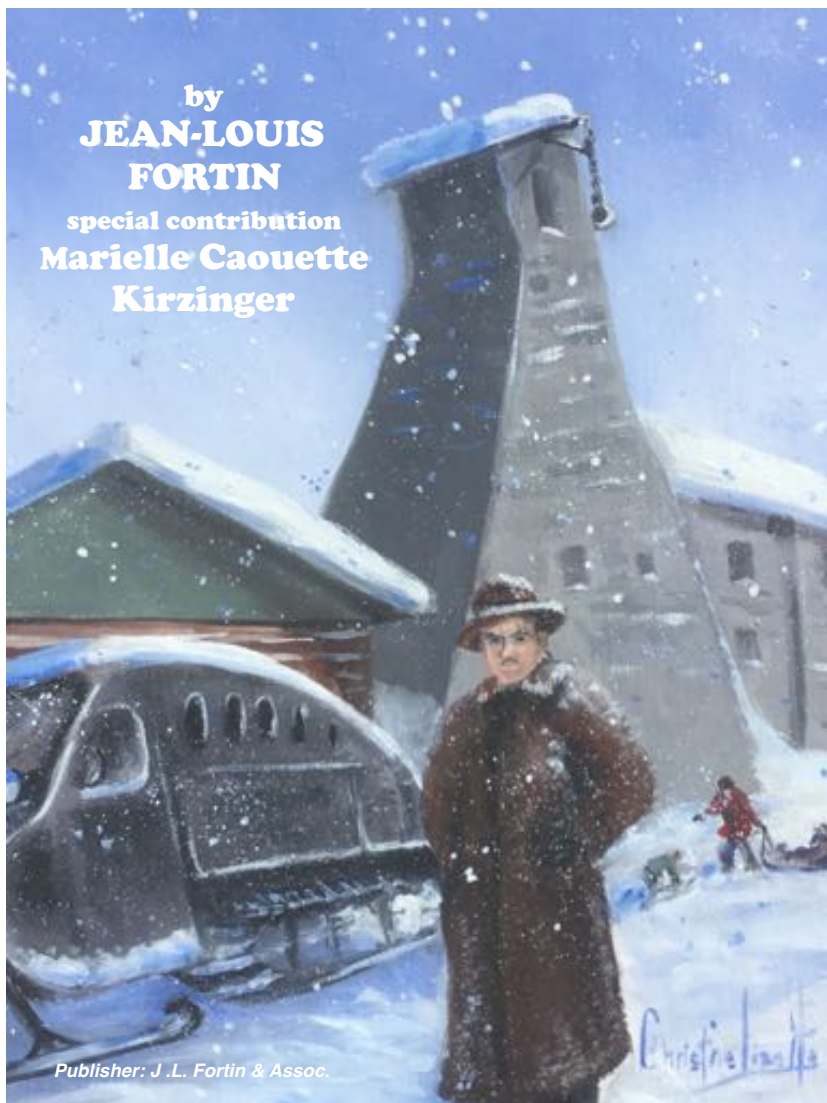


THE CITY THAT WAS

by
**JEAN-LOUIS
FORTIN**
special contribution
**Marielle Caouette
Kirzinger**



Publisher: J. L. Fortin & Assoc.

**Theresa Gold Mines, Longlac, Ontario
1934-1954**

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Published by : JL Fortin & Associés inc.

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JL Fortin & Assoc. inc. ©
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Others were provided from Marcel Beaudoin's site: *What do you remember if you grew in Longlac*, the BAnQ archives as well as the works of Cadieux and Rémillard.

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theresagoldmines.ca

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Preface

I have named the Theresa Gold Mines as "The City that was". When Jean-Louis talked to me of his book, in my mind, that is what I saw "The City That Was".. My father Marcel also known as Buster Caouette, my gramps Alphonse and my grandmother Delvia whom we lovingly called LaRouge kept their business practices to themselves. My sister Helene, brother Raymond and myself were oblivious to the operation of Theresa Gold Mines.

In the 1990's, my father, would sometimes tell me stories and explain how he and Gramps Alphonse were involved in an important project regarding a mine called Theresa Gold Mines. Dad and I were very close and I would often ask questions about the mine. He did tell me that the mine was named after his sister Thérèse also lovingly called Tessie.

