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FRANCO-AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER
78 Earle Street, P.O. Box 830, Woonsocket, Rhode Island 02895-0870

Website: www.afgs.org/site
Inquiry email: info@afgs.org
Editor: JMSeditor@afgs.org

MEMBERSHIP

- Individual: \$40
- Family: \$50 for 2 members plus \$10 for each additional family member
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- Institutional: \$45
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Non-U.S. residents must use a credit card.

LIBRARY

The library is open for research Tuesdays from 1 PM to 9 PM and Saturdays from 10 AM to 4 PM. The library is closed on designated holidays. There are no Saturday sessions in July. For closing dates, please check our website at www.afgs.org/site.

RESEARCH

The Society will conduct research for a fee. Please see our research policies elsewhere in this issue.

ARTICLES

Original manuscripts are welcomed. Please see our author's guidelines elsewhere in this issue.

ADVERTISING

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ABOUT OUR COVER

Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Boston, Mass.

The First Catholic Cathedral in New England

Photo 1871, pub. by N.M. Williams and P.C. Keely, architect

Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

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**FROM THE
PRESIDENT'S DESK**

Normand Deragon

As we enter a new year, I look back on where we've been. January marks the society's anniversary. It was 46 years ago that Henri LeBlond founded the American-French Genealogical Society whose home was at the LeFoyer Club, a French-Canadian organization based in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. Henri's dream was to set up a library at LeFoyer where members could read about the history of "New France" and learn about their ancestors. From that humble beginning with a few dozen books in milk crates to more than 20,000 publications in our library today, Henri's dream has been fulfilled.

Henri had the opportunity to visit our library a few years ago. It was the first time he had seen it. As I showed him around the building, he was speechless when he saw what AFGS had become. Since our founding in 1978, more than 7,500 people have joined AFGS. Today we have members from most states, all provinces in Canada, and even some members in Europe.

This journal has also grown over the years. The early editions of Je Me Souviens were photocopied and mailed to less than one hundred members. This edition of JMS will be distributed electronically to about 1,000 members. JMS had one editor responsible for gathering articles, proofing, and assembling the book for printing. Today, we have a team that does all those functions. They help gather the right articles for our themed issues, make certain the text is proofread and fact checked a few times before being completed for distribution.

If you have not already done so, I urge you to register for access to the members-only site to view all the past issues of JMS. Each issue may be searched by key words or names to locate topics that were published in JMS that you might want to read about.

The theme of this issue focuses on the history of the Catholic Church in New England. If you want to read about the Church's activities in New France, checkout the 75-volume Jesuit Relations on the members-only site. It is a collection of journals written by the Jesuit priests that detail the difficulties they experienced while attempting to spread the faith among the natives during the early years of the colony.

Normand Deragon, President



Henri E. LeBlond
1933 – 2020

A TIP FROM YOUR BOOKIE

by Janice Burkhart



**JANICE
BURKHART**
Librarian

Since this issue is dealing with the history of the Catholic Church in New England, I thought I would write a little bit about general research in the parish registers.

First let's look at a typical marriage record. You will find the name of the groom; the groom's mother and father; the date and place of the groom's baptism; the name of the bride; the names of the bride's father and mother; the date and place of the bride's baptism; and the date and place of the marriage. It is important to note that in the church record, the date being recorded is almost always the baptismal date and not the birth date. It is sometimes confusing when a researcher sees that the recorded date does not match the known birth date. It is because the baptism usually takes place a number of days after the birth. This can be especially confusing when the date is only a few weeks before the wedding. This is because you have an adult either converting to Catholicism or an adult being baptized for the first time. It is also important to note where the baptism took place. This is often a clue to help you find where the parents were married or at least where they were living at the time of their child's birth.

Next, we will look at the baptismal records. Note that I have said "baptismal" records and not "birth" records. Generally speaking, the Catholic Church records will reflect the date the person was baptized, and the baptismal record will probably mention when the child was born, i.e., today, yesterday, last night, a couple days ago, etc. Civil records, on the other hand, will record only the birth date. Civil records do not reflect if you were baptized. A baptismal record will record: the name of the child; the date of birth and the names of the father and the mother; the date of baptism and the names of the Godfather and the Godmother. In some baptismal records you may find the child's marriage date has been annotated to it, with the place of marriage and spouse listed. It is customary to report that information back to the church where the baptism occurred. This can be very important information because it could prove helpful when trying to locate the child's marriage information.

Church burial records are just that - a record of when a Mass will be said and where the body will be buried. It might also mention a relative who ordered the Mass to be said. It is not a death record. To obtain information about the person's death you need to consult Funeral Home records or death records at City Hall. Those records will contain a wealth of information such as: the name of the deceased person, date of birth, place of birth, age at death, sex, name of spouse, names and birth places of parents, date of death, place of death, place of burial, occupation, cause of death, name and relationship of person giving the information, address, service record, and perhaps other information.

My advice to you is to use both Civil and Religious records for your research. You will find information unique to each type of record and many clues that will help you jump to the next generation.

FIND IT IN THE LIBRARY



AFGS library has thousands of books, many which contain the early history of places in New France, Acadia and other provinces. The books listed here are some of the books that contain the history of the Catholic Church in New England, The Sentinellist Agitation in the 1920s as well as other books containing the history of the Catholic Church. In addition to this list, our library has histories of literally hundreds of churches in New England and Québec as well as in other places. Check our library

catalog on our website to see if we have a history of a church you may be interested in.

- XXX CHIS Foisy, J. Albert. *The Sentinellist Agitation in New England, 1925-1928*. Providence, R.I.: Providence Visitor Press, 1930.
- 87-88 HIS Byrne, Very Rev. Wm. *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States*. Boston: The Hurd & Everts Co., 1899.
- 589 CHIS Daignault, Elphège J. *Le Vrai Mouvement Seninelliste en Angleterre, 1923-1929 et L’Affaire du Rhode Island*. Montréal : Les Editions du Zodiaque, 1935.
- 589A CHIS Daignault, Elphège J. *The Authentic Sentinellist Movement in New England and the Affair in Rhode Island*. Private Printing, 1936.
- 587 CHIS Gowans, Alan. *Church Architecture in New France*. Toronto: Univ. of Toronto, 1955.
- 585 CHIS Murphy, Owen J., Jr. *There Were Giants in Those Days*. Strasbourg, France: Éditions du Signe, 2000.
- 590 CHIS Duffy, Mr. Joseph and Liptak, Sr. Dolores, Msgr. Thomas M. Ginty, Executive Editor. *Lift High The Cross: The History of the Archdiocese of Hartford*. Strasbourg, France: Editions du Signe, 2003.
- 607 CHIS *The Official Catholic Directory*. New Providence, N.J.: P.J. Kennedy & Sons, 1995.
- 670 CHIS *Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence Directory, 2013-2014*. Visitor Printing Co., 2013.
- 654 CHIS Farley, Rev. John. *Historical Sketches of Saint Charles Borromeo Parish, Woonsocket, Rhode Island, On the Occasion of Our 140th Anniversary, 1846-1986*. n.p.
- 722 CHIS Smith, James W. *History of the Catholic Church in Woonsocket and Vicinity*. Woonsocket: Charles E. Cook, 1903.
- 637 CHIS Humling, Virginia. *U.S. Catholic Sources, A Diocesan Research Guide*. Salt Lake City: Ancestry.com, 1995.
- 199 CHIS Fluet, Father Grégoire J., Ph.D. *Responding to His Call: A Celebration of the History of the Diocese of Norwich, 1953-2003*. Strasbourg, France: Éditions du Signe, n.d.

MEMBERS ONLY ONLINE LIBRARY

If you have never accessed our Members Only Online Library, please remember that you must register with the "FIRST TIME REGISTER" button on the main AFGS web page. When you register, please make note of the username and password that you create. A few days after you register, you will receive an email announcing that you have been granted access. You can then use the "LOGIN" button to access the Members Only Online Library with your username and password.

You will be amazed at the amount of reference material we have placed there for your research! Our website committee is working to continue adding our many resources to the Members Only Online Library increasing the value of your AFGS membership for our members throughout the United States and around the world, as well as those who are able to visit our library in Rhode Island.

FIND IT IN OUR ONLINE LIBRARY

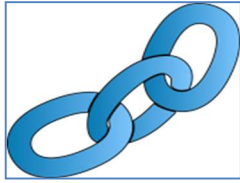
You can find instructions on how to read the many different forms of our genealogy records in our Members Only Online Library, simply go to the Education section and click on:

[Read Repertoire Records](#)

**AMERICAN-FRENCH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the *American-French Genealogical Society* is to:

- Collect, preserve and publish cultural, genealogical, historical and biographical matter relating to Americans of French and French-Canadian descent;
- Play an active part in the preservation of French and French-Canadian culture and heritage; and highlight the role that they have played in the history of North America;
- Maintain an educational, research and cultural center;
- Conduct periodic educational programs and conferences to explore cultural, genealogical, and historical topics;
- Disseminate cultural, genealogical, historical, and biographical information to members and the general public.



INTERESTING LINKS

WEBSITES YOU MIGHT LIKE

This edition of our journal focuses on the early Catholic Church in New England, its origins and some of its early development. Some websites you might want to look at are:

The College of the Holy Cross history at <https://www.holycross.edu/about-us/history>, or <https://www.holycross.edu/175th-anniversary/historical-timeline-holy-cross>.

The Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Boston was the first Cathedral in New England. Check it out at <https://www.bostonpreservation.org/advocacy-project/cathedral-holy-cross>, also check it out at <https://catholicshrinebasilica.com/cathedral-of-the-holy-cross-boston-massachusetts-united-states/>.

Later in this journal is the story of the Sentinellist Affair. You can find additional history at <https://newenglandhistoricalsociety.com/the-sentinelle-affair-keeping-the-french-in-franco-american/>, and at https://www.valleybreeze.com/news/diving-into-history-with-the-sentinelle-affair/article_f3983124-1e80-5270-89c2-93b93a5fe394.html, and at <https://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/Québechistory/events/sentinel.htm>.

To find lists of Catholic Churches built in Massachusetts you can search Wikipedia at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Roman_Catholic_churches_completed_in_1900.

If you have Catholic ancestors who lived in greater Boston, the New England Historic Genealogical Society in Boston embarked on a massive project to transcribe the parish registers of the Boston Diocese from the early days in the 19th century to 1900. These records are searchable on their website. Since their website, www.americanancestors.org is a pay website, AFGS has acquired access to their site for our library patrons. Check out <https://catholicrecords.americanancestors.org/>, come to our library to search these records, or send us a request and we will search them for you.

The Friends of the Sandwich [Massachusetts] Town Archives, FOSTA, claims the first Catholic church on Cape Cod was in Sandwich, Massachusetts. Check out their website at <https://www.fostasandwich.com/firstcatholicchurch>.

An interesting article about How Roman Catholics Conquered Massachusetts: the Inside Story can be found at <https://www.wgbh.org/news/local/2015-04-10/how-roman-catholics-conquered-massachusetts-the-inside-story>.

For a view of some of the most beautiful Catholic Churches in Massachusetts check out this website at <https://www.macathconf.org/beautiful-catholic-churches-in-massachusetts/>.

For a discussion regarding the first Catholic Mass in Rhode Island, see <https://smallstatebighistory.com/the-first-catholic-mass-in-rhode-island-newport-1780/>.

For a history of the first Catholic Churches in Maine, see <https://portlanddiocese.org/catholic-sites-maine#:~:text=St.,-Ann%20Church%2C%20Indian&text=Ann%20Church%20on%20Indian%20Island,by%20the%20British%20in%201723>.

The Cathedral of St. Joseph's History in Burlington, Vermont, can be found at <https://stjoseph.vermontcatholic.org/st-josephs-history>.



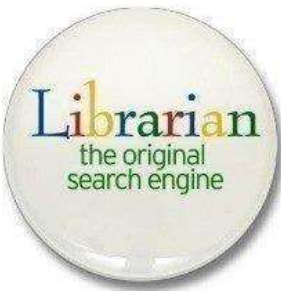
PARLONS FRANÇAIS

Parlons Français is an AFGS program designed to help folks regain their French conversational skills. Our purpose is not to teach French, but to help people whose French conversational skills are "rusty" due to the lack of opportunity to speak in French with others.

The *Parlons Français* program is led by Sylvia Bartholomy and meets through Zoom on the first and third Monday and Tuesday of the month at 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM Eastern Standard Time and the first and third Thursday of the month from 8:00 PM to 9:30 PM Eastern Standard Time. We are a diverse, friendly group; and no one is ever put "on the spot" to speak as we have learned that newcomers often prefer to listen at the beginning. We currently have members from all across the US as well as from the Province of Québec.

There are currently openings in all three sessions. You do not have to have a Zoom account to join in our meetings. Sylvia is keeping all groups to 10-12 participants, so everyone has the opportunity to speak. If you are looking for an opportunity to use your French in conversation, you are invited to join these sessions.

There is no fee for this program. It is a part of our AFGS cultural mission. If you would like to give us a try, please contact Sylvia Bartholomy at Sylviaafgs@gmail.com.



HAVE YOU USED OUR AFGS RESEARCH SERVICES?

Did you know that AFGS will help you do genealogy research? The members of our AFGS Research Committee have over 70 years of combined experience in genealogy research. If you hit a brick wall or just don't have the experience or extra time to really dig into your research, let us help you.

We hope you are using our Members Only Online Library for your research. If you need assistance with your research, we also have a research service where you can request help for specific lines. You can submit your information to us online at our website, <https://afgs.org/site/request-research/>. On our main page, click on "Services/Resources" on the blue bar and select "Request Research" and "French Ancestors/Vital Records Request." This will take you to the "Research Options and Fees" page where you will find a link to a downloadable order form or you can scroll further down the page to an on-line order form for Birth/Baptism, Marriage, Death/Burial, 5 Generation Chart, Direct Lineage, or Other (specify). You may also request photo or microfilm copies of original records, if available. DO NOT send payment in advance, you will be billed when the research is completed. AFGS members receive reduced rates for this research service.



CELEBRATING OUR NEW MEMBERS

The following list of members joined AFGS in Q4 of 2023.

Francine Larouche Newth, RI
 Emily Young, VA
 Beth Sumpter, NC
 Susan Nielson, CA
 Gisele Guilbet-Anderson, CA
 Mark Ouellet, RI
 Carl LaFrance, OH
 Colleen Rhodes, MI
 Janine Fisher, AB
 Cecelia Weatherly, MI

Michael Patric, NY
 Julie Black, NH
 Donna Williams, CA
 Denise Wells, MN
 Jacob Albert, FL
 George Danis, MA
 Yolanda Riendeau, RI
 Petty Shackelford, AL
 Nicole Amundson, WA

Maureen Elizabeth O’Neil-Cote, NJ
 Larry D. Buswell, NE
 Brendan Keefe, RI
 Virginia Edes Krone, CA
 Lisa Binkley, NS, Canada
 Amy Thibeault, RI
 William Goedel, RI
 Dennis A. Agren, TX
 Mandy Somerhalder, MS

Welcome to our new members!

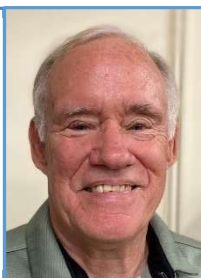
**BENEFITS OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN THE
*American-French Genealogical Society***

- Access to the research library and collections,
- Access to our quarterly *Je Me Souviens*, a digital magazine filled with resources for genealogists, research stories, new member listings, tips and facts,
- Access to a Members Only Online Library section of our website containing genealogical research resources, archives of *Je Me Souviens*, and other useful material,
- New members who visit our library receive individual assistance and training from experienced and highly competent staff members,
- Members unable to conduct their own research may use the library resources through the Research Committee. A staff of experienced researchers is available to conduct research at low member rates.

For more information visit our website at www.afgs.org/site .

**EDWARD
WALLACE
PHILLIPS**

Genealogist
& Author



THE HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN NEW ENGLAND

by Edward W. Phillips

New England is one of the most Catholic regions in the United States. It is the home to the first Catholic college, The College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, which opened in 1843, and the first Catholic Cathedral, the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Boston. New England was settled by Protestant immigrants, primarily from England, including the Pilgrims and the Puritans. They were followed by French Huguenot refugees, starting around 1686, after King Louis XIV rescinded the *Edict of Nantes*,¹ a ruling that effectively banned the Protestant religion in France.

The origins of the founding of the Catholic Church in New England came with the start of the Industrial Revolution, with men like Samuel Slater bringing weaving technology to New England. The spread of automated weaving technology quickly spread, with the resulting construction of numerous mills throughout many of the cities in New England. Places like Burlington and Colchester, Vermont, Somersworth and Manchester, New Hampshire, Boston, Springfield, Worcester, Lynn, Lowell, New Bedford and Fall River, Massachusetts, and Woonsocket, Pawtucket and Providence, Rhode Island, to name only a few.

In 1825 a massive construction project was launched, the Blackstone Canal, a 46-mile-long canal that stretched from Worcester to Providence, which was an impetus to bring more construction workers into New England than the existing workforce could provide. The majority of these immigrant workers were Irish. The Blackstone Canal also fueled the growth of numerous mills along the river, the area which became known as the start of the Industrial Revolution in America. During the period of construction, 1825-1828, and its years of operation, 1828-1848, the first Catholic Churches were built.

As factories were built, cheap labor was needed to run them and support the insatiable demand for cheap goods that resulted. Beginning in the 1820s, families trickled into New England from Ireland and New France, and slowly but steadily increased in flow through the 1830s, 40s and 50s and continued throughout the American Civil War (1861-1865).

In July 1604 Father Nicolas Aubry, a Parisian who was a member of an expedition led by Pierre du Guast, Sieur du Monts, celebrated Mass in the far northeastern reaches of what became the State of Maine. This was 16 years before the arrival of the Pilgrims on the Mayflower which began the settlement of New England. Du Monts party, including Samuel de Champlain who at that time was a young French cartographer, held a charter from King Henry IV of France to establish the first permanent settlement in this part of the New World. The area was called "Acadie" and it stretched roughly from the St. Lawrence River Valley to the islands of Long Island Sound and Nantucket Sound, and also including Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island (P.E.I.), Newfoundland, New Brunswick and parts of eastern Maine. The party arrived at Passamaquoddy Bay near modern day Calais, Maine, where they planted a cross claiming all of the territory in the name of the French King. They built a rude chapel and Father Aubry began the regular celebration of the Mass. The

¹ The Edict of Nantes was enacted by Henry of Navarre in 1598 after he ascended the French throne as Henry IV, and effectively ended the French Wars of Religion by granting official tolerance to Protestantism. Henry of Navarre had been a Calvinist but converted to Catholicism before he was crowned.

French settlers called the river surrounding the island Ste. Croix, a name later adopted by New England's first Roman Catholic college, translated to the English as Holy Cross.²

In that first winter of 1604/05, more than half of the party died including Father Aubry. Samuel de Champlain survived the winter and set out to complete the royal commission and to chart the hills and valleys of all of Acadie. In early July 1605, he reached the southern boundary of Acadie which was Cape Cod³ and, in an effort, to claim every tree, blade of grass, and grain of sand in the region planted another cross. Three years later when asked to return and lead the resettlement he opted not for Acadie but for the St. Lawrence River Valley in the area that would become Québec City.⁴

With the arrival of the Pilgrims in November 1620, the earlier settling of Virginia in 1607 and the other original thirteen colonies, the early English colonies of America were ardently Protestant and often in conflict with the French Catholics who settled New France. The Protestants were openly distrustful of, and even "hated the Catholics." Father Guilday, a professor of Church history at the Catholic University of America, told his readers "The celebration of the Mass in Massachusetts was made punishable by death." By decree of the Massachusetts General Court effective 10 September 1700, the presence of "Jesuits, Priests and Popish missionaries" was forbidden in the territory under the penalty of imprisonment or, if recapture followed a successful escape, by death. An earlier law passed in May 1647 sanctioned no more than "banishment" for the first offense.⁵ In fact, Roger Williams and Elizabeth Hutchinson, along with their followers, were banished from Massachusetts in the 1630s for speaking out against the civil authorities for punishing religious dissension and for the confiscation of Native Americans lands. Roger Williams and his followers founded Providence Plantations and Elizabeth Hutchinson with her followers founded a settlement at Portsmouth, Rhode Island.

The descendants of the first party that settled at Saint Croix Island in 1605 migrated across the Bay of Fundy to settle in Nova Scotia. All of the Maritime Provinces had come under British rule by 1714 and all of the settlers were expected to pledge their allegiance to the British Crown. Most of the Acadians refused to, and for reasons unknown, were allowed to continue their Catholic way of life for the next almost half century. That is until a larger conflict erupted in 1754, after numerous small conflicts over the years, a conflict later called the Seven Years War in Canada and the French and Indian Wars in America. From 1755 to 1764, a period which became known as the "Great Expulsion," when the British ordered the removal of the Catholic Acadian population and forced their resettlement either back to Europe or to the east coast English colonies. Twenty years after the deportation, about 1500 Acadians settled in the French-held Louisiana Territories. Approximately 1000 of the more than 7000 exiles were sent to Massachusetts and including two families and an unescorted teen-age girl who settled in Worcester, Massachusetts. Not long after their arrival the wife of Justin White gave birth to their third child, the baby believed to be the first born to Catholic parents in Worcester County.⁶

² Owen J. Murphy, Jr., *There Were Giants in Those Days, Glimpses of Roman Catholic History in Central Massachusetts* (Strasbourg, France: Editions du Signe, 2000), 11-14.

