

**François Drouillard UEL, 1741-1812:
A Canadien Loyalist of
The Detroit River Region**

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I. By Way of Introduction

In the spring of 2005, the *Kent County Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society* hosted a regional meeting. I attended as a member of the *Société franco-ontarienne d'histoire et de généalogie*. We set up a display of some of the *Société's* publications. I had also brought my ten-generation French ancestry chart. You can't imagine my surprise when Ida Debusschere, a member of the Kent OGS, turned to me and said, "Hello cousin. I see you also descend from François Drouillard. Did you know that he is a Loyalist?"¹ I didn't know. So much for being so proud of my well-documented chart.

Earlier, in 2002, I had discovered a third great-grandfather on my English/Irish maternal side who had served in the War of 1812. I suspected that he could be a Loyalist, so I took out a membership with the Bicentennial Branch of the United Empire Loyalist Association. Prior to Ida's question, it had never occurred to me that any of my 'French' ancestors were Loyalists. However, after submitting the appropriate documentation in the fall of 2005, I received certification for **François Drouillard, United Empire Loyalist (UEL)**. As proof of ancestry, I used photocopies of original baptismal and marriage registers from various local Catholic Churches to prove my descent from François. French researchers are blessed in that the Catholic Church Register usually records the parents of the bride and groom. French records need to be translated to English if an application is submitted. Shortly after I received my certificate, I sent a copy of my application to Gail Moreau-DesHarnais, editor of *Michigan's Habitant Heritage*. She suggested that I submit an article about "François Drouillard, the Loyalist."

In the spring of 2007, the Bicentennial Branch hosted the annual conference of the United Empire Loyalist Association. Kimberly Hurst, the Conference chair, asked if I would put together a presentation for the genealogists' workshop. She thought that, since I descend from a French Loyalist, it would be good to highlight the early history of the Detroit River Region from a French-Canadian point of view. As I was already working on an article for the FCHSM Journal, I agreed to write the presentation. However, I was not able to present it myself as I was attending the Ontario Genealogical Society's Seminar that same weekend. Kimberly and I added some slides to my words and developed a Power Point presentation. Kathryn Lake, a member of the Bicentennial Branch, made the presentation.

So, now here it is, 2009. What started out to be a genealogical article on the life of François Drouillard UEL, has also become an anecdotal time line of historical events. Therein, I've briefly outlined significant milestones in the French/English struggle for North America, from New France of the late 1600s, to British North America prior to and shortly after the American Revolution. I have interwoven my Drouillard Family into these events, starting with **Simon Drouillard dit Argentcour**, François' grandfather. The historical portion of my article has a bibliography. In the case of the genealogical content, I have included footnotes.

¹ Brenda Dougall Merriman, *United Empire Loyalists, A Guide to Tracing Loyalist Ancestors in Upper Canada* (Campbellville, Ontario: Global Heritage Press, Inc., 2006). "A loyalist describes a specific person who was involved with the British during the American Revolutionary War, and who moved to re-settle in a British region in the 1780's." p.7. The British offered free "waste lands of the Crown" ("the Kings bounty") to Loyalists. Order of the Governor in Council of the 9th of November 1789, for the allotting of land to the sons and daughters of such Loyalists that adhered to the Unity of the Empire and joined the Royal Standard before the Treaty of Separation in 1783, and for putting a Mark of Honour upon their families. p. 9. "...those who performed militia duties at Detroit. While they were recognized as military claimants their children were not entitled to special privilege." [except the UE Mark of Honour] p. 17.

II. "Location, Location, Location:" New France of the Late 1600s

The French word *détroit* means "a strait or narrows." The early explorers considered the whole water connection between Lakes Huron and Erie as *Le Détroit*, Lake St. Clair being only a bulge in the strait. Although unrecorded, there can be little doubt that numbers of the storied *coureurs de bois* visited the strait in the last half of the seventeenth century. *Coureurs de bois* (runners of the woods) were illegal or unlicensed fur traders. The King of France wanted the fur trading with the distant tribes to be transacted along the St. Lawrence River, so laws were passed with heavy penalties, forbidding trading "in the woods." Nevertheless, attracted by the lure of profits and an independent life, many *coureurs de bois* defied all edicts of the king and his representatives. Acting on the King's behalf, the Governor of New France decided that each year a limited number of *congés* (licenses) would be issued. The intention was to regulate through licensing the trade in furs with the distant Native tribes. *Voyageurs*, unlike the *coureurs de bois*, were legal or licensed fur traders. To form alliances with these tribes, a garrison was established at Michilimackinac on Lake Huron.

Michilimackinac was the chief meeting place of the *coureurs de bois*, some of whom were adopted by the Native tribes and settled amongst them. They consolidated the French influence in the West and helped to retain for France that part of the continent. These men of the woods, who did the work of the fur trade, ranged far and wide wherever furs could be obtained. According to early travelers, the Detroit River Region "...abounded in all game and fur-bearing animals to an extent not surpassed by any other place." English fur traders, however, also visited the strait before the end of the seventeenth century. In 1686, the Governor of New France protested to the English Governor at New York about the incursions of English traders in the upper Great Lakes. The New York governor replied that the King of England had as much right to trade in those parts as the King of France.

