

fertilizer? Did they eat biscuits or bannock? Did they love râpure as much as I do? Were they military men? Or were they opposed to war and fighting? Were they active in their religion? Or just going through the motions? Were their children their pride and joy? What was la Mi-Carême, or la Chandeleur? Did they have the same feelings I have, about the birth of a child, the death of a loved one? Do I have their nose shape, their eye or hair colour? How tall were they? Were they as passionate about where they lived as I am? I know some of these questions will never be answered, until I can ask them for myself in the next life. But I never tire of looking for the answers here and now.

There was a popular beer commercial a few months back, a young man extolling the virtues of being Canadian. I sometimes feel like that, but rather as an Acadian! We are not Québécois; our national day is August 15th, not June 24th. Our flag is the French Tricolor with the golden star in the blue representing our national patron saint, Our Lady of the Assumption. I personally do not speak French, but Acadians the world over speak many different languages, for we are a people without a homeland, banished in the 1750's and dispersed all over the world.

We Island Acadians are the lucky ones, for we still occupy some of the lands where our ancestors first came. Many left for only a few years, some not at all, with proud names such as Arsenault, Poirier, Gallant, Gaudet, Bernard, Caissie, DesRoches and a couple of a dozen more. At one time I thought that Canadian history was boring, not at all like our neighbours to the south. But my studies of the pioneers of the Acadian parishes of Prince County have brought to life the exciting times

they lived in. Hard times. happy times, sad times, good times. Many others and I are their legacy. The DNA in their bodies will match ours.

I remember reading somewhere about a young man who had a dream about going to heaven where he met his grandfather. They had so much to talk about, but all that the old man would ask was : «What have you done with my name?» Finally the young man answered, that he had done nothing that his grandfather would be ashamed of, that he was proud to bear the name of his grandfather and he would make him proud also. The grandfather thanked him and walked away. And the young man woke up, back in the world. We need to be proud of our ancestors. They lived and died in a harsh environment different from ours, so that we might have a better life, that we might enjoy freedom, in a great country. There are hundreds of thousands of Acadians throughout North America, from the Gulf of Mexico to Nunavut, from the Pacific Ocean to right here at home on the Atlantic coast. There are Acadians in France, and England, Spain and Italy, indeed all over the world. We are all cousins, related through the centuries.

With my interest came a desire to record on paper events from my grandparents' lives. I rewrote a short biography an aunt had previously written on my paternal grandparents, had it printed and now make it available for aunts and uncles and cousins to have. It was so well received that I went back another generation, and then another. I have now started to do the same for my maternal grandparents. With the advent of computers I began entering my lineage into a database, in time it expanded to include brothers and sisters of my ancestors and their children. It now has almost

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