

## **Jacques Agement Son dit Martin of La Prairie, Quebec**

*A Soldier with the Régiment Royal-Roussillon in the French and Indian War (1756-1763)*



*Battle of the Plains of Abraham 1759- This 1797 engraving is based on a sketch made by Hervey Smyth, General Wolfe's aide-de-camp during the siege of Quebec: A view of the taking of Quebec, 13<sup>th</sup> September 1759. (Wiki PD)*

Variations in the family surname found on public records include Agement dit Martin, Saint-Martin Azema, Azéman, Azément dit Martin, Asman dit Martin, Son dit Martin, Sond Martin, and simply Martin.

At the end of 1760, the French had lost New France to the British. Most, but not all, of the French troops were put on ships and sent home. Some decided to remain and seek their fortune in a country that would now be governed by the English. Among them was Jacques Agement Son dit Martin.

The French and Indian War, known in Europe as the Seven Years War, began in 1756. France and Britain, along with their allies, were pitted against each other in a war fought primarily for imperial gains. The war is considered by some to be the first global conflict as military confrontations took place in America, Europe and Asia. The initial battles took place on the North American continent. In the first of several events leading up to the war, a Virginia Militia unit under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel George Washington defeated a French reconnaissance party from Fort Duquesne in southwestern Pennsylvania on May 28, 1754.

Well-trained, professional troops were sent by France to augment its fighting forces in New France. By 1759, soldiers in the colony included battalions from five French infantry regiments. Each regiment represented a different area of France. Soldiers forming the Régiment Royal-Roussillon were recruited from the Roussillon-Languedoc, Perpignan and Catalogne regions. Two battalions of this regiment were among the regular soldiers that departed from the French port of Brest on April 3, 1756, arriving in Quebec City between May 12 and 31. The Royal-

Roussillon Regiment, initially stationed at Montreal, participated in fighting at Fort Carillon (also known as Fort Ticonderoga) on Lake Champlain, Fort William Henry (at the southern tip of Lake Champlain), at Montmorency and on the Plains of Abraham, on the outskirts of Quebec. It was in this last, short, twenty-minute battle, fought on September 13, 1759, that Generals Montcalm and Wolfe, the respective commanders of the French and British forces, were mortally wounded and Quebec City fell to the British. The following spring, on April 28, 1760, British and French forces clashed again at nearby Sainte-Foy. The confrontation ended in victory for the French, but it would be their last victory in the French and Indian War. After the battle, the French were unable to retake Quebec and retreated to Montreal. However, British soldiers were approaching Montreal from three directions. Brief battles were fought nearby in August of 1760. French forces surrendered Montreal to the British on September 8, 1760 in order to avoid a long and painful siege of the city.

After the French defeat in Canada in 1760, some 2,000 demobilized soldiers chose to remain in the colony. Jacques Agement was one of those soldiers who decided to stay in Canada. He married Marie Babeu, daughter of François Babeu and Marie Marguerite Poupart, on November 10, 1760 in St-Philippe, across the river from Montreal. His marriage was just two months after the surrender of Montreal to the British and the order for French troops to sail for home. Marie Babeu's sister Marie-Anne married a man by the name of André Jordan in St-Philippe on the same day. Both Jacques and André were witnesses to the marriage of Jean-Baptiste Talard in the same parish three weeks earlier, on October 20, 1760. The men obviously knew each other. It might well have been that soldiers Agement and Jordan were billeted at the Babeu homestead while the regiment was stationed at Montreal.

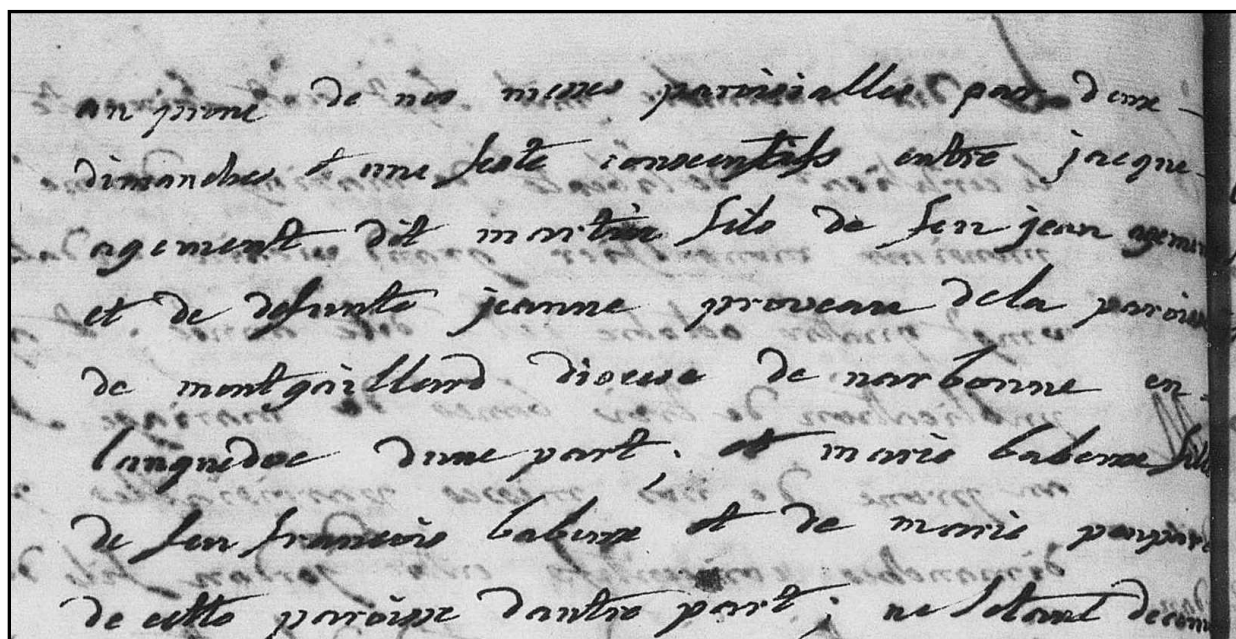
Genealogist Gail Moreau-DesHarnais was the first to write that Jacques served in the Royal-Roussillon Regiment. According to her research, he served in the Company of Poulhariés in 1749 and under Serviés in 1756. The Company of Serviés was a part of the second battalion of the Royal-Roussillon. Gail cites information provided on a website developed by Suzanne Galaise as documentation of Jacques' service as a soldier in the regiment. The website and its resources are no longer available online.

