

Commemorating
the Tercentenary
of the Samson Family
in America



*An English translation of the work entitled *Échos du Tricentenaire des Familles Samson en Amérique* written by Marcel Samson and others following the 1967 celebration of the 300th anniversary of the arrival of Gabriel and Jacques Samson at New France in 1665. Translated by Claire Pelchat and edited by Tim Nolan, May, 2009. Cover art based on a photo by Kim Richards of a window in the church at St-Gatien-des-Bois in Lower Normandy, France.*

Message from the President

It is with great pride and joy that we present the souvenir album of the festivities which marked the 3rd centenary of the arrival of brothers Gabriel and Jacques Samson in Canada.

It is important to point out that this booklet exists only because of the generosity of a few benefactors, who fully recognized the true value of the work that went into the production of this publication.

We owe our most sincere thanks to two among us who spared neither time nor efforts in preparing this album: Reverend Father Roger Samson from St-Damien de Bellechasse and Mr. Marcel Samson from Lévis.

We are sure that each and every one of us will do his utmost to conserve this document precious in order to pass it down to future generations.

Fernand Samson,

President of the Organizing Committee

Presentation

On the occasion of the tercentenary of the arrival of brothers Gabriel and Jacques Samson to Canada in 1665, we present the Samson families with this booklet.

Firstly, it includes a résumé of the life of our first two Canadian ancestors:

Gabriel's history is mainly the work of Father Archange Godbout, of the Franciscan order, while Jacques' derives from J.-Edmond Roy's "History of the Lauzon Seigneurie", as well as from period writings and notaries.

After that, we give an account of the tercentenary celebration that took place on the 23rd of July, 1967, in Lauzon.

Finally, there are some notes about Saint-Gatien in Normandy, whence the Samsons of America originated, about our present relationship with France, and about our genealogy.

We hope that this work, prepared in homage to our ancestors, will serve the brotherly union of the Samson families.

Roger SAMSON, parish priest
Saint-Damien de Bellechasse

Marcel SAMSON
10, rue du Manoir, Lévis



Samson Families

• • • Canadian Tercentenary

SAMSON PRIESTS

Antoine Samson	<i>34, rue Belmont, Sherbrooke, P.Q.</i>
Gérard Samson	<i>Rector of La Durantaye, Bellechasse County, P.Q.</i>
Gilles Samson	<i>Rector of the Ste-Germaine-Cousin Parish 14205 Notre-Dame Street West, Montreal</i>
Henri Samson S.J.	<i>Psychotherapy Institute 1172 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal</i>
Henri Samson	<i>256 St-Luc Street, Québec City 8, P.Q.</i>
Jean-Marie Samson	<i>St-Ambroise Presbytery, 1215 Beaubien Street, Montreal</i>
Jules Samson, M.L.	<i>Tupi Poulisto, Sao Paulo Province, Brazil</i>
Leo Samson, c.f.s.	<i>Hotel Dieu Hospital, Roberval, P.Q.</i>
Paul-Papin Samson, o.p.	<i>St-Vincent-Ferrier House, St-Hyacinthe, P.Q.</i>
Roger Samson	<i>Chaplain, St-Damien Normal School, Bellechasse, P.Q.</i>
Réal Samson	<i>Rector, St-Martyr-Canadian Parish, Québec City, P.Q.</i>
André Samson	<i>St-Louis College, Edmunston, New Brunswick</i>
Pierre Samson	<i>Regional House, Philippines</i>
Gregory Sampson	<i>Storekeeper, Bathurst College, Bathurst, New Brunswick</i>

THE HISTORY OF GABRIEL SAMSON

1643-1698

IN FRANCE, THE COUNTRY OF HIS BIRTH

The Canadian documents that recorded the place of origin of Gabriel Samson and his younger brother Jacques show them coming from Saint-Gatien in the diocese of Lisieux, in Normandy. It is useless to look for this topographical piece of information in a modern French dictionary. St-Gatien is the present-day town of St-Gatien-des-Bois, in the township of Honfleur, and in the department of Calvados. Moreover, Saint Gratien or Saint Gatien are one in the same, as both names refer to one saint, the Bishop of Tours, whose feast day is celebrated on December 18th.

St-Gatien, a small parish with a population of less than 500 in the 17th century, was, without a doubt, the stronghold of the Samsons. When the two brothers emigrated, there were between 20 and 30 Samson families living there. To differentiate between them, official records usually indicated the name of the father after the name of the head of the family. Thus we find Guillaume, son of Geoffray (1644), Jean, son of Gatien (1644), Pierre, son of Jean (1644), Gabriel, son of Paul (1651). Others are characterized by nicknames: Gabriel, Sr des Coutures (1651); Olivier, Sr du Monarque (1653); Pierre, Sr de la Fosse (1658). The latter two are also referred to as 'citizens of Honfleur'.

In St-Gatien-des-Bois, on November 30, 1641, the marriage of Toussaint Samson and Catherine Le Chevalier, took place. These are Gabriel's and Jacques' parents.

Here is the birth certificate of Gabriel Samson, as found in the St-Gatien parish register: "A son for Toussaint Samson was baptized and named Gabriel Samson by Gabriel Samson, son of Paul, and Suzanne Peronne, wife of Paul Samson, Sr des Aulnes, on August 28, 1643".

The birth certificate and Gabriel's wedding contract indicate that his mother's name was Catherine Chevalier. We have found only one person in St-Gatien who went by this name: Catherine, daughter of Jehan LeChevalier the Younger and of Isabeau Hébert, named at baptism, on August 19, 1607, by Catherine, Jehan Hébert's wife.

Jacques Samson was born in 1647.

Toussaint Samson and his wife died in St-Gatien, in 1659 and 1662 respectively.

"Toussaint Samson was buried in the church, in the presence of the 'charitons', on May 16, 1649 [*sic*]".

"Catherine Le Chevalier, Toussaint Samson's widow, was buried in the church, in the presence of the 'charitons', on March 5, 1662".

The 'charitons' were members of a religious brotherhood, 'la Charité', dedicated to christian burials of the departed.

1665

Starting Out in New France

It is very likely that it was sometime in 1665 that Gabriel Samson and his brother Jacques landed in New France; Gabriel was 22 and his brother 18 years old. Two facts bring us to this conclusion: Gabriel is mentioned in the 1666 census, drawn up during the winter of 1665-6, and he began working independently in November of 1668, which is proof that he had completed the obligatory 36 months as a hired man.

Therefore, in 1665-1666, while Jacques Samson was doing his farming apprenticeship as a hired servant at Gervais Buisson's in Sillery, Gabriel did the same at François Becquet's in Côte de Lauzon. Becquet, originally from Notre-Dame du Pray in Pont-Audemer,

was, like Gabriel, a Norman. On April 16, 1660, he had bought land from Gabriel Lemieux in Lauzon and had quickly begun to farm it. It was there that Gabriel first began to work. His master was so pleased with Gabriel's work that he vowed to lease out his farm to him.



1668

Settlement

It behooves us to give a summary of the document drawn up on this occasion, as it was on this piece of land, in this house of François Becquet's, that our Gabriel settled, along with his young wife, and it is where his eldest son would be born.

It was on November 16, 1668, in the office of notary Romain Becquet, in Québec City, in the presence of Jean-Baptiste Cosset and Jean-Baptiste Gaudon, Sr de Bellefontaine, both called as witnesses, that Sr François Becquet, citizen of Québec City and domiciled there, declared that he had leased and given up a farm, for 4 consecutive years, starting on that day and ending on the same date in 1672, to Gabriel Samson, farmer, living in the Côte de Lauzon, consisting of a settlement located in the Côte de Lauzon, and including 3 acres' frontage, where there was a house, a barn, a stable and a shed, and with land that was partly arable and partly wooded. The receiving party promised, for his part, to deliver to the

leasing agent, on Saint-André's feast day of each year (November 30th), 13 bushels of hay, 30 bushels of peas (20 bushels of garden peas and 10 of green peas), and, at the end of the lease, to leave the side of the barn full of hay, in the same state as when the lease had begun. Also in the contract were a few details about cutting wood and maintaining the farm. Finally, Sr Becquet also leased a brown cow in return for 20 livres of butter yearly, as well as an ox and two young bulls, with the condition that Samson would bring 50 cords of wood out to the front of his house.

Being a shrewd man, Gabriel Samson wanted to use his capital as soon as possible. On November 11th, 5 days after the above-mentioned contract, before the same notary, he promised to transport all the corded wood from Gabriel Lemieux's home in Lauzon, to the landing of St-Cosme's, another farmer in the area. In return, Samson was granted a third of the wood that he transported.

1669

GABRIEL'S MARRIAGE

*The
29th of
November,
1669*



Birds work hard building their nests in preparation for the arrival of their young. Gabriel Samson had similar concerns when he contracted with François Becquet. Two little Breton girls from Tour du Châtel in Quimper, right in the center of Cornouaille, had arrived in Lauzon a few years earlier with their mother, who was then married to Théodore Sureau. In 1668, one, named Jeanne Durand, was 13 years old and the other, Françoise, 11. On the 21st of July of that year, their mother suddenly died. Their lovely headdresses undoubtedly attracted the attention of many a young Norman, because 3 months later, Louis Bégin, one of Gabriel's compatriots, since he came from Honfleur, married Jeanne, on October 15th. Gabriel Samson vowed to win Françoise's heart. On November 6th, he met François Becquet.

Winter, then spring and summer were spent in a frenzy of activity. Finally, on November 21, 1669, the big day dawned. Jeanne, over 12 years of age now, had become marriageable. Now, with nothing barring the union of the young Norman and the little Breton, notary Duquet was summoned from Québec City, at the request of the step-father, now married, since September, to Perrine Hutré; and so the two orphans: Gabriel Samson, son of the deceased Toussaint and Catherine Chevalier, and Françoise Durand, daughter of the late Martin and Françoise Brunet, were engaged. Françoise's older sister was there with her husband, Louis Bégin, and also the little sister from the second marriage, too young to be cited in the contract: Geneviève Sureau, 5 years old. The religious ceremony took place in Québec City a week later, the 29th of November.

On the next page we reproduce the marriage contract.

1669

MARRIAGE OF GABRIEL SAMSON and FRANCOISE DURAND

November 21, 1669 before Duquet N.P.

This translation of the marriage document is the work of Charles Samson, reproduced with permission, from the Samson website at www.samsonhistory.com.

Appearing before the royal notary in New France, Pierre Duquet, resident of Quebec, and undersigned witnesses, are Gabriel Samson, resident of Lauzon and son of the deceased Toussaint Samson and Catherine Chavallier, his father and mother from the parish of St. Gratian, diocese of Lissieux; and Francoise Durand, daughter of the deceased Martin Durand and Francoise Brunette, her father and mother from Quimper Corentin, diocese of Cornouaille. Also gathered in the presence of family and friends, on the part of Gabriel Samson, are Simon Rocheron, resident of Lauzon, Charles Courtois, resident of the same, and Jean Buquet; and on the part of Francoise Durand, are Theodore Sureau, her step-father, Perette Hutre, his wife, Louis Begin, her brother in law with Jeanne Durand, her sister, and Robert Chartier with Anne Bertrault, his wife. Of their own free will, they understand and have together confessed making treaties and promises of marriage; Gabriel Samson promises to take Francoise Durand as his wife and legitimate spouse, and Francoise Durand likewise promises to take him as her legitimate spouse. This marriage is sanctified by

our Holy Roman and Apostolic Catholic Church. Both parties are united in common property, though neither is responsible for debts made by the other before the marriage, following the custom in Paris. The rights of the wife on her husband's property are fixed in advance in the sum of three hundred livres, to be made in one payment. She retains those rights, which would otherwise expire upon her inheritance. As a dowry, Theodore Sureau, step-father of the bride promises to provide the sum of one hundred livres, with fifty livres on Christmas day, and another fifty livres on Christmas of the following year. All parties have agreed to this contract. Completed in Lauzon, in the house of Theodore Sureau on November 21, 1669, in the presence of the undersigned. Neither Theodore Sureau, Begin nor Robert Chartier are able to write or sign.

Jeanne Durand
Rocheron
Charles Courtois
Jean Buquet
Duquet, N.P.

