



***Our
French
Canadian
Forefathers***

***by
Lucille Fournier Rock***

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INTRODUCTION

This is an excerpt of a very informative book written by Lucille Fournier Rock. The book was published in 1982. I don't know very much about the author, but I did speak with her on the telephone on Tuesday, May 1, 1999. Lucille's husband has passed away, and she is now married to George Wilcox, and living in Woonsocket, Rhode Island.

During our conversation, Lucille was quite nice. We of course talked about the book, and she told me that she has since stopped selling it, and she no longer pursues her genealogy research. She was gracious enough to give me permission to publish this excerpt, the chapter titled "The Crevier Family."

Though this excerpt consists of only one chapter from the book, you may be interested to see the full table of contents from the book:

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Observations:

- In the text, Lucille abbreviates many locations. For example, (TR) means Trois-Rivieres and (SC) means Saint Cande Le Jeune. If you come across an abbreviation that you don't understand, check the text in the previous paragraphs, as Lucille does use the full spelling before using any abbreviation.
- Christophe Crevier (b.1611, d.~1662) was married to Jeanne Enard. Some other sources show his wife's surname as "Evard". Here in Lucille's book, she seems to use both spellings interchangeably.

During the months of May and June, 1999, I spend numerous evenings transcribing this chapter into electronic form. With few exceptions, I have converted this document word for word. I have added a table of contents to assist the reader in finding specific pieces of information within this chapter. And since this table of contents refers to several men who share the same name, I have also added titles next to their names (i.e. 2nd Seigneur of St. Francois), to distinguish each from the others. It is certainly possible that I have made

an occasional typing error. If you happen to notice any typos or any information that does not make sense, please let me know. I will make any necessary corrections and I will make updated versions of this book available.

If you would like to quote this book in your own genealogy research, please be sure not to confuse me with the author. Though you may wish to note where you got this excerpt from, I suggest you credit the book as follows:

Lucille Fournier Rock, Our French Canadian Forefathers, © 1982.

It is fitting that I finished this project on Fathers Day, June 20, 1999. A day such as this helps us to remember our “forefathers”, keeping in mind the difficult times that they lived through and the chances that they took, in order to make a better life for their children, and to get us where we are today. Since I started my own genealogy research in January 1999, I now find it difficult, if not unfair, to complain about anything today.

For as long as I am alive, I will be very happy to discuss this document or my genealogy data with any of my relatives. If you should happen to have any information, or if you are a distant (or not so distant) relative, please take a moment to say hello. I expect that my e-mail address below will be valid for many years to come. And I also invite you to visit my family history web site.

Enjoy.

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Last update: June 20, 1999

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THE CREVIER FAMILY

The Crevier family hailed from Roeun, France and not from La Rochelle, France, as has been believed by many historians. The family has been traced back to the sixteenth century, as follows:

Robert Crevier, baker, died before 1583. From his marriage with Jeanne Dauphin, we know of the following children:

Vincent: baker, resident of Saint Cande le Vieil.

Hughes: who follows. (This son has not been confirmed as their child, but the evidence indicates that he must have been.)

Hughes Crevier and his wife, Helene Levasseur, resided in the parish of Sainte Croix Saint Ouen, in a house named "la Teste noire" (The Black Head). After their death, this house was the object of multiple transactions among their children. In a notarial act dated August 11, 1611, there is a reference to another property owned by Hughes and his wife, in Bordeaux. From this marriage, which took place around 1560, we know of the following children:

Thomas: merchant and bourgeois of Rouen. He resided in Saint Michel.

Robert: master baker and bourgeois of Rouen.

Jean: resided in Saint Jean.

Sebastien, alias Bastien: merchant and bourgeois of Rouen. He resided in the parish of Sainte Croix Saint Ouen.

Genevieve: b. 24 December 1579 Sainte Croix Saint Ouen.

Nicolas: who follows:

Nicolas Crevier, merchant, baker and bourgeois, was baptized on April 19, 1581, in Sainte Croix Saint Ouen. He married Anne Baziret around 1607, and they made their home in Saint Cande le Vieil Jeune. On November 27, 1617, he bought a parcel of land from Claude Periet in Saint Pierre du Petit Quevilly. This parcel, with house and garden, was later sold by his widow on March 6, 1630 to Abraham Frement, Royal Scribe in Rouen. Nicolas Crevier died at the age of 45 and was buried on October 15, 1625. His widow died five years later and was buried on March 12, 1631. They had at least four children:

Helene: b. 18 March 1608, Saint Cande Le Jeune (SC).

Hughes: b. 21 November 1609 (SC); m. 25 February 1632 to Jeanne Laurent.

Christophe: who follows.

Nicolas: b. 23 March 1612 (SC).

CHRISTOPHE CREVIER

Christophe Crevier, Sieur de la Meslee, baptized in Saint Cande le Jeune, Rouen, France, on February 17, 1611, was the son of Nicolas Crevier and Anne Baziret.

He spent his youth in Rouen and it was most likely there that he met Jeanne Evard (Enard), his future wife. They were married in the church in which he was baptized, on November 6, 1633. He was twenty-two years old and his bride was about fourteen.

Perhaps it was the intrigue of the tales of the new colony, or perhaps it was their spirit of adventure that brought them to Canada in 1639. On their arrival, they settled in Trois-Rivieres where Crevier earned his living as a baker, and more profitably, as a fur trader.

For unknown reasons, the family returned to France between 1642 and 1645. During this sojourn in the mother country, Crevier earned his living as a merchant. They resided in La Rochelle and it was there that their daughter, Marguerite, was born in 1645. On January 20, 1647, Crevier was a witness at the signing of a marriage contract. We know that he was still in France in 1651, because on July 8, of that year, in La Rochelle, he and his wife paid a debt of 42 “livres” 13 “sols” to Marie Capin, widow of Martin Poirier.

