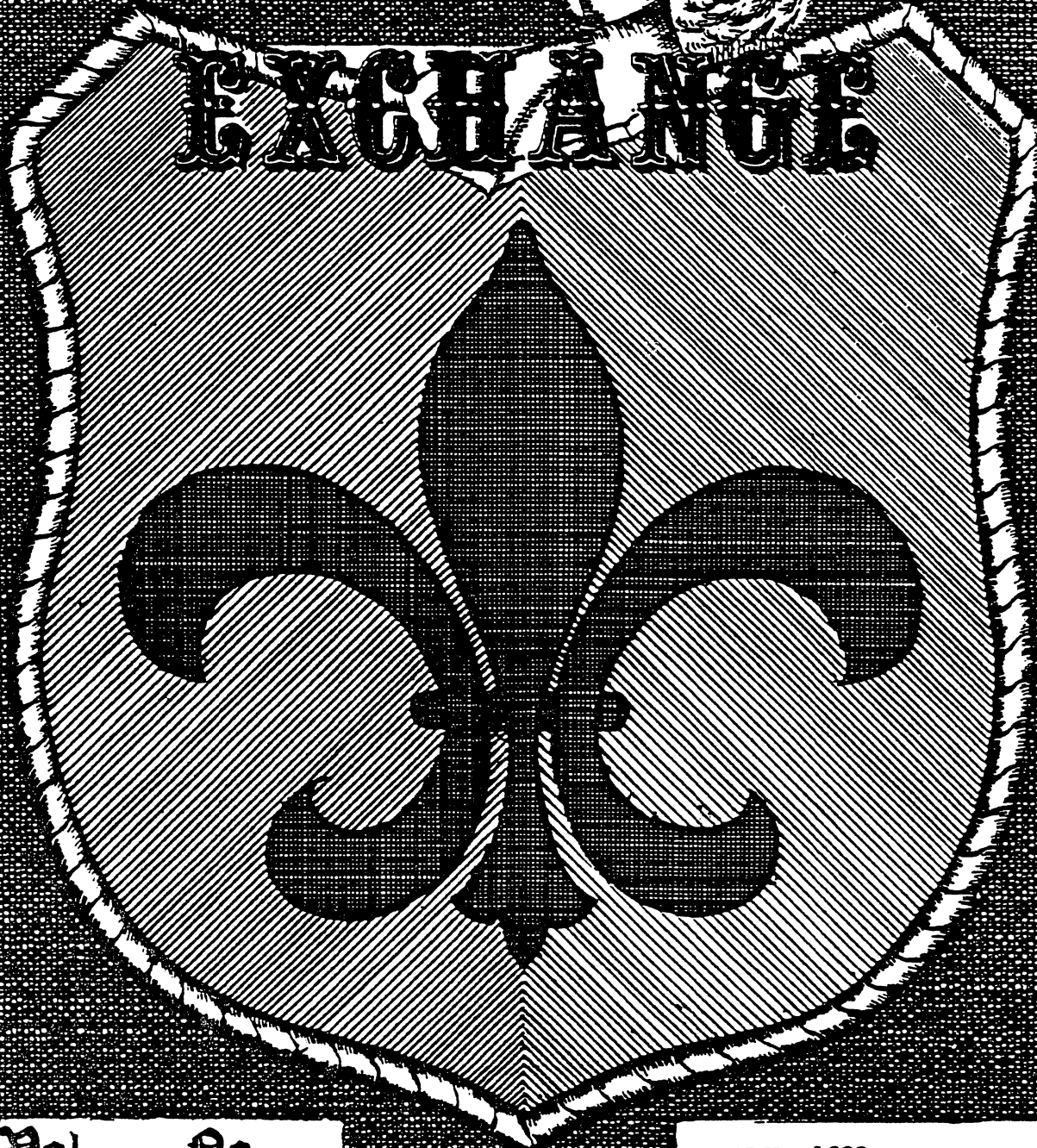


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The Mystery of the Two Basile Leblancs
and the One Marie Landry
by John P. DuLong, Ph.D.

There are many reasons for becoming interested in genealogy, such as simple curiosity or family pride. However, I suspect that many people remain active researchers because of the joy of the chase. Genealogy is fundamentally a detective game for amateurs. For family researchers the reward of the genealogy is the sense of satisfaction they get when they finally solve a long worked on problem.