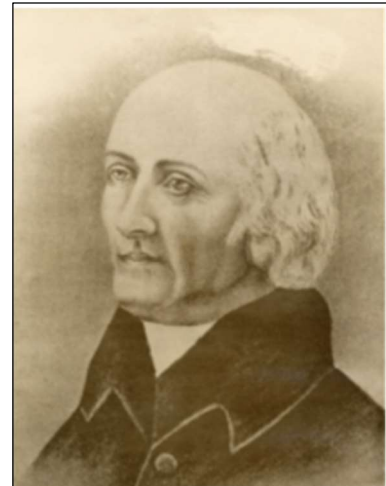
³ Note the earlier description that the southern boundary of Acadia was Long Island.

⁴ Murphy, Jr., *There Were Giants in Those Days*, 11-14.

⁵ Murphy, Jr., *There Were Giants in Those Days*, 15.

⁶ Murphy, Jr., *There Were Giants in Those Days*, 19-20.

Back in Boston, 37-year-old Claudius Florent Bouchard, Abbé de la Poterie, a former French navy chaplain, settled in Boston in 1788. The French fleet was said to have sought refuge from hurricanes when it dropped anchor in Boston harbor in late-summer that year. The fleet left but l’Abbé Claudius stayed. He organized the first Catholic parish in an abandoned Huguenot church on School Street that was made available for Catholic use. On 2 November 1788, he celebrated what Father John E. Sexton in 1944 said “may properly be called the first public Mass in Boston.”



Father Anthony Maignon
Illustration by Gerard P. Rooney
Pub. in The Pilot, the nation’s oldest Catholic newspaper



The Parish of Baltimore
The first Catholic Parish in the U.S.

In the late 1780s the Massachusetts Constitution proclaimed, “No subject shall be hurt, molested, or restrained in his person,

liberty, or estate for worshipping God in the manner and season most agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience, or for his

religious profession or sentiments.”⁷

On 6 June 1784 Pope Pius VI confirmed 49-year-old Father John Carroll of Maryland as the “superior of the mission” for the 13 colonies of the United States. His cousin, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, who was a member of the Maryland delegation to the Continental congress, was the



Statue of Father John Carroll in front of Healy Hall inside the front gates of Georgetown University, sculpted by Jerome Connor. Wikimedia/public domain

only Catholic to sign the Declaration of Independence. John’s brother Daniel was one of only two Catholics at the Constitutional convention that debated and in 1787 framed and endorsed the United States Constitution. On 25 March 1789, John was elected by a vote of 25-2 as the first Bishop. The territory he was to oversee stretched from British Canada (Acadia) to Spanish Florida and from the Atlantic to the Mississippi River. The seat of the nation’s first diocese was chosen in Baltimore since nearly two-thirds of

the nation’s estimated 25,000 Catholics and two-thirds of the priests were living in Maryland. The election of John Carroll as the first Bishop was confirmed by Pope Pius VI on 6 November 1789.

The Constitution of the United States, originally written in 1787, contained only one reference to religion.

⁷ Murphy, Jr., *There Were Giants in Those Days*, 21-22.

No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office of public trust under the United States.

The First amendment, proposed just a year or so later in 1789 or 1790, defined this tenant further:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

This election of Rev. Carroll marked the formalization of Catholicism in America and of its first Catholic diocese. Bishop Carroll was formally consecrated on 15 August 1790 in the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady chapel southwest of London. One of the first tasks of Father Carroll was to remove Abbé de la Poterie from his post in Boston due to antagonisms he created with the French consul. Father Carroll embarked on a trip to Boston which ran from mid-May to mid-June 1791. He withdrew the privileges of Father Louis de Rousselet who was Abbé de la Poterie's successor. He then installed Father John Thayer to the post at the School Street church in Boston. Father John Thayer was the first New Englander ordained to the priesthood and was a native of Boston, having been previously a Congregational minister. The Rev. Mr. Thayer had been chaplain to Gov. John Hancock, who was the largest landowner in Worcester during the Revolutionary period. Father Thayer apparently ruffled the feathers of the small French and Irish Catholic community in Boston and quickly had many of them refusing to attend services. Within the year Father Francis A. Matignon sailed from France to Baltimore. He travelled from Baltimore arriving in Boston 20 August 1792 after having been assigned by Bishop Carroll to the Boston Catholic community.

The origins of the Catholic Church in Central Massachusetts have not been well documented. The impetus for Catholicism in the area was driven by the aforementioned start of work on the Blackstone Canal project which began in 1825. It was much later on that the river was called "America's hardest working river."



Photograph taken from a painting of Bishop Benedict Joseph Fenwick
Born 1782, ordained 1825, died 1846, second bishop of Boston, founded College of the Holy Cross which opened October of 1843.
Source: College of the Holy Cross

There is a marker on North Main Street in Worcester that states: "In the year 1826 the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered for the first time in Worcester by the Rt. Rev. Benedict Fenwick in a room in the United States Arms Tavern which stood on this site." This Mass was believed to be a private Mass celebrated in a small dining room of the popular hotel.⁸ Albert B. Southwick, a Leicester, Massachusetts, journalist and historian, noted at that time (c. 1826) Worcester was "a small isolated, inbred town" whose population was about 3,000 individuals of which only about 19 were foreign born, and had no Roman Catholics. This Mass is not documented, and it is likely that Bishop Fenwick's first trip to this city wouldn't occur for another six years. It is possible that an itinerant priest made a stopover in Worcester and performed this Mass. At that time Lincoln Square was the central hub and the U.S. Arms Hotel the principal transfer station. Bishop Fenwick kept detailed journals and they credit his first visit to Central Massachusetts and specifically to Worcester on 27 July and 6 August 1832. He met with Father James Fitton who would soon become Worcester's first resident priest. At the time of the visit, however, Bishop Fenwick

was in charge of the mission of Hartford, Connecticut, which included all of Connecticut and most of Western Massachusetts. Bishop Fenwick had been consecrated on 1 November 1825 as Boston's second bishop and had been ordained a Jesuit Priest on 11 June 1808, just two months

⁸ Murphy, Jr., *There Were Giants in Those Days*, 29.

before Pope Pius VII raised Baltimore to archdiocesan stature and established Boston and New York as two of its suffragan Sees.⁹

Bishop Fenwick faced the problem of a shortage of priests. There were only three priests available to serve the whole New England region and minister to its nine churches, consisting of the cathedral in Boston and eight other small gathering places. There was a dilapidated chapel in Passamaquoddy, Maine, and a small, unfinished church in New Bedford. Bishop Fenwick started a seminary out of his home to train local priests. He pursued his dream of making a seminary, which was later named in his honor, the centerpiece of the farming community in Benedicta, Maine. Later, in 1843, the same year Connecticut and Rhode Island were established as New England's second Catholic diocese, he began constructing an institute on Mount St. James in Worcester. This was the beginning of the College of the Holy Cross. One of the first candidates of Bishop Fenwick's home seminary was James Fitton. Father Fitton would go on to serve the Catholic Church for 54 years and would later be referred to by Father Lord as "the greatest missionary priest in the history of the Diocese of Boston."¹⁰

Father Fitton directed the construction of the first Catholic Church in all of the interior of Massachusetts alongside a "wagon trail" which later became known as Temple Street and used it as his launching point to bring the Sacraments of the Catholic Mass to every corner of Worcester County. He traveled to Webster and Leicester in October 1832 and noted in the marriage register then known as the "Hartford Mission." In early 1833, he made stops in the Blackstone Valley and recorded in his register what he now called the "Worcester Mission."

During the four years of the construction of the Blackstone Canal (1825-1828), Father Robert D. Woodley, a priest that Bishop Fenwick had assigned to Providence in early January 1828, began a two-day visit to Worcester, probably arriving on a barge on the Blackstone Canal. Father Woodley graduated with distinction from Georgetown in 1825 and was a native of Virginia. While there is no record he performed the Mass, his recorded visits were on Sundays so there can be little doubt that Mass was celebrated.

Father Woodley was the first resident priest in Rhode Island, and he traveled incessantly over a large area pursuing every Catholic community that was brought to his attention and saying Mass in many places. In late 1830, he asked for and was granted his release from Bishop Fenwick and returned to Georgetown and entered the Society of Jesus.¹¹

In an April 1834 Mass, \$600 was pledged for the construction of a church. Father Fitton set out to locate and purchase a plot of land and settled on a plot near where the later church of Notre Dame des Canadiens stood in Worcester. When finalizing the deed, the landowner, a certain Mr. Browne, asked what Father Fitton was going to build. When he answered, "a Catholic church," Mr. Browne tore up the deed which put an end to the negotiations. Soon after this incident another occurred in Greater Boston and was called "the most disgraceful outrage ever perpetrated in New England and the most tragic event in the history of the Church here."¹² During the night of 11-12 August 1834



St. John's Church
Temple St. Worcester
(photo by Kenneth C.
Zirkel - Own work,
CC BY-SA 4.0,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=92828754>)

⁹ Murphy, Jr., *There Were Giants in Those Days*, 30; a suffragan diocese is one that is subordinate to a metropolitan archiepiscopal See (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).

¹⁰ Murphy, Jr., *There Were Giants in Those Days*, 32.

¹¹ Murphy, Jr., *There Were Giants in Those Days*, 35.

¹² Murphy, Jr., *There Were Giants in Those Days*, 40.

a mob routed ten defenseless women and forty-four terrified children and proceeded to plunder and burn to the ground every building connected to the Ursuline Sisters convent and school in Charlestown, Massachusetts, just outside of Boston. Bishop Fenwick's library was destroyed, coffins in the convent and mausoleum, and the Blessed Sacrament seized and strewn around the grounds or taken away as trophies. They also threatened, in subsequent days, to destroy the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, a threat which was never carried out.¹³ The nuns sought payment from the city and the state with little success. It has been said that they decided to raise monies to rebuild the convent but instead used it to build a school for the children of the immigrants and chose a location in the western hills of Boston to build the school. The school that was subsequently built was the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester.¹⁴

On 1 May 1834 three lots of pastureland bordering a rutted cart path were purchased for the same \$600 as the previous attempted purchase. The land was on Flagg's Plain which ran from Green Street toward the Blackstone Canal. Father Fitton made regular visits from Hartford to supervise the construction of what would be called "Christ Church," which opened in 1836. This became the mother church of the two dioceses and was the predecessor of St. John's Church on Temple Street. It was here that "four catholic families, eighteen unmarried men and a single lady" celebrated the Mass in the unfinished basement before the building had been erected.¹⁵

The development of the various dioceses and the construction and support of the earliest churches was driven by the immigration of the Irish Catholics. They were attracted here to build Canals, buildings, and to work in the textile and shoe mills throughout New England. In St. Johnsbury, Vermont, Catholics were divided by language and heritage, with separate churches for the French and the Irish. Before any churches were built, Catholic explorers and priests came to the area to meet the Abenaki (Sokoki) and other tribal groups. French explorers from New Canada traveled down the Richelieu to the "inland sea" of Lake Champlain. Shortly before Samuel de Champlain arrived in Vermont, he had asked the Society of Jesus, known as the Jesuits, to come to the region and convert the Native Americans to the French Catholic religion. They were to evangelize, or explain the Catholic view of God, and to missionary, creating places of worship and structures for outreach. These early Jesuit priests, often called the "Black Robes" for the appearance of their garments, wrote back to the leaders in New France about the progress of their explorations and their evangelizations. Their reports, called "Relations," told the story of their journeys, what they learned and what they believe they accomplished. Various struggles with the colonies and the War of Independence (American Revolution) changed the relationship with the Native Americans creating and dividing them into either allies or opponents. Battles between the English and the French settlers damaged tribal settlements resulting in the French and Indian Wars from 1754 to 1763 and thereby ending the Jesuit presence in Vermont for the most part.¹⁶

The First Catholic Dioceses

The creation of the first diocese, that of Baltimore, the construction of the first church, that of "Christ Church," later to become St. John's Church, were the foundations of the Catholic Church in New England. Additional dioceses would be carved out as the population of Catholics grew. The arrival of the Irish, supporting first the construction of the Blackstone Canal and later the

¹³ Murphy, Jr., *There Were Giants in Those Days*, 40-41.

¹⁴ Dennis L. Noble and Truman R. Strobridge, *Capt. Hell Roaring Michael Healy, from American Slave to Arctic Hero* (Florida: University Press of Florida, 2017), p. 25.

¹⁵ Owen J. Murphy, Jr., "There Were Giants in Those Days," *Glimpses of Roman Catholic History in Central Massachusetts*, 41.

¹⁶ *Behind the Building, Early Catholic history and community in the Northeast Kingdom* by Beth Kanell 2019, online at northstarmonthly.com/features/early-catholic-history-and-communtiy-in-the-northeast-kingdom.

construction of the railroad, was followed by or simultaneously with the growth of the mills throughout New England which would draw the French Canadians across the border into New England. The Canadians flowed across the border into places like Chateaugay and Keeseville, New York, St. Albans and Colchester, Vermont, Biddeford, Saco, and Lewiston, Maine, which were some of the early mill cities. As the population of French Canadians and the Irish grew, church creation followed soon after.

The first Catholic Nun in New England was believed to have been Fanny Allen, daughter of the famous Ethan Allen of the Green Mountain boys. She was baptized by the minister Daniel Barber, a Revolutionary War soldier and minister at Claremont, New Hampshire, who was about twenty-one years old at the time. She became a Catholic later on, entered a religious order in Québec, and earned the title as the first Catholic Nun of New England. There are other examples of the early Catholics and converts in the beginning of the 19th century.

The first diocese headquartered in New England was the Diocese of Boston. This diocese was erected 8 April 1808 and covered the states of Connecticut, Massachusetts (which included Maine at the time), New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. This separated New England from the Diocese of Baltimore which had covered New England for the previous twenty years. Pope Pius VII erected Boston as he did New York, Philadelphia, and Bardstown (Kentucky) at the same time. The Diocese of Baltimore was elevated to a Metropolitan Archdiocese and the four newly formed dioceses were designated as suffragans.¹⁷

On 20 November 1843 Pope Gregory XVI erected the Diocese of Hartford and assigned Connecticut, Rhode Island, the counties of Barnstable, Bristol, Dukes and Nantucket, along with the towns of Marion, Mattapoisett and Wareham in southern Plymouth County, Massachusetts to it. This diocese also was made a suffragan of the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

On 29 July 1853 Pope Pius IX erected the Diocese of Burlington, Vermont, removing the territory from the Diocese of Boston. At the same time, he erected the Diocese of Portland, Maine removing the states of Maine and New Hampshire from Boston Diocese. These two new dioceses were suffragans of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of New York.

On 14 June 1870 Pope Pius IX erected the Diocese of Springfield, Massachusetts, removing the western counties of Massachusetts including Berkshire, Hampshire, Hampden and Worcester counties from the Boston Diocese and assigning them to Springfield. This new diocese was made a suffragan of the New York Diocese.

Two years later on 16 February 1872 the Diocese of Providence, Rhode Island, was erected and all of Rhode Island, along with the southeastern region of Massachusetts previously assigned to the Diocese of Hartford, Connecticut, was assigned to it. This new diocese was also made a suffragan of the New York Diocese.

On 12 April 1875 Boston was elevated to a Metropolitan Archdiocese, and the dioceses of Burlington, Hartford, Portland, Providence, and Springfield were made suffragans of it. This was the point that the Catholic Church in New England was fully separated from the Dioceses of New York and Baltimore for the first time in its history.

On 15 April 1884 the Diocese of Manchester was erected taking the State of New Hampshire from the Diocese of Portland, Maine, and adding it as another suffragan of the Diocese of Boston.

¹⁷ Archdiocese of Baltimore website.

On 12 March 1904, Pope Pius X erected the Diocese of Fall River taking the area that had been previously assigned to the Diocese of Providence and making it a suffragan of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Boston.

Another 47 years would pass before the Diocese of Worcester was erected. On 14 January 1950 Pope Pius XII erected it taking it from the Diocese of Springfield and adding it as a suffragan to the Archdiocese Boston.

This was followed three years later with the erection of the Diocese of Bridgeport and the Diocese of Norwich, Connecticut, removing them from the Diocese of Hartford. At the same time, he elevated Hartford to a Metropolitan Diocese and making the Diocese of Bridgeport, Norwich and Providence its suffragans.¹⁸

The creation of these dioceses covering all of New England paralleled the growth of Catholicism in the New England States. The immigration of the Irish, who represented by far the largest flow of immigrants, was accompanied with the flow of the French-Canadians and was added to by a flood of immigrants from Europe who entered through the ports of Boston and New York's Ellis Island and included Polish, German, Lithuanian, Armenian, Italian and other eastern European Catholic countries.

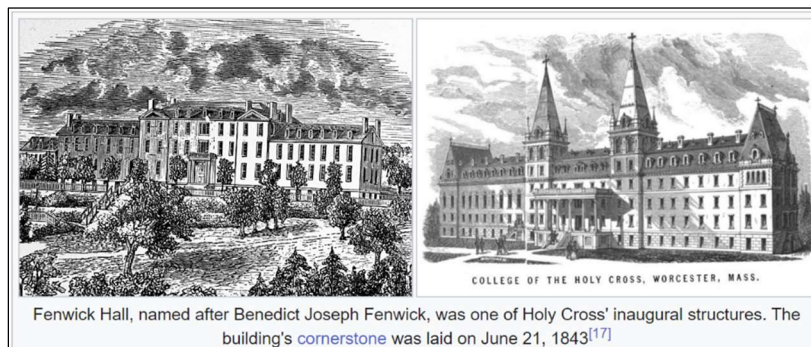
The First Churches

Boston's first church was the Church of the Holy Cross which was located on Franklin Street in Boston. It was designed by Charles Bulfinch and built in 1803. In 1808, its name was changed to the Cathedral of the Holy Cross. This first church building lasted until about 1862. A new church was designed by architect Patrick Keely and construction began in 1860. Work was delayed by the Civil War, but it was finally dedicated at the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, the Mother of God, on 8 December 1875. It was the largest church in New England and seats nearly 2000 people.¹⁹



The Cathedral of the Holy Cross, mother church of the Archdiocese of Boston and a parish to the historic & vibrant South End

By the time Bishop John J. Williams became the fourth bishop of Boston in 1866, there were 200,000 Catholics in the Archdiocese, 109 parishes and about 25 Catholic institutions, including orphanages and hospitals. The Civil War had ended and there was a boom in construction, not only in Boston but across the young nation. By the turn of the next century there were 850,000 Catholics in the Archdiocese.²⁰



Fenwick Hall, named after Benedict Joseph Fenwick, was one of Holy Cross' inaugural structures. The building's cornerstone was laid on June 21, 1843^[17]

The College of the Holy Cross opened only 9 years after the tragic ransacking and destruction at the Ursuline Sisters Convent in Charlestown. This school was the pet project of Boston's second bishop, Benedict Fenwick, and was the first Catholic college in New

¹⁸ The above history of the creation of the New England dioceses was found at *Wikipedia.org*, at wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_of_Boston.

¹⁹ Cathedral of the Holy Cross, online at Bostoncathedral.com/history.

²⁰ Archdiocese of Boston online at bostoncatholic.org/population-increases-fuel-parish-growth.

England. It was a Jesuit college in the midst of Protestant Yankee New England. It, at first, offered a seven-year humanities program and failed to obtain a charter from the Massachusetts General Court until 1865 when the Civil War ended. Interestingly, James Healy from Macon, Georgia, the son of a white Irish immigrant and a black slave mother, was the first valedictorian of the first graduating class in 1849. James went on to become Bishop of Portland, Maine, his younger brother became Bishop of Atlanta, Georgia, at least two sisters became mother Superiors of the convents in Montréal, and a younger brother Michael became captain in the Revenue Cutter Service (predecessor of the U.S. Coast Guard), the first black officer of any branch of the U.S. military!²¹

Hartford's First Catholic Church was the Church of the Holy Trinity which was purchased from Christ Episcopal Church in Hartford on 13 July 1829. By that November, the church was moved to a new location and renovated. Bishop Fenwick dedicated Holy Trinity Church on 30 July 1830. At that time, Bishop Fenwick recommended to the Fifth Provincial Council of Baltimore that greater concern be given to the Catholics in Connecticut. This led to the creation of the Diocese of Hartford in 1843 with Rev. William Tyler, Vicar General of Boston and a convert to Catholicism, as its founding Bishop. He was responsible for the pastoral care of the 10,000 Catholics who then constituted the diocese. In 1844 Rev. Tyler petitioned the Papacy in Rome to move the See of Hartford to Providence, Rhode Island.²² In 1849 church officials decided they needed a larger church to accommodate over 1000 Catholics and in 1851 dedicated St Patrick Church. It's a good thing they did because two years later on 12 May 1853 the old Holy Trinity Church burned down.²³



St. Patrick's Church
Hartford, Conn.

