

## New England Descendants of Philippe Aubert de Gaspé

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Philippe-Joseph Aubert de Gaspé (henceforth, simply “de Gaspé”) was born in Quebec City, Canada in 1786, the son of Pierre-Ignace Aubert de Gaspé, an army officer and seigneur of St-Jean-Port-Joli, a village on the south shore of the St. Lawrence River about 60 miles downstream from Quebec City<sup>1</sup>. De Gaspé’s ancestors include several of the most illustrious families of New France, among them his great-great grandfather, Charles Aubert de la Chesnaye (1632-1702), a wealthy fur trader who was ennobled by Louis XIV in 1693<sup>2</sup>.

De Gaspé’s life started auspiciously. Unusually for a French-Canadian, he was educated by both French and English-speaking teachers and studied law with Jonathan Sewell, a Loyalist lawyer, then judge, in Quebec City. He was called to the Bar in 1811 and appointed Sheriff of Quebec in 1816. However, he was careless with money and after a long trial was found guilty of misuse of government funds, which led to his being dismissed as Sheriff in 1822<sup>3</sup>. For the next 16 years, he lived in fear of being jailed for his debts, which finally happened in 1838. An Act of Parliament was necessary for him to be freed in 1841<sup>4</sup>.

Upon his release from jail, he retreated to his family’s manor. He had married in 1811 Suzanne Allison, the daughter of Thomas Allison, a British Army officer, and they had four sons and nine daughters, all of whom reached adulthood.

From an early age, he took interest in literature and history, and was well read in both French and English. He frequented many of Quebec City’s intellectuals and was a founder of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, whose library, somewhat ironically, is now in the building that housed the prison in which he spent his painful four years. In 1863, when he was 75, he published *Les Anciens Canadiens*, (soon translated as *Canadians of Old*) an autobiographical historical novel set around the time of the Conquest of Canada by the British and based on his own family history<sup>5</sup>.

With its mix of adventure, heroism, romance, vivid descriptions of relations between the social classes in 18<sup>th</sup> Century Canada, and retellings of old legends, not to mention an encounter with a witch reminiscent of a certain Scottish play, *Les Anciens Canadiens* was an immediate success. Translated into English the following year, it has had over 25 editions in French, English and Spanish and is still in print<sup>6</sup>. A book of reminiscences, *Mémoires*, followed in 1866.<sup>7</sup>

### De Gaspé’s Descendants

Until recently, it was believed that de Gaspé had no living descendants in the male line<sup>8</sup>. His eldest son, Philippe-Ignace (1814-1841), French Canada’s first novelist, died unmarried while his father was in jail<sup>9</sup>. The second son, Thomas, was a priest<sup>10</sup>. The fourth, Alfred, a civil servant who became his father’s literary executor, married and had two daughters and

one son who died unmarried in 1909<sup>11</sup>. This leaves Pierre-Edouard Aubert de Gaspé (1822-1862), the third son, who married Adélaide Caron on 21 July 1846 in nearby L'Islet and had five daughters and five sons who reached adulthood, all born in L'Islet or St-Jean-Port-Joli: Pierre-Edouard (b. 3 Aug 1848), Philippe (b. 18 May 1850), Alfred (b. 24 July 1853), Thomas (b. 23 Oct 1854), and Charles (b. 17 Aug 1858). One son, Joseph Alphonse (b. 24 Dec 1860, d. 10 Mar 1866, L'Islet ) died in infancy<sup>12</sup>.

In his genealogy of the Aubert de Gaspé family published in 1907, Pierre-Georges Roy, the first archivist of Quebec, shows no descendants of any of the sons. He writes that Pierre-Edouard lived in Bridgeport, Connecticut, Philippe died unmarried in Pittsburgh on 25 December 1890, Thomas settled in the United States, and Charles died in Bridgeport on 24 June 1890<sup>13</sup>. Although we will see most of this information is correct, other parts, particularly the lack of descendants, misled genealogists for a long time.