For at least seven years I worked on a particular case I like to call the mystery of the two Basile Leblancs and the one Marie Landry.¹ The problem is that several genealogists have confused two first cousins who share the same name, Basile Leblanc.² These researchers claim that both men were supposedly married to a woman named Marie Landry. Moreover, they fail to identify her parents. Marie Landry is the "lady in black" of this detective story.

The problems to solve in this case are twofold: identify which Basile Leblanc married Marie Landry, and find the parentage of the shadowy lady. These same problems have haunted fellow family researchers since 1947 and as recently as 1976.³ I am happy

¹John P. DuLong, "Two Basile Leblancs" (letter), Acadian Genealogy Exchange 13:3 (July 1984):79-80. This query covers the same issues discussed here. However, it lacks evidence and documentation.

²Bona Arsenault, Histoire et généalogie des Acadiens (6 vols., Québec: Éditions Leméac Inc., 1978), vol. 2, pp. 650 & 652. Adrien Bergeron, Le grand arrangement des Acadiens au Québec (8 vols., Montréal: Éditions Élysée, 1981), vol. 5, pp. 90, 94 & 95. Archange Godbout, "Daniel Leblanc and the Leblanc Genealogy," trans. G. P. Hébert, French-Canadian and Acadian Genealogical Review 4:1 (Spring 1972): 17-20, p. 30. Roland-J. Auger, "Leblanc Genealogy," French-Canadian and Acadian Genealogical Review 4:1 (Spring 1972): 21-36, p. 30. Unless otherwise noted, all genealogical facts mentioned in this paper can be found in Arsenault.

³Claudine Dulong, of Montreal, was working on the case in 1947, see Amos Everett Jewett, "The Acadians in Rowley," The Essex Institute Historical Collections LXXXIV:4 (October 1948): 366-388, pp. 387-388. D. Thurston Kee placed a query on the case in Mémoires 27:4 (October-December 1976): 251. Christian Roy and J.-G. Frigault both responded, see Mémoires 28:1 (January-March 1977): 74. In addition, several people have corresponded with me about this case over a number of years including: Helen V. Bertrand, Douglas Thurston Kee, Roger B. Leblanc, and Janet B. Jehn. I would like to thank all of these people for their interest and help.

to report that the mystery is resolved. This paper provides the facts of the case and shows how the "family techniques" was used to solve the mystery of the two Basile Leblancs and the one Marie Landry.

Case Background

The 1755 expulsion of Acadians created a genealogical nightmare. Family members were separated, parish records were lost, and notarial papers were destroyed. The lack of accurate information has led some family historians to make mistakes in identifying individuals and reconstructing families. Investigators on this case did not properly distinguish between the two Basile Leblancs.

The two Basile Leblancs are first-cousins. Their kinship traces back to Pierre Leblanc and Madeleine Bourg who had several children including two sons, Joseph and Paul. Joseph Leblanc married Marguerite Bourgeois on 20 January 1721 at Port-Royal, Acadia. Together they had several children including a son named Basile born at Port-Royal around 1727. Joseph's brother, Paul Leblanc, married Marie-Joséphé Richard on 6 October 1732 at Port-Royal. They too had a family which included a Basile born around 1748.

Basile, the son of Joseph, married Marie-Anne Richard, on 27 November 1752 at Port-Royal. After the death of his first wife, Basile took Marie Landry as his second wife while in exile.

Basile, the son of Paul, was supposedly married to a Marie Landry about 1768 in exile. He did marry Marguerite Amirault 24 January 1780 at Trois-Rivières, Québec.

Eliminating the Wrong Basile Leblanc

The facts which I have uncovered show that Basile, the son of Paul, never married a Marie Landry. His marriage record to Marguerite Amirault only mentions his parents and does not--as was customary--mention any previous marriage.⁴ This Basile settled in at St-Gregoire, Nicolet County, Québec and died their around 1820.⁵

⁴"Marriage record of Basile Leblanc and Marguerite Amirault," Trois-Rivières, 24 January 1780, Archives nationales du Québec, Centre régional de Trois-Rivières, number M168, photocopy of original record in the author's possession, 19 September 1980.

⁵His wife died at Nicolet on 2 June 1795. It is not clear if they had any children or if he ever remarried.

