

SUMMARY

- Our members from all generations tell their confinement stories
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# Les Tétreau disent...

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## 1995 – 2020 25 YEARS ALREADY!



In 2015 many of us celebrated our 20th anniversary. We had decided to honor our founders as well as those who greatly contributed to the Association's database, notably Gene Tetro of Vermont, who joined us for the occasion.



**André Tétreault**

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# A word from the President

Dear members,

The year 2020 should have been one of rejoicing for the members of our Association. The Association of the Descendants of Louis Tetreau was founded 25 years ago, and 400 years ago, on July 29, 1620, Mathurin Tétreau and Marie Bernard, the parents of our ancestor, Louis Tétreau, were married at Tessonnière in Poitou.

We had hoped to celebrate these two anniversaries at our fall reunion. Unfortunately, under the current circumstances, we agreed to postpone this meeting. Indeed, it would be difficult for us to gather while respecting social distancing. We hold all of you dear and would not want to put you at risk.

However, we are exploring the possibility of holding our fall general assembly virtually. This meeting could probably be held on social media like Messenger or Skype. We will notify you as soon as we have made a decision.

To mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our Association, we agreed to send you our newsletter in color and in a new format. I want to thank Geneviève Tétrault who took time during her summer vacation to revise the layout. We are presently considering the possibility of regularly publishing our newsletter in color.

Without a doubt, 2020 will long be remembered. Who could have predicted that a pandemic would keep us isolated from each other for months! Whereas some of us have fared well enough during the confinement, others faced a different reality. Some of our members have lost loved ones to the pandemic. I want to take this opportunity, in the name of our administrative council members, to offer you my sincere condolences.

In this issue, we offer you a special report on the way different members of our group have lived through the pandemic and the period of isolation.

We hope to be able to see you soon. Meanwhile, stay well!

# Welcome to our new members!

Gerald Myers from Renton, Washington  
Nancy Teodori from Pierrefonds, Québec  
Annette Parks from Seattle, Washinton

## SPECIAL FEATURE

### First-hand accounts of the COVID-19 pandemic

Since March 2020, we have been living in historic times. In the following pages we will share with you some experiences that were lived out by our members from all age groups.

Anne-Charlotte Éthier, age 7,  
granddaughter of Danielle Côté







**Maeva Karivelil, age 12, daughter of Stéphanie Tétreault**

*"I gave my mother a pleading look. She gave me a sign of approval to say that I would be returning to school."*

## An Exceptional End to Elementary School

My name is Maeva, and I'm 12 years old. Allow me to tell you how I managed the home confinement here in Québec, specifically in Jonquière.

At the very beginning of this stay-at-home period, I was worried because I was in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade of elementary school, and I was afraid I would be lacking some measure of knowledge needed to be admitted to secondary school. I was soon reassured and was led to understand that the teachers would be very understanding. Besides, the ministry of education emailed us some learning packages each week. Well, I must admit that I didn't use them very often. I preferred using some exercise booklets and I also listened to the broadcast, *L'école à la maison* (School at Home) from Télé-Québec, along with my 9-year-old brother. This program is very educational and interesting for children.

With my class, we began having Zoom meetings. I did the same with my dance group several times a week. It felt good to move together with my group, even while we were apart. Personally, I prefer the regular way of teaching this art, but, luckily, Covid-19 did not prevent me from exercising my passion, my way to unwind.

At the end of spring, my dance teacher produced a long video presentation in

which each group performed a segment of choreography. It was wonderful! Besides, the video was broadcast on the very day when our performance would have taken place. This is always a very important event in the year, and I was very sad not to be able to be on stage this time. Around mid-May, I found out that I would be allowed to return to school. I gave my mother a pleading look. She gave me a sign of approval to say that I would be returning to school. It was such good news! I was happy at the thought of seeing my friends and my teacher.

Since we were too many pupils in my elementary school, the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students were transferred to the secondary school in Kénogami (my next school). That was very cool. Because we were only 30 students we had a big secondary school all to ourselves! Each morning we had to meet in the yard at our elementary school to take a school bus. The seats were marked with tape to indicate which places we were allowed to take. We had to wash our hands upon entering school, and then in the classroom, and again as we left. In total, with the arrival, recess, lunch and the end of classes, it added up to 16 times a day!

Our desks were spaced two meters apart. We were three groups of a maximum

of 12 students per area (instead of two groups). I very much enjoyed this teacher to student ratio. It made me less timid to speak in front of the class.

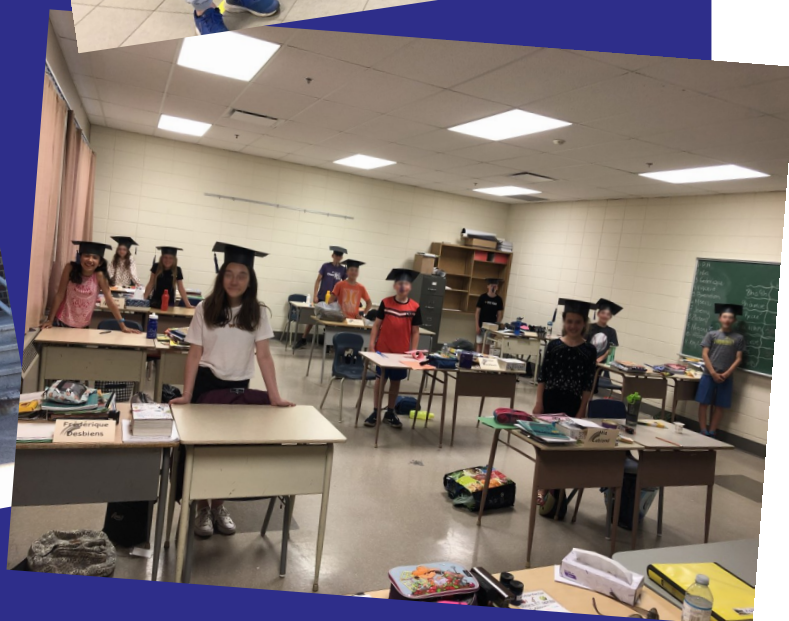
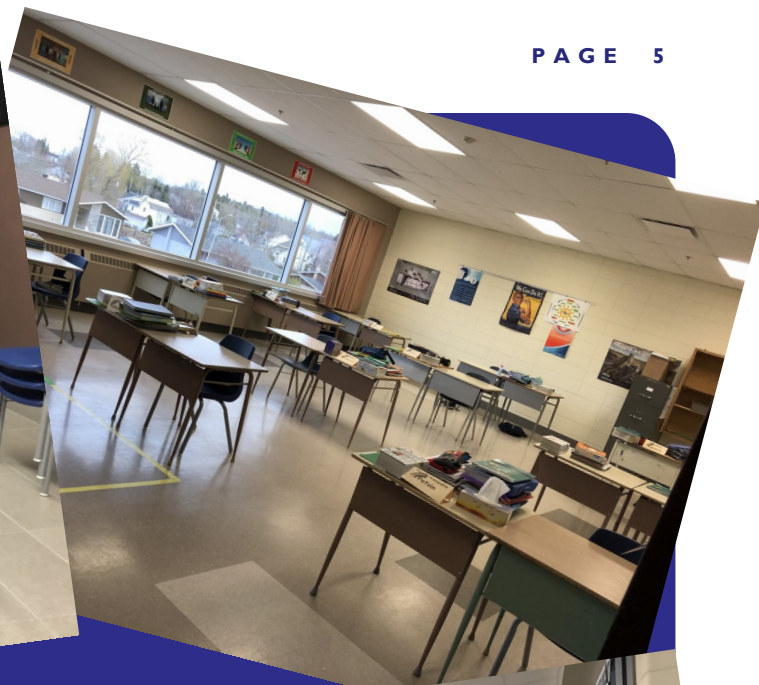
In short, I was happy to be back in school, even if I was unable to say goodbye to my elementary school, nor was there any year-end leave or any ceremony for those who were moving on.

What I appreciated most about the stay-at-home is that we didn't have any exams to study for, since they had all been cancelled. Since my parents worked from home and nobody had any night classes, meetings or gatherings, we spent all our evenings as a family. I was introduced to the game of Monopoly, and this could last for hours! Now, nobody wants to play because my father always won! I was also able to discover another passion: cooking (especially desserts).

On the other hand, there were also some disadvantages, such as not being able to see our loved ones and our friends. Since we were always together at home, there might have been some occasional tension in the family.

Finally, my home confinement wasn't so bad, and the end of my elementary school was truly unique!







Stéphanie Tétreault

*"And now, from now on, they were back on break...for an undetermined length of time."*

## The Home Confinement of an Independent Worker in Saguenay

March 13, 2020 will remain etched in the memory of all the inhabitants of Quebec. It was on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> that the government announced that Quebec would be shut down for several weeks.

The next day, at home, we were celebrating my daughter's birthday along with four friends who would sleep over. Then, on Sunday, our lives changed dramatically.

My children (6<sup>th</sup> grade and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade) had returned to school for 3 days after a week's break. And now, from now on, they were back on break... for an undetermined length of time. And so, like all families in Quebec, we had to adapt to a new situation at home for work and with the children. As for me, nothing changed with my work environment. For the past 15 years, I have worked independently from home. So, it can be said that working from home is part of my routine.

For a long time I heard people envy my working from home: wearing pajamas all day, loafing around in the morning, taking a hike in the afternoon in good weather... not really. Those who worked at home soon learned that if they were expected to put in 30 hours a week, they had to produce the work, with or without

children. Fortunately, many employers have allowed their employees (especially those who have young children), to put in fewer hours per day since work and the supervision of a toddler bounding with energy are rather incompatible.

Now, my partner who works for a government agency quickly set himself up at the house, and this, until the end of August. The adjustment I had to make was to work at home with all the members of my family present. My partner works in a room exactly one floor above me. The most disagreeable element I had to "endure" is rather not common. I discovered that the position he holds requires him to make many phone calls per day, and he laughs very loud...and all the time! I therefore had to learn to focus on my work (an intellectual task that requires constant concentration) while ignoring his incessant laughter!

Luckily, our children are old enough to be able to occupy themselves. My daughter took a course for baby sitters last year, and so, she took care of her little brother. I find that the time of home confinement helped them develop a sense of independence. They were able to experiment in the kitchen

without supervision, and we were always close by should a problem arise. Needless to say, my partner and I enjoyed excellent snacks at coffee breaks: muffins, cupcakes, cookies and even a two-layered cake!

What I liked the most about our stay-at-home is that we had all our evenings (weekdays and weekends) together as a family. No more extracurricular courses, no yoga, no overbooked schedules! What a joy it was to be able to simply spend time together, all four of us, without having to plan, to eat quickly, etc. The Corona virus has slowed down time, and we took advantage of it. To have time for several games of Monopoly lasting 3 or 4 hours during the same week—unheard of!

In mid-May, we decided to send our children back to school. Since we live in Saguenay, our region, which is remote and only accessible by a few roads, was able to close itself off with road blocks. Thus we were able to more quickly eradicate the virus from our population. The return to a more normal life happened more quickly for us than in the Montreal region, for example.

My son went back to his school with only 8 to 10 stu-



dents per class. He loved this teacher to pupil ratio. He found it less intimidating and was more willing to participate. As for my daughter who was completing elementary school, the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students had to move to a secondary school. Thus my daughter got introduced to her future school, which gave her a preview of her transition in September. It was a very different ending of elementary school for these 30 students who had the secondary school to themselves. As a mother, I must admit that I really appreciated the absence of exams and after-school homework. But this is only a postponement. It will all start over in September.

As far as disadvantages go, evidently, what I found most difficult has been to not be allowed to visit with my family (who live outside our region) and friends. I was particularly aware of the fact that my parents and in-laws were more at risk. But we

found some temporary solutions. Like many other families, we highlighted anniversaries through Zoom meetings. In March, I would occasionally go for tea at my friend's door to talk, 2 meters apart, well seated—on the snow bank.