Recently, however, Yves Drolet published that Thomas married Séraphine Labranche on 16 May 1876 in L'Islet, that they emigrated to Saginaw, Michigan and then to Lewiston, Maine, and had four children, including a son, George Edward Degaspe (b. 17 Jun 1897, Lewiston, Maine-d. 31 Jul 1975, Methuen, Massachusetts), who married Carrie Agnes May in 1923 in Methuen, and have descendants to this day by the name Degaspe<sup>14</sup>.

This, however, is only the beginning of the story, as we will see that Pierre-Edouard's other four adult sons spent time in the United States, with three dying there and two having male descent to this day. Finding them was the result of trying to confirm Roy's reports, and a bit of luck.

As Roy indicated in his genealogy, Charles died in Bridgeport in 1890. A search for his death records revealed his probate records, under the name of Charles Aubert. His eldest brother Pierre-Edouard, now calling himself P. Edward Aubert, acted as executor of the estate. Charles had not left a will, and the probate records contain the names and residences of his next-of-kin, who are listed as<sup>15</sup>:

| Names                                     | Residences       | Relationship |
|---|------------------|--------------|
| <b>P. Edward Aubert</b>                   | Bridgeport, Conn | Bro          |
| <b>Phillip Aubert</b>                     | Pittsfield, Mass | Bro          |
| <b>Alfred Aubert</b>                      | Canada           | Bro          |
| <b>Thomas Aubert</b>                      | Michigan         | Bro          |
| <b>Adelaide Morin, w. of [sic]</b>        | Quebec, Can      | Sister       |
| <b>Susan Belanger, widow</b>              | Canada           | Sister       |
| <b>Elmira, w. of Quiqueran de Beaujeu</b> | Canada           | Sister       |

All of this is consistent with Roy's description, except that Phillip Aubert is shown as a resident of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, not Pittsburgh, presumably the one in Pennsylvania.

There are no remaining records from the US Census of 1890, the year of the probate, but -- and this is where the luck comes in -- the 1880 Census of Sandisfield, Berkshire County, Massachusetts (less than 30 miles south of Pittsfield) reveals the following household:

| Name                  | Relationship | Age | Occupation    | Place of Birth | Place of birth of Father | Place of Birth of Mother |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----|---------------|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Obert, Edward</b>  |              | 32  | Collier       | Canada         | Canada                   | Canada                   |
| <b>Obert, Emma</b>    | Wife         | 28  | Keeping house | Canada         | Canada                   | Canada                   |
| <b>Obert, Alma</b>    | Daughter     | 6   |               | Mass           | Canada                   | Canada                   |
| <b>Obert, Edward</b>  | Son          | 4   |               | Mass           | Canada                   | Canada                   |
| <b>Obert, Almiran</b> | Son          | 2   |               | Mass           | Canada                   | Canada                   |
| <b>Obert, Phillip</b> | Brother      | 29  |               | Canada         | Canada                   | Canada                   |
| <b>Obert, Alfred</b>  | Brother      | 23  | Collier       | Canada         | Canada                   | Canada                   |

The three adult males thus appear to be three out of Charles's four older living brothers (Thomas is missing, but he is known to have been then living in Michigan), along with Edward's wife and three children, and all have taken the name Obert<sup>16</sup>. Charles himself is not with them.

The name Obert is not a whim of the census taker, as it will be used consistently by Edward and Philip, as we will refer to them from now on, and their descendants.

So going back to the beginning, all the brothers appear in the 1871 census of Canada in L'Islet, with their mother and sisters, their father having died on 22 Nov 1862 in St-Jean-Port-Joli<sup>17</sup>. In the 1900 United States census, Edward says he arrived in the United States in 1870, and the first child of his we know about was born in Sept 1874. Unlike his younger brothers Philip and Alfred, he was not a witness at either the burial of their grand-father Philippe Aubert de Gaspé in early 1871 or that of their mother Adélaide Caron in Dec 1872, so he likely left as late as 1873, but possibly as early as 1870, which would have been before the settlement of his grand-father's estate, to which we will return below<sup>18</sup>. Alfred and Philip certainly did not leave till 1873, and possibly as late as 1879 or 1880.