Moreover, Arsenault mistakenly claims that Basile, the son of Paul, had two children with Marie Landry: Elizabeth and Jean-Édouard. However, his alleged children did not live in Nicolet County. Instead, they appear in the records of L'Assomption County which is over forty miles away. These two are actually the children of his cousin, Basile, the son of Joseph, and the real spouse of Marie Landry.

On the Track of the Right Basile Leblanc

As any detective knows, people usually leave a paper trail behind them. Certainly, this is the case with Basile and his family. Basile, his wife Marie-Anne, and their young son were exiled along with the rest of the Port-Royal community on or near 8 December 1755.⁶ They would spend most of their exile in the town of Rowley, Essex County, Massachusetts, not far from Boston. The town's records mention the plight of this Acadian family several times.⁷

The Acadians arrived in Boston by 30 December 1755. A committee of the Massachusetts General Court ordered that they be distributed among the neighboring towns. The letter to the selectmen of Rowley states: "We shall as soon as possible send Charles Lower & wife, Alex. Reshaw, Peter Dupee & wife, Bezaleel Leblong & wife 2 sons & 1 Dat^r. in all ten of said Inhabitants to your Town."⁸ Basile's family arrived at Rowley with the others on 7 January 1756.

The selectmen of Rowley were careful to keep record of the money spent to support the French Neutrals. The town paid for their food, clothing, shelter, and medical assistance. They rendered this aid from the time of the Acadian arrival until 1766. Despite this help from the people of Rowley, the Acadians were in miserable shape on their arrival. On 29 June 1756 the selectmen wrote to their superiors in Boston:

We would inform your Honours Something as to y^e Surcomstances of y^e french with us, one old man hath been Sick above two months, thre others of them hath bin Sick of a fever a Considerable time & one more of

⁶William G. Godfrey, "John Handfield," Dictionary of Canadian Biography (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1974), vol. III, pp. 277-278

⁷For details about Basile's stay in Rowley, see Jewett, "Acadians in Rowley," pp. 377-378, 380, & 382.

⁸Ibid., p. 377.

them taken lately by Reason whereof Considerable of there time hath bin taken up in tending the sick.⁹

Basile's wife died soon after this letter was written. Marie-Anne Richard was buried on 29 August 1756 at Rowley. She is found recorded in the registry as: "Leblong, _____, French woman, w. Bezaleel."¹⁰ Although Basile might have suffered from the same illness that affected his countrymen and which killed his wife, the selectmen reported on 25 January 1757 that he was "in health & able to Labour."¹¹

Marie-Anne and Basile had three children together.¹² The eldest was a son whose name is unknown. He was born around 1752 and died between 25 January 1757 and 20 June 1760. The next child was also a son. Joseph was born near Port-Royal around 1754. The third child was a daughter named Marie-Anne who was born around 1755.

Basile's family is recorded on several lists during their exile. The widower and his children appear on a list of Acadians living at Rowley on 20 July 1760: "Brizzel Leblong," age 31, Joseph age four, and Ann age three.¹³ On 14 August 1763 at Boston there is a "Bazille La Blanc, his wife and two children," recorded as living in Connecticut on a petition of Acadians asking permission to migrate to France.¹⁴ He appears again on an unidentified and undated list with "6 from his family."¹⁵ Lastly, Basile Leblanc appears again on another list of Acadians wishing to go to Canada made at Boston on 2 June 1766. There are now eight in his family

⁹Ibid., p. 379.

¹⁰Vital Records of Rowley, Massachusetts to the End of the Year 1849: Volume II, Supplementary Records Kept by Ministers and Recorders, (Salem, MA: The Essex Institute, 1931), p. 19.

¹¹Jewett, "Acadians in Rowley," p. 380.

¹²Ibid., pp. 379-380.

¹³Janet B. Jehn, Acadian Exiles in the Colonies (Covington, KY: privately printed, 1977), p. 78.

¹⁴Milton P. Rieder, Jr., and Norma Gaudet Rieder, comps. and trans., The Acadian Exiles in the American Colonies 1755-1768 (Metairie, LA: privately printed, 1977), p. 12. Although this list indicates the residence of the Acadians as Connecticut, there is some doubt as to whether this document pertains just to Connecticut or applies to all of New England including the Boston area.

