

La Famille Poulain

The Story of our Poulin Ancestors in the New World



By

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Cover Painting: *Habitants* by Cornelius Krieghoff, 1852.

Introduction

According to the dictionary, ‘poul’ is a 5,000 year old root word meaning the young of an animal. In French, poulain, the original spelling of our name, means pony, a foal, a young horse. Two possible origins of the name are generally considered. One possibility begins during the Crusades and one earlier. Translated from French:

Our name was well known before the ordinance of 1539, dictated by Villers-Cotterets, which obliged priests to register the baptisms they performed. According to Paul Lebel, one finds in a written tract of 1144 in the general records of Paris the Latin form of Pullanus. In fact, a more remote person is known, Herve Poulain. Here is what is written on this subject:

In 1034, after the death of their mother, Havoise, her sons, Duke Allain III and Eudon, gave (for the salvation of their mother’s soul) to the Abbey of St. Georges of Rennes the actual property of the deceased Duchess. There was living there a farmer named Gurdifen who upon seeing the management style of the Duchess and how distant she lived from the land, easily, and unobtrusively at first, took over her property and acted as if he had inherited it. The Abbess of St. Georges, outraged by his pretensions, and wanting to maintain her right of ownership, let Gurdifen know in no uncertain words that he would never inherit the farm. Indignant and outraged, he sought revenge by ravaging the property of the Pleubihan Priory. The Abbess had G. arrested and imprisoned for one year in the castle of one of her vassals named Herve (Harvey) Poulain: he is the oldest known person of the Poulin family to be recorded in history.

Of the other part (the second explanation), Grousset, in his book titled “The Crusades” relates the following: Near the end of the 2nd Crusade in 1095¹ the French knights went to the East to fight for the deliverance of the Holy Tomb of Christ and for the Christians oppressed by Islam.

Many of the knights married with the daughters of the country of Acre in Syria and their children were called under the name of Poulain or Polain by a group of French who refused to recognize the half-breeds as French. The attribution of the name of Poulain given to these children born of Syrians plunged anthropologists into an insoluble enigma according to Paul Lebel. What was it, for instance, the name Poulain that was designated by all the colonists of the Holy Land (Grousset page 26).

In the life of Saint-Louis, Jean, Sieur de Joinville, seneschal of Champagne (1224-1317) wrote: “They called me Poulain because I counseled the King to go to live with the poulains.” Joinville wanted to dissuade the King from returning to France. According to Larousse, the Poulains were formed of people of the Latin States by crossing the Europeans and the Syrian and Armenian Christian women.²

The first account places the earliest Herve Poulain near Rennes in Brittany. The word “Poul” shows up in many place names of Brittany, and the people of Brittany, except possibly the aristocracy, did not speak French in the Middle Ages. They spoke the ancient Celtic known as Goidelic, also spoken by

¹ This is a mistake; actually this was the year in which Pope Urban II called for the beginning of the First Crusade; the Second Crusade began in 1144; Michael Spilling, Ed., *Battles of the Crusades 1097-1444*, Amber Books, Ltd., London, UK, 2007.

² Bernard Poulin, *Bienvenue dans la Beauce aux Descendants de Claude Jean and Maurice.*, 26, 27, 28 June 1987, page 15-16. This was a pamphlet written for a Poulin reunion at Beauce, Quebec, 1987. The source notated in the text is A. Le Moyne de la Borderie in his *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. III, page 116. This story is also paraphrased by Yvan Poulin, *Origine de L’Histoire des Poulin*, a typed manuscript printed at Sante-Marie, Beauce, June 1991, page 24.

the people of Wales and Cornwall. Goidelic is a cousin of Gaelic, which was spoken by the Irish and Scottish. Poulain may have another meaning in Bretagne (Brezeg) or it may be the same exact word as in French. I have yet to find a Goidelic dictionary. As for the Latin form of the name it was common since the early Dark Ages for nobles to have two forms of their name, one a local form and the other a Latin form. Since our ancestors who came to Canada were not aristocrats I tend to lean towards the latter explanation of the name and believe that one of our ancestors traveled to Outremer (overseas) and married a Saracen or Armenian woman. If our Crusader was a knight, a half breed would still be of noble birth. But I rather think our ancestor was a commoner, or a disenfranchised son of a noble, who somehow made his way back to France and thrived there. There are numerous cases of this occurring and it is said that people who have the word Moor incorporated into their name have Saracen/Moorish ancestry: Moore, Morin, Morris, Morrisette, Morrison, etc. The connotation of 'poulain' used as a euphemism for 'half-breed,' was that of a person who does not measure up, being a pony rather than a full horse. Leo Poulin, a cousin of our parents, found vague references to Poulain de Courval, Poulain de Quefferon, and Poulain de la Fosse-David who lived in or near Paris in the 1200s.³ These would be Poulains who had retained titles of nobility.

There were eight separate unrelated Poulins (with various spellings) who came to Canada but the three main branches were from Normandie, Picardie, and Paris. The first to arrive was Claude, our ancestor, who is described in the main text. The second was Maurice, Sieur de La Fontaine, a purchaser of the king, born in the department of l'Orne, France, of the marriage of Pierre Poulin and Anne Plommelle. He married Jeanne Jallot in 1654 at Trois-Rivieres, a widow who had five children. She was living at the Ursuline Convent at Trois-Rivieres at the time. The third was Jean Poulin, son of Jacques Poulin and of Marie Violette, native of the parish of Meun in Picardie, diocese of Beauvais. He married Louise Pare in 1667, daughter of Robert Pare and Francoise Lehoux, of Ste-Anne de Beaupre. They had nine children; the descendants of Jean went to live at St-Joachim circa 1900.⁴

Whenever anyone is attempting to write about their ancestors there are many choices to make. One is tempted to describe each one individually, but this cuts the story up. We are not individuals, we are members of families. There are births, marriages, and deaths going on during each person's life. The second inclination is to just describe the family events. This is fine as a simple list of facts. But if we don't give the story some background of events going on at the time it seems they lived in a vacuum. For example Jean-Baptiste Poulin was married at such and such a time to so-and-so. This fact alone is important, but if we study the situation, in this case we find out that the militia, of which Jean was a member, was called out barely a week later. This adds some poignancy to Jean's marriage. There is some attempt at this in the original texts but I wanted to add more. Also I added maps and pictures. One difficulty in writing about the ancestors is that it can become a litany of births, marriages, and deaths since these are the only documents available most of the time. That's what happens in the latter part of the text. It's ironic that we know more about the earliest ancestors than we do about the later ones. In genealogical research we only find out facts: what, when, where, and who, but we almost never find out what kind of people they were, though some is learned by their accomplishments. We can't know what they liked or disliked, if they were content or angry, or if they played music or sang, or if they had a sense of humor – things like that. We can only generalize by events that were occurring at the time.

Throughout the text I refer to the British as English because that is what the Canadiens called them. They also referred to the New England Colonists as Bostonnais. I do not call them Americans because all people in the New World were Americans, including the Amerindians, English, Spanish, French, Dutch, Portuguese, etc. The British did think of their colonists as Americans but so did the French. Later, the

³ Letter from Leo Poulin to David and Martha Poulin Kammer, dated December 12, 1988; courtesy of Solange Poulin Turcotte.

⁴ Joseph-Philippe Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire de la Famille Poulin au Canada, 1639-1939*, printed in Quebec in 1939, p 5-6.

people of the United States inaccurately took the term Americans for themselves because they could not call themselves United States's.

When dealing with a foreign language translation is usually difficult, and is even more so when one is not fluent in that language. That was my difficulty so there may be some mistakes herein. The other thing about it is that I was trying to write the story in English and in English there are no accent marks, so I did not use any accent marks anywhere. They are useful in French but they mean nothing in English and they clutter up the text and actually make it harder to read, though they do establish the "foreignness" of the word, but that is not very useful. And as an added bonus I could work much faster. I hope my French speaking relatives (and ancestors) are not offended. As a note of interest, it appears that none of our ancestors (the male Poulins anyway) could read until our fifth ancestor, Joseph Poulin, who was also the first to move from Beaufort to Beauce.

During the 16th century the English developed a style of bragging in which they appeared to themselves to be the victors even when they lost or when nothing was gained. They constantly employed depredations on the character of the enemy and praises for themselves in their writings. Americans still carry on this practice today and many events which are deemed as history are actually fiction or mostly fiction. This makes the research of the early periods difficult to do objectively. One example of this was a propaganda campaign by the English to downplay the character of the Spanish, so today, everyone says "the Spanish were cruel," when in fact the English were much more cruel to the natives. Incidentally, the British, having lost an empire, no longer carry on this practice and their newer histories are very objective. Another example is the diary of William Rogers. If you go by his account you will believe that his Rangers were invincible and could have conquered the world. But if you read factual French accounts or official British reports you get another picture, one of almost incredible incompetence. The truth is most likely somewhere in between but the historian has to try to guess which are the most reasonable facts. So whenever trying to research this time period it is good to find foreign accounts and cross reference what you read.

A word about the Iroquois because you can't talk about Canadian history without mentioning them – they formed such a part of our ancestor's experience. The French called them by that name but they called themselves Haudenosaunee (People of the Longhouse). In latter days the British called them the Five Nations. The five member tribes were Mohawk, Oneida, Onandaga, Cayuga, and Seneca. The famous French explorer, Jacques Cartier, first encountered the Iroquois in July, 1534. It was a peaceful encounter. The next important encounter was in 1609. At that time many Algonquin natives lived along the riverbanks. Samuel de Champlain and his comrades befriended them through their fur trade. In the spring of 1609, a native chieftain asked him to accompany them on a raid against the Iroquois. In the interest of keeping his fur trade alliances he agreed. When the battle started Champlain and two Frenchmen fired their muskets, felling several Iroquois and immediately throwing them into total confusion. Fifty Mohawk were killed and twelve were taken captive. The Algonquin were ecstatic. However, the long standing and bitter feud between the Canadians and the Iroquois was begun. Many French Colonists would regret this occurrence.⁵ That said, it probably would have happened eventually. Soon another factor had aggravated the Iroquois, the diseases the white men brought, to which the natives had no resistance. A third factor was the incessant instigation of the English who wanted Canada and the western portion of the modern United States for themselves.⁶ A fourth factor was the beaver fur trade, a major industry of colonial America. The trade aggravated relations between the Iroquois who had exhausted their own beaver hunting grounds and their non-confederation neighbors. This led to the

⁵ Francis Parkman, *France and England in North America, Volume I*, Literary Classics of the United States, Inc., New York, N. Y., 1983, 316-324.

⁶ Michael Johnson, *Tribes of the Iroquois Confederacy*, Osprey Publishing, Oxford, UK, 2003, pages 3-7.

devastating Beaver Wars of the 1640s. In the early 1600s the Iroquois Confederation may have numbered about 16,000. But by 1700 the tribes were so decimated by constant warfare with their neighbors, that they could barely put 1,000 warriors in the field and half of them were said to be adopted captives. Circa 1722 the Iroquois were joined by another tribe called Tuscarora who became the sixth nation.

We cannot imagine the horrors of warfare in this period. Neither can we play it down and make things politically correct. Men, women, and children suffered alike. People were burned over open fires for amusement or to be eaten. Survivors were brought back to the Iroquois fortified villages and those not made to run a gauntlet were tied to a stake and then tortured by the women and children for their amusement. Some were made servants and a few were adopted into Iroquois families to replace lost family members. It's not true that the Iroquois and other natives only practiced 'ritual cannibalism,' the horrid truth being that they ate humans whenever they wanted to. In fact the eastern Algonquians called the one of the Iroquois tribes Mohawk, meaning "flesh eaters." It has also been established that Amerindians did not develop the custom of scalping from the Europeans. It was in practice long before they arrived. This style of frontier fighting was terrorism in the worst sense and we have no idea what it was like to live with it.

Despite difficult relations many Iroquois were converted to Christianity by the Jesuits and Recollets and relocated to missions in Canada. The Christianized Amerindians formed their own confederacy of seven tribes called Onontioga (meaning French Indians). These mission tribes were known as Algonquians, Abenakis, Oda, St. Francis, Becancour, Oswegatchie, Lorette, and St. Regis. In fact, the first saint of the New World was an Iroquois girl named Kateri Tekakwitha who died in 1680 at the age of 24. But most of these natives had only drawn a Christian veil over their original belief systems and they retained many of their ancient customs including the barbarous torture of prisoners, similar to the Iroquois Confederation. In contrast, most the eastern tribes including the Algonquians and Abenakis did not usually practice these customs and prisoners were generally incorporated into their tribes as slaves or as adopted replacements of lost family members. The Franciscan and Jesuit missionaries tried to soften to the treatment of prisoners by tribes under their charge while at the same time exhorting them to go to war with the enemies of France. They saw the English as heretics and the English saw them as Papists.

Je me Souviens

"Me I Remember"

The Quebec Province motto.

"Beau Port de Mer"
"Beautiful Seaport"
(march time 3/4)

A Saint-Malo, beau port de mer,
Trois gros navir's sont arrivés.
Chargés d'avoin', charges de blé.
Trois dam's s'en vont les marchander.
"Marchand, marchand, combien ton blé?"
"Trois francs l'avoin', six francs le blé."
"Marchand, tu n'vendas pas to blé."
"Si j'le vends pas, je le donnerai."
(*repetez*)

Trois gros navir's sont arrivés.
Chargés d'avoin', charges de blé.
Trois dam's s'en vont les marchander.
"Marchand, marchand, combien ton blé?"
"Trois francs l'avoin', six francs le blé."
"Marchand, tu n'vendas pas to blé."
"Si j'le vends pas, je le donnerai."
"A ce prix-là, on va s'arranger!"

Refrain:

Nous irons sur l'eau, Nous y prom-promener
Nous irons jouer dan l'île.

Translation:

At the fine port of St. Malo, three big ships arrived,
Laden with oats and wheat. Three ladies came to buy some.
"Merchant, how much is your wheat?"
"Three francs for the oats, six for the wheat."
"Merchant, you'll never sell your wheat."
"If I don't sell it, I'll give it away."
"At that price, we can do business!"

Chorus: We are going on the water, We are sailing there,
We are going to play on the island.

This song reminds French Canadians of Jacques Cartier, the discoverer of Quebec, because it is about his home port of St. Malo; although it is a sixteenth century song, it is considered a patriotic song and is still a favorite in Quebec today.



Chapter One Les Premier Ancetres



In 1608 Samuel de Champlain built a fortified settlement at the site of Quebec with 28 men. It was a fur trading post by which Champlain developed a large network of allies with Montagnais and Huron Amerindians. The first winter did not go well. By the next spring there were only Champlain and seven men left, and four of them were sick. Although merchants pressured Champlain to keep Quebec as a trading post he wanted to make it the hub a flourishing colony.⁷ Somehow the colony survived. One of Champlain's companions in the early days was M. Olivier Letardif. He had come to Quebec in 1618 in the service of *La Compagnie des Marchands*. He worked with Champlain to establish fur trade ties with the Amerindians and during this time he became skilled in the Montagnais, Huron, and Algonquin languages. In this capacity he traveled extensively in the wilds of Canada. In 1621 he attended an assembly called by Champlain and sided with him against two trading companies in support of the habitants (colonists). In 1623 he became a Clerk Interpreter under the Superintendent of New France, Guillaume de Caen. The little colony struggled along until an English squadron of three ships arrived in 1628. They were commanded by brothers, David, Lewis, and Thomas Kirk. The Canadians under Champlain were without food, or powder, and their fort was falling apart. There were only sixteen men to defend the settlement – they had to surrender. Letardif was chosen by Champlain to surrender the keys of the colony to them, which was done on the 20th of July, 1628. The family of early settler Louis Hebert was allowed to stay – the others were deported and Letardif sailed with Champlain back to France.⁸



Left: a sketch of Champlain's 1608 fort based on his own depiction⁹; right: typical male dress of the early 1600s.

⁷ <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0001505>; retrieved 5/21/10.

⁸ <http://www.upperstjohn.com/nellie/d706.htm>; retrieved 6/15/10.

⁹ <http://www.telusplanet.net/dgarneau/french4.htm>; retrieved 5/20/10.

Four years later the treaty of St-Germain-en-Laye was made in which England agreed to return New France back to France, and in 1632, the Emery de Caen was commissioned by the French Crown to reoccupy Quebec and manage it for a year in the name of the company of ‘One Hundred Associates.’ Olivier Letardif returned with him as an employee of the company. Because of the treatment received by the English most of the Amerindians had fled the area but they soon returned. In 1633 Champlain again took over command of the city. One of his chief accomplishments during this time was the construction of the Notre-Dame-de-la-Recouvrance Church, which he had vowed to build upon his return. Champlain died there at the age of 65 in 1635. The political situation at this time was that France was in the midst of the Huguenot Rebellion so the colony still suffered from neglect.¹⁰



Most of the French colonists came from Normandy. Paris is the large red square to the right.

The first generation Poulin (**our first ancestor**) to arrive in Canada was Claude Poulain. He was born in 1615 in Saint-Maclou de Rouen, France, located on the Seine River, a short distance from Le Havre. He was baptized in the 16th century church of St-Maclou de Rouen on the 26th of January, 1615. His parents were Pascal Poulain and Marie Levert.¹¹ He went to school as a boy and during his adolescence he worked for the monks at St-Maclou de Rouen. Perhaps that is where he apprenticed as a carpenter. He decided at the age of 21 to leave for adventure in New France in America. In the springtime he boarded the vessel of Sieur de Courpon in company with other new families who were making the voyage to increase the colony.¹² He was a skilled carpenter (journeyman) by this time. Imagine Claude's wonder after the difficult crossing of eight to twelve weeks, when he saw the buildings of Quebec, in the afternoon of June 11, 1636. Quebec was then a very small town swarming with life; bustling with sailors, hunters, pioneers, and merchants. The construction of this era was plentiful, so he did not have a lack of

¹⁰ Parkman, *France and England*, Voll I, 251-260.