THE FAMILY FLOURISHES

The next big event to brighten up the home of the Samson couple was the birth of Pierre, their eldest son, baptized on March 16, 1671.

The owner of the farm where Gabriel Samson lived had died in December of 1669. Moreover, the leasing conditions were a burden, and it seemed impossible to ever attain ownership. Therefore, Gabriel decided he would break the lease, but before doing so, true to his Norman character, he signed a new lease with Charles Bazire, a rich middle-class merchant from Québec City, on September 23, 1671.

Here are the clauses of the new lease:

Samson took out a 3-year lease, starting the following All Saints' Day, on land located in Lauzon, 3 acres by 40, with a house, barn, and stable, as well as two oxen estimated at 180 lbs., all of which he was to return in good or equivalent condition, at the expiration of the contract. He promised also to "make a woodlot for his family", and to deliver to the lessor, by the Feast of Assumption each year (August 15), 5 cords of wood which he would leave on the shore at the road of the said dwelling (Becquet's office).

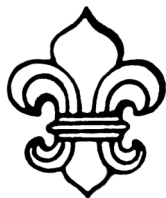
Assured that, from now on, his work would be for the benefit of his own family, our young man appeared at Notary Becquet's home two days later (September 25, 1671) and settled his accounts with François Becquet's estate, in this case with Becquet's uncle, François Bissot, Sr de la Rivière, to whom he owed 61 livres.

If Gabriel Samson had been hesitant up until then to settle for good in Canada, it may have been out of fear of being abandoned by his brother Jacques; but now Jacques was about to put down permanent roots in the country, too. "On November 26, 1671, by special permission, Father Morel performed three weddings at Lévis Point. The three contracts were registered in Québec City". These were the marriages of Jacques Samson to Marie-Anne Métru, with Gabriel Samson and Michel Buisson from Saint-Cosme serving as witnesses; of Laurant Poiré to Geneviève Leclerc, and of Gabriel Lemieux, widower of Marguerite Lebeuf, to Marie Beauregard. The three brides had arrived from France that same year.

We can recall that one of the articles of the lease between Charles Bazire and Gabriel Samson stipulated that the lessee had "to make a woodlot for his family". Without official documents, it is difficult to know for sure if this woodlot became the "ancestral property". Be that as it may, the 1681 census indicates that Gabriel owned 6 horned animals and 8 acres of farmed land. The land on one side belonged to his brother Jacques, and on the other, to Jean Guay.

At home, Gabriel and Françoise's family was growing: Pierre was 11, Perrine, 9, Jeanne, 6, Jean, 4, and Marguerite, 2. One baby brother died almost right after birth in 1674. Brother Jacques' household was also blessed with many children: Jean, 9 years old, Marie, 8, Ignace, 5, and Marguerite, 2. His farm was actually more prosperous than Gabriel's: he was farming 16 acres and owned 9 horned animals.

FAMILY OF GABRIEL SAMSON



Gabriel Samson, son of Toussaint and Catherine Chevalier, was born at Saint-Gatien-des-Bois in Normandy (now known as the department of Calvados) and was baptized on August 28, 1643.

Having arrived in Canada no later than 1665, he was married in Québec City on November 29, 1669 to Françoise Durand, 12 years old, from Tour du Châtel in Quimper, lower Brittany, the daughter of Martin and Françoise Brunet. After Gabriel Samson died, Françoise Durand married again, this time to Yvon Richard, the widower of Madeleine Doucet, this marriage taking place in Québec City on February 1, 1699.

ELEVEN CHILDREN WERE BORN OF THE SAMSON-DURAND UNION

1- Pierre, born in Lévis, was baptized on March 16, 1671. On November 24, 1695, in Québec City, he married Catherine Gauthier, and was buried in Lévis on the 29th of May, 1709, having drowned on the 15th of April of that year. He left only one child, a daughter.

2- Perrine, baptized on September 1, 1672, was married in Lévis on June 12, 1691 to Ignace Guay, the widower of Marguerite Rocheron. He was buried at Lévis on December 10, 1729, leaving 6 children.

3- Jean-François, baptized on March 4, 1674 and buried 6 days later.

4- Jeanne, baptized on September 4, 1675. She married François Grenet in Lévis on November 9, 1699. He died in 1717, and she in 1736.

5- Jean-Baptiste, baptized on October 6, 1677, married Charlotte Lecours on April 26, 1706, and was buried in Lévis on April 29, 1746. He had 12 children.

6- Marguerite, baptized in Lévis on December 16, 1679, had as godparents Louis Guay, Jean Guay's son, and Marguerite Amyot, Jean Joly's wife. She was still alive in 1681, but nothing further is known about her.

7- Gabriel, born around 1682, was married in Port-Royal, Acadia, on April 7, 1704, to Jeanne Martin, the daughter of Barnabé and Jeanne Pelletret. He had 11 children.

8- Marie-Anne, born about 1684, was married in Montreal, on January 4, 1706, to Pierre Bourbeau, son of Pierre and Anne Besnard, from Cap-de-la-Madeleine. She had two children and was no longer alive in 1713.

9- Louis was baptized in Québec City on April 30, 1686. We have no further knowledge of his life.

10- Ignace, born about 1688, was married in Québec City, on January 26, 1711, to Madeleine Hubert, daughter of François and Ursule Turbar.

11- Eustache, born about 1690, was married in Lévis on November 6, 1730, to Louise Lemieux, widow of Michel Lecours, daughter of Michel Lemieux and Marguerite Samson. He was buried in Lévis on December 5, 1759. He had 5 children.

By Archange GODBOUT, Ordre des Frères Mineurs

A GOOD NAME IS BETTER THAN...

Gabriel Samson, though a Norman, was a peace-loving man. However, in 1684, he felt it his duty to bring a libel suit against Jean Chauveau "dit" Lafleur, a neighbor who was attacking the moral standing of his wife and her family. This is a known fact. Joseph-Edmond Roy discusses it in his "History of the Seigniorship of Lauzon" (1, p.492), and Claude de Bonnault, an author with a penchant for gossip, even used Chauveau's slander to attack the virtue of our original forebears.

And so, in the summer of 1684, convinced that he was within his rights, Gabriel Samson presented administrative officer de Meulles with a request showing that Chauveau had been "spreading a rumor for a while that the wife of said Samson, her sister, and their mother were and had been people of loose morals, and other more shameful and sordid things in regard to the sister-in-law of said Samson". The administrative officer, invested with the "power to prevent and repress all that disturbs public order", complied with Samson's request on August 2nd, and sent Guillaume Roger, first Bailiff of the Sovereign Council, to summon both parties to present themselves before him the following Sunday. Mr. de Meulles' summons was received by both parties only on the Sunday itself, August 3rd. Chauveau dit Lafleur, apparently fearing the Magistrate's verdict, preferred to go to Notary Rageot and there to declare, before Sr Roger and Sr Pierre Biron, who were called as witnesses, "that he had no knowledge of what had been

alleged against him, - not surprising, since the poor man was sometimes drunk, - that if something inappropriate had been said about the above-named persons, he asked their pardon, recognizing them as 'honest and honorable people'. And the parties agreed that, if one of them were to say offensive words about the other, they would have to pay 10 livres to the other in amends. As to the costs of the request and the summons, amounting to 32 sols, Lafleur promised to pay them.

It is significant that, in his declaration before the notary, the slanderer did not only offer his excuses, but also expressly stated that the defamed people were "honest and honorable people". What secret motive had caused Chauveau to use such disobliging words concerning the women? The Chauveau family came from St-Pierre d'Oléron, near LaRochelle, whereas the Samsons were Normans. Well, back then, people from LaRochelle and people from Normandy were readily seen as opposite types, with the latter being judged far more worthy, it seems. And what about the 10 livres that were to be payable to either party if they were to utter slanderous words about the other? One might conclude that Samson had also been less than circumspect in his language.

Be that as it may, the incident was closed, to such an extent that, at the end of the year (1684), Gabriel Samson was the trustee to the estate of André Albert, Jean Chauveau's very brother-in-law.

THE HONEST MAN

It was also about this time that Samson wanted to pay off an old 150-livre debt that he had contracted with the Hospitalières nurses of Québec City. After his father-in-law, Theodore Sureau's, death in 1677, Sureau's land had been sold to his son-in-law, Thomas Gasse. Gasse, however, was indebted by 150 livres each to his

brothers-in-law, Louis Bégin and Gabriel Samson. It was this amount owing from Thomas Gasse that Samson turned over to the Sisters of Charity on September 25, 1684. Gasse promised to pay it out in installments of 25 livres a year, "the first payment to take place one year from now".

1688

PIERRE, GABRIEL'S ELDEST SON, BECOMES A TRAVELLER

Travel to "upper Canada"; Outaouais, Sault-Sainte-Marie, Illinois, etc., haunted the imaginations of the youth of those days, such trips satisfying not only their longing for adventure, but also their desire to seek out advantageous opportunities. Most travelers came from Montreal and Trois-Rivières. Lauzon also supplied its share: the mysterious tales of Guillaume Couture, the companion of the first Jesuit missionaries, had sparked the enthusiasm of Lauzon's young men. Several of them were confirmed trappers and many young people followed suit. Pierre, Gabriel's eldest, was among them.

We are aware of two of his expeditions to the Outaouais region. On May 14, 1688, only 17 years old at the time, he signed on with Guillin Dubord Sr de la Tourelle to make the Outaouais expedition, along with 5 other young men from Lauzon: the Couture brothers, Charles and Eustache; Jean Chauveau dit Lafleur; Jacques Guay,

and Gabriel Lemieux. The contract was drawn up in Montreal before Notary Antoine Adhémar.

Five years later, on September 4, 1693, he appeared before the same notary, contracting to make the same voyage, but this time on behalf of Jacques Lemoyne, Sr de Ste-Hélène.

Making a living by hunting and trapping was by no means the way to increase the French-Canadian population. Pierre Samson had only one child, a girl named Marie-Anne, who was only 4 years old when she lost her father in a drowning accident on the Québec City waterfront. Not long afterwards, her mother married again, this time to an Englishman, Edward Clement. Marie-Anne moved to Montreal, where she was hired as a servant, on July 1, 1723, in the home of Bertrand Trudeau, master blacksmith, and his wife, Marie-Anne Gervais. In 1730, she married a soldier from the Lemoyne company of Sevigny: Louis André dit Saint-Amand.

1704

HIS FOURTH SON, GABRIEL, ¹ SETTLES IN ACADIA

"The fourth son, Gabriel, moved to Port-Royal, where, on April 7, 1704, he married Jeanne Martin, the daughter of Barnabé Martin and Jeanne Pelletray. A few months after, he was taken prisoner with his wife and brought to Boston, where his eldest daughter, Madeleine, was born on January 9, 1705. They were imprisoned, it seems, for over a year, and were back to Port-Royal at the end of January, 1706. On January 27th of that year, they had Madeleine baptized, and the Port-Royal records indicate that she was born on January 9, 1705. She died at a very young age in 1713.

Here are the names of the other children of Gabriel Samson and Jeanne Martin:

MICHEL, born and baptized July 12, 1706. It is said that he has descendants in Petit DeGras and elsewhere on Cape Breton Island.

JEANNE and **LOUISE**, twins, born and baptized on July 1, 1708; they died the same month.

MATHIEU, born on July 13, 1709, and baptized the next day. His godparents were Sr Mathieu De Goutin, civil and criminal lieutenant for the province of Acadia, and his wife, Madame Bonaventure. In Port-Toulouse,

he married Claire Langlois, born March 13, 1710, daughter of François Langlois and Madeleine Comeau. According to Father G.M. Leblanc, the Samsons of l'Ardoise, Cape Breton Island, are descendants of this Mathieu.

Two twin daughters, buried January 12, 1712.

MADELEINE, born June 17, 1713. She married a Martel, according to Father Le Blanc.

MARIE-LOUISE, born July 10, 1715, and baptized October 6th of the same year. She married Jean Pâté, whose descendants are in Ardoise and Arichat.

CHARLES, born October 1, 1717, whose descendants are in Petit DeGras.

JEANNE, born October 22, 1719, and baptized on the 29th of the same month.

