar and Joseph, whom he hadn't seen for nearly 35 years, visiting to celebrate with him the golden jubilee of automobile.*

*Since 1907, when he owned in Québec City a two-cylinder Ford, bought second hand at the Toronto exposition, M<sup>r</sup> Cyprien Robitaille has had autos of all the imaginable brands. Currently, he drives a 1938 Chrysler. But Fords and Packards with one, two or three cylinders, are all familiar to him.*

*Yesterday, M. Robitaille, employee to the Provincial Department of Roads on Belvédère street, accompanied by his two brothers, was the guest of M<sup>r</sup> Émile Renaud, secretary of Québec City's Automobile Club.*

*M<sup>r</sup> Joseph Robitaille drove the long distance from St-Boniface, Manitoba, where he owns a garage, to Québec, where his brother Cyprien lives. M<sup>r</sup> Adélar Robitaille has traveled even longer, from Long Beach, California. Both arrived two weeks ago.*

*M<sup>r</sup> Adélar Robitaille built his own gasoline car in 1896, while Henry Ford made his first appearance in Detroit with a four-wheel vehicle, also powered by gasoline. During 1907 and 1908, MM. Adélar and Cyprien Robitaille, then both living in Québec City, bought two two-cylinder Fords at the Toronto Exposition, which they then reconditioned " the best they could to turn them into automobiles ".*

*Ever since that time, the Robitaille brothers have always been interested in the evolution of the automo-*



*bile. They have bought, dismantled and rebuilt, studied all auto pieces, owned every brand, so that we can rightly call them « first pioneers of the automobile in Québec City. »*

*We know that the first gasoline powered car appeared in America in 1896. Henry Ford built the first one in Detroit and proudly drove around that city. A year later, Doctor Casgrain, from Québec City, amazed his fellow citizens with a new modern apparatus, a tricycle of sorts powered by gasoline. At that time, Québec City had automobile veterans, all members of the budding Auto-Club, MM. Carrel and Pion, Georges-Élie Amyot, the Honorable D -O. L'Espérance, Wellie Brunet, A.-E. Pfeiffer, J.-M. Landry, Jos. Devarennes, D<sup>r</sup> Robert Larue, H. Lavigneur, M<sup>r</sup> Georges Parent, J.-T. Donohue, Guy Simpson, M.-H. Leonard, J.-H. Fortier, Jos. Boswell, Adj. Amyot, P.J. Paradis. Cyrille Kirouac and many others.*

*If Eugène Brioux, famous French writer of that time, was still living and saw the three Robitaille brothers in each of their cars, as well as the enormous development of the auto industry across the world, he might have refrained from writing: " I have doubts about our future when I see one of those men with cap and glasses, enormous, wrapped up in woolens or ugly pelts, like a native from Greenland. Why is this extraordinary triumph of ugliness? Insulting mockery of a carriage, disfigurement of man and street. The absurd development of motoring calls for sanctioning by public authorities. "*

The historical notes on automobile development in the Québec region were kindly provided by M<sup>r</sup> Émile Renaud, secretary of the Automobile Club in his article "« Automobile's Golden Jubilee; 1896-1946. »

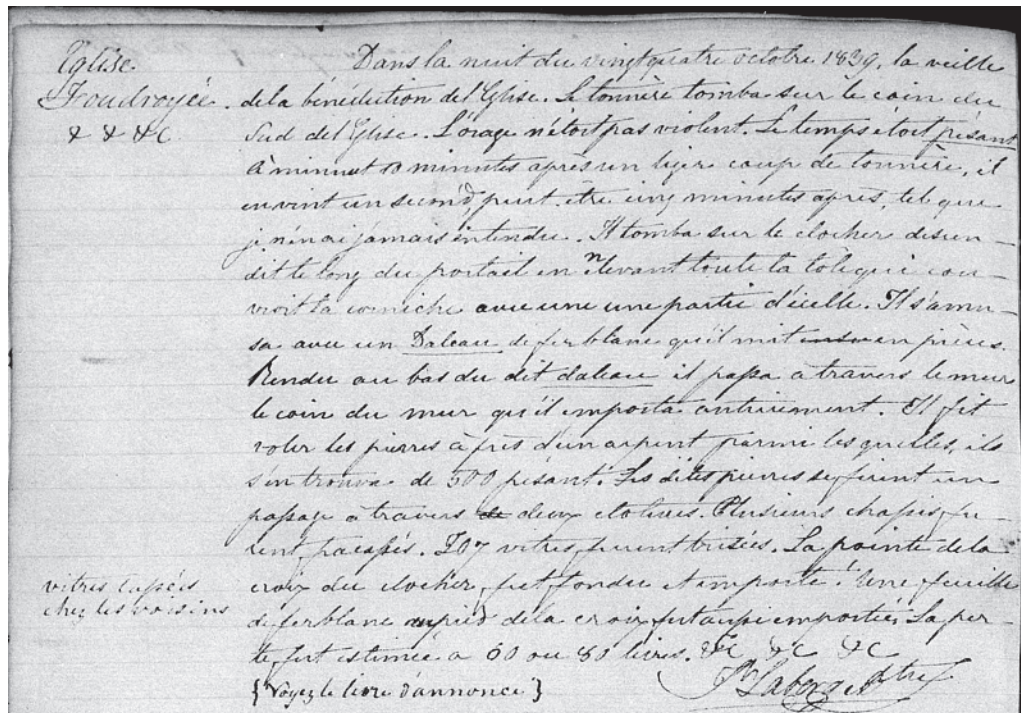


THE FIRST GASOLINE CAR IN QUEBEC : The two-cylinder « Ford » seen on the top photo, was the first gasoline automobile appearing in Québec's streets. It was owned by Mr CYPRIEN ROBITAILLE, sitting behind the wheel, in the company of his two brothers. On the bottom photo, the ROBITAILLE brothers in front of the Automobile Club, where they were guests yesterday. From left to right: Mr JOSEPH ROBITAILLE, from Saint-Boniface, Manitoba; Mr ADELARD ROBITAILLE, from Palm Beach, California; Mr CYPRIEN ROBITAILLE, 165, Christophe-Colomb Street, Québec City, and Mr J.-EMILE RENAUD, secretary of the Automobile Club.

## Back in those days...

Extracts from the parish register of Notre-Dame-de-L'Annonciation, L'Ancienne-Lorette

Joseph Laberge (1804-09-23 – 1877-08-28) was parish priest of L'Ancienne-Lorette for 45 years. Over the years, he added some personal notes to the parish register. Generally, he wrote down his comments at the change of year, recalling the significant events of the past year but, in October 1839, he allowed himself to add an annotation between the registration of a marriage and that of a burial.



### Thunderstruck Church

In the night of October 4, 1839, the day before the benediction of the church, thunder fell on the South corner of the church. The storm was not violent. The weather was heavy up to 10 minutes past midnight. After a slight thunderclap, came a second one, maybe five minutes later, louder than I had ever heard. It struck on the church tower, went down along the portal, lifting all the sheet metal that covered the cornice and bringing down part of the cornice itself. It played with the tin waterspout that was blown to pieces. At the bottom of the waterspout, it went through the wall, blowing up the corner of the wall. Sending large boulders up to an acre away, some weighing up to 500 pounds each. Those stones passed through two fences. Several windows were smashed, 207 glass panes were broken (broken windows on the neighbours' houses). The tip of the spire cross was melted and taken away. A sheet of tin near the cross was also blown away. Our loss was estimated to 60 or 80 pounds.

**J. Laberge, ptre**

## Vintage issues 41 to 50 of the Robitalleries on our website

### ...now on the web

*Par René Robitaille, Saint-Lambert-de-Lauzon*

Editor's note: Each issue usually includes a word from the president giving news on the Association's projects and activities. Number 41 is the last number which was limited to a maximum of 10 pages to save postage. Starting with issue 42, a new Association policy made it possible to publish newsletters of 20 to 30 pages. It was also at this time that we began to publish more articles in English for English-speaking members.

**Issue 41** presents news on members, deaths and events in which we participated, such as the Fêtes de la Nouvelle-France and the genealogical workshops. There is also a report on the annual meeting and visit to the Village québécois d'Antan in Drummondville as well as President Claire's annual report.

A message from Manitoba informs us of the great Robitaille meeting to celebrate the centennial of the arrival in Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes of the couple Joseph Robitaille and Parmélia Cailler, considered to be the ancestors of all Robitailles in the region.

**Number 42** includes an important file on the knight Olivier Robitaille (1811-1896), doctor, mayor of Québec City and great philanthropist. He was the great-grandfather of René from Québec, the first president of our Association.

The bulletin also contains the history and genealogy of Emmett Robitaille from Texas and his brothers Daniel and Frank from California. In addition, that issue describes a corn roast for all Robitaille from Dupuy in Abitibi, descendants of Ovide Robitaille and Adélia Morasse, and two golden wedding anniversaries among these descendants. Finally, we learn the story of Jacques Robitaille who runs an exceptional and historic inn in Sainte-Catherine-de-la-Jacques-Cartier.

**Number 43** has an archive photo on its cover page from 1928, showing the celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Orchestre Symphonique de Québec. In the group photographed, there

were two Robitaille who played music and who were members of the Board of Directors, Paul flautist and Gustave cellist.

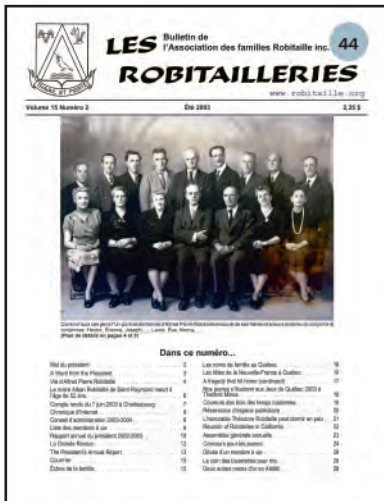
There are several biographical stories told:

- The 24,000 km solo bicycle expedition across the three Americas from south to north by the grandson of Cécile Robitaille Le Thierry d'Hennequin from France;
- The story of a rescue of the crew of a sinking boat during a storm off Vancouver by Major Jacques Robitaille;
- The story of Sr Lucille Robitaille who taught music in India for many years;
- The life of Père Blanc d'Afrique missionary, Jean-Paul Robitaille (1924-2002), in Burkina Faso.

Finally there are a few news items such as news from members from New Jersey and Saskatchewan, photos of the wedding in France of Olivier Cailler and Christine Robitaille, the latter known for taking part in two of our gatherings, and the meeting of Samuel de Champlain and the Indians at Tadoussac in 1603 with the understanding that the French were welcome in exchange for future aid against the Iroquois.



**Number 44** presents the first part of the life of Alfred Pierre Robitaille (1873-1964), the ancestor of a pioneer family from Charlesbourg. The son of Cyprien Robitaille, a businessman from Québec City, Alfred Pierre raised ten children and lost an eleventh infant. He worked in accounting, founded several companies and was deeply involved in his community.



An article recalls the fact that Mayor Alban Robitaille of Saint-Raymond had guided an Association group on Mount Laura and that he died shortly after at the age of 52. Other news reports are:

- The continuation of the rescue story by Major Jacques Robitaille;
- The Robitaille meeting in California;
- A demonstration of the modern coureurs de bois;
- Two other golden wedding anniversaries celebrated in Abitibi.

Finally, an article mentions the installation of a commemorative plaque in tribute to Lieutenant-Governor Théodore Robitaille (1834-1897) in the Belmont cemetery. Having no descendants and his funeral monument having been vandalized and destroyed, the Association undertook to correct the situation.

**Number 45** honors two other related families, that of William Robitaille and Gemma Daigle and that of Paul Robitaille and Yvette Bureau. William and Paul were two brothers raised on a farm in the Eastern Townships. William is the father of Florent, then president of the Association.

The other subjects dealt with concern:

- The second part of Alfred Pierre Robitaille's life;
- The unexpected meetings of our representative Paul Robitaille from the United States with owners of Robitaille Candy Store in California and Father Raymond Robitaille in New Iberia, Louisiana;
- The story of Andréanne Robitaille, nurse in the Far North;
- A 2003 statistic which shows that the Association had a total of 203 members including twelve in the United States and nine in France;
- The story of a happy 75-year-old guy, Conrad Morasse aka Mister Potato.