Antoine Laumet, Sieur de LaMotte Cadillac, who had been *commandant* at Michilimackinac from 1694 to 1697, went to Paris in 1698 with a recommendation from Governor Frontenac pressing for quick action to ward off the growing danger of English infiltration into the Great Lakes region. Cadillac's plan called for shifting the centre of importance from Michilimackinac to the shores of a deep clear river south of Lake Ste. Claire. Here, "...the climate was mild and a crop of corn was assured each year." According to Cadillac, this veritable paradise was the real hub of the Great Lakes country, the one spot best suited to hold in check both the English and their allies, the Iroquois. To accomplish this dual purpose, it was necessary to establish "...in this fair locality not only a trading and a military post, but also an agricultural colony."²

By the close of the seventeenth century, therefore, the Detroit River Region was a no-man's land between the English with their Native allies on the one hand, and the French with their Native allies on the other. Both the French and the English coveted that most bountiful and strategic position on the world's finest system of interior fresh waters.

III. Settlement on the North Shore: Early 1700s

At the outset of the eighteenth century, Cadillac was granted the permission he sought from the King of France to establish a colony at *Le Détroit*. He left Montréal on 5 June 1701 and arrived in the Detroit River Region on July 24th. He was accompanied by fifty soldiers, fifty-one *voyageurs*, and two priests. He chose a site, "...on the north shore above a bend where the river is narrow and the banks are high."

² Part of Section II and the last paragraph of Section III were extracted from: Ernest J. Lajeunesse, C.S.B., ed., *The Windsor Border Region: Canada's Southernmost Frontier, A Collection of Documents* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1960), p. x1.

They measured off one square arpent and built dwellings, a warehouse, and a place of worship. The church at the fort later became known as Ste. Anne's of Détroit.

Fur was the main trade at the fort, and to ensure an ample supply of it, Cadillac invited the Native tribes of the lakes' region to camp outside the fort. The traders in Montréal outfitted canoes with supplies and trade goods. They hired *voyageurs* to deliver the merchandise and return with the furs. There were two routes that the *voyageurs* could take. One route was north from Montréal up the Ottawa River, across and down through Georgian Bay. The second route was west from Montréal, through the Niagara area and Lakes Ontario and Erie. The latter route was the shorter and easier of the two, as there was only one portage at Niagara. There were at least thirty portages over the Ottawa River route. Because of the presence of the hostile Iroquois in the lower lakes' region, however, Cadillac's first trip to *le fort Pontchartrain du détroit du lac Érié*³ was along the Ottawa route.

England's Native allies, the Iroquois, were the most powerful of the Eastern Woodlands people. They formed a Confederacy of first five, then six Native nations. The original five nations were the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Seneca, and the Cayuga. In a treaty ratified at Montréal in July of 1701, the Iroquois Confederacy agreed to remain neutral in wars between the English and the French. This 'Great Peace of 1701' ended almost a hundred years of war between the Iroquois Confederacy, New France, and its Native allies. What a lucky break for Cadillac's Village!

Simon Drouillard *dit* Argentcour, son of **Jean Drouillard** and **Anne Chevreau**, and grandfather to François Drouillard, came to New France as a soldier with *Lestringant de Saint Martin*.⁴ He probably served in the campaign against the Iroquois near Montréal. Simon was engaged in the fishing industry. He was hired as a sailor, fisherman, and a ship's carpenter.⁵ In 1698 Simon married **Marguerite Ferret**, and he was capable of signing the marriage contract.⁶ There were seven children from this union,⁷ including a son, **Jean Baptiste**, who was born in 1707, at l'Île Jésus.⁸ Jean Baptiste was a *voyageur*.⁹

³ First official title for Detroit, see *Michigan's Habitant Heritage (MHH)*, Vol. 22, #1, January 2001, p. 20, editor's note.

⁴ Sources that were consulted are: a) *Dictionnaire National des Canadiens Français, 1608-1760*, édition révisée, 3 vols. (Montréal: Institut Généalogique Drouin, 1985), Vol. 1, p. 422. b) Rev. Christian Denissen, *Genealogy of the French Families of the Detroit River Region 1701-1936, Revision* (Detroit: Detroit Society for Genealogical Research, Inc., 1987), Vol. I, p. 367. c) *Fichier Origine*, #310103, researchers: Christian Siguret, Gail Moreau-DesHarnais. d) Mark Drouillard, **Know Your Kin, The "ALL Drouillard" Family Website** <http://www.knowyourkin.com> ["According to Fr. C. Denissen and *The Askin Papers*, Simon was buried at Detroit, October 21, 1733, but there is no mention of this in the Ste. Anne of Detroit registers. He possibly was confused with a Simon Drouillard who was buried from Ste. Anne in October 1753. This latter Simon was supposedly around the age of 45 years at the time of his death in Détroit. We are not able to identify him."] e) Cyprien Tanguay, *Dictionnaire généalogique des familles canadiennes* 7 vols. (Montréal, Eusèbe Sénécal, 1871-1890), Vol. 3, p. 452. Fr. Tanguay states that Simon was buried September 21, 1753 at Detroit.