¹⁵Jehn, Acadian Exiles, p. 16.

according to this last list.¹⁶ The evidence from these lists indicate that Basile took Marie Landry as his wife between 20 July 1760 and 14 August 1763.¹⁷

Basile Leblanc and Marie Landry in Québec

On 23 September 1767, the citizens of Rowley at their town meeting voted 26 pounds, 13 shillings, and four pence "to the French to enable them to Remove to Canada."¹⁸ Basile and his family left Massachusetts in the Autumn of 1767 and arrived in Québec soon after. They were among the Acadian refugees who moved to L'Assomption County northeast of Montréal.

The Seminary of St-Sulpice, in Montréal, was the seigneur of the L'Assomption area. The Sulpicians invited the Acadian refugees to dwell on their lands. Father Jacques Degeay was the parish priest at L'Assomption and under his influence many of these Acadian refugees settled on the Ruisseau St-Georges.¹⁹ This is a small stream that enters the L'Assomption River northwest of L'Assomption. Eventually, they established the nearby Acadian town of St-Jacques de l'Achigan in Montcalm County.

Some Acadians had arrived in the area as early as 1759, but most of them came between 1766 and 1767.²⁰ They travelled either by way of Lake Champlain and the Richelieu River or on a schooner from New England. The largest contingent came in May 1767. In June, Father Degeay revalidated many of their civil marriages and

¹⁶Ibid., p. 267.

¹⁷I have been unable to locate a marriage record for Basile and Marie. Nor have I found any record of their marriage being revalidated back in Canada.

¹⁸Jewett, "Acadians in Rowley," p. 384.

¹⁹J.-Bruno Harel, "Jacques Degeay," Dictionary of Canadian Biography (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1974), vol. IV, pp. 200-201.

²⁰Christian Roy, Histoire de l'Assomption (L'Assomption, Québec: La Commission des Fêtes du 250^e, 1967), pp. 141-146 & 467-478.

baptisms.²¹ Basile and Marie drifted in after most of the other Acadians had already arrived.

Basile's reasons for moving to L'Assomption are unknown. However, he did not settle in Québec near his parents or siblings. Joseph Leblanc and Marguerite Bourgeois were exiled to Amesbury and later to Methuen, both in Essex county, and near to Rowley.²² They too left Massachusetts around 1768. Basile's parents moved to St-Denis, St-Hyacinthe County, on the Richelieu River. His father was buried there on 20 October 1775. His brothers and sisters settled in St-Denis, St-Ours, and Maskinongé.

In an age when people made decisions based on family ties, it is seems strange that Basile would decide to settle so far away from his family. The expulsion undoubtedly separated him from his parents and siblings. He may not have known that they were exiled in nearby towns. If this was the case, then he would have been unable to coordinate his migration to Québec with his family. However, it is unlikely that Basile had no contact with his nearby relatives.

Although the Massachusetts government, as early as April 1756, issued several proclamations confining the Acadians to the towns they had been assigned to and limiting their movement, these restrictions were lifted by August 1760.²³ According to d'Entremont and Hébert, there was a striking amount of travelling and communications between the exiled Acadians in Massachusetts despite these restrictions.²⁴ Furthermore, since Marie was not a resident of Rowley, Basile had to journey from Rowley at least once to seek a wife. Therefore, Basile may have had several years of freedom to visit nearby Acadian communities and associate with his kinsmen.

²¹Arsenault, History of the Acadians, (Québec: Éditions Leméac Inc., 1978), pp. 170-171. Guy Courteau and François Lanoue, Une Nouvelle Acadie: Saint-Jacques de l'Achigan 1772-1947 (Montréal: Imprimerie Populaire Ltd., 1947), p. 47. "L'Assomption Church Records," Québec, L'Assomption County, 1756-1782, Genealogical Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, microfilm reel 1018240, contains the marriage and baptism revalidations.

²²Clarence J. d'Entremont and Hector J. Hébert, "Parkman's Diary and the Acadian Exiles in Massachusetts." French-Canadian and Acadian Genealogical Review 1:4 (Winter 1968): 241-294, p. 249.

²³Ibid., pp. 272 & 283. Arsenault, History of the Acadians, p. 152. Thomas Franklin Waters, Ipswich in Massachusetts Bay Colony (2 vols., Ipswich, MA: Ipswich Historical Society, 1917), vol. II, p. 207.

²⁴D'Entremont and Hébert, "Parkman's Diary," p. 280.