**Issue 46 of May 2004** tells the story of Françoise Robitaille Saint-Cyr, member of our Board at the time, as well as that of her ancestors linked for three generations to the fur trade in Québec City. Françoise is the granddaughter of Joseph-Napoléon Robitaille, founder of the Jos Robitaille Fourrures store, who ran the store from 1894 to 1944, before handing over the management to her son Eudore. In 1959, it was René, Françoise's brother, who perpetuated the Robitaille line of this remarkable trade.

The Robitalleries, wanting to make the members of the Board better known, asked Diane Robitaille Brisson to answer a series of questions about her life and career. The result was a true autobiography full of information and interesting to read.

We also mention the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Association and a celebration for the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of Aurélien Robitaille from Dupuy in Abitibi.

**Issue number 47 of September 2004** continues the story of Françoise Robitaille Saint-Cyr with a family tree genealogy and an archive photo of her great-grandparents: François-Xavier Robitaille and Reine Trudel.

In those pages, we also find:

- A report of the annual meeting in Sainte-Foy in the presence of Emmett Robitaille of Texas and his brother Frank of California;
- A tribute to René during his induction as Commander of the Association;
- The first part of the history of the establishment of Robitaille families in Cap-Rouge.

**Issue 48 of January 2005** traces the origins of Louis Robitaille and Marie-Louise Brault, Robitaille pioneers in the Joliette region, as told by Canon Georges Robitaille. Louis was Joliette's first pharmacist.

- There is also an account of the gathering at L'Épiphanie organized by Pierrette. The cover photo depicts Pierrette as a proud ancestor of four generations;
- The second part of the Robitaille saga in Cap-Rouge is presented;
- At a dinner of the Association, Lady Alys Robi (aka Robitaille) talks about how she fulfilled her dream of bringing her turbulent story to the silver screen.



**Number 49 of April 2005** draws attention to a genealogy enthusiast, Jules Robitaille, who has handwritten all the genealogical data from his research on the Robitailles in about thirty binders.

- The third part of the Robitaille in Cap-Rouge reports a funny fact, that of a letter of admonition from the parish priest to Dianora Robitaille for letting family members dance after midnight on Holy Saturday.
- There is also a report on the unveiling of a painting by Eugène Hamel representing a former mayor of Québec City, Dr. Olivier Robitaille.

**Issue 50 of October 2005** is historic since it represents the end of a 16-year writing period beginning with the founding of the Association. It was also an opportunity to bind the first fifty numbers into books from the leftover newsletters remaining in the

warehouse. We thought we would, this way, ensure the sustainability of our history. Today the first 50 issues are on the Web and ensure digital sustainability and accessibility to the public.

Other times, other manners.

P.S.: For more details, go to our website [ROBITAILLE.ORG](http://ROBITAILLE.ORG) and click on the tabs

- The Association
- Communications
- The Robitalleries
- Full text of old issues

Enjoy your reading!

## Four Yvones

In the L'Ancienne-Lorette parish Registry, the year 1894 is particular because it opens up with a strange series of Robitaille baptisms:

- On **January 25**, Pierre Robitaille and Marie Anna Morand have their daughter **Marie Yvonne** baptized.
- On **February 12**, it is Charles Robitaille and Lumina Laberge's turn to have their daughter **Marie Yvonne** baptized.
- On **March 16**, Jean Robitaille and Marie Sylvain choose the name **Marie Yvonne** for their daughter.
- On **April 18**, Léon Robitaille and Alma Gauvin add their grain of salt by baptizing their daughter **Marie Yvonne Alice**.

There is no Robitaille baptism in May. The next Robitaille baptism for the Robitailles in the parishes on **June 10** where Amédée Robitaille and Odélie Drolet have their son baptized *Joseph Elzéar Léger* thus ending the magical sequence.

Did the Robitaille families pass the word around to put the school teacher in trouble a few years later?



## A Hesdin Notebook (Part 7)

### Spanish Rule (1553-1639)

*By René Robitaille, Saint-Lambert-de-Lauzon  
(translated by David Robitaille, North Vancouver)*

Ed. note: The first five parts of this notebook dealt with the history of the Hesdin region from prehistory until the destruction of the city in 1553 by Charles V. The sixth part covered the reconstruction of the fortified city between 1554 and 1560, located a few kilometres west of the old site. This seventh part deals with Spanish rule during the period from 1553 to 1639.

**Source: Histoire d'Hesdin by Bruno Béthouard et al.**

#### Importance of a fortified city for Charles V

As king of Spain, Charles V already ruled over the 17 provinces of the Netherlands (the Low Countries). By gaining Artois and Flanders as war trophies, he enlarged Spanish domination of the region. Hesdin was located near the border with France. The French were still present in this fortified area, but weakened because of their outdated defenses. For Charles V this was like a thorn in his side, and he decided to settle once and for all the danger of an invasion at his southwestern border. In 1553, he managed to take the city after a short siege and decided to raze it and rebuild a modern fortified city on a defensible site located a little to the west, and it became a kind of buffer zone.

#### The life of the population under the reign of the Spaniards (1553-1639)

In 1555 Charles V resigned as emperor and king of Spain and officially ceded his titles to his son, Philip II, in 1556. The latter had previously received from his father the task of representing the king in Spain, since he knew the country so well. With the arrival of a new king of France, Henry II, skirmishes began again at the border and there were many crossings by soldiers and mischief from armed gangs that surely affected the population. In 1595, the French army, under the direction of Henry IV, took Auchy and burned the old city Hesdin, but they were unable to conquer the new Hesdin stronghold.

On the other hand, Philip II had to face a serious internal problem. The 17 provinces of the Netherlands were of highly significant value to Spain since they brought in royalties of 2 million ounces of gold annually from foreign holdings, out of a total of 5 million. The 7 northern and protestant provinces suffered severe reprisals from the very catholic king because of their religion. Feeling betrayed by this strict Philip II, who had been raised in Spain when they were accustomed to being ruled by a more tolerant ruler raised in Burgundy, they revolted; thereby creating a split. The ten predominantly catholic provinces in the south, including Artois, did not have to suffer religious violence.

The Spanish, who could now count on a stronghold to control the southern region, knew that the cooperation of the population had to be relied upon to ensure peace. In developing a city within the fortifications, they implemented the clauses of a charter that defined urban attributes and administrative functions. The organization was headed by a governor who took care of the military and defensive side, along with a mayor and 7 aldermen responsible for the local tax and judicial systems. This was the model which had been used in Old Hesdin. The surrounding municipalities, under the supervision of the governor, had the same structure.

This stable organization enabled the establishment of civil and religious institutions and buildings. In 1563, the first stone was laid for the Hesdin Town Hall, which was completed only around 1599, while the belfry was completed in 1581. A new church in Saint Omer was consecrated in 1573. It later served as the foundation for a Franciscan convent (the Recollets), dedicated to public assistance and teaching, as well as several colleges run mainly by the Jesuits.

Justice was sometimes applied harshly. In 1573, Jehanne Lepetit, known as Nisette, was accused of witchcraft. A dozen witnesses spoke of the woman's malfeasance including the use of spells: that is, calling upon an "evil spirit" to kill cattle, as well as women and children. The so-called witch was condemned to be exhibited in a public place, beaten, and burned.

According to census results, the population of Hesdin within the fortifications was 1000 inhabitants in 1569 and 2000 in 1592. Between 1620 and 1639 there were a number of epidemics of plague and smallpox. Having no statistics for this period, it is believed that the demographics did not change and that the population would have remained at 2000 inhabitants until the siege of 1639.

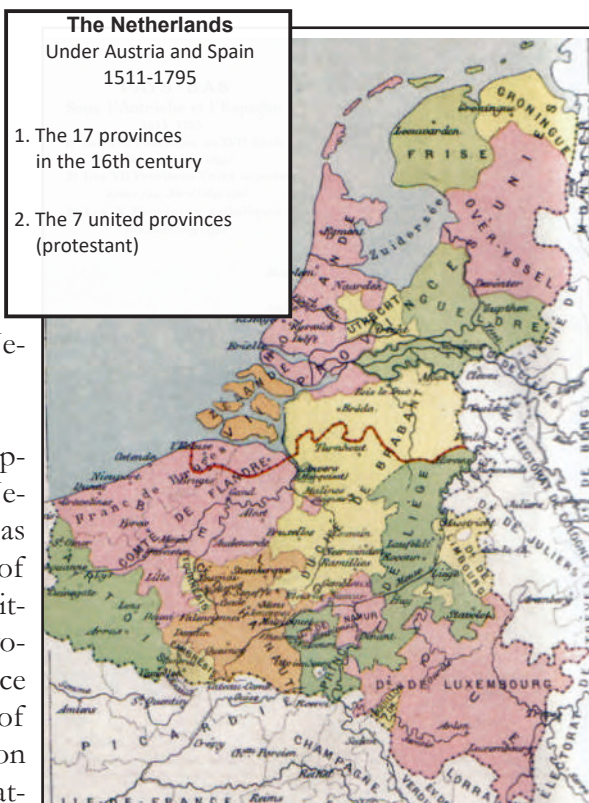
## Our ancestors during the reign of the Spaniards

We know that the Spanish reign over the Netherlands took place from 1553 to 1639. The four brothers, Jean, Nicolas, Pierre, and Philippe Robitaille, who emigrated to America, were born in 1642, 1650, 1651, and 1662, respectively. They did not live under Spanish rule. They stated that they were born in Auchy, St. George, and Bealencourt. They lived in villages on the outskirts of Hesdin under the new French rule.

On the other hand, it is known that the parents of the four brothers, Jean Robitaille and Martine Cormont, were married in Auchy near Hesdin in 1640, the day after the handover of power from the Spanish to the French. Jean and Martine therefore lived their youth between 1615 or 1620 and 1639 during the last days of Spanish rule, and raised their children in the

early years of French reign. They must have been strong because they survived epidemics of plague and smallpox and witnessed the siege and capture of Hesdin in 1639.

As for the grandparents and great-grandparents of the four brothers, there are no records of their dates of birth, marriage, and burial, nor of their places of residence. All that can be assu-



Illustrative map of the Spanish Netherlands and the split

During the reign of Philip II, a conflict with Spain arose. Indeed, as much as Charles V was a child of the country, Philip II was just as much a foreign sovereign, educated in Spain. In addition, there was a financial conflict against the (centralizing) government and a religious divide (the king, a catholic, strongly fighting against "protestant heresy"). (Wikipedia)

med is that they lived all their lives under Spanish rule and probably in villages surrounding Hesdin.

In short, the living conditions of the Artesian population under the Spanish were no worse than under the tutelage of the French. Local administrative and judicial officials managed the

activities in the same way in both cases. What might have been trying for people was when they had to suffer the consequences of wars and skirmishes; however, the 86-year period of Spanish rule can be considered to have been relatively stable for the region Hesdin.

*To be continued*

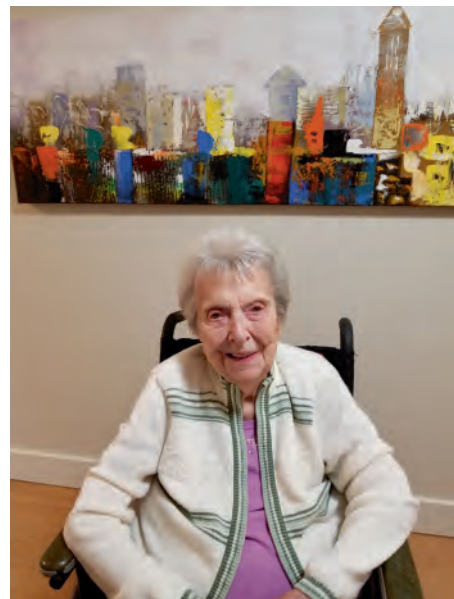
## Obituary

Madeleine McGuigan (nee- Robitaille) was born in St. Boniface Manitoba on October 9, 1925 and passed away in Qualicum Beach, BC on January 2, 2020. She was a happy resident of Qualicum Manor and succumbed to an infection. She was a long-time member of our Association.

Madeleine was predeceased by her husband Jack McGuigan in 1992 and her parents Joseph Robitaille and Victoria Ouellette. Madeleine is survived by her daughter Bridget McGuigan and her son in law Frank Pouliot.