This is the last act of baptism of the children of Gabriel Samson and Jeanne Martin that can be found in the records of the St-Jean-Baptiste parish of Port-Royal. If Gabriel had any other children, they must have been born in Port-Toulouse (now known as St-Pierre on Cape Breton Island), where the family moved, along with François Langlois' family, after 1719".

(notes taken from appendix XXVIII, vol 111, Histoire de la Seigneurie de Lauzon)

¹ See corrections in Translator's Notes for this family.

1698

THE END OF AN EXISTENCE GABRIEL'S DEATH

During the last years of Gabriel Samson's life, few events of importance are worth mentioning other than the weddings of his two eldest children, Pierre and Perrine. Perrine, at 18, was the first one to leave home, in order to marry, on June 12, 1691, the neighbor's son, Ignace Guay, widower of marguerite Rocheron after a few years of marriage. By the time Pierre settled down, Perrine had already given Gabriel Samson two granddaughters, Marie-Françoise and Elisabeth. Pierre's wife was the

daughter of Jean Gauthier dit Larouche, who was a worker in the edge-tool trade, originally from Saintonge and living in Québec city. He has an extensive lineage.

We know neither when nor how Gabriel Samson died: it must have been sometime in 1698, shortly before the death of his brother Jacques, who was buried in Lévis on May 4, 1699.

1699

THE WIDOW HER SECOND MARRIAGE

His widow, Françoise Durand, born in 1657, was in her early forties. On February 1, 1699, she was married for a second time in Québec City, to Yvon Richard, originally from l'île d'Yeu in France, but living in l'Île Percé since 1680. There he had married - but his wife had since died, without having borne any children - Madeleine Doucet, the widow of a Pierre Aigron dit LaMothe, a man who had more than once had conflicts with the Canadian civil and religious authorities.

The marriage contract received by Notary Roger on January 19, 1699, was drawn up in the house of Claude Philippeau, master tailor and merchant, living on the rue du Sault au Matelot. He was an old friend of the Samsons, who married Jacques' widow, Marie-Anne Métru. From Pierre Samson's family, only the eldest son was present. The future wife was to have the customary dowry or 300 livres, and, in the event that one of the spouses were to die, the survivor would benefit from a 150-livres preciput.

A lawsuit that Yvon Richard had to sustain in 1705 on behalf of his wife, tells us that he was, at that time, "a resident of Mont-à-Peine in the seigniorship of Vincennes". Françoise Durant had contracted a debt of

462 livres and 6 deniers towards Maguerite Amyot, the widow of Jean Joly, a Québec City baker. Pierre Normandin, a merchant in the same city, having become the owner of this credit, obtained judgment by the Provostship against the debtor on July 31, 1705. Richard, in his wife's name, appealed the decision to the Sovereign Council. A judgment reached by this court on March 29, 1706, reduced the debt to 352 livres, 12 sols, and 7 deniers, "crediting the wife of the before-mentioned Richard with the sum of 90 livres for a year and a half of laundering".

From this last detail we see that, being the brave Breton that she was, Françoise Durand knew how to assume her family responsibilities. Their time in Mont-à-Peine must not have been long, because, when Ignace Samson contracted to get married on January 25, 1711, Yvon Richard, Ignace's step-father, was living in Québec City. Yvon Richard contracted for his step-son, given that "Françoise Durand, being sick in bed, could not attend the drawing-up of the contract". Still relatively young, not yet having reached age 54, she ended her hard-working and meritorious existence. Two years later, on December 5, 1713, the passing-bells announced that the first grandmother of a bountiful progeny had gone to her final rest in heaven.

1665

THE HISTORY OF JACQUES SAMSON

1647-1699

He arrived in New France sometime in 1665, at the age of 18, along with his older brother, Gabriel. In 1665-1666, he did his farming apprenticeship as a hired servant at Gervais Buisson's home in Sillery, Québec.

1669

His contract as a hired man having ended after thirty-six months, he settled in Lauzon, next to his brother Gabriel, who got married on November 29, 1669.

1670

In 1670, Jacques entered into three agreements which allowed him to better settle down in Lauzon.

In the spring, he made a deal with Louis Lefebvre from Québec City to supply him with all the fish that he could catch that summer from the river in front of his land, including eel, salmon, sturgeon, sea bass, and shad, in exchange for a sum of money.

A few months later, Jacques became the owner of a house and land, purchased from Etienne Landeron of Québec City. We have this sales contract, dated August 25, 1670:

"Jacques Samson, living on the côte de Lauzon, acquires a residence from Etienne Landeron, located on the Côte de Lauzon, including land of three acres wide by forty deep, bordered on one side by Nicolas Droissy, and on

the other side by Michel du Buisson, dit St Cosme, and bordered on one end by the great St Lawrence River, and on the other end the extent of the afore-mentioned land grant".

The selling price was set at three hundred livres, payable in one hundred cords of hardwood, to be delivered in three installments, namely, forty on the following St. Jean the Baptist holiday, forty on the same holiday in 1672, and the last twenty in 1673.

That same day, Jacques contracted a debt with the same Etienne Landeron, before Notary Becquet:

"Jacques acknowledges a debt to Sr Estienne Landron, resident of Québec City, in the amount of 750 livres for the sale and delivery of all the grain that is presently hanging by its root at the residence of the before-mentioned Sr Landron, and for money lent and other things..."

To reimburse this sum of 750 livres, Jacques promised to furnish him good hardwood, delivered to the front of the said residence, with the following conditions: in 1673, on the St. Jean the Baptist holiday, twenty cords, and, from 1674 to 1680, each year, forty cords, adding up to a total of three hundred cords. A cord was estimated to be worth fifty sols then.

HIS MARRIAGE

November 26, 1671

It was Jacques' turn to set down roots in the country by marrying. At that time there was no church in Lauzon, so residents were part of the Québec City parish. For this reason, on November 26, 1671, Father Thomas Morel, the priest from the Seminary, was granted special

permission to perform three marriages at the Lévy Point, of which one was the union of Jacques Samson and Marie-Anne Métru, who had arrived that very year from France. She was the daughter of Claude Métru, an agent for Monseignor the Archbishop of Paris, and Jeanne Crisset, from the Sainte-Marine parish in Paris.

The Family of Jacques Samson

Jacques Samson, son of Toussaint and Catherine Chevalier, was born in Saint-Gatien-des-bois in Normandy (now Calvados) in 1647. He arrived in Canada in 1665 with his brother Gabriel. On November 26, 1671, in Lauzon, he married a Parisian, Marie-Anne Métru. He died in Lauzon on May 4, 1699.

Eighteen children were born of the Samson-Métru union:

- 1- Jacques, born in 1672
- 2- Marie-Suzanne, born in 1674, married to Louis Guay in 1692.
- 3- Ignace, born in 1676, married in 1700 to Charlotte Lemieux and in 1711 to Madeleine Hubert.
- 4- André, born and died in March, 1678.
- 5- Charles-Louis, born in 1679.
- 6- Jeanne, born in 1681 and married to Jean Carrier.
- 7- Marie-Françoise, born in 1682 and married to Louis Galoudet.
- 8- Marguerite, born in 1684, and married in 1700 to Michel Lemieux.
- 9- Étienne, born in ?, married in 1718 to Angélique Guay.
- 10- Geneviève, born in 1685.
- 11- Charles-François, born in 1687.
- 12- Jacques-Charles, born in 1690.
- 13- Jean, born and died in 1691.
- 14- Joseph, born and died in 1692.
- 15- Geneviève, born in 1693, married in 1707 to Jean Gely.
- 16- Jean-Baptiste, born in 1695, married in 1719 to Elizabeth Lecours.
- 17- Joseph, born in 1697, married in 1722 to Catherine Guay.
- 18- Louis, born in 1698, married in 1731 to Catherine Bourassa.



THE FIRST TEN YEARS OF MARRIAGE

1671 – 1681

Jacques' house was located on Lévy Point across from the present-day church of Bienville.

With the help of the Québec Archives, we know the first children born of this marriage: Jean in 1672, Marie-Suzanne in 1674, Ignace in 1676, André in 1678 (he lived only eleven days), Charles-Louis in 1679, and Jeanne towards the end of 1681.

1681 CENSUS

In 1681, authorities drew up the last inventory of names that we have of the inhabitants of the colony under French rule. This count shows us the names of 292 inhabitants of the côte de Lauzon, from the 49 families registered. In the census-takers' notebooks, we find a listing of the families of Jacques and Gabriel Samson, one after the other. Here is the enumeration of Jacques Samson's household, with each person's name followed by their age in parentheses:

Jacques Samson (34), Marie Métru, his wife (25) Children: Jean (9), Marie (8), Ignace (5), Marguerite (2), Olive, servant (17), Jean, servant (24).

The family owns a gun, 9 horned animals, and 16 acres of productive land. On one side of Jacques' land is his brother Gabriel's land, and on the other is the land of Jean Guay.

OTHER CHILDREN

Over the years, Jacques' family continued to grow. In fact, he and his wife had 18 children, and 9 of them got married. His sons Ignace, Etienne, Eustache, Joseph, and Louis, settled on Point Lévy and had so many offspring that nicknames had to be used in order to distinguish the different branches of Samsons. That is why we see references to the Samson-Baboises, the Samson-Saillants, the Samson-Récollets, and the Samson-Majors. It is not easy to figure out how these nicknames came about



1690

PHIPPS ATTACKS QUÉBEC CITY

The peace and quiet of Québec City was disrupted by Phipps' attack, from the 16th to the 22nd of October, 1690.

In October 1690, Frontenac being the governor in Québec City, the English of Boston attacked Québec City by sea. They had an armed fleet of 35 vessels, with a force of more than 2000 men on board, commanded by William Phipps. "The History of the Seignior of Lauzon" by J.-Edmond Roy tells us: "After an unsuccessful attempt against Beauport, Phipps

wanted to have a company disembark at the côte de Lauzon, but the Canadians who were waiting there in ambush forced them to return aboard ship, without them having caused even 10 crowns of damage."

Several drawings exist showing Phipps' attack. One of these, drawn by Sieur de Villeneuve, the king's engineer, shows a part of the Point Lévy shoreline, from the present-day Church of Saint-Joseph to right across from Québec City. On the shore, opposite Bienville, the houses of Jacques Samson and Louis Bégin are indicated



1690

THE ARRIVAL OF THE FIRST PRIEST

It was during this same year, 1690, that Father Philippe Boucher, the son of the famous Pierre Boucher, became the first permanent priest of the parish of Saint-Joseph de Lauzon. Previous to this, missionary priests had served the southern shore. The young priest's first undertaking was to get church pews made in order to ensure that the vestry would have an annual income.

This pastor was careful to keep a record of the names of the parishioners who were gathering in his primitive house of worship at that time. This is how we know that Jacques Samson and his wife sat in the sixth pew on the right-hand side of the altar. On May 14, 1690, on the feast of Pentecost, Jacques became the occupant of this pew at an auction. He was to keep it until the day of his death.

1692

FIRST MARRIAGE IN JACQUES' FAMILY

The archives tell us that on January 10, 1692, the marriage of Louis Guay and Suzanne Samson took place. Suzanne, then 18 years of age, was Jacques' eldest daughter. Her husband, Louis Guay, was 31 years old and the widower of Marie-Anne Bégin. He was the son of Jean Guay, their neighbor. A year later, on January 11, 1693, a child was born to this couple and was baptized Louis. Jacques Samson was now a young, 46-year old grandfather. On the next day, Jacques himself baptized his own twelfth child, Geneviève.

1693

THE LAND TENANT

In 1693, we find the list of land tenants making payments to Mr. Martinière, a farmer and the administrator of the Seigniori for the estate of Lauzon of France. The list shows that Jacques made his annual payment on St-Martin's day, November 11th.

1699

HIS DEATH

The summary of the records of Point Lévy's St-Joseph Parish for the year 1699 show that on May 4th, the burial of Jacques Samson took place. The day before, May 3rd, his 14-year-old son, François, was buried. What might have happened? Could it have been a sickness or an accident that would have caused a father and child to die at the same time?

Jacques was 51 years old. His brother Gabriel had died the previous year.