Soon after, the family returned to Canada but, unknowingly, it was a costly decision, because two of their sons would succumb to the wrath of the Iroquois. The first, Francois, was killed on May 28, 1653; the other, Antoine, most likely in 1661. Francois Hertel, who had been taken prisoner that year and later released wrote of the sufferings and tortures endured by captives. An excerpt reads:

“As for the little Antoine de la Maslee (the name often used by the family), this poor child filled me with compassion, because he had become the servant of these barbarians, and they killed him with knife blows as they hunted him down.”

In August of 1653, Crevier was named trustee of the “habitants” of the seigneurie of Notre Dame des Anges, near Quebec. To have received this appointment would indicate that the family had resided in the area for some time. But they did not remain in Quebec. On March 9, 1655, the Jesuits granted Crevier a parcel of land on the largest island situated at the mouth of the St. Maurice River. At the same time, the Jesuits sold

parcels to Jacques Bertrand, Jacques Brisset, Jean Pecault, Pierre Dandonneau, and Michel Lemay. During the next few years, Christophe bought all of the shares of his neighbors and this land became known as the "Fief Saint Christophe." It is still known as St. Christophe today.

The first court case registered in Trois-Rivieres is dated June 1655 and involves Crevier's wife, Jeanne Evard, who appears as plaintiff against Marie Sedillot, wife of Bertrand Fafard dit Laframboise. The case involved a calf which Jeanne Evard had cared for, for a few weeks at the request of the owner, Marie Sedillot. In payment, Jeanne Evard wanted half of the calf when it was slaughtered. The court's verdict was that Jeanne Evard would receive the proportion of meat, which would be half of the weight gained by the calf, while it was under her care. The judge sitting on the bench was Pierre Boucher, son-in-law of Jeanne Evard. His judgement was considerably less than what his mother-in-law had sued for. It does make one wonder what happened after the trial.

Christophe Crevier remained in Trois-Rivieres for the remainder of his life. The exact date of his death has never been found. From existing records, his death had to occur between October 10, 1661, when he was mentioned as witnessing the signing of his daughter's marriage contract to Michel Gamelin, and November 20, 1663, when he was mentioned as deceased at the signing of his son's marriage contract. His widow, Jeanne Evard, died much later, but the record of her death has also been lost.

Christophe Crevier and Jeanne Evard had at least ten children of whom six left posterity:

Jeanne: b. 1636; m. 9 July 1652, Quebec, to Pierre Boucher, Seigneur de Boucherville, nobleman, Governor of Trois-Rivieres, and son of Gaspard Boucher and Nicole Lemere.

Antoine: murdered by the Iroquois in 1652.

Francois: b. 1640 Trois-Rivieres (TR); murdered by the Iroquois on May 28, 1653.

Nicolas: Sieur de Bellerive, b. 1641 (TR); m. 1660 to Louise Lecoustre.

Jean: who follows.

Marguerite: b. 1645 in La Rouchelle, France; 1^om. 14 May 1657 (TR) to Jacques Fournier, Sieur de la Ville, son of Michel Fournier and Michelle Croyer; 2^om. 10 October 1661 contract Ameau, to Michel Gamelin and Francoise Belanger; 3^om. 21 August 1683 Boucherville, to Francois Renou and Marie Serle. This Marguerite Crevier never married Pierre Groston dit St. Onge, as noted in Tanguay's dictionary.

Jerome:

Joseph:

Marie: b. 1649; m. 1663 to Nicolas Gastineau, Sieur du Plessis, notary and judge in Cap de la Madeleine.

Jean Baptiste: Sieur Duvernay, b. 1648; m. 20 January 1682 Champlain, to Anne Charlotte Chorel, daughter of Francois Chorel and Marie Anne Aubuchon.

JEAN CREVIER, 1ST SEIGNEUR OF ST. FRANCOIS

Jean Crevier, one of eight children, was born on April 3, 1642, in Trois-Rivieres, from the marriage of Christophe Crevier and Jeanne Enard. He grew up to be an ambitious young man and set out in the most lucrative enterprise of the time, fur trading. In exchange for fur pelts, which he later sold at huge profits, he gave the Indians guns, gun powder, lead, woolen blankets, woolen cloths, and liquor.

At the age of twenty-one, on November 26, 1663, in Trois-Rivieres, he married Marguerite Hertel, daughter of Jacques Hertel and Marie Marguerie. They made their home in Champlain, then at Cap-de-la-Madeleine, before settling in St. Francois.

St. Francois was owned by Pierre Boucher, nobleman and governor of Trois-Rivieres, who had married Jean's sister in 1652. Boucher, not interested in developing this parcel, sold the upper portion to his brother-in-law, Jean Crevier, on July 23, 1673, and at about the same time, sold the lower portion to Michel Leneuf, Sieur de la Valliere.

A seignury could be bought, as in the case of Jean Crevier, or it could be acquired by grant. The shape of a seignury was usually a long, thin trapezoid situated along the St. Lawrence River, because the river was the avenue of intracolonial transportation in summer as well as in winter. When the Seigneur conceded parcels of land, they were usually rectangular in shape, with a narrow frontage along the shoreline and ten times longer, thus giving each "habitant" access to the river. When all the parcels had been conceded along the river, a second range (rang) of concessions was begun behind the first, then a third behind the second, etc. Seigneuries thus became divided into several ranges (rangs).

At first, seigneuries were virgin forests and practically worthless. A seignury became valuable only when the domain was settled and the leased land was developed. If there were a manor house, several farm buildings, a mill, and fifty square "arpents" of cleared land on the seignury, as well as thirty to forty settled parcels, the seignury was worth between 8,000 to 12,000 "livres." It, therefore, was in the seigneur's interest to attract tenants onto this seignury.