¹¹ Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 41. The names of his parents were furnished by Vaillancourt in his book titled, *La Conquete du Canada par les Normands*.

¹² Yvan Poulin, *Origine de L'Histoire des Poulin*, a typed manuscript printed at Sante-Marie, Beauce, June 1991, 33; Bibliotheque Nationale du Quebec.

work. We may assume that after thirty years of difficult colonization, give or take, that some houses of wood and stone were already built in the Place Royale and part of Old Quebec.¹³

In such a small town it can be supposed that Claude frequently encountered Jeanne Mercier whom he would eventually marry. Jeanne was the daughter of Loup Mercier and Jeanne Gaillard who had been married in France on September 25, 1611. Jeanne was born on the 25th of November in 1621, at Mortagne, France and was baptized in 1622. She came to Canada in 1638 at the age of 17 where she met Claude. They were married on August 8, 1639 by Father Nicolas Adam, of the Compagnie de Jesus (Jesuits), who was functioning as the parish priest of Champlain's newly built Notre-Dame-de-la-Recouvrance Church in Quebec. Present were Guillaume Boivin and the surgeon Robert Giffard, Seigneur de Beauport.¹⁴ Their marriage was the 18th celebrated in Quebec. The church was located in the Old Quebec quarter on the corner of Buade and Tresor Streets.¹⁵ It burned to the ground the following year in 1640 and all the parish records were completely destroyed.¹⁶

Surprisingly, the newlyweds went to live in Trois-Rivieres for a time, with Claude most likely still working as a carpenter. Trois-Rivieres was a new village which had been founded in 1634 and Claude must have heard of available work there. Apparently he got along well with the Jesuits. Claude and Jeanne baptized their first child, a daughter who was born on January 1, 1641. Her name was Marie. Then it seems that they were overtaken by homesickness because they returned to Rouen, France, in 1642. It was there that two more children were born, Pascal, on February 15, 1645 and Madeleine on the 27 of June, 1646. Just before the birth of Madeleine, on April 17th, 1646, in Paris, Olivier Letardif passed an Act before the Notary Levasseur which conceded six arpents of land to Claude Poulain in the Seigneurie de Beaupre. The land was located about 20 miles, approximately seven French leagues, northeast of Quebec City, on the north bank of the St. Lawrence River, across from northeastern end of the Ile d'Orleans. Letardif had recently become co-seigneur and Procurer General of Beaupre by purchasing one eighth of the Seigneurie. He also took over duties as the Seigneurial Judge. Perhaps Olivier had met up with Claude somehow and convinced him to return to Canada. Olivier himself owned a plot of land with a five-arpent frontage on the St. Lawrence which ran back a depth of five miles. It was probably located on the east side of the Riviere Ste-Anne, less than three miles east of Claude's land. Olivier built a home there and made over fifteen concessions to habitants.¹⁷

In order to maintain feudalism in the New World, the King had decreed that large land grants, referred to as seigneuries, would be given to aristocrats and they, in turn, would consign land to the common settlers. An arpent was a French acre of land that, in this case, signified a width of a strip of land that reached from the Saint Lawrence River back some distance to interior. In Quebec, the arpent was often used as a linear measurement of 191.8 feet. Therefore, Claude's concession of six arpents was a strip of land 1151 feet wide.¹⁸ In the year after receiving the land, in 1647, the Poulain family, which now consisted of five members, rented space in a ship to recross the ocean. This time, however, Claude had the promise of owning land in New France. Since it was nearly impossible for a common man to procure land

¹³ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 34.

¹⁴ Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, 43.

¹⁵ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 41.

¹⁶ Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, 44. In spite of this statement Claude's marriage contract was not destroyed (see copy at the end of this chapter).

¹⁷ <http://www.upperstjohn.com/nellie/d706.htm>; from the book *Madawaskan Heritage* by Leo G. Cyr; retrieved 6/16/10. Also: <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=:262140&id=I247>; Translation by M. Mangum; retrieved 6/17/10. One translation said 1/8 of the seigneurie and the other said Lot 8 by which I located the plot he owned. Perhaps both are true.

¹⁸ *Barron's French-English Dictionary*, 2006; in Quebec the arpent could be a linear measurement of 191.8 feet or a surface area of 36, 802sf, just under one American acre.

in France, this was an exciting opportunity. Why did Claude, a commoner, receive six arpents when most of his neighbors received only three or four? It may be because in these early days the seigneurs were attempting to induce skilled craftsmen to come live in their town.

It is not known for sure whether the family lodged in Quebec or Beupre after they arrived in New France but it is known that Martin (**our 2nd ancestor**) was born in Quebec on the 26th of September, 1648, as shown in the Register of the Church of Notre Dame de Quebec. It is also related that in the absence of a missionary, Martin was baptized privately in the house of his parents on the day of his birth. It was not until the following month, on the 17th of October, that Father B. Vimont, of the Compagnie de Jesus formally conferred the ceremony of baptism, in the church at Quebec. The baby's godfather, Martin Gouvel, and godmother, Marie Couillard, gave him the name of Martin. In these days most settlements did not have a parish priest and had to rely on itinerant priests for religious services and sacraments. They were known as missionaries, usually Recollets, a branch of Franciscan monks, or failing that, Jesuits. Two and a half years later, on the 27th of January, 1651, Claude and Jeanne's fifth child, a boy, was born. He was baptized on the 2nd of February with the name of Rene, at the house of M. Olivier Letardif, by Father Ragueneau, who was serving as the parish priest. It was noted at this time that the father and mother were from the location called Cap Tourmente (and later Sainte-Anne du Petit-Cap), as the name of Sainte-Anne de Beupre was not yet in use at this time. It is apparent that Letardif and his wife Barbe figured heavily in the lives of the earliest colonists.

20	PIERRE LEPICARD	3
21	MARIE MICHEL, Vve de LOUIS GARNIER	3
22	JULIEN MERCIER	3,5
23	PIERRE MAUFILS	2,5
24	ROBERT SIGUERE	4
25	ETIENNE DELESSART	6
26	FABRIQUE DE SAINTE-ANNE	2
27	HELENE BOUIN	2
28	CLAUDE POULAIN	6
29	ROBERT FOUBERT	3
30	GEORGES PELLETIER	3
31	FRANCOIS BOIVIN	5
32	MATHURIN MOUSNIER	4
33	HOEL SIMARD	4
34	SIMON BOIVIN	5

This map from June 1663 is oriented with the top towards the east and shows the plot of land owned by Claude.

Nearby, just to the east is the plot owned by Etienne de Lessart (Lessard). A segment of land between them was donated by Etienne for the building of a church. This map shows 49 plots of land.¹⁹

By September, 1651, Claude and family were finally living on their own land after having made a contract with the Fabrique de Quebec, which was signed at Fort St-Louis, in Quebec. On November 8th, 1651, Claude Poulain and Abel Benoit accepted from Olivier Letardif, a "mitairie" name of "Tousaincts."²⁰ Claude had to pay or was bound to pay 50 livres for the land.²¹ It can be assumed that Claude could now begin clearing the land and building a house if he had not begun it already.

¹⁹ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 48.

²⁰ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 42. This is either a miss-spelling of the word 'métairie' or it is an old Quebec form of the word. In one book métairie meant a small farm (J. G. Keetels, *New Method of Learning the French Language*, Harvard College Library, 1924). But in more common and general usage, a métairie is a property outside of town used according to a 'métayage' contract. <http://www.larousse.com/en/dictionnaires/francais/mitairie>. This is a contract whereby the owner or the life-tenant of rural land leases the land for nine years as long as the lessee cultivates it and shares the gains and losses. (Information retrieved by Martha Poulin Kammer.) This share-cropping agreement is usually described as a 50/50 share between owner and tenant; it was practiced in large parts of 17th and 18th century France. But in Normandie and other northern provinces the practice was the

Claude Poulain, Robert Caron, and Etienne Racine were the first colonists on the Cote de Beaupre. They were established in the part which we know today as the parish of Ste-Anne and of St-Joachim. They were the patriarchs of families that preserved the heritage of their fathers with their religious sentiments and their good and ancient customs.²² The Poulain family remained at Sainte-Anne and witnessed a life of new beginnings. Claude was the godfather at the first baptism that is inscribed in the register of the Fabrique de Sainte-Anne. The infant baptized was Claude Pelletier, who would become the future Friar Didace, the first Canadian-born Recollet. On January 18, 1654, their oldest daughter Marie was married in Ste-Anne, just after her 13th birthday, to Julien Mercier, a neighbor whose land was a few lots away. Two more children were born into Claude and Jeanne's family. Ignace Poulain on the 19th of December, 1655, and Marguerite on October 4, 1658.²³

In 1658, on the 8th of March, Etienne de Lessard (**another of our direct ancestors**), future father-in-law of the second Marie Poulain, and a neighbor of Claude, desiring to contribute towards the fulfillment of the long-standing desire of the community to have a place of worship, donated two arpents of land for the construction of a church and for living quarters of the parish priests who would come there. It is easy to locate with precision the first chapel of 1658, on the shore of the river to the west of the current Basilica of Sainte-Anne. A fragment of the framework that was found confirms that it was located there. The Society of Historical Monuments placed a commemorative plaque at this location near the Grand Chemin, in front of the Basilica.²⁴ Etienne de Lessard was from Chamblais, a small town near Falaise in Normandy, which can be seen on the map of Normandie above (just below Caen), but Chamblais is too small to be seen. He was born in 1623, the son of Jacques de Lessart and Marie Herson, and came to New France in 1646. On April 8th, 1652, he married Marguerite, daughter of Charles Sevestre, the Seigneur de Lanoraie, and Marie Pichon.²⁵ Work began on the new church and Claude, being a skilled carpenter worked on the construction. As he and several others began, a miracle occurred, the first miracle of Ste-Anne de Beaupre. Louis Guimont, who had a lame leg was cured after laying a few foundation stones. The site soon became the object of many pilgrimages and many other miracle healings occurred through the following centuries.

In 1659, on November 19, the Poulain's second daughter, Madeleine was married in Quebec to Pierre Maufiles, another neighbor who lived next to Julien Mercier. She was fourteen years old. Of the last two of Claude and Jeanne's children, Marie, was born on the 25th of May, 1661 and Pierre on the 7th of August, 1664. Thus Claude and Jeanne had a total of nine children, five girls and four boys. A few months after Marie was born, on the 8th of August, 1661, tragedy struck the family when two of their boys, Pascal and Rene, ages 16 and 10, were lost in the woods. It was supposed that hostile Iroquois had taken them since they had killed three men of the village on the same day. It is written in the Journal of Jesuits for the month of June 1661: *The news was carried the 8th. The night of the return of the afore-mentioned boat crew and at the same time that of Trois-Rivieres when the enemies have killed three men of Cap and*

payment of a money rent which worked out much better for the tenant. However in Canada it appears that the land was sold to the habitants, in Claude's case for 50 livres, which was much more reasonable. The name of "Tousaincts" may have been a name which referenced the parcel of land Claude received, and/or it might also have been a unique 'dit' name used to represent Claude in his militia service as well as in civil matters. But the mention of Abel Benoit as receiving the same name makes no sense and I suppose that either the author was confused or we have yet to discover the exact details.

²¹ Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 46. The payments Claude made to the Fabrique over the years may have been for the paying off of this purchase price. The original copy of the sale is located in the Bureau des Archives Judiciaires du District de Quebec. The answer to the exact meaning of metairie or mitairie may be located there.

²² Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 47. From the book by the priest, Ferland, entitled, *Brochures Canadiennes No. 9*.

²³ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 41-46.

²⁴ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 49.

²⁵ *Lessard de Lessard*, an unsigned undated one page paper.

two children of Claude Poulain were lost in the woods, likely, they were taken by the Iroquois. What cruel anguish of the tears of the heart at the hearth Poulain.²⁶ What tears were cried by their mother when after searching through the forest near their land and they did not find them! What conjectures ran through the minds of Claude and Jeanne? Were they devoured by wild animals or carried off by the Iroquois? In this last alternative what type of appalling death was suffered by the two children?²⁷ It can be assumed that the Milice (militia) of Ste-Anne kept a very vigilant watch for Iroquois after this.



At this time all Canadians, friendly natives, and even wild natives in Canada lived in mortal fear of the Iroquois. Without adequate garrisons of soldiers the colonists had been forced to defend themselves as best they could. Finally, four years later in 1665 the King took an interest in his colony (it had been under the control of a private company since 1627), and, taking over the administration of Canada, himself he sent a full regiment of 1300 musketeers to “subdue or destroy the Iroquois.” This regiment, the Carignan-Salieres (image at left) under the command of Colonel de Salieres, was the first regiment sent to support Canada. It was just in time because the fury and frequency of the Iroquois raids was seriously impeding the growth of the colony. Along with a new regiment came a new governor, Daniel de Remy, Sieur de Courcelle who was replacing Governor Marquis de Tracy. That winter, Courcelle with five hundred men made a forced march to the Iroquois country. In one sense the foray was a failure. The men of the regiment were not trained in survival in the Canadian winters and many men froze to death. There was no battle, but the attempted raid had a profound impact on the Iroquois

who realized they were not safe, even in winter, and they sent a delegation of peace to Quebec. However, the talks broke down and a new force of 1300 men marched south again with Tracy and Courcelle. They found seven Mohawk villages which they pillaged and burned. In each case, the warriors could not stand up to the din of twenty drums backed by many ranks of troops and ran away at the sound. The Iroquois again sued for a peace which lasted twenty years – a great boon to the colonists, who had less people than the Iroquois nation, not numbering more than 2500 at this time. Sadly, there was no mention of the restoration of captives.²⁸ At any rate, this was a few years too late for the Poulain family. After the campaign, upon completion of their terms of service, the men of the Regiment were invited to stay in Canada as colonists and about 400 of them took the offer.

Meanwhile, back in Beaupre, the choice of the location of the first church had not taken into account the consequences of the great tides of springtime and the habitants had to resign themselves to build a new chapel. It was impossible to construct elsewhere on the plot given by Etienne because they could not place it on the riverbank and the land to the interior must have proved just as difficult. But by his generosity and desire to protect the future church, Etienne offered a plot of adjacent land to the east of the first. Monseigneur Francois de Laval, the first bishop of Quebec City, accepted the offer and work began in 1661. The ancient cemetery which is found beside the current Commemorative Chapel was the

²⁶ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 47.

²⁷ Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 45.

²⁸ Parkman, *France and England*, Vol I, 1229-1249. This depiction of a man of the Regiment can be found at many sites on the web. I understand it comes from one of the five volumes of the Osprey Publishing Men-at-Arms-Series called *Louis XV's Army* but I could not determine which one, probably volume 2 or 3.

site chosen. It was built in record time as the account books of the Fabrique de Beupre indicate.²⁹ Bishop Laval also founded a school in St-Joachim, probably before 1676.

In the 1660s there are some records of transactions between Claude and the Fabrique de Beupre. According to these books, in 1661 Claude paid to the Fabrique sixteen livres, in 1662 twenty sols, in 1663 a bushel of wheat and forty sols. In 1663 the Fabrique paid Claude as a journeyman carpenter forty sols. In 1663 a receipt shows twenty-two livres and nine 'sols' for the 'tambour' [frame?] of the door of the church, and for a piece of wood to hold a quart of the 'water of life' [holy water?], and in 1664 he was paid twenty sols for candles. In 1664 Claude paid the Fabrique two minots of Indian wheat and in 1665 two more minots of Indian wheat, one minot of peas, etc.³⁰ In 1666, it is shown that Claude had cleared twenty arpents of arable land to farm.

Besides ordering the regiment of musketeers to the colony the King also began sending boatloads of immigrants and by 1667 the size of the colony had increased from 2,500 to over 4,000. Interestingly, the Cote de Beupre had more people at this time than the town of Quebec did.³¹ In these later years Claude also obtained revenue by continuing to use his talents as a carpenter. In 1678 he worked as a 'Presbytere' (a church warden) of the parish – and he installed the bell in the new tower at this time. In colonial Canada the church bell was not just a fixture of the church. Besides announcing the time for mass it served all the community by indicating the hours of the day, calling assembly meetings, and giving warning in times of danger.

In 1679, Jeanne furnished the meals for the church roofers. As payment, the parish priest gave the family three minots of wheat and twelve pounds of butter. In the 1670s a fire razed the new church to the ground and work was begun on a third church in 1676. Daughter Marie's husband Julien Mercier died sometime in early 1682 and she was remarried on May 11 of that year with Charles de Montmaigni. In July 1686 the third church was finally finished. The modern commemorative Chapel is placed on the foundations of the transept of the third historical church. This church would serve the community for two hundred years.

The founding Poulain family was laborious, social, and sharp. After a life of many activities, after having supported Christianity, and after all the trials of living in the New World, Claude and Jeanne died within three days of each other, Jeanne on the 14th of December and Claude on the 17th, 1687. They were buried in the graveyard beside the church.³²

²⁹ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 49-50.

