

The Caboose

Newsletter of the Cumberland Township Historical Society
Bulletin de la Société historique du canton de Cumberland
Web site: <http://www.storm.ca/~jeanf/index.html>

Vol. XIV, No. 2
ISSN 1203-147X

September 2001

Published every two months

Editor: Bob Serré
1057 Riviera Dr., Ottawa ON K1K 0N7
Phone: (613) 749-0607

NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 5, at 7:00 p.m., at the Public Library, 1599 Tenth Line Road. The guest speaker will be Verna Kinsella, who will answer all the questions you ever had about Vars, and were willing to ask. This will be a public meeting, and everyone is welcome!

FEATURE ARTICLE

The Foubert and Dunning Families and the Fur Trade in the Lower Ottawa Valley

by Bob Serré

In the days when the French flag still flew in the St. Lawrence Valley, Jean-Baptiste Faubert, a young soldier from Paris nicknamed Lecoq, boarded a ship bound for New France, where he was garrisoned at the Lake of Two Mountains northeast of the island of Montreal. France lost the ensuing war, and Jean-Baptiste remained in the region of Vaudreuil, where he farmed and raised a large family with Geneviève Durocher, whom he had married on November 8, 1753 at Oka.

In the days when the British flag still flew over the American colonies, Abijah Dunning, born in 1744, married Elizabeth Gregory, born in 1742, and they raised a family in Massachusetts. In the early 1770s they moved to Connecticut, and in 1790 they emigrated to Canada.

During the French Regime, no one was allowed to settle in the Ottawa Valley, since that would disturb the fur trade, which was the chief source of revenue for the colony. After the British conquest of Canada was sealed in 1760, the French policy of non-settlement in the Ottawa Valley was maintained, for the same reasons, and so the fur trade resumed, under a new breed of traders, many of whom were Scots. As Voorhis explains in a book entitled *Historic Forts and Trading Posts* (1930), "for twenty years after the cession of Canada the inland trade was in the hands of private adventurers who in 1783, tired of rivalry, united to form the North-West Fur Trading Company with headquarters at Montreal." Now the rivalry was directed against the Hudson's Bay Company, whose headquarters were in England. When the situation got out of hand and turned to armed violence, pressures were brought to bear, leading to the amalgamation of the Hudson's Bay and North West companies in 1821; the new company was called the Hudson's Bay Company.

In the heyday of the fur trade, and for some years afterwards, there were a number of petty traders operating as "Independents." In the Lower Ottawa Valley, and along the Lièvre River, two families came to dominate the local fur trade; they were the Fouberts and the Dunnings.

Gabriel Foubert was born on April 10 in 1754, the first child of Jean-Baptiste Faubert and Geneviève Durocher (the name soon came to be spelled Foubert). He married Marie-Joseph Houde in Lachine on September 21, 1778, and became a fur trader on the Ottawa River.

The Dunnings, who had spent a couple of years in Saint-Jean on the Richelieu River, moved to Montreal around 1792. In 1796, Nathaniel Hazard Treadwell, an American, purchased the Seigneurie of L'Original, above the Long Sault on the Ottawa River, and encouraged other Americans to settle in the area. And so it was that the Dunnings established themselves at Cassburn, about three miles inland from L'Original.

By 1797, Gabriel Foubert was an agent in the fur trade, operating at the mouth of the Lièvre River (below present-day Buckingham). In a 30-page document entitled *Some Notes on Bytown and the Fur Trade* (1991), Michael Newton explains that, in 1800, Gabriel and his family were engaged by the North West Company in the fur trade with the Indians.

Zalmon Dunning, the eldest son of Abijah and Elizabeth Dunning, was born in Massachusetts in 1766. He married Debora Royce in 1790, and they raised a large family. Their son William became an important trader and merchant in Cumberland and Buckingham. His sister, Matilda Dunning, married Gabriel Foubert's son Amable around 1807; Amable was himself a trader operating in Cumberland, and other members of the Foubert family were also active in the fur trade as independents. In his 1991 book, Newton quotes the following passage from an 1832 letter: "the Company (HBC) will find it a difficult matter to secure Foubert as he never remains more than a couple of Days with his family and then off to the Woods - I understand he is frequently seen about Bytown (where he goes to dispose of his hunt)." Another passage, from an 1845 letter by an HBC clerk on the upper Lièvre River, reads as follows: "I'm sorry to inform you that we are surrounded here this season by rival Traders, William Dunning and a man by the name of Joseph Foubert a Farmer in this river below us, are our strongest opponents, besides some others who gather up as much Furs as they can for the Bytown market."