My loving husband George and I were home this particular day in 2017 when my cousin Marcie and I both received by e-mail a numeric book called "Les enfants de la rivière: It was about the life of children that had lived at Theresa Gold Mines.

Stunned and surprised, I read the book.....

My reaction was..... Tears of Joy.

I contacted the author Jean-Louis who had been living at the mine at the same time as I had but whom I had never met

while in Theresa and even until today. He lives in Montreal and I do in Powell River not too far from Victoria. Miles away but since then, very close.

We had several chats and exchanged memories. As I thought this story should be read by many, I offered Jean-Louis to translate it into English. It is my personal contribution to a story that has lasted 20 years and shaped my life and the lives of many members of my family.

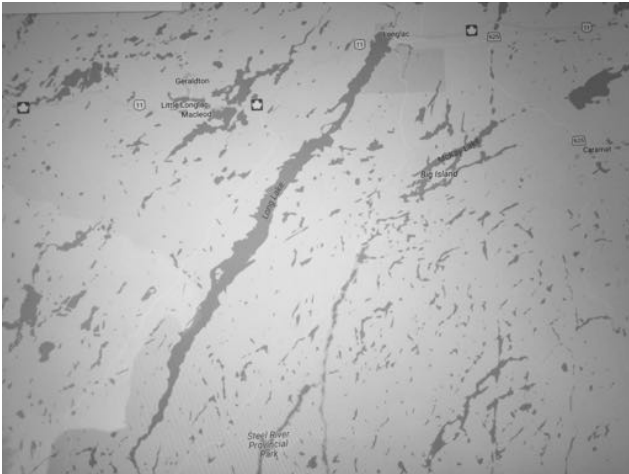
*Marielle Caouette-Kirzinger
April 2019*



Theresa British Lorry

The City that Was is not a romance but a true story.
All conversations are based on facts.
All characters are real.

Judgements made in this book
are exclusively those of the author.
They are based on the author' 30 years+
of professional experience
in assessing, building and designing projects of all sorts.



*The small village of Longlac is at the tip a a very Long Lake.
Making Ground River flows from South to North,*

Main characters

ALPHONSE CAOUETTE: President and main investor of Theresa Gold Mines (TGM).

MARCEL « Buster » CAOUETTE : TGM Executive Director. Son of Alphonse.

ANNETTE CHARBONNEAU: Teacher. She was Secretary of the Theresa Schoolboard Commission.

YVES CLOUTIER, chief engineer.

FATHER ALPHONSE CORRIVEAU, Theresa Gold Mines' Chaplain.

ROSE-ANNA COUTURE, Chief Cook.

JEANNE DUVAL : Teacher.

WILFRID GILBERT : Notary.

MICHEL HALLÉ, Entrepreneur. Brother of Mgr Hallé. Bishop of Hearst, Ontario.

ZOËL LAMBERT, Priest. Administrator of the Diocese of Hearst.

ISIDOR PATTABAM MAKWA, Indian friend of many mine workers.

And so many others.

Historical characters

LOUIS BISSON, Pilot. Known as the Canadian Charles Lindberg, Responsible for tracing the famous Crimson Route.

Mgr JOSEPH CHARBONNEAU, Bishop of Hearst, Archbishop of Montreal. Université de Montréal Chancellor.

FATHER JOSEPH-MARIE COUTURE, Missionary. Called The Flying Padre.

REVEREND CHARLES-ÉMILE GADBOIS, Initiator of « La Bonne chanson » Music publisher. Equivalent today to «René Angélil »

Mgr JOSEPH HALLÉ, Bishop of Hearst.

NOAH A. TIMMINS, prospector. Businessman.

Acknowledgments

First of all, a big thank you to the residents of Longlac who through the site "*What do you remember if you grew up in Longlac*" have built archives containing many videos, photos and commentaries of people who lived at Theresa during that era. To the illustrator, Christine Lizotte, the promoters Marcel Beaudoin, Louise Lussier Tonin and others, "Thank you."

To Jean Simoneau who made Theresa the subject of his master thesis, our profound gratitude.