There is simply not enough evidence to determine which factors influenced Basile's decision to move to L'Assomption. It may have been that the ship he took dropped anchor on the St. Lawrence River nearer to L'Assomption than to St-Denis. However, I suspect that his decision was still very much influenced by family considerations. As will be seen, he may not have settled near his own family, but his wife's siblings were certainly in close proximity.

Basile and Marie had nine children: (1) Joseph born in exile around 1760; (2) Pierre born in exile around 1762; (3) Marie born in exile; (4) Elizabeth born in exile around 1766; (5) Jean-Édouard born in Canada around 1769; (6) Marguerite baptized on 26 December 1771 at L'Assomption; (7) Jacques baptized on 31 March 1774 at L'Assomption; (8) Marie-Charlotte baptized on 13 September 1776 at L'Assomption; and finally, (9) Basile baptized on 7 April 1781 and buried 19 November 1781 at L'Assomption. In addition to these children from his second marriage, Basile still had two children from his first marriage in his household.

Two documents in particular reveal interesting facts about the life style of this family in Québec. The first is an inventory of his property and the second is a contract of employment.

It was the custom in French Canada for the widowed parent to take out guardianship papers for the children they had with the deceased spouse.²⁵ This law protected the rights of the children from step-parents. The Honorable John Fraser, judge of the Court of Common Pleas for the District of Montréal, granted Basile the guardianship of Marie-Anne's children on 9 July 1772.²⁶ At that time Joseph was 18 years-old and Marie-Anne was 16 and a half. Judge Fraser made Basile's cousin, Armand Leblanc, the surrogate guardian.²⁷ As part of the guardianship process, the notary Régis Loisel made an inventory of Basile's belongings on 15 July 1772.

The inventory does not clearly state how much of the property Basile acquired before his second marriage. He may have accumulated some of the listed items after his remarriage and

²⁵Isabel Foulché-Delbosc, "Women of Three Rivers: 1651-1663," in The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women's History, ed. Susan Mann Trofimenkoff and Alison Prentice (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977), pp. 20-21.

²⁶"Inventory of Basile Leblanc's Property," Régis Loisel, notary, L'Assomption, 15 July 1772, Archives nationales du Québec à Montréal, document 3567, photocopy of original in the author's possession, translated by Paul A. Lavoie.

²⁷This is the other Basile Leblanc's brother.

return from exile. In either case, Basile's wealth was at best modest. The notary described most of the property with the adjective "old." Among the listed items are tools, cooking utensils, and raw materials one would expect on a farm. His house was simply furnished with three stuffed chairs, one table with cloth, a spinning wheel, a crib, and a bed described as being "quite old." He owned, four pigs, four hens, and had title to no land. His neighbors owed him about 75 pounds and he in turn owed others around 79 pounds, including 18 pounds for the services of the notary. Altogether Basile was worth only about 230 pounds. The inventory closes with Basile's promise to protect the estate of his children from his first marriage.

The second document of interest involves the craft Basile followed in Québec. On 25 January 1797, the notary Joseph-Édouard Faribault prepared two agreements which renewed for nine years the contracts between local millers and the seigneurs of St-Sulpice.²⁸ These two millers were Joseph Dugas and Basile Leblanc, both Acadian refugees. Where and when Basile first learned the skills needed to practice the fine mechanical art of milling is unknown. It could have been in Acadia, in Massachusetts, or in Québec. However, Basile's decision to become a miller influenced the lives of several of his descendants and established a small miller's dynasty.

Basile operated a water driven flour mill in L'Épiphanie, a small town just west of L'Assomption on the Achigan river. His son Pierre ran a saw mill in the same town. His other son, Jean-Édouard, also went into the miller's trade. Séraphin (also known as François-Séraphin or Louis) Leblanc, Basile's grandson and Jean-Édouard's son, took to the miller's trade as well.²⁹ Séraphin helped launch the milling career of his cousin, François-Richard Dulong (the son of René Dulong and Marie Leblanc), in the town of St-Roch de l'Achigan.³⁰ In turn, François-Richard's son, François-Séraphin Dulong also became a miller on the Achigan River.³¹

²⁸Roy, L'Assomption, pp. 483-484.

²⁹Roy, L'Assomption, pp. 280 & 480-481. Jacques Forest, President of the Société de généalogie de Lanaudière, Inc., to John P. DuLong, 18 October 1982, in the author's possession.