Madeleine was a Commercial artist, better known as a Graphic artist, now a days. She was a multi medium artist who also taught painting and had the privilege of earning her living at art too. In her retirement she mastered china painting and enjoyed that with a great passion. Also, in retirement she enjoyed the art of cruising with her daughter. Madeleine had a full beautiful life and was living independently until December 2018. She will really be missed by her family and close friends.

Our sincere condolences to the bereaved family.



DO YOU HAVE A COMMENT OR ANYTHING RELATED TO YOUR FAMILY THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE?

WRITE US AT [INFO@ROBITAILLE.ORG](mailto:INFO@ROBITAILLE.ORG)

## In Memoriam

At the Hôpital du Saint-Sacrement in Québec City, on May 18, 2020, passed away Mrs. Claire Robitaille, age 80, wife of Mr. Fernand Gingras. She is survived by her husband, her children Lucie, René and Nicole, six grandchildren and four great grandchildren.



Claire was born in Sainte-Catherine-de-la-Jacques-Cartier to Albertine Thibault and Oscar Robitaille. She was the second in a family of six children. Her grandfather was Ernest Robitaille and her grandmother, Marie Denis. The couple raised fourteen children. Claire's father was a carpenter and her grandfather a farmer and blacksmith in his spare time.

After completing her elementary and secondary studies in Sainte-Catherine, Claire studied for two years at the École Normale de Pont-Rouge. She worked in education for four years before spending 22 years of her life in the food and pharmaceutical industries. After retirement, she devoted herself to her three hobbies, horticulture, music and traveling. A travel enthusiast, she fondly remembered the one made in 1991 with a group from the Association in the land of our ancestors, in Artois.

She was a member of the Association from the very beginning, was a member on the Board of Directors, president from 1998 to 2002 and a commander as a former president. She was involved in all the activities of the Association and helped with secretarial work such as sending renewal notices until very recently. She will remain in our minds as a woman of heart, always ready to be of service, very sociable and sensitive.

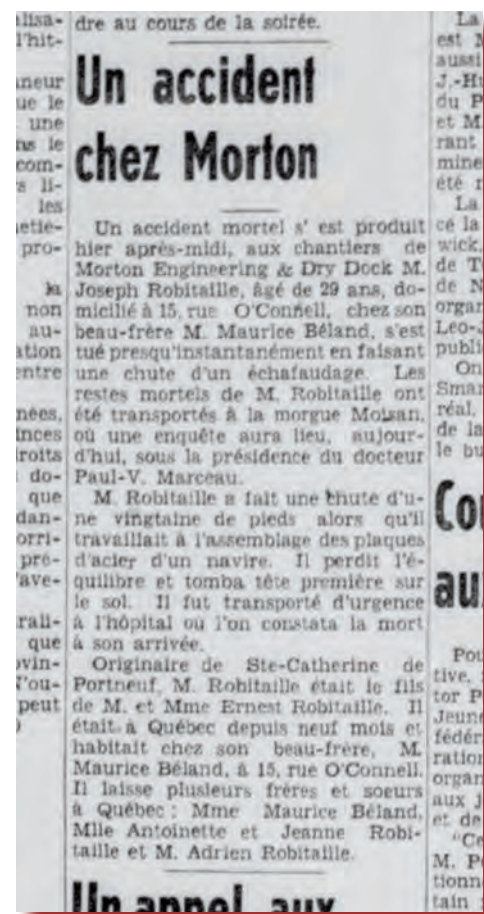
To the grieving family, our deepest sympathy.

**Claire Robitaille  
(1939-2020)**

### An accident at Morton's

On October 22, 1942, the daily *Le Soleil* in Québec City reports a fatal accident the day before on a working site located on the banks of the river St-Charles. Joseph Robitaille, born in Ste-Catherine-de-la-Jacques-Cartier, was working on a twenty-foot high scaffolding for fixing steel plates to a ship when he tripped and fell head-first to the ground.

This Joseph, baptized Joseph Albert Henri, was the son of Ernest Robitaille and Marie Denis of Ste-Catherine and had recently moved to Québec City to live with his sister and brother-in-law. Joseph was the uncle of Claire Robitaille, whom we deplore the recent death.



## Who are these people?

By Jean Robitaille, Québec

In my online travels, I stumbled on an old photo on the Amos Historical Society's website. The caption simply said *Robitaille Family*. It was enough to pique my curiosity.

I contacted the Amos Historical Society (AHS) to ask for more information on this photo and they confirmed that the picture was taken in Abitibi around 1930. The persons appearing on the photo were identified in 2014 by a descendant of the family during a photo identification operation led by the AHS. So, from left to right, they would be:

Ernest Robitaille, Mélie? (aunt), Rose? (aunt), Alma Robitaille (grandmother), Michelle Robitaille (baby), ? Robitaille (grandfather), Solande Robitaille (in the car), Eugène Robitaille, Micheline Robitaille (child), Ector Robitaille, Gérald Robitaille et ? Robitaille (boy).

So we have a photo of twelve Robitailles, taken in Abitibi around 1930, but how can one find out who they are precisely?

### The clues

Let's start by analysing this image a bit further.

First, since we have been told that it is a Robitaille family, we will adopt the premise that these persons are all related. They are not gathered here as members of an association or simply as neighbours.



Robitaille Family  
(Photo : Amos Historical Society – Fond Bernard Cossette)

At first glance we note that there are people of all ages. Small children, young adults and older individuals. It is likely that we have here three generations. Besides, the description made available to us states **grandfather** Robitaille, **grandmother** Alma, **aunt** Rose and **aunt** Mélie. Needless to say that Michèle and Micheline would be the little girls around whom the others are designated. Aunt Mélie would then be Michelle's aunt, Alma, her grandmother...

Also apparent, are two more children on the photo: a young *Solande* in the car and a young boy, no given name, petting a dog on the right. There is a good chance that these two children are siblings of Michelle and Micheline. Before continuing, let's raise a big doubt on the given name *Solande*: could it rather be Solange, Rolande or Yolande?

We can see that they are in their Sunday bests: Rose has her nice necklace, the gentlemen all wear ties. Everyone is warmly dressed and wears a hat or cap (except *Solande* who is sheltered in the car). The shadows on the ground tell us that the sun is low. We can easily imagine that the picture was taken on an autumn Sunday, toward the end of the day.

Let's continue with the analysis. In the center, a grandfather whose given name we don't know yet, sits on the stepboard of an old automobile. Right beside him stands grandmother Alma Robitaille holding a small Michelle in her arms.

On the grandfather's other side, a man named Eugène holds little Micheline's hand. He could very well be Michelle and Micheline's father, son of grandmother Alma and grandfather Robitaille.

Behind Grandmother Alma, two ladies : first Aunt Rose who seems rather young and Aunt Mélie who seems older, enough so as to wonder if Aunt Mélie wouldn't be Eugène's aunt rather than the children's.

Remaining three mature men on the photo: Ernest, Ector and Gérald. We were not told their family ties. Ernest and Gérald seem to be of the same generation as the grandfather but Ector, sitting on the car's hood would be of father Eugène's generation.

Note that the legend we were given for the picture identifies no mother for the children, which is very surprising.

Now we have a few clues to begin our search for the identity of these Robitaille. We simply have to find a family with a grandmother named Alma, an aunt named Rose, children named Michelle, Micheline and *Solande*.

## The quest

We have a photo of Robitailles taken in Abitibi around 1930. Were they born in Abitibi? For the young ones, it's possible but we must remember that these lands became available only at the beginning of the twentieth century and that the first waves of settlers arrived during the 1930's. The older protagonists in the picture were probably born and married outside the region.

I primarily used the Directory of baptisms and marriages created by the Association des familles Robitaille to try and find the identity of the Robitailles on the photo. This database now consists of about 6675 baptisms and 9920 marriages of Robitailles. The list of marriages is fairly complete up to the 1960's but, to this day, the inventory of baptisms is still very limited after 1900. To find our Robitaille family of Abitibi in 1930, we will thus concentrate on the marriages.

Accordingly, I reviewed one by one each of the marriages of Robitailles in Abitibi, starting with the oldest and pieced together each family, as best I could, at the search of a family with names corresponding with the individuals on our photo.

After many days of research, I finally found the marriage of **Solange** Robitaille to Henri Pageau on April 20th, 1938, in Belcourt (Abitibi). Solange is the daughter of **Eugène** Robitaille and **Alma** Gagnon. Solange, Eugène, Alma: three given names from our picture. Finally, a serious trail to explore further.

The said Eugène Robitaille married Alma Gagnon in Montréal September 16, 1895.

The Directory of baptisms tells me that Eugène and Alma had a boy baptised **Hector** in Montréal on July 17, 1897. Another given name from the photo!

Using the 1921 Canadian census, I was able to find the couple Eugène Robitaille and Alma Gagnon in Courville-Carpentier-Senneterre. The family already lives in Abitibi in 1921. With them, three children: **Eugène**, Aline and **Solange** and a lodger, **Ernest** Robitaille, brother of the head of family. Three given names from the photo.

Searching for traces of these children, I stumble upon the marriage of the son **Eugène** with **Rose** Lavoie, in Belcourt (Abitibi) October 17th, 1923. Among the witnesses signing the register, **Eugène** the father, **Eugène** the son, **Rose** Lavoie but also **Hector** Robitaille and **Émilie** Robitaille. Well, well, could it be Aunt Mélie?

The clues pile up, relations intertwine. Hector is Émilie's husband. Émilie was born Émilie Lavoie. She is Rose Lavoie's sister.

Having the maiden name of Rose and Émilie, it is possible to look for children of theirs who got married. In the Directory of marriages, with Eugène Robitaille as father of the bride and Rose Lavoie as mother, there are three marriages: **Micheline** married in Senneterre in 1959, **Michelle** married in 1957 in Belcourt and Alette married in 1958 in Senneterre. We found the two little girls from the photo!

Scanning the registers of Ste-Cécile de Belcourt's parish for the years subsequent to the marriage of **Eugène** and **Rose** in 1923, we find a few children to this couple: Lucille born 1924, **Gérald** born 1926, the twins **Michelle** and **Micheline** born 1931 and Alette born 1938. As Michelle and Micheline are toddlers on the photo, it is understandable that Alette was not yet born.

At the twins' baptism, we learn that Michelle's godfather is **Ernest** Robitaille and Micheline's is **Hector** Robitaille while his wife **Émilie** Lavoie is her godmother. All of them in our picture!

## The Results

Everything seems to indicate that we have found the right Robitaille family appearing in the photo preserved by the Amos Historical Society.



Eugène Sr

In the middle, sitting on the step board of the automobile, there is the grandfather **Eugène Robitaille**. Beside him, with a child in her arms, stands his wife **Alma Gagnon**. He was born in Québec in 1874, she was born in Les Éboulements en 1877. They got married in Montréal in 1895, where their first child was born, Hector. They moved and lived in Québec a few years, where Lucienne (1899) and Eugène Junior (1902) were born. In 1902, they settled in Montauban, Portneuf County, where Lucienne died, and Aline



Alma Gagnon

was born. After living in Montauban about ten years, they moved to Belcourt, Abitibi around 1918. That is where their daughter Solange was born in 1918 and their daughter Aline died in 1923.



Eugène Jr



Hector



Michelle



Laurent «Ernest»

In the arms of grandmother Alma is **Michelle Robitaille**, born 1931, daughter of **Eugène Junior** and **Rose Lavoie**. Eugène Junior and Rose married in Belcourt in 1923. In the picture, Rose is right beside grandmother Alma. Eugène Junior is standing by his father, holding a little girl's hand. She is **Micheline Robitaille**, Michelle's twin sister.

The woman standing next to Mother Rose Lavoie is named **Émilie Lavoie**. They are sisters. Émilie, Rose's older sister by eight years, is little Micheline's godmother. Émilie's husband is **Hector Robitaille**. Hector is Micheline's godfather. He is the eldest brother of Daddy Eugène Junior. So, the two Robitaille brothers married the two Lavoie sisters. Hector is not far, sitting on the car's hood, beside his young brother.