By 1883, Edward and Philip appear in the city directory of Bridgeport as ice peddlers<sup>19</sup>. Edward was to spend the rest of his life in Bridgeport, employed by the Housatonic Ice Company and then by the Sprague Ice and Coal Company till his death on 14 May 1906 in Stratford, Connecticut, where he is recorded as "Count Peter Edward Aubert"<sup>20</sup>. Philip returned to Pittsfield by 1890 and appears in directories there as a teamster till his death in 1894<sup>21</sup>.

Alfred, who lived with his brothers in Sandisfield, also went with them to Bridgeport, but returned to Canada by 1890, as noted in his brother Charles's probate. He died unmarried in St-Grégoire, Québec on 26 June 1916<sup>22</sup>.

Charles joined his brothers in Bridgeport by 1884, and worked there as a hostler till his death in 1890. His probate records confirm he never married<sup>23</sup>.

We'll now look into the two New England branches of the Aubert de Gaspé family that left descendants called Obert: first that of Edward Obert, centered in Bridgeport, then that of Philip Obert, around Pittsfield.

### The Family of Edward Obert

As we saw in the 1880 census, around 1872 Edward married Emma, born in Canada around 1853. We will return later to her possible identity. No marriage record has been found, but in the 1900 Census of Bridgeport, she is said to have married in 1870 and had 11 children, with 5 still living. The ones who were named in the 1880 census are:

- Alma, b. 1 Sep 1874 in Williamstown, Berkshire, MA, and d. in 1881 in Pittsfield<sup>24</sup>.
- Edward Joseph, b. 19 May 1876 in Pittsfield, and d. 18 Mar 1941 in Gorham, New Hampshire. He married in 1876 Ellen (Nellie) Cook (1876-1959), and they had a daughter, Florence E (1876-1959) who married in 1930 Almon Phineas Woodin (1898-1970). The Woodins had a daughter Ellen (1934-2005).
- Almiran (in census as a boy, but who does not appear anywhere else) was likely Sarah Almira (Sadie), b. 18 Sep 1878 in Pittsfield and d. 9 Jul 1964 in Bridgeport. She married Oscar F Knablin (1880-1962), a musician, and they had a daughter, Helen (1899-1973).

In the 1900 Census in Bridgeport, Edward and Emma appear under the name O'Belt, with two additional children:

- James C, b. ca 1880 in Connecticut.
- Thomas R, b Aug 1891 in Connecticut, d. 1928-1930 in Bridgeport. He married around 1917 in Bridgeport Catherine (1893-1964) and they had a son William E (1918-29 Oct 1959). William married about 1945 in Bridgeport Adeline Piazza. In 1953 they owned a restaurant there, but were divorced soon thereafter.

Three or four of the children named above were alive in 1920. One other possibility, about whom we know a lot except the name of his parents, is

- Charles Alphonse, whose birth appears on both his WWI and WWII draft registration records as 28 Oct 1880 in Colebrook, Connecticut, although no record of it has been found in either Colebrook or nearby Winsted. He then lived in Bridgeport, employed by Sikorsky Aircraft until his death there in 1947. He married in New York on 21 Feb 1901 Louise Waldhouse and they had two sons, Edward Jules

(1903-1949) and Charles H (1914-1997). Edward Jules married Beatrice ca 1924 and had several sons: Edward J, b. 1925, Robert Nelson, b. 1927, and Harold M, b. 1928, and one daughter Jane, b. 1930. Charles H, who was a supervisor in the industrial photography department at Sikorsky Aircraft, married in the 1940s and also had children. Although Charles Alphonse's parents have not been found, from census records, they were French-Canadian. All the other Oberts of Canadian descent we have found in Western Massachusetts and Connecticut have been related to one of the brothers. Also, his name and those of his sons are common in the de Gaspé family (Alphonse was the name of Pierre-Edouard's youngest son, who died young). If he is related to the de Gaspé Oberts, this would indicate that the family stopped in Colebrook in late 1880 on its way from Sandisfield to Bridgeport.

There are to this day Oberts living in Bridgeport and surrounding area.