Thus, the two brothers who had arrived in the country at a young age, remained inseparable. They settled side by side in Lauzon, and many of their descendants remained in the region and acknowledge each other as part of the same large family. They still retain the name, the unity, and the faith of their ancestors.

AND LIFE GOES ON IN THE HOME OF
MRS. JACQUES SAMSON
Inventory of her Property

Jacques Samson's wife became a widow with 12 children still at home. An interesting document from the papers of Notary Nicolas Métru shows us the property left by Jacques at his death.

The inventory was taken on June 18, 1700, by Notary Métru, in the Seigniory of Lauzon, at the request of Mrs. Métru, widow of the deceased Jacques Samson, mother and guardian of the deceased's minor children, and with the consent and in the presence of Louis Guay, guardian of the minor children.

Here is a summary of this inventory:
Furniture: pots, pan, bucket, candlesticks, clothes iron, funnel, green jug, a gun, three axes, a hammer, a vat, an old table with a drawer, grill, two feather beds, blankets, pillows, two pine wooden chests; Animals: two oxen, three cows, a shed with a plow, wheels, sledges, axes, hoes, lamps, scythes. The residence, and the land measuring 2 1/2 acres by 40 acres deep.

Each inventoried item is appraised in livres, sols and deniers.

Here is a reproduction of this interesting document:

Inventory taken by myself, Nicolas Métru, in the Seigniory of Lauzon on June 18, 1700, at the request of Mrs. Métru, widow of the deceased Jacques Samson, mother and guardian of the deceased's minor children and with the consent and in the presence of Louis Guet, their surrogate guardian. In law and by act rendered on this day by Judge Sénéchal of this Seigniory , and with Louis Gué, Louis Bégin, Ignace Carrier, and Estienne Rocheron to estimate the movable and immovable goods and property and land, by their souls and conscience in presence of whom, they attended to and proceeded with the above-mentioned inventory in order to preserve the rights of the above-mentioned minors to whom the following will belong: -

FIRSTLY

	L. S. D.
A worthless oak used as a pot rack	
estimated at fifteen sols	0 15 0
A fireplace shovel estimated	
at forty sols	2 0 0
Item: - two iron pots with lids,	
as is, estimated at eight livres, ten sols	8 10 0
Item: - a patched-up saucepan, an old yellow copper	
frying pan also patched up, estimated at two	
livres, ten sols	2 10 0
Item: - An old patched-up yellow copper bucket	
estimated at four livres	4 0 0
Item: - Two clothes irons	
estimated at four livres	4 0 0
Item: - Two yellow copper candlesticks estimated at	
three livres, ten sols	3 10 0
Item: - Twenty-three livres of pewter at twenty sols per	
livre	23 0 0
Item: - A small tin funnel	
estimated at ten sols	0 10 0
Item: - Five thick-glassed bottles, specifically three	
quart-sized and the other two pint-sized,	
estimated at three livres five sols	3 5 0
Item: - A small green jug estimated	
at ten sols	0 10 0
Item: - Fourteen	
estimated at seven livres	7 0 0
Item: - A small pair of yellow copper scales with their	
beam and with weights of ten livres,	
estimated at a hundred sols	5 0 0
Item: - A gun estimated at ten livres with a rifle,	
together estimated at fourteen livres	14 0 0
Item: - three axes estimated at ten livres	10 0 0
Item: - A big auger estimated	
at forty sols	2 0 0
Item: - A plane and some old grappling irons estimated	
at fifty sols	2 10 0
Item: - two old copper buckets having been used only	
for scrap iron, estimated at eight livres	8 0 0

Item: - A hammer estimated at twenty
Sols 1 0 0
Item: - two vats and two small vats, as is, estimated at
ten livres 10 0 0
Item: - An old table with a drawer, estimated at forty
sols 2 0 0
Item: - A pair of brushes estimated at ten
Sols 0 10 0
Item: - An old grill estimated at thirty Sols 1 10 0
Item: - A feather bed and its bolster, estimated at fifteen
livres 15 0 0
Item: - Another feather bed and its bolster, estimated at
thirty livres 30 0 0
Item: - Six blankets estimated at thirty
Livres 30 0 0
Item: - three flimsy blankets estimated at six
livres 6 0 0
Item: - eight half-worn sheets estimated at
twelve francs 12 0 0
Item: - four as-is tablecloths and a dozen and a half
napkins estimated at twenty-four Livres 24 0 0
Item: - Five feather pillows estimated at six livres five
sols 6 0 0
Item: - two lockable pine wood chests estimated at nine
livres 9 0 0
Item: - another chest estimated at forty Sols 2 0 0
Item: - Eight pulleys estimated at eight
Livres 8 0 0

AN INVENTORY OF THE ANIMALS, AS FOLLOWS

Item: - two oxen estimated at one hundred and eighty
livres 180 0 0
Item: - three cows estimated at one hundred and twenty
livres 120 0 0
Item: - twenty cords of wood at three per
Cord 60 0 0
Item: - three oxen straps estimated at three
Livres 3 0 0
Item: - a yellow copper strainer 0 10 0
Item: - a pair of wheels with three tires, estimated at ten
livres 10 0 0
Item: - a verd ? estimated at six
Livres 6 0 0
Item: - A plow, as is, estimated at sixteen
Livres 16 0 0
Item: - An oak from a sledge estimated at three
livres 3 0 0
Item: - three scythes and two rings, estimated
at three livres 3 0 0

Item: - two old sledges with their harnesses
estimated at four livres 4 0 0
Item: - An as-is gun estimated at three
Livres 3 0 0
Item: - four axes estimated at ten
Livres 10 0 0
Item: - three hoes and a flimsy slater's hammer,
estimated at six livres 6 0 0
Item: - an old trivet and a wedge for splitting wood,
estimated at two livres 2 0 0
Item: - a flimsy yellow copper bucket estimated at fifty
sols 2 10 0
Item: - two old lamps estimated at fifteen
Sols 0 15 0
Item: - a half-bushel basket estimated at ten
Sols 0 10 0
Item: - a shed estimated at one hundred and fifty
Livres 150 0 0
Item: - a cabin estimated at twenty
Francs 20 0 0
Item: - the land and house consisting of approximately
two acres and a half wide by forty acres deep estimated
at the rate of two and a half acres of land, totaling four
hundred livres 400 0 0
These movable goods specified in the above inventory
have been left to the afore-mentioned widow, mother,
and guardian of the afore-mentioned minor children,
and she took the responsibility in the presence of the
afore-mentioned Estienne Rocheron and Ignace Carié,
and the afore-mentioned widow has signed with us, the
Notary, on the day and year mentioned

Anne METRU
Estienne ROCHERON
METRU

Paraphé ne varietur
Verrier P. Gen. DuLurent, Clerk of the Court



A LEASE WITH HER ELDEST SON, IGNACE

1700

On the same day, June 18, 1700, Mrs. Jacques Samson entered into a leasing agreement with her eldest son, Ignace, then 24 years old.

She leased to him the land and house of his deceased father so that he could live there and put it to work as best as possible, as a good father and family man, for nine years starting on the next All Saints' Day.

She also leased to him two oxen, three cows, four small pigs, an equipped plow, a pot, a pan, a gun, etc.; in short, everything he would need to run a house.

In return, Ignace promised to supply his mother with butter, two pigs per year, and ten cords of wood, to help her pay her debts, and to take into his care his younger brothers Charles, 13 years old, Jacques, 10, and Joseph, 3, whom he would put to work, according to their ability, for the stipulated 9-year period.

This agreement was signed by Anne Métru, Ignace Samson, Notary Métru, and the parish priest, Father Philippe Boucher.

MARRIAGE OF IGNACE SAMSON (Jacques' son)

1700

Three weeks later, on July 5th, 1700, Ignace married Charlotte Lemieux, Gabriel Lemieux's daughter. The second generation of Samsons started on the same land and in the same home as Jacques Samson's family had.

But in 1709, Widow Samson sold the land to her son-in-law, Jean Carrier, married to her daughter Jeanne.

MRS. JACQUES SAMSON IN QUÉBEC CITY

SECOND INVENTORY

1710

At that time, Mrs. Jacques Samson had been living with her other children in Québec City on Saint-Pierre Street for about 10 years. She continued to live there another ten years. She had a rather good life for the period, judging by the inventory of her property taken in 1710 by Notary Dubreuil.

He included in the inventory all the contents of the kitchen, basement, attic, and yard. Another interesting detail: "in money, three hundred livres in card money

in circulation here". Moreover, she was owed a total of two hundred thirty-five livres by various people. She, herself, had no debts.

HER SECOND MARRIAGE

1710

This inventory was certainly taken in view of her second marriage, as we can see that Mrs. Samson, then 54 years of age, was married in Québec City in 1710 to Claude Philippaux, a master tailor having a shop on Sault au Matelot Street.

DEATH OF HER SECOND HUSBAND AND TRIP TO FRANCE

1713

From Notary Louis Chamballon's notes, we extracted the following information:

"On October 26, 1713, in acknowledgement of an obligation by Marie-Anne Métru, widow of Jacques Samson and of Claude Philippaux, of Québec City, to Marie-Madeleine Dion, widow of Gervais Rocheron, of Ste-Famille, an I.O.U. of 100 gold crowns, for the value of which the afore-mentioned Métru promises to bring back merchandise from France next year".

"On October 30, 1713, a transaction between Marie-Anne Métru, widowed first by Jacques Samson, and secondly by Claude Philippaux, of Québec City, and Louis Philippaux, Montreal merchant and her step-son, to the effect of recognizing the rights of the afore-mentioned Métru to the estate of Claude Philippaux, her deceased husband".

MRS. JACQUES SAMSON'S DEATH

1731

We conclude this incomplete story by mentioning that Anne Métru, mother of the children of Jacques Samson, died in 1731 and was buried in Lauzon on March 27, 1731.



THE TERCENTENARY CELEBRATION

Preparation :

Below is a copy of the first official communication sent on May 1, 1967, to the Samson families. It gives information about the committee's formation and its work.

"Dear cousin,

Last February, a group of Samsons from Lévis-Lauzon laid the foundation of an organization which would stir up memories of 300 years of our family history, and set up a committee with the goal of celebrating the tercentenary of the arrival of our ancestors, brothers Gabriel and Jacques Samson, in America.

These two sons of Toussaint Samson and Catherine Chevalier of St-Gatien-des-Bois of Normandy came to settle at Levy Point (Lauzon), opposite Québec City.

From the original name of "Samson" used by our ancestors, Samson, Sanson, and Sampson are names that have evolved down through the ages. Our good pastors have referred to the biblical Samson, to give us the pejorative meaning of Samson.

To mark this event, which will of course take place in Lauzon, the cradle of the Samson families, it has been decided that the celebration will take place on Sunday, July 23.

The people in charge of this family reunion are: Mr. Fernand Samson, president, Mr. Robert Samson, vice president, Gilbert and Marcel Samson, secretary and treasurer, respectively, all from Lauzon; Marcel Samson of Lévis, archivist and genealogist, Paul-Émile Samson, architect, and Father Roger Samson.

From its very beginning, the committee has met weekly, and has drawn up the following program for the day: a mass celebrated at the St-Antoine de Bienville Church, followed by the unveiling of a monument on the grounds of the rectory, both of these places being located on the land of our ancestors; this is to be followed by a banquet at the Old Fort in Lauzon. Finally, there will a social time to allow one and all to fraternize and get acquainted.

We are sure that this celebration will be a true success, thanks to everyone's eager collaboration.

Today, for the first time, we are asking for your collaboration, with the goal of compiling as complete as possible a list of our family's members, by filling out the attached questionnaire as soon as possible, and sending it to our secretary. Returning this questionnaire, even if you are unable to attend the reunion, will be important for the compilation of our family genealogy.

In order to allow everyone to attend, we have decided that a contribution of \$5.00 per family will be sufficient to help cover the cost of a monument and all other expenses.

Sincerely,
Gibert Samson, Secretary



THE DAY OF THE TERCENTENARY

JULY 23, 1967



That Sunday was a big day for the Samson families of America who gathered in Lauzon, on the southern shore of the St-Lawrence River, opposite Québec City.

Starting at ten in the morning, a stream of participants began to arrive at the Sisters of Charity of St. Louis convent in Bienville, where registration took place.