It is evident that video conference platforms and social media have enabled us to break the bonds of isolation. Watching television's news could be a source of anxiety, but the creativity of people on social media like Facebook has been a balm on our isolation. I've never laughed so much over such humor and creativity to get through this unprecedented health crisis while trying to keep a smile.

The stay-at-home has been easier for some, and more difficult for others. I think about the elderly who live alone, confined to an apartment, or about the many families who live in tiny apartments. There are some

couples who have not survived this period of confinement. There were couples of adolescents or of adults who were not living together or in the same region, who were unable to see each other. There are people who have had to grieve a loved one without being able to say their goodbyes.

Last week, in the context of my work, I did the revision of a genealogical manuscript about my client's family. When I think of our ancestors who had very large families of 12 or 14 children, who lived in a single small house, with, no doubt, a bedroom for the parents, one for the boys, the girls, the older ones, and the youngest, all of this in difficult conditions, I can't help but admire their resilience and their solidarity as a family. They too, in a way, knew what it was like to experience lack of privacy and confinement.

***"It's not without reason that I bought a new bike: I could no longer fit in my shorts!"***

## Articles wanted !

### To our English-speaking Tetreau cousins,

We are always looking for content for our newsletter. Feel free to submit a short, or not-so-short, story about your Tetreau ancestors and we would be pleased to include it in an upcoming newsletter.

Here are some suggestions for possible articles:

- A politician in the family? A musician? A star athlete?
- An ancestor who served in the military and received a medal?
- Anyone who witnessed a historic event?
- A pioneer ancestor/family that moved to the United States or western Canada?
- A famous (or infamous?) businessman or woman?

Whether it's about a recent Tetreau relative (parent, grandparent, etc.) or a more distant Tetreau ancestor, we would love to hear about their exploits and challenges.

Please contact me regarding any submittal.

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Geneviève Tétrault

*"Ultimately, what we lived through would turn out to be much worse than what we had imagined."*

## Chronicle of an Announced Catastrophe

**March 12.** There was a certain nervousness among the personnel at my school. We had just returned for a few days after a week's break during which many students and colleagues of mine had travelled. Everybody was talking about the epidemic that was spreading in Europe. I was personally worried because I take an immunosuppressant to control my Crohn's disease. Between two sessions, information was spreading among the adults that François Legault (Quebec's Prime Minister) would be holding a press conference during the lunch hour. Related to that, a rumor was spreading that schools would soon be closed. As long as the announcement was not made officially, the rumor was not shared with the students, and the Corona virus remained a topic of discussion like any other in my human sciences groups where talk of ongoing events was routine. The subject seemed distant, across the oceans; it did not concern us directly. This is no less what the students thought as well as many adults. When I shared my concern with colleagues, I felt that they thought I was exaggerating. Ultimately, what we lived through would turn out to be much worse than what we had imagined.

**March 12, 4<sup>th</sup> Period.** I was with my cultural geography group in 5e secondaire.<sup>1</sup> We had finished viewing a film which we were discussing when our general director took to the public address system to make a general announcement. I've been teaching for 16 years in this school; it's quite rare that the general director would thus interrupt a class. Almost every time that he did, it was to share bad news. My heart was pounding, but I had to keep a serene face for my students. As a student had once told me when we went through another difficult time, "If the teachers roll over, what are we supposed to do?" I hadn't been able to see the Prime Minister's press conference, but I knew that he had not announced the closing of the schools, for now... Our director announced then that we were expected in school tomorrow, but that the situation was evolving rapidly and that we should check our emails in the evening. There were 10 minutes left in the period; it was impossible to do anything else, so we talked about the situation. My adolescent students were worried. Some thought it would be preferable to close the schools like they had done in other countries. Others wondered how they would complete their learning programs if the schools were to close. Still

others had parents who are teachers and wondered if they would still get paid if schools closed. As best as I could, I tried to reassure my older students suddenly turned into small children. My impulse in such cases is to offer an historical perspective. The only comparison that I thought would be useful in the moment was the ice storm of 1998. Schools were closed for three or four weeks, depending on the region. Teachers were paid and programs were completed without having to extend the school year into the summer. Later I would understand that this was like comparing apples and oranges.

**March 12, 3:45 p.m.** The bell rang for the end of the school day. Little did we know it would be the last time this year. I had an eerie foreboding. I watched my students leave; I looked at my empty classroom with a feeling that I wouldn't see it tomorrow. I had the same reaction as before a snowstorm. I gathered all my important personal effects to bring home. In the course of the evening, we received the dreaded email announcing that our private school would be closed the next day. Most of the other private and public schools did the same. Within a few hours, our lives crashed.

**March 13, 11:00 a.m.** The decision was made: schools would be closed for two weeks. I must admit that I was relieved. The more we learned about this illness, the more I asked myself how I would be able to protect myself in this Petri dish which is a school. So, for starters, I must admit that I was concerned for myself. I remind you that we expected schools to be closed for two weeks. There was much criticism leveled at the Minister of Education for telling us at the time that the two weeks would be a vacation. We must remember that when we left the day before, the students left everything behind in their lockers: notebooks, class notes, shoes, lunch leftovers... In spite of the privileged environment in which I teach, not all my students have access to a computer and some small towns in my region do not have access to high speed internet. Many of my colleagues were in the same situation. In short, we were not prepared for distance learning, and our students did not all share the same advantages. To continue teaching and to make the work mandatory would only accentuate the inequalities that were already there before the pandemic.

**March 23, 1:00 p.m.** The government announced that school closures would extend until May 1. The whole Quebec economy came to a halt. Already the border with the U.S. had been closed, homes for the elderly were closed, gatherings were prohibited, legislative assemblies were on hold, etc. People like me were also asked to stay at home. This was serious. I felt fragile. To teach when you do

not have a clear mind and a strong heart is very difficult. I'm saying this because it was also at that moment that we were told that we could send work to the homes of students, optional work because of the disparities I mentioned earlier. I live alone. I'm cut off from my family, my friends, and my professional environment. I worried about my aging parents and about my brother who had lost his job. I took inventory of all I had for food to see how long I could hold out before sending him to the front for provisions. My head was not into teaching. I assumed that my students were not into learning either. I couldn't imagine, at the moment, that it would be important for anyone to know any more about the Constitutional Act of 1791. (That's where I was at on that infamous March 12 with my students of 3e secondaire.)<sup>2</sup>

It's after a conversation with my school's 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle (equivalent of grades 9-11) principal, who herself has adolescents at home, that I understood. I realized that to get through this I would need my students just as much as they needed me. We all needed to get back into a routine, to occupy our minds with tasks other than the one o'clock press conference. Bit by bit, we got ourselves organized. We called every student from the school to find out how they were and whether they had ac-

cess to computers. We began to have weekly meetings of teachers to share our experiences and the tools we knew of for distance learning. It was informal and different from one teacher to another depending on each one's situation. Of course, it was the students who were usually most motivated and the better performers who did the work I sent them by email. Each one did their best according to their circumstances.

Then, at the end of April, the Ministry of Education told us that we could retrieve the material we had left at the schools and that school would be obligatory. It was a done deal! It was a lot of work to organize a schedule for on-line courses. We also had to select what the ministry considered essential knowledge to be taught in the short time that was left. The minister of education talked as if there was a document, some sort of list, which was not the case. We also had to adapt the material so it could be presented on-line in a very limited time. There were only 6 weeks left and the

*"I watched my students leave; I looked at my empty classroom with a feeling that I wouldn't see it tomorrow."*



**The first video sent to my students:**  
*"One day, you will be able to tell your grandchildren that you were there!"*



*I also baked bread!*

*"I didn't have the pleasure of truly being with them, but they made me proud on numerous occasions."*

on-line periods were shorter than the ordinary sessions.

**May 11, 9:30 a.m.** Finally, I was with my students. The same ones I said goodbye to at the end of the day on March 12. I was nervous like on the first day of school, the previous August. Nervous like a beginner, in spite of my 18 years of experience, because I was afraid I wouldn't be able to manage everything (two monitors, the keyboard, the material to present, a completely different style of management), afraid to run out of time, afraid I would find myself alone in front of my screen. To my great surprise, my students were all there! I was so proud!

Little by little, the routine got established. It became the "new normal" like we often heard on the media. The number of students participating remained very high. They didn't all do the work and I didn't collect all the

work that was required. But, on the whole, and considering the context, they worked well. It must be said that as a society, we demanded much of them. They were not able to reconnect with their friends at a time in their life when this is important. They did babysitting. They became essential workers in the retail and restoration business, and they had to dovetail all that with their studies. The message as to the obligatory character of school work changed several times, and they didn't know until the last day how their final grade would be tallied.<sup>3</sup> So, why bother with the work if it won't change the grade at the end of the year? Who can blame them for not wanting to work for nothing, from their point of view?<sup>4</sup>

When asked how I liked distance teaching, I always say that I didn't have any fun, because, to do good work, we need contact, a bond, a presence. During those six weeks, I taught to a screen on which appeared an avatar<sup>5</sup> of the students. They failed to turn on their cameras, so I couldn't see them. I couldn't see the question marks in their eyes, nor the spark that indicates they understood. If they laughed at my jokes, I couldn't hear it (yes, I manage to make them laugh in normal times!). I believe we have demonstrated that we will never be able to replace teachers with computers. A good point for us!

I didn't have the pleasure of truly being with them, but they made me proud on numerous occasions. Some of them salvaged their year through hard work during this period of time. The situation gave me time to offer more personal feedback about their work. This was especially helpful to the weaker students. They were present. They very quickly adapted to the new approach. They were a great help in dealing with computer glitches (mine and each other's). They showed me empathy, always asking me how I was. Together, we turned this time of challenge and constraint into a success. All this was possible because of the bond we had created since September 2019. This bond was created because we had spent our days together. This link was created through uncontrolled group laughter; an encouraging pat on the back, the time spent drying tears of heartbreak, and through activities (school year opening activities, field trips, carnival, amateur theater productions, etc.). This is why it will be important to return to the classroom in September. In order to help my new students progress, we must create this bond without which nothing is possible.

**It was June 26.** This was the first day of summer vacations, which will, realistically, not be such this year, because even though we speak about it more and more as a thing of the past, the pandemic is not finished. This



was not a normal end to the school year. It felt incomplete. All the activities that help with closure did not happen. The senior prom was postponed indefinitely. There were no final exams, no final field trip to La Ronde. My colleagues who are retiring after decades of loyal service did not receive the usual tribute. Of course, I'm one of the lucky ones who kept receiving a salary while staying in the security of my home. In my entourage (family, friends, col-

leagues, students) only one aunt contracted Covid, and she recovered in spite of her advanced age. I'm very aware of having come out of it unscathed and I'm truly grateful. I simply hope that we can draw some lessons from this crisis, that we won't waste it by giving in to the very human desire to return to a former life too soon. Some good and some beauty must come from this. To console my students, I told them that when they get to be my age, they will

talk about this experience with their children, just like previous generations shared stories about war or the assassination of JFK. It's sure that I will never forget this time in my life and that it far surpassed the crisis of the ice storm and the tragedy of 9/11. See, I too am speaking of it as in the past. Yet, no end to this crisis can be predicted as I write these lines.



*"It's sure that I will never forget this time in my life and that it far surpassed the crisis of the ice storm and the tragedy of 9/11."*

*I also had time to complete jigsaw puzzles of 1,000 and even 1,500 pieces!*

### Notes

1. Equivalent to 11<sup>th</sup> grade in U.S.
2. Equivalent to 9<sup>th</sup> grade in U.S.
3. It varied depending on the level. From grades 7 to 9, they were given a pass/fail without having been tested.
4. In 10 and 11, a percent grade was given to make the passage to the next level easier. Many students believed they would be passed whether they had done the work or not.
5. We adults know it's good to remain mentally active. But what would you have done at their age?
6. This varied with the students: a photo of themselves (rather rare), or of a place, a patch of color, sometimes even the photo of another student. In other words, nothing helpful to me!