Since the twins Michelle and Micheline were born in April of 1931, and they seem to be around two years old, we can infer that the picture would have been taken in the autumn of 1932.

We have now identified eight persons in the photo. Who are the others?

Far left, arms crossed on his chest, there is **Ernest Robitaille**. He's a special case. He is Grandfather Eugène Senior's brother. Ernest was born in Québec in 1882, was baptised Laurent but he seems to have inherited, while quite young, the given name of his brother Ernest who died in 1879, only 16 months old. I have found Ernest in the 1921 Census while he was living in his brother's Eugène household. Ernest is Michelle's godfather. According to the baptism directory, in 1931 he works for the C.N.R. Ernest never married and he died in Amos (Abitibi) in 1954. His tombstone gives his name as Laurent-Ernest Robitaille.



Rose Lavoie



Émilie Lavoie



Micheline

The descriptive notice of the photo that the AHS has, states our last three persons are:

- «Solande» in the car
- Gérald Robitaille
- Boy Robitaille



After combing through the registers of Abitibi and elsewhere to reconstruct the history of this family, I must admit my scepticism. There is a Solange in this family: the youngest daughter of Grandfather Eugène is called Solange. So, she is Daddy Eugène Junior and Hector's sister and the twin's aunt. That Solange was born around 1918 and would be around 14 when the picture was taken. But the girl in the car seems younger. In my opinion, it is more likely that it is **Lucille Robitaille**, eldest daughter of Ernest Junior and Rose Lavoie. This Lucille, born in 1924 would be 8 on the photo. It seems more coherent that Lucille would be portrayed here, taken her age into account. Otherwise, who was babysitting her while this photo was taken?

### Lucille

Using the same basic principle, there is a **Gérald Robitaille** in this family, but he would not be a mature man but rather a young boy born in 1926, brother to Lucille whom we just discussed and also brother to the twins. I submit the hypothesis that the boy with the dog at far right is Gérald, 6 years old, the twins' brother.

Remains the «old» gentleman we were told was Gérald, who seems to have a pipe in his left hand. From his apparent age, I believe him to be of the same generation as Grandfather Eugène Senior.



Gérald

Grandfather Eugène migrated to Abitibi at the same period as two of his brothers. I think this might be one of them.

We have already identified Grandfather Eugène Senior and his brother Ernest. The third brother who migrated to Abitibi is called **Léonidas Robitaille**. He was born in 1876 in Québec City, where he married Olivine Bédard in 1898. They lived many years in Montauban (Portneuf) and landed in Abitibi with their numerous children in the 1920's.

- Eugène Senior died in Amos (Abitibi) in 1954
- Laurent-Ernest died in Amos (Abitibi) in 1954.
- Léonidas died in Senneterre (Abitibi) in 1966.

These three brothers were the sons of Ignace Robitaille and Éléonore Guérard, married in Notre-Dame de Québec church on January 26, 1874.



Léonidas

But why is a *Solande* Robitaille mentioned in this picture while it seems she is not there. What if it was Aunt Solange holding the camera?

If you are interested in pursuing the research, I want to let you know that Lucille Robitaille, daughter of Daddy Eugène Junior and Rose Lavoie, would still be alive according to the obituary of her sister Micheline who died in February of 2019.

*Québec City Family whose oldest sons fled to Abitibi with wife and children*



*Ignace Robitaille*

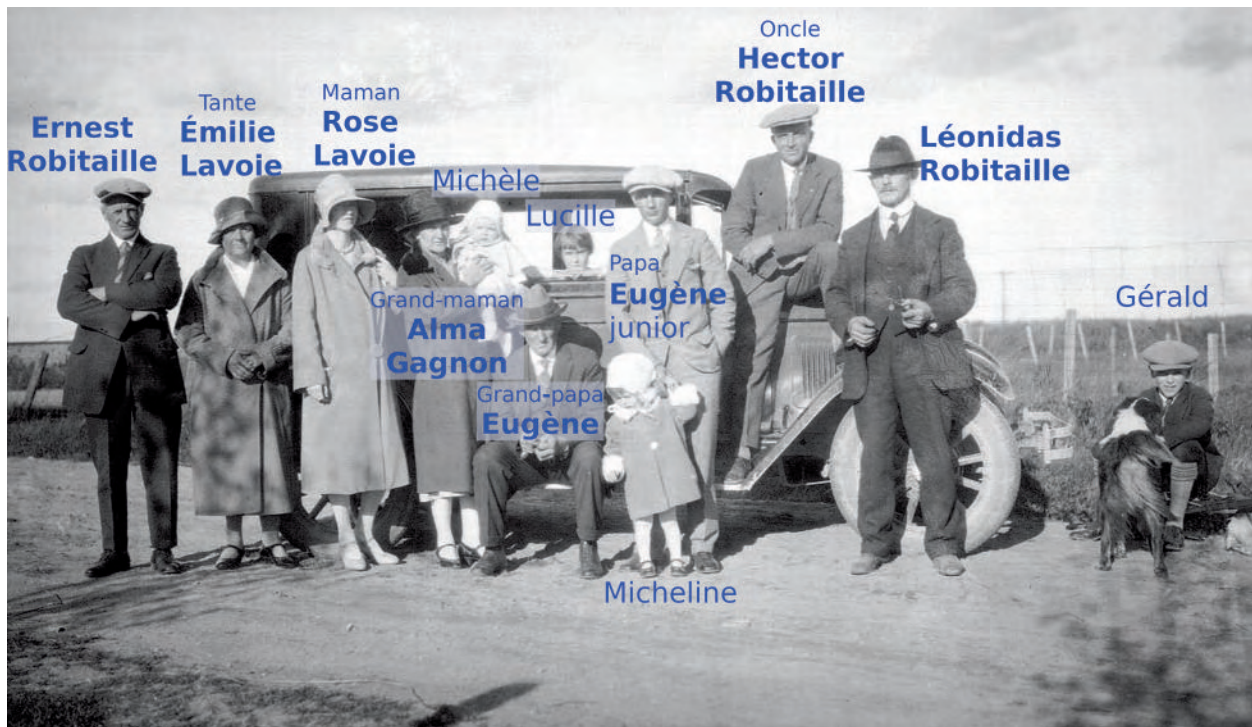


*Éléonore Guérard*

<b>Ignace Robitaille</b> (~1839-09 – 1903-05-07)	Québec (N-D-de-Québec) 1874-01-26	<b>Éléonore Guérard</b> (1849-11-16 – 1914-09-19)
Robitaille Children	Marriage	Spouse
Eugène (1874-12-14 – 1954-08-27)	Montréal (Ste-Brigide) 1895-09-16	Alma Gagnon (1877-01-11 – 1953-07-05)
Joseph Léonidas (1876-05-13 – 1959-12-25)	Québec (N-D-de-Québec) 1898-09-12	Olivine Bédard (1877-07-10 – 1934-04-25)
Ernest (1877-09-02 – 1879-04-23)		
Marie Alma (1880-04-21 – 1953-04-14)	Québec (N-D-de-Québec) 1907-09-02	Henri Laplante (1883-09-01 – 1956-06-13)
Laurent «Ernest» (1882-02-10 – 1954-09-17)		
Marie Louise (1884-01-01 – 1939-12-09)	Québec (N-D-de-Québec) 1911-05-02	Louis Victor Ménard (1885-12-10 – 1952-05-10)
Joseph Émile (1886-01-23 – 1966-06-27)	Québec (St-Roch) 1910-07-25	Delvina Plamondon (1884-08-04 – 1915-06-14)
	Québec (St-Roch) 1918-06-08	Laura Plante (1889-10-02 – 1921-09-13)
	Québec (N-D-de-Québec) 1926-07-06	Adéline Boudreau (1887-01-23 – 1983-11-11)
Marie Alice (1888-03-07 – 1894-03-27)		
Edgar (1890-06-02 – 1973-10-03)	Québec (N-D-de-la-Garde) 1917-06-04	Émérentienne Doré (1896-05-27 – 1964-06-21)
Arthur (1892-03-24 – 1893-01-28)		

Highlighted in green, those who migrated to Abitibi.

## Discrepancies



Robitaille Family  
 (Photo : Amos Historical Society – Fond Bernard Cossette)  
 - Annotations: Association des familles Robitaille inc.

We have identified, with a lot of confidence, the persons appearing on the photo of the AHS. Nonetheless, there remains some grey zones in this research. Listing the differences between what was stated in the official description of the photo and what we have inferred from our research in different sources, we observe discrepancies.

- The photo description mentioned Aunt Rose while our research tends to prove that Rose was in fact the mother of the children on the picture.
- The boy with the dog was not identified but we think it is likely G eral, the twins Michelle and Micheline’s big brother.
- The descriptive notice assigns the given name G eral to the man with a pipe, standing be-

side the car. Our research shows no G eral Robitaille of that apparent age in Abitibi around 1930. We boldly suggested that he was rather L eonidas Robitaille, brother of Grandfather Eug ene Senior. Unfortunately, no concrete clue supports this hypothesis, but circumstances plead in its favor.

- We have dared to pretend that the young girl in the car is not Solande (Solange) Robitaille, but Lucille Robitaille, the twin’s other sister. To explain the association of Solange’s name with the photo, we suggested that she might be the photographer. Solange, young sister to Hector and Eug ene Junior, aunt to the children in the picture, youngest daughter of Grandfather Eug ene Senior.

- Must we restate that we speculated that Ector and Mélie were in fact, Hector Robitaille and Émilie Lavoie? To our defence, it must be admitted that the given names from the notice, while being familiar, are certainly not in that form in the official registries.
- There was no given name to the grandfather sitting in the centre of the photo. Since the grandmother was clearly identified as Alma, we easily found that the only Alma married to a Robitaille in Abitibi at that time was undoubtedly Alma Lavoie and that her husband had to be Eugène Senior.
- There remains one bothering discrepancy that spreads doubt on our conclusions: Michelle is identified on the notice as a baby and Micheline as a child. Michelle is held by her grandmother while Micheline is standing holding her father's hand. At first glance, Michelle seems younger than Micheline. However, there aren't many children baptised Michelle and Micheline Robitaille in Abitibi at the beginning of the 1930s. The only ones that we found really are the twin daughters of Eugène Junior Robitaille and Rose Lavoie, born April 30th, 1931. They are not identical twins. They both passed away (Michelle in 2011 and Micheline in 2019) and in the obituaries found online we can see a

family resemblance, but they are certainly not identical. The apparent difference in size on the photo might be explained by some child sickness that affected one more than the other or simply by an optical effect: Michelle seems smaller because her legs are folded. Note that it was unusual at that time to give two children of different ages a similar name or of the same root (like Michelle and Micheline) while it was customary in the case of twins. In the family shown here, it would be incongruous to have a one-year-old Michelle and a two-year-old Micheline.

And now, we have completed our research into the individuals on the historical photo of Robitailles preserved by the Amos Historical Society. A family of pioneers from Québec City, via Portneuf county, which then took root in Belcourt.

#### Grandfather Eugène's family

Eugène (senior) Robitaille (1874-12-14 – 1954-08-27)	Montréal (Ste-Brigide) 1895-07-16	Alma Gagnon (1877-01-11 – 1953-07-05)
Robitaille children	Marriage	Spouses
Hector (1897-07-15 – 1954-02-19)	Circa 1918	Émilie Lavoie (1895-11-21 – 2000-12-22)
Lucienne (1899-12-31 – 1902-12-17)		
Eugène (junior) (1902-01-10 – 1962-09-22)	Belcourt 1923-10-17	Rose Lavoie (1903-07-07 – ~2001)
Aline (1915-06-13 – 1923-11-22)		
Solange (~1918-09-08 – 1983-01-10)	Belcourt 1938-04-20	Henri Pageau (1913-10-01 – 1988-01-06)

In green, those<sup>1</sup> that appear on the old photograph.

