This is the signature of François Frigon as it appeared on a contract undertaken in the presence of notary Adhémar on May 14, 1683. The finely formed letters seem to convey a certain sense of application, a desire to do things well. This generous trait can in fact be found in plentiful supply in the Frigons of today - passed on over the centuries through the Frigon genome. But let us leave to graphologists the task of a more in depth analysis and ask ourselves the question: since François could sign his name, does this mean he was educated? We will probably never know for certain. It seems likely that he was not. His very careful signature seems to convey that he was not educated. If, as an educated person, he had known how to write, he likely would have been tempted to adopt a flowing signature, possibly ending up with a flourish or paraph* as exhibited at times in the signatures of notaries, lawyers, businessmen and such. For more on this you might look up the excellent article by Jean-Louis Beaucarnot: Paroissiaux: lire entre les lignes ou entre les actes in La revue française de généalogie, a periodical published in Paris. If you need assistance with this reference, please contact the Editor, Raymond Frigon.

In France, in François' time, being able to sign one's name did not necessarily mean that one could write. The ability to sign came from the wish of King François 1st to impose reading and writing and use of the French language on all his subjects in the diverse regions of his empire. The ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts of 1539 required the use of French in all official acts, instead of Latin and regional languages. At the time, even though most Frenchmen were not educated, a good many were able to sign agreements, as for example marriage contracts, which accounts for the expression "savait signer" (able to sign) found on documents in Québec's archives. To know more about this aspect of the subject, please look up the article by Jean-Marc Moriceau: L'univers culturel des paysans - langues et alphabétisation in Gé-Magazine, a genealogical periodical published in Paris.

* Signature with paraph, Rouen, 1604
Louis XIV tried to regulate the fur trade by coercion: “Transgressors were to be ‘punished with the whip for the first offence’” and, in the case of a relapse, “they were to be condemned to galley ships for life.”

However he was not able to stop the illegal trade. There was too much collusion in the hierarchy. The governor, the Jesuits, the merchants and the English, everybody coveted the furs. Finally, the king gave up. By the letters patent of May 2, 1681, “Louis XIV resigns himself to pardon, to proclaim a full amnesty with a completely retroactive effect that even reimburses the fines.”

Nor did the inauguration of trading permits succeed to discipline the parties. Thus, “initially, the ‘congé’ gave the right to send out only one canoe; but, under the administration of de La Barre, certain permit holders began to send out two. Denonville re-established the rule of one canoe of merchandise per permit, but after him, the practice of sending out two canoes was restored. The abuses led to the abolition of the system in 1696, but it was reinstated between 1716 and 1719, and again from 1728 to the end of the French Regime.”

These permits seem to have been issued, according to the governor, Joseph-Antoine Lefebvre, sieur de La Barre, to “favour his people.” These permits, then, were given to the governor's people. Almost every French governor became personally involved in the fur trade. And, the twenty-five permits issued officially each year did not correspond with the reality of the situation. In 1683, the merchants of Quebec alone “have about 200 merchandise canoes out trading...” That was 150 canoes more than the 50 permitted, and at Quebec alone! Lahontan confirms that these permits were for “friends”: “These congés are written permissions that the Governors General grant, by order of the King, to poor Gentlemen and to old Officers who are responsible for children, so that they can send merchandise to the Lakes. The number is limited to twenty-five each year, though God alone knows how many more are issued. It is forbidden to all kinds of persons, regardless of their rank and status, to go or to send (merchandise) without these authorisations, under the penalty of death. Each permit allows up to two large canoes of merchandise. Whoever receives a ‘congé’ or a half ‘congé’ can exploit it himself or sell it to the highest bidder. A congé usually is worth six hundred écus, and is customarily bought by a merchant. Those who obtain them have no difficulty finding ‘Coureurs de bois’ to undertake the long trips they are obliged to make if they want to earn considerable profits. The usual term is one year and sometimes more. The merchants put 6 men in the two canoes as stipulated in the congés;...”

The next article will deal with the “traité de société”.

