



THE FRIGONS

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIGON,
FRIGONE, FREGO, FREGOE,
FREGON, FREGONE FAMILIES

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ANOTHER LOOK AT THE LIFE OF MARIE-CLAUDE CHAMOIS

(5 de 5) Gérald Frigon (116)

HER DESTINY

It seems unlikely that François Frigon would have left on a fur trade expedition before the fall of 1683. But we can think that he was very familiar with the fur trading post established in Trois-Rivières for the Indians coming from the Saint-Maurice or the Batiscan rivers. Marie-Claude was very often left by herself. We know that their decision that she should make the journey to Paris to claim her inheritance was taken in 1683 because the proxy letter from François to Marie-Claude was drawn up by a notary on May 14, 1683. The decision had been discussed since the arrival of ships in the preceding summer. But they knew that Marie-Claude would not embark immediately because she was pregnant with Jeanne who was baptised in September of that year. Such a trip to Paris required sums of money they did not have at the time. This explains why, two days later, François signed up with 8 other voyageurs for an expedition to Illinois in the winter of 1683-84. But she gets pregnant again in 1684 and must delay the trip to 1685 following Antoine's birth. He was not three months old when she embarked on the ship,

bringing with her a new proxy letter signed in Québec on November 2d in front of notary François Genaple.



We know that Marie-Claude did not go to school in her young age and was unable to write her name on the marriage contract with Forcier, nor in the notarial acts of 1683, 1684 and 1685. But in 1705, her handwriting was well formed on a contract passed before a notary for the loan that enabled her to go back to France. Therefore, we can say that she did not learn to write during her years spent in Batiscan. Nevertheless she exchanged letters with someone she knew in Paris because we are sure that the notices of the death of her brothers and of her sister were not published in the Gazette de Québec. She must have had a contact who was keeping her informed of family matters. Could it be Madame Rivault, Babette or her own mother? We know that at the end of his legal argument (p. 521),

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REMINDER: "The Lights of Christmas" at the Sanctuary Notre-Dame-du-Cap, exposition of the "FRIGON" miniature house from December 14, 2013 to January 05, 2014. www.sanctuaire-ndc.ca

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d'Aguessau mentions the following: "sieur Millet explains Marie-Claude's stay at La Salpêtrière, the letters exchanged between the daughter and the mother". I assume that this Sieur Millet was the director of the hospital who has testified at the trial that he recognised her and that letters were exchanged between mother and daughter between 1671 and 1683. On page 508, it is also noted that Marie-Claude received numerous letters from her mother but did not bring any of those. Marie-Claude also mentions that she has written many times to her mother. This is also confirmed by the declaration of Anne Gastier, widow Bourdon. Since Marie-Claude did not know how to read and write, a notary clerk must have assisted her in this correspondence. It is quite normal that the mother informs her daughter of the death of her brothers and sister. It is also probable that the clerk reading the correspondence would be the future notary Trottain, a friend of the family (he was already a clerk for the notary Roy for ten years or so) and that he would immediately understand that she would be her father's heiress.

A seven year trial and at least three more years before obtaining her inheritance, Marie-Claude who was energetic but had not experienced the pleasure of friendship in her new country and had been prisoner of Canadian winters, now back in her large hometown, at thirty-five years of age, has had many occasions to fill the void in her life. The causes of her exile no longer prevailed. She has escaped from the uncomfortable situation of her past and was seeing the surroundings of her childhood with a different eye. Moreover, she had not known her father very well but the research done for the trials have shown her his qualities. He had replaced an academicien as secretary to one of the greatest nobleman of the kingdom and had been given the title of Hérault of France. She could now feel part of a more 'glamorous' society. Was it by choice that she did not come back between 1697 and 1704? If so, and if she has now gained financial wealth, it would be logical to think that she would have liked to see her children again, one last time. This is most likely the reason behind her coming back in 1704. In July 1704, Marie-Claude was hospitalised at the Hôtel-Dieu in Québec, most likely to recover

from an illness caught on the ship. And then, in August 1704, François signs a proxy letter enabling her to borrow the money required for her return in France. If she has decided to undertake this trip, she must have had the money for the return. In front of the misery in which she found her family, she gives the money she has left and borrows for the return trip. Moreover, on August 19, 1704¹, François settles a debt of 150 livres owed to Antoine Trottier and in February 1705, he gives (for a dowry) a discharge for a sum of 200 livres each to Françoise Frigon and Jean-François Frigon. We know that Françoise's husband, Joseph Moreau and Jean-François were together on a trading expedition in Illinois during the Fall/Winter of 1704-1705. We can make a guess that this money comes from Marie-Claude. It's up to you to support this idea or not. She might have been weakened by her sickness and was running out of time. She must remain one more year in New-France and only embarks in the Fall of 1705 for her return to France.