The seigneur was legally entitled to revenues from his tenants from diverse sources. All tenants owed a "cens." This was a small cash payment, which under the feudal system, indicated that the land could not be subgranted. In the early years, the "cens" was only a couple of "deniers;" later, six "deniers" or a "sol" for every "arpent" of

frontage. A “denier” was to a “livre”, what a penny is to an English pound. Thus 12 “deniers” made 1 “sol” and 20 “sols” made 1 “livre.” The seigneur also collected a rent which was a major source of revenue. In the seventeenth century, the rent was usually one or more capons, plus twenty “sols” for each “arpent” of frontage. Usually, the seigneur had been granted fishing rights with the acquisition of the seigneurie. The seigneur passed on this right to his tenants, in return for a small cash payment or a fraction, usually a tenth of a twentieth of the catch. These charges were difficult to collect and some seigneurs did not bother with them. By 1700, within a third to a half of the seigneuries, there were common pastures, sometimes a strip of natural grassland along the river bank, sometimes tracts of forest set aside for this purpose. This allowed the seigneur to collect a fee from his tenants for the use of this land. Five “sols” per head was a fairly standard rate, but some seigneurs charged a flat fee. There were also revenues from banalities, which were charges for services provided by the seigneur. One was a charge for the use of a bake-oven. This impractical practice was quickly abandoned, as the seigneuries were so large, that, in winter, tenants could not reach the oven in time, without their bread being half frozen. The other, a gristmill banality, often became an important source of seigneurial revenue. If the seigneur owned a gristmill, he usually inserted a clause in the lease, that the tenant was required to grind his grain at the seigneurial gristmill. After 1686, seigneurs were required to build a mill within a year, or sacrifice their banal rights. These mills must have cost the seigneurs at least 2,000 “livres” to build and the maintenance cost was high. It is estimated that the annual cost of the simplest mill must have been 500 “livres” for repairs, depreciation, and a miller’s salary. The mill was a liability to the seigneur until he had at least twenty-five families in his seigneurie. Another source of revenue was a fee of a twelfth of the sale price, whenever a tenant sold his land other than out of the line of direct succession.

On every seigneurie, there was a domain, which was the parcel the seigneur had set aside with the intention of establishing a large farm, a sawmill and perhaps a fishing station for his own use. Although most seigneurs set aside only one domain, which usually extended the entire depth of the seigneurie, a few withheld more. The division of a seigneurie among heirs, who became co-seigneurs, led to the establishment of several domains on one seigneurie. The seigneur either employed farm hands or farmed the land himself, depending on his financial means. Some seigneurs rented their domains. Usually, as was the case with Jean Crevier, the seigneur lived on the domain and supervised the farm himself, since it was an important source of income.

As soon as Crevier acquired his seigneurie, he set about developing it. On October 3, 1673, he gave land concessions to: Laurent Philippe dit Lafontaine l’Outaouais; Charles Blazon; Benjamin Anceau, sieur de Berry; Pierre Couc dit Lafleur de Cognac; and Jacques Juhén. Many of these land parcels were situated on the Isle of Saint Jean, which was undoubtedly named after the seigneur, as was the Isle of Saint Joseph named after his first born son.

The seigneurie of St. Francois was described on several occasions. Bacqueville de la Potherie, going up the river in 1701, described it thus:

“I can see no other area, in all of Canada, where we can live with so much pleasure, if we were not troubled in times of war. These islands are five or six at the extremity of the lake St. Pierre, on the south-end, in a nook. A river which descends from the Nouvelle-York ends here, which forms a quantity of large canals, all bordered with beautiful trees. If we could enjoy the pleasures of a rustic life with security, we would find everything that would make it blissful here, and there are no all powerful seigneurs in Europe that would not want the same site to make their home—one of the most pleasurable and most delightful areas on earth. These islands are two and one half miles in length at most, level and filled with wood of full grown trees. We can see large pines like the ones that have been used to make masts for the king’s vessels. The oak, the maple and the cedar trees are found in quantity. The grain is very good. The prairies are charming and the pastures are admirable. Game abounds at all times; the ones that migrate, like geese and bustards, which come only in the spring and fall, are found in profusion in these seasons. The perching wood ducks are always present; these birds have a tuft on their head in mixed colors of red to changing violets, which make them quite beautiful. We make ver nice muffs from these tufts. As the lake is abundantly filled with fish, all these canals are not less. This area is therefore like the center of the best of all that we could dream of in Canada.”

M. de Catalogne wrote in 1712, “The lands are level and very beautiful, particularly the islands, fertile in all sorts of grains and vegetables, the woods are filled with all kinds of trees, game and fish are abundant.”

The development of the seigneurie did not interfere with Crevier’s fur business. It was a time when there was much opposition to the trading of liquor with the Indians. Many felt that their barbaric acts were the result of their indulgence in the spirits; others felt that trading was vital to the economy of the country. Finally, the king of France, Louis XIV, by a decree signed on May 12, 1678, in Saint Germain en Laye, gave instructions to Governor Frontenac and Intendant Duchesneau, along with the Sovereign Council, to assemble the twenty principal and longest residing residents of the country, to discuss the bartering of liquor for fur pelts with the Indians.

Mgr. de Laval had endeavored to have strict laws passed concerning this practice and had even threatened to refuse absolution to those involved. The assembly was convened at Chateau Saint Louis in Quebec, on October 26, 1678. Jean Crevier, one of the twenty chosen by the governor to give his opinion said, “if the trading of spirits is not permitted, it would bring considerable damage to the country, because a large number of Sokokis Indians who have taken the habit of drinking and who have been brought up with liquor amongst the English, would return to the English and would deprive those involved of huge profits which they bring them, not having any knowledge that they bring disorder in their drunkenness, and if it happens, it is not for this reason because the Outaouais Indians who do not indulge in the spirits and who are educated by the Jesuits,

commit all kinds of crimes daily, which shows that it is their barbaric temperament that leads them to these ill acts.” Of the twenty chosen to discuss the matter, fifteen were in agreement that the economy of the colony and that the wealth this enterprise brought should not be turned over to the colonists of New England.