To all those people who lived at Theresa Gold Mines and shared their souvenir, this book is for you.

Jean-Louis Fortin,
Son of
Charles-Édouard Fortin
and Laurence Gilbert

Marielle Caouette-Kirzinger,
Daughter of
Marcel (Buster) Caouette
and Adrienne Hallé

April 2019

French-Canadians started to believe that there was nothing else to do other than dream of becoming a Dr., priest or lawyer. Cloutier became a Mining Engineer and went immediately to Theresa after completing his education. This was a revolution in Quebec to see French-Canadians throw themselves into the business of exploiting a mine...

Sylvio Fortin

Chapter 1: Dreams about to converge

Dream # 1: Buy a plane for my mission

The TransCanada highway which crossed Northern Ontario going West went by Cochrane, Kapuskasing and further north through Hearst. The road continued approximately one hundred miles further and then to Longlac which was called a village, situated at the tip of a lake called Long Lake.

The road continued towards Geraldton and got lost towards the direction of Winnipeg. Forty miles north of Longlac, aboard his bobsled which was being pulled by four large sled dogs, Father Couture was enveloped from head to toe in his fur coat wearing sun glasses which masked his face. Here was a giant French-Canadian scraping through trees in the direction of an Ojibwe camp.



There were times when he ran in front of his dogs. Father Joseph-Marie Couture would yell "*Whoa! Whoa!*" while waving his hands as several natives came to welcome him. "*Aanii, Neendamishkanf Ndishnikaaz*" (Hello, I am Father

Couture). All were waiting! The Missionary never announced his visit. The incredible speed the natives heard of the news always intrigued Father Couture.

The priest spoke Ojibwe fluently. The natives called him *Neendamishkang, the one we love to see arriving*. They had the deepest respect for this man who consecrated his life to help them, and who lived close to nature with them as well as respecting the lives of the wolves, moose and bears.

Father Couture suffered acute pain in his leg. He had an immense territory to cover and two of his dogs were worn out. This is why Father Couture needed more resources to further help his parish. His dream was to own a plane for displacement. He went as far as to the office of Noah Timmins which was situated in a Montreal skyscraper.

-Noah, I need a plane, can you help me? -Why not a snowmobile replied Mr. Timmins who had made his fortune developing mines in Northern Ontario.

Mr. Timmins was not afraid of the idea, but he had a fear of planes. He said to the missionary that he would be better off with a snowmobile and declined to help. On his way out, Father Couture met with Noah's son to whom he explained his presence in Montreal. Leo was impressed by the Jesuite's devotion to the Natives and promised to help.

-But Father, you don't know how to fly and you are over fifty.

-Don't worry Leo, I will learn.

The flying priest and his pilot

Louis Bisson was a very talented pilot. He had flown with Charles Lindberg which became love of flying at first sight. To make a few bucks, he would enter into flying competitions in the States where he, and his friend Don McVicar, would confront the best US pilot named John (Jonathan) Livingston¹ himself. Out of many races entered, Bisson often placed first and was only second to Livingston.

Louis had another way of earning money: he would offer flying rides at the bargain price of one cent a pound per passenger.

When he first met this tall impressive man Father Couture approaching him, he said to himself: "this passenger will make my day !"

-You want a ride, Father ?

-Yes and no, replied the missionary, I want you to teach me to fly.

-Have you ever been into the air, asked the pilot?

No, but what about starting today!

Louis was charmed by the Father's attitude.

-OK , come on in. I'm offering you a free ride.

¹ The same pilot who inspired the movie « Jonathan Livingston Seagull ».

After two or three flying lessons, the missionary asks to fly his plane alone. He rushes on the runway takes up latitude and starts doing somersaults. On his return, Louis Bisson is white as a sheet. He told him to never do that again, and Father Couture started to laugh. Like a good Jesuit that he was, he did what he wanted.

Father Couture became the first priest in Canada to become a pilot. During 1933 to 1940 he was called "*The Flying Padre*". For four straight years, Louis Bisson acted as his private pilot. They both flew hundreds of hours over the Diocese territory and at times going as far as Inuit Reserves. For his part, Louis Bisson would become the Canadian "*Charles Lindberg*" and the bridge from Montreal to Laval by Autoroute #15 would lately be named in his honor.