At noon, a mass was held in the St-Antoine de Bienville Church, concelebrated by Fathers Henri, Jules, Réal, and Roger Samson. Father Gérard Samson of la Durantaye, was part of the choir. Father Roger gave a sermon in which he drew a parallel between the tercentenary gathering and God's plan, in which all will be united in his Kingdom. He reminded us that, on the same morning, in St-Gatien-des-Bois in Normandy, Father André Main celebrated his parish mass for the intention of the Samson families of Canada and Normandy. It was through Faith that the Canadian and Norman branches of the Samson families came together.

When the religious ceremony was over, Mr. Fernand Samson, president of the organizing committee, unveiled a monument on the rectory grounds. The Québec flag was removed from a large block of granite which bore, on its front, a bronze plaque with the following inscription:

"In homage to the ancestors of the Samson families, brothers Jacques and Gabriel, sons of Toussaint Samson and Catherine Chevalier of St-Gatien-des-Bois in Normandy, who came to settle on this land, three hundred years ago".

Several dignitaries participated in this ceremony. In his speech, Mr. Fernand Samson eloquently emphasized the faithfulness of the Samsons to their French origins and mentioned that current-day France, through its President, General Charles de Gaulle, who had just arrived in Québec a few hours earlier, acknowledged this three-century-long faithfulness. Canon Jean-Paul Lachance, priest of the Bienville parish, then spoke, saying that, as the pastor of the parish where the first Canadian Samsons settled, he congratulated all for being good citizens and good Christians, and for having the family spirit. To conclude, a telegram from the Prime Minister of Québec, Honorable Daniel Johnson, was read: "Cordial greetings go out to all the members of the Samson families who have gathered together today to celebrate the tercentenary of the arrival of your ancestors on Québec soil".

During the garden dinner party that followed at the Old Fort of Lauzon, a wave of fraternity and friendship came over all the guests. Samsons from all over were present: from Québec, Ontario, Alberta, New Brunswick, Michigan, New Hampshire. It was then that Marcel Samson, our genealogist, told us that at that time 2,000 Samson families, all descendants of the ancestors who came over from St-Gatien, were living in North America. Two messages had been sent from the priest and the mayor of St-Gatien, the contents of which can be found on the following pages.

Divine providence having granted wonderful weather, the day will remain forever etched in the hearts of all the Samsons who departed in the hopes of meeting again.

MESSAGE FROM THE SAINT-GATIEN-DES-BOIS PRIEST

Dated July 12, 1967 and sent to

Father Roger Samson

"I remember very well your visit during the summer of 1962, when you had told me that your ancestor Jacques Samson, along with his brother Gabriel, had left St. Gatien in 1665, headed for the New World. At that time you had told me of your intention to celebrate the tercentenary of their arrival in Canada, and I am happy to see that in a few days you are going to celebrate this anniversary by bringing the Samsons of Canada together.

I thank you and the entire organizing committee heartily for having been kind enough to invite me and our Honorable Mayor to be involved in your ceremony of Sunday, July 23rd, and for having named us honorary patrons of the day. It is an honor and a gesture of friendship for which, personally, I am very grateful. Unfortunately, it is impossible for either one of us to travel to Bienville and Fort Lauzon in order to be with you.

But I have found a way of uniting us all in prayer on that day. On Sunday, July 23, in Saint-Gatien, the 11 o'clock parish mass will be celebrated for the intention of all the Samsons of Canada, alive or deceased, and likewise for the intention of the Norman branch of their family, because the names Samson and Bégin are to be found in our region; at any event, Jacques and Gabriel Samson had either sisters or brothers or at least some cousins who certainly left descendants in this corner of the Pays d'Auge. Thus our hearts and our souls will be joined in Christ by renewing his Sacrifice and our friendship will be strengthened and deepened...

I cannot end this letter without evoking the memory of the Canadian regiments who sacrificed themselves in 1944 to liberate Normandy. As a prisoner of war in Bavaria, I met some of them, and our acquaintance was renewed through vivid conversations that I will certainly recount to you some day.

And now for my final word: if, at some future date a group of Samsons makes a pilgrimage to the land of their forefathers, rest assured that the town and the parish of Saint-Gatien will extend to you the warm welcome of your Norman cousins. On our behalf, tell this to all the Samsons gathered on July 23rd.

I would like to once again express to you my faithful friendship, and I ask you to send along, particularly to the priests of your family, my brotherly remembrance in Jesus Christ."

Father André MAIN

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR OF SAINT-GATIEN-DES-BOIS

Dated July 6, 1967 and sent to Father
Roger Samson

"I want you to know that I was very interested by your letter telling of the origins of your family in Saint-Gatien. Father Main, our parish priest, had in fact informed me of your 1962 visit, and so I was already aware that some Samsons had left St-Gatien for Canada in the 17th century. We have archives from that era, but at the moment, they are at the department's head office in Caen for photocopying; but rest assured that, as soon as they are returned to us, we will be sure to examine them to find, we hope, mention of the Samson family.

I offer you deep thanks for your invitation to participate in your lovely family celebration. Believe me, I was very tempted, but, alas, Canada is a bit too far!... I sincerely wish you great joy during this gathering of so many descendants of the same ancestor.

I shared your letter with the municipal council, who were all very interested, and who also send along their best wishes. I also am pleased to be sending you a copy of the "Paris-Normandie" newspaper, which contains a very well-written article which is likely to be of interest to you.

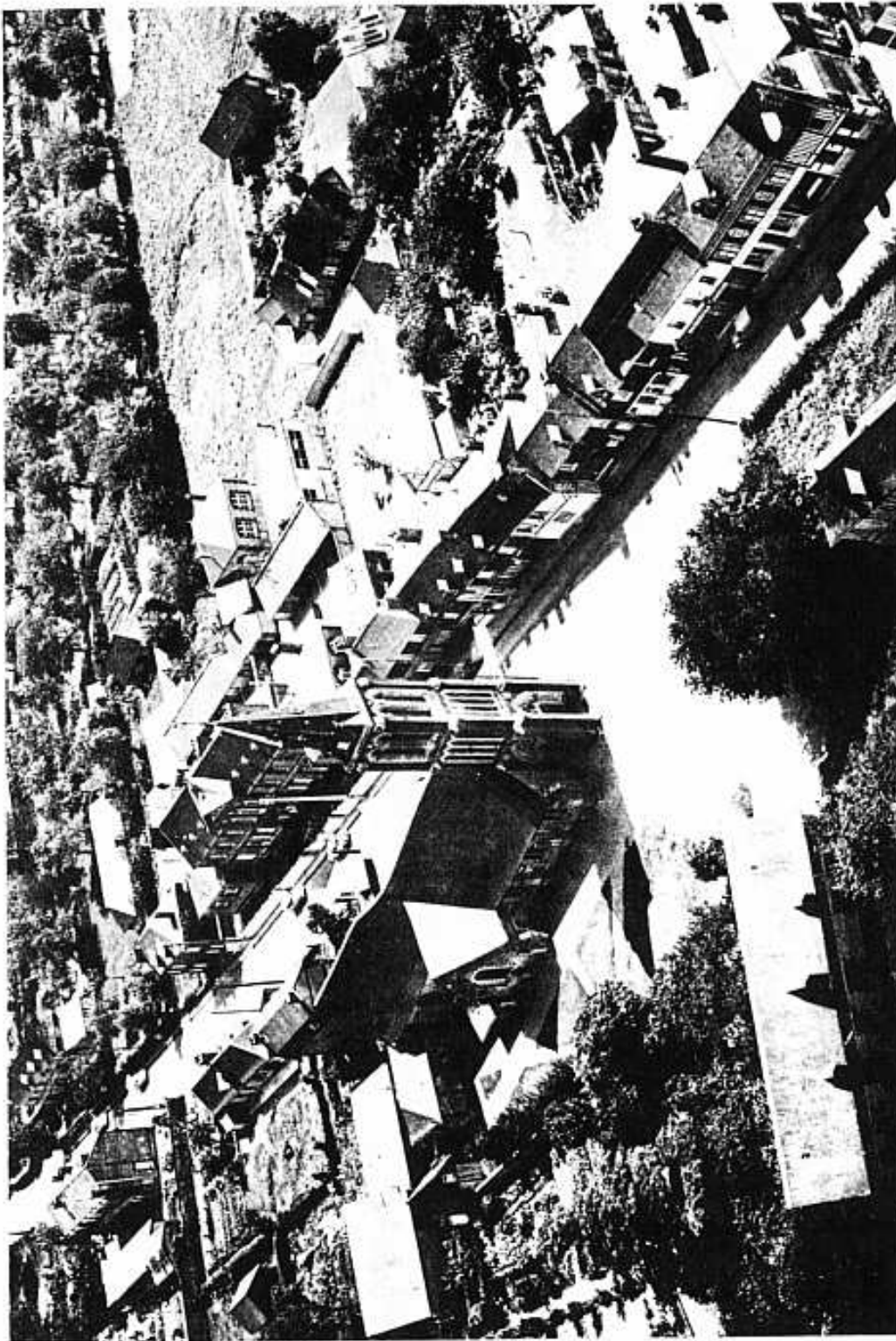
My family, too, has a long history in St-Gatien, and I was born there and have been the mayor of the town for 22 years now, having succeeded one of my uncles, Mr. Charles Yger.

Most respectfully yours,

R. RUFIN



AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF A PART OF THE TOWN OF ST-GATIEN-DES-BOIS



PTOTOGRAPHIE AERIENNE D'UNE PARTIE DU BOURG DE ST-GATIEN-DES-BOIS

SAINT-GATIEN-DES-BOIS...

TODAY

I will cite Mayor P. Rufin, who writes: "St. Gatien is the largest town in the department, with its 5,000 hectares, of which 3,000 are forested, and with a population of 850.

The future of St-Gatien is mainly in tourism. With city dwellers more and more in search of peace of mind, our wooded areas are the solution.

We are presently undertaking community upgrading; laying down water pipes, creating a 30-home development, all with municipal sewerage. All these enhancements will, hopefully, make St-Gatien all the more attractive.

We also have the Deauville Airport in our region. The construction of thatched cottages in the Normand style, already begun, and the creation of an equestrian center will give our community a new look.

I include with this letter an aerial photo of part of the village of St-Gatien that my assistant, Mr. Mancel, a pilot at the airport, was happy to give me to pass on to you" . . .

In July 1962, I paid a visit to the parish priest, Father Andre Main. As a result of this meeting, I am able to tell you a few things about the parish church that we visited together.

The top of the red brick steeple dates to the end of the 19th century. That is the modern part; it is set against the façade, and at its base are three doors framed in stone in the gothic style.

The church itself is low, the roof pointed, the walls are of thick stone and supported by buttresses, the windows are in close pairs. This church still has the original foundation and foundation walls despite any later additions. So this is the church where our French ancestors were baptized: Gabriel in 1643 and Jacques in 1647.

Let's proceed now to the interior of the church. With emotion and faith I knelt before the tabernacle where Christ's presence has been felt through so many generations. The flagstone floor is the same one on which the Samsons once prayed.

Next, Father told me that the open space in front of the church had been the site of the old cemetery, the one from the time of our ancestors. When they created the new cemetery, the old one became a sacred spot upon which construction was forbidden. So, buried in this old cemetery, actually beneath the area in front of the church, are the parents of our ancestors, Toussaint Samson in 1659 and Catherine Chevalier in 1662. The modern cemetery is a short distance away in the village.

There are no more Samson families in the parish, but there are some in the region. The name Samson is very old in Normandy. It dates back to a hermit named Samson who evangelized the area around the 5th century and built two church-monasteries. Popular piety granted him sainthood. In his memory, two places were given the St. Samson name: St-Samson-de-la-Roque and the St-Samson Lighthouse, both located near the Marais Vernier, to the east of Honfleur, between Pont Audemer and the Seine.

OUR PRESENT-DAY RELATIONSHIP

WITH FRANCE

Through the kindness of Madame Jacqueline Colliex of Honfleur in Normandy, the port of embarkation for our ancestors heading to New France, our tercentenary celebrations were recounted to our French cousins in her newspaper, "Paris-Normandie".