At the same time, Crevier was having boundary disputes with Michel Leneuf, who had acquired the adjacent property from Pierre Boucher in 1673. Leneuf neglected this property and sought to acquire lands in Nova Scotia. In 1676, he acquired Chignictou, which he named Beaubassin, and moved there in 1678.

By an ordinance of 1676, the king of France reunited to his domain all lands granted but not developed. It was the responsibility of the seigneurs to lease parcels of land to tenants and to have these parcels cleared or forfeit their grants.

Although Leneuf’s parcel, Yamaska, had returned to the king’s domain, he still endeavored to hold title to it and was eventually successful. Disputes began between him and Crevier as to the boundaries between the seigneuries.

On October 8, 1678, Governor de Frontenac and Intendant Duchesneau rendered judgement, giving Crevier two and one half miles in depth northward along the River Saint Francois, including the islands within this depth. The parcel was also two and one half miles in width from the north side of the river from the end of the parcel belonging to Lussaudiere, together with the lands that are situated on the other side of the river at the south side, beginning with the end of the seigneurie of St. Francois to the boundaries of Leneuf’s land. Included were the rights of hunting and fishing on this land.

Two days later, the intendant clarified the ordinance of the eight and specified that Crevier would retain the seigneurie of St. Francois, measuring from the Tardif Channel to the Yamaska River on the north-east side, including the Percees Islands and the islands situated in the du Moine Channel. On the northern side, Crevier would own up to the land owned by Lussaudiere, which was along the Nicolet River going southward.

The following year, on October 23, 1679, there was a murder in St. Francois. Jeanne Couc, twenty years old, daughter of Pierre Couc dit Lafleur and Marie Sauvagesse, and Algonquin Indian, was found mortally wounded and her father beaten. Jean Rattier dit Dubuisson, husband of Marie Riviere, was accused of the murder and detained in prison pending his trial. On the 31st of October, he was found guilty by the tribunal of Trois-Rivieres and sentenced to be hanged. He appealed to the Sovereign Council and was transferred to the prison of that city. Among the many witnesses testifying were Crevier, Pierre Gilbert dit Lachasse, Jacques Dupuis dit La Garenne and Jacques Julien. These four were also accused complicity in the affair in varying degrees. Crevier was accused of slander. The trial lasted for more than a year. The judgement was rendered on December 31, 1680. Rattier was found guilty of the murder and sentenced to be hanged in Quebec City. However, since the post of public executioner was vacant, Rattier’s life was spared on the condition that he accept the position, which he gratefully did. The post of public executioner was frowned upon and thus became a very difficult

position to fill. In Canada, the public executioner, as well as his family, were the targets of ridicule to the point where life in the community became intolerable. Therefore, Rattier did not atone for his crime by himself; his family would live through years of condemnation and ostracism.

On March 24, 1681, the Council rendered judgement against Crevier. He was fined 490 “livres” in civil interest to Pierre Couc, ten “livres” to the King and court costs. By the same decree, the court forbade Pierre Couc to reproach Crevier on the matter of the murder of his daughter.

The years ahead were not to be serene ones. Although the inhabitants had enjoyed relative tranquility from the attacks of the Indians since the arrival of the Carignan Regiment in 1665, it was about to come to an abrupt end. In 1684, the Iroquois attacked. Through conferences, the French endeavored to negotiate peace. On June 15, 1688, in Montreal, a truce was agreed upon, but it was short lived. Renegade bands of Indians ignored it and continued their raids. On September 1, 1687, Governor Denonville reiterated previous orders that forts be built on each seigneurie to serve as refuge for the inhabitants. Crevier obeyed this command, and a fort was built in St. Francois the same year. The years 1688 to 1693 were bloody years almost uninterrupted from the ravages of the Iroquois. In a letter from Quebec, dated August 17, 1693, Intendant Champigny wrote that Crevier “was busy with fifteen or sixteen men in harvesting crops, whereupon they were alerted of the arrival of the Iroquois. The workers hurried to the fort, which was within gunshot, but one inhabitant was killed, and one soldier as well as the Sieur Crevier were made prisoners.” The attack occurred during the first days of the month. By the end of the month, the Iroquois were settled in their village. They had torn out Crevier’s fingernails on five fingers and were preparing to burn him at the stake when Major Peter Schuyler, commander of the Albany fort, bought him for fifty “louis”. Historians believe that Crevier died in Albany in 1693 or soon after from the torture and the wounds he suffered during his captivity at the hands of the Iroquois.

Marguerite Hertel died on December 26, 1711. She was buried beneath the second church but on November 14, 1718, her remains were transferred to beneath the third church, that had recently been erected on lands donated by her son, Joseph, and his wife, Angelique Le Boulanger.

Jean Crevier and Marguerite Hertel had five children:

Joseph: who follows

Louis: b. 1669; d. 27 March 1690, in a battle at Salmon Falls against the Indians.

Jean Baptiste Rene: b. 13 September 1679, Trois-Rivieres; 1^om. 30 April 1708, Champlain, to Marie Madeleine Babie, daughter of Jacques Babie and Jeanne Dandonneau; 2^om. 23 January 1726, Sorel (S), to Marie Therese de Miray, daughter of Jean de Miray, Sieur de l’Argenterie and Catherine Le Roy; d. 28 March 1754, St. Francois (SF).

Marguerite: b. 18 September 1683 (S); m. 1712 to Francois Babie, Sieur Chenneville, son of Jacques Babie and Jeanne Dandonneau; d. before 1723.

Marie Anne: b. 25 July 1686 (S); m. 13 February 1708 (SF) to Pierre Babie, son of Jacques Babie and Jeanne Dandonneau.

JOSEPH CREVIER, 2ND SEIGNEUR OF ST. FRANCOIS

Joseph, the eldest son of Jean Crevier and Marguerite Hertel was most likely born in 1667. Since the record of his birth has been lost, the date must be ascertained from the census of 1681, which lists him as fourteen. As the first born son, he was destined to inherit the largest part of the seigneurie of St. Francois and become its second seigneur. He was the first to be named Joseph and all subsequent seigneurs would carry that name.

