



THE FRIGONS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF FRIGON FAMILIES

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The *FRIGONS*, as a quarterly newsletter, seeks to keep members informed of the activities of the Association of Frigon Families and attempts to answer the often-put question:

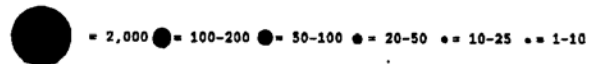
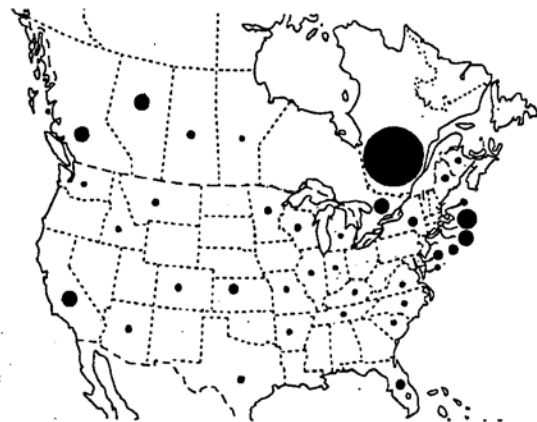
WHO ARE THE FRIGONS?

In way of introduction, this first issue briefly answers the question and leaves to coming issues an in-depth account of the intriguing history of the Frigon family, so many of which have ventured afar.

Who are the Frigons? The Frigons of North America are the descendants of François Frigon dit *l'Espagnol*, who arrived in Canada from France in 1665, and of his wife, Marie-Claude Chamois, whom he married in 1670. It is known that Marie-Claude came from Paris. François' origin in France is not known, as the relevant documents are missing. Current research places him in the Paris region, but with no certainty. Oral tradition in some Frigon families would have him come from variously Brittany, Normandy, Artois, Aveyron, Jersey...

Where do they come from? The Frigon cradle is Batiscan, in the vicinity of Trois-Rivières, in Quebec's Mauricie region, where the pioneer couple settled in 1670.

Where are they located and how many are there? As the map on this page shows, some 3,000 Frigons are to be found almost everywhere in Canada and the United States, with the largest number outside Quebec located in the New England states. There are no Frigons left in France, according to current research.



Above: The Frigons in North America

Next issues...

will present the fascinating story of the Frigons of North America: their origins, successes; the meaning of Frigon in old French; François Frigon *coureur des bois*; his wife's inheritance claim before the royal courts in Paris; prominent Frigons... And news of family gatherings and of publications: family histories, biographies, anecdotes, family trees...

The Editor invites, for possible publication, contributions to the Frigon family history: biographies, newspaper clippings, personal recollections, photos...

THE FRIGONS

MARIE-CLAUDE'S ADVENTURE

If little is known of François Frigon, it is otherwise with his wife, Marie-Claude Chamois, *Fille du roi* (King's Daughter*), and heir to a fortune, which she went to France to claim, after she was already settled in New France and mother of seven children. It is then that her adventure began. The inheritance left by her father, Honoré Chamois, *Secrétaire du Roi* and secretary to the Count of Harcourt, must have been fairly large. Upon her arrival in France, her mother disowned her. This refusal on the part of the mother led to a case brought before the *Parlement de Paris* (High judicial court). The address to the court (*plaidoyer*), delivered by the brilliant French magistrate, Henri-François d'Aguesseau, in his capacity as *avocat général* (assistant public prosecutor), sheds light on some aspects of Marie-Claude's life. Fortunately, the *plaidoyer's* text has been preserved in the published *Plaidoyers* delivered by d'Aguesseau, who later became France's Chancellor. In a future issue, *THE FRIGONS*, will cover this fascinating story in greater detail. Meanwhile, it is interesting to note that d'Aguesseau used Marie-Claude's marriage certificates to prove her identity, which may explain why they are missing: Marie-Claude would have taken them with her!

DID YOU KNOW THAT:

Henry Frigon, is Vice President at *Hallmark Cards* in Kansas City? Charles Hilaire Frigon of Edmonton is President and founder of Frigon Construction, builders of fine homes? He is second eldest in a family of 18 children whose Quebec ancestor settled in Illinois in 1852? Father Benoît Frigon, in 1993, celebrated his 50 years as priest, in Giroux Alberta? A Frigon gathering of the clan took place in Calmer, Alberta in August 1993? One of the founders of Canadian Broadcasting Corporation was Augustin Frigon, D.Sc.? Ivanhoe Frigon is a prominent entrepreneur in Abitibi, Quebec? Gérard Frigon was Deputy Minister of Communications in the Quebec government?

THE ASSOCIATION'S EMBLEM

Our emblem features the "F" as written by François Frigon when signing notary papers. In the background stands the *fragon*, medicinal plant which could have been at the origin of our family name. Around the edge, the words: *ruscus - bruscus - frisgones - fragon - fregon - frigon* show how, from the Middle Ages, the botanical term *ruscus* could have become the family name *Frigon*!



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