⁵ Michel Langlois, *Dictionnaire Biographique des Ancêtres Québécois (1608-1700) Lettres D à I* (Sillery: La Maison des Ancêtres, Inc., 1999), Tome II, p. 464.

⁶ Marriage Contract, 16 November 1698, Notary-Rogers.

⁷ Langlois, Tome II, p. 464. Thanks to Agathe Vaillancourt and Annette Robert for the translation.

⁸ *Programme de recherche en démographie historique (PRDH)* de l'Université de Montréal online: <http://www.genealogie.umontreal.ca>, #21576

⁹ Original research of Sharon Kelley shows several contracts: a) Hired [*engagé*] to the "upper country", 30 June 1728, Notary-Adhémar. Hired to "Missillimackinac," 23 April 1731, Notary-Adhémar. Hired to "Missilimackinac," 10 February 1735, Notary-Lepallieur. Hired to "St. Joseph," 16 May 1736, Notary-Lepallieur. Hired to "Détroit," 13 April 1737, Notary-Chevremont. Hired to "Missilimackinac," or to "Sault Ste. Marie," 20 December 1738, and 12 February 1739, Notary-Lepallieur. Hired to "Fort Pontchartrain of Détroit of Lake Érié," 2 June 1741, Notary-Adhémar. Hired to "Fort Pontchartrain of Détroit of Lake Érié," 3 May 1742, Notary-Adhémar. Hired to "Détroit," 2 May 1743, Notary-Adhémar. Hired to "Détroit," 10 June 1745, Notary-Simonnet. Also b) Antoine Roy,

One of his earliest, if not his first contract, was in June, 1728.¹⁰ He married **Elizabeth Rapin** on February 5, 1731 at Lachine.¹¹ So begins the participation of the Drouillard Family in the growth of the colony of New France, which the French called Canada.

Meanwhile, the growth of the new colony at Fort Pontchartrain was slow. Around 1730, however, numbers at the fort began to increase as *voyageurs* made their headquarters at Détroit. The increase of settlers at this time is reflected in the number of baptisms recorded at Ste. Anne's Church.

The first half of the eighteenth century along the Detroit River had witnessed some major changes to the area. A fort, a trading post, and an agricultural settlement had been firmly established on the north shore. In 1728, adjoining the Huron Village, a Jesuit mission was set up by Father Richardie on the north shore. In 1742, the village and mission moved to Bois Blanc and the nearby mainland. This site had to be abandoned after an Indian raid in 1747. It was not until 1748 that Father Richardie and his assistant, Father Potier, transferred the mission to the south shore.¹² The south shore, however, was still a wilderness inhabited by two tribes of Natives: the Ottawas and the Hurons.

IV. Settlers on the South Shore: Mid-1700s

In the spring of 1749, a proclamation was read in every parish along the St. Lawrence River. Every man who would settle at Détroit would be given land and provisions on condition that a "hearth and home" be established within a year. By the summer of 1749, twenty-two new settlers had arrived at Détroit. Imagine their hope and enthusiasm for their new lives in a new land. Among them was Jean Baptiste Drouillard, the father of Loyalist, François Drouillard, who was only eight years old at the time.¹³ On July 26, 1749, Jean Baptiste arrived at Détroit with his wife, **Elizabeth Rapin**, their five sons, and three daughters.¹⁴ Seven years later, Elizabeth Rapin, François' mother, remarried in February of 1756 to **Joseph Guignand dit St. Estienne** at Ste. Anne Détroit.¹⁵ What had become of Jean Baptiste? There is no record of his burial in the register of Ste. Anne Détroit. It is interesting to note that no definitive record of his father Simon's death has been found either. Would Jean Baptiste not have been a local militiaman for the Détroit River Region? Had he been fighting for New France as a *Canadien* militiaman against the British? Not all militiamen took part in attacks; some were needed to man the canoes laden with weapons, powder, and sufficient food for hundreds of men. This task was extremely onerous, but *Canadien voyageurs* were men accustomed from childhood to the rigours of canoeing and life in the woods. Jean Baptiste could have been one of these specialized militiamen.

In early 1753, the British started to build a fort at the confluence of the Allegheny and Ohio Rivers. The French troops soon arrived and forcibly removed the British. The French then completed the fort and named it Fort Duquesne. So began new hostilities between Britain and France in North America. The British sent Major General Edward Braddock from England to capture Fort Duquesne. On July 9, 1755, Braddock's army was defeated by the French. Both Braddock and the French commander, Daniel

Inventaire des Greffes des Notaires du Régime Français (Québec: Archives de la Province de Québec, 1950), XV, pp. 28, 42. c) Charles-Henri Dubé, ed., *Inventaire des Greffes des Notaires du Régime Français, François Lepallieur* (Québec, Ministère des Affaires Culturelles, Archives du Québec, 1973), XXV, pp. 70, 139, 336.