At the age of fourteen, Joseph enlisted in the “troupes de la marine,” (troups of the admiralty). In the Province of Quebec, there were two armies, the permanent and non-permanent. The permanent army was called troups of the admiralty, because it was administered by the navy. The non-permanent army, under the direction of the Ministry of War, was composed of volunteers. Each parish had at least one company and it was commanded by a captain, whose title was capitaine de milice. A list of officers, drawn up in 1696, makes the following notation: “Crevier, sous enseigne, excellent officer.” Nevertheless, he never surpassed the grade of ensign.

On April 29, 1697, in Cap de la Madeleine, Crevier married Marie Angelique Le Boulanger, born September 18, 1680, in the same village, daughter of Pierre Le Boulanger, sieur de St. Pierre, merchant and bourgeois, and of Renee Godefroy, of noble lineage. They signed their marriage contract on the 22nd of the following month before Notary Ameau.

When Crevier’s father died in 1693, his mother, Marguerite Hertel, was appointed guardian of her minor children. Although she gave her children many parcels of land during her lifetime, the final division of the estate would not take place until after her death.

On January 3, 1707, Michel Lefebvre de Lassiseraye, a land surveyor from Trois Rivieres, arrived in St. Francois at the request of the seigneuresse and her eldest son, Joseph. He was to divide the land so that each child would receive his fair share according to the “Coutume de Paris,” which was a codification of customary French law. The law was a compromise between the assumption that an individual had a natural right to land and the desire to preserve the integrity of the family estate. The eldest son, as was the case with Joseph Crevier, inherited the seigneurial manor with its courtyard and half of the rest of the seigneurie. If there were no manor on the estate, the eldest child received an additional square “arpent” of land. The other half of the seigneurie was divided equally among the remainder of the children. Crevier had one brother and two sisters who,

therefore, each received a third of the remaining half. If there were only two children, the elder son received the manor with its courtyard and two-thirds of the estate. If the children were all girls, the manor and land were divided equally. If a seigneur's death preceded his wife's, the estate was usually divided between the widow and the children, although the widow's half was held in usufruct and passed to the children at her death. The rights of the "coutume" were lost only if an individual renounced his claim, entered the Church, or accepted a donation larger than the inheritance. A seigneur had the legal right to sell his seigneurie, but his wife and children could reclaim the seigneurie by reimbursing the purchaser.

Once the estate was divided, the seigneur usually tried to regain control of the entire seigneurie. If the other heirs agreed to sell, the entire seigneurie was put up at public auction. After Mass, on three consecutive Sundays, a statement of the sale was read in front of the church. The seigneur was in a viable position to outbid anyone else, since he already owned half of the estate, his purchase price would be half of what he bid. The auction guaranteed a fair price to the heirs and the seigneurie remained intact. Sometimes, the seigneur bought parcels from the co-seigneurs one at a time, but this took years to unify the seigneurie. Many seigneuries remained divided forever.

After Marguerite Hertel's death in 1711, the land was divided. Joseph took his rightful title of seigneur, while his brother along with his two brothers-in-law took the titles of co-seigneurs.

The Abenakis Indians had settled on the territory of the seigneurie around 1690 at forty "arpents" above their actual village and on the same side of the river. In 1700, as preparations were made to sign a peace treaty with the Iroquois, Governor Callieres and Intendant Champigny yearned to join the Abenakis of the Chaudiere River with those of the St. Francois river. This plan would form a stronger barrier against the Iroquois, should they break their truce. They approached Marguerite Hertel and her son, Joseph, with their plan. The two consented and on August 23, 1700, before Notaries Adhemar and Raimbault, the contract was signed. It stipulated that a strip of land of one and one-quarter miles be given to the Abenakis. The contract specified the following: that the land would return to the heirs, when the Jesuit mission, which would be established on this land, ceased to exist; that the donors could grow hay for their own profit on portions of the land not utilized by the Indians; that land abandoned by the Indians could be cultivated by the donors; and that there would be no rent for this land payable to the donors. In return, the donors, to the exclusion of all other Frenchmen, would have the privilege of maintaining a house near the fort of the Indians, to sell them bread and other staples originating from the farms of the country. Moreover, they would have the right to have a garden and an enclosure of two "arpents" in area and would be able to take as much wood as would be necessary to build and to heat this house. There were land grants previously given on the land in question to Pierre and Jean Baptiste Gamelin. The contract further stipulated that the Gamelin's would remain in their land and that the rents would remain payable to the donors. It was an amenable agreement.

It was later discovered that within the mile and a quarter parcel of land granted to the Abenakis by the Creviers, was a strip of land owned by the heirs of the late Laurent Philippe, seigneur of Pierreville. The matter was quickly resolved as it was decided by the heirs to grant this land to the Abenakis. The contract made more or less the same stipulations as the one to the Creviers and also included the house and the sale of goods on the property.

In 1705, the Abenakis, finding their land grants insufficient for their needs, asked for another parcel. The Marquis de Vaudreuil implored the Creviers to cede yet another parcel to the Indians of five-eighths of a mile. It was agreed upon, but as Jean Baptiste Rene Crevier dit Descheneaux owned a portion of this land in his own right, and had already cleared and planted a portion of the acreage, it was decided that he should be compensated. For his land grant, he would receive the title of cadet in the troops of the admiralty, without actually serving and as such, he would receive seventy-eight "livres" annually, plus clothing. This contract, like the others, stipulated that the land would return to him or his heirs, when the mission ceased to exist.