**Pierrette Brière**

*"I could not imagine that my car in the garage and my warm clothes in the closet wouldn't be taken out for the rest of the winter."*

## Home Confinement in the Mascoutain Countryside

On March 12, I went home aware of the fact that a virus threatened to change our routines for a few weeks. I could not imagine that my car in the garage and my warm clothes in the closet wouldn't be taken out for the rest of the winter.

The very next day, a period of home confinement started which proved to be much longer than anticipated. In the course of the first four months, I can count on the fingers of one hand the number of times that I set foot off our property. Whether it was to avoid contracting and transmitting the virus, out of respect for the fears of my fellow countrymen, or out of a sense of obedience for the established rules, I stayed home as much as possible. And it's not over.

Jean-Claude and I had the pleasure of having children offer to do errands for us. The weekly food order was left in the garage and disinfected before storage. We got into the habit of ordering medications by phone and of greeting delivery persons through the window as they left parcels at our door. We didn't lack anything essential and we even enjoyed some much appreciated treats.

We enjoyed frequent and sometimes lengthy phone conversations with our loved ones, and our social life took

on a different form. We now use our devices to order items, to conduct business, and to hold medical appointments.

We take advantage of modern internet technology to communicate through email, Facebook, Messenger or Skype with our family and friends, to stay close to our children, to receive good news from my sister in Italy or to hold enriching virtual meetings with my upbeat group of "six Monday friends." As septuagenarians, we even managed to catch up with some technology to access our financial statements, to pay bills, and to forward a few funds to our children along with birthday wishes.

Even as we miss our loved ones, we are not alone whereas so many of our fellow citizens suffer deeply from the isolation. As my 91-year-old good friend, a faithful daily communicator, says, "Good that we have each other!"

While it carries a number of constraints, the stay-at-home can provide some advantages. Since I easily fall asleep for short naps, I can snooze at any time of day or night because nothing or no one expects anything from me away from home. I started doing some house cleaning, with slow progress. But

this is not a problem, since we don't expect company. I have a number of ongoing projects, but cancelled deadlines gives me some respite. I continue to work, calm and rested, full of hope and good intentions.

Jean-Claude found the beginning of the home confinement rather difficult. It denied him his morning coffee buddies and his habitual daily rounds. Tired of television with its repetitive programming, he has returned to DIY projects. He constructed a little gem of a chicken coop, the home of our two chickens which provide us with fresh eggs and their gentle cackling. After some springtime chores, he tackled the vegetable garden which has already given us a nice variety of fresh vegetables. Boredom has been replaced by auto maintenance, the replacement of flooring, repairs on the garden shed, a few puzzles, and several games of Freecell.

We take the time to watch the water flow in the river, the lush greenery along the banks, and sunsets behind our house. We delight in sunrises over the vast fields spread in front of our property. Such beauty to be enjoyed when we take life more slowly!

I see that humans have a surprising ability for adapta-

tion. We grieve certain things for a time, others permanently. We go through phases of grumpiness and of sadness until we get hold of ourselves and move on to rebuild a new way of living. In spite of the losses, we dream of being able to move around in a larger environment, to recover part of our lost effervescence, and to savor the proximity of those we love. We long to feel the warmth of hugs, to return to restaurants with pleasant company, to open our doors

to family and friends, to resume our encounters with coworkers and volunteer colleagues.

We will soon have spent five months preparing meals three times a day, seven days a week, seeking new ways to break the routine, nibbling on comforting snacks, living with rejuvenating technological experiences, and following television series depicting the life of our ancestors, also confined, but happy in their small world. Winter has ended,

spring has passed, summer is in full bloom, and fall will come. The future waits with no guarantee that we will be able to return to the habits of our former life.

Nevertheless, all is well, and all will be well!

***“Nevertheless,  
all is well, and  
all will be  
well!”***



***Chickens Monnick and Lyndaw  
Confined to their Mascoutain castle***





Murielle Tétreault

*"Claudette climbed on a chair last night; she fell and the pain in her wrist kept her from sleeping."*

At the beginning of the period of home confinement, my sisters and I organized a communication chain to call my handicapped sister in Quebec City every day. Each one of us had a day to share news with the others. And I'm the one who ordered her groceries by phone from a little market in Quebec which delivered to her door. I used my credit card since she doesn't have one.

#### **A fall and a fracture**

Everything was going well until my sister Sylvie told us, "Claudette climbed on a chair last night; she fell and the pain in her wrist kept her from sleeping." Then began a barrage of phone calls to give her advice: apply an ice pack, take an anti-inflammatory. After two days, it became clear that we needed to find a service to transport her to the hospital. We made multiple calls to the CLSC (health services), to the Little Brothers of the Poor, and other help organizations. It was a wasted effort. Because of the epidemic, all services had been suspended. After several attempts, I managed to reach her family practitioner and got her an appointment for an X-ray in a private clinic. Luckily, my sister had sent her some masks by mail. She put one on, got a taxi, and got to the clinic. The diagnosis came back: a fractured bone in her arm.

Then, my brother François and my sister Jocelyne, from Granby, left for Quebec City, brought her to the hospital, and after a few days, brought her back to Granby, to my sister's who has housed her and taken care of her until now.

#### **Outbreak in the CHLSD**

I was relieved from this worry early in May, and then another anxiety fell upon us. Until the end of May, the Covid 19 tests that Bahgat, my children's father, had taken, were all negative. We hadn't been able to visit him since the beginning of March. He was alone in his room at the Lachine CHLD (nursing home). Being paralyzed in his bed, we thought he was safe. There had been no cases on his floor. We saw him occasionally on Face time.

All of a sudden, there was an outbreak: 10 cases, including the father of my children. My daughter couldn't go since she lives with me. My son, who lives in Waterloo, Ontario, obtained authorization to visit his father. He went to Beaconsfield, settled in a hotel, and went to assist his father after receiving training about the necessary precautions and the use of personal protection

equipment. He didn't want to come near me for fear of spreading the virus.

Then, began a series of communications with family, both here and in Egypt. My children's father is from Egypt. Thank God for Messenger! And then, that dreaded call. His respiratory difficulties were too serious; he had to be transferred to the hospital. There, my son was allowed only one visit for an hour. He went back home and quarantined himself in his basement. His wife lived upstairs.

The nurse who cared for Bahgat was priceless. She brought him a telephone so that our daughter could say goodbye to her father on June 5. The family in Egypt was notified. It was his sister's birthday. There was a private funeral in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu. As if that weren't enough, a flat tire complicated our travel. This was the final tribute to



*For five months, the telephone and the Internet were precious to me in order to stay in contact with members of my family.*

the one who had been my lover, my professor, a loving father, a generous grandfather. I couldn't embrace my children and grandchildren. It was a cold funeral.

Then, my daughter picked up his personal effects that had been thrown haphazardly in plastic bags and stored in the basement of the CHLD. The bodies of the victims of the epidemic at our health services were removed in body bags and sent to be cremated.

#### **Living in isolation**

My son who had seen his father

in his last days is so concerned about me that he hasn't come close since the beginning of June. He hasn't wanted to come in my house. I haven't seen my best friend who is in a CHLD in Marieville since the beginning of March. My children have done so much to protect me. I don't want to worry them, so I stay home. I fear all those who don't wear masks.

I went to the grocery store for the first time in three months on Saturday at 6:00 p.m., because at that time, there weren't many people. It felt like being

on a trip, on vacation, being able to cruise the aisles and pick my own items.

What kept me going is the contact with my family and friends on Facetime and Facebook on the internet. I continue to study Portuguese and to do a little work in my garden. These days, my tablet is my most precious possession.

Every time I hear about a second wave, I panic. This has been a slice of my life which I will be happy to leave behind.

***"The nurse who cared for Bahgat was priceless."***



*Confined, the great-granddaughters of Antoine Tétreau created some decorations to give hope to all those whose only leisure activity was walking.*



**Gérard Tétrault  
et  
Claire St-Cyr**

*"[...] our governor  
has been  
proactive from  
the very  
beginning of the  
epidemic."*

Here in Vermont, we feel fortunate that our governor has been proactive from the very beginning of the epidemic. He has held press conferences three times a week, has deferred to experts, and has been very cautious about reopening the economy. In addition, the population seems to trust his directives and has complied quite well. As a result, we have had very few cases and few deaths.

Claire and I have done well. I have continued to work in my shop, producing cabinets such as bathroom vanities for clients. Of course, I have had extra time to reorganize my shop and to play with some projects I've always wanted to do, such as turn-

## Surviving Covid 19

ing segmented bowls. (See photos) Some of these have up to 400 pieces. We have taken short rides by car to explore back roads and have had a few take-out meals.

Claire has been disappointed that she could no longer volunteer at the school. Rather, she has done more baking and meal preparation and distributed these meals to elderly friends. She has had Zoom meetings with some of her committees at church and taken on some additional responsibilities for a number of activities. She has also spent a lot of time on email with family and friends. On one occasion, we had a Zoom meeting with my sister in Quebec, my other sister in Germany and my

brother on the farm here in Vermont. It was a fun encounter, but we were very careful to avoid the topic of politics! Such is my family!

More recently, we have had small gatherings of friends outside in our yard, observing social distancing. We have begun to return to our favorite restaurant which is open by appointment and with limited seating. In some small ways, life is a bit more normal.

We have both enjoyed taking more time to read. Life is more relaxed. In some ways, this epidemic could turn out to be a gift.





# Containment as experienced by Jacqueline Tétrault-Canu in France

My name is Jacqueline Tétrault-Canu. I am retired and live in Loire-Atlantique, France.

I'm doing just fine and the days of confinement have been... too short to do everything!

Before the confinement, I used to go out every day on the market square to go to the café, the Bar Le Bretagne. I would do arrowheads for an hour, surrounded by people who got together to share a drink and chat.

Before the confinement, I liked to go for a walk on the beach boardwalk, along the most beautiful bay in Europe, and its 8 km long beach of fine sand. There was a kiosk where I could eat a pancake on the waterfront. Before the confinement, I used to come to the Senior Residence to accompany on the piano those who wanted to sing.

Before confinement, a young girl, grade 7, would come to me to help her with her homework.

Before the confinement, I had the opportunity to speak in English with a person who wanted to improve her English. What has changed since then? That was all in the past... which is now -

thankfully - back. All you have to do is put some gel on your hands and a mask to get out. Yes, really, the days were too short to do everything.

During the lockdown, I listened to a lot of TV. All the health specialists came to tell us what they knew and, more importantly, what they didn't know...

Since no one came to see me and I only went out to go shopping, I took the opportunity to finish the family tree on which I spent nine years. Five families: those of my father TÉTRAULT, my mother ABGRALL, my husband CANU, a grandmother NAULT and a great-grandmother LANDRY listed in 38 books. These families were all present in France in the 17th century.

Also, I had to cancel two trips: to Montreal and Winnipeg in May, then to the south of France in July. Now that it's time for "deconfined holidays", I had the pleasure of receiving several members of the family. Such happiness!

I wish you all good health. And I look forward to seeing you again when it will be possible.



Jacqueline  
Tétrault-Canu

*"I'm doing just fine and the days of confinement have been... too short to do everything!"*



February 2020

June 2020



**Jean-Louis Savoie**

***"I found this waiting period to be the most difficult, shifting back and forth from the hope of an imminent release to the fear that my confinement would be extended again."***

## I don't wish this on anybody!

On April 15, I was hospitalized in Saint-Hyacinthe for major surgery. Then, on May 9, as I woke up early in the morning, I noticed a lot of coming and going in the room I shared with another person. I soon realized that my neighbor had passed away. A few hours later, I learned that he might have been a victim of Covid-19, and they gave me a test for the virus.

Unfortunately, the result was positive. I had the virus. Since I'm 85 years old and already in a weakened condition, my loved ones and I were quite concerned as to what would happen to me in the coming days.