But was that the only reason why Louis Bisson deserved such an honor? Surely not !

Leo Timmins had meanwhile kept his word. In 1933, Father Couture gets his floatplane. It was a WACO (Weaver Aircraft Company) similar to that of Indiana Jones in *Raiders of the lost Ark*, a few years later.



*Photo: Joseph Couture,
the Flying Padre*



Rev. Lambert pretends he is flying the WACO while Louis Bisson patiently prepares his flight.

Dream # 2: Attract more settlers in Northern Ontario

Mgr. Hallé was the vicar of a territory that was nearly twice the size of the Province of New Brunswick. Called to Hearst in 1919 he wanted to attract French-Canadians to the region of Northern Ontario so they could clear the available land.

Mgr. Hallé had been campaigning for a long time in Lac St-Jean and La Beauce so that the people would move to the Hearst region. In those days, Beaucerons persisted for generations on « cultivating rocks » on the river Chaudière

shores. In other words their land was some of the most hostile in Quebec. Many of them had already left Quebec to move to the United States. As many as 900,000 Quebecers moved to the U.S. between 1860 - 1930.

Fortunately, the construction of the railway created a large influx of prospectors, lumberjacks, businessmen into Northern Ontario. This new transportation system had been introduced with the purpose of initiating settlement and to develop the agricultural potential. There were two railways, the Canadian Pacific Railroad (CPR) and the Temiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway (T & NO). the latest was described as "*The road to nowhere*". These initiatives would help Mgr Hallé.

Mgr. Hallé wanted Hearst to be slowly transformed into a modern French and catholic city. He wanted the new parishioners to become merchants, business men, insurance agents and bankers... but the essential resources were missing especially those that he wanted for Father Couture. Mgr. being very proud did not want to ask for financial help from the archbishop in Ottawa. He wanted to resolve this by himself.



Mgr Joseph Hallé

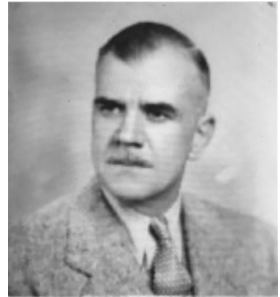
The promise of work, freedom and a new life had brought French-Canadians mostly from Lac St-Jean to Northern Ontario. There they met with newly arrived Ukrainians, Polish, Finns, Italians and well established Natives

conferring an ethnic diversity that still defines Northern Ontario today.

Dream # 3: Exploit a French Canadian Gold Mine

Alphonse Caouette loved his work which permitted him to ride the Railway from Cochrane to Longlac. At each stop he would go and check out what was going on. Everyone knew him as well as the natives. Alphonse had a firm idea planted in his head which he had never discussed with anyone, not even his wife Delvia who was lovingly called LaRouge.

Leo Timmins had told Alphonse how his father Noah had made his fortune after discovering and exploiting the mines in the area. Leo convinced Alphonse that he could become wealthy exploiting mines also.



Alphonse Caouette

Alphonse was stunned to discover the importance of the Porcupine Gold Rush in Northern Ontario which had grown at least 5 times more than the Klondike Gold Rush with 67 million ounces for the Porcupine against 12 million for the Klondike. Leo Timmins had told him about the particular incident of 1911 which had completely eradicated one of the mines, but also revealed an important gold vein on the surface. One of the small mines reported 1 million dollars per year whereas another gold vein had been evaluated correctly to 13

million dollars. The largest in the ground measured 150ft. wide by a few hundred feet long. The Timmins region with more than 5,000 miners for the only zone in Porcupine would become the most important Canadian Centre for Gold extraction as it would represent more than 75 percent of the total Canadian production.

By 1930, Canada had become the world's second largest producer of gold, Ontario's north responsible for most of that output.

Some mines were open pit. Others were near a river as in Klondike. In that case, low tech equipments were needed. Sometimes, only a pan and a shovel. But, certain gold veins had a tendency of descending in a vertical fashion. In this case a headframe had to be built over the shafts. Therefore digging, making tunnels, finding veins and if lucky return the invaluable metal to ground level and extract the gold through a mill.