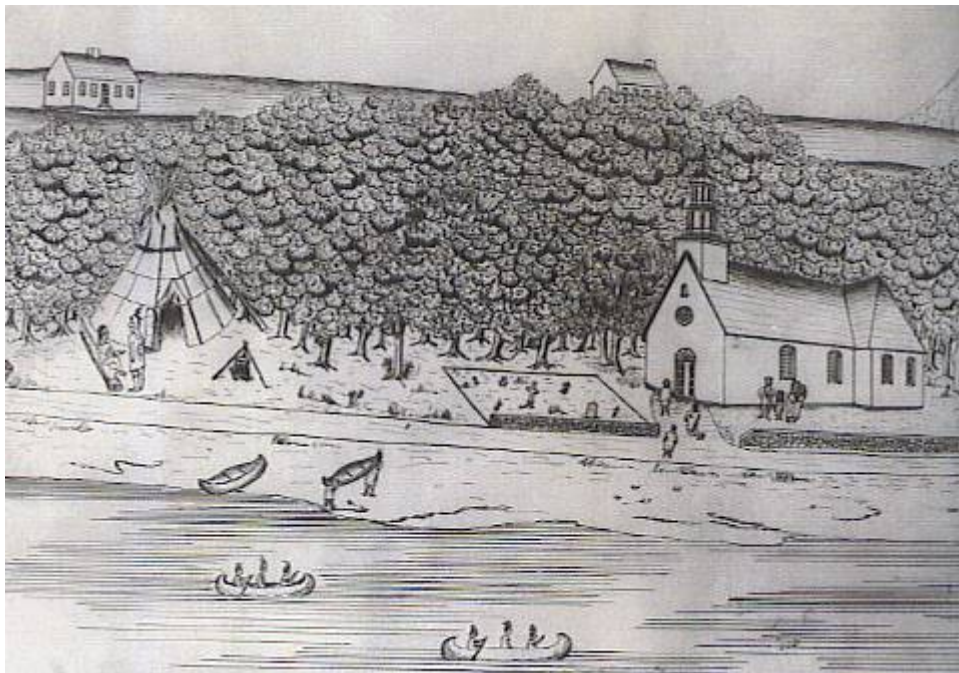
³⁰ Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 50; information furnished by Father Ferland, parish priest of Ste-Anne de Beupre.

³¹ Parkman, *France and England*, Vol I, 1270.

³² Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 50-52.



The First Miracle: “As the foundations were being laid for the first church in 1658, Louis Guimont, who was disabled, had only placed three small stones before he was miraculously cured.”³³ Claude is possibly meant to be one of the men depicted here. This is a good representation of workmen during this period. They usually wore breeches that were not tied at the knee (like sailors) and they also did not normally wear stockings as they would quickly wear out. The only omission is possibly a workman’s cap, since it was the custom in those days for every man to cover his head.



This sketch, showing the 2nd church, commemorates the first pilgrimage by Amerindians, the Huron-Windats, to the shrine of Ste-Anne in 1671. Other tribes followed, often setting up camp near the Church. French Canadians also arrived in small boats.³⁴

³³ Jean-Marie Level and Brigitte Ostiguy, *Saint Anne de Beaupre, An Inspiration*, Les Editions du Chien Rouge, Quebec, 1999, 5.

³⁴ Lebel and Ostiguy, *Saint Anne de Beaupre*, 38.



CHAPEL AND GROTTO AT STE. ANNE DE BEAUPRÉ.



The Louis Hebert Monument in the Parc Montmorency (near the Chateau-Frontenac) celebrates the earliest settlers of Quebec. Claude and Jeanne's names are placed on the plaque on the back of the pedestal.



The Plaque: Claude Poulain is the 8th name from last in the left column; Jeanne Mercier's name is opposite his.



To the left of the door of the modern Commemorative Chapel, a plaque for Claude Poulain reads: “1639-1939; Claude Poulain Jeanne Mercier; Arrived in Quebec in 1636; Married in Quebec in 1639; Established at Ste-Anne in 1651; Interred here in 1687; Jean Poulain Louise Pare; 1667 Ste Anne; General Committee of Celebration.”



To the right of the door a commemorative plaque for Etienne de Lessard reads: “To the memory of Etienne de Lessard who in 1658 gave the land on which was built the first public chapel dedicated to Ste-Anne in America. Hommage of the Families Lessard 21 September 1958.”

1638
 Le 28. D'oct. 1639. Le ban adieu estant fait p un pstant
 homme amy legitime supposé le P. Nicolas D'ayz
 faisant fonting de Curé a Luthier de
 et Jean M... après les anes Dubourg...
 un tel conseil...
 1639
 Le 1. D'oct. 1639. Le ban adieu estant fait p un
 homme amy legitime supposé le P. Nicolas D'ayz
 faisant fonting de Curé a Luthier de
 et Jean M... après les anes Dubourg...
 un tel conseil...
 Le 12. D'oct. 1639. Le ban adieu estant fait p un
 homme amy legitime supposé le P. Nicolas D'ayz
 faisant fonting de Curé a Luthier de
 et Jean M... après les anes Dubourg...
 un tel conseil...
 Le 26. D'oct. 1639. Le ban adieu estant fait p un
 homme amy legitime supposé le P. Nicolas D'ayz
 faisant fonting de Curé a Luthier de
 et Jean M... après les anes Dubourg...
 un tel conseil...

A photocopy of Claude Poulain's marriage contract, 1639.

"Petit Rocher"

"Little Rock"

Petit rocher de la haute montagne,
Je viens ici finir cette campagne.
Ah! doux échos, entendez mes soupirs,
En languissant je vais bientôt mourir.

Little rock of the high mountain
I come here to finish this campaign.
Ah, sweet echos, hear my sighs;
Languishing, I am soon to die.

Seul en ces bois, que j'ai eu de soucis!
Pensant toujours à mes si chers amis,
Je demandais: Hélas! sont-ils noyés?
Les Iroquois les auraient-ils tué?

Alone in these woods, what cares I have had!
Thinking always of my friends so dear.
I asked: "Are they drowned?
Have the Iroquois killed them?

Un de ces jours que, m'étant éloigné,
En revenant je vis une fumée;
Je me suis dit: Ah! grand Dieu qu'est ceci?
M'ont mis le coeur d'une trop grande joie!

One day, when roaming alone,
And returning I saw smoke,
I asked myself, "Ah, great God, what is this?
Have the Iroquois taken my house?

Je me suis mis un peu à l'ambassade,
Afin de voir si c'était embuscade;
Alors je vis trois visages français!
Les Iroquois m'ont-ils pris mon logis?

I then set out as an ambassador
To see if it was an ambush;
Then I saw three French faces!
My heart beat with great joy.

Mes genoux poient, ma faible voix s'arrête,
Je tombe...Hélas! à partir ils s'apprêtent:
Je reste seul...Pas un qui me console,
Quand la mort vient par un si grand désol!

My knees bending, my weak voice stops,
I fall...Alas! they are going to leave.
I remain alone...No one to console me;
When death comes near one so desolate.

Rosignolet, va dire à ma maîtresse,
Ames enfants qu'un adieu je leur laisse;
Que j'ai gardé mon amour et ma foi,
Et désormais faut renoncer à moi!

Nightingale, go tell my mistress,
Carry word to the children I'm leaving,
That I have kept my love and my faith,
And henceforth they must give up hope of me.

C'est donc ici que le monde m'abandonne!
Mais j'ai secours en vous, Sauveur des hommes!
Très-Sainte Vierge, ah! m'abandonnez pas,
Permettez-moi d mourir entre vos bras!

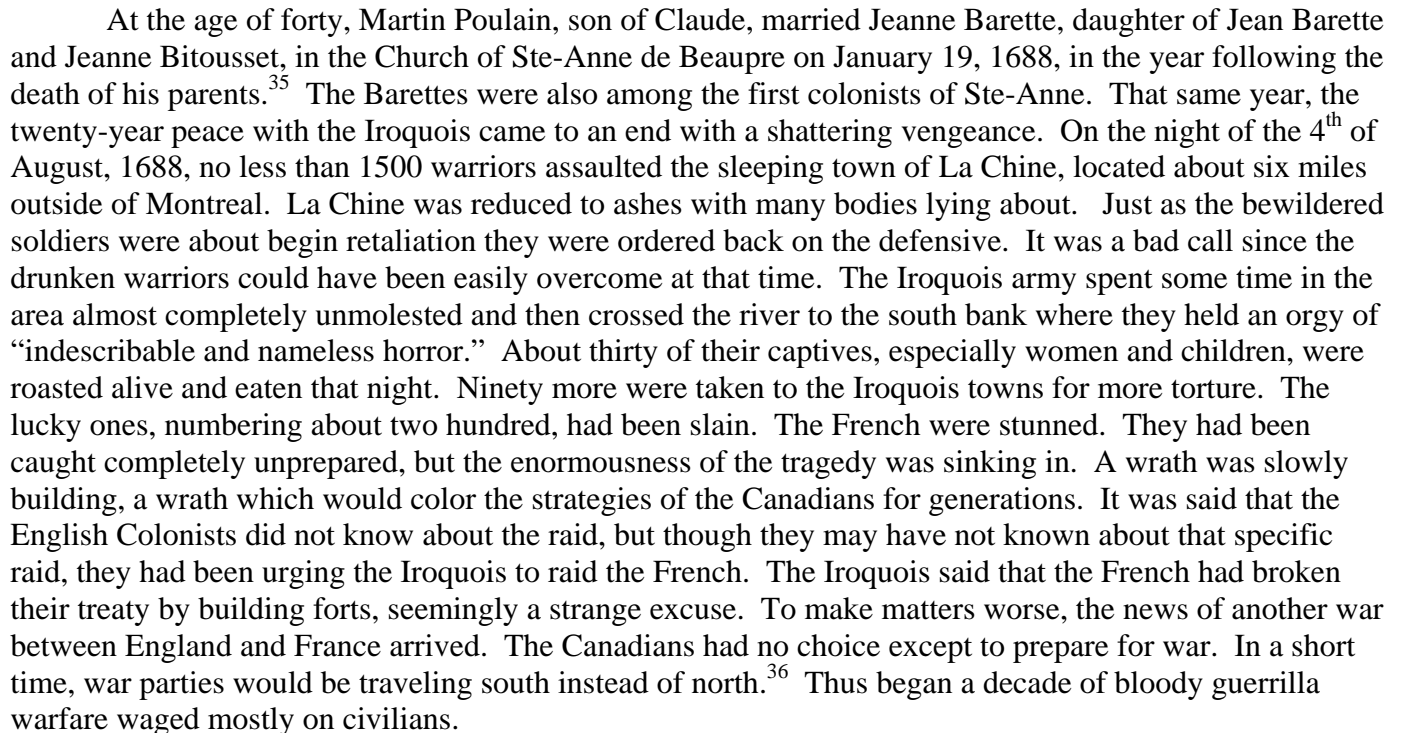
It is here that the world abandoned me,
But I seek aid from you, Saviour of men!
Most holy Virgin, Ah, do not abandon me;
Let me die in your arms.

This is a song of the voyageurs (trappers, mountain men); one of the earliest songs of New World origin. This song is about a dying trapper named Cadieux who was known throughout the entire region on the Saint Lawrence River. According to legend, he saw his camp threatened by Iroquois. He quickly loaded his family in a canoe and sent them downriver. They made it to a French settlement. When he failed to rejoin them a search party was sent to look for him. His body was found in a shallow grave, apparently dug by his own hands, and beside it lay this song, written in blood on a piece of birch bark. This song is mentioned in many accounts throughout the nineteenth century, and would have been known to any 'Coureurs-de-bois' (bush rangers).



Chapter Two

La Vie á Ste-Anne de Beaupre



The map illustrates the St. Lawrence Valley, a crucial region for French colonization. It shows the St. Lawrence River flowing from the Saguenay Fjord in the north to the Gulf of St. Lawrence in the south. Key locations marked include Quebec (1608), Montreal (1642), and various missions and forts established by the French. The map also shows the St. Lawrence Mountains and the Saguenay River. The regions of the Algonquians and Hurons are indicated, along with the Saguenay Fjord and the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The map is color-coded, with yellow representing French territory and pink representing other regions. The text 'ALGONQUINIENS' is written across the central part of the map, and 'HURONS' is written in the bottom right corner. The map is titled 'St. Lawrence Valley' at the top.

³⁵ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 57.

³⁶ Parkman, *France and England*, Vol II, 133-137.

Conditions in Canada were such that each man of the age of 16-60 was required to be a member of a militia company (milice) organized by community or parish. One problem was that each company could have several men of similar or even the same names. The military did not yet use serial numbers so it was the practice for each man to choose a unique name to identify himself. 'Dit' meant 'called' or 'said,' for example, Claude Poulain dit Tousainct (a possible explanation of the "Mitairie nom de Tousainct" mentioned above). Each man was given a hunting musket (fusil de chasse) which he had to pay off in a certain amount of time. The men were expected to use the muskets for hunting and defense. In 1650 Claude may have had a matchlock musket similar to one depicted in the picture of the soldier of the Carignon-Saliere Regiment. These were mostly made in Tulle, France, and cost 14 livres each. Etienne de Lessard was the ensign (2nd lieutenant) of Ste-Anne's company. Women, boys, and even young girls of all classes were taught how to shoot.

Later that year, in November, 1688, during a snowstorm, another Iroquois war party struck the town of La Chesnaye, now called Riviere-du-Loup located on the south bank of the St. Laurence, downriver from Beupre. It was known as Wolf River because the French called seals 'sea-wolves'.³⁷ Across the river, our ancestors in Beupre must have thought they would be next. The terror that reigned throughout the colony was complete, perhaps increased by the ineffective leadership of Governor Denonville. In this situation, Martin Poulain and his new bride, Jeanne Barette, prepared for the birth of their first child. It can be assumed that while Jeanne was giving birth to their first son, Jean, Martin was assisting a vigilant watch by the village Milice for Iroquois or English raiders. Jean (**our 3rd ancestor**), also sometimes referred to as Jean-Baptiste, was born on the 26th of November in 1688. The next day he was baptized by Father Germain Morin, a priest of the Seminary of Quebec, in the church of Ste-Anne de Beupre. The Godfather was the baby's maternal grandfather, Jean Barette, and the godmother was his aunt, Marie Poulain (the 2nd Marie), now the wife of Etienne Lessard, son of Etienne de Lessard.³⁸

By this time King Louis IV was becoming tired of his colony. Despite all his considerable efforts it had not prospered as well as he had hoped. To fill the gap in leadership, he sent Count Frontenac back to lead Canada in those dark times. But, entertaining a false belief in the power of his name, Frontenac believed he could still make negotiations of peace with the Iroquois, so in 1689 he sent envoys to the Iroquois nation, and raiders to the English colonies. Perhaps he should have sent envoys to the English and raiders to the Iroquois. Three separate raiding columns moved south, one from Montreal, one from Trois-Rivieres, and one from Quebec. Instead of using regular soldiers, and leaving Canada open to counterattack, he turned to the beaver trappers known as coureur-de-bois (bush rangers) or voyageurs (travelers) for help. The first party consisted of 114 voyageurs and ninety-six Christianized Iroquois headed for Albany, NY, the second included twenty-four voyageurs and fifteen Abenakis and five Algonquins aimed at the settlements of New Hampshire, and the third was composed of fifty French and sixty Mission Abenakis whose destination was the settlements in Maine.³⁹

The previously mentioned war, known as King William's War, broke out in 1689. In response to the vicious raids, in May 1690 the English Colonists met in New York and devised a plan to capture Canada. Part of their force was to travel to Quebec by sea and part was to venture north to Montreal by land. The Iroquois had pledged to support the endeavor, but in truth, they had no taste for European warfare. Meanwhile, unaware of their plans, Frontenac was busy fortifying Quebec. He kept garrisons of regular troops along the river and maintained vigilance through continual scouting parties sent out into the wilds. Even so, Iroquois war parties still broke through at certain points and continued their slaughter. A

³⁷ Parkman, *France and England*, Vol II, 145.

³⁸ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 59.

³⁹ Parkman, *France and England*, Vol II, 138-154.

French scout found the English land army, under the command of a man named Walker building canoes at Lake George to travel to Montreal. Frontenac assembled his Regulars and sallied out with 1200 men. But they could not find the enemy because Walker and his men had given up and returned to Albany, all except for Captain John Shuyler who made a raid with twenty-nine whites and 120 Iroquois on the village of La Prairie, located across the river from Montreal. They were unsuccessful at catching anyone unawares and his party was driven off by a combination of Regulars, Milice, and Natives.⁴⁰

Then Frontenac received news that a fleet of enemy ships had reached Tadoussac, the location of the mission of St-Croix, downriver from Beauport. He ordered the Regulars near Montreal to make their way to Quebec and he hurried there himself. He found that the defenses of the town had been almost completed. After two days there were two hundred Regulars and Milice ready for the defense. The parish militias of Beauport and Beauport had been ordered to watch the river from vantage points near their towns. Finally, on the 16th, the sails of 34 ships were seen passing the Pointe d'Orleans, under the command of Sir William Phips. Les Bostonnais, as the French called the New Englanders, had arrived. Frontenac quickly refused a demand to surrender.



The aging Frontenac (right) refuses the offer to surrender. "I have no reply to make to your general other than from the mouth of my cannons and muskets."⁴¹

While Phips and his commanders deliberated the next move they lost the favor of the tides. That evening a great shouting with the sound of fifes and drums reached the English ears. One of their prisoners knew what it was – Callierres of Montreal with 700-800 men, Regulars, Milice, and coureurs-de-bois, had arrived. The odds were more even now. The English had their own fanfare two days later when they landed 1300 men at Beauport, commanded by a Major Walley. The defenders, militiamen from

⁴⁰ Parkman, *France and England*, Vol II, 172-188.