In the afternoon, I was transferred to a local health facility and put under quarantine for fourteen days. My room was in a special section designated as *hot*, where patients like me were placed.

I was not allowed to leave this facility, and visitors were not allowed. The only peo-

ple that I saw were members of the staff wearing masks to prevent the spread of the virus. I was cut off from the news about the situation, both in this contained facility and about society on the outside. We were kept in strict isolation. The food was decent, but I didn't have much of an appetite in this depressing environment.


There was no television in the room, and no internet. I had access to a telephone in the hallway, but it was very difficult for my family to communicate with me. I was supposed to be given a tablet, but it never came. It was near impossible to make contact with the other patients, since most were not in a condition favorable to conversation.

During my stay, I was given ten corona virus tests. I waited for two consecutive negative tests to be allowed to leave. I found this waiting period to be the most difficult, shifting back and forth from the hope of an immi-

nent release to the fear that my confinement would be extended again.

Finally, on June 18, I was released. I returned to my residence which I had left 65 days earlier. What a joy it was to be home and to regain all that I had so missed! Since I had not suffered any of the symptoms of Covid-19 during my 41 day confinement, I didn't receive any treatment. Yet, the headaches that plague me from time to time since my return are probably linked to the corona virus I had contracted.

They say, "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger." I suppose, then, that I got stronger somehow, but I assure you that I was profoundly affected by this sad adventure, an ordeal that I wouldn't wish on anyone.



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## Life and Death during Covid

Last January, my mother, Rachel Déry, found out that she had colorectal cancer. She was faced with the decision whether or not to undergo surgery. Her second husband had had the same kind of cancer and had undergone a colostomy (with a bag). Her decision was clear: this was out of the question. She said that she had lived a good life and it was time for it to end.



*Rachel Déry before she relocated to the Maison Murray.*

### Waiting for assisted suicide

She had asked her doctor about the possibility of being helped along to die since she did not want to undergo long months of suffering. The doctor answered that it would be possible to help death along, but that she should ask about it later when there was nothing left that could be done. He also suggested that she move to a residence where she could receive nursing care if it was necessary.

In early March, we found her a room in one of these residences, and she moved in on March 11.

On March 13, the period of confinement due to the pandemic started in Quebec Province. We were no longer allowed to visit her. For a period of time, all the residents were forced to stay in their room or apartment. At 86 years of age, my mother couldn't understand why. She had to be hospitalized twice. Each time, she had to pass a Covid test both upon entering the hospital and again in order to return to the residence. In spite of the negative results, and even though the other residents were now allowed to gather in the dining room

in small groups, she had to quarantine in her room while attendants would bring her meals and check that everything was going well. We were still forbidden to visit her.

### Intergenerational family confinement

On March 15, my wife and I decided to set up our own confinement with our daughter Ariane, our son-in-law Patrick, and our granddaughter Olivia, age 2, since

we expected another little girl to soon become part of our family. Since it would be necessary for someone to keep Olivia while her parents went to the hospital to give birth, it would be easier if everybody was already in one place. Ariane was anxious when she found out through the media that there were hospitals who would not allow the dad to be present for the birth because of Covid-19. All through March, we were at my daughter's and did "Facetime" with my mother. She didn't understand this confinement and why we couldn't go visit her in Sherbrooke. Sometimes, she asked my sister to kiss her grandchildren for her. My sister would respond that they weren't allowed to visit them either. "But Pierre, he is allowed. He is at home with Olivia." My sister would explain that it was because Ariane was about to give birth and that she needed someone to be with Olivia while they went to the hospital.

### A new baby comes into the world

On April 6, Ariane started having more frequent contractions; these had actually started happening, but without regularity since her last pregnancy visit on April 1. As the contractions had become more and more frequent that day, Ariane and



*Pierre Tétreault*

*"She said that she had lived a good life and it was time for it to end."*



*“Even though she didn’t suffer too much, her last wish was never respected.”*

Patrick headed for the hospital after supper, and around 9:30, they were admitted. Little Alexia was born at 53 minutes after midnight on April 7. She weighed 3.7 kg and measured 49 cm. Since everything had gone well for the mother as well as for the child, and considering the exceptional circumstances due to the epidemic, they were given the choice to go home rather than staying in the hospital. So, they left the maternity ward the same day around 2:30 p.m., less than 12 hours after the birth, with the understanding that they would report to the clinic the next morning for the baby’s checkup after 24 hours of life. On April 8, a few hours after their visit to the clinic, Ariane got a call to return to the hospital because Alexia had icterus (jaundice). Alexia had to receive U.V. treatments in the nursery, since the parents were no longer technically under their care, and they had no available hospital rooms. Patrick then found out that he couldn’t stay at the hospital with Ariane and Alexia because they allowed only one parent to be present under the new procedures implemented during the pandemic. Therefore, it should be the mother to allow for nursing the child. Ultimately, he was able to return and spend the night of the 8 to 9 of April because Ariane was able to get a room to accompany Alexia. It was explained that Alexia’s jaundice was caused by a mixing of the blood of mother and child during



*Alexia one day after her birth.*

pregnancy, since the mother had developed some anti-A while the baby was a group A (the baby was fighting against its own blood). After 24 hours of treatment, Alexia was finally discharged from the hospital, and the family could go home.

#### The circle of life

As soon as they got back home, we did a “Facetime” with my mother to show her her new great granddaughter, Alexia. She looked very happy. She was smiling. There were more “Facetimes,” since this was the best way to see her. My mother then went through a difficult period. She was hardly eating and she was getting progressively weaker. She was sent back to the hospital on April 28. We were still

not allowed to visit her. We could call on the phone, but she slept much of the time.

On May 6, the hospital personnel where Rachel was, reached my sister Sylvie to tell her that visits would be permitted, one person at a time, and only by her children. That’s the point when strong conflicting emotions hit me like lightning: the joy of staying in confinement with my new granddaughter already one month old, with my daughter’s family, versus not knowing if I would have the opportunity to see them if I went to see my mother in the hospital because I would have to quarantine for fourteen days after the visit.

I arrived at the hospital with my brother for the first time to see our mother, but no sooner had we arrived we had to leave. They told us, “We don’t understand who



*On May 6, when permission was granted for me to visit my dying mother for her last days.*

told you that you could come.” A short time later, on May 14, my sister Sylvie got a call from the hospital to say that we could go see her and that she didn’t have much time left. We rushed

to the hospital, but she was no longer conscious. She was never able to receive the assistance she wanted to die. She passed on May 16. She never did receive the assistance to die and lived

for two months at her residence under palliative care. Even though she didn’t suffer too much, her last wish was never respected.

## A meeting of the ADLT’s administration council ... socially distanced!

On September 7<sup>th</sup> a pre-autumn wind blows and a few clouds float quickly over the meeting of the administrators of the Association des Descendants de Louis Tetreau. Nonetheless it is a joyous occasion. We are so happy to finally see each other again, to resume our discussions regarding our projects.

In order to respect the health and safety guidelines imposed by the public safety officials, and above all to protect me, the eldest and most vulnerable to contamination, we met outdoors in a local park in Varennes, Québec.

123 years ago in Varennes, our ancestors were celebrating a wedding on this same date, September 7<sup>th</sup>. Were they also searching the sky just like we were, hoping that rain would not put a damper on their celebration? Alphonse Théberge, the grand-

son of Joseph Tetro and Marie Vigeant, married Florentine Tomas in Varennes on September 7, 1897.

If we could tell the unusual and historic circumstances of our meeting to Nicolas Tetreau and Marie-Anne Monastesse who, 179 years ago on another September 7<sup>th</sup>, gave their daughter Mélodie away in marriage a few kilometers from Varennes,

what would they say? Would they tell us that on that day the pre-autumn wind also blew Mélodie’s bridal veil as she exited the Verchères church on the arm of François-Xavier Girard?

Unlike them, we have a photograph that captured our event.



*Murielle Tétreault*





# 25 YEARS OF



In 2013 in Trois-Rivières, we remembered the 350th wedding anniversary of Noëlle and Louis. André Corbeil blessed the union, while Geneviève Tétreault and André Tétreault dressed up as our ancestors.



In 2014, we honored Canadian veterans as part of the 100th anniversary of the onset of World War One. Josée Tétreault, Denis Tétreault, André Tétreault, Murielle, Tétreault, Geneviève Tétreault.



In the spring of 2013, a commemorative plaque is unveiled in Tessonnière, France. It was all made possible by the tenacious work of Josée Tétreault who discovered Louis's baptism record after many years of research.



Gene Tatro, a great contributor to our database, and André Tétreault



# MEMORIES

A big thank you to Jean-Yves Boislard who took most of the photos of our activities that can be seen on our website and in our bulletin!



In 2013, we also honored Noëlle, born in Jauzé, France.



In 2016, Association members gathered in Verchères, under the watchful eye of Madeleine!



years of gatherings, conferences, exchanges, laughter and fellowship



Jacqueline Canu regularly travels from France to participate in our activities

## Obituaries

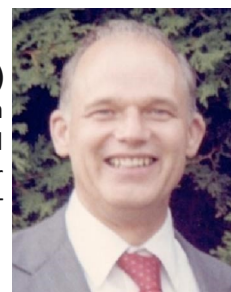


### **Ginette Tétrault (1948-2020)**

Mrs. Ginette Tétrault died in Saint-Hyacinthe on April 10, 2020, at the age of 71. She was born in 1948 to Luc Tétrault and Thérèse Galarneau. She is mourned by numerous friends and family, and is survived by her children, Martin, Brigitte and Luc, as well as her brother Georges Tétrault, a member of our Association.

### **Roland Tetreault (1931-2020)**

Mr. Roland Tetreault died in Springfield, Massachusetts on April 19, 2020. He was born in 1931 to Louis Tetreault and Irene Tougas. He is survived by his wife Judy, his son Alan, and numerous other family members and friends. Roland was a pillar of our Association for many years. Among other things, his contributions included the data base for the ADLT and the publication of his book about our ancestor, Louis Tetreau.



### **Yves Guérin (1942-2020)**

Yves Guérin died on April 21, 2020, at the age of 77 at the hospital in Granby. He was born to Alice Tétrault and Laurent Guérin. In addition to many relatives and friends, he leaves behind his children, Étienne and Isabelle, as well as his sister Pierrette Guérin, a long-time member of our Association.

### **Bahgat Choucrist Francis (1933-2020)**

Mr. Bahgat Choucrist Francis died in Lachine on June 5, 2020. Along with numerous family members and friends, he is survived by his children, Frédéric, Alexandre, and Clotilde, as well as their mother Murielle Tétrault, the secretary of our Association for many years.



### **Jeanne d'Arc Tétrault (1924-2020)**

Mrs. Jeanne d'Arc Tétrault died at the age of 95 at the Hôtel-Dieu of Saint-Hyacinthe. She was born on October 12, 1924, to the late Jérémie Tétrault and the late Alfreda Jeannotte. She is survived by her nieces and nephews and other family members and friends. She was the aunt of André Tétrault, the president of our Association.

### **Georges-Aimé Tétrault (1926-2020)**

Mr. Georges-Aimé Tétrault died on August 3, 2020. He was born to the late Eugène Tétrault and the late Alida Dion. He is survived by his wife, Paulette Thiffault, his son, Jean-Luc, his daughter, Isabelle, and numerous family members and friends. Mr. Tétrault had been a member of our Association for many years.



### **Rachel Déry (1935-2020)**

On August 16, 2020, Mrs. Rachel Déry passed away at age 85. She was the wife of the late Jean Tétrault and partner of the late Jean-Marie Dallaire. She will be sadly missed by her many children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, parents and friends. She was the mother of Pierre Tétrault, treasurer of our Association.

Our sincere condolences to their grieving families.