1- Lahontan, *Oeuvres complètes 1, édition critique* par Réal Ouellet et Alain Beaulieu, PUM, 1990, p. 322, note 229
3- Lahontan, tome 1, p. 322, note 230
5- Lanctot p. 117
6- Lahontan, tome 1, pp. 321-322

*Translation: Claudette Chevrette Naud*
Bill Frigon, an early member of the Association, died February 12 at the age of 71. Bill was a dedicated Frigon. He was the second American-born Frigon to join the Association and, having overcome a fear that he would feel lost among his French-speaking cousins, became the first to attend a Frigon family gathering. He and his wife Norma came to the *retrouvailles* in Ottawa in 1997. After that, there was no keeping them away, as they enthusiastically reappeared at the meeting in Montreal in 1999! A highlight of their visit to Ottawa was meeting Robert Frigon (2), our Vice-President. Robert bears a striking resemblance to Harry, Bill’s father Harry who died in 1991. The encounter brought back to Bill and Norma, fond memories of earlier days.

Our heartfelt condolences to Norma and her three daughters and their spouses: Denise and Paul Katilus, Patricia and Paul Gelinas, Kathleen and Derick Caruso, and their children.

Following is an extract from the obituary published in *The Hartford Courant*, February 14, 2000.

William F. “Bill” Frigon, 71, of Raffia Road, Enfield, beloved husband of Norma (Smith) Frigon, died Saturday (February 12, 2000) in Woodsville, NH. Born in Enfield on August 16, 1928, son of the late Harry and Lillian (Palshaw) Frigon, he was a lifelong resident of the community, and attended local schools in Enfield. Bill entered the service in 1946, serving with the U. S. Army, 2nd Infantry Division in Europe during World War II and served in the Korea War, where he was awarded three Bronze Stars. Prior to his retirement in 1988, he had been employed with the Federal Government as Chief of Production for DCAS Pro at Hamilton Standard. Previously, Bill had been employed at the Springfield Armory as an Engineering Technician, traveling throughout the United States and Europe. When the Armory was closed in 1967, he worked in private industry as a Tool Designer and Method Engineer for 12 years, before returning to government employment with DCAS. Bill was a faithful communicant and charter parishioner of Holy Family Church in Enfield, and was a member of the original fund raising committee of the parish. He was a regular attendee at the monthly luncheon meeting of retired government employees at Westover AFB, and was also a member of the John Maciolek Post #154 American Legion in Enfield. Bill was an avid bowler and a member of the DCAS League at the Ten-Pin Bowl in South Windsor. He was also a skilled woodworker and enjoyed hunting. Among his favourite pastimes in recent years was visiting the casino with his wife Norma.

**GENEALOGY**

| William Frederick Frigon and Norma Helen Smith, 1953, Staffordsprings, CT |
| Henry “Harry” Frigon and Lillian Palshaw, ?, Thompsonville CT ? |
| Henri Frigon and Rosilda Lévesque, ?, St-Valère, Qué.? |
| Hubert Frigon and Philomène Simoneau, 1880, St-Valère, Qué. |
| Joseph Frigon and Henriette Désaulniers, 1840, Ste-Geneviève, Qué. |
| Olivier Frigon and Louise Veillette 1814, Ste-Geneviève, Qué. |
| Joseph Frigon and Madeleine Lefebvre, 1782, Ste-Geneviève, Qué. |
| Antoine Frigon and Marie-Anne Trottier, 1748, Batiscan, Qué. |
| Jean-François Frigon and Gertrude Perrot, 1715, Batiscan, Qué. |
| François Frigon and Marie-Claude Chamois, 1670, Batiscan, Qué. |
A Frigon cousin visits Batiscanie*

Georges Frigon (93)

In January 1999, while exploring a genealogy web site on the internet, I happened on a request from a certain Mary Frego Coates who was looking for information on her ancestors. She claimed to be a descendant of Désiré Frigon and Émilie Lupien, natives of Louiseville, Québec.