The Great Depression had been devastating. It had shaken the foundations of the world's leading nations. But Leo Timmins thought that this would bring favorable conditions in developing a gold mine. Gold would surely explode to compensate the weakness of the conditions.

« Alphonse, you are smart, why don't you try something else and be on your own ? Why don't you look and find a new gold vein ? There are plenty around. The best place to start a gold mine is in the shadow of an old one. My father has given the town his name. He wasn't afraid of new challenges. Come on, I'm sure you can do

the same. Come on Alphonse, follow your dream, think big ».

The discovery

Three natives hastily entered Father Couture's presbytery and announced their find.

-Father, Father, look at this rock, it's full of gold ! Osaawaabik ! Osaawaabik !

-Did you find this rock near the river? asked the missionary who was commissioned to evangelize the Northern Ontario natives.

-Yes we did. It was near our place, near the river, answered in chorus Joe Toweda, Muckety and William Bill²

The second he found out what the Indians had discovered, Father Couture told them *-I must show that to your Chief and to Alphonse Caouette. Don't tell anybody else about your discovery. OK ?*

² Moose Fisher is often credited for the discovery of the precious golden rock. Others claim that it was Snowball and his father. Others opted for Bill Patigouane. Marcel "Buster" Caouette confirms 30 years later after the mine was closed in an interview with Simoneau that it was Toweda and his companions who found the rock. Possibly the natives wanted to keep the identity of the finder in order to protect their discovery. Quite strategic!!

Two days later Father Couture called out a train employee who had stopped at the Longlac train station.

-Alphonse, can you come to see me at the presbytery I have something important to show you... the Chief is waiting for us.

* * *

The Mine Speaker

On returning home, Alphonse shows the famous rock to his wife Delvia and his daughter Thérèse who was turning 14. - *Delvia, I believe I have finally found what I am looking for after so many years. Explore a mine on my own account!*

He added that the "Timmins men" would surely help him.

-Tess, do you know what we are going to call the mine? We are going to call it Theresa, just like you. Are you happy?

-This is the chance of my lifetime ! I'm going to resign tomorrow from CPR, he added.

An unexpected delight

This fortunate discovery of a piece of a gold nugget was the start of a big project that would bring together Indians, clergymen, Ontarian and Quebecers.

A new Gold Mine was about to be created. Situated 100 miles south-west of Hearst and 60 miles north of Lake

Superior the mine was situated near the heart of gold-bearing territory partly on native land.

The dreams of Father Couture, the Bishop of Hearst and Alphonse Caouette were to converge.

Father Couture, Alphonse Caouette and the Chief of the Reserve made a pact that 25% of the mine revenues would go to the Ojibwe. From now on, Alphonse Caouette would be recognized everywhere in Northern Ontario as the Mine Speaker.

The exploitation of Theresa Gold Mines was probably to become one of the most important business projects in French Canada during the period of 1934 and 1954. This large French-Canadian development staggered during 20 years remains a well kept secret until today...

* * *

Chapter 2: Winning conditions

In 1846, almost a hundred years before, somewhere in La Beauce:

It's Sunday, we need to go to the church. Go at the end of the field and bring me a horse said Léger Gilbert to his teenager.

-Yes Dad, I'm going.

When crossing the shallow, sandy Touffe-de-Pins River, Chlotilde noticed a shiny yellow rock the size of a pigeon egg. *-Oh, how beautiful this rock is,* she said to her horse .

-I will show it to Dad.

Léger Gilbert has his eyes opened.

-But, where did you find this beautiful stone? Let's bring it to our landlord Seigneur de Léry.

Two week later the local newspaper titles:

« The rock found by Chlotilde Gilbert turned out to be a 2.5-ounce gold nugget »

In an eye blink, miners streamed in from as far away as British Columbia, California, Australia and England. A boom town was hastily slapped together and the river Touffe-de-Pins was renamed Gilbert River. *La Chaudière Mining Co.* a subsidiary of Hudson Bay Co., became the first mining

company to operate near the River. Barely weeks passed before houses, hotels were erected. Then came the Canada Mining Company, the Reciprocity Company, the De Léry Gold Mining Company et many others.