## Roland Tétreault has left us.

Even though we were aware that Roland Tétreault from Springfield had been ill for a few years, the notice of his death sent us by Josée has profoundly saddened us. He passed away on April 19, 2020 at his home. Roland was a member of our Association.

Roland had undertaken the writing of a book concerning all the generations of his Tétreault family. During the whole time of this gigantic work, we collaborated with him both with the research and with the meaning of words or expressions taken from these documents.

Roland has donated the book about his Tétreault ancestry to our Association. Out of this work, he came up with another book about our ancestor, Louis. He gave permission to the ADLT to translate the book in French, to print it, sell it, and keep the profits. In addition, he gave us all the documents and transcriptions he had used to write his book. We had to move these in three large boxes.

The database on our website comes, in great part, from Gene Tatro. He had his own system which was not compatible with new information technology. Roland is the one who copied all the data into a compatible system. In addition, he entered all the

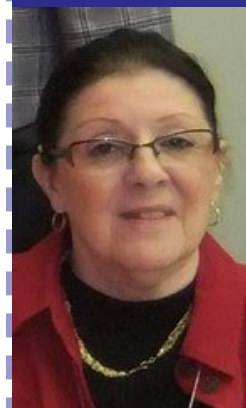
data on the Tétreau Women that my spouse and I had acquired from the National Archives. This involved over 500 emails. He kindly gave me his Family Tree Maker program and all his data.

Roland had invited us to his home twice. My spouse and I got to know Roland as an attentive host and generous with his time as he guided us in exploring his little corner of the world.

Roland was a wine lover. He made his own wine in his basement. He participated in numerous competitions and took home a number of trophies. He was proud of these and loved to display them.

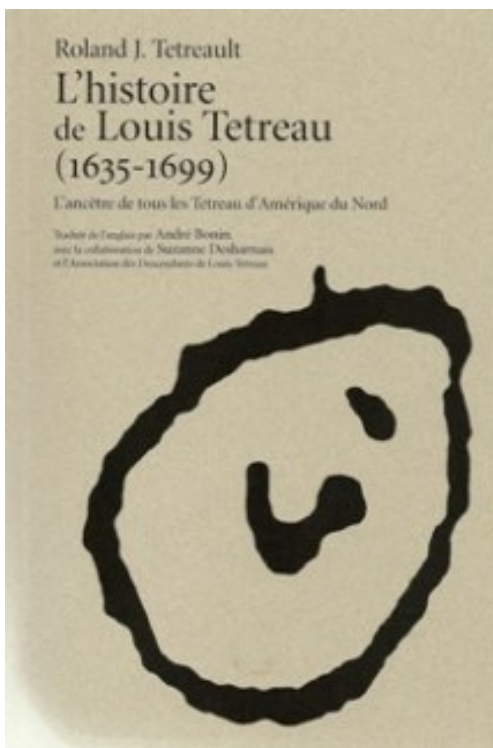
His obituary, for those who would like to learn more, can be found at the following link: <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/name/roland-tetreault-obituary?pid=196119995>

Roland, you will always be in our memories and in our hearts.



**Danielle Tétreault  
and  
Marcel Bouthillier**

*"Roland, you will  
always be in our  
memories and in  
our hearts."*







*"Georges-Aimé continued his career of teaching arts in high school, specifically at École Sacré-Cœur and at Polyvalente J.-H. Leclerc."*

## Death of Georges-Aimé Tétreault, an artist at heart

On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, we lost Mister Georges-Aimé Tétreault, a member of our association for many years.

An artist at heart, Georges-Aimé had lived three lives. As a member of the congregation of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart in Granby, he started his fifteen year teaching career. He left the community in 1958. He then worked two years in his brother Jean-Louis's company, St-Onge Néons in Granby, where he developed his artistic talent.

He later married Berthe Courville in 1959 and they settled on rue Mullin, in Granby. They would have two children. Georges-Aimé continued his career of teaching arts in high school, specifically at École Sacré-Cœur and at Polyvalente J.-H. Leclerc. During this time, he established a painting class in his home where many talented individuals first took up the art.

Widowed and retired, he started the third chapter of his life as a painter specializing in water colours. He

would sign his artwork using the pseudonym TETRO. In 1998, he married Paulette Thiffaut, also an artist. Together they will settle down in Sainte-Rose. He will have a prolific artistic career and will participate in many art exhibits.

*The above text, published on the Guay funeral home site, is reproduced with the kind approval of Jean-Luc Tétreault, son of Georges-Aimé.*


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## What the ADLT has brought me - and still brings me

I met the Association of the descendants of Louis Tetreau in 2013 in Trois-Rivières. Since then, I've been addicted. From day one, Murielle Tétreault took me under her wing. She introduced me to my Tetreau ancestors and, one thing leading to another, I not only wrote the tree of my Tetreau/Tétrault family, but I continued with the family of my maternal grandmother Nau/Nault, my great-grandmother Landry-Melanson, my mother Abgrall, and then my husband Canu.

All these families were in France in the 17th century. As a result, I learned about my family's dramatic history through the history of Canada. Here are some of the highlights.

### **The Deerfield Raid, Massachusetts in 1704...**

In the last issue of the newsletter, Robert Tétreault gave a wonderful account of the raid. On page 18, he states that the French family was also attacked. The family consisted of the parents, three daughters and two sons. The mother, Mary Catlin, died en route to Canada, while the newborn John was killed in Deerfield. Two of the (Anglo-Protestant) daughters, Freedom and Martha, were raised in Quebec families to become

French-Canadian Catholics. At the age of 12, Freedom was baptized on April 6, 1706 as Marie-Françoise in Montreal. She married Jean Daveluy dit Larose on February 6, 1713 in Montreal and had 11 children.

As for Martha French, 9 years old, her identity was changed several times. Marie Marthe Marguerite Franche/Frinche. At 16 years old, she married Jacques Roy and had 11 children. She became a widow, married Jean Louis Ménard and had 5 children, including 3 daughters. The eldest had 11 children, all of whom died without descendants. The second had 18 children, of which only one survived. Finally, the third had 7 children, of which only one survived.

The father Thomas and his son Thomas (17 years old) were taken prisoner by the Mohawks of Kahnawake near Montreal. Both men were ransomed in 1704 and 1706. Also at Kahnawake, the other daughter, 6-year-old Abigail French, remained at Kahnawake all her life. As a result, the French family continued to have contacts with the Mohawks.

In 1759, a daughter, Jane French, was born in Kahnawake. She is my ancestor. She married John Richard Dease. Their son John Warren Dease, Mohawk Mé-

tis, married Geneviève Beignoit (Chippewa Métis from Green Lake, Saskatchewan). They had a daughter, Nancy Dease, who is the mother of my great-grandmother Nancy Gladu, wife of Joseph Charles Tétrault. Hence the cross-breeding of the Tétrault family in Manitoba and the Pembina region.

### **Deportation of the Acadians Landry and Mélanson in 1755**

The Jean Landry and Madeleine Mélanson siblings suffered the full force of the Deportation of the Acadians and ended up in England, the United States, Louisiana, Miquelon, Haiti and Santo Domingo. Those who ended up in France wandered for 30 years, finally finding ships to take them to Louisiana. Of the hundreds of people from the Landry family who sailed across to France (Saint-Servan, Saint-Malo, Châtellerauld, the Acadian line, Nantes, Paimbœuf, Belle-Île-en-Mer, Cherbourg), only two cousins managed to leave Acadia and arrive in Louisiana 30 years later. Others were on ships that sank and drowned hundreds of people. On the ships, the mortality was very high.

My ancestor Antoine Landry came to Quebec from Connecticut in 1763. Two generations later, Joseph Denis



*Jaqueline  
Tétrault-Canu*

*"I met the  
Association of  
the descendants  
of Louis Tetreau  
in 2013 in Trois-  
Rivières. Since  
then, I've been  
addicted."*

Landry, a voyageur, found himself at the centre of the deadly competition between the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company in western Canada in 1815. On this occasion, Joseph Denis, who had been taken prisoner, met Jean-Baptiste Lagimodière, who was returning home, but who had been taken prisoner after carrying a message to Lord Selkirk by walking from St. Boniface, Manitoba to Montreal and back. Jean-Baptiste had married Marie-Anne Gaboury in 1807 (my ancestors). During Jean-Baptiste's absence, Marie-Anne Gaboury was in great danger and had been saved by the Amerindian chief Péguy.



**Marie Anne Gaboury (1780-1875), born in Maskinongé, Québec. Grandmother of Louis Riel, mother of 8 children, including Josette and Julie Lagimodière. 75 grandchildren and 344 great-grandchildren.**

Lord Selkirk proposed to Joseph Denis to come and settle at the Red River Settlement. There he

met Geneviève Lalonde, who had just arrived in the West with her parents. They had 14 children, 9 of whom were girls.

Three of the Landry girls married three Nault brothers (also my ancestors). Many of their children married Métis, hence the tragedies of the Métis. Louis Riel, grandson of Jean-Baptiste Lagimodière, was the first cousin of my great-grandfather Boniface Nault.

#### **Hanging of Louis Riel by the English in Regina in 1885.**

The Métis leader was buried in February 1886. His coffin was carried over a long, rugged path for nearly six miles in the snow by several people: 8 Nault, 2 Lagimodière, 1 Landry and 7 others. They were followed by six or seven hundred Métis dressed in buffalo robes, beaver helmets and moccasins. A red arrow sash around their waist. They wore a wide white ribbon around their shoulders and on their chest. There were 75 sleds in the procession, which was nearly a mile long. The procession left the Riel house in St. Vital to go to the St. Boniface Cathedral (I had the opportunity to see Louis Riel's arrow belt at

the St. Boniface Museum).

#### **Gabriel Dumont, leader of the rebellion at Batoche in 1885.**

His father had married Angélique Landry, sister of my great-grandmother, in his second marriage. Many métis died in Batoche, including Damase Carrière, the cousin of my grandmother Éléonore Nault, leaving dozens of orphans.

#### **Hanging of patriots in Montreal in 1838**

Previously, in 1838 in Montreal, 12 patriots were hanged, including Pierre Théophile Decoigne (generation 6), a descendant of Joseph Marie Tétreau. Murielle led me to Au pied du courant, where the patriots were hanged on the prison pediment, five at a time, because there was no room for more. There is a memorial at 901-905 de Lorimier Street, at the corner of Notre-Dame East in Montreal.

#### **My Journeys in Canada**

Every time I attend ADLT general meetings, I make new discoveries. It's a real journey from the Loire-Atlantique in France to come to Montreal. To see a sugar shack, the house of the King's Daughters, Verchères, Maski-



**André Nault (1830-1924), his wife Anastasie Landry (1832-1914) and his mother Josette Lagimodière (1810-1897).**





*Eulalie (1853-1931) and Henriette Riel (1861-1898), sisters of Louis Riel. Eulalie marries William Gladu, brother of Nancy Gladu Tétrault.*



*"So many travels  
and so many  
encounters!  
Many thanks to  
the Association  
as well as to  
Murielle and  
Josée Tétrault."*

nongé, Quebec, the Montmorency Falls or Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Rouville, from where Joseph Charles Tétréau left to go West, where Tétréau became Tétrault.

#### **A story that is passed on**

Once I wrote the story of each family, I wanted to share it with the family. So I made thousands of photocopies. I went door-to-door with my 38 books:

The **Abgralls** are in Brittany in several villages (Ploudiry, Commana, Bodilis) and scattered across Canada: Saint-Laurent in Manitoba; Nanaimo, Youbou and Victoria on Vancouver Island; Langley and Richmond in British Columbia.