Quick mutual contact resulted in an amazing exchange of information. The Association of Frigon Families already had on hand extensive information on the Fregoes of Massena, N. Y. painstakingly researched by an early member of the Association, Bob Harvey (35), originally of Massena and now residing in Saint Johnsville, N. Y..

Mary Coates, also of Massena, immediately established further contact with the Association and was able to get additional help from Raymond Frigon (1) and Robert Frigon (2). We now have a new volunteer dedicated to developing this ancestral line.

At the beginning of July 1999, Mary informed by E-mail that she and her husband Rodney with their children Wesley, David and Elizabeth would be visiting the "Frigonia" region. On July 22, I had the pleasure to join the Coates family on a tour of the beautiful countryside of our ancestor François. We started with the Sanctuaire Notre-Dame-du-Cap and then went to the Vieux Presbytère de Batiscan, the ancestor's homestead, the church St-François-Xavier-de-Batiscan and the vieux Trois-Rivières.

The Coates family lives in Kincardine, Ontario, on the shores of Lake Huron. Mary teaches French at elementary school in Kincardine and Rodney is an engineer at the Nuclear Plant in Kincardine.

Mary Frego, Rodney Coates and their children, Wesley, David and Elizabeth at the Vieux Presbytère de Batiscan, July 22, 1999.

*Translation: R. F.
Dear Mr. Frigon:

Little did I realize 26 years ago when I look a course called "Genealogy and Dynastic History" as part of a minor in history that I would be embarking on a personal study of history as seen through my ancestors in the Frego and Frigon families. At that time, 26 years ago I was able to trace my northern New York family back to 1839 when Francis Frego purchased land in the Raquette area of Massena and he and (we assume) his brother Joseph began to raise their families there. At the time all that my branch of the family knew was that we were “from Canada” as it was stated so many times in the census records of 1840, 1850, and 1860.

With the growth of the Internet, I began hopefully searching for a link that could tell me more about these early New York settlers. By chance I spotted an inquiry that Georges Frigon had posted on a genealogical web page and I dashed off a note in French hoping that perhaps he would know of a Joseph Frego who had sons Frank (François), Phillip (Philippe), Peter (Pierre), Levi and Antoine before leaving Canada for the USA where he and his wife had five more children including my great grandmother, Ellen. Thus began my entry into the Frigon Family Association. Georges not only knew of Joseph Désiré Frigon but of all the Frigons who formed the family in Quebec and throughout North America and beyond. Through this correspondence I have learned more about history than my professor could have ever envisioned. This summer I was able to tour Batiscan, Cap de la Madelaine and Trois Rivieres with Georges Frigon and see the area where François Frigon dit l’Espagnol and his wife Marie Claude Chamois lived. After reading all of the copies of “The Frigons” I felt that I knew quite a bit about life in New France and how the early settlers had lived. I was totally unprepared, though, for the beauty of this area of Quebec.

I will be corresponding with my New York cousins to tell them of this adventure, but I would like to thank you as President of the Frigon Family Association for reaching out to all branches of the family to help us better understand our heritage and our history. Through you, Georges and Robert Frigon I have also established contact with other branches of my New York family and have spoken with Bob Harvey and Cindy Fregoe.

As well, I spent some time this summer on a side trip to Durham, New Hampshire to see what I could learn about Mercy Adams. She was abducted in an Indian raid on Oyster River in 1694 and went to Quebec where she married into the DuBois-Brisebois family. Her grand-daughter married Paul Joseph Frigon who was the grandfather of our New York founder Joseph Désiré Frigon. This too, turned out to be an interesting history lesson. Georges showed me where Mercy settled in Quebec and perhaps on our next trip I will try to visit those places.

Congratulations on your work with the Association and thanks for all of your help.

