

SIMON L'HÉRAULT DIT L'HEUREUX

Here is a strange title. The ancestor of the Lereau and the L'Heureux , had a family name easily variable according to notaries' writings: Levreau, Lerreau, Leureau, L'Hérault, etc... Of all the spellings maybe only one carries in its veins an historic sense: *Héraut*, public officer who carried messages, sometimes martial, such as the ones of Moucheron from the de La Fontaine fable.

Jacqueline Marchand, descendant of the ancestor Simon L'Hérault, has discovered in the Jersey Islands archives that the name *Hérault* was honored in those islands during more than four centuries from 1299 to 1749. In one word, of the French department of L'Hérault. In 1790, that territory received its name from a small Mediterranean river of the same name, which flows through it over a distance of 132 kilometers.

Right or False Start?

Nos Racines (a publication) published the following text without a blink: «So, in 1652, in La Rochelle, Simon L'Hérault, the ancestor of the : L'Hérault and L'Heureux families, his sister Marie, his brother-in-law Gervais Bisson, the brother of Gervais Florent Bisson, and a few other emigrants wait patiently»...

M. René L'Heureux, expert in the history of his ancestors, goes ahead with much less certainty. Putting together all the converging deductions militates in effect for an arrival in Canada of *Simon L'Hérault* in 1652; a probability. To affirm that Simon left La Rochelle, is something else. In the beginning of 1650, Robert Giffard, convinced and convincing speaker had harangued the inhabitants of *Saint-Cosme-de-Vair*, at the Cheval Blanc hotel. Simon must have been amongst the thrilled listeners. Giffard's small boat docked at Québec July 14th of the same year. Was the family L'Hérault aboard that boat and even the ancestor Julien Fortin? We know that the mother's of Julien and that of Simon were named *Julienne and Marguerite* Guillemin, both from St-Cosme, no doubt, two close relatives.

Upon arrival in this country, Simon probably spent his time as a paid employee on the Côte de Beaupré, maybe at that place which didn't yet have a name and now is called Sainte-Anne.

The Wife before the Farm

The great majority of emigrants started by obtaining a land grant and built a house before creating a family. Officially it was the opposite for Simon L'Hérault.

On the eve of All Saints Day 1655, on the north side of Ile d'Orléans, almost facing the Rivière-aux-Chiens, there is a party at Maurice Arrivé's home. Notary Claude Auber of Château-Richer, Étienne Lessard and Louis Gagné of Ste-Anne have just anchored their boat near the shore. Claude Guyon and Jacques Pifre soon knocked at the door of the master's home. To assist at the signature of a marriage contract: a party and an honor in that era!

Simon L'Hérault, nearing his thirties, in great shape, attracts the attention of everyone. The son and heir of the "percheron" (From Perche in France) René Hérault wishes to marry *Suzanne Jaroussel*, daughter of the deceased Pierre Jarousseau and of Jacquette Touraude of Périgny, commons of the Department of the Charente-Maritime, East of La Rochelle. Is Poland's prime minister, the potentate Wojcieh Jaruzelski of french lineal ancestry? Lets hope not. 'Moreover, Jaroussel is the feminised name of Jarousseau and the other of Toureaude becomes Touraud when you write it in the masculine form. Already feminism was claiming its rights... What would happen today if we had to write while feminising names such as Pepin, Pelchat and Vachon?

Suzanne is maybe 14 or 15 years old. An orphan, she came to Canada with her mother to join her aunt Françoise Touraud, wife of Jacques Archambault. Her mother had found at Québec a second husband, the "angoumois" (from Anjou) *Jacques Prévireau*, on July 21 1653, he passed away very soon after. Then, it was the brick-layer *Maurice Arrivé*, resident of Sillery, who accepted as his wife Jacquette and as his daughter, Suzanne on August 26 1654.

The ceremony really takes place on the island. To be noted Maurice Arrivé and his wife will give the amount of 80 pounds to their daughter Suzanne. Moreover, «the said Arrivé promises to make a chimney foundation and stone walls of the house of the future spouse». The building will be 27 feet long anfeet wide. Arrivé even promises to feed the son-in-law while the work is in progress. In sh 16 ort, Simon will live at his father-in-law's as long as his own house in not completed.

Apostle of the Hurons, father René Ménart, S.J., blessed the union of Simon and of Suzanne, in front of the witnesses Jean Baillargeon and Pierre Petit, on November 27 1655, in the chapel at the end of the island. The rite is recorded in the registry of Notre-Dame of Québec.