#### The family of Eugène junior, father of the twins

Eugène (junior) Robitaille (1902-01-10 – 1962-09-22)	Belcourt 1923-10-17	Rose Lavoie (1903-07-07 – ~2001)
Robitaille children	Marriage	Spouses
Lucie «Lucille» (1924-10-14 – ♥)	Carpentier-Courville (Belcourt) 1944-11-15	Nelson Bellisle (1920-03-12 – 2002-05-30)
Gérald (1926-12-31 – 1982-08-17)	Amos 1950-10-17	Françoise Dumas (1929-05-27 – 2011-03-01)
Micheline (1931-04-30 – 2019-02-03)	Senneterre 1959-10-17	Jean-Marc Cossette (1931-02-15 – 2019-11-16)
Michelle (1931-04-30 – 2011-02-06)	Belcourt 1957-09-21	Robert Jolin (1936-02-27 – ?)
		Réal Charland (? – ?)
Aliette «Liette» (1938-04-04 – ♥)	Senneterre 1958-10-23	Réjean Gauthier (1935-08-28 – 2018-09-13)

<sup>1</sup> One will note that the name of Solange was mentioned by the Amos Historical Society but, in our opinion, she does not appear on the picture.

## News from your Association

The most recent meeting of the Board of Directors was held on February 28, 2020 and a number of important topics were discussed as decisions needed to be made. After that date, all other meetings were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Meetings will be held via phone conferences or via the Internet for any further decision-making.

Here is a summary of our current projects:

### Agreement with BAnQ (Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec) (Quebec's National Archives and Library)

This organization wants to provide public access to all past issues of our newsletter Les Robitailleries. The Association agrees that it could be done for the first 45 issues which are currently posted online on our website and for those we progressively publish after careful review, but not for the most recent ones of the last five years, as we want to provide exclusive access to this content to our members only.

By the terms of the agreement, we will provide BAnQ with a digital copy of all issues of Les Robitailleries, but with some reservations. Access to the issues not available on our website will be limited to a few computers at BAnQ, downloading or printing of these issues will be blocked. This measure is what the libraries call on-site consultation of a printed document. Jean Robitaille is our representative for the negotiations with BAnQ.

### Use of the Association's name

Some authors have asked permission to use the name Association des familles Robitaille inc. when posting documents on the Internet or when publishing them. Giving permission provides us visibility in various communities, but we need to make sure the documents with which our name is associated are quality documents.

The Board authorized Jean, Florent and René Robitaille to act as quality controllers.

### Annual general assembly

Our annual assembly was scheduled in June of 2020 but it will have to be postponed because of the pandemic. You will be kept informed of those changes. Look out for an upcoming infoletter or visit our website.

## Back in those days...

Extracts from the parish register of Notre-Dame-de-L'Annonciation, L'Ancienne-Lorette

*Joseph Laberge (1804-09-23 – 1877-08-28) was parish priest of L'Ancienne-Lorette for 45 years. Over the years, he added some personal notes to the parish register. Here is what he wrote about year 1850.*

N.B. There was no outstanding event in the parish during this year of 1850.

- Monseigneur's visit took place.
- The oats crop was average.
- Wheat started to show.
- Potatoes were in small quantities.
- Abundance of hay.
- Market food at very low prices.
- Lard at /6 ½ et /7.
- Political affairs of very little consequences.
- In England, serious religious affairs.

The Pope appoints Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops to different positions, stirring things up for a part of England.

Reinstatement of the Pope in Rome by the French Republic troops. Louis Napoléon is President.

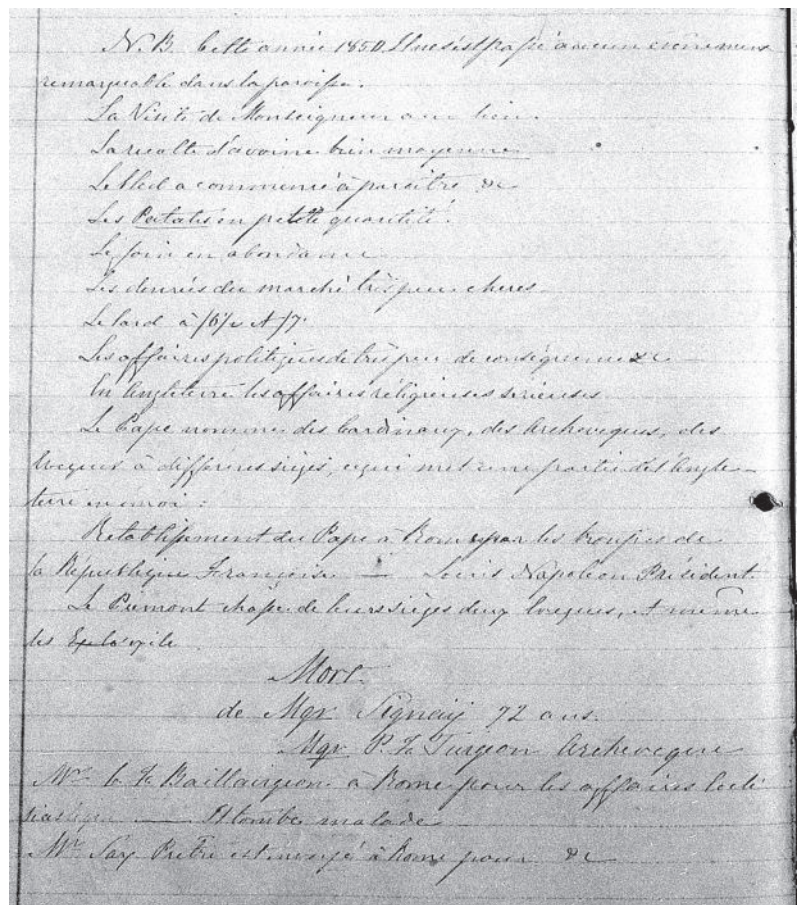
Piémont drives two Bishops out of their seats and even exiles them.

Death of Mgr Signay at 72.

Mgr P. F. Turgeon Archbishop.

Mr C.F. Baillairgeon in Rome on ecclesiastical affairs. He is taken ill.

Mr Say, priest is sent to Rome to (?)



## Michel Robitaille at the Centre de la francophonie



*Translated by Johanne Boucher, trad. A., Montréal*

Editor's note: Michel Robitaille is one of the founding members of the Association des familles Robitaille inc. Over the course of his career he held various positions in Quebec Government Offices abroad, in New York City, Los Angeles, Brussels and Paris. He is currently chairperson of the Board of the Centre de la francophonie des Amériques.

Michel Robitaille launched in mid-February 2020 the new digital portal for the Centre de la francophonie des Amériques. Its new design showcases the programs, activities and contests supported by the Centre and provides news and information on events happening throughout the Francophonie.

Since 2008, the Centre pursues its mission to promote a pluralist, diverse Francophonie in the Americas, to unify and engage the far-flung community of francophones and francophiles in the Americas while respecting the richness of their differences.

Here is a sample of what you can find on this new portal:

- **Zone Franco** gives a profile of francophone communities in various regions of the Americas;
- **Le Canal@CFAmériques** is a collection of video recordings of conferences and other events
- The **portal** leads to the other websites of the Centre
- **La Bibliothèque des Amériques** provides free ac-

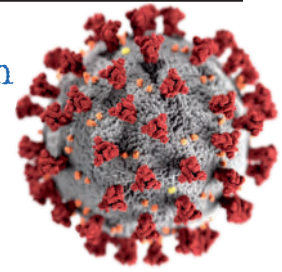
cess to 13 000 digital books written by French-speaking authors of the Americas

- Its **network of 150 cities** francophones or francofriendly in Canada, the United States, Haïti, Martinique, and Guadeloupe is a singular new developmental model that forges ties aiming to yield tourism, economic, and cultural benefits for those cities and communities.
- **Espace Membre** is a platform with exclusive content for Centre members.

You can join the 50 000 current members of the Centre by subscribing, free of charge, to the Centre de la francophonie des Amériques website. It is estimated that there are 33 million francophones and francophiles in the three Americas.



## How can a member of our Association keep busy during the Coronavirus crisis?



*Translated by Johanne Boucher, trad. A.,  
Montréal*

When you read this newsletter, we will probably still be in the thick of the COVID-19 pandemic. Whether you are temporarily unemployed, working from home on a part-time basis, retired or confined, you may ask yourself: “What can I do to keep healthily busy, and feel useful?”

As a member of the Association des familles Robitaille inc., you may be questioning your membership and what it brings to you. This is a good time to reverse your questioning and ask yourself: “What could I do for my family, my relatives, my friends and my Association?”

Here are activities you may consider:

Go to our website and read the first 50 issues of our free online newsletter *Les Robitaileries*. When reviewing them before posting, we realized how much information we had published on our ancestors, our descendants and on numerous branches of our extensive family. We are currently reviewing and progressively posting the next set of 40 newsletters. The issues published in the past five years are not publicly accessible as they are reserved exclusively for our members.

The Association’s mission is to ensure the safeguard and development of the heritage of all Robitaille descendants and those whose name derives from it; and, finally to make this heritage known. For future generations, this is the ideal place to retain our historical et genealogical da-

ta, as well as the accomplishments of Robitaille members from your family branch. Our archives are stored in the digital cloud, and also in the federal and provincial archive agencies.

If you are a senior, why not write your memoirs, starting with your own life and then that of your parents and grandparents? You may be the only link with those previous generations and their stories, which constitute your family heritage. You could become the focal point for your relatives to send old photographs and anecdotes. Our forefathers often lived lives full of unique experiences and memories. Your grandchildren, great-grandchildren and other descendants will, one day, be thankful for this legacy.

Lifetime members recently received a letter enjoining them to continue helping their Association. A good number of them had paid a substantial amount to provide financial support for the founding of the Association and for ensuring its sustainability. Over the years, the Board of directors invested these amounts in savings bonds in order to have a financial cushion. The interest paid on these bonds were supposed to match the total value of our regular membership. To those lifetime members who ask, “How much should I give?”, we suggest they pay a one-year or two-year regular membership and change their status to that of regular member.

## The family of Pierre Robitaille, from father to son in the seigneurie of Gaudarville (Part 3)

*Lorraine Robitaille Samson*

*Translated by David Robitaille, Vancouver*

In issues 86 and 87 of the *Robitailleries*, we undertook the revision of the original text of this monograph produced by Lorraine Robitaille Samson in 1987.

Having published the foreword and the preamble we now enter Chapter 1 to learn about three of the four Robitaille brothers who came from France in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century.

The family of  
Pierre Robitaille,  
from father to son  
in the seigneurie  
of Gaudarville

Second Edition  
Version of 11 August 2018

Lorraine Robitaille-Samson, Québec

A Preview

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## Chapter 1 – The first generation of Robitailles in North America: Jean, Nicolas, Philippe, and Pierre

### *THE REASONS FOR THEIR DEPARTURE FROM FRANCE*

What drove these four brothers to come to Canada? Given that there was twenty years age difference between Jean and Philippe, we can assume that the family of Jean Robitaille and Martine Cormont was large. Moreover, in Philippe's marriage contract, it is mentioned that his father was a plowman.<sup>9</sup> In those years in France, there was a lot of poverty and unemployment. It was not possible to keep dividing small farms into smaller and smaller pieces.<sup>10</sup>

Since Jean Robitaille was a plowman, perhaps he owned a piece of land as a farmer but, because of its size, he could not leave it to all of his children. It must also be said that France, at that time, had been seriously affected by wars and all their consequences. This was accompanied by a climate of insecurity and very high taxes to be paid. To these causes can be added the propaganda that was beginning to be circulated in France, for example by Pierre Boucher and Robert Giffard, to recruit many settlers for New France.

It was around 1667 that Jean Robitaille's sons, Jean, Nicolas, and Pierre, probably saw posters and heard the drum rolls announcing the presence of recruiters for New France in the public square. They learned that they could come to work and even obtain land on the banks of the St. Lawrence, so they applied to the French government, as indicated by an application submitted by Nicolas and Jean. They received an offer that was difficult to refuse. They were promised land that they had to clear if they wanted to stay. Otherwise they had the option to return to their country of origin.

Jean, Nicolas, and Pierre certainly were not difficult to convince to embark for New France since they could make a better living without having to pay heavy taxes, because obtaining land in France was not possible for them. What awaited them was not as beautiful as they imagined: harsh winters, short agricultural seasons, wars with the Iroquois, and a lot of work.

Since Nicolas returned to his native country after only a few years in New France, it was probably the story of his adventures that convinced Philippe to join his two other brothers some 23 years later. While the Robitailles living in L'Ancienne-Lorette were sedentary for several generations and married their neighbors' daughters while remaining in the same village, Philippe's family, who settled in Montréal, had more of a taste for adventure.