²¹ Dennis L. Noble and Truman R. Strobridge, *Captain "Hell Roaring" Michael Healy: From American Slave to Artic Hero* (University Press of Florida, 2009, First Edition), 352 pps.

²² Archdiocese of Hartford online at archdiocese.org/history-of-the-diocese.

²³ St. Patrick Church online at spsact.org/our-parish/our-history.

Rhode Island's first Catholic church was built in West Warwick in 1844 and was named St. Mary's. It is located in the village of Crompton in West Warwick and stands on a hilltop above the commercial area of the mill village of Crompton overlooking the Pawtuxet River and valley. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.²⁴ The original and the main portion of the church were completed and dedicated in 1845 making it the oldest Catholic church building in the state. The church layout is in the form of a Roman cross as transepts, and a sanctuary and tower were added after the initial construction was completed. Later on,

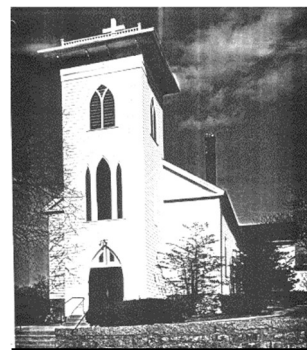


St. Charles Borromeo
Woonsocket, R.I.

with the construction of Fort Adams in Newport, the Providence and Stonington railroad and the aforementioned Blackstone Canal resulted in an accelerating influx of Irish immigrants. Most of the churches at this time depended on traveling missionary priests. St. Mary's was no different until 1850 when Father Daniel Kelly was named as its pastor. Nine months later he was succeeded by the Rev. James Gibson, a Yankee convert. Father Gibson remained pastor until 1892. By 1875 St. Mary's parish had become so large that it included four other churches in the villages of West Warwick — Saints Peter and Paul in Phenix, St. John the Baptist and St. Joseph's in Crompton, and St. Catherine's in Apponaug.²⁵

St. Charles Borromeo, the oldest Catholic parish in Northern Rhode Island, is in the city of Woonsocket. As early as 1828, Rev. Robert D. Woodley visited Woonsocket and said Mass in the house of Walter Allen, a generous Protestant, for the ten Irish Catholics who were then living in town. The house, known as the Osborne House, was still standing in 1930. In 1834 when the first Catholic census was taken, there were thirty Catholics living in Woonsocket and the Rev. James Fitton of the Boston Diocese said the first Catholic Mass. Rev. Fitton said the Mass for the next 12 years in private homes in Pawtucket, Newport, and Crompton. In 1841, the Mass was said in a hall attached to the Woonsocket Hotel. A small church was built on a lot of land near Social Village on Mendon and Daniels Street. This church, St. Charles, had as its first pastor the Rev. Charles O'Reilly who served the parish from 1846 to 1852. St. Charles Church is a stone structure built in the Gothic style and was designed by architect Keeley.²⁶

St. Patrick Church in Newcastle, Maine, is called the most continuously operated Catholic Church east of the Mississippi River. It was the first church in the United States to be named for St. Patrick, houses the altar of Bishop Cheverus, and has a bell cast by Paul Revere and his son Joseph! The church was dedicated on 30 July 1808 and was designed by Nicolas Codd, an Irishman who came to New England to design and build a church. The original pews



St. Mary's Church
Crompton in West
Warwick, R.I.
(Warren Jagger,
photographer, April 1977
Negative: R.I. Historical
Preservation Commission)



St. Patrick's Church

²⁴ St. Mary's Church and Cemetery (Crompton, Rhode Island), online at [wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Mary%27s_Church_and_Cemetery_\(Crompton,_Rhode_Island\)](https://wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Mary%27s_Church_and_Cemetery_(Crompton,_Rhode_Island))

²⁵ St. Mary's Church and Cemetery, Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission, online at www.preservation.ri.gov/files/west_warwick.

²⁶ Rhode Island Genealogy, online at rhodeislandgenealogy.com/providence/st-charles-church-of-woonsocket-rhode-island.htm.

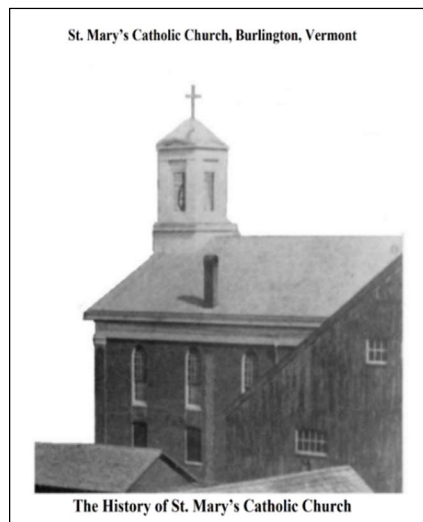
were constructed from trees found in the nearby forests. The altar is older than the church structure, resembles a tomb and is purported to have been imported from France.²⁷



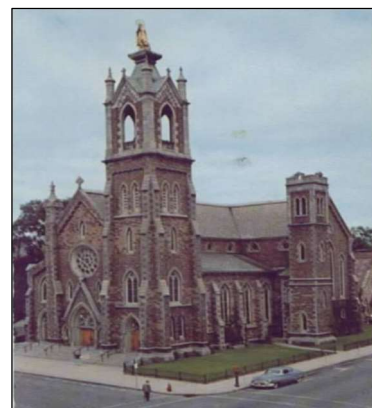
“St. John's Catholic Church, Worcester,”
Glass negatives: Wohlbrück, Theodore Clemens, 1879-1936, *Wohlbruck Collection*, accessed November 4, 2023, <https://americanantiquarian.org/wohlbruckcollection/items/show/177>.

The oldest Church in Worcester County, Massachusetts, is St. John’s Catholic Church in the city of Worcester. It is called the “Mother” church of both the Springfield and Worcester dioceses and was built when it belonged to the Diocese of Boston. Father James Fitton of the Boston Archdiocese was the founder. Father Fitton was ordained in 1827 and served Passamaquoddy tribal members in Maine. Some of those tribal members visited him at St. John’s in later years. He was the first Catholic to preach the Gospel in most locations in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. In 1830, he was assigned to pastor to the few Catholics in Hartford and continued from there to the Catholics in Central Massachusetts.²⁸

Father Jeremiah O’Callaghan was sent from Boston to visit the Catholic Communities in western Vermont. St. Mary’s was the first Catholic Church in Vermont and opened in Burlington in 1832. French people came from Canada



seeking farm and factory work and employment on the docks in Burlington. In 1860, a year before the Civil War broke out, plans were produced to build new churches in Vermont towns like St. Johnsbury and Albany.



Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
1867-1972

St. Joseph’s Cathedral was the first church in New England designed, created, and dedicated as a Cathedral Church. Bishop Louis de Goesbriand was the Vicar General of the Diocese of Cleveland and became Vermont’s first Roman Catholic Prelate. Bishop de Goesbriand hired architect Patrick C. Keely, a noted architect from Boston to design and build the first Cathedral in Vermont. Most of the work was done during the Civil War and the Cathedral was opened on 18 May 1867 and the first Masses were celebrated on 29 September 1867 by Father Cloarec, the Rector of the new Cathedral. The Cathedral was formally consecrated on 8 December 1867 as Immaculate Conception. Unfortunately, the Cathedral burned to the ground on 13 March 1872.²⁹

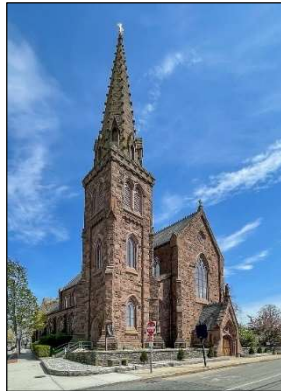
In 1830, the first Roman Catholic parish was founded in Springfield, Massachusetts, and was called St. Joseph’s. In 1860, St. Michael’s was founded there. The French-Canadian parishioners pushed for the establishment of their own church, one that would serve their needs. A new St. Joseph’s Church was built between 1873-1877 as the first church to serve them. Friar Gagnier from Québec is credited with

²⁷ Acadia National Park, online at acadiannationalpark.com/midcoast_attractions/st_patricks_church.php.

²⁸ St. John’s Catholic Church, Worcester, Mass., online at stjohnsworcester.org/history.

²⁹ The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, online at st.Joseph.vermontcatholic.org/history-of-the-cathedral-of-the-immaculate-conception.

designing the church based on churches in Québec. Services were held in the basement until the entire building was completed in 1877. St. Joseph's closed in 2005 and has since been demolished.³⁰



St. Mary's Church
Newport, R.I.

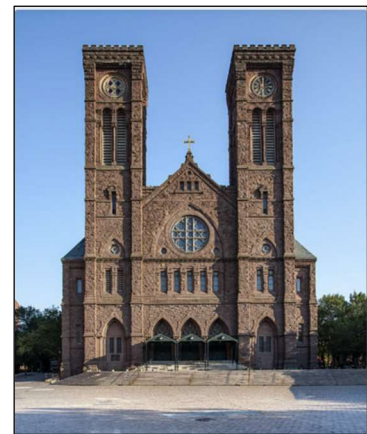
St. Mary's parish in Newport, Rhode Island was the first catholic church in Rhode Island. Rev. Robert D. Woodley bought what he called "a beautiful schoolhouse," proceeded to make renovations, and held the first Catholic Mass there on 6 April 1828. Bishop Fenwick traveled from Boston the next year and consecrated the edifice. Father Woodley was responsible for the Catholics in Providence, Pawtucket, Woonsocket, New Bedford, Fall River, Taunton, and the entire state of Connecticut. He was soon replaced with Bishop Fenwick by the Rev. John Corry in December 1830. The original church in Newport was called St. Joseph's but was renamed St. Mary's in 1849. Its official name is the Church of the Holy Name of Mary, Our Lady of the Isle. This is the same church that hosted the wedding of Jacqueline Bouvier and Senator, later President, J.F. Kennedy in 1953.

In Providence, Rhode Island, the first Mass of Sts. Peter and Paul was celebrated on 10 March 1837, in what was one of the earliest stone structures in Providence. Unfortunately, it was poorly built, and the congregation struggled to pay the masons and carpenters who built it, so they attached a lien on the building. It wasn't until 1872 when Bishop Thomas Hendrickson announced his intention to replace the now decrepit building. He engaged the services of Patrick C. Keely, the leading Catholic architect of his day, to draw up plans for a new church. Keely designed a Romanesque-style building, and the cornerstone was laid on 28 November 1878.³¹

This article could continue with the discussion of dozens more of the earliest churches in New England. The last quarter of the 19th century saw a boom in the construction of Catholic churches, driven by a huge influx of the Irish and French Canadians, and towards the close of the 19th century a steady flow of Catholic refugees from eastern Europe. A 1990 survey revealed New England was as much as 54% Catholic. That percentage dropped to around 36% by 2010.

In 1866, after the close of the Civil War, there were 200,000 Catholics in the Archdiocese of Boston, 109 parishes and about 25 Catholic institutions including orphanages and hospitals. Early in the 20th century the population had increased to 850,000. When Cardinal Cushing died in 1970, there were 3,500,000 Catholics in the Archdiocese of Boston.³²

Rhode Island is believed to be the most Catholic state in the country. In a 2016 survey, a total of 41% of Rhode Islanders identified as Roman Catholic. This was down from 62% in 1990.³³



SS. Peter and Paul Church
Providence, R.I.
(wikiwand.com)

³⁰ Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield in Massachusetts, online at [Wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Diocese_of_Springfield_in_Massachusetts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Diocese_of_Springfield_in_Massachusetts).

³¹ History of SS. Peter and Paul makes it a fitting centerpiece for anniversary observance, Rhode Island Catholic [news], online at <https://thericatholic.com/stories/a-history-of-the-cathedral-of-ss-peter-paul.6677?>

³² Archdiocese of Boston, "Population Increases Fuel Parish Growth," online at bostoncatholic.org/population-increases-fuel-parish-growth.

³³ Public Religion Research Institute, Washington, D.C.

AFGS RESOURCES

The AFGS library has more than 30,000 volumes of marriage, baptism, birth, death and burial records, genealogies, biographies, histories, and reference books.

The *Forget Files* – records include thousands of early Franco-American marriages in Rhode Island and other New England states.

A collection of more than 7,000 microfilms of vital records (BMD) for Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, and New Hampshire from about 1854 to circa 1915. Some of our Vermont records are earlier.

Members have internet access to *Ancestry.com*, *AmericanAncestors.org*, *PRDH*, *FamilySearch.org*, and other digital research records and information.

AFGS publications such as our popular cookbook, our quarterly magazine *Je Me Souviens*, local church records, books, maps, journals from other genealogical societies, family histories and other items of interest to genealogists.

The *Drouin Genealogical Collection of Canadian Church and Civil Records* – this unique collection of books and microfilms, available to our members, includes records from the inception of Québec through 1935. The films contain images of the actual baptism, marriage and burial records as they were written.

AFGS is a FamilySearch Affiliate Library. Therefore, visitors can access all information (including any locked records sets) from the Church of Latter-day Saints (LDS) data base from our library facility. This makes researching your ancestors from many countries throughout the world a possibility.



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We are always happy to hear from our members. You can let us know your thoughts on our journal and your society in general.

Do you have any ideas for future issues? Are there any programs you would like to participate in either online or in person? We would love to hear your ideas. Would you like to join a scheduled Zoom group made up of our members who reside in your state? Would you like to join a scheduled Zoom research group to request a live look-up in our library's parish records? Are you using our Members Only Online Library to conduct your research? Do you need help navigating our resources there? Are there lecture topics you would love to hear? What instructions do you need to be a better genealogy researcher?

These are just some of the questions we would like our members to answer. Let us know how we can help you realize the value of your membership.

You can email us directly at JMSeditor@afgs.org

NEW FRANCE – A TIMELINE, PART 1

by Fran Tivey

This article begins a series of thirteen articles chronicling the timeline of New France from its creation to the end of the French and Indian, or Seven Years War in 1760. Each journal will contain one article and will extend over the next three years.

Pre 1524 – “Indigenous Peoples of the North-East Corridor”

The Hurons - Part of the Iroquoian people, the Huron received their name from the French in the seventeenth century derived from an Old French word *hure*, which referred to a male Huron’s bristly and untidy head of hair. Often, they were called Wendat, Guyandot, or Wyandot meaning “islanders” or “peninsula dwellers” because their territory was along the riverbanks. Furthermore, the Huron were divided into many clans including Cord, Bear, and Deer.

The Huron lived in 18 to 25 villages with a total of up to 3,500 people in their population and became successful farmers. They grew tobacco as a trading commodity, which the men were responsible for tending. The women were in charge of the planting and farming most of the time, growing numerous crops, especially corn, their most important crop. They also became involved in the fur trade, using beaver as a product for Europeans to make essential items such as hats and coats.

The Huron took pride in hunting, using bows and arrows to shoot deer, nets to catch beaver, and traps to catch bears as their food source. Fishing became another source of food. Whitefish were the Hurons most common catch and nets made of nettles were used to capture the fish.



Three Huron-Wyandot chiefs from the Huron Wendake reservation in Québec

The Huron prided themselves on their culture and took an interest in educating their children for their future. Boys were taught to hunt, while girls learned to plant crops, store food, cook, and weave. The clothing they wore was highly decorative with painted designs and fringed edges of the leggings, shirts, and skirts. In the winter, the Huron wore fur, while the off season had them wearing leggings, breechcloths, moccasin shoes, and deerskin shirts and skirts. They proceeded to paint their faces with dyes made from vegetables and minerals mixed with sunflower oil and bear fat.

One important ceremony for the Huron was a *Celebration of the Dead* in which a feast was held in honor of a loved one who had passed away. The corpse was wrapped in furs and placed on top of a litter for mourning, then moved to a nearby cemetery. A small cabin was built over the corpse where food, presents, and other items were placed to help the person on their journey to the spiritual world. Furthermore, an annual Feast of the Dead was celebrated every ten years to honor and remember their loved ones with stories.

The Micmacs – Were part of the Wabanaki Confederacy, which includes the tribes of Maliseet, Passamaquoddy, Abenaki, and Penobscot. Members of the Wabanaki Confederacy were in and named for the area which they called *Wabanahkik* [Dawnland], roughly the area that became the French colony of Acadia. It was made up of most of present-day Maine in the United States, and New Brunswick, mainland Nova Scotia, Cape Breton Island, Prince Edward Island and some of Québec south of the St. Laurent River in Canada. The Western Abenaki live on lands in New Hampshire, Vermont, and Massachusetts of the United States.

The Micmacs sometimes called Mi'kmaq, lived in areas along the water, specifically New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia. Today, they still occupy the area and have an important and vast culture to share.

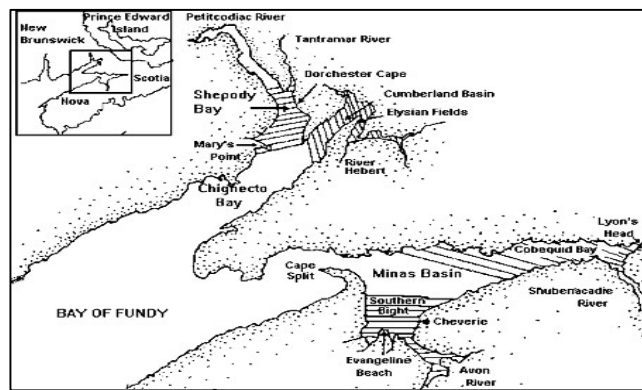
The Micmacs resided seasonally and based their lifestyle on this by moving frequently. They spent their summers along the coast and their winters inland. Since they lived by seasons, adapting to this was important for survival. They relied on diets of shellfish, cod, sea mammals, and other small game. Moose was their most important food source and used for other essentials including tools and clothing. Their village consisted of 10 to 20 people, and they resided in wigwams made of birch bark and saplings. They allied with the French, who gave them the option of keeping with tradition or converting to Catholicism.



A Micmac Village

Micmac Village – Their culture consisted of traditions, music, stories, and food with oral traditions on myths, folklore, and legends. Myths were symbolic in telling stories of their creation and expressing how things came to be with the world. Folklore provided storytelling that offered social lessons to children and legends relating to specific people and places of the past.

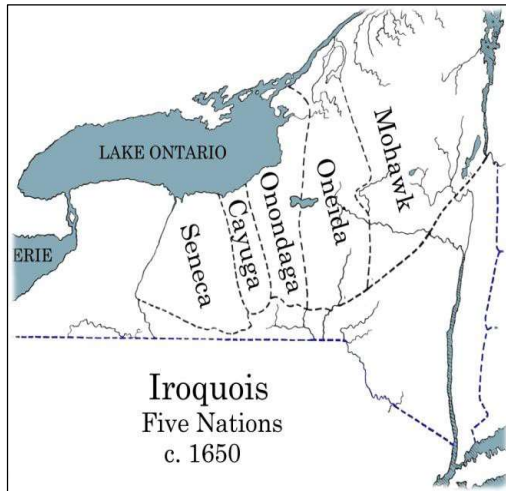
Their celebrations consisted of music in the form of drums played during the summer months to celebrate powwows and a feast of fish, moose, blueberries, venison, and Mi'Kmaq bread. Smudging ceremonies were used to cleanse the thoughts and hearts to be open to change and respecting diversity. The practices of seven sacred prayers served as a way to create alliances with both native and non-native people. The prayers had a sweet grass ceremony to give thanks to life and what it has provided.



Micmac Tribal Territory included Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Gaspé Peninsula, North shore of New Brunswick and inland to the Saint John River Watershed, eastern Maine, and part of Newfoundland, including the islands in the Gulf of St. Laurent as well as St. Pierre and Miquelon

The Iroquois – They have occupied Canada for centuries and were called many different names due to their numerous tribes. Among these names was the Five Nations made up of Mohawk, Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, and Oneida. Their languages allowed them to occupy different areas of North America, specifically New York State and southern Québec and Ontario.

Five Nations – The Iroquois have a long-standing tradition of being farmers as a source of food and economy. Their essential diet came from farming with their main crops being beans, squash, and corn known as the “Three Sisters,” these crops were seen as special gifts from the Creator. Women



were in charge of the planting and farming while the men hunted and fished. Their fish diet consisted of trout, whitefish, and salmon caught in nets made of vegetable fiber. The Iroquois had other food sources including wild berries, wild nuts, and pumpkins.

The Iroquois lived in villages of longhouses and wore clothing that suited their needs for the weather. They wore moccasin shoes, some made of corn husks, which women would make during harvest time. Women wore short leggings, a wraparound skirt, and tunics to cover their torsos. Men did not wear shirts unless it was winter and wore long leggings and a breechcloth. To accommodate the colder weather, the Iroquois wore fur robes to keep warm.

The hairstyles and body paint of the Iroquois were different in many ways pertaining to either culture or ritual. Women would wear their hair long and in braids but upon mourning a loved one, they would cut their hair short. Men shaved most of their hair, leaving only a small portion of it in place. While women did not paint their bodies or face, the men did. They would paint their faces and bodies with tribal tattoos, and on the warpath would paint their faces half black and half red.