³⁰Robert W.S. Mackay, The Canada Directory (Montréal: John Lovell, 1851), p. B [sic, next to p. 18]. 1831 Canadian Census, L'Assomption, L'Assomption County, Québec, p. 1071, Public Archives of Canada, microfilm reel C-722.

³¹1861 Canadian Census, St-Roch, L'Assomption County, Québec, p. 270, Public Archives of Canada, microfilm reel C-1310.

Basile never lived to see the end of his nine year milling contract. At the age of 74 years he was buried on 10 May 1801 at L'Assomption.³²

Marie Landry's Parents

We now know who the correct Basile Leblanc was, and the story of his life, but what of Marie Landry his wife. Who were her parents?

Marie, aged 84 years, was buried on 2 April 1819 at L'Assomption.³³ As was common at that time, when a married woman died, her burial record contains no information about her parents. It merely shows that she is the widow of Basile Leblanc.

To track Marie's parentage it was necessary to rely on the "family technique." That is, to search for documents concerning her children, suspected relatives, and friends for clues about her kinship ties and ancestry.

The baptism record of Marie's son, Jacques, on 31 March 1774, shows the godmother at this ceremony was Marguerite Landry the widow of Thibodeau.³⁴ This record was the first I found linking Marie Landry with another Landry. In 1983 I made contact with Janet B. Jehn, the renowned Acadian genealogist, with this limited data. She suggested that Marguerite Landry was the widow of Antoine Thibodeau and the daughter of Pierre Landry and Cécile Robichaud.³⁵ Unfortunately, the record does not show Marguerite's relationship to her godson Jacques. Therefore, I could not conclude the investigation by assuming that Marie and Marguerite were sisters or even cousins.

The crucial document, which proves Marie Landry's parentage, is the marriage contract of her daughter, Marie Leblanc. Ironically, a copy of this document was in my possession since I

³²Maurice Perreault, La paroisse de L'Assomption: Répertoire des sépultures (1800-1980) (Ottawa: Le Centre de Généalogie S.C., 1983), p. 395.

³³Ibid., p. 368.

³⁴Maurice Perreault, La paroisse de L'Assomption: Volume I, répertoire des baptêmes (1724-1800) (Ottawa: Le centre de Généalogie S.C., 1981), p. 261. "L'Assomption Church Records," Québec, L'Assomption County, 1756-1782, Genealogical Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, microfilm reel 1018240.

³⁵I have since lost the letter from Janet Jehn, but my query which she published in July 1984 refers to her letter.

returned from a research trip to Québec in 1981. It sat on my desk in a pile of papers waiting for me to process it. In 1985 I finally got to the bottom of the stack. I was pleasantly surprised to find the solution to my problem. This marriage contract clearly identifies all the Landry kin living in the L'Assomption area and their relationship to Marie Leblanc and, by inference, to her mother.

The notary J.-Thomas Raymond drew up this marriage contract on the afternoon of 31 August 1789 in the home of Basile Leblanc on the Achigan river.³⁶ The groom was René Dulong, a merchant from Montréal. His witnesses were Jacques Dulong his brother, Augustin Lemieux his brother-in-law, and Jean-Baptiste Bricault his cousin. Jacques and René had a business partnership in Montréal which was dissolved in 1791.³⁷ Both brothers eventually moved to St-Jacques de l'Achigan.

Since the marriage took place the next day in L'Assomption, at her parish, it is not surprising to find the bride's representatives outnumbering the grooms.³⁸ The bride's witnesses on the marriage contract included:

. . . Sieur Bazile Leblanc her father and lady Marie Landry her mother, Srs. Pierre, Édouard, and Jacques her brothers, misses Marie-Anne, Marguerite, and Marie-Charlotte Leblanc her sisters, Sr. Pierre Landry, Pierre Leblanc her uncles, ladies Marguerite Landry, Nathalie Landry, Jeanne Bazilique Landry her aunts, ladies Marie Prejean, Marguerite Dugas, Marguerite Leblanc, and Elizabeth Leblanc her cousins, Sr. Etienne Fournier and lady Denise de Brom, Marie Vailland her friends.