What becomes of François? Between 1685 and 1704, they wrote to each other many times. He was well informed of her actions. I am sure of that, although there is no proof. And François must have agreed: the proxy letter given in August 1704, only two weeks after her return from France implies that the discussion was of short duration. And that he accepted the outcome. From the age of 55, he will live the rest of his life as a widower, alone with his children. He accepted to bear with the situation.

François Frigon was a good worker and a good neighbour (as can be seen from the number of trips he made to Champlain, Cap-de-la-Madeleine or Trois-Rivières to serve as witness for his neighbours). In 1671, he claims and has been granted as a concession a piece of land 4 arpents in frontage while many of his neighbours lands have only 2 arpents of frontage. But he did not have a very good business sense. For example, the rent he paid for the land of Cusson, in 1667, was of 6 bushels of wheat (boisseaux) annually while Cusson paid to the Jesuits, for the same land, 2

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¹Refer to Agreement and discharge in front of notary Chambalon for the broken canoe in François' barn



A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Louise Frigon (83)

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Dear Members

On August 28th, the Annual General Meeting of our association was held in Saint-Prospier. Our thanks to the 75 people who attended the meeting. Your presence contributed greatly to the success of this event which took place in an atmosphere of joy and pleasure at being together again. We had the privilege to welcome Mr Gaétan Frigon who told us about his career path. His determination to achieve his objectives, with respect and consideration towards employees and customers, made Mr Frigon the great man that we know today.

In the context of the 350th anniversary of the arrival of the Filles du Roy (King's Wards) in New France, we had as guests Mr Luc Béraud, Mr Jean-

Pierre Chartier and Ms Chantale Labossière who personified Marie-Claude Chamois. The latter told us what her life was like as a woman and as the wife of François Frigon dit l'Espagnol.

The year 2014 will mark the 20th anniversary of our association. The date set for our meeting is August 16, 2014 and will take place at Nicolet. The administrators are hard at work preparing a pleasant and interesting meeting for all of you. This is an event you cannot miss!

On my own behalf and on that of the Board of Directors, thank you for your participation in the annual meetings and the interest that you show towards the Association of Frigon Families.

Sincere greetings to all of you, dear members.



On the way to see the bisons



There were 71 people at dinner at La Ferme La Bissonnière.



In the afternoon, 75 people attended Gaétan Frigon's presentation and the conferences for the 350th Anniversary of the Filles du Roy.



Gaétan Frigon presents his book « GAÉTAN FRIGON né Dragon »



Several draws took place during the afternoon: 3 of Gaétan's books (107), a painting by Odette Frigon (52), a macramé by Ursule (111), a book by Ivanhoë III (80). Thank you all.

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bushels (boisseaux) plus 2 capons. In addition, François promised to clear 2 new arpents. The land obtained in 1671 was costing him, in rental and cens, 1 boisseau per arpent (therefore 4 boisseaux) plus 2 capons and 2 deniers. In 1690, he bought from Jean Lemoine for the sum of 1030 livres, a land of 80 square arpents along the St Laurent river in Batiscan. It does not appear that he had sold his land measuring 80 square arpents, unless he handed it over to the Sieur Charles Aubert de Lachenaye who, on the same contract, was a garantor for François' payment. We do not find a swap contract between François Frigon and Charles de Lachenaye (at some point a title search for those two lands will have to be made in order to clarify the Frigon situation). In 1692, he finalizes with the Jesuits the rents for this new land. After occupying his first land for 21 years, he acknowledges that he owes the Jesuits 85 deniers. He had not made any monetary payments and had to borrow 210 livres from Jean Baril and a similar amount from Jeanne Dandonneau to pay off his current debts². This new land, situated between those of Jean Morneau and François Fortage will be listed in 1725 as being owned by Jean-François Frigon³. In 1708, 3 years after Marie-Claude's departure, François has to borrow once more 175 livres from François Rivard.