For the Iroquois, women were highly respected and valued with many advantages at their disposal. They could divorce, pass down their leadership to other women, and were able to keep custody of their children. A council of women can make the decision to remove a chief, showing their power within the clan. Furthermore, they could own property and keep it in case of a divorce.



An Iroquois woman in native dress.

The Iroquois culture was a vibrant community that included music, ceremonies, and religion. For music, the Iroquois used drums and flutes. The drums were used to provide rhythmic sound while the flutes were played to attract women to men as a form of flirting. Their religious beliefs varied as some became Christians upon European contact. Ceremonies and festivals coincided with their religious beliefs. One particular ceremony was called the False Face Society in which healing rituals took place to cure the sick. In this ceremony, they wore carved false face masks to drive away spirits and healed the sick with a tobacco-burning prayer ritual. Other ceremonies essential to the Iroquois were The Husk Face Society and the Secret Medicine Society. The Secret Medicine Society cured diseases by performing rituals while the Husk Face Society communicated with spirits in hopes of getting a good crop for the season.

For the Iroquois, warfare was a form of their culture and livelihood for centuries, especially when European contact developed. Melting pots of the Iroquois would occur from warfare as they took and adopted captives into their tribes. Personal victories from warfare would give men self-respect and honor. Warfare could also be seen as a spiritual ritual for the Iroquois, who would mourn the loss of those in battle but believed that spirits could be renewed in the outcome.

**SINDI
BROUSSARD
TERRIEN**
Genealogist



IDENTIFYING THE FIRST FRENCH- CANADIAN CATHOLIC CHURCHES IN NEW ENGLAND

by Sindi Broussard Terrien

(The information in this article was mostly obtained from *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States*, both volumes of which are at the AFGS library.)¹

From the outset, Puritan New England was notorious for condemning the Catholic Church and the people who practiced Catholicism. In fact, it was illegal to be Catholic in most of the New England areas and those practicing Catholicism could be punished by death. Irish immigrants began populating New England in the early 1700s and brought their Catholic faith with them. When France, a Catholic nation, assisted the United States against England in the Revolutionary War, Puritan views of Catholic exclusion and persecution began to wane. Later, economics and the need for people to work in industries had even more influence in changing obdurate minds. It is funny how the “Almighty Dollar” can change religious zeal and the hearts and minds of stiff-necked politicians, leaders, and captains of industry. Gradually, Catholicism in New England would become tolerated and the people practicing the religion would be accepted.

While the Irish played a very large role in building Catholic churches in New England through the 1700s, the emigration of French Canadians to New England in the early 1800s resulted in the surge in the Catholic population and, consequently, the building of more Catholic Churches. As populations changed in the cities and towns due to industry and employment, and immigration, so did the populations of the Catholic churches.

Throughout the two volumes of *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States*, the authors identified churches French Canadians attended and built between the 1700s and 1899. While French Canadians may have had influence in many other Catholic churches throughout New England, this article lists only those that were specifically described as French Canadian.

Massachusetts

There were many French people in Massachusetts in the 1700s, but not all were French Canadian. Many were from France who had left during the French Revolution. “Some of these exiles settled in Boston, Salem, and Newburyport, where they played a part in the founding of the earliest Catholic churches.”²

Rev. John Thayer, a former Puritan, converted to Catholicism and served as a priest in Boston beginning in 1790. There were then about one hundred Catholics in Boston. “The Sunday after his arrival Father Thayer held services in the church of the Holy Cross on School Street.” The services were held in the former Protestant church building on Franklin Street in Boston. In 1803, “The Church of the Holy Cross, as it was still called, was built of brick on a stone foundation.” Charles Bulfinch supplied the plans for the church.³

¹ William Byrne, William A. Leahy, J.J. McCoy, et al, *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States*, 2 vols. (Boston: Boston, Hurd & Everts Co. 1899).

² Byrne, *History of the Catholic Church*, 1:10.

³ Ibid, 1:19, 29.

French Canadians attended many of the early churches established in the Boston area and a few churches were distinctly French-Canadian parishes. But that would change. By the 1890s, there were about 40,000 French Canadians in the Boston diocese.

With Irish immigration to Lowell, Massachusetts, the first Mass said there was in 1822. When French Canadians began arriving, there were seven Catholic churches in Lowell. The cotton trade attracted French Canadians between 1870 and 1890. St. John the Baptist became the principal French church. This church was built of granite, as were most buildings in Lowell. The French daily paper, *L'Étoile*, brought news from Québec and New England for the local French Canadians. Before St. Anthony of Padua was organized in West Boylston, French Canadians gathered in homes to worship as early as 1843. They “recite the Rosary, make the Stations of the Cross before a set of small pictures, and sing hymns, as had been their custom in the old lands.”⁴

A few French Canadians went to St. Bridget’s Church in Abington. Purported to be the oldest wooden Catholic church in the Boston area still standing, it was built in 1863. St. Ann’s Church was established for French Canadians in Lawrence, Massachusetts. The French-Canadian population in Lawrence was 400 people in 1869. They had been using the basement of the Immaculate Conception church. St. Ann’s was completed in 1883. This Church building is still standing, but not functioning as a Catholic church.⁵

Worcester had its share of French Canadians who wanted their own church. Arriving around 1845, they attended the local Catholic churches. In 1869, a Mass was said at the Horticultural Hall for the French Canadians. At the time, they numbered 1,743. By June 1870, a Methodist church was purchased for \$35,000. The parish contributed another \$35,000 for renovations and repairs to what became Notre Dame. In 1883, a new parish priest visited the 6,000 Canadians which were made up of 1,200 families. Also in Worcester was the Church of St. Joseph built around 1887. The parish began with 1,923 French Canadians; and by 1899, there were 2,075. With the French-Canadian population increasing, Church of the Holy Name was built in 1895.⁶

Salem, Massachusetts also had a French-Canadian population, mostly from Québec. They attended St. Joseph’s Church on Lafayette Street, built in 1884 and dedicated in 1885. This church also had a St. Jean Baptiste society.⁷

St. Mary’s church was established in Lynn in 1835. Lynn manufactured shoes. Around 1899, shoe manufacturing was “one of the best-paid and most attractive forms of industrial employment” The French Canadians were able to attract a clergyman from Canada in 1886. In 1886, Father Gadoury was organizing a new Catholic church in Lynn, Church of St. John the Baptist. The building was erected in 1887 and served most of the French-Canadian Catholics in the area.⁸

Haverhill’s Catholics were divided by English speaking and French speaking. By 1870, The Church of St. Joseph was established for the French Canadians. The French-Canadian population in Haverhill was large enough to support a St. Jean Baptiste Society. The priests at St. Joseph’s had French names such as Baudin, Lecomte and Casgrain. A parish school was established. Parents went

⁴ Ibid, 1:232, 2:745

⁵ Ibid, 1:296-297, 339-340.

⁶ Ibid, 2:854, 865-66.

⁷ Ibid, 1:316-317.

⁸ Ibid, 1:299, 302.

to court for the right to educate their children in religious schools as “the Haverhill School Board attempted to abolish on account of the use of the French language in some of the studies.”⁹

The Reverend Elphège Godin opened the Notre Dame de Pitié chapel for French-Canadian Catholics in 1892 living in North Cambridge, Medford and Somerville. The church (which is still standing), is no longer functioning as a Catholic church.¹⁰

In Brockton, the Church of the Sacred Heart was built in 1893 and served French-Canadians, including some of Acadian descent. It was the second Catholic church in Brockton. There were enough Catholic families in the parish to establish a St. Jean Baptiste society.¹¹

Acadians from New Brunswick living in Waltham attended St. Joseph’s Church. The parish was founded in 1894 and Pierre H. Grenier was the pastor. Before the building was erected, services were held at the home of Mr. Geoffrion. The Acadian population was about 900. “Their congregation in such numbers in a single town, is due to the clannish instinct, common to all small racial groups, which impels one family to follow another, and all to cling closely together in adherence to old ways and customs. As a result of this tendency intermarriage of cousins is extremely common among the Acadians. They are employed in the mills, and as carpenters.”¹²

Table 1 - Other Catholic churches in Massachusetts that served French Canadians.

Church	Town	Church	Town
St. Catherine	Athol	St. Joseph	North Brookfield
St. Paul	Blackstone	St. Mary	Northampton
St. Mary	Brookfield	Sacred Heart	Northampton
Assumption	Chicopee	Our Lady of Good Counsel	Pittsfield
St. Denis	East Douglas	St. Mary	Turner’s Falls
Immaculate Conception	Easthampton	St. Ann	Turner’s Falls
St. Patrick’s and St. Anne	Fiskdale	Our Lady of Mt. Carmel	Ware
The Annunciation	Florence	St. Louis	West Springfield
St. Aloysius	Gilbertville	St. Thomas	West Warren
St. Philip	Grafton	St. Luke	Westboro
St. Mary	Haydenville	St. John	Clinton
Precious Blood	Holyoke	St. James	Fisherville
St. Thomas	Huntington	Immaculate Conception (Canadian)	Fitchburg
St. Aloysius	Indian Orchard	St. Joseph (French)	Fitchburg
St. Anne’s	Lenox	Our Lady of the Rosary (Canadian)	West Gardner
Notre Dame du Sacré Coeur	North Adams		

Though New Bedford is in Massachusetts, it was in the Providence Diocese in the 1890s. French Canadians began pouring into New Bedford around 1874, probably because the Wamsutta cotton

⁹ Ibid, 1:284.

¹⁰ Ibid, 1:213, 284.

¹¹ Ibid, 1:342-343.

¹² Ibid, 1:266-267.

mills had been established. The Parish of Sacred Heart had the largest French-Canadian parish in New Bedford in 1899. To accommodate the large French-Canadian population, St. Hyacinthe parish was established as a mission church for Sacred Heart in New Bedford. Building of the church began in 1888 and it was dedicated in 1893.¹³

Maine

The first known Mass said in what became Maine was in July 1604 by Rev. Nicholas Aubry in a little chapel. Father Peter Baird said the second known Mass in October 1611 on an island near Kennebec, which also today is in Maine. This Mass was attended by the indigenous people. In 1613, Sieur de la Saussaye, including three Jesuit priests, planted a cross on Mount Desert Island at what is now known as Fernald's Point in Maine, and celebrated Mass. The place was named Saint Sauveur. In 1648, Our Lady of Holy Hope had been built in Penobscot, Maine. A copy plate found in 1863 in the soil offered proof of its existence. The inscription on the copperplate reads,

1648 : 8 Jun : F. Leo Parasin Capvc; MISS Posvi Hoc Fvndtm in Hnrem. NRAE DmaE
Santae Spei

This translates to, "On the 8th of June 1648, I, Friar Leo of Paris, Capuchin missionary, laid this cornerstone in honor of Our Lady of Holy Hope."¹⁴

Abenakis in Maine were converted to Catholicism in the early 1700s. When Massachusetts took possession of Maine in 1650, destruction of the Catholic missionaries was one of its goals. In 1724, a group of New England militiamen killed Father Rale, profaned his body, and destroyed the village. Thirty Abnakis were killed. It would be many years before Catholic missionaries would establish a presence in Maine again. Many of the Catholics at Fort Kent were French Canadian. This town did not have a church until 1850. To attend Mass in 1810, parishioners went by canoe on the St. John River to St. Basile in New Brunswick, twenty-five miles away. The parish of St. Louis was established in 1850.¹⁵

One thousand French Canadians in Lewiston worshiped at St. Joseph's. In 1869, they were placed in the care of Rev. Louis Mutsaeurs. As their number increased in Lewiston, the Church of Sts. Peter and Paul was built in 1872 to accommodate them. French Canadians began moving to Dexter and by 1871, a church was built to accommodate the influx. St. Anne's parish began as a mission around 1845 and became a parish in 1893.¹⁶

The first Catholics in Lisbon were said to be French Canadians. They attended Mass in Lewiston until they built their own church, St. Ann's, in 1886. In 1890, St. Patrick's was built in Lisbon and served "Irish, French Canadians, Germans, Hungarians, Greek Catholics, Poles, Russian Catholics and one family of Indians." In Augusta, there were enough French Canadians to establish St. Augustine's in the 1880s. St. Bruno's in Van Buren served Canadians and Acadians.¹⁷

Vermont

One of the earliest Masses said in North America was in Vermont. A chapel within Fort Saint Ann was built around 1666. It is said to be the first such structure in Vermont and one of the first in the United States. French-Canadian families were in the Burlington area as early as 1815. There were a few French-Canadian Catholics in northern Vermont by 1834. People from lower Canada began to

¹³ Ibid, 1:455.

¹⁴ Ibid, 1:466-68, 471.

¹⁵ Ibid, 1:483, 527.

¹⁶ Ibid, 1:523-524, 532.

¹⁷ Ibid, 1:511, 536, 552.

populate Vermont after the Civil War as they immigrated for employment. By 1899, Vermont had 87 churches for its 60,000 Catholics.¹⁸

There were a very few French Canadians at St. Albans as early as 1825. That would change because of employment. Several Catholic churches in St. Albans were built to meet the needs of its Catholic population. By 1872, the priest at Immaculate Conception could not get an accurate count of the French-Canadian population due to their traveling to and from Canada. There were two Sunday Masses, one for the French Canadians and one for the English-speaking congregation. St. Mary's was founded by French Canadians and English, but in 1872 the Church of the Holy Guardian Angels was built for the French Canadians.¹⁹

Blessing and Laying of the Corner Stone of the French Catholic Church

Pulled from St. Albans Messenger, printed September 29, 1872

"Yesterday took place one of the most imposing ceremonies ever witnessed in St. Albans. As had been announced in our last issue, the ceremony began at 3 o'clock by the procession formed in front of St. Mary's Catholic Church, which was so long that the head had reached the ground on which the French church is being built before the end of the procession began to move. The procession was composed as announced in the program. On arriving at the new church, the several societies took their respective places, the clergy, flag bearers and the two Catholic choirs being on the platform erected for the occasion. After singing a hymn, Rev. Father Roumigalle of Plattsburg gave an interesting sermon in the French language, the subject of which was inspired by the ceremony about to take place; the erection of a new temple, and the means to be taken to secure success. We wish we could give a synopsis of his address, but our limited space does not show us to do so. After the French sermon, St. Mary's choir sang a hymn, and the Rt. Rev. Bishop of Burlington gave an allocation in the English language."

French Canadians arrived in East Dorset around the 1840s to work in the quarries and logging camps. They attended St. Jerome's. Between 1888 to 1899, many French Canadians were leaving the area to find work elsewhere because the quarries were closed. A very small group of French-Canadian Catholics lived in Montgomery Center in 1855. They attended Mass in George Cochesne's log cabin. The Church of St. Isadore, the Laborer was built in 1882.²⁰

St. James the Greater in Island Pond served Catholics beginning in 1856. A railroad station servicing lumber companies resulted in this being an important point of entry to the United States from Canada. Around 1859, there were four French-Canadian families attending Mass at the home of Mr. Paquette in West Glover, near Barton. St. Charles in Bellows Falls served thirty French-Canadian families. St. Joseph's in Burlington most likely served French Canadians based on the following: "The congregation of St. Joseph's is perhaps the first distinctively Canadian congregation in New England, and St. Joseph's the first French church."²¹

The home of Joseph Mailhiot or the old courthouse in Rutland served as a place for Mass until Sacred Heart of Mary was established in 1869. Mailhiot was in Rutland as early as 1852 along with other families who left Canada after "the Papineau war" (a.k.a., the 1837-38 Rebellion).²²

Agriculture drew French Canadians to Franklin where All Saints Church was established. A small structure was built in 1874. Farming in Lowell also attracted French Canadians who attended St. Ignatius. An imposter served the parish for a short time and was nicknamed "Father Runaway" after he was discovered and ran out of town.²³

¹⁸ Ibid, 2:465, 468, 470-71.

¹⁹ Ibid, 2:551-555.

²⁰ Ibid, 2: 510-511, 531.

²¹ Ibid, 2:493, 496, 506, 520.

²² Ibid, 2:545; The Papineau War was the "Lower Canada Rebellion" of 1837-1838.

²³ Byrne, *History of the Catholic Church*, 2:519, 522-523.

St. Francis Xavier in Winooski was established for its 170 French-Canadian families in 1868. In 1885, three bells were installed in the belfry. Following French custom, the bells were named. The first bell, *Jean Baptise* weighed 2,260 lb (1,030 kg) and was tuned in the key of C. The second bell, *Saint Francis* weighed 1,200 lb (540 kg) was tuned in the key of E. The third named *Saint Marie* weighed 744 lb (337 kg) and was tuned to the key of G.²⁴ Many of the churches in Vermont were described as French and the families attending as Canadian.

Table 2 - other Catholic churches French Canadians attended in Vermont.

Church	Town	Church	Town
St. John Baptist	Enosburgh	Sacred Heart of Jesus	Bennington
All Saints	Richford	St. Alphonsus	Pittsford
Holy Family	Essex Junction	Sacred Heart of Jesus	West Rutland
St. Louis	Fairhaven	St. Geneviève	Shoreham
St. Elizabeth	Lyndonville	St. Monica’s Church	Barré
Church of the Annunciation	Ludlow	Our Lady of Victories	St. Johnsbury
St. Ann’s	Milton	Nativity of Blessed Virgin Mary	Swanton
St. Augustine’s	Montpelier	St. Peter	Vergennes
Star of the Sea	Newport		

Connecticut

Connecticut was without a Catholic church until 1830. In 1835, there were 720 Catholics and by 1844, there were almost 5,000 Catholics in Connecticut. As French Canadians immigrated to Connecticut, building of Catholic churches for them became necessary.

Records in Putnam indicate that French Canadian Peter Donough and his large family arrived in 1843 and were the first Catholics there. When factories were opened in Putnam in 1848, Canadians followed. They attended St. Mary’s of the Visitation. In 1886, St. Anne’s Parish in Waterbury was organized for the population of 500 French Canadians. Danielson was the home of St. James’ parish, which served about 1,300 French Canadians in the late 1880s. St. Joseph’s in Dayville had a congregation of mostly French Canadians in 1899. St. Joseph’s was later known as the Church of the Five Wounds and then St. Anne’s. It closed in 2010. Another church named St. Joseph’s, but in Grosvenordale, served French Canadians.²⁵

²⁴ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St. Francis Xavier Church \(Winooski, Vermont\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Francis_Xavier_Church_(Winooski,_Vermont)) accessed 24 April 2024.

²⁵ Killingly Historical & Genealogical Society, “Killingly’s Villages,” online at and accessed 29 December 2023, <https://www.killinglyhistorical.org/museum/killinglys-villages>; Byrne, *History of the Catholic Church*, 2:357, 433, 435, 437-38.

In New Haven, French Canadians attended St. Louis parish, which was organized in 1889. Nine o'clock Mass at St. Roses in Meriden was specifically for the French Canadians. Then St. Laurent's was organized. They first celebrated Mass in the City Hall. The church was dedicated in 1888.²⁶

Hartford had St. Ann's serving French Canadians. The parish began in 1889 but the building was not completed until 1893. St. Mary's in New Britain served a mixed population of mostly Irish, with French Canadians and Italians. A few French Canadians attended St. Patrick's in Thompsonville when it was organized in 1863. St. John's parish in Watertown had French Canadians who belonged to it. By 1899, French Canadians in Mossup were attending All Hallow's parish. Wauregan had a population of 1,000 who attended Sacred Heart. Many of them had been walking to All Hallows to attend Mass.²⁷

Rhode Island

The Providence Diocese was originally made up of communities in Rhode Island as well as parishes in southeastern Massachusetts, including Cape Cod.

Though St. Ann's in Cranston was built in 1858, probably by the Irish, many French Canadians attended Mass there. St. Jean Baptiste in Artic Centre had a French-Canadian population beginning in 1870 and the church was built in 1874. At the time, it "was the largest French-Canadian parish in the Pawtuxet valley." This parish built a cemetery in 1889 and "nearly all of the French-American Catholics of the 'Valley'" were buried there.²⁸

French Canadians first worked in cotton mills when they started arriving in Rhode Island. In spite of the Slater family who "greatly disliked the Catholic Church," the French-Canadian Catholics began replacing the Irish and English in Slatersville after 1865. St. John's Church held Mass in a hall until the church was built and dedicated in 1871. The land the church was built on was given by Sarah Devlin, a servant of the Slater family, who had received the land from the Slaters. Before 1870, there were a few French Canadians in Natick (West Warwick). By 1873, St. Joseph's church was being erected for the French Canadians. One-third of the parish were Italians, Polish and English-speaking. Central Falls population of French Canadians prompted the building of Notre Dame du Sacré Coeur in 1875.²⁹

Precious Blood in Woonsocket was built in 1876 to accommodate the French-Canadian population. This would relieve the French Canadians from going to St. Charles in Providence, built in 1874 or the priests from traveling to Woonsocket to say Mass at Harris Privilege Mill. At this time, the Bishop of Providence recognized the need for French-speaking priests and had seminarians learning French. By 1890, St. Anne in Woonsocket (now closed) was built as an offshoot of Precious Blood to accommodate the ever-increasing French-Canadian population.³⁰ *Editors note: See IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF OUR ANCESTORS IN WOONSOCKET by Lise Giguère in JMS Issue 2019-2, found in our Members Only Online Library, for a photo of the interior of this beautiful church.*

French Canadians in Rhode Island and Massachusetts would leave in the summer to make a pilgrimage to Ste. Anne de Beaupré. In September, French-Canadian children would leave New England to go to school in Canada.³¹

²⁶ Byrne, *History of the Catholic Church*, 2:370-71, 437.