#### **The origins of Edward Obert's wife, Emma Beland**

Although Quebec has quite complete and accessible vital records, it is not easy to determine with certainty the origin of Edward's wife. She appears in US records mostly as Emma, but occasionally as Anna or Almira. Her family name appears mostly as Beland, Ballan, and once as Poulit. Belan(d) or Bellan(d) are the obvious related French family names, and the first names would be Emma, Anna, Anne, Elmire and Almira. Less closely related names would be Aurélie, Eléonore, Delina, Delima, and Amanda.

I have found eight women born in Quebec of those names in the decade preceding 1858, when she would have been 16 at the birth of her first known child, and which includes Oct 1854 which is reported as her birth date in the 1900 US Census<sup>25</sup>. Six of these women can be excluded as having been married or died in Quebec at times inconsistent with what we know of Emma. This leaves two candidates. The first is Emma Béland, born in Sorel, Québec on 8 Sept 1856, the daughter of Pierre Béland, a merchant, and Rose Cournoyer. I can find nothing more about her or her parents, in either Canada or the United States. The second candidate is Emma Valeda Béland, born 20 Oct 1853 in Quebec City, daughter of François-Xavier Beland and Louise Déry. I have found no marriage or death for this Emma in Quebec. She appears with her parents and six siblings in the 1871 Canada census in Sorel, but in no later Canadian census. Her father, who was born in 1837, is also not found in any Canadian census, but neither can I find him in a US census, nor can I find his death. Her mother appears as a widow in the 1881 and 1891 Canadian censuses. Several, but not all, her siblings married in Canada. This leaves open the possibility that the family emigrated shortly after the 1871 Canada census, Emma married, her father died, and the rest of the family returned to Canada. Given the lack of a record of Emma and Edward's marriage in Massachusetts, they might both have emigrated to somewhere else, married there, and then moved to the Pittsfield area. This case clearly requires more investigation.

## The Family of Philip Obert

Philip Obert's family is easier to track than his brother's, largely because we do have a record of a marriage between him, age 20, son of Edward and Adelaide, dated 29 July 1880 in Pittsfield, and Delia Benoit, age 23, daughter of Andrew and Elmira, with both parties born in Canada. Philip and Delia had two children in Pittsfield before moving to Bridgeport for a few years (1883-1889), then returning to Pittsfield until Philip's death on 24 Dec 1894. Delia remarried, to John Carr, in Pittsfield 5 Oct 1903 and they adopted a child in 1908. Carr was a widower by 1940, so she must have died after 1930.

Philip Obert and Delia Benoit had the following children:

- Phyllis, b. and d. 5 May 1881 in Pittsfield.
- Almira, b. 16 Oct 1882 and d. 11 Aug 1902, both in Pittsfield. She did not marry.
- Florence, b. 29 Nov 1886 in Bridgeport and d. 3 Nov 1972 in Pittsfield. She married Lorenzo Paul Hinckley about 1910 in Pittsfield and they had five children.
- Philip Jr, b 8 Jun 1891 and d. Mar 1969 in Pittsfield. He and his descendants went by the name O'Bert. He married Ruby Clark (1901-2001) about 1919 in Pittsfield and they had two daughters, Lilian Delia (1920-2000), and Elmira Florence (1921-2002), and one son, Philip Lewis O'Bert (1923-2006). Philip Lewis married Jessie Hatch and Eleanor Guyette and had several children who are probably still living.
- Elma (or Alma) b. 6 Aug 1894 in Pittsfield. She married 24 Dec 1910 George John Wick (1890-1964) and they had 10 children. She d. in 1966 in Pittsfield.

There are to this day Oberts living in Pittsfield.

### The origins of Philip Obert's wife, Delia Benoit

At her marriage to Philip Obert, Delia Benoit (anglicized to Bennett) records her parents as Andrew and Elmira<sup>26</sup>. Andrew Bennett died in Pittsfield on 21 August 1887 at age 73. Andrew Bennett and Elmire Baron also appear as parents in the marriages of Andrew Jr Bennett to Mary Gregory in Pittsfield on 30 Sept 1883, of Ida Bennett to Philip White in nearby Dalton, on 20 June 1886 (although his name is recorded as Felix), and of Matilda Bennett to Joseph Buckwheat in Dalton on 2 May 1886. On their marriage records, Andrew Jr is said to be born about 1861 in Canada, while Ida and Matilda were born in 1865 and 1866 in Pittsfield, which would mean that Andrew Benoit and Elmire Baron would have immigrated between 1861 and 1865.