La Beauce was Canada first Gold Rush !



Photo: mining installations on River Touffe-de-Pins (circa 1860).

The International Economic Conference in London

In 1932, at the end of his mandate, Herbert Hoover 31st President of the United States, convenes for June of the following year sixty six Heads of State to discuss world economy. London is to be hosting this very strategic Conference.

But unfortunately for him he is defeated in the November General Elections by a New York business man who repeated over and over during his campaign:

-The United States are the greatest World economy and the future of Americans lay on America first.

A month after his inauguration, President Roosevelt signed an Executive Order which required Americans to surrender much of their gold. Government would compensate paying \$20,17 per ounce. After the surrender period, (the Gold Reserve Act of 1934), he raised the price of Gold to \$35.00 per troy ounce.

Sworn in three months before the planned International Conference, F.D. Roosevelt reiterates his position:

-The future of the United States won't be decided on the shores of the Thames River (London) but right here on the shores of the Potomac (Washington).

After the Official opening of the Conference by the King of England, Roosevelt stands on the way of other Head States and finally torpedoes the International Conference.

The Conference was a total failure.

Most of the Heads of States, the media and even businessmen asked for Roosevelt resignation. But Roosevelt has a Plan of his own: the New Deal.

Price of Gold had already jumped from 20\$ ounce to 35\$. Now that price was to remain fixed for a long while.



Georges V, King of England inaugurates the World Economic Conference

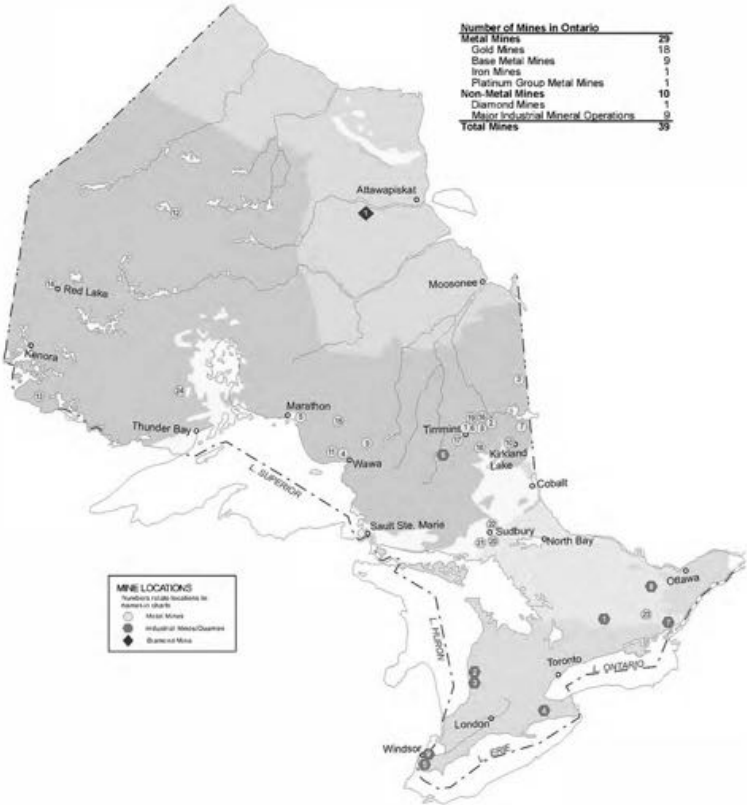
Portrait of Mining in Ontario³ in the '30

All headframes seem similar in Timmins, Sudbury and elsewhere in Northern Quebec and Northern Ontario. Apart from Canada and the US, all mine workers seemed to be coming from all around Eastern and Western Europe: Italians, Fins, Polish, Ukrainians...Many of them came in with their family. Mine workers are very mobile and better paid than many other industries. Very few French-Canadians at the time of Toweda's discovery are seen in the mines. They seem to prefer agriculture and forestry.

The oldest Ontario mine region is Sudbury which started its operations in 1886. Cobalt in 1904, Timmins by the 1910,

³ From: *L'histoire des mineurs du nord ontarien et québécois*. Guy Gaudreau

and Kirkland after the First World War. Northern Ontario is full of mines: Larose, Hollinger, Dome, McIntyre, Creighton to name a few. While working at the CPR, Alphonse Caouette had visited most of them.