He was first and foremost a woodman and a farmer. He resorted to fur trading expeditions only by necessity, I believe, between 1683 and 1686 to pay for Marie-Claude's trip. And in 1686 one of the three canoes of the group was vandalised by the Iroquois. Followed a trial for the sharing of losses. His only other known trip is that of 1695 with his son Jean-François, aged 21, and two other inhabitants of Batiscan. The trips of 1701, 1704 and 1705 with Lamothe-Cadillac, were made by Jean-François, as proven by his signature on the contract signed by the voyageurs who were leaving to found Detroit. His father was already over 52 years old.

François may have led an eventful life but he did not manage to conquer Marie-Claude's heart. He

did not manage to integrate her in the social life of the village. This young city girl, rebellious in nature but reserved in front of the exterior world did not like the reclusion in the woods of Batiscan. « L'oiseau a pris goût à vivre hors du nid » (She was like a bird preferring to live outside the nest). Who are we to blame her...

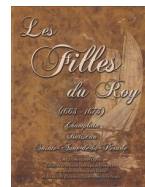
Nonetheless François really loved her. A proxy letter by François in her name and in the name of her children allowed her to claim her heritage. He legally had a right to the inheritance but he did not seem to mind and on August 19, 1704, he signed a proxy letter so that she could borrow money for her return to Paris. She has reimbursed this money which came by boat the following summer, as promised on the act signed in front of a notary, because, as shown by the fact that François who guaranteed the loan was never bothered over the issue. Then ten years later, he asks his children to accept not to engage in procedures to claim the heritage.

Who, in this big Paris, could fill the sentimental void in Marie-Claude's life? Who, during these 10 years of trial and wait time, could be interested in her to the point of showing her how to write? Who could create such a turmoil in her heart that she would leave her husband and her children? François, although easy-going and candid in business, was a loving and devoted husband. She did not leave him to change four quarters for a dollar. I think that she went back to her social standing, that of the minor nobility. I also think that she ended her life happier. Here again, you can think differently. If some day, her tomb is found with a headstone, maybe we will find an answer.

Complementary note: We do not know when Marie-Claude died nor where she is buried. However there were only two cemeteries in Paris during the years 1700-1750: that of Charonne located at 119 de Bagnolet Street (Pl. St-Blaise), 75018, Paris and that of the Calvaire (old Montmartre), 2, du Mont Cenis St., 75018, Paris. The annual listing of entries to the Parisian cemeteries is in alphabetical order and she would normally be registered under her spouse's name as Marie-Claude Frigon. Although, following François' death in 1724, she could have remarried. But she was 69 years old... If you happen to pass by and are willing to spend a « few hours »....

²Notarial acts of October 28 and December 2d, 1692..

³On Dupuis' map of 1725



In the context of the 350th anniversary of the arrival of the first Filles du Roy (King's Wards) in New-France, festivities took place in Quebec and in France. Eight young women represented the region of Trois-Rivières (Batiscan, Champlain and Sainte-de-la-Pérade). Among these, there was one that attracted our attention, Marie-Claude Chamois, portrayed by Chantale Labossière, whose history was published in the commemorative book launched last August 30th in memory of the 77 Filles du Roy who settled in these three parishes. This corresponds to 10% of those who landed in Quebec City between 1663 and 1673.



Jean-Pierre Chartier, Luc Béraud, and seven of the eight Filles du Roy of Batiscan, Champlain and Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pérade



Louise Frigon (83), President of AFF, Chantale Labossière and Pierre Frigon (04)



Chantale Labossière personifying Marie-Claude Chamois

The launch took place in the big tent at the Old Presbytery of Batiscan. The text on Marie-Claude Chamois was written by Pierre Frigon (04). This book can be purchased for \$40, by contacting Gaétan Lebel (418-362-2222), Secretary of the Batiscan Historical Society or by writing to the Society: 691, rue Principale, Batiscan, G0X 1A0. The authors have given the profits on the sale of the books to the historical societies of the three villages.

The 421-page book is divided into four chapters.

- 1 - The foundations of New-France and the crucial contribution of the Filles du Roy.
- 2 - Geographic areas.
- 3 - Biographical notes on each of the 77 Filles du Roy of the Trois-Rivières region.