By this time, the fur trade was well past its peak. Timbering and logging operations had become the main source of revenue in the Valley, and farming was attracting more and more settlers as the land was cleared of its magnificent trees. The Dunnings and Fouberts and many others dealt with the changes as best they could, and there certainly doesn't seem to have been any slowdown in the changes faced by subsequent generations.

EARLY PIONEERS

Benjamin **Cozens** was first assessed for lot 28, concession 1, in 1841. He was reassessed for the same lot each year thereafter until 1847, but not in 1848. He was not enumerated in Cumberland Township when the 1861 Census was taken. In a 7-page series of notes on Cumberland history received by the Cumberland Township Historical Society from Joan Lancaster (nee Barnett) in 1998, B. Cozens is said to have been elected Superintendent of the elementary schools in the townships of Cumberland and Cambridge in 1844. When Peter O'Toole was christened in the Catholic church of Saint-Grégoire-de-Naziance in Buckingham, on March 17, 1844, the sponsors were "Burke and Cristiana Couzins."

Edouard **Barnabé** settled on lot 35, concession 1, in Cumberland Township. His name first appears on the assessment roll for 1846. Born around 1826, he was the son of Jérémie Barnabé and of Marie-Angélique Brien dit Desrochers, who had been married on January 15, 1810 at Saint-Jacques

l'Achigan, northeast of Montreal. Jérémie Barnabé was the grandson of Pierre Martin dit Barnabé, whose father René was the grandson of Robert Martin, a Frenchman who had settled in Acadia (now Nova Scotia) in 1632 with his wife and son. Édouard was about 17 years old when he married Louise Malboeuf, the daughter of François Malboeuf and Louise Lefebvre, at Buckingham, on September 3, 1843. The Barnabé and Malboeuf families were neighbours in Cumberland Township. Édouard and Louise had at least two children: Édouard, born in June 1844, and David, born November 2, 1845.

John Busby was assessed for the west half of lot 3, concession 1 (100 acres, old survey) in Cumberland Township in 1848, but as early as 1845, there was a reference to "John Busby Weaver" in the ledger of Bill Dunning's store in Buckingham. Born in Ireland, John had married Jane Miller, a native of Belfast; their sons William and John had been born in Scotland, and then the family had emigrated to Canada in the early 1840s. Three more sons were born in Canada East between 1844 and 1848. Jane was only 51 when she died on October 28, 1858. John died three years later, in April 1861; he was in his early fifties. Both had been members of the Carmel Presbyterian Church of Cumberland; they were interred in Dale's Cemetery.

[The above profiles were prepared by Bob Serré, using, among other sources, 1861 Census data and records of the Presbyterian Church in Cumberland.]

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

On the 5th of May, our Society elected a new Council for 2001-2002: Jean-Noël Dessaint, President; Jean-François Beaulieu, Vice-President (and Web Master); Ruth Parsons, Treasurer; Bob Serré, Secretary; Verna Cotton, Director; Carole Proulx-Lafrance, Director; Bob Dessaint, Director.

Our Society was well represented at the Navan Fair (August 9-12). Bob and Rita Dessaint organized our float for the Saturday morning parade. Carole Proulx-Lafrance had designed a genealogical apple tree, which along with our banner formed a backdrop for Jean-Noël and Germaine Dessaint, Rita Dessaint, Verna Cotton and Ruth Parsons, seated on the float, with Bob Dessaint driving the tractor. The judges liked the result, and we won third prize. Carole's apple tree (with family names inscribed on the apples) also formed the backdrop for our stand at the Fair, with Ruth Parsons, Jean-François Beaulieu and Bob Serré in attendance at various times.

BACK IN 1893

On Friday, June 9, 1893, *The Evening Journal*, an Ottawa newspaper, carried a news item about Cumberland on page 8. [Note that Robert Holmes married Margaret Wylie on November 4, 1858]

CUMBERLAND

June 8—Chief Constable MacLaren has been appointed sanitary inspector of the township of Cumberland by the county council.