⁴¹ <http://wikimedia.org/commons/thumb/9/91/Frontenac...>; retrieved 5/20/10

Beaupre and Beauport, made a good defense, but being vastly outnumbered, were driven off and the English advanced towards Quebec. Meanwhile Phips began a cannonade of the town with his biggest ships. Frontenac returned fire. The next day the firing began anew. Two of the English ships were badly mauled and one drew off from the fight. Phips' flagship lost a mast and with it his flag. The English gunners had done virtually no harm at all, having killed only two or three men. Thus engaged, Phips ignored sending Walley the small boats he needed to cross the St. Charles River and assault Quebec from the landward side. The next day while Walley was conferring with Phips his men made a mad dash against Frontenac and his Regulars. Though they were more numerous they were repulsed and to cap it all Phips had decided to recover them back to the ships. The next day the rambunctious English on shore attacked the Canadian Milice that had flanked them and detachments from Quebec crossed the River to join the fight. They were also joined by the militias of Beauport and Beaupre. Along with the troops, many of the priests were in the thick of the fight encouraging their flock to fight harder against the heretics. The Milice fought in their usual way, as woodsmen, taking cover and reloading behind rocks or trees, for which the English taunted them. But neither force could defeat the other that day. In spite of their bragging, the pugnacious Bostonnais made a very hasty embarkation in a driving rain to the safety of their fleet, leaving their five field pieces behind. Phips wanted to make another landing but the rough weather convinced him not to do it. The English fleet retreated four leagues and stopped to repair the damaged ships. They were followed by a French detachment. This turned out to be a good chance to exchange prisoners, including those that had been brought to Canada from Maine and those who had been ransomed back from the Indians.⁴²



A map of Quebec 1690, the original dwellings were along the shore; Cap Diamant is the name of the 320 foot high bluffs.

Martin Poulain and the men of Beaupre had taken part in the vigilance along the river and the fight at the beach of Beauport and also the fords of the St. Charles. The women and children may have been sent to Quebec for shelter, many of whom took refuge at the Ursuline Convent. One of the nuns had had a corner of her apron removed by an English cannon ball; twenty-six shot in all landed in their courtyard,

⁴² Parkman, *France and England*, Vol II, 188-204.

which they gathered up and gave to the French gunners, who, in turn, not-so-kindly returned them to the English. Some people were also sheltered at the Hotel Dieu. The villagers who did not come to Quebec were said to have hidden in the woods. The Jesuits at their seminary prepared to repel attackers whom, they had heard, vowed to kill them all and cut off their ears to make necklaces. The victory was acclaimed



by all as divine intervention. It was at this time that three French ships with large sums of money and supplies were making the yearly trip to Quebec. Somehow the English knew about them and hoped to capture them, but a thick fog came up and then a snowstorm. They were able to hide until the enemy fleet left. This particular miracle was ascribed to Ste-Anne de Beaupre. On the return journey Phips lost many men to cold and disease. They arrived at the dismal Colony of Massachusetts which now found itself in extreme debt. Phips also happens to be the man who botched the administration of the famous Salem witch trials.⁴³ The picture on the left shows a typical militia musketeer in Phips's army, this example is of a private in the Dorchester Company from Massachusetts. The Canadian Milice, counterparts of the Massachusetts Militia would not have looked much different and the muskets and equipment were also much the same. The entire Dorchester Company was lost at sea on one of four ships that sank on the way home.⁴⁴

Later that year, a second son was born to Martin and Jeanne. His name was Andre and he was born on the 31st of December, 1690. He was baptized at Ste-Anne de Beaupre and his godfather was Francois Barette, his maternal uncle, and his godmother was Dorothee Lessart, daughter of Etienne Lessart.⁴⁵

After the English left the Iroquois war resumed with a fury, and for the next nine years raids and counter raids traveled back and forth. But the Iroquois found that the Canadians were more robust now. Frontenac had revived their fighting spirit. The Canadiens also had use of all the forts and blockhouses they had built. The farmers of the villages worked their fields all together, concentrated in one field guarded by Regulars with Militia scouts ranging outward. Then when that field was done they moved on to the next, etc. At the first sign of trouble they retreated to a fortified place and fought the raiders off. Even girls had been taught to shoot and stories abounded of native attacks driven off by girls and boys. Also the response against the raids was much better now, and many raiders were caught and killed, and often, captives were freed. The upriver settlements were affected most since it was easier for the Iroquois to go that way. Downriver, the settlements along the Cote de Beaupre were relatively quiet. But south of the Saint Laurence the Iroquois began to range into the Beauce area to catch trappers and Christianized Indians from a mission located there. The English had made peace with France but the Amerindians continued fighting. The French were so infuriated at the way that the Iroquois burned their captives that they began to burn Iroquois captives – all of them. This had the desired effect and after a time the Iroquois ceased burning their prisoners.

As if life wasn't hard enough, in 1692 most of the crops in New France were destroyed by caterpillars.⁴⁶ In 1693 on the 14th of February Martin and Jeanne had their third child, Marie-Anne. She was baptized the same day at Ste-Anne de Beaupre; her godfather was Pierre Poulain, her paternal uncle,

⁴³ Parkman, *France and England*, Vol II, 205-207.

⁴⁴ Rene Chartrand, *Colonial American Troops 1610-1774*, Osprey Publishing, Oxford, UK, 2002, plate C3.

⁴⁵ Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 53.

⁴⁶ <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCETimelineBrowse&Params=A1CAT9>; retrieved 5/22/10.

and her godmother was Jeanne Bitoussset, her maternal grandmother. The fourth child, Agnes, was born in 1695 and the next two children, Pierre and Ursule, were twins. They were born in August of 1699.⁴⁷

South and southeast of Quebec the fighting was just as severe though the natives there were not given to such vicious tortures as those of the Iroquois. Most of the fighting took place in Maine and New Hampshire where the French could easily nurse the old hatred of the Abenakis for the English. All the while the Canadians kept up a detente of dialogue and gifts with non-Iroquois tribes. Things were touch and go for a while, but finally it worked. Almost all of those tribes became allied or at least neutral with the French, as opposed to the English who had only the Mohawk as their staunch allies. Just after this success, on the 28th of November, 1698, Frontenac died at the age of seventy-eight.⁴⁸

In the following year, 1699, there was a grand council of native tribes held in Montreal. With the news that both the English and the French were bent on their extermination, and were even considering cooperation to do it, not to mention that most of the non-Iroquois tribes might have helped, and also the fact of their own considerable losses of warriors, the Iroquois finally thought of peace. The French and their allied native tribes promised the return of all Iroquois captives held by them, and the Iroquois promised to return their captives also. First came 200 Iroquois in canoes, the mission Indians were ranged along the shore to greet them. Then came a giant flotilla carrying the western and northern allies in hundreds of canoes. Twelve great chiefs led the council. In the end the northern and western allies gave up their Iroquois captives but the Iroquois only gave about twenty women and children back. One unexpected problem was that many of the Iroquois captives did not want to return, others were hidden. Regardless, the Iroquois were never again the powerful nation they once had been and no one was afraid of them now. In 1689 an English estimate put the number of Iroquois warriors at 2,550 and by 1698 only 1,230.⁴⁹



Sketch of Quebec in 1700.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Poulin, *Troisième Centenaire*, page 54.

⁴⁸ Parkman, *France and England*, Vol II, 209-229.

⁴⁹ Parkman, *France and England*, Vol II, 315-324.

⁵⁰ http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Quebec_nouvelle_france.jp; retrieved 5/20/10.

Martin and Jeanne eventually had nine children in all, three sons and six daughters: Jean (1688), Andre (1690), Marie-Anne (1693), Agnes (1695), Pierre (1699), and Ursule (1699), Marguerite (1702), Genevieve (1703), and Francoise (?).⁵¹ It is deduced by the *Procesverbaux de 1712* that Martin was not a farmer but on the other hand, it is unknown what he did do for work. In all the extracts of baptism, marriage, civil state Martin's occupation is not mentioned. It's conceivable that he may have learned the carpentry trade from his father and had kept on in that occupation. Martin's brother Pierre, lived on Etienne de Lessard's land, next to the land of his father, Claude, and farmed it.⁵² Etienne died about this time, 1703, his wife would live on for some time.

As soon as things started to settled down the threat of war broke out again, this time it was known as Queen Anne's War, which was really a war of Spanish Succession regarding who would sit on that throne.⁵³ It began in 1702. Governor Vaudreuil, successor to Frontenac, followed his predecessor's penchant for instigating raids. Both sides in the New World were still quite weak and the savage fighting in the borderlands of Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts continued on and on. It was during this time, on the 28th of February, 1704, that the attack on Deerfield, Massachusetts occurred. Fifty-four or fifty-seven villagers were killed and 111 had been made captive. Many other raids continued and there was heroism on the part of the English, even by their women. Almost every English village on the borderlands was hit by at least one attack. The wars in Maine would continue, off and on, until August 12th, 1724, when the mission village of Norridgewock was destroyed by the English. The missionary there, Father Sebastien Rale, was said to have been firing on them whereupon an officer broke into his house and shot him in the head.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, in 1710 the English decided once again to capture Quebec.⁵⁵ The English again planned a two-pronged attack, one against Montreal by land, and one against Quebec by sea, the same plan as before. On October 1st, 1710, Acadia surrendered to the English fleet.⁵⁶

In that year Martin Poulain died at midnight on January 15, 1710 at the age of sixty-one. He was buried the next day in the cemetery at Ste-Anne de Beaupre. Attending the service by Father Gauthier were Ignace Poulain, his brother-in-law Etienne-Simard, another brother-in-law William Morel, and many relatives and friends. His wife, Jeanne remarried and died thirty-seven years later in 1747 at Chateau-Richer. In the year following Martin's death, at the age of 23, his eldest son Jean-Baptiste Poulain married Agnes Druoin of Chateau-Richer in that church on the 21st of July, 1711. Agnes, 20 years old, was the daughter of Etienne Drouin and Catherine Loignon. At this time Jean's father, Martin, and Agnes's mother were both deceased. Those present were Francois Barette, Etienne Casillon, Nicolas Drouin, and Ignace Poulain.⁵⁷ Three of the Poulain children, Jean-Baptiste, Andre, and Agnes, eventually married three of the same Drouin family.

Early in August, 1711, the French in Quebec were warned of the approach of the English invasion and the Canadian Milice was pressed into service and mustered at Quebec, just about a week after Jean-Baptiste's marriage. Jean eventually became a sergeant of Milice de Ste-Anne de Beaupre, but he may have been a private at this time. The Captain of the company was Prisque Lessard, the son of Etienne

⁵¹ Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 54.

⁵² Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 49. This statement seems unlikely. Pierre had married the daughter of Robert Giguere whose land was next to that of Etienne's – so it would make more sense that he lived on Robert's land next to Etienne's, unless he was renting a plot from Etienne, though why he did not cultivate a portion of the Poulin land is a mystery, especially given the fact that his brother Martin was not a farmer. A *procesverbaux* was an account drawn up by a magistrate or official.

⁵³ Parkman, *France and England*, Vol II, 339.

⁵⁴ Parkman, *France and England*, Vol II, 498-2501.

⁵⁵ Parkman, *France and England*, Vol II, 373-404.

⁵⁶ Parkman, *France and England*, Vol II, 438.

⁵⁷ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 71.

Lessard.⁵⁸ This invasion is known as the Walker Expedition. It was heavily supported by the English Crown, which sent warships and seven British infantry regiments. Things did not look good for Quebec. After the West appeared secure from the attempted invasion by land the French troops there were moved to Quebec. As mentioned earlier, the English in the west had retreated and the French did not know why. The powerful English fleet consisted of nine ships of war and two bomb ketches and about sixty troop carriers and support ships, the aforesaid British Regiments of 5500 men, 600 marines, and 1500 provincial Militia. Before setting out from Acadia, the English had captured a French sailor whom they bribed to pilot them safely to Quebec. When they were about to enter the St. Laurence River they found themselves on August 18th near the north shore, not in the center of the channel as they had supposed. Perhaps the French pilot had steered them off course. Just as they realized this mistake a storm came up and drove part of the fleet onto the rocks. The ships of war all escaped but eight British transports, one store ship and one sutler's sloop were all destroyed. 740 soldiers were killed and the number of deceased sailors is not known. The remaining naval captains decided that they did not have skilled enough pilots to continue on to Quebec. When the army in the west led by Nicholson got news of the disaster they had turned around and gone home. Meanwhile, in Quebec there was no lack of praise and wonder for the latest miracle that had occurred.⁵⁹ Queen Anne's War ended with the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, which gave the Hudson Bay area, Acadia, and Newfoundland to the English, while the French retained Cape Breton, Quebec, and other Islands in the St.-Laurence.

Amidst these dramatic events life went on. Of the union of Jean-Baptiste and Agnes Poulain ten children were born, Agnes (1712), Jean (1713), Joseph (1715), Madeleine (1717), Marguerite (1722), Pierre (1724), Claude (1727), Genevieve (1729), Athenase (1729), and Felicite-Jeanne (1732).⁶⁰ Joseph (**our 4th ancestor**) was born in the afternoon of May 27, 1715,⁶¹ and was baptized the same day at Ste-Anne de Beaupre by Father Chabot. The godfather was Joseph Poulain, a grand-cousin, and the godmother was Catherine, aunt of the infant and daughter of Etienne Drouin of the Parish of Chateau-Richer. In French Canadian families it is a tradition to name some of the boys Joseph, and some the girls Marie. But this usually forces most of them to use their middle names. In his youth Joseph and his brothers must have gone to a local school, because he knew how to sign his name. Perhaps the parish priest had tutored some of the children, or it could have been an itinerant teacher.⁶²

⁵⁸ Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 101.

⁵⁹ Parkman, *France and England*, Vol II, 440-457.

⁶⁰ Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 101-102; there is obviously a mistake in the records between Genevieve and Athenase who are listed as having been born within two months of each other.

⁶¹ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 62.

⁶² Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 71, and Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 107.

1688

Le premier jour du Mois de Janvier de l'an 1688, qu'on
 premier de vingt huit; par moy Germain Normin prestre de son par-
 laire Paray du quel se fait fonction de faire en cette Eglise, à cette
 baptême chrétien, fille de Joseph Paray et de M^{lle} Adeline
 Berthelot la femme, née la Nuit précédente, son parain
 à cette Joseph Guimont, et sa Maraine, Marie Lhuissier
 grande Mère, habitant de cette parisse, lesquels ont déclaré
 ne savoir écrire ny signer, de ce jure par les suivants l'ordon-
 nance. Signé, Normin prestre.

L'an 1688 quatre vingt huit; Le vingt deuxieme du mois
 de Janvier, apres la publication des trois bans de Mariage,
 faite au presbytere des Messes paroissiales, les surs, ou surs,
 et des tuteurs du dit mois, d'une Martin Poulain, aage
 de trente neuf à quarante ans, fils de defunct Claude Poulain
 et de Jeanne Meris le pere et Mere, d'une part, et Jeanne
 Barthe, aage de dix neuf à vingt ans, fille de Jean Barthe
 et de Jeanne Bitouffe ses pere et mere d'autre part, et ne
 restant de l'un ou de l'autre aucun empêchement légitime, lesdits
 quatre faisant fonction en cette Eglise, au presbytere
 assistant le ray, mores, et donne la benediction Nuptiale
 selon la forme prescrite de N^{re} Mère par l'Esq^{ue}, en presen-
 ce de Charles D^ummesnil, not^{aire} & Esienne Lestart Secrétaire.

A photocopy of Martin Poulain's marriage contract, 1688.

"Les Trois Beaux Canards"
"The Three beautiful Ducks"

V' là l'bon vent,

V' là l'joli vent,

V' là l'bon vent m'amie m'appelle,

V' là l'bon vent,

V' là l'jolie vent,

V' là l'bon vent m'amie m'attend.

Derrière' chez nous y'a t'un étang (bis)

Trois beaux canards s'en vont baignant.

Translation:

Here's the good wind, here's the jolly wind,
Here's the good wind, my friend calls me,
Here's the good wind, here's the jolly wind,
Here's the good wind, my friend waits for me.

Behind our house there is a swamp (repeat)
Three fine ducks go swimming there.

This is a canoe 'paddling song' for the courier-de-bois and milice. These were meant to break the monotony on long canoe trips. There are 130 versions of this one, and this is just a scrap of this version. The voyageurs liked to ad lib their own verses, eventually creating their own version entirely. Apparently French Canadians sang a lot while on the move. There are stories of large groups of them singing their hearts out while driving mule trains across the American prairie in the 1850s.



Chapter 3 Les Beaucerons



At the end of the 17th century the area around the region of Quebec was full of settlers and the area of the Cote de Beaupre and the Isle d'Orleans were also fully occupied. It was not easy for the Governor to create new seigneuries at this time because of the constant wars. But finally in 1714 the King agreed to create new ones because the lack of expansion was harming the colony. The colonization and clearing of the area in the valley of the River Chaudiere, located south of Quebec was now about to begin. The English were unceasingly obsessed on the subject of delimitations of the border between the two colonies. They claimed all the land up to the south bank of the St. Laurence River.⁶³ On the other hand, the French hoped to control all the land down to the coast of Maine. This kind of situation usually means that the border will eventually be somewhere in the middle.