The Farm after the Wife

That morning, April 2 1656, notary François Badeau is rubbing his hands with satisfaction. His papers are ready. He will sign at least 14 land concessions for the residents of l'Île d'Orléans. Guillaume Bauché, Jacques Bilodeau, Robert Gagnon, Guillaume Landry, Maurice Arrivé and *Simon Lereau*, etc... The legal concessions are no surprises since they had been known for several months. As proof, Maurice Arrivé already has a roof over his head, Simon L'Hérault has certainly a unused corner to attach his house. With a 4 acres (french) frontage of land, the concessionnaire Simon becomes neighbor of Maurice Arrivé

and of Pierre Nolin dit Lafougère. Each feast of St.Rémy «October Chief» he will pay 4 pounds for land tax and 48 sols to his master Charles de Lauzon, seigneur of Charny and of Lirec.

In 1666, Simon has an employee, working by the month, Étienne Comptant, a linen weaver by trade. The following year he declares a livestock of 14 animals in his barn and 25 acres of cultivated land; a success! Jean Leclerc, 21 years old, is his household help.

Transaction and Purchase

Jean Levasseur had bought from Simon L'Hérault the frame of a house. He had already paid 150 pounds. As Levasseur was unable to fulfill his obligations towards his debtor, he asks Simon to give him back his money in 3 installments. Denys de la Ronde, first owner of that site «of 24 ½ feet of frontage on the street leading to the Champlain fountain, with a depth of 22 feet» in the lower-town of Québec; concedes it right away to L'Hérault, September 26 1660, in front of notary Audouart. Simon finished the house in 1662, proof that he had a carpenter's talent and business sense.

The father-in-law, Maurice Arrivé, noticed one day that his arms were weakening and decided to sell a part of his farm to Simon. The l'Arrivé's home was childless. Maurice owned 16 rods of land in frontage with barn and house. His neighbors: David Asselin and his son-in-law Simon who will pay 760 pounds, 230 of which immediately to the present vendor and 146 to sieur Charny, next All Saints day. Jean Levasseur, Jacques Turet and notary Duquet, initialed the agreement, June 23 1667. Simon did not know how to read or write. On the island, that purchase made the L'Hérault ancestor, an imposing land owner; he had great dreams. The l'Arrivé land was giving him 12 new acres of cleared land.

On March 7 1668, a Wednesday, Jean Levasseur, bailiff, gives faith and homage in the name of Simon Lereau, owner of a site in the lower-town of Québec, between Charles Cadieu and Jacques Perrot dit Villedaigre. Simon pays 3 pounds of annual land tax and 5 sols for property tax.

Boys and Girls

The family of Suzanne and Simon consisted of seven children, 5 girls and 2 boys. Of that number, two *Catherines* were baptized and buried at Château-Richer in the presence of l'abbé Thomas Morel.

The birth certificate of the eldest *Marie and Pierre*, the god-child of Pierre Loignon, have been lost. Very young, Marie became the wife of Jean Guy, a gun-maker, on January 7 1671 at Ste-Famille. And Pierre, belated bachelor, will give his heart to the adolescent Marguerite Badeau on February 7 1689 in Québec in front of the l'abbé François Dupré. Marguerite will give him 5 children. Pierre died crushed under a load of hay at Charlesbourg where he will be buried on November 25 1711.

God-child of Louis Lepage and of Marie Perrot on May 7 1667, *Anne* will marry François Fréchette, son of Étienne and of Marie Belin, boat carpenter, militia captain, on January 18 1680 at Ste-Famille. Anne is the direct ancestor of Louis Fréchette our national friend. François and Anne had 9 children.

Born October 9 1667 at Ste-Famille, god-child of the lieutenant of the First Company of Carignan, Sixte Charrier de Mignarde, *Sixte L'Hérault* was 27 years old when he decided to marry Reine Deblois on February 15 1694. He was a father about eight times and lived at the beautiful Ile d'Orléans where he died in 1717 at the age of 50. The youngest *M.-Madeleine*, godchild of Jean Gagnon of Robert and of M.-Madeleine Bauché, one day left the beautiful Ile d'Orléans. In Montréal, she married Jean Laroche, son of Robert and of Jeanne Souillou of France. She had 7 children before being married a second time at Laprairie to Louis Leduc, indian of the Chicachias nation according to Tanguay. Madeleine died in Laprairie after her second husband, in 1741.