¹⁰ René Jetté, *Dictionnaire généalogique des familles du Québec des origines à 1730* (Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1983), p. 362.

¹¹ PRDH #115918.

¹² MHH, Vol. 12, #1, January 1991, p. 22.

¹³ Dennisen, Vol. I, p. 368.

¹⁴ Lajeunesse, p. 50; MHH, Vol. 29, #3, July 2008, p. 148.

¹⁵ Sharon A. Kelley, ed., *Marriage Records Ste. Anne Church Detroit 1701-1850*, (Detroit: Detroit Society for Genealogical Research, Inc., 2001), p. 11.

Liénard de Beaujeu, were killed in action. Chief Pontiac of the Ottawas fought on the side of France at Fort Duquesne and throughout the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), also known as the French and Indian War. In contemporary terms, it might be said that, at one point, Chief Pontiac and my Jean Baptiste were neighbours, living as such in close proximity to each other along the south bank of the Detroit River. Although the hostilities between France and Britain started in early 1754, and continued again in 1755, it was not until 1756 that war was officially declared by Britain. An important question remains: Did the events at Fort Duquesne in the summer of 1755 play a role in the disappearance of Jean Baptiste?

So as it was, hardly had these French settlers on the south shore of the Detroit River begun to feel secure in their possessions, wrested from the wilderness, when the Seven Years' War broke out in North America. After it came and went, that war had turned the world of the family of Jean Baptiste upside down. François was just fourteen-years-old when his father died.¹⁶ In April of 1757, at Montréal, Simon Amable Drouillard stipulated for his younger brother, François, and himself to hire out to Sieur Charles Barthe of Détroit, therefore carrying on the "family business" after the death of their father, Jean Baptiste.¹⁷

V. The Conquest of New France: The 1750s

In September of 1759, the most important battle in Canadian history took place on the Plains of Abraham along the north shore of the St. Lawrence River at present-day Québec City. Two armies of France and Britain squared off with the fate of New France in the balance. Whoever controlled Québec controlled the St. Lawrence. Whoever controlled the St. Lawrence controlled New France. Britain won the battle. New France was conquered.

Four years later, with the Treaty of Paris that ended the Seven Years' War in February of 1763, a defeated France relinquished all claims to its former colony except for two tiny unfortified fishing islands, Saint Pierre and Miquelon, located in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. When offered a choice by Britain, France chose to keep these islands and her fishing rights off Newfoundland and in the Gulf. Though unpopular with the British public, France's rich sugar-producing islands in the Caribbean, captured by Britain during the war, were restored to France. Indeed, France deemed them more valuable than Canada. Madame du Barry, the French king's mistress, disdainfully reflected the short-sighted value placed by many in France on her North American colony with contemptuous comments such as, "Nothing ever came from New France but my fur coat." With somewhat more exalted credibility came the French *philosophe* Voltaire's admonition, "Canada is a few acres of snow and not worth a soldier's bones."

It is little wonder that many of the French settlers living in the Canada of that time began, disappointedly to be sure, to question the value of their allegiance to a Monarchy which didn't appear, nor prove by its actions at the three-year peace conference, to want them. Assuredly one might conclude that all that these *Canadien* settlers had really wanted was to live in peace and raise their families under the protection of their king and country. After the fall of New France and the peace treaty that confirmed all its consequences, any hope for such positive prospects appeared to be most probable with the King of England, not the King of France.

¹⁶ PRDH #113301; Denissen, Vol. I, p. 368.

¹⁷ Thanks to Sharon Kelley for providing the following references held by the Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library: a) Montreal Notary Records. Transcription of Voyageur Contract dated 26 avril 1757, Notary-Simonet, pp. 4741 & 4742. b) MS Porteous John, *Diary of John Porteous*, (Journal of John Porteous from Schenectady to New York...to Mackinac, Mar. 15, 1765 to May 27, 1766), Vol. 3, p. 72. "Novem^r 25 arrived François Drouillard in four Boats with provisions from Detroit bro^t me some Callicoos and papers."

VI. British Military Rule and the Royal Proclamation: 1760-1763

Between 1759 and 1763, Britain maintained and enjoyed a peaceful *status quo* in its newly defined, far-flung North American Empire. The existing Thirteen "British" Colonies along the Atlantic coast to the south were pleased. The French threat to their security had been removed by the mother country, as they had demanded. British Military Rule over the conquered *Canadien* population to the north was tolerant and benevolent, allowing the two cultures, French and English, to coexist side by side unimpeded. This tranquil interlude, however, did not last long. It began to unravel with the passage by the British Parliament of the "Royal Proclamation in 1763."

In 1763, English-speaking, Protestant Britain turned its attention to the governance of its French-speaking, Catholic *Canadien* subjects. The Proclamation intended ultimately to make the French inhabitants of Québec British through assimilation. Use of British institutions, laws, customs, and the English language were to be enforced throughout Québec Colony.