²⁷ Ibid, 2:220, 237, 251, 310, 441-42.

²⁸ Ibid, 1:409, 423-24.

²⁹ Ibid, 1:414, 421, 425.

³⁰ Ibid, 1:417.

³¹ Ibid, 1:387-388.

New Hampshire

New Hampshire was anti-Catholic for many years and longer than any other New England state. So much so, that Catholics did not have constitutional rights until 1877. There were only 337 Catholics in New Hampshire in 1835.³² How times change. Now the welcome sign at the New Hampshire border is “Bienvenue.”

Concord's French-Canadian population began as early as 1860 and at the beginning, Mass was said in Phoenix Hall and Grand Army Hall. By 1890, their population was large enough to support their own church, Sacred Heart. The church was built between 1892 and 1894. Nashua had over 1,500 French Canadians and requested their own parish in 1871. St. Aloysius celebrated its first Mass in an old Episcopalian Church. A rapid increase in the French population in Nashua required the building of St. Francis Xavier by 1885.³³

When French Canadians arrived in Manchester, they brought “all the traditions of their Catholic ancestors, an enthusiastic loyalty to the church, an admirable fondness for its devotional practices, an innate love for the light and beauty of its gorgeous ceremonial. St. Mary's church in Manchester was built in 1879 to accommodate the French-Canadian population. It became overcrowded because French Canadians continued to immigrate. By 1890, St. George's Church was built. Services were held in the basement in 1893. The building was completed in 1894.³⁴

St. Leo's Church in Gonic was almost all French Canadian. This church was built in 1890. In West Manchester, St. Patrick's church served French immigrants and English-speaking Catholics. French Canadians who lived in Berlin Falls went to St. Anne's Church. For a time, French Canadians attended St. Joseph's church in Laconia until Sacred Heart Church was started in 1891. The building was dedicated in 1894. St. Charles in Dover had a French-Canadian population attending the building that was completed in 1896. Rochester built Holy Rosary Church for their French-Canadian population. Their church was built in 1886. The town of Somersworth had a population of French Canadians large enough to support a church, St. Martin's. Mass was sometimes said in the Old Town Hall. The building began in 1884 and was completed in 1889. Previously, the French Canadians attended Holy Trinity.³⁵

Over a hundred-year period, New England went from a place of unwelcome for Catholics to an area of more-hospitable relations. Though the Irish paved the way for Catholics in New England, the French Canadians were second in the effort. Between the late 1750s and 1899, French Canadians attended at least one hundred nineteen Catholic churches around New England. Staying true to their language and culture, they would petition for Masses to be said in French, for their own churches, and for priests who spoke French, if not French-Canadian priests.

³² Ibid, 1:47.

³³ Ibid, 1:634, 660-61.

³⁴ Ibid, 1:603, 624-25.

³⁵ Ibid, 1: 626, 628, 640, 644, 652, 673.



CITING YOUR SOURCES

WRITING A CITATION FROM A CHURCH RECORD

by Sindi Broussard Terrien

Finding a sacramental record of your family member online is so rewarding. What is even more rewarding is getting a hard copy or digital copy of the record from the church or the diocese. Not every church or diocese will share a copy of the record. But if you should be so lucky, you should cite your source.

For example, say you requested the marriage record of your great-great-grandparents from the Diocese of Lafayette’s Archive. Several weeks later you received a beautiful image of the sacramental record on parchment paper with a stamp on the back. After admiring the record you have in your hands, write a citation for it. You’ll be so glad you did when six years later you decide to share a copy of the document with your cousin, or you finally write the family history, and your citation is needed.

Table 1. How the parts of a citation are formatted as a reference or a bibliography.

	Reference (endnote or footnote)	Source (Bibliography)
Who (author/compiler)	St. Nicholas (Lydia, Louisiana)	St. Nicholas (Lydia, Louisiana)
What (title)	Marriage act, unspecified volume, William Walker & Philomene Camilla Dooley, 28 May 1872	Marriage act, unspecified volume, William Walker & Philomene Camilla Dooley, 28 May 1872
Format	Digital image	Digital Image
Date accessed	Supplied 18 October 2021	Not applicable
Item of interest	Not applicable	Not applicable
Year Published	Not applicable	Not applicable
Credit Line (source of this record)	Diocese of Lafayette Archive	Diocese of Lafayette Archive
Optional additional note.	For the original volume and page number of the record, see Rev. Donald J. Hebert, <i>Southwest Louisiana Records</i> , 10:116. Citation reads “DOOLEY, Camilla Philomene (William & Melanie TOOPS) m. 28 May 1872 WILLIAM WALKER (LYDIA CH.:1:84).”	Not applicable

Reference (Endnote or Footnote):

St. Nicholas, (Lydia, Louisiana), marriage act, unspecified volume, William Walker & Philomene Camilla Dooley, 28 May 1872, digital image from 1953 microfilm, supplied 18 October 2021 by Diocese of Lafayette Archive. (image privately held by <your name>, <your city, state>, <date of citation>). For the original volume and page number of the record, see Rev. Donald J. Hebert, *Southwest Louisiana Records*, 10:116. Citation reads “DOOLEY, Camilla Philomene (William & Melanie TOOPS) m. 28 May 1872 WILLIAM WALKER (LYDIA CH.:1:84).”

Bibliography (Source List)

St. Nicholas, (Lydia, Louisiana). Marriage act, unspecified volume. William Walker & Philomene Camilla Dooley, 28 May 1872. Diocese of Lafayette Archive.



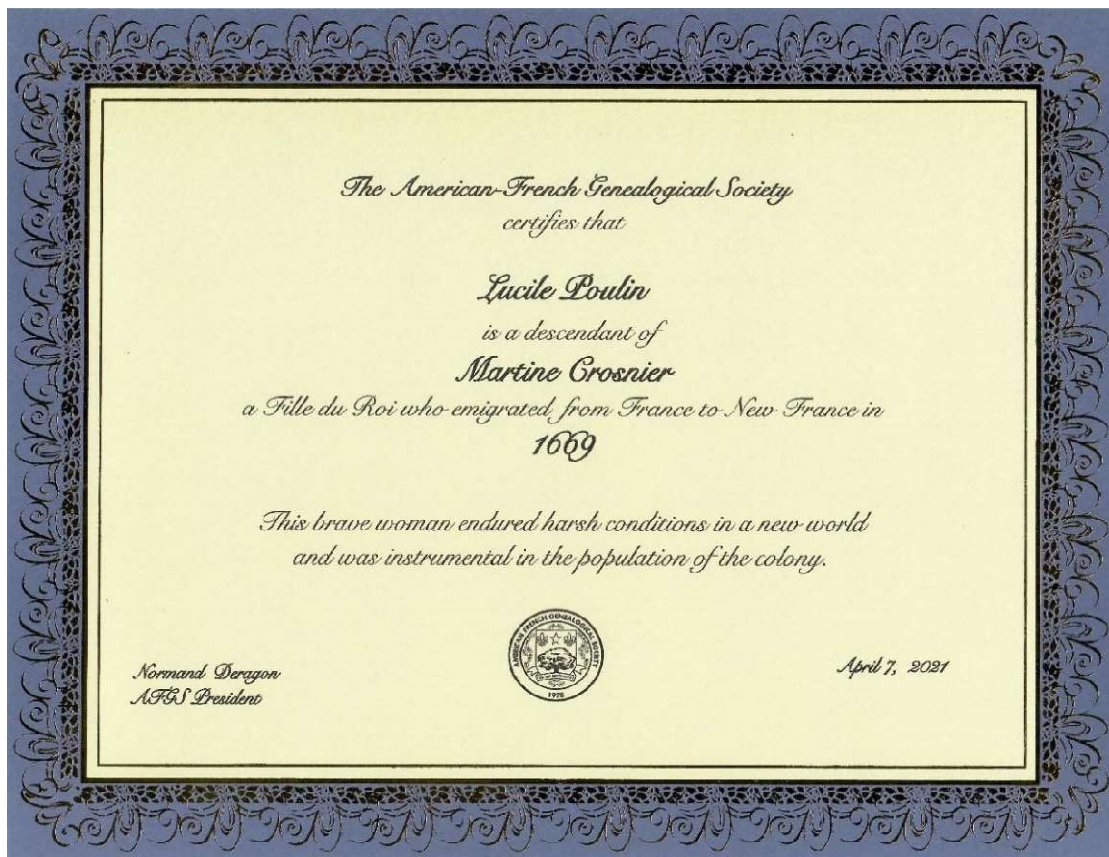
"FILLES DU ROI" PIN AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

AFGS is honoring descendants of the FILLES DU ROI, the “Daughters of the King” with an authentication and certificate program.

As Peter Gagné describes in his book, *King’s Daughters and Founding Mothers: Les Filles du Roi 1663-1673*, more than 350 years ago the King’s Daughters or “Filles du Roi” arrived in Québec. They immigrated to New France between 1663 and 1673 as part of a program sponsored by King Louis XIV of France.

The program was designed to boost Canada’s population both by encouraging male emigrants to settle there, and by promoting marriage, family formation and the birth of children. While women and girls certainly immigrated to New France both before and after this period, they were not considered to be “Filles du Roi,” as the term refers to women and girls who were actively recruited by the government and whose travel to the colony was paid for by the King. The title “King’s Daughters” was meant to imply state patronage, not royal or even noble parentage. Most of these women were commoners of humble birth.

If you are fortunate to find one of these 768 women among your ancestors, we congratulate you and celebrate your remarkable lineage.



Verified descendants of a “Fille du Roi” will receive a pin and certificate as pictured.

A description of all the necessary information needed to submit an application for a certificate and pin can be found on our website at <https://afgs.org/site/kings-daughters/>

WANTED: YOUR STORIES

We would love to share your interesting stories with your fellow AFGS members in *Je Me Souviens*.

Here is a list of some topics that we will be covering in future issues:

- As your research took you back to the early 1600s did you discover the same families in multiple branches of your family tree? Which of these founding families did you find? How many times did they appear in your tree? Where did they live?
- Do you have a story about your ancestors that you would like to share in a future issue of JMS? ***Don't be afraid to send it along to us.*** You will find the Author's Guidelines on page 60 of this issue. We are happy to receive your stories and if you would like help preparing them, let us know at JMSeditor@afgs.org. Our editors will be happy to work with you to craft an interesting and informative article that our members will enjoy reading.
- Have you taken a trip to Canada or France to find the places where your ancestors lived? We'd love to hear about your travels. Perhaps you would inspire some of our members to follow in your footsteps?

You are always welcome to share your stories with our readers. Stories of your childhood, growing up in a French-Canadian family will bring back memories – not only for you, but for many of our members. Did you grow up in a “**Little Canada**”? Did other generations or members of your family live in other units of your multi-family house? Although we investigate the distant past, we must take care to document our own experiences for those descendants who will follow us. They will better understand our lives and times by reading the stories we tell today.

**PLEASE SEND YOUR STORIES* TO
US AT JMSeditor@afgs.org**

***You can find our AUTHORS GUIDELINES on page 60.**

Has your email address changed because you switched internet providers or employers? Please let AFGS know if you have a new email address – it's IMPORTANT because we want to keep you informed about our programs and publications.

You can send us your new email address at info@afgs.org

CHURCH FOUNDING DATES IN THE DIOCESE OF PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

By Ulysse Forget, M.D.

(translated from French, shortened, and slightly modified for presentation here)

In 1780-81, the Mass was celebrated for the first time in Newport. In 1783, restrictions against the Catholics were abolished by Parliament. As the Catholic populations grew, church construction began. Due to their smaller numbers, the French-Canadians all attended Irish churches while waiting to have their own churches. In addition, because of marriages between different nationalities or due to travel distances, many of them became members of other churches. I have compiled a list of Catholic churches built before 1900 for researchers who would like to locate certain marriage records. A great number of these marriages cannot be located until the local archives are consulted. Here is an example:

Paul Peferin, 28 yrs old, born Canada, father: Peter, mother: Livia
married Josephine La Moeses, 28 yrs old, born Canada, father: ?, mother: Lois
registered at Bristol, R.I., April 30, 1889; married at Fall River, Mass., in Ste Anne
Church "Paul Pivin épouse Josephine Lamarre, le 30 avril 1889."

All marriages are registered in the state archives; moreover, if both spouses lived in the same village the marriage was registered in that village. If the two spouses lived in different villages the marriage was registered in their respective villages. If the spouses resided in different cities and married in another city, the marriage was registered in their respective cities and in the city where the marriage took place. Finally, each city sent the original to the state archives and kept a copy.

It was difficult for the town clerks to write the French names. Another difficulty was that many immigrants from Québec could not write. This is the reason they all said they were born in Canada. It was easier than to give the name of the town where they were born. If the priest was from Québec, quite often he would be able to write the spouses names correctly and where they were born while the town clerks, most of them English speaking, could not.

Churches in the Diocese of Providence, R.I., erected prior to 1900.

<u>Year founded</u>	<u>Name of Church</u>	<u>Village or City</u>	<u>Ethnicity</u>
1826.	St. Mary's, Spring St., Newport,	Irish Presbytery, 12 William St., Newport, 02840	-----Irish
1829.	St. Mary's of the Immaculate Conception,	103 Pine St., Pawtucket, 02860.	-----Irish
1837.	SS. Peter and Paul, The Cathedral,	Presbytery 26 Pond St., Providence, 02903	
1841.	St. Patrick's, Smith and Davis Sts,	Providence, Presbytère 38 State St., 02908	-----Irish
1844.	St. Mary's, 70 Church St.,	Crompton, 02993	-----Irish
1846.	St. Charles Borromeo, 190 Main St.,	Woonsocket, 02895	-----Irish
1852.	St. Joseph's, 92 Hope St.,	Providence, 02906	-----Irish
1853.	St. Mary's, 538 Broadway,	Providence, 02909	-----Irish
1854.	St. Patrick's, Main St.,	Harrisville, 02830	-----Irish
1857.	St. Michael the Archangel (formerly St. Bernard's),	239 Oxford St., Providence, 02905	-----Irish
1852-1860.	St. Mary of the Bay, 645 Main St.,	Warren, 02805	-----Irish
1861.	St. Patrick's, 285 Broad St.,	Cumberland, 02864	-----Irish
1863.	St. Ann's, 1493 Cranston St.,	Cranston, 02920	-----Irish
1869.	Sacred Heart, 118 Taunton Ave.,	East Providence, 02914	-----Irish
1869.	St. Mary's, Wood St.,	Bristol, 02809	-----Irish
1870.	St. John's, 57 Sutton St.,	Providence, 02909	-----Irish

1872. St. Joseph's, 112 Mendon Road, Ashton, 02864 -----	Irish
1872. Sacred Heart, 38 Park St., Pawtucket, 02860 -----	Irish
1873. Précieux-Sang, Carrington and Park Avenues, Woonsocket. 02895 -----	French
1872. St. John the Evangelist, Church St., Slatersville, 02876 -----	Irish
1872. St. Joseph's, 193 Walcott St., Pawtucket, 02860 -----	Irish
1873. St. Joseph, 854 Providence St., West Warwick, 02893 -----	French
1873. Notre-Dame-du Sacré-Coeur, 666 Broad St., Central Falls, 02863 -----	French
1874. St. Charles Borrome, 178 Dexter St., Providence, 02907 -----	French
1874. St. Edward's, 999 Branch Ave., Providence, 02904 -----	Irish
1874. St. Jacques, 33 Division St., Manville. 02838 -----	French
1874. St. Jean Baptiste, 20 Washington St., West Warwick. 02893 -----	French
1877. St. Jean Baptiste, Main St., Warren, 02885 -----	French
1879. St. Francis of Assisi, 42 High St. Wakefield, 02879 -----	Irish
1882. Holy Name of Jesus, 99 Camp St., Providence, 02906 -----	Irish
1883. St. Teresa's, 18 Pope St., Providence, 02909 -----	Irish
1884. St. Bernard' s, 410 Tower Hill Rd., Wickford, 02852 -----	Irish
1885. St. Joseph's, 5 Mann Ave., Newport, 02840 -----	Irish
1886. Our Lady of the Rosary, 463 Benefit St., Providence, 12903 -----	Portuguese
1886. St. Thomas, 65 Fruit Hill Ave, Providence, 02909 -----	Irish
1886. Immaculate Conception, 111 High St., Westerly, 02891 -----	Irish
1888. St. Margaret's, 42 Bishop Ave., Rumford, 02961 -----	Irish
1889. Holy Trinity, 134 Fuller St., Central Falls, 02863 -----	Irish
1889. Holy Ghost, 472 Atwells Ave., Providence, 02909 -----	Italian
1890. Ste Anne, 82 Cumberland St., Woonsocket, 02895 -----	French
1891. St. Thomas More, Rockland and Rodman Sts., Narragansett, 02882 -----	Irish
1892. St. Ambrose, 191 School St., Albion, 02802 -----	French
1895. Notre Dame de La Consolation, 635 Broadway, Pawtucket, 02860 -----	French
1895. St. Ann's, 2 Russo St., Providence, 02904 -----	Italian
1895. Sacred Heart, 415 Olo St., Woonsocket, 02895 -----	Irish
1897. Notre Dame du Bon Conseil, 60 Pleasant St., 2893, Phenix -----	French
1900. St. Anthony's, 549, Plainfield St., Providence, 02909 -----	Irish

WHAT IS AFGS?

The American-French Genealogical Society, founded in 1978, is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization devoted to people of French-Canadian ancestry. However, we have many research holdings pertaining to Native American nations and other nationalities including Irish, English, Italian and German. Its purpose is to assist members in tracing their ancestors and discovering the daily events that shaped their lives, and eventually, our lives.

The Society collects and publishes Franco-American vital statistics, parish registers, burial records, and other data consistent with our culture.

The AFGS is dedicated to the preservation of French-Canadian culture in the United States. Long and short-range plans include increasing the Society's capability to direct research and facilitating members' ancestral search.

Library Hours:

Tuesday from 1 P.M. to 9 P.M.

Saturday from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. (Closed Saturdays in July)

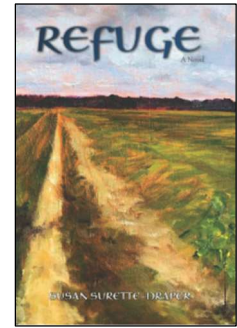


Susan
Surette-
Draper
Author

BOOK REVIEW

Refuge: A Novel by Susan Surette-Draper

(Clairmont Pub. Services, 2022.
375pp., paperback, \$30 at Amazon.com)



Descendants of Pierre Surette and Catherine Bro will enjoy *Refuge* as will any Acadian/Cajun who desires a historic tale of fact and fiction combined. Susan Surette-Draper, a seventh-generation Acadian living in the land of her ancestors, is an artist and interpreter at Grande-Pré National Historic Site. If you visited Grande-Pré, you may have seen her portraying Marguerite Mius d'Entremont or taken one of her excellent guided tours. She also wrote the booklet "Return to Acadie A Self Guided Memory Walk of the Annapolis Valley."

Refuge is Surette-Draper's portrayal of her ancestor Pierre Surette and his family and how they escaped deportation from Acadie. They suffered just as much as the deportees during the Great Upheaval while hiding in Acadie and Nova Scotia. The story begins in 1730, when Pierre Surette embarks on his life as a single adult in Pointe des Boudreaux and ends around 1773 with he and his family starting a new life in Cap Sable.

Surette-Draper includes other Acadians such as the LeBlancs, Broussards, Melansons, Landrys, Bourgs, and Theriots. Many other Acadian families and their roles in the Acadian saga are mentioned throughout. The author's detailed research of the time, place and historical figures is accurate. Surette-Draper provides genealogical information in creative ways that make the reading enjoyable, and the facts appreciated.

The dialogue between characters is realistic throughout the novel. The scenic descriptions of Acadie are firsthand and can be vividly imagined. Surette-Draper's accounts of the painful events the Surettes went through are believable. She weaves in Acadian folk songs, French expressions, Catholic practices, and Acadian traditions.

Refuge is centered around Pierre Surette's view of the English and Acadians relationship and how it impacts his family. Pierre is described as wise, insightful, protective, and peaceful. His family and extended family are most important to him. On the other hand, Acadian hero Joseph Beausoleil Broussard does not get the same treatment. There is contention between Surette and Broussard throughout the novel. After all, as Surette-Draper explained to me in a personal guided tour of Grand Pré, one stayed in Nova Scotia and the other left.

Surette-Draper takes the reader to scenes at Fort Cumberland, Camp Belair, and Camp d'Espérance. We witness the Surette family struggle for many years as they move around Nova Scotia between 1759 and 1773. The reader is given a view of how Acadians may have made decisions to stay in their beloved homeland under British restrictions and take the Oath of Allegiance after the Seven Years War ended.