From one Shore to the Other

Simon L'Hérault took part, like the people of his faith, in the social life of his time. We find him as a witness at the wedding of Mathurin Gerber in 1658 and as godfather at several christenings: Jacques Bilodeau, Joseph and Jean Deblois, Françoise Loignon and Michel Chartier. Suzanne and Simon received the sacrament of confirmation from the hands of Mgr. De Laval, on february 2 1660, at Château-Richer.

The name Simon «LHéreau» appears at the Sovereign Council of Québec, November 10 1663. Charles Aubert de la Chenaye demands from Simon the amount of 38 pounds 5 sols to compensate the price for the passage of a workman «qu'il luy bailla des y aa quatre ans» (he had loaned him four years before). And April 28 of the following year, the sailor Pierre Aygron complains that his servant has cost him a fortune because of his illness. He demands permission to seize his salary now that he works at the home of *Simon Lheureau*, this was accorded by that Supreme Court.

In 1670, the colony seemed promised to a brilliant future. However the L'Hérault family was to go through some trials. On April 21, Jacquette Touraud, mother of Suzanne, was buried on the island. Two months later Maurice Arrivé rapidly married Françoise Pedenelle. As Mrs. L'Hérault was heiress to half of the belongings of M. Arrivé, Simon ordered an inventory, by the "prévôt judge" of the seigniory, July 25. The next day, notary Paul Vachon in the presence of delegated witnesses, executed the order. One and a half acre of land left over was allotted to Suzanne.

Then, it was the autumn with its flus or maybe an accident. Simon landed at the Hôtel-Dieu of Québec, we don't know how. The surgeon René Cauchon dit Laverdière took care of him. On November 2 1670, from his hospital bed, Simon assists at the reading of the marriage contract of his oldest daughter Marie. Ten days later, he rendered his last breath after having confided his last wishes to l'abbé Charles de Lauzon-Charny. History has left us no document concerning the burial of this ancestor.

The Nouvelle-France had just lost one of her humble pioneer, father of a proud descent.

Suzanne and the Other

In those days, people could not afford the luxury of long courtships.

On February 5 1671, in the house of the deceased Simon, Suzanne passes a marriage contract with Robert Coutard, son of deceased parents François and Anne Jolly, of the parish of St-Martin, city of Vendôme, Mans. Suzanne and Robert want to live in “communauté de biens” (putting all they own in common). Robert commits himself to up-keep the children «Pierre, Sixte, Anne and Marie Magdelene Lereau» until the age of 15. It is initialed by: Claude Bermen, Nicolas Huot dit St-Laurent, C.Bouchard dit Dorval, René Cochon and the royal notary.

The wedding is on February 9 in the church of Ste-Famille in the presence of the witnesses Arrivé and Jean-Guy. Four children Jarousel-Courtaud were added to the little L’Hérault’s: *Marie*, born January 24 1672 and deceased April 1673; *François*, godchild of François Marceau; *Marie*, born in 1677, future wife of Bertrand Lart dit Laramée; *Pierre*, carried to baptism by his uncle and aunt Pierre and Marie L’Heureux; and finally *Jacques*, mentionned by Mgr Tanguay and of whom we know little.

The day after her marriage contract, Suzanne ask for the inventory of her goods to protect the inheritance of her children. The operation was completed March 12 1671. House, barn, hangar, oven, 58 acres of cultured land and prairies, concession titles, varied papers, everything was included. There is not enough room here to detail all the furniture, kitchen utensils, farm instruments and tools, animals, oxen, cows, calves, pigs and grains and the small framed mirror used by the family.

An attempt at sharing between the minor L’Hérault children was tried in 1672. By wanting to share too much, everyone was at risk of finding themselves stripped of possessions. Robert Coutard wanted at least the house «manable» (manageable) and a reasonable portion of land to cultivate which was accorded to him. The last unpleasantness of this difficult and complicated succession ended near 1700.

Suzanne Jaroussel and Robert Coutard ended up establishing themselves at the Côte de Lauzon, where Robert had a concession since November 7 1670. In 1681, that is where he was included in the census with his wife and children. As for Suzanne, research has not revealed any details of her death, which happened July 18 1700.

For a multitude, Suzanne and Simon L’Hérault were the dawn which rose on the heights of their Canadian history.

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