On July 4, 1967, the newspaper contained an article entitled "The Samsons" of Canada are originally from St-Gatien-des-Bois.

On the following August 2nd, our tercentenary celebrations were described in an article entitled "The Samsons of America, all descendants of brothers Gabriel and Jacques Samson of St-Gatien-des-Bois, gathered together in Lauzon (Canada)".

WHAT OF THE SAMSONS WHO REMAINED IN FRANCE?

At this time, we are trying to establish some communication with the Samsons of France.

First, through our efforts, we are trying to get to know the French relatives of our ancestors better. For this, we are having French archives and documents of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries examined. With this as a starting point, and with a dose of patience, we will be able to make a connection with the French Samsons living today, descendants of our common ancestors.

Thanks to our continually obliging Mayor Rufin, this work has already begun. The following letter, addressed to us, proves this:

"I have received your letter dated November 12, 1967. I have waited a few days before responding, because we had asked the department's Archives to have our parish records back and we were hoping to get some information therein for you. Well, last week, some of these records did arrive here (for the years 1732 - 1792), but the oldest records still remain in Caen for photocopying.

However, we are forwarding your request to Mr. Philippe Dévillard, member of the Société des Antiquaires de Normandie, who personally told the Mayor's secretary that he was interested in getting in touch with you, having on numerous occasions come across the names of members of the Samson family mentioned in the public registers of our region. Going through archival documents is important, and we believe that he will have some interesting details to relay to you. His address is: Perception, 14-Beaumont-en-Auge.

As well, our secretary has proposed to examine our registries during the coming vacation, and to note down the relatives and friends that are indicated when there is a mention of a Samson in our records; such information was often recorded in the 18th century. By merely thumbing through, we found Elisabeth Samson, godmother of Jean Augustin David (1734); François Sanson (the spelling may have variations) godfather in 1738. These were present at a burial in 1732: J. Sanson and V. Sanson. In 1748, Robert Sanson, son of Jean and of Marie Labbey, originally from Saint-Gatien, but living in Canapville (a few kilometers away) got married to Marie Lequesne... etc."

P. RUFIN



OUR FAMILY'S NEW FRENCH FRIEND

Finally, as a follow-up, we are including the last letter received from France, from Mr. Philippe Devillard.

25, rue du Paradis
14-Beaumont-en-Auge,
France

December 2, 1967

Reverend Father,

As my friend, the secretary of the St-Gatien-des-Bois Mayor's office must have informed you, I have received your letter dated November 12 and am going to try to reply to it, provisionally, at least.

Indeed, I am an amateur genealogist, and almost all my wife's ancestors are from the same village as yours and have entered into partnerships with the Sansons or Samsons through the centuries. So, I went to have a look in St-Gatien's old registers (1598), both at the Mayor's office and at the departmental archives in Caen, and I would like to inform you of my findings.

I found the following note, dated November 30, 1641: Marriage of Toussaint Samson and Catherine le Chevallier, then "On May 19, 1659, Toussaint Samson was buried in the church, in the presence of the "charitons", and "On March 5, 1662, Catherine Le Chevallier, widow of Toussaint Samson, was buried in the church, in the presence of the "charitons"". Moreover, I found a birth record: "Gabriel Samson, on August 28, 1643, son of Toussaint and Catherine le Chevallier, named by Gabriel Samson, son of Paul, and by Suzanne, wife of Paul Samson."

An agreement was made with the Calvados sub-archivist to arrange to send the registers to Saint-Gatien very soon, thus allowing me to consult them more thoroughly. Maybe I will be able to make new discoveries, for you as well as for me; one never knows what can be found with a little luck, but in genealogy, usually a lot is needed.

In Toussaint's days, there were many Samsons and Chevalliers in Saint-Gatien and the region. How to connect one to another? I ask myself the question, but I don't have the answer. In the 18th century, there were only 2 families left, but the registers are not uniform in content, some with, some without descendants and annotations for added details. But do not despair; you now have a new friend in place who will do his best to help you.

Are you familiar with our region? It is very beautiful and close to Honfleur, which was the site from which so many of your ancestors departed for New France. It is also the birthplace of His Eminence Cardinal Bégin and General Vanier.

Our friendship with Canada is undeniable and I am a member of the federation, whose president is Mr. Jacques Henry, the mayor of Fournet, a small town near here. I have already had a chance to study a few families who have had relations with Canada: the d'Estimauvilles, for example, the family of Reverend Mother Catherine de Longprey, to whom, it seems, I have blood ties from long ago through the Symars and the Jourdans. If other families of the area interest you, please let me know; if by chance I have some notes on them, I will answer you and I will do research as soon as I have the time.

That is all for today, as I do not want to keep you in suspense any longer, and I hope to be able to give you more information soon.

Very respectfully yours,

Philippe DEVILLARD

Society of Norman Authors

CONCLUSION

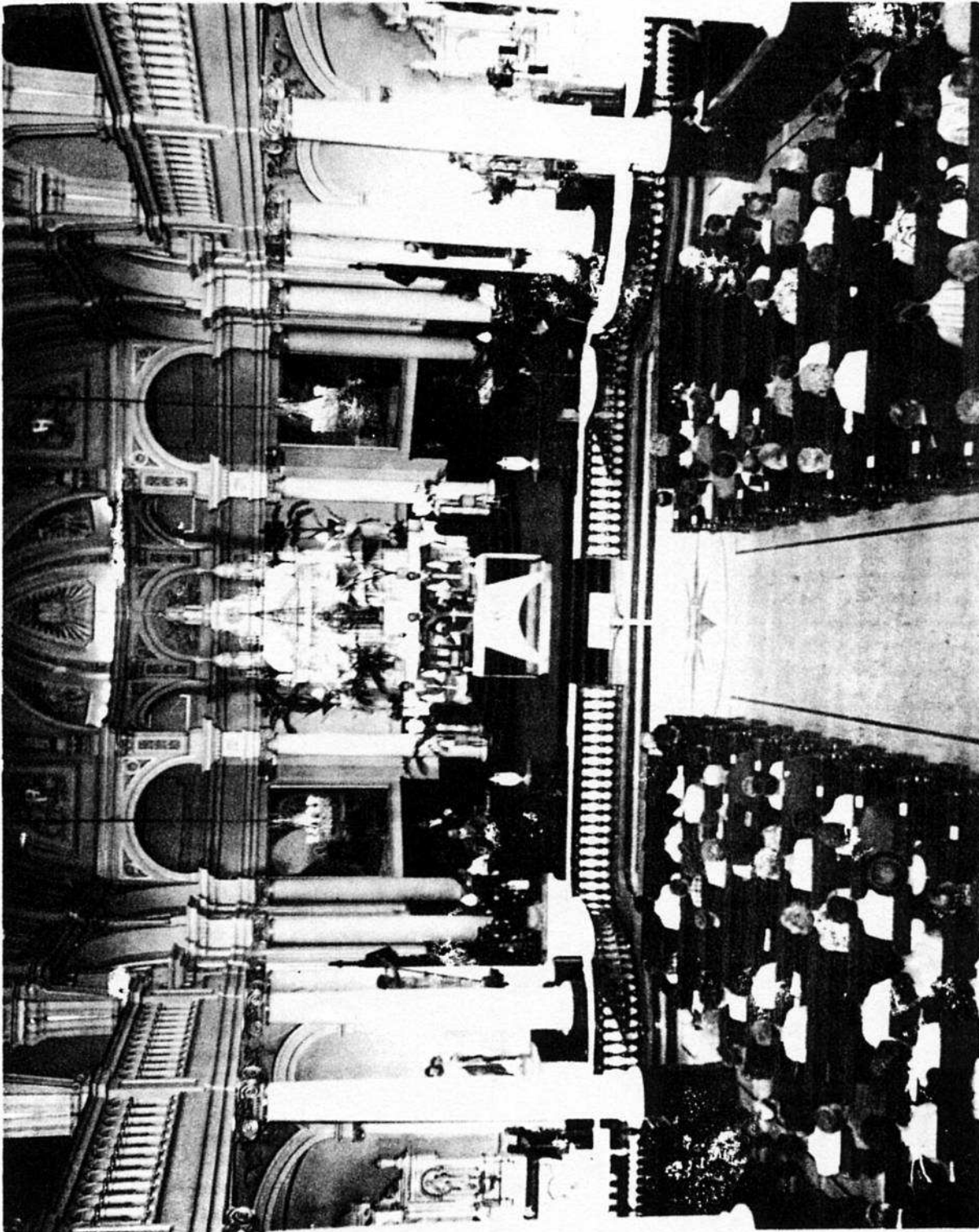
And life goes on towards...the fourth centenary. The next milestones are 1969 and 1971, the years of Gabriel and Jacques Samson's marriages.

We offer our sincere thanks to the members of the Samson families committee. Their collaboration has been valuable.

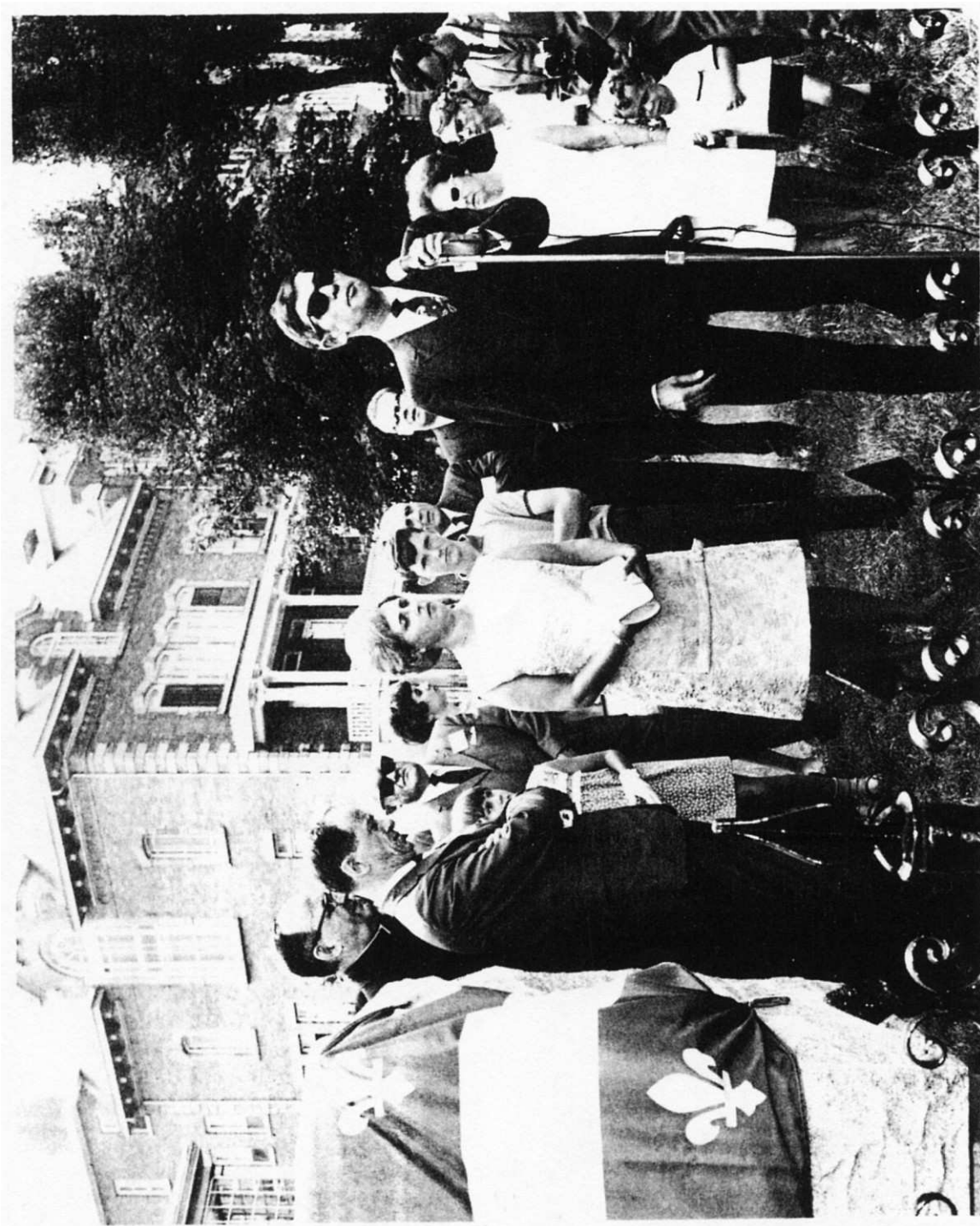
We gratefully welcome any genealogical information on the Samsons. Please contact Mr. Marcel Samson, 10, rue du Manoir, Lévis, (C.P. 247).