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<sup>9</sup> Marriage contract of Philip Robitaille and Madeleine Warren (Marie Magne Houarine), 14 October 1693, notary Bénigne Basset, BAnQ Montréal

<sup>10</sup> Langlois Michel, *La venue des ancêtres*, L'Ancêtre, Vol. IV, No 6, p. 183

## *CROSSING THE ATLANTIC*

We do not know which ship the three Robitaille brothers embarked on. Two ships departed from La Rochelle in 1670: the *Hélène*, captained by André Chaviteau, and the *St-Pierre*, captained by Jean Boutin. Unfortunately, we do not have passenger lists for these crossings. The port of Honfleur was very active during these years: between 1668 and 1670, there were 416 departures and arrivals of ships there.

According to the application submitted by Jean and Nicolas, the Robitaille brothers brought with them their own food and furniture for the whole trip. According to the ships' logs of that time, the passengers lived in very cramped conditions during the crossing, which lasted between one and three months depending on the winds and storms. At night, grouped below decks, the travelers slept on thin mattresses. If the weather was nice, the hatches and windows remained open to allow ventilation. On board, they ate mainly biscuits, semolina (rye, oats or corn), beans, and bacon. If a passenger died, his belongings were sold at auction at the foot of the main mast.

“For the passengers nothing was organized. Daily life on board was quite monotonous. It consisted, when time permitted, of long walks on the deck, interspersed with games or chance—card games were very popular at the time—of music and singing and, for some of the more educated passengers, reading. But since the monotony of everyday life could lead to nostalgia, a disease that the doctors of the time considered to be deadly, the captain organized wrestling or climbing contests after supper”.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Lachance André, *À l'aventure sur l'Atlantique*, Québec-Histoire, Nos 5-6, p. 29

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## THE ARRIVAL

The arrival of the ships marked an important moment in the lives of the inhabitants of the colony, since it was their only contact with France. Did the three Robitaille brothers arrive in the summer or early autumn of 1670? We are not sure. One hypothesis is that they did not come here as 36-month employees or as illegal immigrants. Did they have some money? The three brothers signed a land grant contract in the Seigneurie of Gaudarville, beginning in November 1670. Jean was married three days later. He was 27 years old at the time, Pierre was 18, and Nicolas was 19 or 20. Together they built Jean's house, and thus get a roof for themselves. The Seigneur likely granted them their concession orally before the contracts were signed with the notary. Jean and Pierre remained on their concession, but Nicolas returned to France without leaving any descendants. When the three Robitaille brothers arrived, Philippe was only 7 years old and living in France with his parents. He would join them 23 years later.

## THE SEIGNEURY OF GAUDARVILLE

The Seigneurie of Gaudarville was located in Champigny, in the parish of L'Ancienne-Lorette.

The Seigneurie of Gaudarville had been granted to "*Jean of Lauzon, the king's ordinary adviser on his councils of state and private, governor and lieutenant general for His Majesty in New France,*" who himself conceded it to "*Louis de Lauzon, squire, seigneur of La Citière and Gaudarville,*" on February 8, 1652. The name of the seigneurie was granted in memory of Louis' mother, Marie Gaudar (Gaudard).

Upon the death of Louis de Lauzon in 1659, his wife Marie Catherine Nau of Fossambault became the owner of the Seigneurie of Gaudarville. She married Jean-Baptiste Peuvret of Mesnu, a nobleman who owned other lands including the Mesnu fiefdom.

On November 9, 1667,

*"Act of faith and tribute from Jean-Baptiste Peuvret, Sieur de Mesnu, tax collector of the West India Company, for the land and Seigneurie of Gaudarville, which belongs to him by the concession that was made to him and to Catherine Nau, his wife, by various creditors of the estate of the late Louis de Lauzon, the first husband of the said Miss Nau".*<sup>12</sup>

## COSTS AND BENEFITS FOR A COLONIST SETTLING IN A SEIGNEURY

The land granted was not cleared. The first winter was very difficult and it could sometimes take several years before a settler's land was sufficiently cleared. Once he had established himself, he could consider finding a wife and starting a family. Courtship was brief and the

<sup>12</sup> Inventory of Concessions in fiefdom and Seigneurie times and Tribute and confessions and Counts kept in the national archives, BAnQ

young man had to declare his intention to the woman's father and mother after four visits to their daughter.

“By settling in a seigneurie, the colonist accepted certain obligations: he had to build a house and live there, pay the seigneur a royalty on St. Martin's feast day (November 11), clear his land, and work on the construction of roads within the seigneurie. On the other hand, he reaped great advantages: without paying a penny, he obtained land that would belong to him in perpetuity, and the environment in which he settled would provide him with essential services: church, road, mill. The son of an inhabitant could, without costing him a penny, settle on a piece of land that exceeded in area that of most peasants in France. And he was his own boss.

The seigneur had to pay tribute to the king, produce a census, pay duties if he sold his estate; he also committed himself to building an ordinary mill. On the other hand, he reaped appreciable advantages: the annual rent, which was usually equivalent to half a day's work per arpent of land granted, the right to grind the 14<sup>th</sup> minot of any ground grain at his mill, and a tax paid to him by the censor who sells his land”.<sup>13</sup>

Each brother's concession was approximately 3 arpents wide (1 arpent measured about 200 feet).

<sup>13</sup> Allard Lionel, *L'Ancienne-Lorette*, Éditions Leméac, pp. 68-69, 1979

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## THE STORY OF THE FOUR BROTHERS

### *Jean Robitaille and the first five generations*

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Jean Robitaille signed a Grant of Concession of Land in the Seigneurie of Gaudarville before the notary, Gilles Rageot, of Québec, November 24, 1670.<sup>14</sup>

He completed a marriage contract before the notary, Becquet, on November 16, 1670. Jean said that he came from the parish of Auchy, in the diocese of Boulogne.<sup>15</sup>

Three days later, he married Marguerite Buletez, daughter of Pierre Buletez and Louise Pépin. Marguerite Buletez was one of the Daughters of the King (Filles du Roi) who were sent to New France in 1670.

“She was born in the village of Auchy in 1647. She brought with her goods worth an estimated 200 livres (approximately the annual salary for an unskilled laborer) and a grant of 50 livres from the king. Marguerite's father was present at the signing of his daughter's marriage contract and he resided in the Seigneurie of Gaudarville. He had emigrated to New France around 1668 with his second wife, Jeanne Charron, and daughter, Marie Anne. The Intendant, Jean Talon, was also present at the signing of Marguerite Buletez's contract and granted her the king's customary gift of 50 pounds. This daughter had likely not accompanied her family to Canada in 1668. She would have joined them in 1670, taking advantage of the benefits granted to the Filles du Roi. The gift she received from the king is significant in this regard.”<sup>16</sup>

We may assume that it was this amount of money that enabled Jean to build his house in L’Ancienne-Lorette. Since Pierre married five years later, he had lived with his brother and sister-in-law for a few years. And Nicolas as well, until his return to France.

Since the first chapel in L’Ancienne-Lorette was not inaugurated until November 4, 1674, Jean Robitaille must have been married in the parish of Notre-Dame de Québec and had his first two children baptized at the mission in Sillery.

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<sup>14</sup> Land grant from M. de Mesnu to Jean Robitaille, November 18, 1670, notary Gilles Rageot, BAnQ

<sup>15</sup> Marriage contract between Jean Robitaille and Marguerite Buletez (Bultez), 16 November 1670, notary Romain Becquet, BAnQ

<sup>16</sup> Dumas, Silvio, *Les Filles du Roi en Nouvelle-France, étude historique avec répertoire biographique*, La Société historique de Québec, cahier d'histoire no 24, First édition (1972)

*Census of 1681*

At the time of the 1681 census, Jean Robitaille was 38 years old and his wife was 34. He was born in 1643. He arrived and married in New France at the age of 27. They had six children by 1681; he owned 2 rifles, 5 horned animals, and 16 acres of land.<sup>17</sup>

*The family of Jean Robitaille and Marguerite Buletez*

Jean-François	Baptized on April 6, 1672 at St. Joseph's Mission in Sillery. Died between the censuses of 1681 and 1716.
Marie-Madeleine	Born in L'Ancienne-Lorette and baptized at St. Joseph's Mission in Sillery on November 19, 1673.
Joseph Martin	Born on August 2, 1673 and baptized on August 3, 1676 in L'Ancienne-Lorette. Confirmed on April 4, 1684 in Québec City. Died before the 1716 census.
Marie-Thérèse	Baptized on March 22, 1678 in L'Ancienne-Lorette. Married on December 19, 1717 at N-D-de-Québec to Joseph Fauconnet, son of P. and Marie Marisi. Died on June 22, 1721 at N-D-de-Québec at the age of 42.
Marie-Marguerite	Named on March 9, 1680 in L'Ancienne-Lorette. Died before the census of 1681.
<b>Charles</b> (aka. Charles-François)	Born and baptized on March 21, 1681 in L'Ancienne-Lorette. Married on October 26, 1705 (age 24) in Neuville to Marie Louise Delisle (age 21), daughter of Louis and Louise Des Granges. Contract Notary Genaple October 19, 1705.

Of this generation, only Charles was able to pass the family name on to his descendants. We will see later that the line of transmission was very thin for the next three generations.

*Jean Robitaille sells his land to his brother Pierre*

In 1693 (the year of his brother Philippe's arrival), on March 23, in front of the notary Genaple, Jean Robitaille sold his land to his brother Pierre and moved to the City of Québec.<sup>18</sup> He was 50 years old at the time, and it is likely that only Charles François, then 12 years old, and perhaps Marie Madeleine, who was 19 at the time, were still at home. Charles-François became a *taillandier* (edge-tool maker) in Québec City and then settled in Neuville.

<sup>17</sup> Lafontaine André, *Recensement annoté de la Nouvelle-France 1681*, Sherbrooke, November 1981

<sup>18</sup> Sale by Jean Robitaille and Marguerite Buletez, his wife, to Pierre Robitaille and Marie Maufay his wife, 23 March 1693, notary François Genaple, BAnQ.

Jean Robitaille died on March 23, 1715 at Notre-Dame de Québec at the age of 73. Marguerite Buletez died on June 25, 1732. She was 85 years of age and is buried at the Notre-Dame de Québec cemetery.

*Descendants of Jean Robitaille and Marguerite Buletez*

Generations 2 to 4: The names of the sons who assured the transmission of the family name to later generations are shown in **bold**.