Marie Leblanc's aunt, Marguerite Landry, is undoubtedly the godmother of her brother Jacques. Without doubt she is the sister of Marie Landry. She was the widow of Antoine Thibodeau and among her children she had a son named Louis. Curiously, the notary crossed out Louis Thibodeau's name off the portion of the marriage

³⁶"Marriage Contract between René Dulong and Marie Leblanc," J.-Thomas Raymond, notary, L'Assomption, 31 August 1789, Archives nationales du Québec à Montréal, document 1438, copy of the original in the author's possession, translated by Paul A. Lavoie.

³⁷"René Dulong and Jacques Dulong, Dissolvment of Partnership," Antoine Foucher, notary, Montréal, 11 March 1791, Archives nationales du Québec à Montréal, document 6904, copy of original in the author's possession.

³⁸Benoit Pontbriand, comp. Mariages de L'Assomption (1724-1977) (Sillery, Québec: Pontbriand privately printed, 1980), p. 94.

contract listing family and friends. However, Louis signed the last page as a neutral witness. The contract also tells us that Marie Leblanc's mother--Marie Landry--had a brother named Pierre Landry and that two other sisters living in the area, Nathalie Landry and Jeanne Bazilique Landry.

The names found in this marriage contract match the composition of the Pierre Landry and Cécile Robichaud family. They were married at Port-Royal on 14 January 1726. Together they had the following children: (1) Marguerite Landry born about 1726; (2) Marie-Joséphé, also known as Marguerite, born about 1727 and married at Port-Royal on 13 November 1743 to Antoine Thibodeau; (3) Anne Landry born 1729; (4) Joseph Landry born about 1730 and married first in 1756 at Maskinongé to Josephtha Barbeau and second on 24 June 1768 at Maskinongé to Marie-Geneviève Vermette; (5) Cécile Landry born about 1732; (6) Marie Landry our, "lady in black," born around 1735; (7) Marie-Madeleine Landry born about 1737; (8) Nathalie or Anne-Nathalie, born around 1737; (9) Jean-Baptiste Landry born around 1742; (10) Isabelle or Elizabeth Landry, probably the spouse of Pierre Leblanc, born around 1745; (11) Pierre Landry born around 1748; and (12) Jeanne-Bazilique Landry the spouse of Amable Prejean.³⁹

Pierre Landry was exiled to Massachusetts. He and his wife, "Sesile," appear on a list of Acadian distributed throughout New England made at Boston on 14 August 1763. They had one son and five daughters with them. Listed under Pierre's family is the widow "Thibaudot" with three boys and three girls.⁴⁰

The available published records do not show where they lived in Massachusetts. It may have been near Rowley, but there is no proof. Also, the fate of Pierre Landry and Cécile Robichaud is unknown. They may have been among the many Acadians who died in exile or they may have perished in an attempt to return to Canada.⁴¹

Despite the lack of information about the parents, we do know that their children made it to Québec. Joseph settled at

³⁹I suspect that further research will show that the first and second daughters are the same person. Also, Jean-Baptiste might really be Jeanne-Bazilique but only misread. Arsenault does not identify Jeanne-Bazilique as one of their children.

⁴⁰Rieder and Rieder, Acadian Exiles, p. 21.

⁴¹One of the pleasures of genealogy is that it always provides us with new mysteries as soon as we solve old problems. What became of Pierre and Cécile? This is worth investigating and the family technique discussed in this paper can be applied to their case as well.

Maskinongé and Pierre, Elizabeth, Nathalie, and Jeanne-Bazilique moved to the St-Jacques area. The fact that so many of Marie's siblings settled near L'Assomption may have had some influence on her husband's decision to move there instead of the Richelieu River near his own family.

Perreault's published repertoires of baptisms and burials for L'Assomption contains other facts which support my claim that I have found the parents of Marie. For instance, the burial of Anne-Nathalie Landry at L'Assomption on 17 February 1799 records that she was the daughter of late Pierre Landry and the late Cécile Robichaud.⁴² Jeanne-Bazilique, another of Marie's sisters, was married to Amable Prejean. At the baptism of their son Joseph-Amable in 1775 the godmother was Marie Landry.⁴³ Furthermore, Christine Roy, the historian of L'Assomption, indicated in a query response that Marie's sister was Elizabeth Landry, the wife of Pierre Leblanc.⁴⁴ However, he did not seem to know who her parents were. Again the parish register holds a clue. Elizabeth's nephew, Jean-Édouard Leblanc, was the godfather of her son Édouard in 1787 and her niece, Marie Leblanc, was godmother to her son Louis in 1784.⁴⁵ Both of these godparents were the children of Marie Landry and Basile Leblanc.