There is an André Benoit, born 18 Sept 1816 at Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Rouville, Quebec, son of Charles Benoit and Josephite Gaboury, who married Elmire Baron on 3 Mar 1855 at Saint-Damase, Quebec. Elmire was born 2 May 1834 at Saint-Damase, daughter of Jean-Baptiste Baron and Sophie Goyette. There are records for two children of Andrew and Elmire in Saint-Damase between 1856 and 1859, including the Andrew/André mentioned above; they then had a daughter in Saint-Césaire, a few miles away. But nowhere can I find a record of Delia's birth!

In various US census records, Delia's birth appears as between 1855 and 1858. Although there is little doubt that André Benoit and Elmire Baron are the immigrants we are looking for, Delia's missing birth record is a puzzle. There are, however, two possibilities. The first is a birth record of a daughter named Valérie Philomène Benoit, born on 5 June 1856 in Saint-Damase. I have found no trace of her in either Canada or the United States. Did Delia change her first name? A less likely prospect is a birth for a Delia Benoit in Saint-Césaire on 30 Oct 1858, but the daughter of Elie Benoit and Tharsile Harnois. There were several Benoit families in Saint-Césaire, and Elie and Andrew are not closely related. Neither men nor their wives could sign, so a mistake by the local parish priest in the records might not have been detected. Elie and his family also moved to Massachusetts, but in Worcester, in the early 1870s. Delia would have been in her early teens then and would likely have come with them. But I have found no trace of her in the United States (although there are several other Delia Benoits in Massachusetts).

### Why did the Oberts emigrate?

The Oberts descend from one of the most illustrious families in Quebec, who had been landowners for two centuries and intermarried into several wealthy families. Why did they decide to join the 900,000 French-Canadians who emigrated to the United States between 1840 and 1930<sup>27</sup>?

I suggest there were three related reasons. Scions of wealthy families can often lead comfortable lives simply living off the income from the family's capital. As we will see, for a variety of reasons, the capital of the Aubert de Gaspé family dwindled during de Gaspé's life, and what was left was distributed among a large number of beneficiaries. Second, although Philippe-Edouard received some education from his father, that was not sufficient for him to be able to earn a living that would allow his family to lead an upper-middle-class lifestyle, for example in the military or the liberal professions, and this was also the case for his sons. Finally, the economic situation in Quebec encouraged laborers from rural areas to migrate to the cities, in particular to those of New England.

When he was released from jail, de Gaspé was committed to paying back outstanding debts of £1,179<sup>28</sup>. A bond of £7,000 had been posted on his behalf by his son-in-law William Power and a friend<sup>29</sup>. He also needed to support his wife and the nine children who were still at home, between the ages of 4 and 24. He could no longer practice law and his resources were limited. Starting in 1812, as his legal problems were beginning, and through the rest of their lives, both his parents sheltered the family's assets from his creditors by repeatedly modifying their wills so that after their deaths – his father died in 1823 and his mother in 1842 – ownership of their assets would pass directly to their grandchildren, while de Gaspé would only receive the income from those assets, mostly rents from land and fees from the use of the seigneurial mills<sup>30</sup>.

Pierre-Edouard was particularly hurt by his grandparents' wills. Traditionally in Quebec, seigneuries were passed to the eldest son. He should have thus become the designated heir



to the seigneurie after the death in 1841 of de Gaspé's eldest son, Philippe-Ignace. He was even called co-seigneur during his father's lifetime<sup>31</sup>. But after the change in the wills, he got no more than any of his siblings.

The next blow to the family was the abolition of the seigneurial regime in 1854. Farmers were given the right to buy the land they leased and relieved of the obligation to grind their grain at the seigneurial mill. Those who did not wish to buy could continue to rent. The seigneur got to keep his manor and the land in his immediate possession, as well as any unleased lands. The government assessed the seigneurie of St-Jean-Port-Joli at \$30,145 and the neighboring La Pocatière at \$9,600<sup>32</sup>.