G	Époux	Enfants
2	<p><b>Charles</b> Robitaille and Marie-Louise Delisle, married in Neuville on October 26, 1705</p> <p>Charles died in Neuville on March 11, 1727, at the age of 45 from a stroke</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marie-Charlotte, born September 10, 1706, married in Lanoraie on November 15, 1733 to Jean Baptiste Guignard, known as Dalcourt, militia captain</li> <li>- <b>Charles-François</b>, born to Madeleine Roberge on November 27, 1708, married in Neuville on February 22, 1751 to Madeleine Roberge</li> <li>- Marie Angélique, born March 9, 1711, married in Neuville on September 23, 1748 to Charles Letartre</li> <li>- Monique, born May 5, 1713, married in Neuville on February 7, 1735 to Louis Joseph Dolbec</li> <li>- Marguerite, born on June 8, 1716, married in Neuville on October 18, 1756 to Pierre Monguar</li> <li>- Marie-Louise, born on August 25, 1718, married in Neuville on February 14, 1746 to Joseph Larue</li> </ul>
3	<p><b>Charles-François</b> Robitaille married Madeleine Roberge in Neuville on February 22, 1751</p> <p>Charles-François Robitaille died on March 8, 1798 Neuville, at the age of 89 (master blacksmith)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Charles, born May 29, 1752, died June 22, 1755 at the age of 3.</li> <li>- Marie-Madeleine, born November 3, 1753; married. in Neuville on November 9, 1778 to J.B. Gingras</li> <li>- Marguerite, born February 22, 1755; died February 6, 1774 at the age of 18</li> <li>- <b>Charles</b>, born April 15, 1757, married in Neuville on November 14, 1791 to Françoise Rognon</li> <li>- Anonymous, born and died August 15, 1759</li> <li>- <b>Augustin</b>, born November 1, 1760; married in Neuville on February 14, 1791 to Geneviève Bertrand</li> <li>- Marie-Anne, born December 4, 1763; married in Neuville on November 15, 1784 to Ignace Doré</li> <li>- François, born June 9, 1766, died September 20, 1766</li> </ul>
4	<p><b>Charles</b> Robitaille married Françoise Rognon on November 14, 1791 in Neuville</p> <p>Charles died in L'Ancienne-Lorette on November 3, 1845 and was buried in the church</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Charles, born February 21, 1798 (His fate is still unknown)</li> <li>- Joseph, born on May 17, 1799; married in N.-D. de Québec on April 26, 1820 to Catherine Bois.</li> <li><i>Their only son, Charles, seems not to have had any descendants.</i></li> <li>- Marie-Jeanne, born November 24, 1800</li> <li>- Élizabeth, born November 18, 1802; married in N.-D. de Québec on November 18, 1820 to Jean Baptiste Dorval, and then on May 19, 1840 to Étienne Turcot</li> <li>- Marie-Françoise, born January 7, 1804; married in N.-D. de Québec on July 1, 1830 to François Xavier Piché</li> <li>- Marie-Anne-Anastasié, born July 23, 1805; married in N.-D. de Québec on January 8, 1833 to Louis Juneau</li> <li>- Marie-Luce, born on October 18, 1808 and died in Québec City with the Sisters of Charity on November 13, 1888</li> </ul>

<p><b>Augustin</b> Robitaille married Geneviève Bertrand on February 14, 1791 in Neuville</p> <p>Augustin died in Neuville on April 20, 1833 at the age of 72</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Angèle, born December 27, 1791, died December 11, 1811</li> <li>- Justine, born June 7, 1793, died August 12, 1858</li> <li>- <b>Charles</b>, born May 27, 1795, married in Neuville on November 19, 1822 to Luce Angers</li> <li>- <b>Augustin</b>, born on April 28, 1797; married in St-Augustin-de-Desmaures on February 3, 1824 to Cécile Quézel</li> <li>- Ursule Dorothée, born on March 21, 1799; married in Neuville on October 4, 1819 to Joachim Gingras</li> <li>- Cécile, born on April 16, 1801 married in Neuville on April 15, 1839 to Jacques Bédard</li> <li>- <b>François-Xavier</b> born on March 12, 1803; married in N.-D. de Québec on November 3, 1829 to Marie Félicité Giroux</li> <li>- Flore, born April 29, 1805; married in Québec City (St-Roch) on November 22, 1831 to Jacques Dulac dit Bonhomme</li> <li>- Reine, born July 28, 1808, died April 12, 1815</li> </ul>
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5<sup>th</sup> generation (3 sons of Augustin R. and Geneviève Bertrand)

<p><b>Charles</b> Robitaille <i>Luce Angers</i></p> <p>Charles died on December 6, 1874 in Québec City (St-Jean-Baptiste)</p>	<p><b>Augustin</b> Robitaille <i>Cécile Quézel</i></p> <p>Augustin died on October 16, 1877 in Neuville</p>	<p><b>François-Xavier</b> Robitaille <i>Marie Félicité Giroux</i></p> <p>François died on October 16, 1884 in South Ham</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Augustin (1825-1826)</li> <li>- Romuald (1826-1901) <i>Adéline Papillon</i></li> <li>- Charles Isidore (1828-1906) <i>Henriette Lévesque</i></li> <li>- François Paul (1830-1855)</li> <li>- Uldéric (1831-1915) <i>Sara Latulippe</i></li> <li>- Reine (1832-1834)</li> <li>- Éloïse (1834-1883) <i>Léger Grenier</i></li> <li>- Virginie Joséphine (1835-1858) <i>Hercule Tapin</i></li> <li>- Hectorine (1837-1838)</li> <li>- Marie Victoire (1838-1840)</li> <li>- Luce Geneviève (1840-1845)</li> <li>- Malvina Adeline (1842-1914) <i>Alexis Cayer</i></li> <li>- Pierre Denys</li> <li>- Adélaïde (1843-1920) <i>Évariste Pagé</i></li> <li>- Louis Philippe (1845-1845)</li> <li>- Louis Téléphore (1847-1929) <i>Marie Zoé Salomé Drolet</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Joseph (1825-1884) <i>Angélique Dussault</i></li> <li>- Rebecca (1827-1891) <i>François-Xavier Trudel</i></li> <li>- François-Xavier (1829-1905) <i>Reine Trudel</i></li> <li>- Augustin (1831-1832)</li> <li>- Augustin (1833-1833)</li> <li>- Johnny (1834-1882)</li> <li>- Marie Léda (1835-1865)</li> <li>- Ferdinand «Cyprien»(1838-1912) <i>Émilie Whalen</i></li> <li>- Joseph Odile (1839-?)</li> <li>- Geo Napoléon (1841-1918) <i>Marie Philomène Cloutier</i></li> <li>- Cécile (1842-1918) <i>Joseph Bélanger</i></li> <li>- Marie Almina (1845-1886) <i>Pierre Fiset</i></li> <li>- Adjutor (1849-1874)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- François-Xavier (1830-1885) <i>Euphrosine St-Michel</i></li> <li>- Célestin (1832-) <i>Exilda Casavant</i></li> <li>- Marie Délina (1834-1837)</li> <li>- Charles Eusèbe (1836-1837)</li> <li>- Aurélie Vitaline (1838-) <i>Adolphe Vallée</i></li> <li>- Marie Joséphine (1839-1899) <i>Étienne Pinard</i></li> <li>- Charles Hippolyte (1841-)</li> <li>- Isidore Agerilas «Silas» (1842-1929) <i>Julie Michel</i></li> <li>- Joseph Alphonse (1844-) <i>Caroline Hamel</i></li> <li>- Narcisse Alfred (1845-1847)</li> <li>- Adéline Délina (1847-1931) <i>Noël Michel</i></li> <li><i>Onésime Nault</i></li> </ul>

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*Nicolas Robitaille's story*

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Nicolas Robitaille signed a contract for a Concession of Land in the Seigneurie of Gaudarville in front of the notary Gilles Rageot of Québec, on November 24, 1670.<sup>19</sup>

We have no trace of Nicolas Robitaille, except on the contract for the sale of Jean Robitaille's house to his brother, Pierre, on November 23, 1693 before the notary Genaple:

*“And by means of the abandonment and transfer which was made of the same quantity of adjacent land by Nicolas Robitaille to his brother, as he departed for France, by a simple agreement between them”* (see Note 18)

And we find the same information in the order issued by Mr. Raudot, the Intendant, on January 18, 1710:

*“The said Robitaille will have the lands surveyed the said lands and the other three which he owns: one granted to him on November 24, 1670 and the other two he acquired from Nicolas and Jean Robitaille his brothers.”*<sup>20</sup>

Nicolas did not stay in New France, he returned to France leaving his land to his brothers Jean and Pierre.

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<sup>19</sup> Land grant from M. de Mesnu to Nicolas Robitaille, 24 no.1670, notary Gilles Rageot, BAnQ

<sup>20</sup> Order issued by Mr. Raudot, the intendant, who gave notice to Sieur du Tisé and Pierre Robitaille of the agreement by them made, January 18, 1710, notary Bernard de la Rivière, BAnQ

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*Philippe Robitaille's story*

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Philippe arrived in New France 23 years after his brothers, in 1693. He was 30 at the time.

In his marriage contract, sworn before Notary Basset in Montréal on October 14, 1693, he declared that he was “*a native of the Village of Billancourt (Béalancourt) in the said Diocese of Boulogne*” (see Note 9)

Philippe Robitaille was a cooper (a maker of wooden barrels).

He married Madeleine Warren (Houarine), the widow of Richard Labosse (Othys) "an English woman living in the town of Annord near Boston, in New England and living in Villemarie" (i.e., Montréal) as of October 15, 1693, at Notre-Dame de Montréal.

Madeleine Warren (Houarine), known as *Grizel* was born on February 24, 1662 in Berwick, New England, daughter of Jacques Warren, a protestant Scot, and Margaret, an Irish Catholic. She was the third wife of Richard Otis (aka Othys), a blacksmith. He already had a large family and she gave him two other little girls, Hanna and Christine. Richard Otis, was quite old, and was likely killed by Indians [sic]. Hanna was also killed at the age of two. Madeleine was abducted by Indians [sic], along with Christine, aged 3 months, and three of Richard's other children: John, Stephen, and Nathaniel. The rest of the family, including three of Richard's daughters, were rescued by a group chasing the kidnappers near the town of Conway. It is likely that Madeleine and Christine were bought from the Indians [sic] by some Frenchmen who brought them back to Montréal.

Grizel was baptized in the Catholic faith in Montréal on May 9, 1693. She was named Marie Madeleine after her godmother, Lady Marie Madeleine Dupont, wife of Mr. Lemoine, Squire of Maricour, and Captain of a Naval detachment. His godfather was Mr. Jacques LeBer, a merchant. Grizel worked in the service of Monsieur de Maricour, and, four months later, Marie Madeleine Otis was confirmed and, on 15 October 1693, she married Philippe Robitaille. The wedding was celebrated by Father Meriel, parish priest of Ville-Marie (Montréal), in the presence of her godfather, her godmother and Mr. de Maricour. In the marriage contract, signed the previous day before the notary Basset, the future husband agrees to take Christine (Margaret) as his own daughter. Marie Madeleine Houarine (Warren) received her citizenship in May 1710. In the *Register of Re-purchased Captives*, she is called Mrs. Grizalem. She seems to have helped her captor-friends and also helped Father Meriel in his ministry to them. She died in Montréal on October 27, 1750 at the age of 89, after being bedridden for 9 or 10 years.

Marie Madeleine's daughter, Christine, baptized on March 15, 1689, and likely educated by the nuns, became, at the age of 18, the second wife of Louis LeBeau. The wedding was celebrated in Ville-Marie on June 14, 1707. LeBeau was 29 years old and a carpenter. He was the son of Jean LeBeau and Étienne Loré, residents of Boucherville who were the witnesses to the marriage, as were Jean Baptiste, the brother of the groom, Lord Dominique Thaumur, master surgeon, and Philippe Robitaille, master cooper, the bride's stepfather.

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This marriage produced two daughters: Marie Anne and Madeleine. Christine received her citizenship at the same time as her mother, in 1710. Her husband died in February 1713.

In 1714, Captain Thomas Baker came to Canada as an interpreter for the Stoddard & Williams Company. He fell in love with Christine and tried to persuade the young widow to return to New England. The Church, the state, and her mother opposed her departure. The Church threatened to keep her children, and the governor said that her eldest daughter should be sent to the Ursulines. Stoddard, with the spirit of New England, replied that Mrs. LeBeau could place her child where she wished “*and as long as she took care of her, no Prince with justice could forcibly remove her*”. The Intendant ordered the sale of her late husband's property and wanted “*the money to be put in the hands of a guardian.*”. Stoddard, who represented Christine, demanded that the money be given to her, because she was in need. He was told, however, that the king ordered that anyone willing to leave the country should have his money withdrawn and that, because Christine was a prisoner of the previous war, she could not take advantage of the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht. Her mother told her that there was no bakery in New England and that she did not know how to make bread.

Neither the Church, nor the state, nor her mother could hold her. With the governor's reluctant consent, Christine set off by boat, leaving her daughters Marie Anne, 4, and Madeleine, 2, in the care of Philippe Robitaille and Madeleine Houarine (Warren), her stepfather and mother. Christine married Thomas Baker and settled in Brookfield, where the couple's children were baptized. Her father-in-law, Philippe Robitaille, came to visit her in New England. Christine missed her two daughters whom she had had to abandon in Canada. On March 2, 1721, Thomas and Christine sent a plea to the General Court requesting permission to return to New France to look for them. Permission was granted on the condition that Thomas accompany his wife to Canada. But Christine returned from this journey without her children, for whom she had become a stranger.