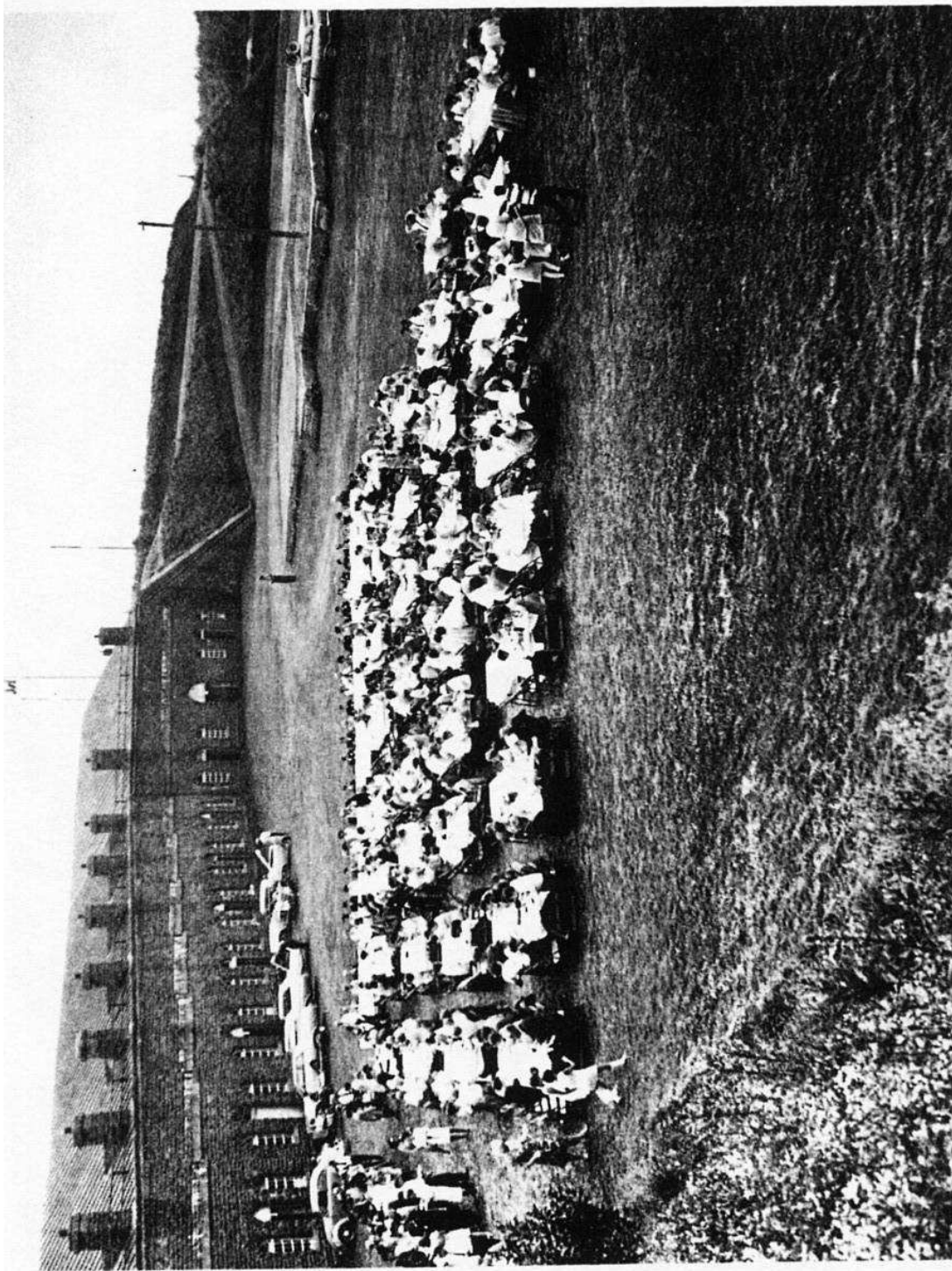
COMMEMORATIVE MONUMENT ERECTED ON THE RECTORY GROUNDS OF THE
ST-ANTOINE DE BIENVILLE CHURCH



SAMSON FAMILIES GATHERED IN THE BIENVILLE PARISH CHURCH FOR THE
THANKSGIVING MASS



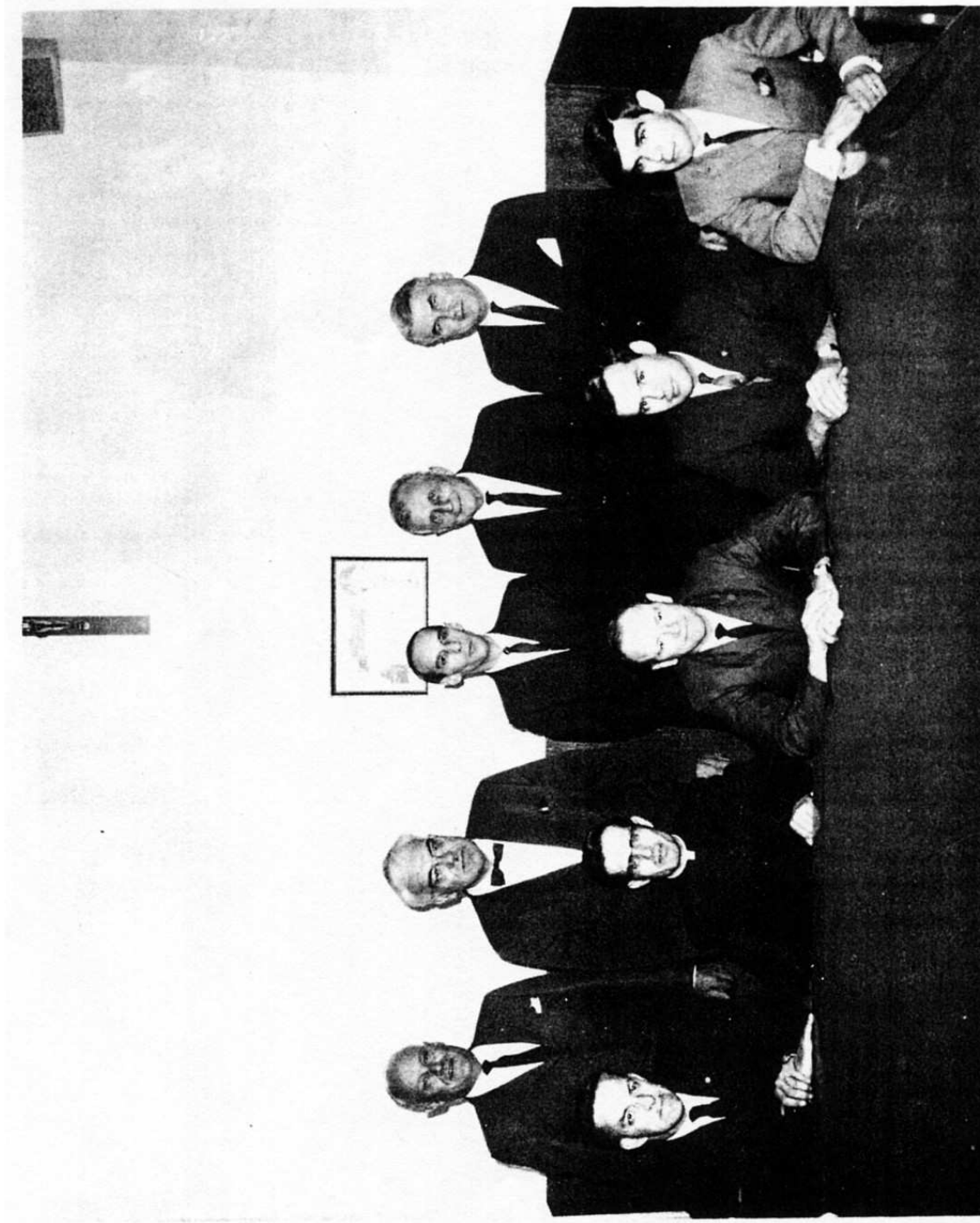
**MR. GASTON SAMSON, MASTER OF CEREMONIES, ADDRESSING GUESTS
BEFORE THE UNVEILING OF THE MONUMENT**



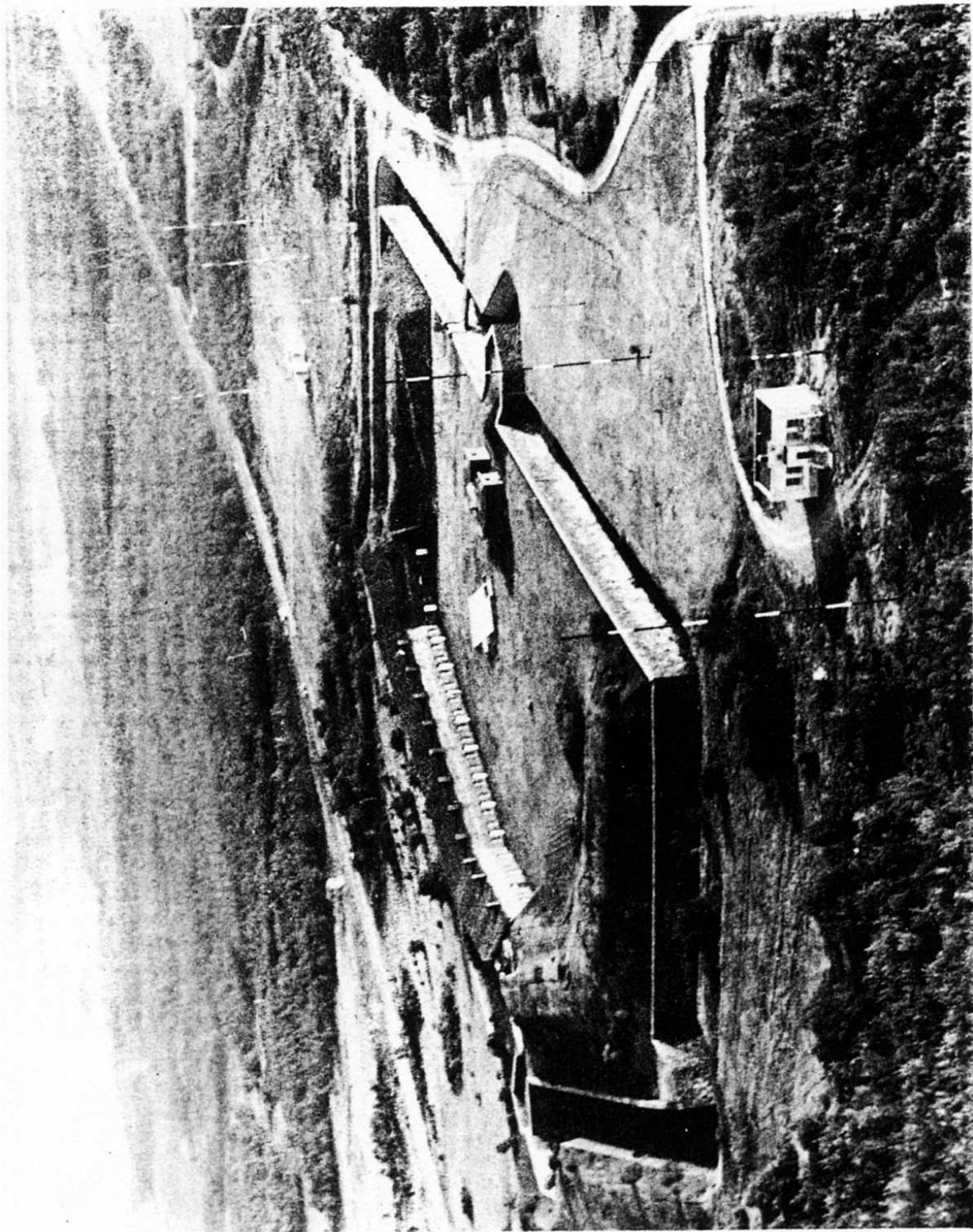
FRATERNAL FEAST AT THE OLD FORT OF LAUZON



**MR. MARCEL SAMSON, THE PROJECT'S FOUNDER,
GIVING A BRIEF GENEALOGY OF THE SAMSON FAMILY TO THE DINNER GUESTS**



THE CELEBRATION'S ORGANIZING COMMITTEE, ALL SAMSONS: FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, SEATED: ROBERT, VICE-PRESIDENT; L'ABBE ROGER; FERNAND, PRESIDENT; GILBERT, SECRETARY; GASTON. STANDING: MARCEL, GENEALOGIST; PAUL-EMILE; LADRIERE; TREASURER RAOUL; AND JACQUES



THE OLD FORT AT LAUZON

Pharmacie Jacques Samson

189, ST-GEORGES, LEVIS

837-2481

La Cité de Lauzon

304, RUE ST-JOSEPH EST, LAUZON

837-3611

Georges J.R. Samson

Entrepreneur Général

“Entreprises de la Rive-Sud”

100, RUE COMMERCIALE
ST-JEAN-CHRYSTOME

839-8965

*En hommage
aux familles “Samson”*

Adrien Samson

620, ST-JOSEPH EST
LAUZON



FERNAND SAMSON C.L.U. C.D'A. A.