Sincerely,

Mary Frego Coates

Kincardine, Ontario, July 29, 1999
Commentary on the chronology of the case of Marie-Claude Chamois against her mother, Jacqueline Girard 1686 to 1693

IV

Second and third judgements favourable to Marie-Claude Chamois

Pierre Frigon (4)

**English Abstract:** On May 22, 1689, the court decides in Marie-Claude's favour. Her mother once again appeals the court's decision. Four long years go by before the case is finally heard by the Supreme Court of France, the Parlement de Paris, on April 21, 1693. As crown prosecutor, Henri-François Daguesseau (a young lawyer destined to become Chancellor of France) delivers his famous *plaidoyer* - address to the court—(published in Paris as part of his works as an historically famous figure). The *plaidoyer* describes Marie-Claude as the legitimate daughter of Honoré Chamois and is therefore his sole heir. But there is a question: did Marie-Claude actually get anything from the estate? Various clues lead us to believe that she did not. Honoré Chamois' estate owed considerable sums of money to a creditor who was to be paid out of the estate of the Comte d'Harcourt. It is possible that the estate reneged on its obligation. Marie-Claude would have then been up against a very powerful family whose comté - county - had been elevated to duché - duchy - in 1700. After the trial, why did not Marie-Claude return to New France permanently? No one knows. Did she enjoy a life of high living in France? Her quick visit to New France in 1705 to borrow 1000 livres from Nicolas Gillet, master wig-maker in Québec (as recorded in notarial act), would seem to indicate otherwise.

Annexes 1, 2, 3 and 4, containing the references made in the 4 instalments of this article will be published in subsequent issues of the newsletter.

**The French text:**

12 MAI 1689
Seconde sentence favorable à Marie-Claude Chamois
Jacqueline Girard utilise constamment l'incapacité raisonnable de payer puisque le jugement du 12 mai 1689 se fait plus contraignant. « ...ladite Marie Claude Chamois sera payée de la somme de quatre cents livres de provision alimentaire a quoi faire à vuidder leurs mains ladite jacqueline Girard et les francs et débitants des dites successions seront contraints payer lesdits francs (et) débitans par les voyes qu'ilz y seront obligés nonobstant toute saisies et oppo(siti)ons faite ou a faire.oppo(siti)ons et appelle(ti)ons quelz conq(ues) et sans p(ré)judice condamne la deffenderesse aux despens. »37 D'Aguesseau confirme; « Seconde sentense qui adjuge quatre cent livres à l'Intimée; Second Appel en adhétant »38

Et, Jacqueline Girard va à nouveau en appel: « ...la dite Jacqueline Girard audit nom, Appellante des Sentences contr'elle rendues aux Requêtes du Palais, les vingt-un juin mil six cent quatre-vingt-huit, & douze Mai mil six cent quatre-vingt -neuf, Défenderesse d'une autre part… »39

Quatre longue années s'écouleront encore avant le dénouement...

21 AVRIL 1693
Sentence finale par le plus haut tribunal du pays
La cour déboute Jacqueline Girard de sa demande d'arrêt de défense: « Arrêt contradictoire qui reçoit la Partie de Me Thévart Appellante, & la déboute du surplus de ses Requêtes, c'est-à-dire leve les défenses; Requête à fin d'évocation du principal. »40 L"« évocation du principal » fait sans doute référence à l'obligation de communiquer à Marie-Claude Chamois l'inventaire des biens et à procéder au partage.

(Continued on page 7)
Enfin, le 21 avril 1693, au Parlement de Paris, rend le jugement final. L'avocat Beaufils représente François Frigon et ses enfants, Thévar représente Jacqueline Girard et Joly de Fleury, Marie-Claude Chamois. « La cour, reçoit la Partie de Beaufils Partie intervenante, ayant aucunement égard à son Intervention, a mis & met l'appellation & ce dont a été appelé au néant, émendant, évoquant le principal, & y faisant droit, a maintenu & gardé la Partie de Joly de Fleury en possession de sa qualité de fille légitime & unique héritière de défunt Honoré Chamois son père, condamne la Partie de Thévar de lui rendre compte de la succession de son père, & des effets de ladite communauté d'entre lui & la Partie de Thévar, & à cette fin les renvoie aux Requêtes du Palais, condamne la Partie de Thévar aux dépens. »