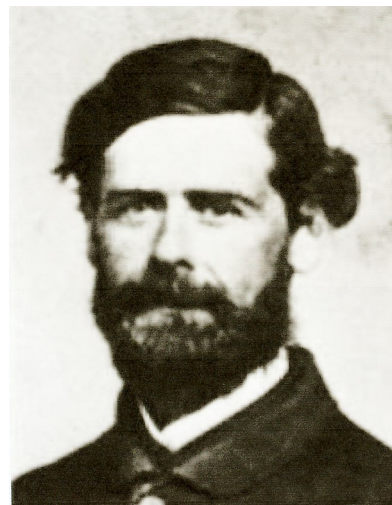
The **Tétraults** are in Halifax, Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver and North Carolina. In addition, I prepared several copies for my 6 children and 17 grandchildren - and later for my 24 great-grandchildren.

I found the **Canu** ancestors in 7 town halls in the suburbs of Rouen, in Seine-Maritime.

So many travels and so many encounters! Many thanks to the Association as well as to Murielle and Josée Tétrault. (And I have only told a very small part of what happened to me with Murielle!).

P. S. At a general meeting of the ADLT, I met Gene Tatro. He was the one who had given my parents, in 1977,

three different copies of the Tétréau men's tree, in a computer format that no longer exists (punching system). I now have these archives, which date from be-



*Jean-Baptiste Lagimodière  
(1778-1855), husband of  
Marie-Anne Gaboury.*

## Jérémie Tétreault and Alfréda Jeannotte



André Tétreault

Jérémie, son of Louis Tétreault and Delphine Blanchette, was born September 6, 1882 and was baptized the following day in Sainte-Madeleine, Québec. Alfréda, daughter of Joseph Jeannotte and Marcelline Gagnon, was born April 12, 1885 and was baptized the same day in Saint-Charles-sur-Richelieu, Québec.

while also tending to his farm. Alfréda, a trained schoolteacher, takes on a management position at a local sand-pit operated by their neighbours, the Beauchemin family. In order to help out Alfréda, a servant girl is taken on to take care of the family. The couple was ahead of the times.

25, 1958, at his home on rue Anger, in the village of Sainte-Madeleine. The burial takes place at the parish cemetery.

Jérémie loved to receive his family and friends at his sugar shack located on the other side of the railway tracks. The farm was divided by route 9 (116 today) and the tracks of the the Grand Trunk Railway. Friends were always welcome for an outing at the sugar shack.

I have so many fond memories of that sugar shack. I remember when Jérémie came to boil the syrup, while my father collected the maple sap water. When it was time to put the syrup in cans (tomato cans), he would call my father. I also remember that he was often present to

perform various tasks around the farm. He would come from the village on foot along the railway tracks. And what can I say about those visits to his home after high mass! We would always stop by to catch up on the latest news.

Jérémie was a hunter. In the fall, the call of the hunt was very strong. His favorite hunting area was the mountain of Saint-Hilaire, where he liked to hunt with his friend Prosper Poirier



Jérémie Tétreault and Alfréda Jeannotte

On June 20, 1907, they both appear before notary M<sup>e</sup> J.-L. Cormier in order to draw up their marriage contract. The marriage takes place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July of the same year in the Saint-Charles-sur-Richelieu church.

The couple establishes their home in Sainte-Madeleine, in the Petit Rang, on a farm that Jérémie had obtained from his father November 3, 1905. This farm had previously been acquired in a sale that took place on the front steps of the church following high mass.

This union will produce five children: Roland, Lomer, Gérard, Jeanne-d'Arc and Lucrèce.

To support his family, Jérémie works multiple jobs,

Early on March 18, 1933, Alfréda died of a pulmonary disease, possibly due to the working conditions that kept her very busy. Her burial took place on March 21, 1933, at Sainte-Madeleine cemetery. Now a widower, Jérémie single-handedly takes on the care of his children who are often left to fend for themselves.

Jérémie dies on September



*"Alfréda, a trained schoolteacher, takes on a management position at a local sand-pit operated by their neighbours, the Beauchemin family."*





*A close friend of Jérémie, J.-Omer Dansereau (left), a businessman, baker, general salesman and developer of rue Sainte-Anne in the same village. On the right, Prosper Poirier, one of Jérémie's hunting buddies.*

*"I have so many fond memories of that sugar shack. I remember when Jérémie came to boil the syrup, while my father collected the maple sap water."*



*Jérémie's brothers and sisters, and brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law  
(Photo taken following the death of Louis, Jérémie's father)*

*Seated : Clara Tétreault, Noé Tétreault, Imelda Tétreault, Delphine Blanchette (mother),  
Alma Tétreault, Jérémie Tétreault and Antoinette Tétreault.*

*Standing : Joseph Messier, Louisa Murphy, Stanislas Janson, Thomas Murphy, Alfréda  
Jeannotte and John Bernier.*





*The child is Gérard, my father, and the man seated is J.-Omer Dansereau.  
2<sup>nd</sup> row: Two strangers, followed by Jérémie and Alfréda. The others are strangers to me.*

who, according to my father, was also a great marksman. We see him here with his last unlucky victim. According to my aunt Jeanne-d'Arc, Jérémie's eyesight wasn't too good anymore.

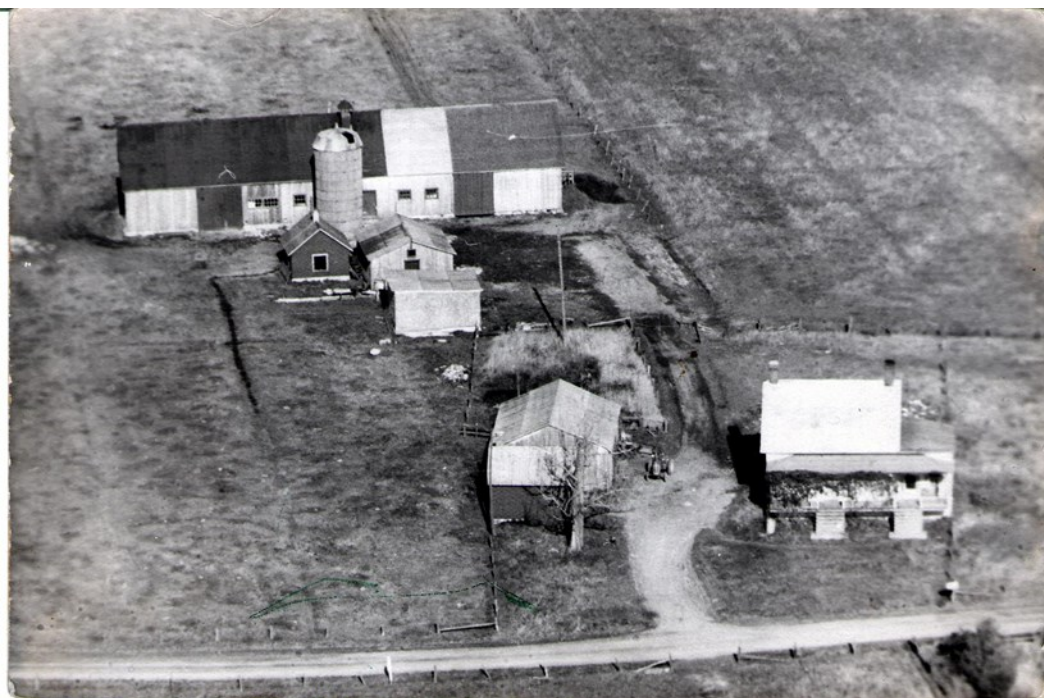
I remember a fishing trip to the rivière des Hurons

(Hurons river), that passed along a plot of land that my father owned near the bay of Sainte-Madeleine. One day my grandfather, who chewed tobacco, allowed me to try some after a comment I had made. I was only 8 years old and the result was pretty awful. It took away

my desire to ever want to try it again.

My grandfather also loved to play cards with his friends at the "Petit Canot", a local gathering place for the village's old-timers.





*Family farm in Sainte-Madeleine*



*Roland, Lomer and Gérard Tétreault*



*Lucrèce, Alfréda, Jérémie and Jeanne-D'Arc Tétreault*



Robert Tétreault

*"One that surprised me was the fact that in the late 1800s many French Canadians, including some descendants of our ancestor Louis Tétreau, had decided to leave the Montérégie region of Québec and establish new homes in the American far western state of Montana."*

When I finally started to research my family tree less than five years ago, I was really unprepared for all the discoveries that I would come upon. One that surprised me was the fact that in the late 1800s many French Canadians, including some descendants of our ancestor Louis Tétreau, had decided to leave the Montérégie region of Québec and establish new homes in the American far western state of Montana. Why Montana? I could just imagine the wife's reaction when her husband came to her and said: "Dear, pack up the kids, we're moving to Montana!" She probably responded: "What's Montana? Where's Montana?"

#### **French Canadians in Montana**

So many French Canadians came to Montana that they became the majority in some towns. Nowhere was this more evident than in the aptly-named village of Frenchtown<sup>1</sup>. The 1900 Federal census for Frenchtown showed that over half of the residents were French-speaking. With family names like Gauthier, Cousineau, Turmelle, Labrie, Gagnon, Plouffe, Dumouchel, Hamel, Cyr, Longpré, and of course Tétreault, among many others, evidently the language spoken on the street and in commerce was French. Just like back home in Qué-

## **Tetreaus in Montana**

bec, the big annual celebration in Frenchtown was June 24<sup>th</sup>, St. John the Baptist day, the patron saint of all French Canadians. They even had their own French Catholic church, appropriately named St. John the Baptist. According to the 1900 census the vast majority of men were farmers, day labourers, butchers, blacksmiths, miners, lumberjacks and sawmill workers. Surprisingly, or maybe not, a few were even listed as saloon keepers!

In the bigger towns like Missoula and Butte<sup>2</sup>, men would congregate in saloons and

Joseph Nadeau. Needless to say there is no need to further describe the type of services rendered at Madame Délia's!

But on a more serious note, what brought all these people to Montana? Why would men uproot their families and travel almost 2,000 miles across a vast continent to face an uncertain future? Why were they leaving the relative stability of what they already had? In order to answer some of these questions, let's take a quick look at how Montana came into being.

#### **Early history of Montana**

Until 1800 the area that would become Montana had been visited by few Europeans. It was the northwestern region of a vast territory obtained by the United States from France in 1803 as part of the "Louisiana Purchase"<sup>3</sup>. That trans-

action meant that all land west of the Mississippi River (828,000 square miles) all the way to the Rocky Mountains suddenly became American territory and it effectively doubled the size of the United States. While Spain still controlled the southwestern part of the North American continent,



St. John the Baptist church

hotels after a hard week of work. One of Butte's star attractions in the town center was the Dumas Hotel. It was established by two brothers from Québec, Joseph and Arthur Nadeau. But the person that ran the day-to-day business of the hotel was the infamous "Madame" Délia Dumas, the wife of





### ***The Louisiana Purchase by the United States***

only the invisible 49<sup>th</sup> parallel<sup>4</sup> to the north separated this essentially unpopulated American territory from its equivalent Canadian plains territory. From the plains of the Dakotas to the east, all the way to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains to the west, the land that would become Montana was largely populated by Native Americans, mainly the Lakota Sioux, the Northern Cheyenne, the Arapaho and the Nez Perce. But soon all of that was about to change. In 1804 American President Thomas Jefferson approved a two-year exploration of the American west. Two very capable men were appointed by the President to carry out this mission: Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. The “Lewis and Clark Expedition”<sup>5</sup> was mandated to find a route to the Pacific Ocean and, in doing so, to document the geography, the animals and vegetation encountered during the trip, as well as to interact peacefully with the Native Americans that they encountered in the territory. Leaving from Saint-Louis in the spring of 1805 they began their expedi-

tion by sailing up the Missouri River and traveling northwest into uncharted lands. Having crossed the Rocky Mountains and ventured all the way to the Pacific Ocean in November 1805, they then returned by a northern route passing through Montana and safely completed their amazing 8,000 mile journey. In September of 1806 they received a hero’s welcome upon their return to Saint-Louis.

### **Influx of speculators and settlers**

Initially the development of this vast unpopulated territory was slow. Trappers established trading posts and missionaries quickly followed by instituting missions. But then came the discovery of gold in California in 1848! Men gripped by gold fever flocked to the west, first to California, and then to the northwest. Once the initial gold rush had petered out in California, prospectors then discovered gold in the Montana area in 1858. This was quickly followed by significant discoveries of silver and copper.