— Sindi Broussard Terrien

SURVIVANCE: A FRANCO-AMERICAN OBSESSION

by Larry Poitras

(Prev. pub. JMS 13 [Winter 1990, no. 2]:5-45)

The Franco-Americans took their strongest stand against Irish-inspired institutional assimilation in the Mouvement Sentinelliste of the 1920's. Institutional assimilation, generally understood to mean religious conformity, called for Franco-American acceptance of the Irish dominated Roman Catholic Church's policies. As a result of the Franco-American resistance, the Roman Catholic Church excommunicated approximately sixty Franco-Americans from a dozen French national parishes of the Blackstone Valley area of Rhode Island.¹

The Franco-American press described the Mouvement Sentinelliste as one “born under the breath of spite, jealousy and vengeance.”² Perhaps the best-known critic of the Sentinellistes and their movement, J. Albert Foisy, called it “the saddest affair this country has ever seen, much more disastrous for souls than any number of attacks against the Church.” Foisy attacked the movement and viewed it as “an agitation that was without a shadow of justification or reason. A movement created in an un-American and un-Christian spirit,” Foisy denounced the Sentinellistes' support of “the worst exhibition of shameless speculation the history of the French race in America will ever relate.”³

The Sentinellistes maintained that the future of their language was at stake and that the Irish-American bishops of New England were bent on destroying the French language. Supporters of the movement described it as “a mission to save the French people threatened by a violent attempt to assimilate.”⁴ Sociologist B. Bessie Wessel, in *An Ethnic Survey of Woonsocket, Rhode Island*, concluded that the real issue behind “the heat of the war” generated by the Mouvement Sentinelliste involved the “cultural rights of an ethnic minority within a mother church.”⁵ Reverend Joseph Binette of Bellingham, Massachusetts, insisted that the Franco-American excommunicants were punished for “loving their brothers too much.”⁶

Ulysse Forget, in his historical review of Saint Jean-Baptiste Parish in Warren, Rhode Island, maintained that the Sentinellistes acted according to the dictates of their consciences because it seemed the proper thing to do.⁷ Recently, Franco-American students of the Sentinelle concluded that the crisis erupted as a result of a struggle for the control of church finances.⁸

These authors failed to arrive at a consensus because they didn't give any consideration to the traditional Franco-American resistance to Irish-American Catholic policies. This resistance may be traced to the Franco-American community's economic, institutional, and social isolation. Such a removal from the mainstream of American society created social and institutional tension leading to inter-ethnic conflict and harassment. As a consequence, this harassment triggered open hostility between Irish-American and Franco-American Catholics beginning in the 1880's.

¹ Ambrose Kennedy, *Québec to New England: The Life of Monsignor Charles Dauray* (Boston, 1948), 123.

² *La Tribune*, pub. July 25, 1925.

³ T. Albert Foisy, *The Sentinellist Agitation in New England*, (Providence, 1930), vols. 73, 98.

⁴ Foisy, *The Sentinellist Agitation in New England*, 65, 222, Foisy presenting arguments made by the Sentinellistes.

⁵ Bessie Wessel, *An Ethnic Survey of Woonsocket, Rhode Island* (Chicago, 1931, 222-223).

⁶ Robert Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains* (Montréal, 1958), 436, Rumilly quoting Father Binette of L'Assomption Church in South Bellingham, Massachusetts, June 13, 1928.

⁷ Ulysse Forget, *La Paroisse Saint Jean Baptiste de Warren, Rhode Island* (Montréal, 1952), 181-182.

⁸ Sister Florence Marie Chevalier, SSA, *The Franco-Americans of New England* (Washington, D.C., 1972, 207; Hélène Forget, “L'Agitation Sentinelliste” (unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Montréal, 1953), 43.

Survivance (survival) became a French-Canadian obsession long before their first migration to New England. As early as 1760, they struggled to preserve their religion, language, and customs in order to maintain their identity under British rule in Canada.⁹ In New France, they isolated themselves to preserve their world as it had been before the English domination.¹⁰

In the great French-Canadian migration to New England during the American Civil War, they isolated themselves in neighborhoods surrounding the mill districts, and settled in "Little Canadas." Franco-American controlled institutions and organizations similar to those earlier established in New France emerged as their population multiplied. Isolated in the mill districts and relying on the services of their institutions and organizations, most of them spoke French exclusively. First generation Franco-Americans saw no need to learn English. Their isolation minimized interaction with non-Franco-American citizens of the communities. Their retention of the French language barred the development of any intimacy or companionship that might have developed between Franco-Americans and the so-called "native Americans."¹¹

French-Canadians faced hostile surroundings upon arriving in the United States. So-called natives often mocked them because of their accents and their poor grammar.¹² They accused the Franco-Americans of being interested only in reaping profits from the American mills.¹³ "Native Americans" charged the Franco-Americans with being "part time Americans." In time, the so-called "natives" became suspicious of the Franco-Americans and criticized their religion, customs and language.¹⁴ These suspicions and accusations accelerated the misunderstandings that prevailed between the Franco-Americans and the native Americans.

The Franco-Americans and the Irish-Americans learned to dislike each other before they learned to know each other.¹⁵ Generally, the Irish-Americans looked at the Franco-Americans as inferior people.¹⁶ At times, the Franco-Americans received harsh treatment, even beatings, by the Irish Americans.¹⁷ Conflicts of interest occurred as a result of the Franco-Americans and the Irish-Americans sharing different ideals, aspirations, languages and cultures.¹⁸

Conflicting interests in economic matters created racial antipathies between the Franco-Americans and the Irish-Americans as economic competition between the two groups intensified.¹⁹ The arrival

⁹ Mason Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook* (New York, 1946), 13.

¹⁰ Wade, *The French-Canadian Outlook*, 23-35, 40-43; Anthony Coelho, *The Sentinellist Controversy* (unpub. manuscript, Brown University, 1972), i. As a consequence, the French-Canadians became inordinately sensitive to any threat to their cherished faith, language, laws and customs. In addition, the needs of the French-Canadians in Canada were met by the Roman Catholic Church. The Church cared for the sick and needy and met the educational needs of the French-Canadians by providing parochial schools.

¹¹ Foisy, *The Sentinellist Agitation*, 4; Kennedy, *Quebec to New England*, 120.

¹² Hélène Forget, "L'Agitation Sentinelliste," 1.

¹³ Kennedy, *Quebec to New England*, 117.

¹⁴ Iris Saunders Podesa, "Québec to Little Canada," *The New England Quarterly* (1950), 23:380.

¹⁵ Foisy, *The Sentinellist Agitation in New England*, 2.

¹⁶ To add to the confusion and misunderstanding between Franco-Americans and Irish-Americans, many French-Canadians lost their names in migrating to New England. Because of their inability to write French or to speak English, names such as "Caisy" became Casey; "Arsenault" changed to Snow, etc. The arrival of French-speaking priests and the establishment of bilingual schools in New England blotted out this "corruption of names" in the 1860's. (Kennedy, *Quebec to New England*, 109-110; Marie Louise Bonier, *Débuts de la Colonie Franco-Américaine de Woonsocket, Rhode Island* [The Beginnings of the Franco-American Colony of Woonsocket, Rhode Island], 79-80).

¹⁷ Bonier, *Debuts de la Colonie Franco Américaine de Woonsocket*, 87-89.

¹⁸ Foisy, *The Sentinellist Agitation in New England*, 5.

¹⁹ Ibid.

of the French Canadians in New England ended the “Irish monopoly of the pick and shovel.” French-Canadian immigrants sought employment in the brick yards, rail yards, log camps and construction sites in New England. The Franco-Americans gradually displaced Yankee and Irish-American laborers in the more skilled activities of the textile industry as their population swelled between 1837 and 1849.²⁰

Employment opportunities encouraged French-Canadian migration. By 1870, New England cotton mills employed 7,000 Franco-Americans.²¹ By 1873, over 200,000 Franco-Americans resided in New England.²² The census of 1880 compared the number of Irish-Americans, French-Canadians, and “native-Americans” employed in the textile mills of Massachusetts and Rhode Island:²³

	Rhode Island:	Massachusetts:
Irish-Americans	15.0%	19.3%
Franco-Americans	21.7%	20.4%
“Native-Americans”	46.3%	44.2%

As the Franco-American population expanded, they gradually replaced native-stock cotton hands. By 1900, over a half-million Franco-Americans made New England their home and 60,000 of them worked in cotton mills.²⁴ In 1900, Franco-Americans made up 40% of the cotton-mill hands in Rhode Island compared to the Irish-American share of 20%.²⁵ By 1909, the majority of Franco-Americans in New England worked in the cotton and woolen mills.²⁶

Franco-Americans suffered real opposition from the Irish-American mill workers in the textile centers of New England as the French-Canadian immigration intensified and Franco-Americans competed with Irish-Americans for jobs.²⁷ Irish-Americans detested Franco-Americans for their

²⁰ Until 1840, cotton-mill operatives in New England came almost exclusively from the “native country population” available to the manufacturing centers. Of the 6,000 “hands” employed in the cotton mills of Lowell, Mass., in 1834, 5,000 were young daughters of New England farmers. In the 1840’s, cotton manufacturing expanded, and mill owners found it necessary to draw from Irish and French-Canadian immigrants. (Marcus Lee Hansen and John Bartlet Brebner, *The Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples New Haven* (1940), 163; *Emigration Report*, 10:29-30).

²¹ Poda, “Québec to Little Canada,” 369.

²² Worcester, Massachusetts, developed into the Franco-American center of the United States by 1873, with great numbers of Franco-Americans working in Worcester’s mills and those of the surrounding communities. The Census of 1875 described Fall River, Massachusetts, as a flourishing Franco-American community with 5,000 Franco American inhabitants. (*Immigration Report*, 10:38-39; Hansen and Brebner, *The Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples*, 163).

²³ *Immigration Report*, 10:31-33; In addition, the Census of 1880 provided a breakdown of the number of textile workers for two “Little Canadas” in Massachusetts: Fall River, Irish-Americans - 2377, Canadians - 3271, “Native Americans” - 4035; Lowell, Irish-Americans - 3471, Canadians - 3229, “Native Americans” – 6491 (*Immigration Report*, 10:38-39). By 1884, over 326,000 Franco-Americans lived in New England and the “Little Canadas” of New Bedford, Fall River and Lowell, Massachusetts, swelled with the influx of Franco-Americans (*Immigration Report*, 5:63).

²⁴ Poda, “Québec to Little Canada,” 369.

²⁵ *Immigration Report*, 10:35-39. In Massachusetts, Franco-American cotton hands accounted for nearly 37% of the cotton’s industry’s work force compared to the Irish-Americans’ 20% share. In Fall River by 1900, there were 36,000 Franco-Americans compared to 20,000 Irish-Americans. In addition, less than 4% of the cotton mill hands were “native stock.”

²⁶ *Immigration Report*, 20:57.

²⁷ Bonier, *Débuts de la Colonie Franco Américaine de Woonsocket, Rhode Island*, 93; Foisy, *The Sentinellist Agitation in New England*, 220. By 1909, New Bedford, Massachusetts, listed a Franco-American population of over 25,000 compared to 8,000 Irish-Americans (*Immigration Report*, 10:40-41). Census figures estimated 73,214

willingness to work harder and longer for lower wages.²⁸ Franco-Americans did not concern themselves with labor conditions and they quickly submitted to the orders of their mill bosses much to the disgust of the Irish-American laborers.²⁹ Irish-Americans protested that Franco-Americans sent their entire families of young children into the mills, taking jobs from Irish-American mill workers.³⁰ Franco-Americans antagonized the Irish-Americans through their willingness to be used as a source of “scabs,” strike breakers.³¹

Evidence presented at a hearing of the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1880 accused Franco-Americans of flagrant violations of labor laws. Carol D. Wright, the Massachusetts Superintendent of Labor Statistics, lashed out at Franco-American workers.³²

They have no considerations for our civic, political, and educational institutions. They do not come here to establish themselves among us, to become our fellow citizens. Their goal is to return to Canada once they have made enough money here and invest their profit. They rarely become naturalized citizens. They do not send their children to school if they can get away with it. They pile them into the factories at an early age. They lie about their children's ages.

Wright classified the Franco-Americans as the “Chinese of the Eastern States,” and insinuated that their only good trait was the fact that Franco-Americans made good workers.³³

As victims of harassment and hostility because of economic differences, the Franco-Americans sought to retain their maternal tongue and Catholic faith. Few Franco-Americans intended to give up what tradition considered sacred. They arrived in New England at a time when Irish-Americans dominated the American Catholic Church and monopolized its leadership from the diocesan to parish levels.³⁴ The lack of Franco-American priests forced them to depend on the Irish-American clergy for guidance and spiritual leadership. Although they could not understand the English sermons and songs, they crowded into churches built earlier with Irish-American monies. Franco-Americans found it difficult to support the Irish American churches with earnings that often amounted to a mere \$4 a week for six days of “dawn to dusk labor.” This resulted in the Franco-Americans becoming unpopular with the Irish-American clergy who so often became insensitive to Franco-American susceptibilities.³⁵

Franco Americans inhabited Rhode Island along with 88,203 Irish-Americans in 1910 (Anthony Coelho, *The Sentinellist Controversy*), Coelho quotes the Census of 1910.

²⁸ *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 6:147.

²⁹ Foisy, *The Sentinellist Agitation in New England*, 23.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Podea, "Québec to Little Canada," 373. This antagonism erupted into blood shed in West Rutland, Vermont, as a result of Franco-Americans being used as strike breakers during the Irish quarrymen strike of 1868. In addition, Fall River mill owners built special houses in their mill yards for Franco-American strike breakers for fear that the strikers would persuade the Franco-Americans to leave town in the strike of 1879.

³² Robert Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains* (Montréal, 1958), 96.

³³ Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 92-93; Podea, "Quebec to Little Canada," 371-73. Irving B. Richman, in his book, *Rhode Island*, declared that the Franco-Americans, by their presence, gave rise to a problem. Richman accused Franco-Americans of not amalgamating with other Americans and branded them as "highly illiterate." He insinuated that they contributed to the degeneracy of the political system in their respective communities with the exception of Woonsocket. He implied that education, combined with an environment of wholesome politics, would beyond any reasonable doubt bring them effectually under the great Anglo-Saxon tradition (Irving B. Richman, *Rhode Island* [Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1905], 323-333).

³⁴ Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 6.

³⁵ *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 6:147; Kennedy, *From Quebec to New England*, 45; Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 6.

Franco-American Catholics assumed Irish American priests wanted nothing more than their hard-earned dollars. Irish-American priests, on the other hand, categorized the Franco-American Catholics as “poor Catholics” because they were eager enough to get dollars but most reluctant to give them in support of the church.³⁶ As the relationship between Irish-American and Franco-American Catholics weakened, Franco-Americans became victims of the Irish American harassment.³⁷

Insisting that the preservation of the maternal tongue was a powerful guardian of their faith, Franco-Americans demanded separate parishes as soon as they were able to support them.³⁸ They maintained that their native tongue bolstered their faith and made them better Catholics.³⁹

Firmly convinced that national parishes would help them preserve the cherished traditions of their ancestors, Franco-Americans organized their first national parish in New England in Rutland, Vermont, in 1850.⁴⁰ Later, Franco-Americans founded their own parishes in Rhode Island but not without interference from the Irish-American bishop. When Franco-Americans in Central Falls, Rhode Island, sought permission to establish their own parish in 1872, Bishop Thomas F. Hendriken delayed their request for over a year.

He insisted that the Franco-Americans could not support a priest. The Franco-Americans proved the bishop wrong. The parish of Notre-Dame du Sacré Coeur (Our Lady of the Sacred Heart) developed into a well-organized and prosperous parish by 1875.⁴¹ Bishop Hendriken answered further Franco-American requests by insisting that there was no need for more Franco-American parishes. The Irish-American bishop predicted that not a word of French would be spoken in the United States among the descendants of the first French-Canadian immigrants. The Franco-Americans took Bishop Hendriken's remarks as a threat to the preservation of their culture.⁴²

Responding to the ever-increasing threat of Americanization, Edmond deNevers, in his book, *L'Âme américaine* (The American Soul) originally published in 1900, classified the Irish-American clergy as “the worst enemy of the French Catholics.”⁴³ As the inter-ethnic tension heightened, one Franco-American priest wondered whether God was going to separate the Irish-Americans from the Franco-Americans in heaven.⁴⁴ A Franco-American joke of the 1890's related the story of a Franco-American who confessed to a Franco-American priest that he had just killed an Irishman. The priest reacted by asking the penitent to begin his confession with his mortal sins.⁴⁵

³⁶ Foisy, *The Sentinellist Agitation of New England*, 5.

³⁷ It became customary for Irish-Americans sitting in the balcony area of their churches to spit on the Franco-Americans as they left Sunday masses. Also, there were cases of Franco-Americans being refused Communion by Irish-American priests solely because they were Franco-Americans (Undocumented interview, 26 Nov.1974).

³⁸ *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 6:14; Forget, *La Paroisse Saint-Jean Baptiste*, 188-89.

³⁹ Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 74.

⁴⁰ *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2:921. Woonsocket, Rhode Island, Franco-Americans waited until 1866 for their first French-speaking priest. Bishop McFarland appointed French-speaking Father Lawrence Walsh to assist the pastor of Woonsocket's Irish-American Catholic Church (St. Charles) in administering the needs of the Franco-American parishioners. Shortly after his appointment, Father Walsh scheduled separate worships in French for the Franco-Americans of Woonsocket (*The Evening Reporter*, pub. 18 July 1881); James W. Smyth, *History of the Catholic Church in Woonsocket and Vicinity* (Woonsocket, 1902) 118-20.

⁴¹ Kennedy, *Québec to New England*, 55.

⁴² Foisy, *The Sentinellist Agitation in New England*, 5-9.

⁴³ Edmond de Nevers quoted in Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains*, 175.

⁴⁴ *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 6:147.

⁴⁵ Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 99.

Franco-Americans insisted that the teaching of French in the schools along with speaking French in the home and church insured the preservation of the French language in New England where English prevailed.⁴⁶ They accepted that the Catholic Church forbade them to send their children to Protestant or public schools if there was a Catholic school available. Reverend Charles Dauray, pastor of Precieux Sang Parish (Precious Blood), in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, maintained that Franco-American parish schools kept the young true to the best traditions of their race.⁴⁷ Dauray founded one of the first Franco-American schools in New England in Woonsocket in 1884, calling upon the assistance of six nuns from Québec. A temporary school in the basement of the church opened its doors to 236 youngsters in 1885.⁴⁸

By 1908, 3,322 students attended Franco-American schools in Fall River, Massachusetts, compared to only 1,694 attending public schools.⁴⁹ In the same year, 923 students were enrolled in Franco-American parish schools in Manchester, New Hampshire, while only 589 Franco-American students attended public schools there.⁵⁰ And Haverhill, Massachusetts, boasted 696 Franco-Americans attending parish schools as opposed to 245 Franco-Americans enrolled in public schools.⁵¹ Of the 22 Franco-American parishes in Rhode Island, only two had no parish school in 1923.⁵² Without the establishment of Franco-American parish churches and schools, the Franco-Americans would have lost both their language and religion to the forces of Americanization.⁵³

With their parish churches and schools well organized, Franco-Americans concentrated on establishing strong parish organizations. They insisted that the establishment of these parish groups further insured the maintenance of Franco-American ethnicity.⁵⁴ Franco-Americans in Worcester, Massachusetts, established societies and parish organizations to care for their needs by 1872.⁵⁵

Franco-Americans in Woonsocket founded La Société Saint Jean-Baptiste in 1886 to ensure the preservation of their French language and traditions.⁵⁶ Organized by the men of Précieux Sang Parish, La Société Saint Jean-Baptiste became the first Franco-American society to serve the 3,400 Franco-Americans in Woonsocket.⁵⁷ By 1887, 162 Franco-American societies with a membership of 24,506 operated in New England. The number of societies increased to 252 with 38,119 members in 1891.⁵⁸ The Union Saint Jean-Baptiste opened its doors in 1900. It provided sick

⁴⁶ Kennedy, *Québec to New England*, 97.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 76.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 95; Franco-Americans in Central Falls, Rhode Island established the Notre Dame Parish School in 1899.

Classes were first conducted in the basement of the parish gym and a new brick facility opened in 1910 housing 1,200 young French-American students (Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 209).

⁴⁹ *Immigration Report*, 21:206.

⁵⁰ *Immigration Report*, 10:182.

⁵¹ *Immigration Report*, 31:306.

⁵² Elphège J. Daignault, *Le Vrai Mouvement Sentinellist* (The True Sentinellist Movement) (Montréal, 1935), 114: As Franco-American school enrollment mushroomed throughout the "little Canadas" of New England, nearly one-half of the Franco-Americans students in Rhode Island attended Franco-American parish schools (*Workers of the Federal Writers' Project, Rhode Island* [Boston, 1937], 314).

⁵³ Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 72.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 108.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 64-66: Franco-Americans in Biddeford, Maine, organized L'Union Canadienne in 1833 to look after the sick benefit and insurance of its Franco-American population (Ibid, 117).