This secondary source already reveals several ties between Marie Landry, her children, and her sisters. A thorough search of the original parish registers of L'Assomption, St-Jacques, and L'Épiphanie--as well as the notarial papers--will undoubtedly reveal more details about her kinship ties. Nevertheless, with just the evidence at hand, it is now obvious that Marie Landry was only married to Basile Leblanc, the son of Joseph Leblanc, and that she was the daughter of Pierre Landry and Cécile Robichaud.

I have properly identified the subjects and investigated their actions. The case is closed!

The Family Technique

This paper is a demonstration of the effectiveness of a particular detective method, the family technique. If you can not

⁴²Perreault, L'Assomption, Sepultures (1724-1800), vol II., p. 137.

⁴³Perreault, L'Assomption, Baptêmes (1724-1800), vol. I, p. 380.

⁴⁴Christian Roy, Mémoires 28:1 (January-March 1977): 74.

⁴⁵Perreault, L'Assomption, Baptêmes (1724-1800), vol. I, p. 261.

find a person, then, so the theory goes, perhaps you can find a sibling or cousin. Information about any family members will eventually help you solve the problem you are having with the original person. Detectives, as well as bill collectors, use this method frequently. However, some genealogists neglect to collect additional information about their ancestors' kin.

In his classic genealogical guide, Greenwood admonishes researchers to: "Get them all." He summarizes the family technique as follows:

During the research for your ancestor it will be to your advantage if you read and extract all information relating to all persons of the surname(s) of interest in the locality of interest. If you do not do it, someday you will be sorry and you will wind up going back through the same records all over again, and it will likely be sooner than you think. You may not be able to identify all of these persons as you find them, but when you begin to synthesize your findings and put them into families most of the pieces will fall into place and the information you have found on those "unknown" persons will often provide clues to help you extend your pedigree.⁴⁶

Not only is this additional data about family (and even friends) valuable in solving lineage problems, but it also helps place your ancestors in their community. Although we are now less tied to the decisions are siblings and cousins make, our ancestors lived in a world of tight-knit family connections. The trades and life styles of your ancestor's brothers, uncles, and cousins undoubtedly influenced the occupational and migration decisions your ancestor made. The influence the Leblanc millers had on my Dulong ancestors is a good case in point. It is imperative to collect all information about a person's family of orientation (parents and their siblings) and family of procreation (children and in-laws) to clearly understand an ancestor's life and to reclaim your lost heritage.

⁴⁶Val D. Greenwood, The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1981), p. 44.



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October 19, 1988

Mrs. Janet Jehn
863 Wayman Branch Road
Covington, Kentucky 41015
U.S.A.

Dear Janet,

I am sorry for not having written to you sooner.

First, I did indeed receive the review copy of your Corrections & Additions to Bona Arsenault's Histoire et généalogie des Acadiens, and I thank you for it. I am sure that many people will find this publication of help in their research. I don't mind admitting that I have already found it so. I was particularly glad, for example, to see the notation on page 107 of the names of the heirs of Olivier Saulnier. Every little bit of documentary evidence helps, you know.

I trust you understand why I could not contribute directly to your Corrections & Additions. Besides any consideration of the volume of work that would be involved in simply copying out all the material we have accumulated here that could be so employed, you must take into account the fact that the more new information that would see print in that way, the less new material would remain for our Dictionnaire généalogique des familles acadiennes. I have the impression, nonetheless, that I have measurably contributed indirectly to what you have just published. At least it seems that there are quite a few references to Steve White of the "Centre d'Etudes" in certain parts of the work.

I should like to compliment you particularly on some of the materials that you have published in recent issues of your Acadian Genealogy Exchange. Dr. John P. DuLong's article on the two Basile LeBlancs in the April issue (pages 44-56) is excellent. (And, incidentally, you might pass on to Dr. DuLong word that his suspicion in footnote 39 is correct; Jean-Baptiste is indeed a misreading of Jeanne-Basilisse.) I was also very much intrigued by the "Early Thibodaux Letter" you transcribed in your July number. Documents of this type are of great value. Indeed, could you please give me an address at which I might reach your contributor, Mrs. Dee

.../2

In this from Steve White?

*John - FYI
Regards
BJ*