Always, of course, one could neither ignore nor escape the presence, influence, and impact of the Native populations and their leaders. Most important of these Native leaders was Pontiac, Chief of the Ottawas. Natives of the Great Lakes region allied with the French. The French had fur posts in the area, but were never considered by the Natives as 'owning' the posts or the land. So, when the area transferred from French to British hands after the Conquest, tribes such as Pontiac's Ottawas were determined that British rule would not prevail over Native lands. Pontiac organized an alliance of Great Lakes' tribes to act against the British forts of the region. All British forts but two were simultaneously attacked and captured by the tribe in its area. Fort Pitt (originally Fort Duquesne) was one exception, and the other was in Pontiac's area, Fort Détroit. Pontiac's surreptitious plan of attack on Détroit was probably exposed to the British by Jacques Duperon Baby, a confidante of Pontiac. Other scenarios as to who spilled the beans to the British do exist. It appears, therefore, that no one really knows for certain. What we do know, however, is that during Pontiac's siege, which followed the botched plan of attack, the local French settlers continued to support the fort until Pontiac finally lifted his siege and retreated. The so-called 'Pontiac Conspiracy' was defeated, but its impact would later prove significant on a broader scale with the passing of the Québec Act in 1774.

Given the threat of the local Native tribes who were aroused and angered by the English, it must have been difficult for the French settlers. François Drouillard was a lieutenant in the local militia during what was called the 'Indian Wars' and served in many campaigns during the years of 1763-1765.¹⁸

On January 13, 1766, François married **Marie-Anne Villers dite St Louis**, the daughter of another family that came to Détroit in the 1749 migration.¹⁹ They obtained permission from the pastor of Ste. Anne, Détroit, to marry at the Church of the Hurons, "*en considération de la difficulté présenté du passage de la rivière*". The marriage is recorded in the Ste. Anne Register which states that François was a lieutenant in the Militia of the South Coast.²⁰ Two years after François' marriage, he purchased 3 x 40 arpents on

¹⁸ a) MS Canadian Archives, October 27, 1764, held by the Burton Historical Collecton, Detroit Public Library. This document is a roll of a company of Canadian Militia which were sent on special assignment to the western post on 27 August 1764 and returned in October. The document states that *de Rouillard* was the only one of the three officers who survived. He signed the document as francois Drouijar[d?]. Thanks to Gail Moreau-DesHarnais for sharing her research. b) Alexander Fraser, LL.D., *Eighteenth Report of the Department of Public Records and Archives of Ontario, 1929*, Sessional Paper No. 26, 1930, printed by order of The Legislative Assembly of Ontario (Toronto: Herbert H. Ball, 1930), p. 175.

¹⁹ Lajeunesse, p. 264; *MHH*, Vol. 29, #3, July 2008, p. 150.

²⁰ Kelley, p. 19.

the South Coast.²¹ In 1768, we find François living on the land with his new wife and their first daughter, Geneviève. They had four cows, a couple of hogs, and some wood.²²

Immediately following the Conquest, the British believed that in time the French of Québec Colony would adopt the British way of doing things. Also, by swamping the French culture with increased British immigration, they thought they could likewise hasten assimilation through the sheer strength of numbers. However, miscalculated policy decisions regarding their southern Thirteen Colonies moved Britain and all its North American Empire in a dramatic new direction. Within the two decades following the Conquest, English, French and Native cultures would challenge each other and British rule in what would ultimately come down to “A Question of Loyalty.”

VII. “A Question of Loyalty,” 1763-1774

If the abandonment of New France implicit in the terms of the 1763 Treaty of Paris was a good reason for *Canadiens* **not to** remain loyal to France, then the Québec Act of 1774 was arguably a good reason for them **to become** firmly loyal to their new ruler, Britain. From the beginnings of New France, the mother country's priorities and attention had favored the fur trade over settlement. Consequently, underpopulation was a chronic impediment to the success of the colony. On the other hand, New England's population was always many times greater than that of New France, with settlement being given the highest priority by the mother country. So much greater was its population, that the Thirteen Colonies were eager to expand westward into the ‘Indian Territory,’ a territory which Britain had established as part of the Royal Proclamation to pacify the Natives of the Ohio Valley after Pontiac's Rebellion. This restriction upon European expansion westward angered all the British Colonies, including Québec, whose westward expansion was also blocked in 1763. Finally came the Québec Act of 1774. In that year, an inept English King and Parliament moved once again to pass legislation intended to, in one way or another, manipulate the loyalty of her disparate North American subjects, both French and British.

VIII. The Québec Act: 1774

The Québec Act of 1774 was a critical spark that changed everything in North America. For the Thirteen Colonies, the Act was the most ‘intolerable’ of all. The British Government had already imposed a series of tax acts on them largely for the purpose of generating revenue to help pay for the Seven Years' War. Opposition to these tax acts was vigorous and grew throughout the early 1770s. On the other hand, to pacify and to elicit the allegiance of the *Canadiens* of Québec Colony, Britain chose to completely reverse its previous policy of assimilation as implied in the earlier Royal Proclamation of 1763.