Marie-Claude Chamois Among Us

On August 31, at the annual meeting of the Association, Luc Béraud painted a picture of the organizations that contributed to the success of activities related to the 350th anniversary of the arrival of the Filles du Roy in New-France. He also spoke on the recruitment of volunteers to portray the Filles du Roy. For his part, Jean-Pierre Chartier listed the circumstances that characterized the arrival of the Filles du Roy: the recruitment, the difficulties of the trip, the King, the marriage dowry and other interesting information about them.

However, the highlight of the meeting was undoubtedly the presence of Marie-Claude Chamois, portrayed by Chantale Labossière, who described the circumstances of her meeting with François Frigon, of their union, and of her adventures beyond the Atlantic.

Many thanks to Chantale who brilliantly represented our ancestral mother in all the events that took place both in Quebec and in France, during the anniversary of the arrival of the King's Wards.



Jean-Pierre Chartier, Chantale Labossière, and Luc Béraud, our lecturers



Raymonde Fortin personifying Catherine Dupuis



Augustin Frigon followed Louis Anthyme Herdt as Chairman of the Montreal Electrical Commission (MESC). “For quite some time already, Louis-Anthyme Herdt’s health left much to be desired”. “At the helm of the MESC since 1911, he moreover assumed multiple other heavy responsibilities (McGill University, Montreal Tramways Commission, professional associations, scientific research, etc.). After so many years of intensive work and stress, his health declined. When he was absent, Commissioners R. S. Kelsch and J. de Gaspé Beaubien took turns chairing the meetings. Beginning in January 1926, in spite of everything, he began participating in the MESC meetings without fail. But, on April 11, exhausted, he put an end to his life. He was 53 years and 10 months old. His death was a great loss for his family, the City of Montreal and the professional milieu of electrical engineers”.

Figure 5.1

Signature of Louis-Anthyme Herdt.
Source: Minutes of the MESC, VM98 S1 SS1.

	Louis-Anthyme Herdt	Augustin Frigon
Secondary education in the public school system	Montreal High School.	Académie commerciale catholique de Montréal (also called L'Académie du Plateau).
University education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1893 : Baccalaureat in Mechanical Engineering - McGill University. – 1898 : Masters Degree- McGill University. – After a brief stay at the École supérieure d'électricité de Paris, he enrolled at the Institut électrotechnique Montefiore, Liège, Belgium and obtained an electrical engineering diploma. – During his stay at the École supérieure d'électricité, he was laboratory assistant at the Laboratoire central d'électricité de Paris. – 1910 : Doctorate <i>honoris causa</i> in Science from McGill University. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1909: Civil Engineering Diploma from the École polytechnique de Montréal. – 1910: Studies in electricity (audited) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. – 1911: Electrical Engineering Diploma from the École polytechnique de Montréal. – 1921: Electrical Engineering Diploma from the École supérieure d'électricité de Paris. – During his stay at the École supérieure d'électricité, he was probationary engineer at the Laboratoire central d'électricité de Paris. – 1922: Doctorate in Electricity from the Science Faculty of the Université de Paris (Sorbonne). – 1943: Doctorate <i>honoris causa</i> in Science from the Université de Montréal.

¹La Presse, April 12, 1926, p. 23, “A tragic ending for Mr. L.-A. Herdt.”

The Gazette, April 12, 1926, p.4, “Dr. L.-A. Herdt Found Shot in Temple / Professor of Electrical Engineering at McGill Discovered Dead in Office / Revolver Nearby / Chairman of Montreal Electrical Service Commission / Born in France / Was McGill Graduate “.

The Gazette, April 14, 1926 (scrapbook, date uncertain), “Tramways Commission, Cabinet considers Successor to late Dr. Herdt “.

La Presse, April 24, 1926, p. 37, “Condolences on the death of Dr. L.-A. Herdt,”

Le Canada, April 24, 1926, “Condolences to the Herdt family.”

²Minutes QPUC, April 27, 1926.

Note: in 1920, the name of the Commission of Public Utility Services of Quebec (CPUSQ) was modified. It is now called the Commission of Public Services of Quebec (CPSQ)

³VM98 S1 SS1 : May 6, 1926.

⁴VM98 S1 SS1 : May 13, 1926.