The friends of Mr. Winsor of the Winsor hotel here will be glad to hear he is recovering. Mrs. R. Holmes, aged 60 years, an old resident of this place, died on Wednesday, May 31st, of inflammation of the lungs. A singular fact in connection with her death is that her nephew, John Holmes, who came from Toronto to see her, died, also from inflammation of the lungs, on Monday following. Another singular fact was that 32 carriages were in attendance at each funeral.

VIEUX REGISTRES

Voici un extrait des registres paroissiaux d'Aylmer et Gatineau, comté de Wright [bobine de microfilm C-2978 aux Archives nationales du Canada].

« Le dix septembre, mil huit cent quarante-un par nous prêtre soussigné a été baptisée Mathilde née le vingt juillet dernier du légitime mariage de Joseph Larocque, cultivateur à Cumberland et de Mathilde Corneau; parrain Jean Baptiste Larocque, marraine Euphrosine Blais qui ainsi que le père n'ont pu signer.

Poirier Ptre »

VISAGES DU PASSE

Pierre Hébert était déjà établi dans le canton de Cumberland quand sa fille Emélie a été baptisée le 2 août 1837 (registre de Buckingham). Pierre avait épousé Rose Morin, fille de Guillaume Morin et d'Angélique Jussiaume, le 2 février 1829 (registre de Montebello). Pierre était le fils de Pierre Hébert et de Cécile Chabot, mariés à Québec le 10 juin 1802, et le petit-fils de Joseph Hébert, dont l'arrière-grand-père, Antoine Hébert, originaire de la France, avait émigré au Port-Royal en Acadie entre 1645 et 1650.

Toujours est-il qu'en 1839 Pierre Hébert et Rose Morin et leurs enfants habitaient la partie nord du lot A de la quatrième concession dans le canton de Cumberland; ils avaient 12 arpents sur 100 de cultivés. En 1848, ils habitaient la même terre, avec 20 arpents de cultivés.

Lors du recensement de 1861, Pierre approchait de la soixantaine; Rose avait trois ans de moins que lui. Ils avaient eu au moins 10 enfants et il en restait quatre à la maison : Olive, Marcel, Onésime et Paul. La famille habitait la même moitié du lot A de la quatrième concession; l'autre moitié appartenait à John Buckley.

Quand le conseil du canton a décidé de faire bâtir un hôtel de ville sur le nouveau chemin le long de la rivière, en janvier 1854, Pierre a offert de livrer le bois de construction, et le conseil a accepté en février de la même année. Quand John Buckley et 16 autres personnes ont présenté une pétition pour avoir une taverne sur le chemin de Bearbrook, le conseil a accordé une licence à Pierre Hébert en décembre 1856, moyennant un certificat de l'inspecteur des tavernes. Quand monseigneur Guigues a décidé de faire construire une église dans le village de Cumberland en 1857, Pierre Hébert a été l'un des 80 souscripteurs. Il a vécu jusqu'à l'âge de 77 ans. Il est mort le 7 août 1879 et il a été enterré dans le cimetière de Saint-Joseph d'Orléans.

Pierre Hébert et Rose Morin ont laissé une nombreuse descendance. Quatre de leurs filles (Rose, Hélène, Marie et Pauline) et trois de leurs fils (Pierre, Joseph et Marcel) ont marié des enfants de familles locales. Pierre a épousé Mathilde Damour, fille d'Antoine Potvin dit Desamours et de Lucie Nantel, le 20 novembre 1853; ils ont eu une fille, Rose, née le 29 décembre 1854, mais Pierre est mort moins d'un mois plus tard, à l'âge de 23 ans et demi. Marie, la soeur de Pierre, a épousé Antoine Damour, le frère de Mathilde, le 22 septembre 1856. Joseph a épousé Philomène Lefebvre, fille de Louis Lefebvre et de Léocadie Blanchette, en septembre 1856. Marcel avait 19 ans quand il a épousé Louise Daoust, fille de Félix Daoust et de Priscille Brosseau, le 23 janvier 1865. Rose a épousé Antoine Branchaud, veuf de Sophie Foubert, le 27 mars 1848. Hélène a épousé Charles Lapointe à Buckingham. Pauline avait 21 ans lorsqu'elle a épousé Ferdinand Frenet, fils de Thomas Frenet et de Judith Pilote, en avril 1863.

Robert Serré