The Québec Act guaranteed by statute the *Canadiens* their rights to the French language, their Catholic religion, their seigniorial system of land holding, and French civil law. Likewise, the western boundaries of Québec Colony were expanded to include the Indian Territory to the west, that very territory that the developing and crowded Thirteen Colonies so greatly coveted. The promise by Britain of an elected assembly was also scrapped for Québec Colony, thus denying that basic democratic tenet of British parliamentary rule for those British subjects living in Québec at the time, and for those British subjects who might emigrate to the colony now that it was under British rule. Protestant, English-speaking Britain was guaranteeing Catholic, French-speaking Québec a geo-political and cultural legitimacy in North America that indeed persists to the present day.

²¹ Lajeunesse, p. 319.

²² Lajeunesse, p. 63.

So, when the American Revolution began in 1775, the *Canadiens* for the most part sat on the sidelines, refusing to mount any significant opposition to their British conquerors who had chosen one year earlier to guarantee them their French culture. From their pulpits, Catholic priests also preached against helping the Americans during their Revolution. Undoubtedly, nothing angered the Americans more than the Québec Act, and one can't help but speculate how the course of North America's history might have turned without it.

IX. The American Revolution and François Drouillard UEL: 1775-1812

The story of the American Revolution certainly needs no telling here. The 1775 "...shot heard round the world" tore asunder Britain's vast North American Empire. At age thirty-four, François Drouillard was in his prime when that fateful clash of Empire and Colonies at 'Lexington and Concord' introduced a new chapter into the already busy biography of my fifth great-grandfather. The Peace of Paris, when signed in 1783, ended the Revolutionary War and created a new nation, stretching along the Atlantic seaboard south of the Great Lakes, and westward to the Mississippi River. The southern border of this new United States of America was Spanish Florida. To the north, a truncated British presence remained. Ironically, in the span of less than one generation, the mighty British Empire in North America had gained and retained French subjects by conquest, only to lose her own British subjects through revolution.

In 1775, Captain Henry Hamilton came to Détroit where he served as Lieutenant Governor from 1775 to 1778. Earlier in that same year Détroit was annexed to Québec. François Drouillard was commissioned by Governor Hamilton as a "Lieutenant of Militia" in 1777.²³ In December of 1783, François Drouillard purchased 4 x 40 arpents from Abbot and Saunders on the south shore of the Détroit River between the properties of Pierre Letourneau and Louis Villaire *dit* St. Louis.²⁴ In 1796, the British withdrew from Détroit, and the American forces took over command of the fort.

François had been born and baptized at *St. Joseph Rivière-des-Prairies*, New France in April of 1741.²⁵ He was a *voyageur*, farmer and militiaman. A few short months after the outset of the War of 1812, François died in September of that fateful year. He was seventy-one years old at that time and was buried at Assumption Church in Sandwich, Essex County, Western District, Upper Canada.²⁶ In his seventy-one years, he witnessed and survived the Seven Years' War, the Fall of New France, Pontiac's uprising, and the American Revolution.

X. United Empire Loyalist: To Be or Not To Be?

With the end of eight long years of hostilities in 1783, a defeated British King and Parliament wrestled with the expenses of their lost war. As compensation for those American colonists who had remained loyal to the Crown during and after the Revolution, and who had suffered losses of all kinds due to that loyalty, the British offered free "waste lands of the Crown" to them. These 'Loyalists' were also not to pay land fees of any kind. This privilege of both land and no fees was also extended to Loyalist sons and daughters. The Land Boards had to interpret the rules for the types of Loyalists and the ranks of Loyalists in regiments. Records and lists were kept. 'Militiamen of Detroit,' one particular type of Loyalist, were recognized as military claimants, but their children were not entitled to special privilege.

Lieutenant of Militia François Drouillard petitioned for a land grant in June of 1796, at Detroit. In June of 2005, his fifth great-granddaughter, Margaret Jacqueline Jeffrey, made application for certification of

²³ *Michigan Pioneer Historical Collections* (Lansing: Thorp & Godfrey, 1886), Vol. 9, p. 473.

²⁴ Lajeunesse, p. 328.

²⁵ PRDH #113301.

²⁶ Denissen, p. 369.

François' UEL status to the United Empire Loyalist Association. For whatever reason, he was not on the original UEL list. A 'Preponderance of Evidence' was therefore required by the UEL Association. The more I thought about it, the more I came to ponder reasons why this need for Preponderance was necessary. Why was he not on the original contemporary list? But then again, not many French were.

Nonetheless, in the end, the Preponderance, as compiled by Margaret Lewis, genealogist of the Bicentennial Branch of the UEL Association, clearly justified the inclusion and the definitive determination of François Drouillard UEL.