No longer a seigneur, de Gaspé leased all the land except for a small lot surrounding the manor house to Pierre-Edouard who held it till his death in 1862, whereupon his wife and children moved to the neighboring village of L'Islet, presumably to be nearer to her family, and the new lessee agreed to provide them with transportation and food<sup>33</sup>. Pierre-Edouard's sons, then between the ages of 8 and 14, no longer had rights to any land.

The publication of de Gaspé's books, and the income they provided, all came after Pierre-Edouard's death. Alfred Aubert de Gaspé, the youngest son, received the rights to *Mémoires* in 1865 and to *Les Anciens Canadiens* in 1885<sup>34</sup>.

De Gaspé's wife, Susanne Allison, had died in 1847, and the last of his daughters at home married in 1869. Thereafter, the former seigneur spent his summers in Rimouski, with one of his daughters, Susanne, the widow of William Power, who had been a lawyer and judge. His winters were spent in Quebec, at the house of another daughter, Elmire, the wife of Andrew Stuart, also a lawyer and judge, later Chief Justice of Quebec and knighted in 1887. This is where he died on 29 January 1871, at the age of 84<sup>35</sup>.

As provided by de Gaspé's father's will, the estate assets were now to be divided among 12 heirs. Castonguay describes the settling of the estate thus:

For reasons likely attributable to their number and their personalities, [the heirs] decided to part with them. On 15 July 1872 the manor-house and seigneurial domain were sold; the following 22 February the family gave up the water-mill on Rivière Trois-Saumons. These sales marked the end of an important dynasty at Saint-Jean-Port-Joli. [Great-grandfather] Pierre-Ignace, who was one of its most eminent figures, had succeeded in preventing a potential attachment of his seigneuries, but not in avoiding this unfortunate outcome<sup>36</sup>.

The sale yielded about \$30,000, each branch of the family getting about \$2,500<sup>37</sup>. Divided equally, each of Pierre-Edouard's eight living children would get about \$300.

At this point, the brothers had no land, but a bit of capital. As best we know, they had received some education. They could read and write, but, unlike their grandfather de Gaspé, they had not had the privilege of an education that would have enabled them to enter the liberal professions or commerce.



Why move to New England? During the 50 years before the brothers' emigration, the population of Quebec had almost tripled, with most of that growth in rural areas. Farm land in the St. Lawrence valley was oversubscribed and the land available in outlying regions such as the Laurentians and the Saguenay was not as suitable to agriculture. Shipping and lumber, the mainstays of the economy of nearby Quebec City were in decline<sup>38</sup>. Montreal was becoming the industrial center of the province but industrial jobs in New England paid better (as much as \$2 a day<sup>39</sup>) and many already had thriving French-Canadians communities<sup>40</sup>. Their inheritance at least provided them with a nest egg allowing them to travel and settle in their new land.

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<sup>1</sup> Over 200 books and articles have been written concerning de Gaspé. A good summary of his life in English is Luc Lacourcière, "AUBERT DE GASPÉ, PHILIPPE-JOSEPH," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 10, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed June 11, 2016, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/aubert\\_de\\_gaspe\\_philippe\\_joseph\\_10E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/aubert_de_gaspe_philippe_joseph_10E.html)

<sup>2</sup> Yves F. Zoltvany, "AUBERT DE LA CHESNAYE, CHARLES," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed June 11, 2016, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/aubert\\_de\\_la\\_chesnaye\\_charles\\_2E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/aubert_de_la_chesnaye_charles_2E.html).

<sup>3</sup> De Gaspé has been a beloved figure of Canadian history, and for a long time, the details of the actions that led to his ruin were not much written about. Lacourcière, *op.cit.* provides one account. A more critical one can be found in Roger Le Moine, "Philippe Aubert de Gaspé ou les affaires du "bon gentilhomme"", *Cahier des Dix*, no 57, 2003, p. 299-321. De Gaspé himself defends his behavior through the words of the marginally fictional M. d'Egmont, the "bon gentilhomme" in chapter 10 of *Les Anciens Canadiens*.

<sup>4</sup> Jacques Castonguay, *Philippe Aubert de Gaspé, Seigneur et Homme de Lettres*, Québec: Septentrion, 1991, p 105.