On the 23rd of September, 1736, the Marquis de Beauharnois and Gilles Hocquart, Governor and Intendant of New France, conceded to Thomas-Jacques Taschereau, councilor of the Superior Council (an early legislature), the Seigneurie of St.-Marie; Francois-Pierre Rigaud de Vaudreuil, equerry, the Seigneuries of Beauceville; and to Joseph Fleury of Gorgendiere, agent of the company of Indes au Canada, the Seigneurie of Saint-Joseph. The following day, 24 September, 1736, Dame Therese de la Lande Gayon, widow of Francois Aubert, councilor of the Superior Council, and Gabriel Aubin de l'Isle, also received two other Seigneuries on the south and north banks of the Chaudiere River known as Saint-George West and Saint-George East, today. These seigneuries were the southernmost and are located not far from the current northern border of Maine. The Seigneur de la Gorgendiere and his two sons-in-law, Taschereau and Vaudreuil, were very actively occupied in the colonization of his domains, respectively called, St.-Joseph, Ste-Marie, and Beauceville.

Beginning in early 1737 the Seigneur de Joseph Fleury de la Gorgendiere, sent word to the Cote de Beaupre for interested settlers to come and clear their new lots. Three brothers, Joseph, Pierre, and Claude Poulain responded to the call. The first concessions were done later that year at Saint-Joseph, on the 17th of December, 1737.⁶⁴

At the age of 24, on the 13th of May, 1739, Joseph Poulain married a young girl by the name of Angelique Pare, daughter of Etienne Pare and Anne Lacroix, of Ste-Anne de Beaupre. Those present were Jean Pare, Prisque Pare, and Etienne Pare, grandfather, uncle, and father, respectively of the bride; and Etienne Racine, Pierre Poulain, friend and brother respectively of the groom; and many other friends and family. Jean-Baptiste, Joseph's father, did not attend the marriage. He was undoubtedly gone on a voyage in his capacity as a sergeant of the Milice.⁶⁵ During this time the French were not making raids and the men of the milice were frequently busy with other tasks: moving supplies, building roads, garrisoning distant locations, and guarding travelers. Usually the younger men, or the necessary older leaders, were called for voyages. Being 52 years old at the time Jean must have been in very good shape.

The following year, according to the custom of the day, on February 18th, 1740, the young Poulain couple received a visit from the savages. Without doubt this was for the celebration of the birth of their

⁶³ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 66.

⁶⁴ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 67-72.

⁶⁵ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 71-72, and Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 108.

first son, who was given the name of Joseph (**our 5th ancestor**), known as Joseph the son, and was baptized in the Church of Ste-Anne de Beauce.⁶⁶ The savages spoken of must have been some of the friendly Mission Indians who often came to Ste-Anne. The Canadians and the Mission Indians usually lived separately but they mixed freely during their daily routines. Infant Joseph was baptized on that day by a Jesuit, Jean-Baptiste Maurice, who was standing in while the regular parish priest, Father M. Naviere was away.⁶⁷



This house rests on the site of the original home built by Joseph Poulin, the father, in 1741. It is situated on the west coast of the Chaudiere Riviere between the towns of St-Joseph and Vallee-Jonction.

It was in the next year, 1741, that Joseph was finally installed on the land of the west bank of the Chaudiere River (near Vallee-Jonction). Today this land is identified by a rock placed in June 1987, where one can read: “In honor of our ancestors Poulin of Beauce.” This was the land that Joseph had cleared before, which was located near that of the Seigneur situated at the foot of Cote des Fermes of the present day. Meanwhile in Ste-Anne, on the 2nd of November, 1741, Agnes died and Jean-Baptiste, was alone. He never remarried and remained a widower for the rest of his life. Among those attending the funeral, besides Jean, was Prisque Lessart, grandson of Etienne de Lessart and captain of the militia company. Father Don Derobles conducted the service. Prisque was about 67 years old at the time. His son, Francois-Malo would also settle in the Seigneurie de Beauce. He had been married on November 28th, in 1724 to Angelique Racine. The church at this time was the third church built at Beauce by Claude Poulain and others.⁶⁸ On the 9th of November, 1741, Joseph and Angelique baptized their new daughter, Marie-Veronique, in the chapel of Saint-Joseph on the west shore of the Chaudiere River. This first wooden chapel had been constructed earlier by the Seigneur Joseph Fleury de la Gorgendiere in 1739. A white cross today marks the location of this first chapel in order to show for generations present and future, the site of the first chapel in the land of la Beauce, where were baptized our first ancestors – 213 of the

⁶⁶ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 72-73.

⁶⁷ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 81. The picture of the Poulin house is from this book also.

⁶⁸ Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 103.

early colonists are buried in the first cemetery of the Beauce.⁶⁹ Incidentally, when they moved to Beauce the three brothers, Joseph, Pierre, and Claude, changed the spelling of their name from Poulain to Poulin. It is not known why. In 1742 on October 22nd Joseph and Angelique's second son, Etienne was born. He was baptized in the little chapel at Beauce by Father Carpentier, Missionary Recollet. In 1744 Jean-Baptiste and his children left Ste-Anne de Beaupre and went to stay with his son Jean in Quebec. Jean the younger was a blacksmith by trade. He had married Mary-Louise Renault in 1736 at Charlesburg, a suburb of Quebec. They had six children, all of whom were baptized at Quebec.⁷⁰ Another son, Athenase who was a mason, also lived in Quebec at this time. He was described as "le type parfait du nomade" (the perfect type of nomad). He also had a small family at this time. Being skilled craftsmen they may have served the military with their respective trades.

In May 1744 another war broke out. This time it was known as King George's War. When the news of war arrived a French force from Fortress Louisbourg attacked an English colony at Canso, in Nova Scotia. After that the English sent a fleet to capture Fort Louisbourg. In the west, the English motivated the Iroquois to make raids against the Canadians again. A large fleet was sent from France but it was decimated in a storm and the few ships that arrived off Louisburg were easily defeated. In November 1745 Fortress Louisburg surrendered to the English while in the west the village of Saratoga, New York, was destroyed by French responses to the Iroquois raids. The English Colonies suffered badly and lost many men in this war, which finally ended with the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle on October 18, 1748. Both nations were weary of the war and agreed to restore former possessions. Louisbourg and the island of Cape Breton was returned to New France, much to the disgust of les Bostonnais.⁷¹

During the war life went on. In 1744, on the 26th of March, Joseph became the father of another child who was baptized as Louis-Joseph by Father Hyacinthe, Missionary Recollet. A fourth child, a girl, followed in 1745. She was baptized in November by Abbe Leclerc (the record is almost invisible). Brothers Pierre and Claude, both now married, also moved to Beauce circa 1744 and 1745 respectively. On the 28th of June, 1747, Angelique Pare, wife of Joseph Poulin, the father, died at the young age of 30 years old. Her body was buried in the little cemetery near the chapel. The attending priest-missionary was Alexis Duburon. Of this first marriage four children had been born. Their ages at this time were seven, four, three, and one. With such a young family care for, Joseph stayed a widower only four months. A farmer needs a wife, not to mention that young children need a mother. Even with a war going on he went to Beaupre to find a new woman to brighten their home and returned on the 10th of November, 1747 to the little house he had built on the riverbank. Her name was Marie-Marguerite Huot and she was from the parish of Ange-Gardien. She was the daughter of Rene Huot and Louise Parent (now deceased). Attending the wedding were Jean Poulin, father of the groom, Louis, brother of the bride, Louis Fafard, brother-in-law, and other friends and family. Of this second union ten children were born, Pierre (1748), Genevieve (?), Louise (1753), Marguerite (1754), Marie-Joseph (1756), Cecile (1758), Marie-Charles (1760), Charles (1762), and Jean (1766).⁷² In 1748, Joseph was elected 'Marguillier,' a church warden. The position of church warden had begun in 1741. The wardens caused friction with the parish priest and the bishops. According to Father Nadeau they politely refused to turn over one of the keys to the safe that had two locks. Over the years the wardens rendered great service to the church, but the position of warden has become a position of honor today.⁷³

⁶⁹ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 73-74.

⁷⁰ Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 103.

⁷¹ Parkman, *France and England*, Vol II, 712-745

⁷² Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 109-110. One of the children is not listed here.

⁷³ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 79 and Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 110; translated by Martha Poulin Kammer. A church warden was a person who looked after the church building and other property.

It is not in the scope of this work to write a description of the Seven Years War, even a short one. Suffice it to say that in the first years of the war 1754-1758 the French had many successes. Milice and Regulars alike were kept busy as bees in all the various campaigns conducted by Major General Louis-Joseph, Marquis de Montcalm. In the latter year, on the 6th of July 1758, Francois Desfosses dit Sanscrainte, a soldier with the Regiment de la Reine was killed at the battle of Fort Carillon (now called Ticonderoga) in which 17,600 English attacked 4,200 French. In the battle the French held their ground behind fieldworks and after a day long battle the British retreated in utter confusion. Francois was the husband of Jean-Baptiste Poulain's niece, Therese, the daughter of his brother Andre. Up to this time the French Regulars were always recruited in France. But during the war Montcalm did not receive adequate replacement troops for his Regular regiments. To fill the gaps he drafted thousands of Canadian militiamen. At the time of this battle almost half his Regulars were actually Canadian Milice. That is why Francois was a member of the Regulars. This was the last battle the Iroquois participated in. About 400 of them sat on a nearby hill, cooked some popcorn, and watched the battle from a distance.⁷⁴



Left: French Milice in typical campaign clothing. Right: Montcalm (in red) with the Regulars at the Battle of Fort Carillon. The white coats with blue trim indicate the Royal-Roussillon Regiment.

During the summer campaigns the militiamen wore large cotton shirts tied with a sash around the waist. They were armed with a fusil de chasse (hunting musket) manufactured in Tulle, France. Usually, militiamen carried three knives, one around the neck, one in the waist sash, and one in a legging strap. The Militiamen are cited to have been “excellent marksmen.” Their leggings (mitasses) were made of wool and they often wore Indian style breech clouts instead of trousers. They carried a powder horn and a ‘possibles’ bag made of leather. Their knit caps (tuques) were said to have been worn in colors that indicated which of the three administrative departments they were from: red for Quebec, white for Trois-Rivieres, and blue for Montreal. In the winter they wore heavy moccasins, snowshoes, mittens, and a coat

⁷⁴ Chartrand, *Ticonderoga 1758*, pages 35 and 75; including the images below. The information on Francois Desfosses was found in Poulain, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 104. The part about the color of the tuques was found in The Company of Military Historians, *The French and Indian Wars, 1755-1770*, page 52.

made from a blanket (capot). They did not drill in the European style of fighting but did a lot of target practice and generally were very good shots.⁷⁵ It is difficult to convey to a modern person the militant lifestyle of our ancestors. At this time Canada was one of the most militarized nations in the world in the sense that every able-bodied man was in the military. It was not by choice. It was for survival. In comparison the more numerous militia of the English Colonists were not so experienced. They normally met once a month and practiced European style drill. The Canadian Milice met once a week and practiced shooting. The Milice ranged throughout the woods in all seasons. A fact not lost on the anxious English Colonists who were fearful of the wild forests.



A Tulle Fusil de Chasse of the 1729/1734 pattern, thousands of these were manufactured in France and shipped to Canada for the Milice. The caliber was 28 balls to the pound. They cost 17 livres each and the men were given three years in which to pay them off. The long barrel ensured better accuracy. These muskets were very good quality because Tulle tested and inspected each one to rigid specifications. They were inspected again upon arrival in Canada.⁷⁶

In the latter part of the war, after 1758, the English numbers and strength began to tell. It was 75,000 French colonists against a million and a half English Colonists, and the military strength invested by their mother countries was also of similar proportions. In the following year, 1759, with news of the approach of the English fleet many people from Quebec and the coast of Beauport sought refuge in other locations, including Quebec city, to escape the horrors of war, and some had gone to Beauce. The Canadian Milice, numbering about 15,000 men, were extremely active in the defense of Canada at this time, though only a portion of them were active at any one time. The Milice de Ste-Anne was most likely deployed at the defenses near Beauport again.⁷⁷

The plan was the same as before. One force would attack Montreal by land while another would attack Fort Louisbourg and then Quebec by sea. After capturing Louisbourg (again), the English fleet, including 9,000 men under the command of General James Wolfe sailed into the St. Laurence River and approached Quebec. Facing them were 14,000 French who had to defend many miles of coastline (from Beauport to Montreal) while the English could focus their forces at any point. This time New France had run out of miracles. The English landed on the Ile d'Orleans on June 27th and found the French troops across the water building earthworks on the heights of Beauport. The French defenses under the command of General Montcalm extended from Quebec about six miles northeast to the falls of Montmorency. This placed Beauport outside of this zone. Landing places upriver from Quebec were also defended. Some English troops were put ashore on the south shore of the St. Laurence. They marched to St-Levis and made camp there and began working on artillery emplacements. Other troops, an oversized brigade and many guns were landed just to the east of Montmorency Falls on July 9th. Bombardment of the city began six days later on the 15th. Mission Indians attacked the force at Montmorency but they were driven off.

⁷⁵ Rene Chartrand, *Louis XV's Army (5), Colonial and Naval Troops*, Oxford, UK, 1998, pages 21-22.

⁷⁶ Russel Bouchard, *The Fusil de Tulle in New France 1691-1741*, Historical Arms Series No. 36, Museum Restoration Service, Canada, 1998.

⁷⁷ Daniel Marston, *The French-Indian War 1754-1760*. Osprey Publishing Ltd., Oxford, UK, 2002. Also: Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War*, Vintage Books, NY, 2000.

Wolfe finally decided to make a full infantry assault at Beauport on the 31st of July. Meant to begin at 8am, the attack was stalled by the tide. A battalion of Grenadiers landed at 11am and made a mis-coordinated effort to attack the heights. It was said that the French put up a “thick fire” and “heavy cannonading.” Meanwhile the English force already on the other side of Montmorency attempted to cross the fords above the falls but was beaten back also. Finally two more English regiments were landed to cover the withdrawal of the Grenadiers. Towards evening a sudden and violent rainstorm ended the battle. Many of the English wounded were left on the beach to the mercy of the Amerindians. Wolfe had lost almost a battalion’s worth of men with no gain.⁷⁸

After the disaster at Montmorency, Wolfe was stymied. In his frustration with his lack of military success he decided to shell the civilians of the town. He hoped to “teach these Scoundrels to make war in a more gentlemanly fashion.”⁷⁹ Suddenly the civilians who had fled to Quebec for safety found themselves in a war directed only at them. The bombardment continued for most of the month of August. Jean-Baptiste’s grandson, Pierre Poulain, was killed by the English in the month of August. Since there was no other activity at this time it must be that he was killed by the cannonade. It is not known whether he was a civilian or militiaman but since no record of him was found at Ste-Anne de Beaupre it’s possible he was a civilian. If he was Jean the younger’s son he would not have been more than fourteen at the most. The body of Pierre was reburied a year later with religious ceremony on the 20th of December, 1760.⁸⁰ Meanwhile, early in September Wolfe’s troops above Montmorency were withdrawn. Another landing was attempted at Pointe aux Trembles, far upriver from Quebec on the 9th and 10th of August with similar losses. Wolfe was getting anxious, winter was coming.



Wolfe’s assault at Foulon and subsequent battle on the Plains of Abraham.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Stuart Reid, *Quebec 1759, the Battle that Won Canada*, Osprey Publishing Ltd., Oxford, UK, 2003, 32-42.

⁷⁹ Reid, *Quebec 1759*, 45.

⁸⁰ Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 103-104.

⁸¹ <http://wikipedia.org/Wikipedia Commons>; retrieved 5/20/10.

His next attempt was at Foulon, a small landing on the west side of Cap Diamant. It had a road leading to the top. There were French piquets (pickets) there guarding the place but when the English boats approached in the predawn darkness of September 13th a British officer convinced the guard they were friendly reinforcements. The surprise was complete. The English gained the heights and started moving up company after company of men. They were able to get more than 4,000 men on the shore. Montcalm rushed 2,000 Regulars to the area to oppose them. While he arranged his troops about 1500 Milice skirmished with the enemy from the front and flanks. The numbers actually in the battle appear to have been roughly equal. When the French Regulars were formed the skirmishers moved to their flanks. Montcalm had decided to charge, hoping to dislodge the English before many more men could be brought up, but this was a costly mistake, since attacking was usually more deadly than defending. As the French approached the English fired a devastating volley that broke up their lines and after a while they began to retreat back to the city. A Scottish regiment tried to cut off the retreat but the Canadian Milice decimated them (they had the highest casualties of any English unit). In all, the French lost about 640 killed and wounded. The English lost 658, about a third of them to the Milice.⁸²



The death of the Marquis de Montcalm. This picture shows the white uniforms of the French Regulars. The color of the trim designated the regiment to which they belonged.⁸³

⁸² Reid, *Quebec 1759*, 55-83; and Marston, *French-Indian War*, 60-64.

⁸³ <http://wikipedia.org/Wikipedia Commons>; retrieved 5/20/10.

The numbers of casualties on both sides seem to belie the normal descriptions of the decisiveness of the English victory. There was obviously more desperate fighting than is usually depicted. Both generals, Wolfe and Montcalm, were mortally wounded. Wolfe was shot three times by the Milice on the British right and Montcalm was hit when he was about to enter the city during the retreat. One factor that had seriously weakened the French during this crisis was the jealousy of Governor Vaudreuil against General Montcalm. Vaudreuil had not supported opposing the English on the Plains of Abraham and, unknown to Montcalm, had stopped the reinforcements that were on their way there. Neither was Montcalm supported by Ramesay, the garrison commander of the City, who only sent him three field cannon and no troops.⁸⁴ Some historians have speculated that Vaudreuil had revealed the weak spot at Foulon in return for political favors, just to get back at his political enemies but no one knows for sure. At any rate Quebec surrendered. It would never again be French. Incidentally, the Plains of Abraham is believed to have been named after Abraham Martin who was granted a tract of land there in 1635.⁸⁵



Quebec City in ruins 1760 Richard Short (NAC C-000357). "During the whole Siege from first to last, 535 Houses were burnt down, among which is the whole eastern Part of the lower Town (save 6 or 8 Houses) which make a very dismal Appearance. We also destroyed upwards of Fourteen Hundred fine Farm-Houses in the Country, &c."⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Parkman, *France and England*, Vol II, 1397-1401. The men of Ste-Anne de Beupre must have been in the thick of the fighting because during his research, Joseph-Philippe Poulin found many names of deceased soldiers in the registers of Ste-Anne, St-Joachim (including the parish priest), and Ste-Famille (at Charlesburg).