Jacques is found in the database of soldiers of 1759-1760 under the name of Jacques Saint-Martin Azema. According to this database, Jacques arrived with the Land Troops in the Royal-Roussillon Regiment and served as a drummer. In this record, the names of his parents, wife, and date of death correspond to the information found in church records of St-Philippe. Jacques is listed as born in 1728 in the city of Pauligne, Aude, France. The village of Pauligne is about a mile from Montgaillard, which is listed as his place of origin in his marriage record. André Jordan and Jean-Baptiste Tallard, the two men mentioned in an earlier paragraph, are also found in this database. (Source: Database of soldiers of 1759-1760, compiled by Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC), *National Battlefields Commission- Plains of Abraham*, Canada and found online at [www.ccbn-nbc.gc.ca](http://www.ccbn-nbc.gc.ca). Information downloaded on January 26, 2014.)

There is also circumstantial evidence for the conclusion that Jacques Agement served as a soldier in the Seven Years War. At the time, the French soldiers who fought in the Seven Years War needed the permission of the authorities to marry. On the church record of Jacques' marriage is the notation, "M. Montgolfier a fourni un certificate de liberte de mariage." This certificate was required to assure the priest that the individual wanting to get married was free to do so, that there was no spouse left behind in France. While not specific to soldiers, it certainly applied to them. This notation was found on the marriage records of Jean-Baptiste Talard and André Jordan as well. All three men had received permission to marry from M. Etienne Montgolfier of Montreal, Vicar-General of the bishop of Quebec.

Jacques Agement's companions, Jean-Baptiste Talard and André Jordan are found in the Fichier Origine (which traces French immigrants to Canada back to their origins in France). On the record of each man is the notation that the individual had come to Quebec in 1756 and was a soldier in the Serviés Company in the Royal-Roussillon Regiment. Jacques Agement is not found in this database.

According to his marriage record, Jacques Agement was the son of Jean Agement and Jeanne Provost, both deceased at the time of the marriage in 1760. Jacques came from Montgaillard, in the commune of Narbonne in the Languedoc-Roussillon region of southern France. Marie was a resident of St-Philippe. The bride and groom were illiterate and unable to sign their names to the marriage record. Between 1761 and 1775, nine children were born to the couple: Pierre Louis (1761), Antoine (1763) Marie Genevieve (1764), Jacques Philippe (1765), Catherine (1767), Jean Jacques (1768), Marie Josephe (1773), François (1774), and Eustache (1775). All were born



*Excerpt from marriage record of Jacques Agement dit Martin and Marie Babeu, "Quebec, Catholic Parish Registers, 1621-1979, St-Philippe: Index 1753-1876, Baptêmes, mariages & sepultures 1753-1784. Family Search.org, Images 251-252; downloaded on Jan 27, 2014.*

in La Prairie, St-Philippe, or Montreal. Jacques died in La Prairie on March 28, 1797. His wife Marie had pre-deceased him, dying in La Prairie on February 25, 1793. His son Jacques Philippe would marry Marie Madeleine Talard, the daughter of Jean-Baptiste Talard, the fellow soldier from the Royal-Roussillon Regiment, whose wedding Jacques Agement had witnessed in 1760.

Sources:

“Batailles de 1759 et 1760: The Siege of Québec” *The National Battlefields Commission, Plains of Abraham*. Web 2 Jan 2014.

Database of soldiers of 1759-1760, compiled by Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC), *National Battlefields Commission- Plains of Abraham*, Canada.

Dickinson, John and Brian Young. *A Short History of Quebec*. Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2005. pp 47-49.

*Fichier Origine Database*. Quebec Federation of Genealogical Societies. Web. 1 Jan 2014.

Moreau-DesHarnais, Gail. “Part 2: Jacques Azeman/ Azema/ Agement/ Son dit Martin/ St. Martin.” *Michigan’s Habitant Heritage* 26, No. 4 (October 2005) 168-169.

*Programme de recherche en demographie historique (PRDH) Genealogical Database*, University of Montreal, 2005. Web. 1 Jan 2014.

“Quebec, Catholic Parish Registers, 1621-1979; St-Philippe: Index 1753-1876, Baptêmes, mariages & sepultures 1753-1784” *FamilySearch.org*. Web Jan 2014.