In closing, some of the more pertinent evidence as proffered by the Association is as follows:

#1. 8.2 Year - 1775

In November, 1775, Captain Henry Hamilton (1775-1778) came to Detroit as Lieutenant Governor. Under Hamilton, Detroit became Britain's main supply base for its Western military campaigns during the Revolutionary War. From Detroit, Captain (Governor) Henry Hamilton originated numerous attacks on frontier settlements in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia, Kentucky, and Indiana. The militia for these raiding parties was made up of British, French, Natives, loyal to the British Crown.²⁷

#2. 8.3 Public Records and Archives of Ontario Minutes of the Land Board, 28th June 1796 – Land Petitions

In the petition of François (Francis) Drouillard, it states he was commissioned by Governor Henry Hamilton as a Lieutenant of Militia in 1777 and took part in the Revolutionary War effort for the British. François had been a resident of Detroit some thirty-eight years in the course of which time he had served in many campaigns, particularly from the years 1763-1765, in the Indian War. Thus, he was valued for his military expertise and knowledge of the Indian Tribes. Also, in the Land Board minutes, it states that several certificates from Colonel McKee, Mr. Baby and other respectable gentlemen were presented with his petition giving "...the petitioner a most excellent character for loyalty and services and confirming everything set forth therein."

In answer to the petition of François (Francis) Drouillard, it was recommended that 1200 acres of land be granted to him. He had a wife and ten children. This petition for land was presented to the Hearing Committee consisting of Honourables Peter Russell, Chairman; Aeneas Shaw, John McGill, and D.W. Smith at Council Chamber, Garrison at York, dated 28 June 1796. The petition for 1200 acres for François (Francis) Drouillard was granted. François' son Denis also received 200 acres.²⁸ Lands granted were along Communication Road and westward to the Raleigh Line in Harwich Township, Kent County, Ontario.²⁹

See François' Petition, Figure #1.

²⁷ a) Peter Gavrilovich and Bill McGraw, eds., *The Detroit Almanac* (Detroit: Detroit Free Press, 2000), p. 259. b) Leland D. Baldwin, *The Stream of American History* (1953), pp. 217, 253.

²⁸ a) Fraser, p. 175. b) Fred Coyne Hamil, *The Valley of the Lower Thames, 1640-1850* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951, reprinted 1973), p. 28.

²⁹ a) Crown Lands Dept., RGI, C-1-3, Fiats, Old Regulations, Vol. 3, DO-DY, Item No. 3. b) Patents Book, Prior and up to 1940 inclusive, Harwich Township, Kent County, Ontario, Registry Office, Chatham.

To His Excellency John -
Davis Lunce Esquire, Lieutenant
Governor and Commander in
Chief of the Province of
Upper Canada, and Major -
General Commanding His
Majesty's Forces in the
N^o N^o in Council.

The Petition of Francis Drouillard,
of Detroit -

I Humbly Sheweth -

That your Petitioner is a -
resident of Detroit three thirty eight years past.
in the course of which time, he has served -
many Campaigns, and particularly from the -
year 1763, to 1765, in the Indian war -

That your Petitioner is burthened with
a Wife and ten Children, and being a Farmer
by Profession, is intreated to hope, your
Excellency will be pleased to grant him -
such quantity of the Waste Lands of the
Crown as to your Excellency may seem
meet. - And your Petitioner will ever pay

Detroit, 1st of June, 1796. - Francis Drouillard

Figure # 1

XI. Justification

Going all the way back to the years immediately following the American Revolution itself, discussion and/or controversy has abounded as to who may bear the title of UE. Indeed, when asked to make a presentation on my ancestor, François Drouillard UEL, some friends and colleagues queried as to why a French Catholic living in the Detroit River Region, such as he, and others such as he, should be so honoured. To that I say this in brief.

Sir Guy Carleton, Governor of British North America, addressed the question of Loyalists in general in 1789. He determined,

“Those Loyalists who have adhered to the Unity of the Empire, and joined the Royal Standard before the year 1783, all their children and their Descendants by either Sex, are to be distinguished by the following Capitals, affixed to their names: U.E. alluding to their great principle the Unity of the Empire.”

Carleton's determination was challenged and altered by Québec's Executive Council ten years later. However, a memorandum attached to that same Council's decision stated the following:

“Canadian-born military men and volunteers were in a special category. Like the other colonies, the Province had been subjected to propaganda, invasion and fifth column infiltration from the south. Therefore those of its citizens who took up arms in its defense were identical to those Loyalists of the southern Colonies, the only difference being that the Crown forces of Québec ultimately defeated the American revolutionaries. Whether they were French, British, Native, or other background, who took their place under the Royal Standard before 1783, adhered to the Unity of Empire.”

So be it. François Drouillard was the proudly acknowledged fifth great-grandfather and United Empire Loyalist ancestor of Margaret Jacqueline Jeffrey UE.

Loyalist Ancestor Information

Loyalist Ancestor	François Drouillard
Military Service	Commission granted by Gov. Hamilton in 1777
Rank & Regiment	Lieutenant of Militia, Detroit, British Territory
Where Settled	Along Communication Rd. Between Chatham and Lake Erie. Lots 11 & 12 on River La Tranche (Thames River) Kent County, Upper Canada.

The following are the first four ancestors of Margaret Jeffrey UE starting with her 2nd great-grandfather, Alexis Desjardins.