⁵⁶ Kennedy, *Québec to New England*, 141-42.

⁵⁷ Wessel, *An Ethnic Survey of Woonsocket, Rhode Island*, 223.

⁵⁸ A. Bourbonnière, *Le Guide Français des États-Unis* (Lowell, Mass., 1891); Franco-Americans in Lowell, Massachusetts, organized L'Union Franco-Américaine in 1895 (*Immigration Report*, 10:341); *La Société Canada-*

benefits and insurance protection for the Franco-Américains population of Woonsocket which, at that time, totaled half of the city's population. It also cared for the aged and provided scholarships for Franco-American students.⁵⁹

The Ordre des Forestiers Franco-Americans (Order of Franco-American Foresters) was organized in 1905 when 25,000 Franco-Americans withdrew from the American Association of Foresters following the announcement that English would be used at all Forester meetings.⁶⁰ Franco-American women united and organized societies by the turn of the century. In Woonsocket, the Conseil Marie (Mary Council) sponsored events for the young in the community.⁶¹ Committed to the preservation of Franco-American institutions, a group founded the Ordre des Croisés (Order of Crusaders) in 1920. Often called the Franco-American "Knights of Columbus," this organization stood united against diocesan control over Franco-American parish schools.⁶²

The Franco-American press, dedicated to the preservation of the French language, consisted of four dailies in New England by 1898, the oldest being a Lowell, Massachusetts, daily founded in 1886. By 1911, the number of Franco-American dailies in New England had risen to seven. Franco-American editors firmly believed in the establishment of Franco-American societies and organizations. In addition, they strongly defended the teaching and use of French in Franco-American parish schools.⁶³

Conflicts erupted between Franco-American and Irish-American Catholics as soon as diocesan officials granted permission to establish Franco-American national parishes. The Irish-American hierarchy of the American Catholic Church sought assimilation while the Franco-Americans demanded conservation of their heritage in national parishes under the direction of priests of their ethnic background. Conflicts flared over the national parish question in Fall River in 1884-85, in Danielson, Connecticut, 1892-96, and in Brookfield, Massachusetts, in 1899.⁶⁴

In addition, Franco-Americans resisted the American system of church support, a system different from the French-Canadian system which guaranteed the pastors and parishes regular income based on the value of the property owned by the parishioners. Franco-Americans supported the American idea of pew rent but considered the Irish clergy to be beggars because of their never-ending collections and drives.⁶⁵

Tensions heightened in Fall River as Reverend Pierre Jean-Baptiste Bédard, pastor of Notre Dame de Lourdes (Our Lady of Lourdes) Parish, refused to accept an Irish-American assistant to care for the needs of the Irish-American children attending his Franco-American parish school. His refusal

Américaine, founded in Manchester, New Hampshire, in 1896, guaranteed the preservation of traditional Canadian culture. Members of this group stood ready to battle any and all encroachments of Franco-American religion, maternal tongue and culture. In addition, the Society provided insurance privileges for its members along with scholarships and loans for Franco-American students (Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans in New England*, 131).

⁵⁹ *L'Union*, in an attempt to preserve Franco-American artifacts, established the largest Franco-American repository in New England in Woonsocket. Woonsocket is the national headquarters for *L'Union*, which serves the insurance needs of 36,000 Franco-American members. *L'Union's* library contains 45,000 volumes on matters pertaining to Franco-American interests and culture (Greater Woonsocket Chamber of Commerce Publication, 1974).

⁶⁰ Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans in New England*, 113.

⁶¹ *The Evening Call* (Woonsocket, Rhode Island), pub. 13 July 1906.

⁶² Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains*, 321-32.

⁶³ Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 185-91; *Immigration Report*, 10:341; In 1937, *The Franco-Americans in New England* published 3 dailies, 28 weeklies and 6 monthlies (*Immigration Report*, 10:341)

⁶⁴ *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 6:143.

⁶⁵ Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains*, 50; Foisy, *The Sentinellist Agitation*, 5 and 45.

did not go well with his religious supervisor and superior, Bishop Thomas F. Hendriken of Providence.⁶⁶ The bishop's sympathy for the Franco-Americans eroded.

Following the death of Reverend Bédard in 1884, Bishop Hendriken rejected a request by parishioners calling for a French pastor. The bishop maintained that the Franco-Americans had no justification in demanding a French priest since everyone in the Franco-American parish would be speaking English within ten years. The bishop's appointment of an Irish-American pastor to Our Lady of Lourdes left the two Franco-American parishes and their 14,000 parishioners without a French pastor. The Franco-Americans retaliated by staying away from their church. The bishop placed the church under interdict and ordered the Blessed Sacrament removed.

The conflict dragged on for three years during which time three Irish-Americans served as pastors. Peace finally returned with the assignment of a Franco-American pastor in 1886.⁶⁷ La Société Franco-Américaine du Denier de Saint Pierre (Franco-American Society of Peter's Pence), at its convention in Woonsocket in July of 1906, called for the securing of French priests and bishops in the Catholic dioceses of New England. One prominent member argued that, although the Franco-Americans constituted a majority of parishioners in many parishes and in some dioceses of New England, few French priests could be found in the six-state region.⁶⁸

Over 30,000 Franco-Americans from several states swarmed to Woonsocket on September 25, 1906, to attend a convention of the Union Saint Jean-Baptiste.⁶⁹ Members of the "Association des Journalistes Franco-Américain de la Nouvelle Angleterre" (Association of Franco-American Journalists of New England), who attended the convention, voted to adopt a new set of resolutions.

The Franco-American journalists rallied behind the call for preserving the mother tongue and maintaining Franco-American schools in which French and English were taught on an equal basis. In addition, the resolutions demanded that the Holy See appoint French-speaking bishops in areas where Franco-Americans predominated and that French-speaking priests be appointed to all Franco-American parishes. The journalists urged the Franco-Americans to ally themselves with their societies which advocated the preservation of the mother tongue and religion. In addition, the delegates sought the support of the Franco-American press.⁷⁰

J.L.K. Laflamme of Woonsocket, president of the Association of Franco-American Journalists, declared, "the knowledge of two languages is a mark of superiority rather than one of hostility towards our public."⁷¹ Convention leaders informed the Franco-Americans attending the convention that the resolutions adopted by the Association would be forwarded to the Pope. This announcement resulted in a tumultuous applause by the huge delegation of Franco-Americans in the audience.⁷² Providence Bishop Matthew Harkins, an Irish-American, who was scheduled to officiate at the convention's Mass, demanded a copy of the editors' resolutions upon arriving in Woonsocket. Insisting that no mention had been made prior to his arrival that the "national question" would be discussed by the delegates, the bishop demanded an explanation from Fr. Chagnon, chaplain of L'Union. Father Chagnon explained, "These resolutions are an expression

⁶⁶ At this time, Fall River, Massachusetts, was included in the Diocese of Providence, Rhode Island.

⁶⁷ Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains*, 102-106; Chevalier, *The Franco Americans of New England*, 98-106.

⁶⁸ *The Evening Call*, pub. 10 July 1906.

⁶⁹ *Worcester Telegram*, pub. 20 Sept. 1906; All schools, mills, and businesses closed for the most elaborate affair of its kind ever held in Woonsocket. Highlights of the convention included an open-air mass, a parade of 4,000 Franco-American marchers and a concert at the Opera House (*Evening Call*, pub. 24 and 26 Sept. 1906).

⁷⁰ *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 6:276; *Evening Call*, pub. 27 Sept. 1906.

⁷¹ *Providence Journal*, pub. 27 Sept. 1906.

⁷² Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains*, 211; *Evening Call*, pub. 27 Sept. 1906.

of the intimate sentiments of all Franco-American clergy and laity in the United States.” Following the delivery of a “scathing lecture” to the Franco-American priests in attendance, Bishop Harkins removed his sacred vestments and boarded the next train to Providence.⁷³

The incident in Woonsocket raised “a storm of indignation” and anger swept Franco-American Catholics and religious authorities. Franco-American journalists responded to Bishop Harkins by insisting that they only wanted to defend themselves against their adversaries. The Franco-Americans claimed that these adversaries advocated the disappearance of the Franco-American race and that the assimilators had set out to achieve this goal with a concerted plan.⁷⁴

J.L.K. Laflamme, the editor of *La Tribune*, Woonsocket's Franco-American newspaper, reported:

We have begun an agitation in the cause of our natural existence, for the preservation of our rights, of our language and of our religion. Too long have we remained supinely silent in the presence of the assaults of those who would like to Saxonize us, too long have we remained inactive when our privileges, won and conserved at the price of many sacrifices, have been attacked and curtailed.⁷⁵

Laflamme argued that Franco-Americans constituted a majority of Catholics in New England, yet the Church hierarchy insisted on filling the seat of the archbishop of Boston with an Irish priest imported from outside the diocese. He criticized the appointment of an Irish-American bishop in Maine, an area with a substantial Franco-American population. Laflamme insisted that Franco-Americans be permitted to “practice their religion in the diocese of New England, in the churches Franco-American money built, in the language of their fathers.”⁷⁶

Tensions between Franco-American Catholics and Irish-American Catholics tended to simmer following the inter-ethnic clash in Woonsocket in 1906; but some unrest and dissention surfaced occasionally. In 1908, the Franco-American sisters of Precieux Sang Parish applied to Bishop Harkins for permission to operate a boarding school for Franco-American girls. More than a year elapsed before the bishop approved the plan and parishioners became upset with the delay in the sisters' plan.⁷⁷

Dr. Albert Maynard of Lewiston, Maine, who earlier had been placed under interdiction by his bishop, caused a commotion at the Union Saint Jean Baptiste convention in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1911. Maynard distributed copies of the controversial pamphlet, *La Bêche* (The Spade), among the delegates. The pamphlet attacked the Irish American bishops of New England and ridiculed and lampooned the Irish-American clergy.⁷⁸

Franco-American tempers flared at Sainte Anne Parish in Woonsocket in March of 1914. Pastor Napoléon Leclerc served 1,300 Franco-American families of the parish since its founding in 1890 until his death in 1914. All curates assigned to Sainte Anne Parish, the second largest Franco-

⁷³ “Bishop Harkin's diary,” 27 Sept. 1906; Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains*, 211-14; *Evening Call*, pub. 28 Sept. 1906; *Providence Journal*, pub. 8 March 1909.

⁷⁴ Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains*, 211-14.

⁷⁵ *Worcester Telegram*, pub. 30 Sept. 1906.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ Kennedy, *Québec to New England*, 101; In Maine, Franco-Americans fought a four-year battle to restore the trustee system in their parishes. Franco-Americans advocated national parishes totally independent from diocesan control. The battle over the parish trustee system entered state courts as well as courts in Rome and dragged on from 1909 to 1913. In the end, the courts ruled in favor of the Church hierarchy, stating that the restoration of the parish trustee system was “un-American.” In order to ease tension, both courts ruled in compromising decisions calling for the establishment of the parish corporation system, which allowed limited parish control (Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans in New England*, 31).

⁷⁸ *Providence Journal*, pub. 13 Dec. 1913.

American parish in Woonsocket, had Franco-American ancestry.⁷⁹ Having heard rumors that Irish American Bishop Harkins had assigned five Belgian French Marist priests to Sainte Anne Parish, the trustees of the parish submitted a petition to the bishop. The petitioners pleaded with Bishop Harkins to reconsider and not send the Marists to Sainte Anne.⁸⁰ The trustees demanded Franco-American priests be assigned because almost the entire parish consisted of Franco-Americans. The petitioners insisted that the parishioners needed the guidance of a Franco-American priest, just as their ancestors had. The Franco-American trustees argued that a Franco-American priest knew Franco-American culture and shared a “special love” with the parishioners through his Franco-American blood relationship. The petition included the names of 23 prominent Franco-American parishioners and trustees including Alphonse Gaulin, a member of the family who donated land used to construct the church; three Franco-American doctors; Philippe Boucher, editor of *La Tribune*, and Judge Elphège Daignault.⁸¹

The Franco-American press rallied to the assistance of the trustees as did some patriotic Franco-American priests. It was these priests who suggested that Elphège Daignault, a parish trustee, place a guard at the rectory to prevent a takeover by the Marists.⁸² A large number of parishioners, some of them armed with pistols, answered Daignault's call for a guard and surrounded the rectory for nearly three weeks.⁸³

Over 700 Franco-American men and boys stood guard at the rectory to prevent the Marists from entering it. The whole Franco-American Social District stirred with restlessness, and crowds of up to 1,000 Franco-Americans crowded Cumberland Street to watch events.⁸⁴ The Franco-American parishioners of Sainte Anne vowed to keep the Marists from assuming control of their prosperous Franco-American parish. The parishioners' claimed Franco-Americans were the sole contributors to the parish since its founding and their wishes for a Franco-American pastor should be recognized by Bishop Harkins.⁸⁵

Realizing the seriousness of the crisis, Bishop Harkins summoned the assistance and guidance of a close friend, Pastor Charles Dauray, of Woonsocket's Precieux Sang Parish. Father Dauray warned the bishop that a sense of revolt prevailed in the hearts of the Franco-Americans in Woonsocket and feared that acts of violence could flare up at any time.⁸⁶ Later, Father Dumont, an assistant at Sainte Anne, met with the bishop and confirmed that Franco-American parishioners surrounded the rectory. Father Giroux, rector of Notre Dame des Victoires in Woonsocket, described the situation as “alarming in every respect.”⁸⁷ In conferring with Bishop Harkins, Rhode Island Governor Aram J. Pothier, a Franco-American from Woonsocket, acknowledged that the restoration of peace hinged upon the withdrawal of the Marists from Sainte Anne.⁸⁸ Following more than three weeks of unrest and threats of violence, Bishop Harkins conceded to the Franco-

⁷⁹ *Evening Reporter*, pub. 9 and 13 March 1914; It is important to note that the other four Franco-American parishes in Woonsocket all had Franco-American pastors and curates in 1914 (*Evening Call*, pub. 7 March 1914).

⁸⁰ Hélène Forget, “L'Agitation Sentinelliste,” 2.

⁸¹ “Petition received by Bishop Matthew Harkins” (on file in the Diocesan Archives in Providence, Rhode Island).

⁸² Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains*, 235-286.

⁸³ Forget, “L'Agitation Sentinelliste,” 2.

⁸⁴ *Evening Reporter*, pub. 9 March 1914.

⁸⁵ *Woonsocket Call*, pub. 5 March 1914. Parishioners emphasized that Franco-Americans contributed over \$500,000 to date to Sainte Anne Parish.

⁸⁶ “Bishop Mathew Harkins' diary,” 3 and 7 March 1914.

⁸⁷ “Bishop Harkins' diary,” 11 March 1914

⁸⁸ “Bishop Harkins' diary,” 10 and 11 March 1914.

Americans and appointed Father Camille Villiard, a Franco-American, as pastor of Sainte Anne.⁸⁹ According to J. Albert Foisy, in his *Sentinellist Agitation*, Bishop Harkin's submission to the Franco-American demands proved to the Franco-Americans that the Irish-American bishop would yield to their demands as soon as the bishop was confronted with a stout opposition.⁹⁰

The harassment of Franco-Americans continued and conflicts between Franco-American and Irish-American Catholics followed the Sainte Anne crisis. In November of 1922 when the Irish pastor of a church in Greenfield, Massachusetts, learned that Franco-American members of his parish sought to establish their own Franco-American parish church, he blasted the Franco-Americans in his Sunday sermon,

We do not see any need of any other church but the English-speaking churches. There is a train going north (to Canada) twice a day and if you don't like it here, get on [it]!

At the children's mass, the pastor chided them and their parents for insisting that catechism classes be conducted in French. The Irish American pastor reminded the children that they were Americans and nothing else.⁹¹

“Americanization forces” in Rhode Island secured the passage of the controversial Peck Law in 1922 in an attempt to make Rhode Island “literate in English.”⁹² The Peck Law designated English as the basic language in all Rhode Island schools. In addition, the state assumed the supervisory and certifying power of private schools, powers under local jurisdiction in the past.⁹³ Franco-Americans considered the Peck Law a threat to their use of French in their parish schools. Franco-Americans in Woonsocket agreed that the Peck Law violated the principle of “home rule” and of local self-government. Woonsocket's Franco-Americans resisted this attempt to Americanize their parish schools as they offered strong opposition to Irish-American domination in church matters.⁹⁴

The Croisés (Crusaders), a Franco-American secret society dedicated to the preservation of the French language, organized in Woonsocket in 1920. Members included Franco-American laity and clergy in the Diocese of Providence. The Croisés went on record as disapproving of the centralization of school systems as practiced by state and diocesan officials. As an alternative, the Croisés favored parish school projects under the supervision of local parish groups.⁹⁵

Irish-American Bishop William A. Hickey, shortly after his appointment as Bishop of Providence in 1921, announced a \$3,000,000 drive which included \$1,000,000 for the construction of diocesan high schools. The Croisés rejected the bishop's idea of diocesan-controlled high schools and the inclusion of Mount Saint Charles in Woonsocket in such a “scheme” increased their opposition to the bishop's drive.⁹⁶ To further aggravate the situation, the bishop placed quotas on each parish in

⁸⁹ “Bishop Harkins' diary,” 19 March 1914. Twenty-one of the original petitioners sent a “thank-you” note to Bishop Harkins for appointing a Franco-American pastor to Saint Ann's (Diocesan Archives in Providence, Rhode Island).

⁹⁰ Foisy, *The Sentinellist Agitation in New England*, 15-16.

⁹¹ Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans in New England*, 77-81. Copies of this sermon are on file in L'Union Saint Jean-Baptiste Archives in Woonsocket, Rhode Island. In Lewiston, Maine, a controversy over the naming of a Franco-American church erupted in 1923. Franco-American parishioners insisted that the parish be named Sainte Croix (Holy Cross), while the French speaking Irish-American pastor insisted the church be named Holy Cross. The feud ended in 1926 with the naming of the parish Sainte Croix (Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains*, 388; Chevalier, *The Franco Americans of New England*, 273-274).

⁹² Wessel, *An Ethnic Survey of Woonsocket, Rhode Island*, 223.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 44-45.

⁹⁵ Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains*, 325-26; Chevalier, *The Franco-Américains of New England*, 212-13. In addition, the Croisés received strong support from Cardinal Begin, Archbishop of Québec.

⁹⁶ Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 214.

the diocese. Bishop Hickey insisted that the parishes meet these quotas or use parish monies to supplement any unmet quotas. The Franco-Americans charged the bishop with setting a "dangerous precedent." They insisted that the bishop's demands would lead to the weakening and eventual destruction of Franco-American parishes.⁹⁷

As the bishop's drive unfolded, the Franco-American societies, the Croisés and Canadas, stepped up their criticism of the high school drive. They contended that, with the inclusion of Mount Saint Charles Academy in the diocesan building plan, it would become "a hot bed of sinister assimilation tricks." The Croisés and Canadas feared that diocesan officials planned to use Franco-American money to assimilate young Franco-American students attending Mount Saint Charles Academy. Furthermore, the resisters claimed that Bishop Hickey's fund-raising methods violated ecclesiastical and civil laws.⁹⁸

The Croisés, led by Elphège Daignault and Dr. Gaspard Boucher, envisioned Mount Saint Charles Academy as an "Irish institution" controlled by Irish-American Bishop Hickey.⁹⁹ The Croisés attacked Brother Josephus, the director of Mount Saint Charles Academy, and branded him an Irish assimilator because his family name was McGarry.¹⁰⁰ Franco-Americans condemned Bishop Hickey for closing Father J.A. Beland's Franco-American high school in Central Falls, Rhode Island, in favor of consolidating operations at diocesan-controlled Mount Saint Charles Academy in Woonsocket. The Croisés charged the bishop with prosecuting Father Beland and closing his school because he stood out against all "assimilatory designs."¹⁰¹

In addition to seeking support for the high school drive, Bishop Hickey demanded funds to support the National Catholic Welfare Conference (N.C.W.C.). In 1922, this conference adopted a platform which established English as the language to be used in every Catholic school in the United States, in the teaching of every subject except religion. The Conference supported school systems under the direct supervision of bishops. Members of the Conference noted that the number of "foreign language Catholic schools" had decreased and that these would easily be transformed into English language schools in a short time.¹⁰² Franco Americans reacted by categorizing the N.C.W.C. a "dangerous agency" employed by Irish-Americans to achieve their long-desired assimilation of the Franco-Americans by Americanizing Franco-American parish schools. They feared the elimination of the French language in their parochial schools would lead to the Americanization of young Franco-Americans.¹⁰³

The Croisés published their first copy of *La Sentinelle* an April 4, 1924, in direct competition with *La Tribune*, the newspaper of *L'Union* in Woonsocket, which supported Bishop Hickey in the high school drive controversy.¹⁰⁴ In its first edition, the Sentinellists noted that *La Sentinelle* would watch over the interests of the Franco-Americans and work for the survival of the Franco-American race.¹⁰⁵ The Sentinellists, through the use of *La Sentinelle*, concentrated their attack on

⁹⁷ Ibid; Ulysse Forget, *La Paraisse Saint Jean Baptiste*, 180; Daignault, *LeVrai Mouvement Sentinelliste*, 63-64.