Ever since the initial contacts by Lewis and Clark, relations between Native Americans and the white population in that region had been cordial for the most part. But with the arrival of steamboats up the Missouri River followed by the advent in that region of the railroad in the 1870s, men were now arriving from everywhere in search of a quick fortune. Native Americans were upset to find prospectors and speculators intruding throughout their traditional hunting grounds. Whereas previous territorial treaties between the U.S. government and the First Nations had been respected, now speculators were either ignorant of the boundaries set by these treaties, or they deliberately ignored them altogether. This lack of control by the U.S. Federal government over the exuberant speculators would eventually lead to serious conflicts with the region’s indigenous population.

***“Men gripped by gold fever flocked to the west, first to California, and then to the northwest.”***

### **War with Native Americans**

Several tribes had had enough of the violation of their territory and decided to attack individual settlements in Montana. In turn the U.S. government responded by sending many cavalry units to the northwest in order to stamp out what they perceived as isolated native uprisings. In June of 1876 Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer led his cavalry in an attack against a large gathering of Lakota Sioux, Northern Cheyenne and Arapaho near the Little Bighorn River located in the southern part of the Montana territory. Unfortunately for them, the U.S. Cavalry had grossly underestimated the size

*"They were also joined by others coming from Great Britain, Europe, Canada (Ontario and Québec) and even Japan!"*

of the enemy force. Under the combined leadership of Sioux chiefs Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse, not only did the natives withstand the full assault of the cavalry, they decimated the entire invading force. Within a few hours, all 262 cavalymen died that day, including Custer. Native losses totaled less than 50.



**Custer**

But that would be the last great victory for Native Americans. The outraged U.S. government quickly sent massive reinforcements under the command of Civil War hero General William Tecumseh Sherman. The fate of a proud native population is ultimately sealed.

Chief Crazy Horse was captured one year later and reportedly died trying to escape. Meanwhile Sitting Bull and 400 of his followers fled to the Canadian Northwest Territory<sup>6</sup>, in an area today called Saskatchewan. He returned a few years later to participate in peace negotiations. Less than five years after the battle at Little

Bighorn, a peace treaty was signed and Native Americans were forced onto reservations throughout the plains and the northwest of the United States, including Montana.

### **Montana becomes the 41<sup>st</sup> state**

With the effective elimination of the native threat and with a strong military presence providing some semblance of stability and order in the region, the railway finally reached Butte by the end of 1881. The U.S. government granted statehood to Montana on November 8, 1889.

The main activities in the new 41<sup>st</sup> state could now proceed unhindered. The previous discovery of large quantities of copper ore led to the need for men to enter the mines and also build smelters and refineries in order to satisfy the ever-growing demand for copper wire, essential for electrical, telegraph and telephone cables. Large quantities of



**Sitting Bull**

timber were needed to support the mine shafts, thus creating a need for lumberjacks and sawmill workers. Others saw their future in raising cattle and farming.

The vast majority of men coming to this new territory were from the Midwestern and eastern parts of the United States. They were also joined by others coming from Great Britain, Europe, Canada (Ontario and Québec) and even Japan!

### **French Canadian exodus from Québec**

As early as the mid-1800s, French Canadians had begun to seek out greener pastures in New England and in the American Midwest (Illinois, Nebraska, etc.). As was well described by our colleague Geneviève Tétrault in her article<sup>7</sup> in the ADLT newsletter of April 2015, ever-growing French Canadian families were running out of available tillable farmland, especially in the valleys of the Saint-Laurent and Richelieu rivers.

By the 1870s and 1880s the railroad now made it easier for American labor recruiters to entice French Canadians to relocate to New England and take up jobs in the growing textile mills of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Some took up logging in Maine, while others moved their families to southwestern Ontario where farmland was still available and the climate was more favorable for growing vegetable crops. And some French Canadians made the longest trek of all

by relocating their entire family right across the continent to the new territory of Montana. They put down roots in Huson, Missoula, Anaconda, Deer Lodge, Great Falls, Kalispell and, especially, Frenchtown. How had they known about Montana? Was it a recruitment drive? Or was it word of mouth? Whatever the means used, a significant number of French Canadians had moved to Montana, beginning in the late 1860s, and until the end of the century. With few exceptions the overwhelming majority would never to return to Québec.

### The family of Gédéon Tétrault and Louise Trahan

Most likely no single family among the large Tétréau clan exemplified the move to Montana like that of Gédéon Tétrault (1817-1899). He was the son of Pierre Tétréau (1789-1855) and Josephite Beausoleil (1792-1849). In 1843 Gédéon married Marie-Louise Trahan (1824-?), the daughter of Jean-Baptiste Trahan (1779-1872) and Marie-Joséphine Therrien (1785-1861). They settled down in the Richelieu valley area and from 1846 to 1870 they had 11 children, 6 boys and 5 girls. Eight of the children would get married, all in the Montérégie region of Québec.

In total seven of Gédéon's eleven children eventually heeded the call to Montana. Of the other four children, only Domithilde, the eldest child, married and remained in Québec for the rest of her life. She wed Moysse Thibodeau in 1865 and together they raised a family of ten children. Two of her younger brothers, Joseph and

Napoléon, died as teenagers and were buried in Farnham. As for the fourth, Édouard, the 1901 Canadian census listed him as single and living with his 77-year-old widowed mother Louise Trahan in Saint-Jean-d'Iberville. He died in 1903 at the age of 39 and was buried in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu.

### Onto Montana

The first of Gédéon and Louise's children to venture to Montana was the eldest son **Moïse** (1847-1920). At the age of 21 he arrived in 1868 and became a farm labourer. He worked there until the winter of 1885-1886 when, surprisingly, he returns to Farnham, Québec to marry Joséphine Chevalier (1850-1942). In the church's marriage register on 8 Mar 1886, the priest records that Moïse is a "*farmer living in Frenchtown, Montana in the United States*". He and his new bride return to Frenchtown that same year, where they will later have two children, a boy and a girl. For the rest of his life Moïse would commonly be known as "Mose" Tétrault. By 1910 the census for Frenchtown stated that he had now become a carpenter.

The next to go out west is **Rosalie** (Marie Rose) (1849-?). She married Jean-Baptiste Lebert (1854-1933) in Farnham in 1873. After having two children in Farnham, the family moved to Tilbury in southwestern Ontario where a son was born in 1879. But by 1882 they were all in Huson, Montana where two more sons were born. The date and place of Rosalie's death are unknown. All that is known is that Jean-Baptiste remarried in 1898 and had three more chil-

dren. The 1920 census for Frenchtown states that he is a farm laborer.

The most mysterious of all the siblings had to be **Gédéon Jr.** (1851-?). In 1875 he married Rosalie Poirier (1860-?) in Saint-Alexandre, Québec. The couple had two sons in Québec before moving to Chatham, Ontario where a daughter was born in 1880. They then moved to Montana where two more sons were born by 1884. After that everything about the couple is pure conjecture! There are no further records regarding Rosalie. As for Gédéon, there exist 1927 and 1929 Missoula city directory listings for a Gideon Tétrault. Also there was talk in the backwoods of Montana of an old trapper named "Jed" Tétrault<sup>8</sup> rumoured to be involved in the production of moonshine!

Also in 1875 younger sister **Élodie** (1853-1936) married Alexis Jetté (1854-1907) in Farnham. Two sons were born in Québec before they moved to Frenchtown around 1882. There, two girls and a boy were born, followed by two more boys born in Missoula. Alexis is recorded as a cattle farmer.

In 1883 **Delphis** (1860-1953) married Éméríte Gense (1868-1932) in Farnham. Three children were born there before the family arrived in Frenchtown around 1889. Four more children were born in Frenchtown. "Dolphis", as he became known to family and friends, was a farm laborer and reputed to be a practical joker well into his advanced age.

*"The most mysterious of all the siblings had to be Gédéon Jr. (1851-?)."*



*"What a difficult time it must have been for parents Gédéon and Louise to see seven of their children leave with their young families, one after the other, and go off to the other side of the continent."*



**Jed's cabin**

**Éléa** (1867-1917) married Alexandre Samoisette (1865-1945) in Sainte-Sabine on 21 Mar 1889. They had two daughters in Québec before they moved to Butte in 1896. The family later relocated to Great Falls, Montana. Alexandre was a carpenter.

And finally the youngest **Jo-séphine** (1870-1953) married Joseph Lagüe (1868-1939), also in Sainte-Sabine, on 19 Feb 1889, just four weeks before the wedding of her older sister Éléa. Between 1890 and 1912 they had 8 children, four boys and four girls. They arrived in Montana in 1893 and settled in Frenchtown. By 1910 they had moved to Missoula and by 1920 they lived in Anaconda. Joseph Lagüe's death certificate dated 14 Nov 1939 stated that he was a

retired carpenter.

#### **The empty nest**

What a difficult time it must have been for parents Gédéon and Louise to see seven of their children leave with their young families, one after the other, and go off to the other side of the continent. They never saw them again. Surely they must have hoped that they would have a better life as homesteaders in Montana than what they could have had back home with them in the Montérégie region. Gédéon passed away on 21 Nov 1899 in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu and presumably Louise Trahan would follow soon after, although there is no record of the exact date or place of her death<sup>9</sup>.

But for their children and subsequent generations of these descendants of Louis Tetreau in the far west of America, the ambitious move to Montana would be the beginning of a whole new opportunity to lay down roots in the vast open plains that would forever be known as "Big Sky Country"<sup>10</sup>.

### Photos (credits)

Louisiana Purchase = Natural Earth and Portland State University.

Custer = Bettman Archives

Sitting Bull = Wikimedia Commons

St. John the Baptist church = clarkforkcatholic.com

Jed Tetrault's cabin = *Frenchtown Valley Footprints* (Frenchtown Historic Society - 1976)

### Notes

1. Frenchtown was first established around 1858 when two French Canadians, Jean-Baptiste Ducharme and Louis Brown (his father was an English Québécois and his mother was a French Québécois), relocated their Métis families into the Montana territory in order to avoid further turmoil with American authorities on the Pacific coast. As more French Canadians arrived in Frenchtown eventually a small church (Saint-Louis) was built in 1864 and a post office was established in 1868. Over the next three decades hundreds of French Canadians, some single and others with their families, would move to Frenchtown and other towns in Montana. A larger church, St. John the Baptist, was erected in 1884. Frenchtown is located approximately 20 miles northwest of Missoula.
2. The town of Butte was located on a hill. In fact, "butte" means *mound* or *hillock* in French. In the late 1800's and early 1900's Butte was known as "The Richest Hill on Earth" because of the vast mineral deposits discovered in the area. Hundreds of men became very wealthy as a result of the mining industry in the Butte area.
3. The history leading up to the Louisiana Purchase is a bit confusing. Initially France controlled the Louisiana territory from 1699 until 1762 when it was ceded to Spain following France's loss of its North American colony of Nouvelle-France to the British. In 1800 Napoleon regained Louisiana from Spain, but then had to quickly sell it to the United States in 1803 for 15 million dollars in order to help fund his war against Great Britain.
4. With the signing of the *Treaty of Oregon* in June of 1846, the governments of Great Britain and the United States of America finally come to a mutual agreement and formally recognize the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel as the official border between Canada and the USA west of the Great Lakes. That line stretches west all the way to the Pacific Ocean.
5. Lewis and Clark had amassed a strong team (45 persons in total) consisting of 27 soldiers, plus a dedicated crew to row their boats, a French Canadian guide and interpreter named Toussaint Charbonneau, and Sacagawea, Charbonneau's Shoshone wife who could speak at least two native languages. She became the team's main interpreter as they ventured deep into unknown territories. Surprisingly, during the entire 8,000-mile expedition, the team would suffer only one fatality, a crew member who died of an infection near the beginning of the journey.
6. Sitting Bull and his followers had fled north across the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel into the southern part of the vast Canadian Northwest Territory. In 1905 that area was subdivided by Canada to create the new provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan.
7. "Our Patriote Ancestors", ADLT newsletter Vol. 17 no. 1 (April 2015).
8. In *Frenchtown Valley Footprints* (Frenchtown Historic Society - Mountain Press Printing - 1976) there is a photograph of three men standing in front of a cabin reputedly owned by an old trapper named "Jed" Tetrault. Two of the men are identified as Fred and Alex Lebert, sons of Jean-Baptiste Lebert and Rosalie Tétrault. Rosalie just happens to be Gédéon Tétrault's older sister. Consequently it would not be unusual for the two nephews to be posing in front of their "uncle Jed's" cabin. This would seem to indicate that the mysterious "Jed" Tetrault is indeed Gédéon Tétrault Jr (1851-?).
9. The last available record for Marie Louise Trahan is the 1901 Canadian census. There, aged 77, she is listed as widowed and living with her son Édouard in Saint-Jean-d'Iberville, Québec.
10. The nickname Big Sky Country first appeared in 1962 as part of a publicity campaign by the Montana State Highway Department. It referred to the vast unobstructed view of the sky that seems to overwhelm the landscape in that region. Montana license plates later displayed that expression starting in 1967.