⁸⁵ <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0006320>; retrieved 5/21/10.

⁸⁶ From the diary of a British soldier in the campaign. <http://www.militaryheritage.com/quebec1.htm>; retrieved 5/27/10. The sacrifices made by the habitants are not mentioned in history books, but can be easily imagined by this scene of devastation. The picture appears to be of the lower town, looking east, since the sun is somewhat to the right. Jean, son of Jean-Baptiste likely lived in this section of town and this may have been the location in which Pierre was killed.

After the fighting subsided at Quebec Jean-Baptiste Poulain went to find his sons, Joseph, Pierre, and Claude, in Beauce and he stayed with them for the rest of his days.⁸⁷ Since he was over seventy years old he had surely not taken part in the fighting. Joseph and his brothers by now were used to the rigors of frontier life in the Vallee de la Chaudiere. In all likelihood they had been involved in a *Compagnie de Milice de Beauce* so they must have been involved in the fighting at Quebec and possibly later at Montreal. The *Milice de Ste-Anne* probably did not get to Quebec in time to be in the final fight.

But the war was not over yet. The French still had a sizable force outside of Quebec so the outcome of the campaign was not yet resolved. Both sides soon settled down to a long winter and most of the *Milice* were sent home to wait it out. In the spring of 1760 the fighting resumed. Brigadier General Francois Gaston Chevalier de Levis, now the commander of the French army, won a battle at St-Fois in April and the English retreated back to Quebec City, but Levis' troops did not have enough ammunition to attack them there. It became a matter of who would be resupplied and reinforced first. In May an English fleet arrived and Levis withdrew. On September 8, 1760 Montreal surrendered.⁸⁸ About two and a half years later on the 10th of February 1763 the Treaty of Paris gave Britain control of all of North America except for two small islands off of Newfoundland in exchange for two islands in the Caribbean. A poor trade. At the French court the famous Voltaire nonchalantly described the loss as "a few acres of snow." To appease their new French subjects the British kept the old French system of government including the parish *Milice* which was still organized under the three administrative centers, Quebec, Trois-Rivieres, and Montreal. The liberal British government policies and the freedom they gave to their captive people helped placate French Canadian sentiments.⁸⁹ "They were in fact treated with a kindness that seemed to surprise them."⁹⁰ The change was not entirely unwelcome. France had poorly supported its colony. And now that they were British subjects, for the first time in 124 years our ancestors could finally settle down to just being farmers and tradesmen. But as it turned out, that would not be so easy.

⁸⁷ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 62-63 and Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 104.

⁸⁸ Marston, *French-Indian War*, 64-68.

⁸⁹ Brendan Morrissey, *Quebec 1775, The American Invasion of Canada*, Osprey Publishing, UK, 2003, pages 22-23.

⁹⁰ Parkman, *France and England*, Vol II, 1453.

"La Rose Blanche"
"The White Rose"

Par un matin je me suis levé, (bis)
Plus matin que ma tante. (bis)

Dans mon jardin jem'en suis allé (bis)
Cuellir la rose blanche (bis)

Je n'en sus eux pas sitot cueilli trois (bis)
Que mon amont y entre (bis)

"Ma mie, faites-moi z'un bouquet (bis)
Qu'il soit de roses blanches."

La belle en faisant ce bouquet (bis)
Elle s'est cassé la jambe (bis)

Fout aller qu'ri le medecin, (bis)
Le medecin de Nantes. (bis)

"Beau medecin, beau medecin (bis)
Que dis-tu de ma jambe?" (bis)

"Ta jambe, ell'n'en guérira pas (bis)
Qu'ell' soit dans l'eau baignante (bis)

Dans un bassin d'or et d'argent (bis)
Couvert de roses blanches." (bis)

Translation:

Early in the morning I got up, Much earlier than my aunt.
Into my garden I went To pick the white rose.
I had not yet picked three, When my sweetheart came in.
"Darling, make me a bouquet Of the white roses."
While making this bouquet The maiden broke her ankle.
We had to send for the doctor, The doctor came from Nantes.
"Good doctor, good doctor, What do you say about my ankle?
"Your ankle will not get better Unless it is bathed in water,
In a gold and silver basin, Covered with white roses."

This song was documented in 1846 as being used by French guides as a canoe paddling song. The woodsmen preferred the rambling and repetitious medieval songs to more modern ones; they were ideal for breaking the monotony on long canoe trips. Many of the old songs do not tell much of a story. Rather, they are meant to create a series of images and feelings.



Chapter 4 Sujets des Anglais



With the fighting over as of 1760, Joseph Poulin, the son, was free to look for a wife. On the 25th of January, 1762, at the age of 22 years, he married Angelique Rodrigue at St-Joseph de Beauce. She was the daughter of Jean Rodrigue and Dorothee Fugere. The marriage was blessed by Father Theodore, Recollet.⁹¹ The Poulin couple was established on a large farm on the high ground of the parish of Saint-Joseph (Sector Callway). Nine children were born to this union, Josephat, Angelique, Joseph, Jean (**our 6th ancestor**), Marguerite, Charles, Pierre, Therese, and a second Pierre. Jean was born on the 24th of February in 1768 at St-Joseph. Two years later, in 1770, Joseph Poulin, the son, had the honor to be elected Marguiller (Church Warden). He was the 4th of this family to fill this important position. His father had been one in 1748, his uncle Pierre in 1755, and a third uncle, Claude, in 1765. The Abbey Verreau gave the list of heads of family having their benches in the little church. Among the names one can encounter Joseph Poulin (1748), Pierre (1755), and Claude (1765), and Joseph Poulin, the son. In the book of Marguillers de St-Joseph in 1780, one can read that Joseph Poulin and Pierre Poulin had the bench in the center of the chapel.⁹² A census of the village of St-Joseph in 1762 shows that the family of Joseph, the son, consisted of one male, one female, one male infant, and one female infant (they must have been twins). He also owned six arpents of land, two bulls, one cow, one heifer, two horses, and two pigs.

In November of 1775, when Jean was only 13 years old, a strange thing occurred. Many men were seen on the Riviere Chaudiere moving north, towards Quebec. They were in very bad shape, starving and frostbitten. A small army of English Colonial Rebels under the command of Benedict Arnold had arrived in Beauce. They had traveled north up the Kennebec River through Maine. Then they portaged their boats to the lake that feeds the Chaudiere River. The habitants along the river gave them beef, mutton, flour, and oatmeal. A year earlier, in 1774, the British Parliament had passed the Quebec Act which allowed the French Canadians to keep their customs, language, religion, laws, and they would also be allowed to hold public office. This infuriated the English Colonists who wanted them punished and oppressed since they feared that the French could be used against them by the British. On the other hand they wanted the French as their own allies. In 1774 they sent an envoy to entreat the French to join them in a revolution against Britain. Then they sent a picked force of 1100 men to capture Quebec. In Canada a call went out for the Milice to muster for the defense of Quebec but very few responded. The Colonial Rebels moved on from Beauce and assaulted Quebec City on December 31, 1775. The attack failed and the fighting moved upriver to the Montreal region.⁹³ One might think the Canadiens would be eager to join with the English Colonists against their British captors but most likely, it was a question of trust. The ancient resentment of the Colonials towards the French was only covered by thin veil of their desire to be allies. And while the French were ambivalent about fighting the English in Canada, several thousand men did travel south to join the Continental Army. Six years later it would be ironic that a powerful French fleet would save the rebellious English Colonists from defeat at Yorktown, Virginia, while making no move to recapture a weakly defended Canada. The United States was born with French intervention.

In 1777, Marie Huot, the wife of Joseph Poulin, the father, died eleven years after the birth of their last child. She was buried three days later on February 10th, 1777. Present at the funeral were Joseph

⁹¹ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 81 and Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 128.

⁹² Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 85 and Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 128 (only nine children are listed and no dates of birth are given in this book); the census is on page 80 of the *Histoire* book (the meaning of 'taurailles' (heifer) was found by David Kammer and is probably a colloquial term as 'Génisse' is more commonly used).

⁹³ Morrissey, *Quebec 1775* Morrissey, *Quebec 1775*, 8-66.

Poulin, his brother Pierre, Jacques Ducharme, Jean Doyon and many other friends and family. The service was conducted by Abbe Verreault, the parish priest of Saint-Joseph.⁹⁴ Old Jean-Baptiste also died in the same year at the age of eighty-nine and was buried in the parish of St. Joseph of New Beauce on the 12th of August. Present were Joseph Poulin, Pierre Poulin, Claude Poulin, their sons, Jean Jobin, and many others. The service was conducted by Father Verreault.⁹⁵ On the 5th of December, 1780, before the notary Louis Mire of Beauport, Joseph, the father, sold his land to Sieur Joseph Lessard, raising 360 livres at 20 sols a livre. After this date he definitely lived on the south bank of the Riviere Chaudiere. It is good that he never changed the name (title?) since 1780 as the property continued to be owned by Poulins.⁹⁶



This house is situated on the site of the farm of Joseph Poulin, the son. It is located on the east riverbank of the Chaudiere (Sector Callway). It became the property of Leo Poulin, of St-Joseph.

In 1791 on December 26 the Constitution Act by the British Parliament divided Canada into the upper and lower autonomous regions, roughly corresponding to downriver and upriver. Unfortunately the Act failed to establish means of responsible government and trouble ensued as we shall see later.⁹⁷ Jean Poulin, farmer and captain of the Milice, was married in 1792 to Charlotte Roy at St-Joseph. They had twelve children, Charlotte, Louise, Jean-Joseph, Angele, Olivier, Angelique, Pierre, also known as Pierrot (**our 7th ancestor**), Abraham, Fereol, Marie, Slivie, and Catherine, seven girls and five boys. Pierre's birth date is not listed. From 1796-1797 the Poulins of St-Joseph participated actively in the construction of the second church of Saint-Joseph, in replacement of the first wooden chapel. This second church burned in 1864.⁹⁸ On 18 July 1799 on an occasion recalled by Antoine Lamotte, priest of St-Joseph, a bell was

⁹⁴ Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 112.

⁹⁵ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 62-63.

⁹⁶ Poulin, *Troisieme Centenaire*, page 112. This transaction appears to have been a loan rather than a sale.

⁹⁷ Pierre Tousignant, *Constitutional Act, 1791*, Thecanadianencyclopedia.com, retrieved 05/10/10.

⁹⁸ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 86.

blessed that weighed 225 pounds. It was named “Antoine” by Joseph, the son, and Angelique Lessard, wife of Joseph Nadeau, leaders of a group of parish godfathers and godmothers respectively.

In 1799 Joseph, the father, passed away at the age of 84, after a life of hard labor and of working to cut out a home in the forest. He was buried after a service by Father Lamothe the next day, on the 11th of November, 1799. Present at the burial were Joseph and Etienne, sons, Jacques Lessard, Augustin Morency, Antoine Vachon, Pierre Lessard and many others.⁹⁹ In his life Joseph had been a Captain of Milice. At this time one of the functions of a captain de Milice was to investigate sudden deaths that occurred in the parish to perform an inquest to establish the cause of death.¹⁰⁰ Joseph Poulin, the son, outlived his father by only one year. He died on the 30th of August, 1800, at the age of 60 and was buried at St-Joseph.¹⁰¹ About this time an epidemic raged throughout Quebec and many people died. The type of disease that caused this is not known.¹⁰²

The War of 1812 began in that year when the United States declared war on Britain. The Canadians and British were so badly outnumbered that they took a defensive stance. Most of the battles took place along the border in the west between Lake Michigan and Montreal. There were several battles in this year but still the Americans had accomplished nothing. In 1813 the Americans briefly occupied York (Toronto) but soon left. They also occupied Fort George for a time. There were also battles on Lake Erie in 1814 and a few successes by both sides further stalemated the situation. The Americans had expected that the largely American population of Upper Canada would rise up and assist them but that did not occur. The war ended in a stalemate without accomplishing anything except the finalization of the border between the U.S. and Canada, except for the border with Maine. The only significance of the war for the Poulin family was that they might have become Americans at that time. It was very close. But the war did instill in Canadians a sense of nationalism that was lacking before.¹⁰³



The family records are very sparse following this time period. Pierre Poulin, also a farmer, was married to Apolline Vachon in 1829 in St-Joseph. They had ten children, four girls and six boys, Olive, Euphémie, Genevieve, Augustin, Prospère (**our 8th ancestor**) also known as Tare, Joseph, Lucie, Jean, Thomas, and Charles.¹⁰⁴ Prospère's date of birth is not listed. At this time trouble had been brewing on the horizon and was about to boil over in both Lower and Upper Canadas. As mentioned before the Canada Act had attempted to make the French equal citizens of the British colony of Canada. But adequate controls of power were not set in place and there was a lot of political and fiscal abuse. The French people of Quebec sympathized with Louis-Joseph Papineau (photo at left), a prominent politician of the time. Early on, the lines were not drawn exclusively along ethnic lines but as each side became more hardnosed things began to develop that way. Towards the end, the other side consisted mainly of established merchants and transplanted 'Britishers' who were becoming the majority in the cities. They wanted political advantage over the French population, especially the merchant class. The conflict was further fueled by the fact that in the early 1830s Canada was experiencing a depression and many French Canadians were close to starvation. Also British immigrants had brought cholera with them, which killed many of the French habitants. In March 1837 the British Parliament rejected the demands of Papineau's *Partie Patriote* (Patriot Party). The Patriotes began to organize boycotts and rallies and prepare

⁹⁹ Poulin, *Troisième Centenaire*, page 112.

¹⁰⁰ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 80.

¹⁰¹ Poulin, *Histoire de Poulin*, 87.

¹⁰² Poulin, *Troisième Centenaire*, page 110.

¹⁰³ <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0008442>; retrieved 5/21/10.

¹⁰⁴ Poulin, *Troisième Centenaire*, page 132.

for war. Late in the year the government tried to arrest the rebel leaders and Papineau had to flee for his life but his followers picked up the baton, in the form of la Fils de la Liberte (Sons of Liberty). On the English side the anti-French hatred boiled to the surface. Most of the fighting took place near Montreal. The rebels defeated a British force at St-Denis on November 23rd, 1837, but were then defeated at St-Charles two days later on the 25th and again at St-Eustache on December 14. After the battle the Anglophone Canadians went on a widespread looting and burning rampage in the French villages. The following year the rebels tried again but were defeated at Napierville and Odelltown. They had a small victory at Beauharnois but were soon scattered by a large British force. Twelve of the leaders were hanged and fifty-eight were shipped to Australia. Although the French were the majority of Quebec's population and also the majority of its legislature they were labeled 'rebels.'¹⁰⁵ Immediately following, in 1839 a new war broke out (well, almost broke out). It is known as the Aroostook War and it was a dispute between Canada and the United States as to the exact location of boundary between Maine and Quebec. It was mostly the direct concern of lumberjacks who needed to know which country owned which portions of land. Despite a lot of chest-thumping no fighting occurred, and in 1843 the Treaty of Paris established the current boundary at the St-Croix River. Unfortunately the treaty was not descriptive enough and it took several more treaties to finally figure it out.¹⁰⁶



The battle of Saint-Eustache.

In 1861 Prosperé Poulin, also a farmer, married Caroline Gilbert in St-Francois de Beauce. Together, they had twelve children six girls and six boys, Adeline, Apolline, Euphemie, Thomas (**our 9th ancestor**), Philibert, William, Eugenie, Albertine, Augustin, Alfred, Eustache, Gustave, and Stephanie who drowned in the Chaudiere River at the age of twenty-one. Thomas was born in 1868. At this time the United States was embroiled in a bloody Civil War and many French Canadians joined Union regiments. If one checks the archives of the State of Maine at Augusta there are no Poulins registered, but there are 21

¹⁰⁵ Thecanadianencyclopedia.com, retrieved 05/10/10. See "Papineau Rebellion."

¹⁰⁶ Thecanadianencyclopedia.com, retrieved 05/10/19. See "Aroostook War" and "Boundaries."

Poolers, many with birth places listed as Canada, St-Joseph, St-Francis, St-George, etc.¹⁰⁷ At any rate, twenty-one Poolers signed up and their experiences seem to reflect a microcosm of the veterans: one failed to muster, one was rejected (he was 53), one was killed in action, two died of wounds, one died of disease, three were disabled and released from service, four deserted, seven mustered out with two reenlisting, and three had incomplete records.