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Professor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1895: Demonstrator in the Electrical Engineering Department of McGill University. – 1907: Assistant to the professor in the Electrical Engineering Department of McGill University. – 1909: Replaced the Director of the Electrical Engineering Department, Robert Bowie Owens. Held this position until his death. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1910: Professor and person responsible for the electrical laboratories of the École polytechnique de Montréal. – 1917: Succeeded Saluste Duval as Titular Professor of Electricity at the École Polytechnique de Montréal after having been his assistant. He held this position until 1923 when he was named Director of Studies at the École polytechnique.
Engineer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Participated in several hydro-electric projects. – 1911: Appointed chairman of the MESC. – Invented a ship-guidance system by electromagnetic waves which were effective in situations of zero visibility. Was used in English ports during the First World War. Tested for the first time on the St. Lawrence River, in 1904. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Participated in several hydro-electric projects. – 1926: appointed Chairman of the MESC. – During the Second World War, when he was Director of Radio-Canada, he set up in New-Brunswick a powerful shortwave transmitter that permitted communications between Canada and England. This later became Radio-Canada International.
Engineering Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1907: Sat on the Winnipeg Engineering Consultants Commission (Pointe-du-Bois Hydro-electric Complex). – 1916: Delegated to the International Electronic Commission held in London, he contributed to the definition of standards. – 1916: Parallel with his function as chairman of the MESC, he sat on the Tramways Commission as engineering consultant, then as one of the two vice-presidents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1910-1917: Engineering consultant at the Quebec Public Utilities Services Commission, which he represented at the Montreal Tramways Co. – 1911-1917: Participated in the construction of dams and hydro-electric plants with his associate Arthur Surveyer (Grand-Mère, Shawinigan, etc.). Corporate name : Surveyer & Frigon, Engineering Consultants. Expertise: appraisals, plans. Estimations, projects, technical and financial reports. – 1937: Canada's Chief Negotiator at the Havana Conference. Contrary to all expectations, he obtained exclusive radio frequencies for Canada, frequencies which had been in the hands of the United States of America.
Scientific career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1911: admitted to the Royal Society of Canada. The members of the Royal Society were named for life. – 1921: member of the Canadian National Research Council. Members are named for 4 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1924: the very year that Louis-Anthyme Herd finished his mandate at the Canadian National Research Council, Augustin Frigon replaced him on the "Associate Committee on Physics and Engineering Physics".
Honours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1923: The French Government awarded him the <i>Légion d'honneur</i> in acknowledgement of services rendered during the Great War. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1940: The <i>Julian C. Smith Medal, E. I. C.</i>, the first time it was granted, was awarded to him in recognition of his important contribution to the development of Canada. – 1946: Received the title of Companion of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint Georges (C.M.G.) from the hands of His Majesty Georges VI, during his visit to Canada.

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“When Augustin Frigon took over the management of the MESC, Commissioner Jacques de Gaspé Beaubien represented the City and R. S. Kelsch, the companies. George Earl Templeman held the position of Chief-engineer and Secretary. At the arrival of Augustin Frigon, the legal framework was well established and, under his chairmanship, the Commission polished up its procedures, particularly the Schedules, an indispensable management tool with regards to schedules”.

“During Augustin Frigon’s mandate, appeal procedures to the QPUC by the companies against the decisions of the MESC ended in withdrawals or in negotiated agreements. With time, the companies’ vindications seemed to diminish a bit. But without a doubt, Augustin Frigon’s qualities contributed greatly to the success of the enterprise: experienced administrator, visionary, sharp negotiator, an authority in electrical engineering; he assumed the chairmanship of the MESC until December 31, 1935. Then he left the Commission for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation that soon became *Radio Canada*, and became its Assistant-Director from 1936 to 1943, then Director from 1943 to 1951”.

Figure 5.2



Augustin Frigon vers 1923

Source. Archives of the École Polytechnique of Montréal.

Figure 5.3

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Augustin Frigon' followed by 'Chairman.' on a new line.

Signature d'Augustin Frigon.

Source. Minutes MESC, VM98 S1 SS1.

The next article will deal with the accomplishments of the Montreal Electrical Services Commission under the chairmanship of Augustin Frigon.



On the left, Ghislain (261), Denise Melançon, Monique Cossette, Normand (246). On the right, Aurèle (272), Nicole Noël, Claire Renaud-Frigon, Jacques (104).



From left to right, Claude Vaillancourt, Ivanhoë III (80), Jean-René (11) and Gilles Bergeron (auditor)

On August 31, 2013, there were 50 participants for supper at the Boissons du Roy at Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pérade.

ERROR in the 2013 SPRING-SUMMER V19N2 NEWSLETTER, P.87. In the GENEALOGICAL SKETCH, the name Garneau should have been Galarneau.