⁹⁸ Foisy, *The Sentinellist Movement*, 30-31; Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 214.

⁹⁹ Foisy, *The Sentinellist Agitation*, 41; Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 214; Helene Forget, *L'Agitation Sentinelliste*, 5.

¹⁰⁰ Foisy, *The Sentinellist Agitation*, 42-44.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains*, 327; Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 198-200.

¹⁰³ Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 200, 203; Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains*, 318; Daignault, *Le Vrai Mouvement Sentinelliste*, 55-70.

¹⁰⁴ Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 218.

¹⁰⁵ *La Sentinelle* (Woonsocket, R.I.), pub. 24 April 1924.

Bishop Hickey in the explosive Mount Saint Charles Academy project controversy.¹⁰⁶ As a result of Bishop Hickey's insistence that Franco-American parishes meet unkept quotas in the diocesan drives of 1925-1927, the Sentinellists decided to take legal action. In the spring of 1927, sixty Franco-Americans representing ten Franco American parishes in the Diocese of Providence, appealed to the Rhode Island Superior Court to enjoin the parishes of that diocese to refrain from obeying the “illicit orders of the bishop.” The Sentinellists lost their appeal in the state court and appealed to Rome.¹⁰⁷ Bishop Hickey added fuel to the fire of the crisis when he suspended Father Prince, pastor of Woonsocket's Saint Louis Parish, and Father J.A. Beland of Central Falls for their support of those who brought suit against him. He justified the suspension of the two pastors by noting that their parishes made a poor showing in his last campaign for Catholic Charities in the diocese. With the suspension, Fathers Prince and Beland became martyrs of the Sentinellist movement to the Franco-American resisters.¹⁰⁸

Elphège Daignault, the leader of the Sentinellists, at a rally in Woonsocket on July 25, 1927, told a large group of Franco Americans that, “a radical change is needed in the diocese, and this can only come with the removal of Bishop Hickey.” In addition, the Sentinellists called for the preservation of national parishes, Franco-American priests in Franco-American parishes and parochial schools where French could be taught.¹⁰⁹ Two days later, Daignault's group proclaimed a Franco-American manifesto. It called for a general strike of Franco-American financial support to parishes until Bishop Hickey recognized the right of Franco-Americans to have parochial schools with French in the classrooms. The Sentinellists demanded an end to the bishop's “pillaging of parish funds” for works of “mere secondary interest to the Franco-Americans.” The strike by the Sentinellists succeeded, resulting in some priests becoming embittered as money stopped flowing into Franco-American parish coffers. Some Franco-American priests refused Communion to strikers at Sunday masses. An anti-clerical feeling developed among Franco-American Sentinellists as they believed the main interest of the priests was money.¹¹⁰

On Easter Sunday 1928, the Roman Catholic Church excommunicated Daignault and the Franco-American plaintiffs who sued the parish corporations in the civil courts.¹¹¹ Church officials gave the excommunicants a limit of one year to seek rehabilitation and submit to diocesan authorities or be considered “heretics” by the Catholic Church.¹¹² Each of the sixty Franco-American excommunicants submitted to their parish pastors before the deadline established by Church authorities. With the reading of the “Acts of Submission” in the churches, with the Franco-American excommunicants present, the Sentinellists returned to their community and to their Church on Easter Sunday, 1929.¹¹³

¹⁰⁶ Foisy, *The Sentinellist Agitation*, 21; The Sentinellists in Woonsocket did not stand alone in their resistance to Americanization. Sentinellist supporters in Worcester organized a protest meeting on April 3, 1927. Those attending included members of *L'Union* and the Franco-American Foresters. The Franco-American protesters supported the construction of parochial schools, the erection of national parishes and the inviolability of parish funds. The Franco-Americans in Worcester went on record opposing Americanization as envisioned by the National Catholic Welfare Conference (Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco Américains*, 409-411; Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 225).

¹⁰⁷ Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 224-226; Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains*, 410-14; Foisy, *The Sentinellist Agitation*, 24-25.

¹⁰⁸ *Woonsocket Call*, pub. 17 June 1927; Coelho, *The Sentinellist Controversy*, 19-20.

¹⁰⁹ *Woonsocket Call*, pub. 25 July 1927.

¹¹⁰ Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 228-29.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, 220; Forget, *La Paroisse Saint Jean Baptiste*, 181.

¹¹² Foisy, *The Sentinellist Agitation*, 156-187; Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 232-235.

¹¹³ Chevalier, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 238-240; Foisy, *The Sentinellist Agitation*, 217-219.

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JOIN OUR NEW AFGS COMMUNITY PAGE ON FACEBOOK

Let's imagine you are in the AFGS library in Woonsocket, RI. You're researching a line that has you stumped. A volunteer approaches and asks "How are you doing? Do you need any help?" This scenario has happened only for our members and

visitors in the AFGS library – until now!

AFGS has created the [American-French Genealogical Society Community Page](#) on Facebook for all our members and genealogy researchers throughout the US and in Canada and Europe. *This is a private group that you can join on request.*

This group is actively moderated. Be courteous to others even though you may disagree. Respect the privacy of our members. Please avoid political or religious commentary which is not aligned to the discussion. No self-promotion or spam marketing.

Members of this group, devoted to helping people explore their French-Canadian heritage, will be able to collaborate with each other about their genealogy research and Franco-American topics. You can ask questions, help each other with research and discover our shared history and culture. There will be discussions on many topics, and we will all have the opportunity to learn from and help each other. The spirit of collaboration and cooperation that has always been so helpful in our library will now become a virtual experience for all our members and guests, wherever they live. Sign up now to be a member of our new group on Facebook at [American-French Genealogical Society Community Page](#) and discover your ancestors from the past along with new research friends for the future.

Thank you for being a valued member of our Society. We look forward to "seeing" you on our community page.



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...with several very large data entry and indexing projects, as well as other assignments according to your specific skills.

Contact us at info@afgs.org to ask about an assignment that would utilize your skills.

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Please note that you do not have to live near the AFGS library to do our data entry work. When you volunteer, a pdf file will be sent to you via email along with a template for transcribing the information that will be added to our data bases. Our Canadian Marriages project covers over one million marriages.

This list contains the names of volunteers from our AFGS Volunteer Opportunities Survey. If you have not been contacted yet by our volunteer coordinators, please reach out to us at info@afgs.org to find out what assignments are available.

We'd love to add your name to our list of volunteers!

Do you have an eagle eye? Our data entry project has entered a new stage! We are in need of volunteer "proofreaders" who can review and correct any typos or date errors. We will provide the transcribed data file and a set of instructions.

Please let us know at JMSeditor@afgs.org if you can help.



WHAT'S COOKING?

by Janice Burkhart

Venison Vegetable Soup

My French-Canadian genes always make me open to a nice, hot bowl of soup. My mother always had a pot of soup simmering on the stove. When we would come home from school at lunch time, especially in the winter, there was always some type of soup, a warm loaf of bread and a warm drink. The soup could be anything and usually had leftover vegetables in it. Those days have wonderful memories for me and although I never had this soup it sounds wonderful. If you do not have a source for venison, I think stew beef

would work just as well.

You will need:

1 Tablespoon of Vegetable Oil
 1 Pound of Venison (Or Stew Beef)
 1 Cup Diced Onion
 1 Package (16 Ounce) Frozen Mixed Vegetable
 2 Cans (14.5 Ounce) Peeled and Diced Tomatoes With Juice
 3 Cups Potatoes, Peeled and Cubed

4 Cups Water
 1 Tablespoon White Sugar
 2 Teaspoons Beef Bouillon Granules
 1 Teaspoon Salt
 1/2 Teaspoon Ground Pepper
 1/2 Teaspoon Garlic Powder
 1/4 Teaspoon Hot Pepper Sauce

Heat oil in stock pot or Dutch oven over medium high heat. Brown the meat in the hot oil. Add onion, cover pot and simmer over medium heat for 10 minutes or until onions are translucent.

Stir in the mixed vegetables, tomatoes and potatoes. Combine the water, sugar and bouillon and stir into soup. Season with salt, pepper, garlic powder and hot pepper sauce. Cover and simmer for at least one hour, or until the meat is tender.

Serve with warm crusty bread. Yum! I'll be over for lunch.

Maybe Mémère never wrote down her recipes, but AFGS has over 250 pages of recipes, including many traditional ones, submitted by our members. You can find them in our cookbook:

Je Me Souviens La Cuisine de la Grandmère

You can order our cookbook for \$15 plus shipping from our on-line store on our website at <https://afgs.org/site/shop-online/>
 It is listed under Books & Publications – Other.





DAUGHTERS OF THE KING – “FILLES DU ROI” PIN AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

As Peter Gagné describes in his book, *King's Daughters and Founding Mothers: Les Filles du Roi 1663-1673*, more than 350 years ago the King's Daughters or “Filles du Roi” arrived in Québec. They immigrated to New France between 1663 and 1673 as part of a program sponsored by Louis XIV.

The program was designed to boost Canada's population both by encouraging male emigrants to settle there, and by promoting marriage, family formation and the birth of children. While women and girls certainly immigrated to New France both before and after this period, they were not considered to be “Filles du Roi,” as the term refers to women and girls who were actively recruited by the government and whose travel to the colony was paid for by the King. The title “King's Daughters” was meant to imply state patronage, not royal or even noble parentage. Most of these women were commoners of humble birth. Almost every person of French-Canadian descent can claim at least one of these incredible, young women in their heritage.

There were about 768 “Filles du Roi.” You can find a list of the “Filles du Roi” on our website at: [http://www.afgs.org/AFGS Daughters of the King List of names.pdf](http://www.afgs.org/AFGS_Daughters_of_the_King_List_of_names.pdf) If you do not have a computer and are interested in receiving a list of the “Fille du Roi,” you can send a request along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope and we will send the list to you.

Instructions and information on the documentation requirements for submission are also on our website at: <https://afgs.org/site/kings-daughters/>. *Verified descendants of a “Fille du Roi” will receive a pin and certificate.*

MARRIAGEABLE GIRLS – “FILLES À MARIER” PIN AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAM



A list of the “Filles à Marier” and their spouses from 1634-1662 is on our website at <http://afgs.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/filles.pdf>. If you do not have a computer and are interested in receiving a list of the “Fille à Marier,” you can send a request along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope and we will send the list to you.

AFGS is offering a second pin and certificate program in addition to the “Filles du Roi” program. This time we will be honoring the marriageable girls who came to New France before the Daughters of the King – THE FILLES À MARIER. For those receiving this newsletter electronically, all the necessary information will be found on our AFGS website at <http://afgs.org/site/les-filles-a-marier/> *Verified descendants of a “Fille à Marier” will receive a pin and certificate.*

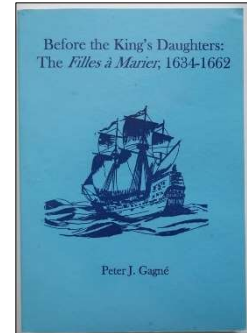
According to Peter J. Gagné, in his book, *Before the King's Daughters: The Filles à Marier, 1634-1662*, just 262 women answered the call to populate France's colony before King Louis XIV started the government sponsored “Filles du Roi” program which brought an additional 768 women to New France. These early seventeenth century women, who came alone or in small groups, left behind families in a civilized country, faced the dangerous ocean crossing to arrive in an uncivilized colony with harsh weather and the constant threat of attacks by the Iroquois Indians to marry a settler and raise as many children as possible for the glory of God and King.

GREAT BOOKS THAT SHOULD BE IN YOUR LIBRARY!

Before the King's Daughters: The Filles à Marier, 1634-1662

AFGS is proud to offer a wonderful book that all genealogists doing French-Canadian research should have in their library. This book, written in English by Peter Gagné, is a treasure trove of historical, genealogical and biographical information. It is being offered for sale with the permission of the author who holds the copyright.

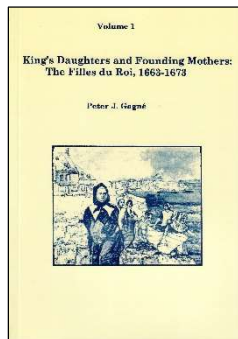
Before the King's Daughters: The Filles à Marier, 1634-1662 is a biographical dictionary of the 262 women and girls sent from France to populate Québec between 1634 and 1662. This work gives an overview of who the "Filles à Marier" were and then presents comprehensive biographies of all the "Marriageable Girls" including a wealth of information never before available in English! This set also includes a glossary, a comprehensive bibliography, various historical documents, and an index of husbands.



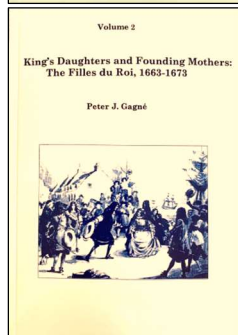
This book is extremely popular at our library. Most French-Canadians have multiple "Fille à Marier" in their line. By popular demand, AFGS is also offering a certificate and pin program to honor and recognize these very brave women. Therefore, we have decided to offer this wonderful book for sale to you as we know that you will be delighted with it. Current inventory is limited so please order right away and give yourself a well-earned gift.

A Companion 2-Volume Set:

King's Daughters and Founding Mothers: Les Filles du Roi 1663-1673



Written in English by Peter Gagné, this is a groundbreaking biographical dictionary of the nearly 800 women and girls sent from France to populate Québec between 1663 and 1673. The introduction explains the need for the program, compares it to similar initiatives by the British and Spanish, dispels misconceptions about the "Filles du Roi" and gives a history of the program in Canada. After defining who can be considered a "Fille du Roi," this work presents comprehensive biographies of all the "King's Daughters," including a wealth of information never before available in English.



This large softcover 2-volume set has 662 pages and includes 20 photographs and reproductions of artwork relating to the "Filles du Roi," biographies of 36 women falsely identified as "Filles du Roi," a table of all the "King's Daughters" by year of arrival, an appendix with supporting documentation, a glossary, thematic index and an index of husbands.

Volume One includes Biographies A-J, Introduction, Historical Background and 20 Images. Volume 2 contains Biographies L-Z, Complete Table of "Filles du Roi" by Year of Arrival., Appendix and Glossary. It is being offered for sale with the permission of the author who holds the copyright.

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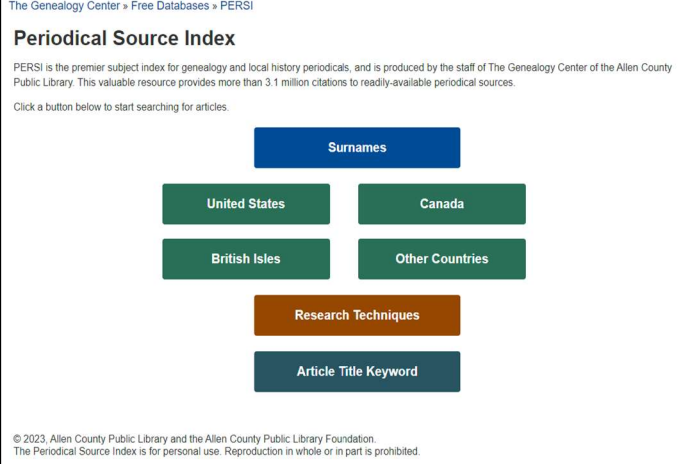
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It is available for free at the Allen County Public Library (ACPL) website, at <https://www.genealogycenter.info/persi/>

You can search for an article by ***Surname***, by ***Country*** including United States, Canada, British Isles, or Other Countries, by ***Research Techniques*** or ***Article Title Keyword***.



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- PERSI does not cover surname periodicals and does not normally include queries, charts, fiction, cartoons, or poetry.
- The article title listed in the citation may not be the actual title as it appears in the periodical. Article titles are not always descriptive, so encoders sometimes alter them to include the actual subject or time period.
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- Abbreviations are used often, but not always. States are abbreviated by their postal codes; religious dominations may be abbreviated by standard three, four or five letter designations; and organizations such as the Grand Army of the Republic are identified by their initials.
- Terminology and spelling can change with location. For example, a “railroad” in the United States may be a “railway” in Canada. Similarly, a large group of working people in England may be identified as “labour,” instead of the American “labor.”
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PARCHEMIN PROJECT

The Parchemin database is a tool that finds notarial records from Québec's past compiled by the Société de Recherche Historique Archiv-Histo. It provides a complete inventory of notarial minutes produced in Canada from 1626 to 1799, totalling 442,402 deeds. The information was entered in the language of the original document. The written form of the names of individuals and locations was respected. Each record informs researchers of the following data regarding a deed: deed type, name of the notary, intervening parties, their trade or profession, marital status, place of origin and place of residence. Currently the period of the documents in the database is 1635 to 1800, but the Society's own data bank holds millions more, and they will assist you:

The Society was founded in 1981 with the aim of providing real access to the large series of archival records in their possession. In 1986, it joined with the Chambre des Notaires du Québec, now called BAnQ (Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec) in order to create the Parchemin notarial database. From 1993 to 2014, the Parchemin bank was distributed on CD-ROM to more than 40 libraries, archive centers and historical and genealogical societies in Québec, the United States, and France.

In addition, it launched a second project in 1993 to inventory the judicial archives in order to produce, in conjunction with BAnQ, a new series of CD-Roms called Thémis. The Themis bank aims to make historical information available to everyone, this time relating to court records.

The Parchemin records contain:

- Notarial minutes recorded throughout the territory of ancient Québec from the 17th to the 19th century
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- Notarial minutes relating to the various Western Forts (1700-1800) (Detroit region and Middle West) microfilmed by the Drouin Institute around 1940
- Notarial minutes of the Baby Fund (1620-1900) of the Division of Document Management and Archives of the University of Montréal
- Notarial minutes found in the judicial files of the Bailiwick of the royal jurisdiction of Montreal (1647-1734)
- Private documents from the Montréal region (1648-1790)
- Acts of insinuations of the Provost of Montréal (1684-1760)
- Notarial minutes of the Principality of Liège preserved in the State Archives in Liège (Belgium)
- Notarial minutes of the Province of Walloon Brabant preserved in the State Archives in Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium)

You can contact them at:

Société de Recherche Historique Archiv-HiManche
2320, rue des Carrière
Montréal, Québec H2G 3G9
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Their website is: <https://archiv-histo.com/accueil.php>

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Je Me Souviens publishes articles of interest to members of the American-French Genealogical Society and people of French Canadian and Acadian Descent. Articles dealing with history and genealogy are of primary interest, although articles on related topics will be considered. Especially desirable are the articles dealing with sources and techniques, i.e. “how-to-guides,” related to specifics of French-Canadian research.

All manuscripts must be well-documented (i.e. with sources) and well written material on French-Canadian or Acadian history, genealogy, culture, or folklore, but not necessarily limited to these areas. However, there **MUST** be a French-Canadian connection to what you submit. They can be of any length, though we reserve the right to break down long articles into two or more parts.

We prefer a clear, direct conversational style. A bibliography is desirable, and documentation in the form of footnotes is necessary for genealogical and historical submissions. Please use footnotes, rather than endnotes. All articles should be single-spaced and left-justified. Do not use bold, italics or underlining for headings.

All submissions must be in electronic form and submitted to JMSeditor@afgs.org. Any word processing file will be accepted but we prefer .doc, .docx, .pdf, .txt, or .rtf files. All illustrations and photos should be submitted as JPEG (.jpg) files. You may also submit printed black-and-white photographs for publication. These photographs should be labeled with the submitter’s name, contact information and the caption for the photo, preferably on the back. We are not responsible for loss of damage to originals, and they may not be returned.

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RESEARCH SERVICES

The American-French Genealogical Society accepts requests for ancestral searches. This service is available for both members and non-members. Our only requirement is that the information you are seeking be for an ancestor who is of French-Canadian origins, since that is the focus of our organization, and the area where we will be the most successful. General information on requesting research can be found at <https://afgs.org/site/request-research/>.

To request AFGS Research Services, you can print the **Research Request Form** found on our website, online at (<https://www.afgsmembers.org/services/research-request-form.pdf>), fill out the form, add any supplemental information relevant to your research, and mail it to AFGS, Attn: Research Dept., P.O. Box 830, Woonsocket, RI 02895-0870, with your deposit (see below).

For a Vital Records or Film Room Request, go to <https://afgs.org/site/ancestors-vital-records-requests/>, fill in the necessary information, then click the “Request Research” button to submit your request.

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Plans are already underway for the next **NERGC Conference** which will be held in Manchester, New Hampshire, on **October 29–November 1, 2025**. You can find information about the NERGC 2025 conference on their website, <https://nergc.org/>

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

AFGS is a charter member of the **New England Regional Genealogical Consortium** and will be providing volunteer hours for this conference. If you are planning to attend the conference, or live within driving distance of Manchester, NH, please consider this opportunity to support your society. There are various assignments such as working as door monitors for one or more of the various lectures, a few hours staffing the registration desk, changing the lecture room signage for the different lectures, working a few hours at the information desk, etc. If you would like to provide a few volunteer hours at this conference, please let us know at info@afgs.org and we can arrange a volunteer assignment of your choice for you.



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[American-French Genealogical Society](#) and

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Our new AFGS Community Page is a virtual visit with your fellow society members. You can discuss your latest research and learn so much more by collaborating with each other in our virtual meeting place!

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