Why did so many Poulins sign up? Especially those of Canada? Some may have joined for a bounty, when it was offered, a bounty of two or three hundred dollars was a lot of money in those days, probably more so in Canada. This contingent no doubt accounts for the 'no shows.' Or perhaps the volunteers looked at enlistment as steady employment, twelve dollars a month and all the beans, salt pork, and hard tack you could eat (the weevils were free). A few young men may have sought adventure. Others may have joined to fight against England, which seemed to be a sure thing early in the war. During that time England had protected some Confederates at sea and it looked like the U.S. would declare war on Britain. However, President Abraham Lincoln said, "One war at a time," and that was that. And some of the young men must have really believed in the Union cause. They would not have cared much about preserving the Union but perhaps they felt strongly about slavery, especially the two men who reenlisted. Slavery had been abolished throughout the empire by Britain in 1833 including Canada, which became the terminus of the 'Underground Railroad.' By 1860 Canada had about 40,000 black people, many of whom were descendants of slaves of New France in the Colonial period. The French Canadians in general supported the allowance of non-English and non-French immigrants to Canada.¹⁰⁸ Even Mexico had given up slavery by this time leaving the 'home of the free' as the only North American country still clinging to this abominable institution. Everyone, except the United States, had given up slavery without a fight.

One man in particular seems to be a likely candidate as a Civil War relative. He is listed as John Pooler, eighteen years old, born in St-Joseph, P.Q. He could have been the son of our ancestor Pierre and a brother to Prospère. He enlisted into the 21st Maine Infantry Regiment at Augusta, Maine, on 9/10/1862 for nine months of service. He claimed his residence as Skowhegan, Maine, and listed his profession as hostler. His complexion was light, eyes hazel, and hair brown. He took part in the siege of Port Hudson, Louisiana, and the assaults on the fort on May 27 and June 14; the Rebel garrison there surrendered on July 8. He was honorably discharged April 25, 1863 when the regiment was disbanded. The unit had lost 27 men to combat and 145 to disease.¹⁰⁹ On April 27, 1864, John reenlisted in the 9th Maine Infantry Regiment. He arrived at the regiment's location in Virginia just in time to be involved in "severe fighting" in eight battles during the next six months, all in Virginia. His unit participated fully in driving Robert E. Lee's army into surrender. In the final engagement only 201 men were present for duty (a regiment is

¹⁰⁷ Archives of the State of Maine at Augusta. When I went to Canada I checked the phone book and there are no Poolers in that area. Then I checked the census records at Waterville, Maine. In 1850 there was a Poulin family living there at the time. I checked the 1860 records and a family with the same first names were now listed as Pooler – and there were no other Poulins. Something happened to make Poulins think it was necessary to Anglicize their name as Pooler, although it's baffling how 21 men from different locations did the exact same thing. Perhaps word got out that, "If you give your name as Pooler you can enlist?" After the war some of the Poolers who lived in Maine kept that name but those who returned to Canada did not. Five entries of the name Pullen was also found in the archives but I understand that they are descended from Poulins of Brittany who assisted in the conquest of England by the Normans in the 11th century and they were given land at York as a reward and were English after that. In fact they may be ancestors of Herve Poulain who is mentioned in the introduction, or his son since the conquest of England took place in 1066 and the account of Herve is in 1034. Another possibility of the name Pooler is that the recruiters were spelling the name phonetically, but again, spelling it exactly the same way 21 times is not likely.

¹⁰⁸ <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0006458>; retrieved 5/21/10.

¹⁰⁹ Archives of the State of Maine at Augusta, also <http://www.maine.gov/sos/arc/archives/military/civilwar/reghis.htm>, and <http://www.civilwarreference.com/regiments/detail.php?regID=1292>, retrieved. 5/20/10. He may have said he was a resident of Skowhegan just to gain acceptance in the foreign army. Since there were no IDs at this time it was common for men to lie about all sorts of things.

supposed to have 1,000 men although it was common for the older units to have three or four hundred by this time in the war). The Regiment was mustered out on July 13, 1865.¹¹⁰ If this was actually Jean Poulin, he married Philomene Rancourt after the war in 1867 at St-Francois.¹¹¹



The Habitant Farm by Cornelius Krieghoff, 1856.

In 1888 Thomas Poulin married Elmina Philomene Plante at St-Francis and they lived in Beauceville. She was usually called by her middle name, Philomena. They had twelve children, Joseph William (**our 10th ancestor**), Leonide, Alberta, Armoza, Placide, Emile, Achille, Theotime, Mandoza, Eva, Aurore, and Antonia.¹¹² Joseph, who was referred to by us grandchildren as ‘Pépère’ (familial French for ‘grandfather’) was born the first of twelve children on October 29, 1889. He left school at a very early age, as did many young boys of his time, to be useful to large families on a farm, or to help support the families by seeking employment. His formal schooling ended with the third grade when he was about ten years of age. No doubt, he helped on the family farm, and at some unknown early age he went off to work at the Thetford Mines some twenty-five miles from home where he worked at mining asbestos. It is not known if or where he boarded.

When jobs became scarce, he did several years of seasonal work as a logger on the Kennebec River in Maine. My Dad said that Pépère would walk from Beauceville to northern Maine in the Spring, drive the logs down the Kennebec River to the mills in southern Maine and walk all the way back in the fall. It was a trip of about 300 miles. They slept out in the woods and fields under huge blankets that they would roll out at night; fifty men to a blanket. The logging company maintained a chuck wagon to cook their meals outdoors. It was dangerous work and some of the men were killed or injured, especially when

¹¹⁰ Archives of the State of Maine at Augusta, also <http://www.maine.gov/sos/arc/archives/military/civilwar/9meinf.htm>, and <http://www.civilwarreference.com/regiments/detail.php?regID=1280>, retrieved 5/20/10.

¹¹¹ If birth dates for this time period were available it would be easier to compare possible candidates.

¹¹² The information in this section was taken from a typed list of ancestors given to me by Martha Poulin Kammer; unfortunately this list only contained years of marriage, not dates of births and deaths.

attempting to free up a log jam.¹¹³ While there in Maine, Pèpère heard he might find steady work at one of the many mills along Maine's rivers. How long he stayed in Maine or how many seasons he worked as a logger is unknown. When in Skowhegan he lived with his Aunt Celina, one of his mother's sisters, whose married name was Plante. Off season, he probably worked on the family farm.

In September 1918 a terrible influenza broke out in Canada. It arrived on the ship *Araguaya* which docked at Halifax. The ship was bringing servicemen home from Europe. Because of the blackout in war news carried out by the Allies no one knew where the flu had originated, but it was born in the trenches of WWI. Many people called it the Spanish Flu because news of it first appeared in Spain since there was no blackout on news there. The flu killed some 30 million people throughout the world including 50,000 Canadians.¹¹⁴ In that year, on October 11, 1918, Joseph enlisted in the Canadian Army, in spite of anti-conscription riots in Quebec earlier in the year. He was almost twenty-nine years old at the time. According to his enlistment record he gave his occupation as 'farmer' and he is listed as a rifleman. At this time, Canada was still part of Great Britain, so his unit was actually part of the British Army. He was rated 'normal' at a medical examination a few days later on the 14th, and he embarked from Vancouver on December 21, 1918 aboard the *S. S. Teesta*. He disembarked in Vladivostok, Russia, on January 12, 1919.

This is a very obscure episode of World War One. The Allies were there to help anyone who wanted to get out of Russia, which had already started its Communist Revolution. They were especially interested in retrieving 50,000 soldiers of the CHECH Legion. There was some fighting with the Red Russians but the Canadians were mostly involved in garrisoning Vladivostok. Finally the Allies were withdrawn.¹¹⁵ Pèpère departed Siberia four months later on May 19, 1919 aboard the "Empress of Russia" and arrived in Vancouver on May 29, 1919. He was discharged from service June 12, 1919. Thus he was in the service eight months.¹¹⁶ Two weeks later the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919 – Armistice Day.

After WWI prohibition became a strong issue in Canada as well as in the United States. Quebec had always been against it and even banned it in 1919 whence it became known to moralistic Canadian anglophiles as the "sinkhole" of North America. Notwithstanding, Quebec soon became the object of many a tourist vacation for Canadians and Americans alike and the Province earned a lot of cash by the sale of booze, which was government controlled.¹¹⁷

Two years after discharge, on April 5th, 1921, Pèpère married Alida Lessard (whom we grandchildren called Mémère, familial French for grandmother). She was from St. Joseph, a farming community several miles north of Pèpère's native Beauceville on the Rivière Chaudière. Alida was born on April 28, 1900, the eighth child in a family of fifteen children. For two years beyond the eighth grade at the local parochial school she attended a vocational school where she took up tailoring. Her natural talent for sewing enabled her in later years to earn much needed money for the growing family. The two newlyweds lived with the paternal Poulin family until sometime after the birth of their first child, Gaston Gerard Poulin, on January 28, 1922.¹¹⁸

But that year tragedy struck the Poulin family when the farm in Beauceville went into bankruptcy. Leo Poulin elucidates on the conditions involved in the bankruptcy:

¹¹³ The information in this section was furnished by Martha Poulin Kammer and recollections by Gus Poulin.

¹¹⁴ <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCETimelineBrowse&Params=A3PER24SRT126>, retrieved 5/22/10; the origins of the flu was discussed on the History Channel.

¹¹⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siberian_Intervention; and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Siberian_Expeditionary_Force; retrieved 5/22/10.

¹¹⁶ Information from discharge papers.

¹¹⁷ <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0006515>; retrieved 5/21/10.

¹¹⁸ Martha Poulin Kammer and Solange Poulin Turcotte; Joseph's service information came from his discharge papers.

Our grandparents [Thomas and Philomene] gave the farm to [their son] Uncle Placide (July 3, 1919) with the proviso that our grandparents remain there till their death, and until Uncle Mendoza and Aunt Aurore and Aunt Antonia reach adulthood. In addition, he, Placide, was to give each one of these three \$300, and was also to give \$300 to Joseph, Theotime, Achille, Emile, and Eva. Placide borrowed from the bank to pay all these people. Then he could not meet his obligations to the bank, so the bank took him into court. Since grandfather had also endorsed the loan, he too was obligated. Psychologically he was unable to accept this situation and he became depressed. All this happened in March and April of 1922. The 1929 crash worsened Uncle Placide's condition. He was a woodsman contractor, and things turned out badly for him. Therefore, he returned the farm to Grandmother [Philomene] who at the time was living with Aunt Aurore in Skowhegan. That same day, August 31, 1929, she transferred the property to my father, Achille.¹¹⁹

Leo Poulin was eventually able to buy back the farm. But in March-April, 1922, Joseph's father Thomas became severely depressed about losing the farm and the land. He took some type of poison, was nursed by Philomene but she was unable to save him. It was a sad time for all the families involved.¹²⁰ This event (along with prospects of a job in Maine) may have contributed to Joseph's decision to emigrate to the United States. In the end, life under the English had reduced to French-Canadiens to subsistence level.

¹¹⁹ Letter from Leo Poulin to David and Martha Poulin Kammer, dated December 12, 1988; courtesy of Solange Poulin Turcotte.

¹²⁰ Related by Leo Poulin to Martha Poulin Kammer.



Thomas Poulin and Elmina Philomene Plante¹²¹

¹²¹ Photo courtesy of Solange Poulin Turcotte.



Joseph Poulin and Alida Lessard¹²²

¹²² Photo courtesy of Solange Poulin Turcotte.

D'innoubrables

+ L'an mil sept cent soixante deux le vingt cinquiesme j^{er} du mois de Janvier, après avoir public
 Mariage aux presens des Officiers parochiaux par trois dimanches consécutifs, du band de Mariage —
 de Joseph — Entre Joseph poulin, fils de Joseph poulin, et d'Angelique paré d'opere et mere de la —
 poulin — paropre de St Joseph de la nouvelle beauce d'une part, et Marie Angelique Rodrigue
 & fille de Jean Rodrigue, et de de fente Dorotee fugere adps pere et mere aussi de l'ette
 d'Angelique paropre de l'autre part, ne s'estant trouve aucun empêchement civil et canonique,
 Rodrigue. je soussigné Missionnaire des paroisses de la nouvelle beauce, ay reçu d'eux mutuel
 consentement de mariage, et leur ay donné la benediction nuptiale avec les
 ceremonies prescrites par l'ait de l'Eglise catholique apostolique et romaine, en
 presence de Joseph poulin, Pierre poulin, Jean poulin, pierre poulin, Claude poulin,
 et Thérèse poulin, Angelique poulin, pere, grand pere, oncle, frere et sœur de
 l'epoux, et de Jean Rodrigue, Francois Rodrigue, Jean Rodrigue, Charles Mathew,
 Augustin Rodrigue, Vincent Rodrigue, pere, frere, oncle, sœur et cousins de
 l'epouse, tant parents qu'amis des dits epoux, dont quelques uns ont signé avec
 nous, les autres ont déclaré ne savoir signer, de ce lequel après lecture a eux
 faite suivant l'ordonnance.

Joseph poulin, pierre poulin
 Claude poulin att. paros + poulin
 Jean Rodrigue

[Signature] S. Theodore Ch. M.

Le 25^e Janv. 1762. L'an mil sept cent soixante deux le vingt sept janvier, par moy soussigné —
 Baptême Missionnaire de la beauce, a été baptisé avec les ceremonies ordinaires Genevieve
 de Genevieve — Victoire, née d'heur Environ sur les dix huit heures du soir, fille de Joseph Vachon —
 Vachon. et de Genevieve paré d'opere et mere en legitime mariage, de l'ette paropre de
 St Joseph de la nouvelle beauce. Son parrain a été Alexis Vachon et Elisabeth

Joseph Poulin the son's marriage contract, 1762.

"Un Canadien Errant"
"A Wandering Canadian"

Un Canadien errant, banni de ses foyers, (*bis*)
Un jour, triste et pensif, assis au bord des flots, (*bis*)
"Si tu vois mon pays, mon pays malheureux, (*bis*)
"O jours si pleins d'appas vous êtes disparus... (*bis*)
"Non, mais en expirant, O mon cher Canada! (*bis*)

Parcourait en pleurant des pays étrangers. (*bis*)
Au courant fugitif il adressa ces mots: (*bis*)
Va, dis à mes amis que je me souviens d'eux." (*bis*)
Et ma patrie, hélas! Je ne le verrai plus!" (*bis*)
Non regard languissant vers toi se portera..." (*bis*)

Translation:

A wandering Canadian lad, exiled from his home,
Wandered in tears through a foreign land.
One day, sad and thoughtful, seated beside a stream,
To the flowing current he addressed these words:
"If you see my country, my unhappy country,
Go, say to my friends that I remember them."
"Oh, days so full of delight, you have vanished,
And my country, alas, I will never see her again."
"No, but in dying, Oh my dear Canada,
My gaze will turn in sorrow towards you."

As a result of the Seven Years War France lost Canada to the British in the Treaty of Paris, 1763. By the 1800's, English oppression had not let up; although somewhat appeased by the right to keep their language and religion, the French and disadvantaged Anglos alike could stand the political and economic inequalities no longer. In 1837-38 Louis Papineau and Dr.E.B. O'Callaghan led a revolt in lower Canada, which was soon crushed. Another rebellion sprouted in Upper Canada with similar results. Hundreds of rebels had to flee their homes in exile; thus, the popularity of this song which was written in 1842 by Antoine Gérin-Lajoie. The next few decades saw rising tensions between England and the United States. Twenty-three years later, when the Civil War broke out, as they also had done during the American Revolution, hundreds of French again flocked south to join the American ranks. They would have well remembered this song in their times of loneliness and homesickness.



Chapter 5

Les Américains

by
Solange Poulin Turcotte



In the year following the death of Joseph's father, the young family emigrated to Skowhegan, Maine, in search of employment. It is a popular family myth that the three traveled south by horse and buggy, but the reality, lately revealed to the family by Solange, is that the three of them traveled by railroad from Canada to Skowhegan, Maine. There was a train station in Skowhegan until the early 40s. The station was located where the Aubuchon Hardware and the Milburn Hotel are now. They rented a house on Free Street.¹²³ Pèpère's first employment in support of his family seems to have been working at odd jobs. It is unknown if he went back to logging on the river at this time, probably not. Eventually he succeeded in obtaining permanent employment at a local spinning mill. Mémère took care of the children. There were nine siblings in all (in order of birth): Gaston Gerard (Gus, 1/28/22), Joseph Guy (Guy, 10/15/23), Marie L. Yvette (Yvette, 10/15/24), Marie Antoinette Solange (Solange, 9/15/26), Marie-Marthe (Martha, 3/20/29), Joseph Victor (Victor, 3/18/31), Joseph Marius Roger (Roger, 11/27/33), George (2/22/35), and Marie Bernadette (usually called Bunny, 11/19/37); five boys and four girls.

Solange: "I was born on Wednesday 9/15/26 in Skowhegan, Maine, in a house on Free Street which my parents were renting. I weighed in at eight pounds, but my mother didn't remember the time of day. My mother had nine children and certainly didn't have time to keep any records on each of us. At that time the President of the United States was Calvin Coolidge, Republican; Vice-President was Charles Dawes. Bread was 10¢ a pound, milk was 56¢ a gallon, gas was 23¢ a gallon and stamps were 2¢ a letter. According to the Chinese zodiac it was the year of the Tiger. Martha was the last one to be born in the house on Free Street. When I was eight months old, my mother was in the process of ironing and I was crawling about on the floor when I pulled the hot iron down onto me. I have a scar on my left upper arm as a result of that episode. When I was about four years old, we moved to the house my parents bought on North Avenue. My only recollection of the house on Free Street is standing in front of the house and enjoying the pouring rain, sans raincoat."¹²⁴

"Our house on North Avenue didn't have a toilet till my father had one installed when he bought the house. He put it in the smallest of the three rooms upstairs. It wasn't till the forties that my parents were able to afford to have a tub and lavatory installed there, and to have oil heat in the kitchen stove. In the bathroom was a cot where one of us kids used to sleep. Downstairs there were also three rooms. We had two sleeper sofas in the living room. A large round table was in the dining room and a buffet with a clock that chimed the hours. It was rather comforting to hear the chimes if you happened to be wakeful some night and be able to know how many more hours till morning. In the kitchen was a old slate sink, a Maytag wringer washer, (no fridge), a wood-burning cook stove, Kineo was the name on it. The reason that I remember the name is because my brother Joe (Guy) got branded with the 'O' on his backside one winter morning while trying to get warm before dressing. The flap on his long-johns was gaping and he got too close to the stove. (I often wondered if the mark was on Joe when he grew up.) We had a pot bellied stove in the front room. It was dragged in from the shed in the fall and moved out in the spring. We burned wood in that stove and also in the kitchen cook stove, summer and winter. Consequently every summer there was wood to be cut, about eight cords a year. After it was chopped into stove-size pieces, it was piled up in the shed. Mama led the brigade – and all of us, down to the smallest, carried in wood to be

¹²³ Memories of Martha Poulin Kammer and Solange Poulin Turcotte.