The Abenakis decided to move their village onto the newly acquired land. Marguerite Hertel and her son, Joseph, built another house near the village to continue the sale of staples to the Indians. Joseph Hertel, nephew to Marguerite and heir of Laurent Philippe, seigneur of Pierreville, had also maintained a house and sold staples to the Indians as agreed upon by the land concession of May 10, 1701. As the Indian village was being relocated, he sought to follow them to their new location. His aunt Marguerite opposed him on this decision as the village would no longer be on land granted by him. In 1701, Hertel sought the intervention of Intendant Raudot in the matter and judgement was pronounced in his favor. The following year, a new ordinance was passed giving him the right to build a house next to the new reservation. By 1711, Hertel and his aunt were still arguing the matter. A new ordinance was delivered to the seigneuresse in person by a bailiff from Trois Rivieres reiterating Hertel's rights.

Marguerite Hertel died that same year. Her son, Joseph, now seigneur of St. Francois continued his opposition to his cousin. On September 7, 1715, he petitioned Intendant Begon to have Hertel appear in court and ban him from building near the Abenakis village. Hertel was to appear on October 15, but did not show up. On January 19, 1716, an ordinance was passed in Crevier's favor. However, the matter was returned to court on March 16. The court reversed its decision and decreed that both would be entitled to build homes and maintain the sale of staples to the Abenakis near their village, but that Hertel would have to pay Crevier fifteen "livres" rent a year as long as he would maintain a house on the land.

Crevier died the following year. Unfortunately, the record of his death no longer exists and the precise date is unknown.

In 1721, Crevier's widow, Angelique Le Boulanger, petitioned the Council for letters of nobility. A letter from Vaudreuil and Begon, dated Quebec, November 4, 1721, reads in part:

“We are sending to the Council a petition from the widow of Seieur Crevier, proprietress of the seigneurie of St. Francois, which shows that M. de Frontenac had hoped to receive letters of nobility for the father of her husband, in consideration of the expenses that he had made in the development of this seigneurie ... that Sieur Deschenaux, brother of the said Sieur Crevier was killed in a confrontation with the English, that her late husband had started to serve in the military at the age of fourteen and continued to serve until his death and that her eldest son has also served in the military for eight years as cadet ... As the said Sieur Crevier, father of her husband, lived nobly during the time of M. de Frontenac, that her husband and his children have continued to serve (nobly), we implore the Council to grant letters of nobility...”

M. de Frontenac had died soon after Jean Crevier. It would seem that since he was a strong ally of Jean Crevier, and had powerful connections, that he would have obtained the letters for him. M. de Vaudreuil and Intendant Begon, on the other hand, were not moved to do so.

Joseph Crevier and Marie Angelique Le Boulanger had eight children:

Joseph: who follows

Louis Francois: b. 1698; d. March 1701 St. Francois (SF).

Jeanne Elizabeth: b. 23 March 1700 (SF); d. 22 November 1740 (SF).

Francois Louis: b. 25 August 1701 (SF).

Antoine: b. 1705

Marie Claire: b. 1707; m. 24 February 1728 (SF), to Jean Baptiste Jutrat dit Desrosiers, Seigneur de Lussaudiere, son of Dominique Jutrat and Marie Niquet; d. 18 April 1734 (SF).

Marie Renee: b. 21 April 1709 (SF).

Marie Angelique: b. 4 June 1712 (SF); d. 19 September 1712 (SF).

JOSEPH CREVIER, 3RD SEIGNEUR OF ST. FRANCOIS

The third seigneur of St. Francois was Joseph, born March 18, 1698, at Cap de la Madeleine, son of Joseph Crevier and Angelique Le Boulanger. Like his father, he joined the military at an early age; he was only fifteen years old. Four years later, his father died soon after, his mother divided the seigneurie among the five surviving children. As

customary, the first born son received half of the land holdings and the remainder of the children were given equal shares of the other half.

On June 1st, 1723, in Quebec, Crevier took his Oath of Fealty (rendit foi et hommage) as seigneur of St. Francois. The following day, he began the census of the seigneurie. Thirty-five parcels of land were enumerated in this census, one of which had been given by the second seigneur for the erection of the church. In return for this donation to the church, an annual Mass was sung in honor of the Seigneur.

The following year, on June 30, in Trois Rivieres, Joseph married Charlotte Lemaitre, born February 3, 1700, in the same village, daughter of Pierre Lemaitre, captain of the militia of St. Francois, and of Marie Chenay.

The first seigneur of St. Francois had had difficulties over the rights of hunting on the seigneurie and fishing in the bordering waters. On December 15, 1677, an ordinance was passed forbidding fishing and hunting to everyone. The residents of the seigneurie interpreted this ordinance to mean all persons living outside the boundaries of the seigneurie. The seigneur, troubled over this situation appealed to have a new, more specific ordinance passed. On August 31, 1683, Intendant De Meulles signed a new ordinance expressly forbidding all persons to fish in the waters adjacent to the seigneurie. A few years later, this decree was forgotten and fishing was resumed. Joseph Crevier, third seigneur, decided to enforce the laws that his grandfather had fought for. He levied a tax of six "livres" annually for fishing rights, but the inhabitants refused to pay it. In the fall of 1730, he forbade everyone to fish in the bordering waters.

The following spring, Claude Pinard, captain in the militia, and Jacques Gamelin, lieutenant, circulated a petition against Seigneur Crevier to have gratuitous fishing rights to the lake, but more importantly in the St. Francois Bay. This petition, dated April 22, 1731, was signed by the following: Claude Pinard; Jacques Gamelin; Pierre Abraham; Louis Pinard; Veronneau, the father; Labonte; Guillaume Cartier; Eustache Gamelin; and Veronneau, the son. The petition was forwarded to the Intendant Hocquart, who on the fifth of May, ordered the seigneur to appear before him on the following twenty-fifth of June. Crevier appeared as ordered and pled his case stating prior ordinances as well as the rights acquired, when the seigneurie was purchased. Finally, on March 27, 1732, Hocquart rendered his decision maintaining that Crevier had the fishing rights in the disputed waters, and that anyone found in violation of this ordinance would pay a fine of one hundred "livres" and their rigging would be confiscated. It gave the right, however, for the inhabitants to fish outside the scope of the seigneurie.