2nd Great-Grandparents

Father	Alexis Desjardins	Son of	Guillaume Desjardins Marie Louise Drouillard
Place of Birth	Walpole Island, Canada West	Date	13 February 1839
Married at	Assumption Church, Sandwich, Upper Canada	Date	28 August 1860
Residence	Sandwich East, Essex County, Ontario	Occupation	Farmer
Place of Burial	Ste. Anne's Church Cemetery, Tecumseh, Ontario	Death Date & Place	1924 Riverside, Ontario
Mother	Hélène Soulière	Daughter of	François Soulière Rose Paré

Occupation	Homemaker		
Place of Birth	Sandwich, Canada West	Date	11 April 1845
Place of Burial	Ste. Anne's Church Cemetery, Tecumseh, Ontario	Death Date & Place	24 November 1923 Tecumseh, Ontario
Children and Spouses	Ignace Emma-Maxime Revait George-Elizabeth Chêne Nallée-Alfred LaPorte Louissey-Emery Lebert Adolphe-Pauline Renaud		Florence-William Gardner <u>Adele-Joseph Girard</u> Zoe-Joseph Groulx Christopher- Delaide Renaud Marguerite-Henri Maître

3rd Great-Grandparents

Father	Guillaume Desjardins	Son of	Guillaume Desjardins Marguerite Fontane
Place of Birth	Thames River, Upper Canada	Date	Mid-January, 1802
Married at	Assumption Church, Sandwich, Upper Canada	Date	23 May 1826
Residence	Sud Island (Walpole Island) Canada West	Occupation	Farmer
Place of Burial	Ste. Anne's Church Cemetery, Tecumseh, Essex County, Ontario	Death Date & Place	14 July 1893 Tecumseh, Ontario
Mother	<u>Marie Louise Drouillard</u>	Daughter of	<u>Alexis Drouillard</u> Cécile Godet <i>dite</i> Marentette
Occupation	Homemaker		
Place of Birth	Assumption Church, Sandwich, Upper Canada	Date	16 June 1808
Place of Burial	Ste. Anne's Church Cemetery, Tecumseh, Ontario	Death Date & Place	23 April 1892 Tecumseh, Ontario
Children and Spouses	M. Louise-Jean Baptiste Sulière Julia-François Sulière B. William-Victoria Sulière Cécile-François Sulière Archange-Léon Sulière Jacques-Marie Sulière		August-Virginia West Patrick <u>Alexis-Helene Sulière</u> François-Emélie Cécile Eulalie Virginie-Jacques Sulière Note Sulière became Soulière in later generations.

4th Great-Grandparents

Father	Alexis Drouillard	Son of	François Drouillard Marie Anne Villers <i>dite</i> St. Louis
Place of Birth	Assumption Parish South Shore, Détroit	Date	05 October 1776
Married at	Assumption Parish, Sandwich, Upper Canada	Date	26 August 1799
Residence	Sud Island (Walpole Island) Kent County, Upper Canada	Occupation	Farmer
Place of Burial	Ste. Anne's Church Cemetery, Tecumseh, Ontario	Death Date & Place	07 March 1870 Tecumseh, Ontario

Mother	Cécile Godet <i>dite</i> Marentette	Daughter of	Joseph Godet Jeanne Pilet
Occupation	Homemaker		
Place of Birth	Assumption Parish, South Shore, Détroit	Date	02 June 1777
Place of Burial	Assumption Parish Sandwich, Essex County, Ontario	Death Date & Place	10 February 1858 Sandwich, Ontario
Children and Spouses	Marie Anne Marie Jeanne-Antoine Dragon Alexander-1 st Pélagie Drouillard 2 nd Sarah Zoe Girard François-Rosalie Gelina		<u>Marie Louise-Guillaume Desjardins</u> Joseph-Thérèse Gelina Laurent-Félicité Cadet Cécile-Jacques Pilette Anastassie

5th Great-Grandparents

Father	François Drouillard	Son of	Jean Baptiste Drouillard Elizabeth Rapin
Place of Birth	Saint Joseph, Riviere-des-Prairies, New France	Date	11 April 1741
Married At	Huron Mission Church South Coast, Détroit	Date	13 January 1766
Residence	South Coast of Détroit and Lots 11 & 12 Thames River, Kent County, Upper Canada	Occupation	Farmer, Voyageur, Militiaman
Place of Burial	Assumption Church Cemetery Sandwich, Essex County, Upper Canada	Death Date & Place	23 September 1812 Sandwich, Essex County, Upper Canada
Mother	Marie Anne Villers <i>dite</i> St. Louis	Daughter of	Louis Villers <i>dit</i> St. Louis M. Joseph Morin
Occupation	Homemaker		
Place of Birth	South Coast of Détroit, New France	Date	13 February 1749
Place of Burial	Assumption Church Cemetery, Sandwich, Upper Canada	Death Date & Place	25 July 1827 Sandwich, Upper Canada
Children and Spouses	Geneviève- 1 st Ridley 2 nd James Arcouet François Soloman-Marie Joseph LeDuc Denis-Catherine Rouin Marguerite-J.B.Letourneau <u>Alexis-Cecile Godet dite</u> <u>Marentette</u>		Cécile-Augustin Roy François Xavier-Margaret Fairchild Susanne-Joseph André dit Clark Marie Archange-Hippolyte Janis Basilisse Thomas-Mary Ann (Polly) Wilcox

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