¹²⁴ Memoire by Solange Poulin Turcotte, 1.

piled. We usually did this in the evening in the fall. My mother and father used to bake about sixteen loaves of bread every week, summer and winter. They had a huge bread mixing machine, but it ran on manpower. There was huge woodbox behind the stove where Mama put eight loaves at a time to rise; it was warm in that corner. When she wasn't using it for bread, it was one of our favorite places to play or to lie down, especially in the winter time.”¹²⁵



Circa 1930 looking east, L-R: Gaston (8), Solange (4), Guy (7), Yvette (6) Pépère in background.

The photo above was taken shortly after the family moved to North Avenue from Free Street. The large oak in the background is the one that Guy climbed when the family dog chased him (Rex did not know Guy yet). The corner of the open porch can be seen. The car must have belonged to a neighbor. “I don’t know when they enclosed the porch but before that we (the four oldest) used to sleep out there lying on a blanket (ouch!) with one to cover us in the summer when we had company from Canada and during Fair Week so we could watch the fireworks.”¹²⁶

“Besides not having any labor-saving appliances, Mama did dressmaking and alterations for people in the neighborhood to help toward the family income. My father used to work as a log driver on the Kennebec River, but I don’t have any personal recollections of those days. I only remember the time when he worked in the spinning mill on the night shift; he worked six nights a week. He went to work at 8 p.m. and came home about 6 a.m. It was a very difficult time because there was a depression on then which lasted most of our childhood. When Papa received a full week’s pay, it was \$11.00. I don’t know how my parents managed. People didn’t get food stamps in those days, but there was donated government surplus food at the Town Hall. I remember going with Papa and helping to drag the little wagon to pick up some food. It was on a Saturday morning usually. Papa must have looked like the Pied Piper, because he took some of us kids with him to give Mama a break. She always had plenty of housework, cooking, and

¹²⁵ Solange, Memoire, 1-2.

¹²⁶ Reminiscences in an email conversation and photo by Solange.

sewing to do. I remember her getting up in the winter about 5 a.m. to light the stoves for cooking, to heat up the house, and to start breakfast before Papa got home from work. Papa had to try to sleep during the day which was very difficult with a house full of kids. Mama was always shushing us. She must have gotten very tired of reminding us to be quiet, especially when we went upstairs to use the bathroom.

I remember that we had a lot of fun playing together. We never went to the neighbors to play but we always had plenty of them come play with us. We didn't need any neighborhood friends; we were a neighborhood by ourselves. We used to play school a lot, using the stairs as the seating arrangement. Because of all these experiences playing school, I could read and write by the time I entered kindergarten, and I was promoted from kindergarten to second grade. It didn't bother me at the time, but now I don't approve of that practice because emotionally you're not as fully developed as your classmates. Academically I did not have any problems; in grammar school I was always one of the top three students in my class. I attended, as we all did, Notre Dame de Lourdes Parochial School, which was staffed by Ursuline nuns. A lot of the kids didn't like the nuns, and there were some confrontations between some of the students and the teachers.

Victor was the first one born in the house on North Avenue, 3/18/31. He was the sixth child. It's a good thing he was a good baby (according to Mama we were all good babies) because she must have been very busy. She nursed every one of us and that takes a lot of time. It's also fortunate that she had a good husband. They worked together to raise us, which took a lot of patience, sacrifice, and hard work. Roger was born 11/27/33. He was a beautiful baby with blond curly hair, but always colicky. He cried a lot and when he was a little older, he walked in his sleep. I don't remember when he stopped. More than once, I was called out of class by the nuns to comfort Roger and sometimes I had to walk him home. He was a real homebody and missed his Mama.

Mama delivered all her children at home, so when her time came we were farmed out to the neighbors. I can remember sleeping at the Sirois's house when George was born 2/22/35. As an infant George was covered with black fuzz; we were all excited because we thought that we got a little black boy. When Bernadette was born, I stayed at the Bushey's house. That was 11/19/37. As the baby of the family she had a lot of doting older siblings, so it's a wonder that she wasn't spoiled rotten. While Mama was recuperating from the birth of Bernadette, Vic who must have been six years old was hit by a truck. He was sliding at the sand bank [across North Avenue], and I don't know if his sled ran out onto the road or if he was dragging his sled on his way home, but Mama saw it happen from her bedroom window. Luckily he was all right except for some bruises and a bump on his head. The doctor was called to check him out. Doctors made house calls in those days.

As the family grew we played musical beds. There were three double sized beds upstairs, plus two cots; downstairs there were two sleeper sofas. All were put to use. When we were growing up, Papa always had a large garden. Since we didn't have enough arable land at home, neighbors with more land than they needed would allow Papa to plant on their land. We were supposed to help with the weeding, but I don't think we were much help. We did more standing around and complaining about the heat and the bugs. I think we kids were quite bratty, because Mama used this expression quite often, "Courage mon ame, le ciel est au bout." And when she had yelled upstairs at us for a third and fourth time to quiet down and go to sleep, she would say, "Vous allez payer pour mes pas." If Papa wasn't there to back her up, it took a little longer for us to behave. I guess we all had too much energy. Poor Mama – and she had to have a lot of energy, too, to cope with us, getting as little sleep as she did. She never went to bed before midnight and got up at 5 a.m.

Mama always sang when she did the laundry. I remember telling her what a lovely voice she had and how beautiful she was. She just smiled and continued singing. She used the Maytag washer and two tubs for rinsing. She always had a huge pile of clothes, but that didn't daunt her. She actually enjoyed her

work. She was always a happy person and accepted life as it was dealt. Another of her sayings was “L’homme propose mais Dieu dispose.” My parents were good Christians. They believed and lived the Word of God. They tried to instill in us the value of prayer and sacrifice and the practice of religion. I hope we weren’t a disappointment to them. I think we all did our best to live by their example. We said the rosary together every evening before supper. It seems that just kneeling was a signal to start giggling. Sometimes Mama had a hard time to keep from joining in. Not so Papa; he was made of sterner stuff. We went to Mass every Sunday morning and Benediction every Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m. During Lent we got up earlier and went to Mass every morning before school started and Saturdays as well. It was mighty cold walking to school during the winter. We went to the parochial school from K to eighth grade. We all had bookbags to carry because we always had plenty of homework – our bookbags were homemade.”¹²⁷



Circa 1932 or 33 L-R: Gaston (10-11), Guy (9-10), Solange (6-7), Yvette (8-9), Martha in window (4).

“I don’t remember the occasion [of the picture] but it must have been some event at school. Gus liked to make model airplanes and woe to we who were watching if we touched anything. He threatened us with a knuckle sandwich. He had a paper route so was able to buy his airplane kits. We, the girls, versus the boys, had to take turns doing the dishes after supper. The dishwasher had to clean the stove and the sink and the dryer had to sweep the floor. After we finished is when we would wrestle....Gus against the rest of us. We didn’t stand a chance. Mama kept a close eye on us so no one would commit mayhem. Gaston was a promoter!! He liked to organize games and even included the girls.”¹²⁸

“Gaston was the oldest of my brothers and he was a promoter. He organized the ball games, tag games, and was always challenging us to take him down. When the wrestling got too noisy, too much crying and whining, or in danger that somebody might get hurt, Mama would step in. Mama was usually stuck with the job of disciplining us, but only because she was on hand. When Papa was home, there was no question of anyone defying his orders, although I don’t think he ever struck any one of us. We were

¹²⁷ Solange Memoire, 2-3.

¹²⁸ Reminiscences and photo by Solange Poulin Turcotte.

very intimidated by his large hands and didn't believe in tempting fate. We weren't allowed to play in the neighbors' yards so consequently our yard was always overrun with kids. Gaston built us a sort of round-about. It was a long plank like a teeter board which was laid across a post which was sunk into the ground. He drove a spike into the center of the plank and into the top of the post; the diameter of the post was about a foot. Someone sat on each end and another one pushed it around. When the kids started horsing around and falling off, Mama made him take it apart. I remember it was a lot of fun and we hated to see it taken down.¹²⁹

"When he was 12 or 13, mama was looking for Gaston and I found him at the neighbor's. He and Walter Dube were smoking in their barn! Walter's grandfather had a huge horse, either a Percheron or a Clydesdale and of course plenty of hay around – the worse place to be smoking. Mama scolded him all the way home. That made me feel bad about tattling. When he was 13 or 14 Gus made a merry-go-round for us. It consisted of a big board balanced on a tree trunk with a spike through the middle. We sat on each end and someone would push us around. It was a lot of fun. It was like we were two families, the four oldest and five youngest as two sets. I didn't have much interaction with the younger except as big sister or baby sitter."¹³⁰

"While I was still in high school, my parents were able to afford to have the kitchen stove converted to oil, and they put in a hot water heater so we had hot and cold water in the sink. The hot water heater stood behind the cook stove because the water coils had to go around the oil burners. We still didn't have a complete bathroom, so we had to continue lugging water upstairs and bathing in a wash tub.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO BE GIVEN TO
THE PERSON NATURALIZED

No. 3934785

CERTIFICATE OF CITIZENSHIP

Pollion No. 520

Personal description of holder as of date of naturalization: Age 45 years, sex male, color white, complexion medium, color of eyes blue, color of hair dk. brown, height 5 feet 6 inches, weight 135 pounds, visible distinctive marks none, former nationality British, marital status married.

I certify that the description above given is true, and that the photograph affixed hereto is a likeness of me.

ORIGINAL

State of Maine, ss: Joseph William Poulin
County of Somerset, Skowhegan, Maine
Be it known, that Joseph William Poulin
then residing at Skowhegan, Maine
having petitioned to be admitted a citizen of the United States of America, and at
a term of the Superior Court of Maine
held pursuant to law at
Skowhegan, Maine on May 15, 1935
the court having found that the petitioner intended to reside permanently in the
United States, had in all respects complied with the Naturalization laws of the United
States in such case applicable, and was entitled to be so admitted, the court thereupon
entered that the petitioner be admitted as a citizen of the United States of America.
In testimony whereof the seal of the court is hereunto affixed this 15th
day of May in the year of our Lord, nineteen hundred and
thirty-five
and fifty-ninth.

Seal

Clerk of the Superior Court

By Deputy Clerk.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS

¹²⁹ Solange Memoire, 4-5.

¹³⁰ Reminiscences in an email conversation by Solange.

Gus's copy of his father's certificate of citizenship; he became a US citizen in 1935.¹³¹

World War II was declared during my junior year of high school, and the salaries started to rise. I was earning 30 cents an hour before leaving for nursing school. My parents were able to put in a new bathroom and to replace the slate sink. They eventually remodeled the whole kitchen and had white metal cabinets installed, which was the style in those days. All this was done about the time Gaston and Guy got out of the service in 1946. It was about this time that they also finished off part of the shed to make a bedroom for the boys.



The Poulin Family in 1941: L-R (back row) Martha, Mère, Yvette, Victor, Gaston, Solange, and Pèpère; (front row) George, Bernadette (Bunny), and Roger; the only one missing is Guy (Photo Courtesy of Bernadette Poulin Karter)

My father died March 31, 1952, from a coronary thrombosis induced by electroshock treatment for depression. (Now there are medicines that are more effective and safer). Victor and Roger were in the service and Martha entered the Nunnery, so there were only Bernadette and George with Mama at home. It's a good thing she had her dressmaking skills to supplement her income from Social Security. She also did babysitting but usually just for her grand kids. I know she was shattered when Papa died, but afterward you never heard her complain about her situation. (C'est la vie.) She was always optimistic. Papa was the pessimist. I don't know how she did it but she sent George and Bernadette to boarding school for their high school education." Mère died of cancer of the liver and bowels on 4/30/71.¹³²

[Here the grandchildren can add their own histories of their family life]

¹³¹ From Gus Poulin's wartime Scrapbook.

¹³² Solange Memoire, 6-11. The story of Gus and Guy in WWII is told in another book entitled *Gus and Guy, and Their Many Air Force Friends during World War II*. This story can be found at: <http://entrada1598.com/books/Marauder/G&G.pdf>

“La Bastringue”
(4/4 Time)

Mademoiselle, voulez vous danser?
La bastringue, la bastringue,
Mademoiselle, voulez vous danser?
La bastringue va commencer.

Oui, monsieur, je veux bien danser.
La bastringue, la bastringue,
Oui, monsieur, je veux bien danser,
C'est pour vous accompagner.

Mademoiselle, il faut nous arrêter...
La bastringue, la bastringue,
Mademoiselle, il faut nous arrêter...
Vous aller vous fatiguer.

Non, monsieur, je sais bien danser...
La bastringue, la bastringue,
Non, monsieur, je sais bien danser...
Je suis prête à recommencer.

Mademoiselle, j'n peux plus danser...
La bastringue, la bastringue,
Mademoiselle, j'n peux plus danser...
Parce que j'en ai des cors aux pieds!

Miss, would you like to dance?
The bastringue, the bastringue.
Miss, would you like to dance?
The Bastringue is about to begin.

Yes, mister, I like to dance,
The bastringue, the bastringue.
Yes, mister, I like to dance,
Especially if you accompany me.

Miss, we must stop.
The bastringue, the bastringue.
Miss, we must stop.
You will be tired.

No mister, I like dancing.
The bastringue, the bastringue.
No mister, I like dancing.
I'm ready to go again.

Miss, I can't dance any more.
The bastringue, the bastringue.
Miss, I can't dance any more.
Because I have corns on my feet!

This immensely popular Canadian dance tune has its origins in the 1600-1700s. By the early 1800s it was very popular in New England and appeared in “Wilson’s Companion to the Ballroom” in 1816. It is a song about an old man who asks a young girl to dance but soon regrets it. His feet are hurting and he pretends to be concerned that she is tired, but she is not. The song ends with him finally admitting the truth. They take their folk songs seriously in Quebec; in the 1950s Charles Marius Barbeau recorded 9,000 versions of 5,000 tunes in a few years of research. “They consider them ‘...the very breath of our life...’” The Marius Barbeau Museum is located in St-Joseph, P.Q. He also collected 400 folk stories.

Ancestors of my paternal grandfather (the Poulin side):

Pascal Poulain married 1615 Marie Levert in Rouen, Normadie, France.

New World Generations:

- 1) Claude Poulain, carpenter, married 1639 to Jeanne Mercier at Quebec
- 2) Martin Poulain, occupation unknown, married 1688 to Jeanne Barrette at Ste-Anne, P.Q.
- 3) Jean Poulain, farmer, married 1711 to Agnes Druoin at Chateau-Richer, P.Q.
- 4) Joseph Poulin, farmer, married 1739 to Angelique Pare at Ste-Anne, P.Q.
- 5) Joseph Poulin fils, farmer, married 1762 to Angelique Rodrigue at St-Joseph, P.Q.
- 6) Jean Poulin, farmer, married 1792 to Charlotte Roy at St-Francois, P.Q.
- 7) Pierre Poulin, farmer married 1829 to Apolline Vachon at St-Joseph, P.Q.
- 8) Prosper Poulin, farmer, married 1861 to Caroline Gilbert at St-Francois, P.Q.
- 9) Thomas Poulin, farmer, married 1888 to Elmina Plante at St-Francois, P.Q.
- 10) Joseph William Poulin, logger and millworker, married 1921 to Marie Elise Alida Lessard at St-Joseph, P.Q.
- 11) Gaston Gerard Poulin, upholsterer, married 1948 to Theresa Provencher at Skowhegan, Maine.

Ancestors of my paternal grandmother (the Lessard side):

Jacques de Lessart married Marie Herson at Chambois, Normadie, France

New World Ancestors:

- 1) Etienne de Lessart married 1652 to Marguerite Sevestre at Ste-Anne de Beaupre.
- 2) Etienne Lessart married 1679 to Marie Poulain (Claude and Jeanne's 2nd Marie).
- 3) Prisque Lessard married 1699 to Marie Jacob.
- 4) Francois-Malo Lessard married 1724 to Anglétique Racine (moved to Beauce).
- 5) Francois Lessard married 1767 to Marie Anne Gagne.
- 6) Francois Lessard married 1802 to Marie Gilbert.
- 7) Basile-Elie Lessard married 1832 to Angele Labbe (an Amerindian).
- 8) George Lessard married 1859 to Dina Tardif.
- 9) Amedee Lessard married 1887 to Celina Lessard (cousins).
- 10) Marie Elise Alida Lessard married 1921 to Joseph Poulin.

Ancestors of my maternal grandfather (the Provencher side) are completely unknown.

Arthur Provencher married Emma Laney. It was said that Arthur came from New Hampshire.

Ancestors of my maternal grandmother (the Laney side):

entrada1598.com/family/poulinfamily.pdf