The matter did not come to an end with this decree. The following year, the parties appeared before Intendant Hocquart again, but he held firm on his decision and the inhabitants were told to pay the levy if they wanted to fish in the disputed waters.

It would seem that the inhabitants decided to pay the levy, because no further disputes on the matter can be found.

Joseph Crevier died young. He was only thirty-six years old. Unfortunately, there is no documentation to explain the cause of death and why his life was interrupted in its prime. He was buried in St. Francois on June 19, 1734. His widow would survive him for many years. The exact date of her death has not been found, but it is known that she died before 1761.

Joseph Crevier and Charlotte Lemaitre had seven children:

Joseph: who follows

Charles Etienne: b. 2 April 1726, St. Francois (SF); 1^om. 24 May 1752, Montreal, to Charlotte Diel, daughter of Jacques Diel and Marie Anne Crepin; 2^om. 2 June 1760 (SF), to Angelique Gamelin, daughter of Antoine Gamelin and Angelique Hertel; d. 1771.

Jean Baptiste: b. January 1728 (SF).

Antoine: b. 17 January 1729 (SF); d. 19 January 1730 (SF).

Antoine: b. 13 May 1730 (SF).

Louis Michel: b. 9 October 1731 (SF); d. 12 November 1731 (SF).

Marie Angelique: b. 21 January 1733 (SF); 1^om. 5 February 1750 (SF), to Jacques Babie, son of Raymond Babie and Therese Lecompte; 2^om. 16 May 1758 (SF), to Joseph Lauziere dit Gaucher, son of Louis Lauziere and Madeleine Renoux; d. 12 February 1776 (SF).

JOSEPH CREVIER, 4TH SEIGNEUR OF ST. FRANCOIS

Joseph, born March 17, 1725, in St. Francois, destined to be the fourth seigneur, was only nine years old when his father died in 1734. His mother, Charlotte Lemaitre, managed the affairs of the seigneurie until he reached his majority.

On July 15, 1761, in Trois Rivieres, he married Marie Anne Poulin, daughter of Pierre Poulin, marchand and royal notary, and of Madeleine Le Boulanger. Marie Anne Poulin was Crevier's first cousin, once removed. Her mother and his grandmother, Marie Angelique Le Boulanger, were sisters.

In 1765, Crevier was chosen, as a seigneur, to be part of a national assembly to discuss business affairs, religion, and acquired privileges of seigneurs. He also participated in another such assembly in Montreal, on February 21, 1766.

At this time, there were only fifty-seven families settled in St. Francois. By 1765, through Crevier's efforts, the population had augmented to seventy-seven families. With the increasing population, there became a need for additional land. A large portion of the

seigneurie belonged to the Abenakis Indians under grants of 1700 and 1705. The grants had contained a vital clause that the lands would return to the heirs when the Jesuit mission ceased to exist and Crevier decided to take advantage of this clause. The Indians complained and Governor Carleton negotiated an agreement. Crevier interpreted this agreement as to leave to the Abenakis any lands occupied by them and in 1770, he offered unused parcels to anyone wishing to lease them. The Abenakis complained to the sub-superintendent of Indians, Daniel Claus, who wrote to the general superintendent, William Johnson, that unfortunate consequences concerning the peace of the inhabitants of the area as well as of the province, could emerge if this matter were not settled. The Abenakis remained in St. Francois and the matter was not settled until 1803.

Crevier, fourth seigneur, was to die young like the seigneurs before him. He was fifty-one years old, when he was buried in the church of St. Francois, on March 20, 1776.

Joseph Crevier and Marie Anne Poulin had seven children:

Joseph Antoine: who follows.

Marie Anne: b. 4 May 1763 St. Francois (SF).

Catherine Antoine: b. 17 June 1764 (SF).

Charlotte Madeleine: b. 22 July 1765 (SF).

Francois Xavier: b. 1766; 1^om. 9 February 1795 (SF), to Marie Anne Lemaitre, daughter of Joseph Lemaitre and Angelique Cartier; 2^om. 7 January 1834 (SF), to Angelique Barbeau, widow of Augustin Langlois; d. 12 December 1834 (SF).

Marie Marguerite: b. 7 December 1768 (SF); d. 16 November 1770 (SF).

Pierre Marie: b. 25 April 1770 (SF); d. 29 May 1770 (SF).

JOSEPH ANTOINE CREVIER, 5TH SEIGNEUR OF ST. FRANCOIS

Joseph Antoine Crevier was born on May 26, 1762, in St. Francois. He was to be the last seigneur by that name. Only fourteen at the death of his father in 1776, his mother, Marie Anne Poulin, managed the affairs of the seigneurie until he reached his majority.

On November 24, 1788, in St. Francois, he married Angelique Lemaitre, daughter of Pierre Lemaitre dit Duguay and Marie Anne Lauziere.

As was customary among the Creviers, Joseph served in the military and he reached the rank of lieutenant colonel in the battalion of the division of Yamaska. He was

also named justice of the peace on two occasions, in 1811 and in 1821. In 1822, he was named commissioner in cases of misdemeanor.

The dispute of land boundaries between the Abenakies and the Creviers had never been resolved. The Indians appealed to the government once again, this time to determine where the rapids began, which would clarify their land holding. Arbitrators were appointed to put an end to the dispute and their decision was rendered on August 31, 1796. Neither party was satisfied with this decision. In July of 1797, Theodore de Pincier, from Sorel, surveyed the land. On this occasion, Seigneur Crevier received an additional parcel to add to his land holding, from Governor Prescott. A few years later, in 1803, the Abenakis received land from the government in the township of Durham.

The seigneurie of Lussaudiere, adjacent to Crevier's seigneurie, was bought by Louis Proulx, seigneur in part of Ile Moras, on September 23, 1796. Proulx was ambitious, had good business sense, and yearned for the seigneurie of St. Francois. He bought the first parcel of St. Francois, on July 23, 1812, from Francois Xavier Crevier. This parcel was one-third of what his parents had owned. A few days later, on the 31st, he bought the seigneur's share, which was a little more than half of the seigneurie. He bought the remainder parcel by parcel, and by 1817, Proulx owned eleven-twelfths of the seigneurie.