Christine died on February 23, 1773, 20 years after her husband. She was buried in Pine Hill Cemetery in Dover.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Coleman Emma Ellis, *New England Captives carried to Canada between 1677 and 1760 during the French and Indians wars*, Portland, Southworth Press, 1925

*The family of Philippe Robitaille and Madeleine Warren*

Philippe	Baptized on February 5, 1695 at Notre-Dame de Montréal. Single and engaged West on August 29, 1715. Died on December 17, 1720 at Notre-Dame de Montréal at the age of 26 (son of Philippe Robitaille, master cooper, the mother's name was left blank).
Jacques	Baptized on January 29, 1697 at Notre-Dame de Montréal. Hired as a Traveller West from September 9, 1715 to September 9, 1728.
Jean	Born and baptized on March 10, 1699 in Notre-Dame de Montréal. Hired as Traveller West on 28 May 1718 and engaged West from 11 June 1720 to 9 September 1728.
Georges	Born on 18 and baptized on April 19, 1701 in Notre-Dame de Montréal (son of Philippe, resident and cooper). Died on February 19, 1703 at Notre-Dame de Montréal at the age of 2.
Marguerite	Born on April 1 and baptized on April 2, 1703 in Notre-Dame de Montréal (daughter of Philippe, bourgeois). Married on April 13, 1722 (19 years old) to Jean Baptiste Biron, 20, in Notre-Dame de Montréal son of Pierre and Marie Jeanne Dumouchel.

Jacques and Jean signed commitment contracts of one year or more <sup>22+23</sup> to go to the north woods or to Lake Erie, by canoe, and at that time there were two categories of “voyageurs” or “travellers”):

- The *bacon eaters* so named because their received a daily ration was of bacon. They transported trade goods to Fort William and brought back to Montréal the furs collected in the North by the *winterers*.
- The *winterers*, these men of the north, hired for at least one year, usually three, sometimes five. These “Jacks of all trades” were canoeists, interpreters, clerks, guides, craftsmen, explorers, hunters, fishermen, builders, and, of course, caterers. Many of them took women in trade. These *country marriages* were the source of the Métis nation. <sup>24</sup>

We may assume that Philippe Robitaille's two sons belonged to the latter category of travellers.

Jacques enlisted as a *Hired Traveler of the West* from September 9, 1715 to September 9 1728. Traces of his passage to Michillimakinac can be found on August 26, 1719 when

<sup>22</sup> Contract of employment of Jacques Robitaille to Sieurs Jacques Dugré and Charles Tessier, May 28, 1708, notary Antoine Adhemar, BAnQ Montréal

<sup>23</sup> Contract of employment of Jacques Robitaille to Sieurs Jean Baptiste Forestier and Jean Quenel, September 9, 1715, notary Antoine Adhemar, BAnQ Montréal

<sup>24</sup> Parc historique national, Lachine, Québec, *Le commerce de la fourrure à Lachine*, exhibition at Pointe-à-Callière museum

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signed a note, worth 1953 pounds, in favor of Paul Marin who deposited this document in Montréal with the notary Gaudron de Chèvremont on August 11, 1736. The French Fort Michilimackinac was located in a strategic location in the strait separating Lakes Michigan and Huron. <sup>25</sup>

Jean also enlisted as a *Engaged Traveler West* on 28 May 1718, for a period from 11 June 1720 to 9 September 1728.

In 2020, Jean Robitaille of Québec discovered a new document dated September 16, 1728 and signed before Charles Lemoine of Longueuil, governor of Montréal, which allowed **Jean Robitaille**, a resident of Illinois, to go by canoe with four men (including **Jacques Robitaille**) to go up to Illinois. This is the last clue we have about the lives of these two explorers. Nor have we found any trace of descendants of these two sons of Philippe.

Figure 17 presents the original document with a handwritten transcript that provides an overview of the obligations of travellers and the strict control of the authorities over those travelling in the territory. It should be noted that the authorities of New France had introduced a permit system in 1716 to control the trade in pelts and to counter this trade with the English colonies. <sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> L'Ancêtre, no 278, volume 33, Spring 2007, pp.225-232

<sup>26</sup> Germain Georges-Hébert, *Les coureurs des bois, la Saga des Indiens*, Montréal, ISBN 978-2-7648-0060-7

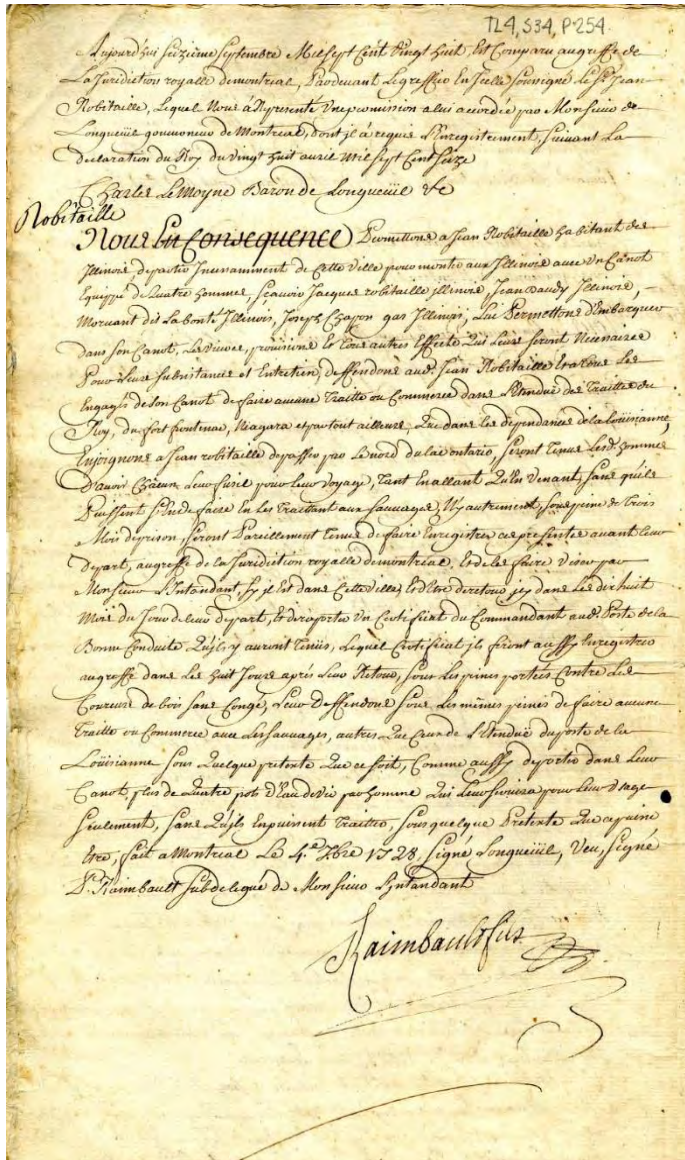


Figure 1- Contract of employment of Jacques and Jean Robitaille in 1728, BAAnQ, cote : TL4,S34,P254

Montréal. Registration of permission granted by Charles Lemoine de Longueuil, Governor of Montréal, to Jean Robitaille, Illinois resident, for a canoe carrying four men, to go up to the Illinois

Today September 16, 1728 there appeared at the registry of the Royal Court of Montreal, before the clerk to the undersigned, of the said **Jean Robitaille**, who presented us with a permit given to him by Mr. Longueuil, the governor of Montréal, which he requested be registered, according to the the King’s declaration of April 28, 1716.

Charles Lemoyne Baron of Longueuil

We hereby permit Jean Robitaille, Illinois resident, to leave this town shortly to travel to Illinois by canoe equipped with four men: to wit, Jacques Robitaille, Illinois, Jean Daudy, Illinois, Moruant dit Labonté, Illinois, Joseph Chagnon, Illinois, allowing them to board his canoe, with their provisions, and all other belongings that will be necessary for their subsistence and maintenance. We forbid the said Jean Robitaille and all the hired men in his canoe to do any trade or commerce within the range of the King’s treaties including Fort Frontenac, Niagara, and anywhere other than in the dependencies of Louisiana. Let Jean Robitaille travel via northern Lake Ontario, where the said men will have to look to their guns during the journey, both in the process going there and returning in order that they can conduct their trade with the savages. They also, on pain of three months in prison, will be obliged to register and present their weapons, before their departure, at the registry of the royal court of Montréal, and to have them stamped by the Intendant, who is in this city and then to return within eighteen months of the day of their departure, and to obtain a certificate from the commander certifying the good conduct they will have held there, which they will also register at the registry within eight days after their return, under the penalties provided for *coureurs de bois* without fail. We command them under the same penalties to make no treaties or trade with the savages, other than those in the extended post of the Louisiana territory for any pretext, and to carry in their canoe no more than four pots of brandy per man that will provide them for their journey only, and they are not permitted to trade with it on any pretext whatsoever.

Given at Montréal September 4, 1728.  
Signed by Mr. Longueuil and Sieur Raimbault, representing the Intendant



Figure 2- *Carte de la Louisiane et du cours du Mississippi*, par Guillaume De L'Isle [Paris, 1718].  
<https://www.loc.gov/item/98685731/>. The Illinois country is located southwest of Lake Michigan

Philippe Robitaille died at Notre-Dame de Montréal on October 3, 1740 at 10:30 p.m. at the age of 77 and was buried on October 5, 1740.

Madeleine Warren died on October 26, 1750 in Notre-Dame de Montréal, at the age of 88 (Vve Robitaille, Philip).

Find out more in the next issue

## Association Membership Renewal

Except for life members, all subscriptions expired on December 31, 2019. If you have not yet paid your annual subscription, the Association would appreciate receiving membership forms soon to avoid recall fees and to make sure that you keep on receiving our newsletter every other month.

Why not take the opportunity to enroll a relative? He or she will receive issue # 89 (December 2019) for free. This may be the boost he or she needs to spark interest in his history or her genealogy.

### ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Province \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Home) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Work) \_\_\_\_\_

Cell \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Tarification** :  12 months 30,00 \$     24 months 50,00\$ for the electronic format  
 12 months 40,00 \$     24 months 70,00\$ for the paper format

**Additional voluntary contribution** \_\_\_\_\_ \$

Included is the total amount of \_\_\_\_\_ \$ at the order of: L'Association des Familles Robitaille Inc.

Signature : \_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_

L'Association des Familles Robitaille Inc.  
C.P. 47007, Succ. Sheppard  
Québec, QC G1S 4X1

## Financial Statements 2019

### L'Association des familles Robitaille inc.

#### Results and Net Assets

Fiscal year ending 31 December 2019

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	\$	\$
Products		
Contributions	320	2 720
Activities	930	575
Other	1 602	581
	<u>2 852</u>	<u>3 876</u>
Expenses		
Rental charges	852	685
Stamps	232	348
Activities	1 437	929
Taxes	34	34
Printing - Newsletters	127	289
F.F.S.Q. (Contribution to)	480	
Bank charges	35	35
	<u>3 197</u>	<u>2 320</u>
<b>Excess of income over expenses</b>	<b>(345)</b>	<b>1 556</b>
Net assets at the beginning	15 167	13 611
Net assets at the end of fiscal year	<u>14 822</u>	<u>15 167</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	\$	\$
Investments	10 938	10 002
Accrued interests receivable	490	404
Cash	3 394	4 761
	<u>14 822</u>	<u>15 167</u>
NET ASSETS NOT AFFECTED	<u>14 822</u>	<u>15 167</u>

This financial summary was dressed up to inform our members of the Association financial health.

It has been prepared by our treasurer Paul Robitaille.

This financial information has not been audited by a company collective name.



### Three Loyal Craftsmen

This photo showing Lorraine, René and Jean adorned the cover of number 50 of the *Robitailleries*, published in 2005. This issue number 50 is part of the most recent batch of issues deposited on our website for free distribution to the general public.

This trio of loyal craftsmen still passionately works on the preparation of the *Robitailleries* as it has done since the very beginnings in 1989.

Some documents have been translated automatically and may contain grammatical errors or inaccuracies. Our goal is to make this content useful to you.

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Québec, QC G1S 4X1

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS :

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##### United States Representative

Paul Robitaille, USA (406) 586-3869

### Les Robitailleries #90 Volume 32 Number 1

#### PRODUCTION TEAM :

Jean, René and Henriette

#### TRANSLATION TEAM :

Monique Albert, Micheline Dussault, Jean and René

#### PHOTOS :

Jean, Louise, Paul, Rénaud and René

In these pages, the masculine gender is used without discrimination, but only for the purpose of lightening the text.

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