<sup>5</sup> Philippe Aubert de Gaspé, *Les Anciens Canadiens*, Québec: G. and G.E. Desbarats, 1863, revised 1864. In English translation: *Canadians of Old*, translated by Charles G.D. Roberts, Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1864. <https://archive.org/details/canadiansold00gaspgooq>, accessed 18 June 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Castonguay, p 144.

<sup>7</sup> Philippe Aubert de Gaspé, *Mémoires*, Ottawa: G.E. Desbarats, 1866. <http://beq.ebooksgratuits.com/pdf/Gaspe-memoires.pdf>, accessed 25 June 2016.

<sup>8</sup> This is reflected, for example, in Yves Drolet, *Genealogical Tables of the Quebec Noblesse*, Montreal, 2009. <http://www.shrt.qc.ca/PDF/20070317.pdf>. Accessed 11 June 2016.

<sup>9</sup> Lacourcière.

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<sup>10</sup> Pierre-Georges Roy, *La Famille Aubert de Gaspé*, Québec, 1907, p. 163-165.

<sup>11</sup> Castonguay, p 166

<sup>12</sup> Roy, *ibid*

<sup>13</sup> Roy, *ibid*

<sup>14</sup> Yves Drolet, Notule Généalogique 111, Les derniers Aubert de Gaspé, *Mémoires de la Société Généalogique Canadienne-Française*, vol 66, no 4, cahier 286, hiver 2015. George Edward's birth appears on his WWI and WWII draft registration cards and his death in Methuen, Massachusetts. George had two sisters who also left descendants in the United States. Emma Séraphine de Gaspé, b. 14 Dec 1877 in Lévis, married (1) Edgar Bégin (1871-1904) in Lewiston, Maine and they had 8 children. She then (2) married and divorced Frank Bonneau, and married (3) Arthur Guay. Mabel Degaspe, b. 4 Nov 1890 in Cheboygan, Michigan, married (1) Alphonse Deschenes on 2 May 1910 in Lewiston ME, divorced in 1917, married (2) Lester George Temple on 9 Feb 1918 in Manchester, NH, and had a daughter Jeannette. Mabel divorced around 1925 and died after 1940, probably in New Hampshire, where she owned a beauty parlor in 1940. [United States Censuses 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930; BMD records and city directories in Quebec, Michigan, Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts; City directories; US Social Security Index, all at ancestry.com].

<sup>15</sup> Connecticut, Wills and Probate Records, 1609-1999. Hartford, Atherton-Barnum,P, p. 311, ancestry.com.

<sup>16</sup> 1880 United States Federal Census, Sandisfield, Berkshire MA, Roll: 520; Family History Film: 1254520; Page: 580D; Enumeration District: 038; Image: 0643. Ancestry.com.

<sup>17</sup> 1871 Census of Canada, L'Islet and St Eugène, L'Islet, Quebec; Roll: C-10362; Page: 12; Family No: 57. Ancestry.com.

<sup>18</sup> Burial record for Philippe Aubert de Gaspé, 1 Feb 1871, St-Jean-Port-Joli; Burial record for Marie-Adélaïde Caron, 28 Dec 1872, L'Islet. Quebec, Canada, Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1621-1968, Ancestry.com. The lack of Edward's signature cannot be taken as an indication that he might have been illiterate, as it appears on his brother Charles' probate.

<sup>19</sup> There is in the Bridgeport City Directories a Frederick Obert, whom I do not believe is related. I suspect he is a descendant of the German Obert family. There are elsewhere in Massachusetts Oberts descendant from Italian families such as Oberti, and from another Canadian family, Aubin.

<sup>20</sup> U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995. Bridgeport CT, 1883 to 1904. 1900 Unites States Federal Census, Bridgeport, Fairfield, CT, Roll: 132; Page: 20B; Enumeration District: 0032; FHL

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microfilm: 1240132. Connecticut, Hale Collection of Cemetery Inscriptions and Newspaper Notices, 1629-1934, ancestry.com.