## ANCESTRY TITLE

### GÉDÉON TÉTRAULT

Mathurin Tetreau and Marie Bernard  
Tessonnière, département Deux-Sèvres, France, January 29, 1620

#### **Louis Tetreau**

Noëlle Landeau (*Jean and Marie Aubert*)  
Trois-Rivières, June 9, 1663

#### **Joseph-Marie Tetreau dit Ducharme**

Anne Jarret dit Beauregard (*André and Marguerite Anthiaume*)  
Notre-Dame de Montréal, June 12, 1700

#### **Louis Tetreau dit Ducharme**

Anne-Marguerite Fontaine dit Bienvenu (*Pierre and Marguerite Gentes*)  
Contrecoeur, February 23, 1721

#### **Joseph Tetreau dit Ducharme**

Marie-Catherine Lussier (*Christophe and Élisabeth Guyon*)  
Verchères, June 20, 1757

#### **Louis-Gabriel Tetreau**

Charlotte Paquet dit Larivière (*Louis and Élisabeth Piedalue*)  
Chambly, August 23, 1785

#### **Pierre Tetreau**

Josephte Beausoleil (*Joseph and Rose Gaudreau*)  
L'Acadie, August 3, 1812

#### **Gédéon Tétrault**



# Tétrault family tragedy in Sainte-Sabine in 1891

This year the Covid-19 pandemic has gripped the entire world, ravaging nation after nation. Canada and the United States have not been immune to the devastation that the coronavirus has brought to countless families throughout the globe.

The coronavirus has been particularly fatal for so many of the elderly among us. At the time of writing this article, well over 80% of the fatalities to Covid-19 in Canada were the elderly in seniors' homes or in extended care facilities. We hope and pray that our readers in the ADLT have been spared the loss of a loved one at this difficult time in our history.

A century ago a pandemic played a direct part in my family's history. My father Pierre Tétrault (1918-1994) never knew his father Raoul (1888-1918). Growing up in Farnham, Québec, he and his two older siblings were deprived of the love of a father due to the outbreak of the Spanish flu. Raoul Tétrault was a healthy 30-year-old when he suddenly passed away on 29 Oct 1918<sup>1</sup>, a victim of the pandemic of that era.

At that time my dad was 4 months old, my aunt Nancy was 16 months old and my uncle Hubert was 2½ years old. The pandemic that coincided with the end of World War One had also affected

many other families worldwide. Unlike today's Covid-19 virus that tends to mainly target the elderly, the Spanish flu surprisingly attacked many younger, seemingly healthy, adults.

A few months ago I was researching the Tétrault family tree for the article that I wrote regarding the many descendants who made the long move to the state of Montana in the late 1800s. Then I accidentally came across a tragic story involving the children from one family. What happened in Sainte-Sabine in May 1891, just a few miles from where my father would grow up? In less than a week, one Tétrault family would lose all their children!

But first let's look at the young couple who would eventually have to bear the burden of this heart-breaking loss. Jean-Baptiste Tétrault (1854-1917) married Marie Gince (1856-?) on 21 Oct 1879 in Sainte-Angèle-de-Monnoir. Jean-Baptiste was the son of Zéphirin Tétrault (1813-1878) and Euphrosine Bédard (1817-1879). Marie was the daughter of Michel Gince and Onésime Gervais, and was also the older sister of Émélite Gince/Gence (1868-1932) who married Delphis Tétrault<sup>2</sup> (1860-1953).

On 1 Sep 1880 Jean-Baptiste

and Marie welcomed their first-born, a son, Zéphirin Théophile, presumably named after his paternal grandfather. The next year a daughter, Marie Médérise, was born. And in June 1883, they had a second son, Joseph Stanislas. Unfortunately, as was all too common in those days, their daughter Médérise died just months after Joseph's birth. The parents were unaware that this would only be the beginning of the family's suffering.

Next came Marie Rosalie born on 2 Feb 1885. Then two more boys followed: Louis in 1887 and Joseph Delphis in December 1888. According to Delphis's baptismal record, the godparents were none other than Delphis Tétrault and Émélite Gince, his uncle and aunt who moved to Montana the following year. Sadly, baby Delphis would live only four weeks. He passed away on 19 Jan 1889. Again, the Tétrault family had to bury a young child.

A year later, in July 1890 a son, Eugène Amédée, was born. Now there was rejoicing again in the Tétrault family. There were now five seemingly healthy children that Jean-Baptiste and Marie could raise in their Sainte-Sabine home. The census of Canada taken on 25 Apr 1891 for "Farnham West" (see Fig. 1) listed the



Robert Tétrault

*"What happened in Sainte-Sabine in May 1891, just a few miles from where my father would grow up?"*

names and ages of all five children as follows: Zéphirin (10), Joseph (7), Rosalie (5), Louis (4) and Amédée (1).

And then, less than two weeks after the census, something went horribly wrong! All five children are dead! Their burial records are recorded one after the

**Rose** (Rosalie): died 10 May 1891; buried 11 May; witnesses: Jean-Baptiste Tétrault (father), Amédée Bessette.

What happened? Was it a house fire? Was it an epidemic? Did they all succumb to a childhood illness easily preventable with today's modern vaccines? The parish register is silent on the cause of death for each of these young ones. What a tragedy for parents Jean-Baptiste and Marie who were not numbered among the fatalities. Between September 1883 and May 1891 they had lost all seven of their children! To lose one child is devastating! To lose five within one week is unimaginable! And to lose all seven, there are no words...

Despite this horrendous tragedy Jean-Baptiste and Marie would have three more children in subsequent years: Henri (1892), Napoléon Édouard (1894) and Alfred Philias (1895), with the last two living into their eighties.

We may never know the exact reasons for the loss of the five children in May 1891. However, in order to better understand this series of unfortunate events, I decided to do a complete review of the parish register of Sainte-Sabine for that specific year. In 1891 the register contained the records of 21 baptisms, 4 marriages and 22 burials.

After reviewing each of the

burial records, a whole new picture appears: 21 of the 22 individuals buried in Sainte-Sabine in 1891 are children 10 years of age or under! Table 1 summarizes each of the burials. By comparison, in the previous year this same register contained the records of only 7 burials: 4 adults and 3 children.

What a tragedy for a small village of a few hundred inhabitants! We may assume that the majority of the 21 children were victims of a childhood disease epidemic that spared the lives of the adult population. From the table we also notice that three other families (Brault, Campbell and Rainville) each suffered the loss of two children. However, the family that suffered the greatest loss in 1891 was obviously that of Jean-Baptiste Tétrault and Marie Gince.

Finally, if any of our readers in the ADLT have any information (documents, old newspapers, oral history, etc.) regarding this event, we would be happy to hear from you and publish an update. Until then, the circumstances surrounding this tragedy in Sainte-Sabine will remain a mystery.

Year	Name	Sex	Age	Signature	Signature
1891	Tétrault-Jean-Bt	M	25	M	—
..	Marie	F	25	M	W
..	Zéphirin	M	10	—	S
..	Joseph	M	7	—	S
..	Rosalie	F	5	—	S
..	Louis	M	4	—	S
..	Amédée	M	1	—	S

Figure 1 - 1891 census

other in the Sainte-Sabine parish register. Here is a summary of the entries:

**Joseph:** died 7 May 1891; buried 8 May; witnesses: Jean-Baptiste Tétrault (father), Amédée Bessette.

**Louis:** died 7 May 1891; buried 8 May; witnesses: Jean-Baptiste Tétrault (father), Amédée Bessette.

**Eugène Amédée:** died 9 May 1891; buried 10 May; witnesses: Jean-Baptiste Tétrault (father), Amédée Bessette, Henri Masse.

**Zéphirin:** died 10 May 1891; buried 10 May; witnesses: Jean-Baptiste Tétrault (father), Amédée Bessette, Henri Masse.

*"What happened? Was it a house fire? Was it an epidemic? Did they all succumb to a childhood illness easily preventable with today's modern vaccines?"*

TABLE 1

	Name	Death	Burial	Age	Age group
S1	Léopold Brault	7 Jan 1891	8 Jan 1891	22 months	child
S2	Anna Exilda Brault	18 Jan 1891	19 Jan 1891	4½ years	child
S3	Hormidas Campbell	14 Feb 1891	15 Feb 1891	18 months	child
S4	Moïse Houle	15 Feb 1891	17 Feb 1891	2½ months	child
S5	Louise Campbell	19 Feb 1891	21 Feb 1891	3 years	child
S6	Victoria Joséphine Bonin	27 Feb 1891	28 Feb 1891	1 month	child
S7	Léonie Émond	19 Mar 1891	21 Mar 1891	15 days	newborn child (*)
S8	Pierre Rainville	27 Apr 1891	28 Apr 1891	8 months	child
S9	Léona Rainville	30 Apr 1891	1 May 1891	2 years	child
S10	<b>Joseph Stanislas Tétrault</b>	7 May 1891	8 May 1891	<b>8 years</b>	child
S11	<b>Louis Tétrault</b>	7 May 1891	8 May 1891	<b>4 years</b>	child
S12	<b>Zéphirin Théophile Tétrault</b>	10 May 1891	10 May 1891	<b>10 years</b>	child
S13	<b>Eugène Amédée Tétrault</b>	9 May 1891	10 May 1891	<b>10 months</b>	child
S14	<b>Rose Tétrault</b>	10 May 1891	11 May 1891	<b>6 years</b>	child
S15	Pierre Dufresne	24 May 1891	25 May 1891	?	child (**)
S16	Anonyme Masse	13 Jun 1891	13 Jun 1891	1 day	newborn child
S17	Ernest Omer Boucher	26 Jun 1891	27 Jun 1891	2 months	child
S18	Amanda Émond	19 Sep 1891	21 Sep 1891	4 months	child (*)
S19	Anonyme Martin	28 Sep 1891	29 Sep 1891	1 day	newborn child
S20	Napoléon Omer Santerre	29 Sep 1891	30 Sep 1891	1 month	child
S21	Antoine Bricault	30 Oct 1891	1 Nov 1891	77 years	adult
S22	Laura Charpentier	6 Nov 1891	8 Nov 1891	6 years	child

\* Léonie Émond and Amanda Émond come from two different families.

\*\* No age is recorded. However the record states that Pierre Dufresne is a child.

### Notes

1. The parish burial record in Farnham states that Raoul died on 29 Oct 1918, whereas the date of death on the monument is 27 Oct 1918.
2. Delphis Tétrault and Émérite Gince would relocate their young family to Montana in 1889 and become pioneers in the mainly French-speaking village of Frenchtown.



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