When Crevier sold the seigneurie, the sales agreement contained certain stipulations, one of which was that the seigneurie would retain "the pleasure of occupying the seigneurial seat in the parish church of St. Francois and to receive the honors as much for himself, during his lifetime, as for the lady, his wife." The seigneurial seat was situated in the most honorable location, which was on the right hand side, four feet from the balustrade. Certain honors were accorded the seigneur: he was the first to be blessed with the holy water, after the church-wardens and choir; the first to have his throat blessed on Candlemas Day; the first to receive the ashes, palms, and communion after the clergy vested in surplices; and the first to walk after the pastor in processions. During the sermon, he was recommended for prayers by name.

At the end of the year of 1815, Louis Proulx protested to the paster, M. Paquin, that Crevier was still receiving the seigneurial honors. It would seem that when Proulx wanted to buy the seigneurie, the most important thing was its ownership and he would have promised anything to buy it. Now three years later, the seigneurie well in hand, he wanted to renege on his contract. The pastor consulted Mgr. Plessis, who answered him on January 15, 1816, that this practice had previously been followed many times and its legality had never been contested. That being the case, the former seigneur should continue to receive the honors, except that his name should be omitted from mention during the sermon. He added that praying "for the seigneur of this parish" would be sufficient.

Matters remained as they were, until the rebellion of 1837. The rebellion manifested itself because the Canadians deplored the fact that they were unable to redress their grievances, many of which had been sustained by them over a long period of time. Some of these grievances were the irresponsibility of the Executive Council; the unfair

composition of the Legislative Council; the utilization of public funds without representation of the people; the trading and the monopoly of public lands; and the interference of the mother country, England, in the interior legislation of the colony. In summation, the French Canadians were fighting against the annihilation not only of their political existence, their liberty, and their freedom, but also the retention of their customs, their religion and their language.

Joseph Antione Crevier was a patriot, unafraid to speak out against the government. In retaliation for his unorthodox speeches, which Lord Gosford found highly damaging to his cause, Crevier was relieved of his functions as justice of the peace.

The bishops of Montreal and Quebec openly opposed the rebellion and advised the clergy to do the same. As could be expected, all the clergy did not come to the fold, but M. Beland, who was now pastor of St. Francois, whether through his own convictions or through obedience to his superiors, opposed the rebellion. Lord Gosford's dismissal of Crevier from his post of justice of the peace, gave M. Beland the opportunity to strip Crevier of his seigneurial honors. He stated that he was "disgusted with his (Crevier's) degrading and revolutionary behavior." The pastor began his action by consulting Vezina, a lawyer, with two questions: the first, whether a seigneur, who had sold his seignury, could reserve for himself the honors of the church; secondly, could the honors that had been enjoyed by a seigneur during a certain amount of time, assure him of their continuation, after he sold the land on which the church was built. The lawyer answered that, in his opinion, all honors belonged to the seigneur who was the proprietor and that a former seigneur could not keep these rights. M. Beland now felt that he could legally refuse the seigneurial honors to Crevier. So great was the pastor's animosity toward Crevier that on January 21, 1838, without warning, he publicly refused Crevier holy water and went so far as to have the altar boy collect the tithe at his seat first. It was a humiliating and degrading experience for Crevier. During the feudal system, pomp and ceremony were an integral part of everyday life and not taken lightly. Crevier wrote to Mgr. Signay about the affair, but the monsignor had his secretary reply that he was not interested in the matter and if Crevier wanted to settle the matter, he had recourse in the civil tribunal. It must be remembered that Crevier was not in the clergy's favor at this time and that M. Beland was well aware that the monsignor would back him up on any action he decided to take against the former seigneur.

Crevier, well respected in the community, was not without sympathy from the townspeople. The pastor could make rules and regulations within his church and certainly, some parishioners followed the leadership of the church, but many others supported Crevier and justifiably interpreted M. Beland's actions as a condemnation of the rebellion. Instead of ostracizing Crevier, the townspeople hailed him as a hero. They feted their compatriot along with military officers and other discharged magistrates.

During these troubled times, two of Crevier's sons were arrested, Benjamin and Louis Germanique. They were sent to prison at Trois Rivieres for their part in the rebellion, and later released with warning. The Crevier family was united in the fight against the English.

Seigneur Crevier died a few years later. He was buried on April 13, 1841, in St. Francois, at the age of 79. He had attained greater longevity than any of the seigneurs before him. He had been a lieutenant colonel, a justice of the peace, and a judge. Instilled with the rare gift of leadership, he had openly voiced his opinions on the political situation of the time and had fought for his principles regardless of personal hardship. He left for his descendants an example of honesty, integrity and perseverance.

Joseph Antione Crevier and Angelique Lemaitre dit Duguay had eight children:

Joseph Antione: b. 23 June 1790 St. Francois (SF); m. 8 February 1831 (SF), to Louise Bazin, daughter of Pierre Bazin and Anne Latraverse; d. 1 June 1838 (SF).

Michelle Archange: b. 30 September 1791 (SF); s. 17 December 1867, Pierreville (P).

Marie Anne: b. 25 November 1792 (SF); d. 18 April 1824 (SF).

Francois Xavier: b. 24 February 1794 (SF); d. 31 December 1797 (SF).

Marguerite: b. 5 August 1795 (SF); d. 9 December 1812 (SF).

Benjamin: b. 5 March 1802 (SF); m. to Marie Anne Biron; d. 10 May 1851 (SF).

Louis Germanique: b. 12 January 1805 (SF); m. 18 February 1835 (P), to Louise Leocadie Mercure, daughter of Joseph Mercure and Therese Gouin; d. 10 June 1859 (P).

Adelaide: b. 4 September 1806 (SF); d. 18 February 1813 (SF).

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