<sup>21</sup> U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995. Pittsfield, MA, 1882. U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995. Bridgeport, CT, 1883-1889. U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995. Pittsfield, MA, 1891-1894.

<sup>22</sup> Quebec, Canada, Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1621-1968. St-Grégoire, Nicolet, QC, 26 June 1916.

<sup>23</sup> U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995. Bridgeport CT, 1884 to 1889.

<sup>24</sup> All events in this section are from Massachusetts, Birth Records, 1840-1915; Massachusetts, Town and Vital Records, 1620-1988; Massachusetts, Marriage Records, 1840-1915; Massachusetts, Death Records, 1841-1915; US Censuses of 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940; U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995; U.S., Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936-2007; U.S., Headstone Applications for Military Veterans, 1925-1963; Connecticut Death Index, 1949-2012; U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918; U.S., World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1942; Connecticut, Marriage Index, 1959-2001, all from ancestry.com.

<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately, the best indexed sources of vital records in Quebec (PRDH at <http://www.genealogie.umontreal.ca/> and GenealogieQuebec.com) stop in 1849, which is a bit too early for our purposes. We have used the next best, [www.bms2000.org](http://www.bms2000.org) and the Drouin Collection at ancestry.com.

<sup>26</sup> All events in this section are from Massachusetts, Birth Records, 1840-1915; Massachusetts, Town and Vital Records, 1620-1988; Massachusetts, Marriage Records, 1840-1915; Massachusetts, Death Records, 1841-1915; US Censuses of 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940; U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995; U.S., Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936-2007; Connecticut, Marriage Index, 1959-2001; Quebec, Canada, Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1621-1968, all from ancestry.com.

<sup>27</sup> Damien-Claude Bélanger and Claude Bélanger, *French Canadian Emigration to the United States*, 1840-1930. Accessed 25 June 2016.  
<http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/quebechistory/readings/leaving.htm>.

<sup>28</sup> Castonguay, p. 103. Until Canadian Confederation in 1867, the pound was worth \$4 Canadian, and the Canadian dollar was roughly at par with the US dollar. A dollar then was worth about \$300 now. James Powell, *A History of the Canadian Dollar*.  
[http://www.bankofcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/dollar\\_book.pdf](http://www.bankofcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/dollar_book.pdf), accessed 25 June 2016. Seven Ways to Compute the Relative Value of a US Dollar Amount,  
<https://www.measuringworth.com/uscompare/>, accessed 25 June 2016.

<sup>29</sup> Castonguay, p. 105

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<sup>30</sup> Ultimately, a third of Philippe-Ignace's assets passed to the family of his son Thomas (1720-1824), and the rest went to de Gaspé's children. His mother's assets all went to his children. (Le Moine, p 312; Castonguay, p. ??)

<sup>31</sup> Burial record for Pierre-Edouard de Gaspé, 24 Nov 1862, St-Jean-Port-Joli; Burial record for Marie-Adélaïde Caron, 28 Dec 1872, L'Islet. Quebec, Canada, Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1621-1968, Ancestry.com

<sup>32</sup> Castonguay, p. 121.

<sup>33</sup> Castonguay, p. 146, footnotes 11 and 12.

<sup>34</sup> Castonguay, p. 148 and 144.

<sup>35</sup> Castonguay, p. 164-165.

<sup>36</sup> Jacques Castonguay, "AUBERT DE GASPÉ, PIERRE-IGNACE," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 6, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed June 18, 2016, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/aubert\\_de\\_gaspe\\_pierre\\_ignace\\_6E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/aubert_de_gaspe_pierre_ignace_6E.html).

<sup>37</sup> Castonguay, p 171, fn 16.

<sup>38</sup> John A. Dickinson and Brian Young, *A Short History of Quebec*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008, Chapter 4.

<sup>39</sup> Stanley Lebergott, Wage Trends 1800-1900, Table 2, p. 469, in *Trends in the American Economy in the Nineteenth Century* (ed. The Conference on Research in Income and Wealth), Princeton University Press, 1960. <http://www.nber.org/chapters/c2486>, accessed 18 June 2016.

<sup>40</sup> The 1880 US Census of Pittsfield shows over 600 people born in Canada, mostly French-Canadians.