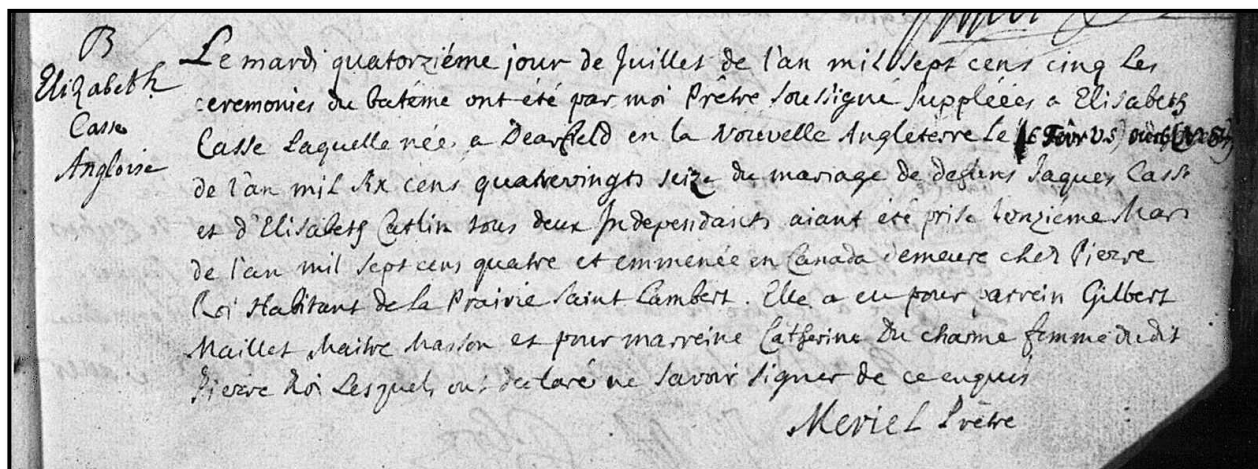


Pierre Roy and Catherine Ducharme of La Prairie, Quebec

Parents of 18 provide a home for Elizabeth Casse,
an English child kidnapped in 1704 raid on Deerfield, MA

© Susan McNelley

In 1704, Pierre Roy and Catherine Ducharme, pioneers of La Prairie, Quebec and parents of eighteen children, took into their home Elizabeth Corse (Casse in the French records). She was an eight-year-old English girl who had been kidnapped by French-led Amerindians in a raid on Deerfield, Massachusetts on February 29, 1704 and marched north to Montreal. Elizabeth was the daughter of James Corse (Jacques Casse in the records of Montreal) and Elizabeth Catlin of Deerfield. Her mother and her aunt had also been kidnapped but died on the march. Elizabeth, along with three female cousins, survived the ordeal.



Baptism record of Elizabeth Casse, dated July 14, 1705. Source: The collection of Quebec, Catholic Parish Registers, 1621-1979; Montreal; Notre-Dame; Baptêmes, mariages, sépultures 1695-1710; Image 597; Downloaded from FamilySearch.org in August, 2013

In the late 1680s, Iroquois natives, aided and abetted by the English colonists in New England, were becoming increasingly bold in their attacks on the French settlements along the St. Lawrence River. In retaliation for the Anglo/Iroquois massacres, French militiamen and their Amerindian allies raided New England villages. These raids occurred well into the eighteenth century. Homes and crops were destroyed. Men and beasts were killed, while women and children were often kidnapped and taken back to New France in the hopes that they might bring a large ransom. Evidently, many French-Canadian settlers sympathized with the plight of those abducted. Children were often adopted by Canadian families. A number converted to the Catholic faith, married French-Canadians and chose to stay in New France rather than return to their homes in New England.

Catherine stood as her godmother when Elizabeth was baptized into the Catholic faith in Montreal on July 14, 1705. Elizabeth married Jean Dumontet dit Lagrandeur on November 6, 1712, at the age of sixteen. Presumably Elizabeth had remained in the home of Pierre and Catherine until she married. Her cousin Marthe French, who had also been taken captive in the

raid on Deerfield and taken to Montreal with Elizabeth, married Pierre and Catherine's son Jacques on November 24, 1711. Both girls would settle in the Montreal area and produce large families. Neither would return to their original home in Massachusetts.

Elizabeth Corse/Casse is not in my direct ancestral line. Her story is told here because it demonstrates the character of Pierre Roy and Catherine Ducharme who are my ancestors. Evidently, these parents of eighteen had a homestead and hearts big enough to hold one more child.

Sources:

Carley, Jeanne Marie Gendreau. "The Deerfield Captives and Their Descendants." *Je Me Souviens*, A Publication of the American-French Genealogical Society. Vol. 27. No 2. Autumn 2004. (This issue of the journal is available online and was downloaded in March of 2014.)

Baptism, Marriage, and Death records for Elizabeth Casse are listed in the Programme de recherche en demographie historique (PRDH) Genealogical Database.

The collection of Quebec, Catholic Parish Registers, 1621-1979; Montreal; Notre-Dame; Baptêmes, mariages, sépultures 1695-1710; Available at FamilySearch.org.

©Susan McNelley/ www.tracingsbysam.com/ March 2014