RES.: 837-6406

15, RUE VAUDREUIL, LAUZON

C.P. 245, LEVIS

BUR.: 833-2663
837-2449

Boulangerie R. Samson Inc.

RAYMOND SAMSON, Président

837-3611

171, St-Joseph,

Lauzon

J. L. DEMERS LTEE

**57, COMMERCIALE
LEVIS**

837-4711

Samson, Samson, Gascon, Mercier, Poistras
NOTAIRES

970, AVENUE CARTIER, QUEBEC 6

524-2495

Translation Notes

This page and any that follow it were added by Claire Pelchat and Tim Nolan in 2009 and were not part of the original document

It was of primary importance to us that this translation be an accurate rendering of the words of the original authors. In line with that purpose, we have attempted, to the best of our ability, to provide as literal a translation as possible. In some cases where the direct translation sounded awkward, we used only as much leverage as the dictionary provided, without attempting to interpret any secondary meaning.

The following notes are presented to clarify or add value to the original content. They do not represent in any way the opinions or thoughts of the original authors. This translation was made without consultation with or approval from anyone related to the original authorship of this document or, for that matter, with anyone who, as far as we know, may have been connected with the 1967 Tricentenaire event that inspired the creation of the French version.

Note on page numbering: Our copy of the French version contained an unnumbered cover page followed by pages numbered at bottom center, from page 1 through page 40. However, the flow of the narrative was found to be out of order chronologically, and some pages contained lightly handwritten page numbers that seemed to make more sense. In the end, we reordered several pages to arrive at a sequence that flowed better and that could very well have been the originally intended order. The only change to the content occurred when we removed the year heading “1643” from the top of the page entitled “The Family of Gabriel Samson”. The result of this change was purely cosmetic. These changes were made only to the English translation that is the output of this project. However, the French version would read better if it conformed to that of our English translation. If you have a French version and decide to reorder the pages don’t forget to include the addendum page supplied at the end of this document which is a French version of an update/correction to the list of Gabriel’s children found in the original.

Page 6 , Gabriel’s Marriage, 1st par, approx. line 10: “*Their lovely headdresses . . .*” Although the original French, “*Leurs jolies coiffes eurent sans doute l’heur de plaire à des yeux normands . . .*” might at first seem better served by translating “coiffes” based on its anglicized meaning whereby it refers to hair, we find that the dictionaries define the French word coiffe to mean either hat or headdress. And this does make sense within the context of the paragraph which describes two young girls from 17th century Brittany with a physical attribute that would be attractive to not just any young man but specifically to one from Normandy which is adjacent to Brittany in France. So the distinctive attribute would more likely be the headdress typically worn by Breton girls of that period and which might have been familiar to Gabriel Samson and his fellow Norman friend, Louis Bégin.

Page 11. For Footnote #1.

Since the 1967 publication date of the original booklet, Acadian genealogist Stephen A. White at the Centre d’Etudes Acadiennes, Université de Moncton, N.B., has described in detail the family of Gabriel Samson in his “Dictionnaire Genealogique des Familles Acadiennes”, published in 1999. The following corrections should be noted: Anne-Madeleine married (1) Jean Richard, (2) Joseph La Chaume, and did not die in 1713; Michel married Anne “Jeanne” Testard dit Paris; Mathieu married Marguerite Pouget dit La Pierre, not Claire Langlois; Madeleine married Louis Lecuyer dit le Benecat, not a Martel; Marguerite-Louise (not Marie-Louise) married Jean-Francois Le Large, not Jean Pate; Charles married Marie Prejean, but left no surviving descendants, and Jeanne married Charles Pinet.

And for anyone wanting more detail, here is a more expansive version of the above information, as taken directly from Stephen's Dictionnaire:

Gabriel Samson married Jeanne Martin, daughter of Barnabe Martin and Jeanne Pelletret in Port Royal on April 7, 1704. Their children were:

Madeleine (or Anne-Madeleine), born in Boston on 9 Jan 1705, baptized at Port Royal on 27 Jan 1706, married (1) Jean Richard, in Port Toulouse about 1722, (2) Joseph La Chaume, in Louisbourg on 19 June 1742.

Michel, born and baptized in Port Royal on 12 July 1706, married Anne "Jeanne" Testard dit Paris, in Port Toulouse, about 1729. He drowned in the sinking of the Neptune, and was buried at Miquelon Island on 22 April 1764.

Jeanne (twin), born and baptized at midnight on 1 July 1708, buried in Port Royal on 19 July 1708.

Louise (twin), born and baptized at midnight on 1 July 1708, buried in Port Royal on 10 July 1708.

Mathieu, born 14 Aug 1709, baptized 15 Aug 1709, married Marguerite Pouget dit LaPierre about 1730.

Two twin daughters, buried on 20 Jan 1712.

Madeleine (or Marie-Madeleine), born 17 June 1713, baptized 18 June 1713 in Port Royal, married Louis Lecuyer dit le Benecat in Port Toulouse about 1730. She died in Louisbourg on 17 Jan 1750, and was buried the following day on 18 Jan 1750.

Marguerite-Louise, born 10 July 1715, baptized in Port Royal on 6 Oct 1715, married Jean-Francois Le Large in Louisbourg on 8 July 1737.

Charles, born 1 Oct 1717, baptized at Port Royal on 3 Oct 1717, married Marie Prejean in Port Toulouse about 1752. He died at sea during the crossing to France in 1758.

Jeanne, born 22 Oct 1719, baptized at Port Royal on 29 Oct 1719, married Charles Pinet in Port Toulouse about 1749. She died at sea during the crossing to France in 1758.

Page 12, 2nd par. Last word, "preciput".

This is a Latin word used with the same spelling, and in the same legal context, in both French and English law. Following is a sample definition found online:

Preciput

French law. An object which is ascertained by law or the agreement of the parties, and which is first to be taken out of property held in common, by one having a right, before a partition takes place.

**Page 20, Middle of 2nd par, below section headed "Mrs. Jacques Samson in Quebec City"
Reference to 'card money'.**

"... in money, three hundred livres in card money in circulation here". A temporary type of impromptu paper money 'issued' occasionally in New France by an agent of the French King in the form of playing cards having a denomination indicated by the number of corner sections that had been cut from the card. The bearer was authorized with the guarantee of the French King, to redeem them at face value in the form of coinage expected to arrive by a certain date by ship from France to relieve a shortage of coins in the colonies.

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0006342>

<http://www.micheloud.com/FXM/MH/canada.htm>

In several places: Currency in use in New France: Livres, Sols, Deniers

Example, Pg 12, par 3 of *The Widow* section: "Durant had contracted a debt of 462 livres and 6 deniers . . .", and "... reduced the debt to 352 livres, 12 sols, and 7 deniers, . . ."

The livre was established by Charlemagne as a unit of account equal to one pound of silver. It was subdivided into 20 "sous" (also "sols"), each of 12 "deniers". The word livre came from the Latin word libra, a Roman unit of weight. This division is also seen in the old English pound sterling, which was divided into 20 shillings, each divided into 12 pence.

<http://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/enwiki/1814728>

In several places: *Units of land area measurement*

Unit of Length

There were various standard arpents. The most common ones were of 180 French feet, used in French North America, and 220 French feet, used in Paris.
1 arpent = 180 French feet (of approximately 32 centimetres) = about 192 English feet = about 58.47 metres

Unit of Area

Historically, in North America, 1 (square) arpent = 32,400 French square feet = about 3419 square metres
In Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida, the official conversion is 1 arpent = 0.84628-acre (3,424.8 m²) = 3424.77365 square metres
In Arkansas and Missouri, the official conversion is 1 arpent = 0.8507-acre (3,443 m²) = 3442.66076 square metres

Origin

The arpent was a pre-metric French unit. Its is based on the actus, one of the Ancient Roman units of measurement. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arpent>

In several places: *“dit” names*

References to nicknames, called “dit” names in both French and English, which are structured as Given Name + “dit” + nickname.e.g., Jean Chauveau dit laFleur. From the French verb dire (to say, to tell), “dit” translates to “known as” and is pronounced “dee”. The French word for nickname is “surnom”, not to be confused with the English “surname” which translates to French as “nom” or “nom de famille” (literally, family name). A person’s first name is in French called “prénom”
<http://www.genealogyforum.com/gfaol/resource/Canada/dit.htm>

Nicknames were used by colonists in New France and were selected for a variety of reasons which are covered clearly at the above link. Briefly, there are three categories of circumstances by which a “dit” name comes into use: by using the name of the Seigneurie that one is associated with for reasons of prestige; by using a “dit” name to distinguish one branch of a family from others who shared the same surname and lived in the same community; occasionally used to distinguish an individual with a name related to a significant event or accomplishment.

In several places *The Seigneurie (also sp. Seigniory) system in New France*

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seigneurial_system_of_New_France

A good explanation is to be found at the link above, and is also covered in brief in the link used to clarify the use of “dit” names

A feudal system originating in France and brought to New France in slightly modified form to make it more attractive to potential colonists. Basically, a person was granted custody by the King to a large tract of land over which he became the landlord or « Seigneur », thus the title « Sr. » to distinguish one as a landlord. They were responsible for developing the parcel by installing roads, a manor house and a mill. They would then lease out sections of the land to persons who entered into a contract with the landlord to be drawn up legally by the landlord’s notary. The tenant usually promised to work the land for his own use and profit and, in return, would agree to supply the landlord with a set portion of the farm’s production in terms of bales of hay and/or an amount of a particular crop or crops, and would promise to use the landlord’s mill for processing his grain harvest. The lessee was allowed to sub-lease parts of his land. The system was ended in the mid-nineteenth century when the subdivided lots of the overall seigneuries were sold outright.. The Wikipedia article is a well-written explanation of this important feature of the colonial period in New France and in Louisiana.

ADDENDUM

Depuis la publication de cet album-souvenir, le généalogiste acadien Stephen A. White, du Centre d'Études Acadiennes à l'Université Moncton au Nouveau-Brunswick, a décrit en détail la famille de Gabriel Samson dans son « Dictionnaire Généalogique des Familles Acadiennes », publié en 1999. Les corrections qui suivent sont à noter : Anne-Madeleine a épousé (1) Jean Richard, (2) Joseph La Chaume, et n'est pas morte en 1713; Michel a épousé Anne 'Jeanne' Testard dit Paris; Mathieu a épousé Marguerite Pouget dit La Pierre, et non pas Claire Langlois; Madeleine a épousé Louis Lecuyer dit le Benecat, et non pas un Martel; Marguerite-Louise (et non pas Marie-Louise) a épousé Jean-François Le Large, et non pas Jean Paté; Charles a épousé Marie Préjean, mais ils n'ont laissé aucun descendant survivant, et Jeanne a épousé Charles Pinet.