_ partir de ce moment, Jacqueline Girard, n'a plus le choix. Elle doit céder l'héritage et quitter les lieux. La loi est limpide à ce sujet: « Ceux qui auront été condamnés, par Arrêt ou Jugement passé en force de chose jugée, à délaisser la possession d'un héritage, seront tenus de ce faire quinzaine après la signification de l'Arrêt ou Jugement faite à personne ou domicile, à peine de 200 livres d'amende, moitié envers Nous, & moitié envers la Partie, qui ne pourra être remise ni modérée. »

_Si quinzaine après la première sommation, les Parties n'obéissent à l'Arrêt ou Jugement, ils pourront être condamnés par corps à délaisser la possession de l'héritage, & en tous les dommages & intérêts de la Partie. »_ Jacqueline Girard n'a plus aucune possibilité de garder les biens appartenant à Marie-Claude Chamois.

Si la loi s'est appliquée telle que prescrite, Marie-Claude Chamois a bel et bien eu droit à son héritage. Mais l'a-t-elle touché? On peut en douter. En effet, la succession de Honoré Chamois devait beaucoup d'argent à un créancier et celui-ci devait être payé à même la succession du Comte de Harcourt. Il est bien probable que cette succession n'ait rien payé. Et lorsque Marie-Claude Chamois eut droit à son héritage, il lui aurait fallu sans doute intenter un procès à cette puissante famille dont le comté sera promu au rang de duché en 1700. L'adversaire était vraiment de trop forte taille.

Par ailleurs, de guerre lasse, aurait-elle pu, en cours de route, renoncer à l'héritage et revenir en Nouvelle-France? Dans tout ce processus, elle était piégée. Accusée d'usurpation d'identité et d'usage de faux, elle ne pouvait pas revenir en Nouvelle-France avant qu'un jugement final ne vienne conclure le processus d'appel que Jacqueline Girard avait systématiquement utilisé. Aurait-elle pris la décision de renoncer à l'héritage et revenir au pays que Jacqueline Girard, de plus belle, l'aurait accusée de fuir pour éviter une condamnation. Et la condamnation pour usurpation d'identité et usage de faux pouvait être très lourde. Ainsi, même si elle a pu légalement partir, elle ne le pouvait, Jacqueline Girard voulant certainement à tout prix une condamnation pour se débarrasser d'elle à tout jamais.

Suite au procès, pourquoi Marie-Claude Chamois n'est-elle pas revenue pour de bon en Nouvelle-France? Nul ne le sait A-t-elle profité d'une vie dorée en France? Son passage éclair en Nouvelle-France en 1705 pour emprunter 1000 livres à Nicolas Gillet, maître perruquier de Québec, permet d'en douter.

Les annexes 1, 2, 3 et 4 paraîtront en deux tranches aux prochains numéros du bulletin.

Come meet your Frigon cousins

at

GRAND FAMILY GATHERING 2000

in Batiscan,

September 2 and 3, 2000

Details will be published in next newsletter
At our first meeting of the Board following the Annual General Meeting, it was agreed to give priority to completing our data base. The number of François Frigon's descendent has grown from 2375 to 3132 since Georges has devoted a large part of his time to building the data base. But beyond registering basic data, we are also seeking more complete information on how our families lived - ordinarily occupations are known—adding information on life, social roles, stories, all that marked the passage of our ancestors and families over time.

On the longer term, we foresee publication of a Frigon Family Book, a project that can be realized only if we all work together. To accomplish this objective we must assemble knowledge on our first ancestors as well as on our parents and grandparents. You will shortly be invited to supply information as well as archival photographs, newspaper articles and other pertinent information, for our data bank.

This long term project need not let us forget the “Rétroviaubes 2000” scheduled to take place in Batiscan on September 1 and 2, 335 years since François Frigon’s arrival ... good reason to celebrate!

Gérald Frigon

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Active members as at April 30, 2000: 150 of 1000
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