*Ontario Mining Operations in 2019.
Ontario Mining Association Web Site (OMA)*

Louis Bisson and Father Couture fly together

Father Couture was a man of practical sense who knew how to use the most modern methods. He purchased a typewriter, which had symbolic character and a machine for printing circulations, advertisements and short sentences on the lives of the saints. He dictated tapes of the most important prayers, some hymns and two sung masses. He went as far as getting a magic lantern.

The arrival of Father Couture with his pilot Louis Bisson always caused a stir in the town assembly, and no one wanted to miss the show. As evening fell, Father Couture would install his lantern and show several series of slides depicting parts of the Church's history, scenes of the Passion of our Lord and Catholic Illustrations. He would add one or two documents on topics like Hygiene or Astronomy. It was necessary to give to the natives some bribes on astronomy because they had a fear of the eclipse of the sun.

Father Couture sang at their request Ojibwe songs called Chippewa Hymn. Also, he recited many stories of his events in the forest, winter, a revolver at his hip with his four dogs Tiger, Nigger, Wolf and Prince. Louis Bisson served as a private pilot to the missionary for four years.

The natives had taught him to preserve his matches under his hat rather than his pockets. *-If you fall into the water, you will have a better chance to build a fire and get warm.* Father Couture welcomed this day in winter, as he sank in the water up to his shoulders.

Chapter 3: Conceptualizing the future mine

After extensive readings and research, Alphonse began to imagine how his mine would be like. It would be a French Canadian owned Catholic mine with shares never to be traded at the Stock Exchange. Caouette despised Trusts. Future Theresa would be first from a cluster of mines to be exploit. The Indians had discovered five other sites but kept them a secret.

Alphonse started brainstorming with Father Couture and the Ojibwe Chief. He extended his consultations and discussions with many businessmen, priests and close friends among which his best friend Michel Hallé, brother of bishop Mgr Hallé. A project was born.

Alphonse had to prove that his project was viable and feasible. He needed help to prove his concept. But no consultants from the Government were there to ask him to draw a strategic plan or define which kind of TRL⁴ he was in. He had to do that all by himself.

Caouette began by filing claims on an area stepping over the Making Ground (Suicide) River. He divided the property into two parts, the eastern which was called the Indian

⁴ Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) is a method of estimating technology maturity

Group and the western called Caouette Group. A bridge was built over the river to facilitate interchanges between both parts.

Two mining companies were approached, the Big Longlac Co. and The Afton Mines Co. The first would conduct tests on the Indian side of the River and the other on the Western side. Samples were extracted and sent to Noranda Laboratories. Tests were conclusive.



A bridge would be constructed over the river

The mining companies explored respectively vein No. 1 and vein No 2. A year after, Big Longlac opted out and was shortly followed by the Afton. The bridge was removed

N.A. Timmins Corp. took over the land. By 1936, it was agreed that Caouette and his associates would become the sole owner of the property and N.A. Timmins opted out.

By the end of 1936, Caouette had left no stone unturned. He now needed new partners.

Alphonse had studied the market. His project was proven feasible but it had to be socially acceptable and be able to survive considering the context. Could he recruit experienced mine workers? Experienced engineers ? And others? What could be offered to the mine workers family considering the location? A mine in the woods far from everything, with no school , no electricity, no road. Could he be competitive? Could he match the high salaries that existed in the industry? Could he get financing?

How could he recruit decent and normal young men and install them in a place far from night clubs and at the same time, paying them less than competition and prohibiting alcohol consumption in the company' territory? What a challenge !

In his plan, he decided he would recruit them by family clusters when possible. But the time had not come. He had other things to do. Continue the testings and finding partners !

Many mines had no mill. Alphonse could transport the cook to Longlac, or carry them to a mine that operates a mill. Why not! All those questions were crossing his mind. when he met Rev. Cimon.

-Why don't you focus on Lac-St-Jean ? Many of them have come here in Northern Ontario for generations. It's a blooming region full of entrepreneurs. - Come with me in Quebec and I will introduce you to my family and the mayor of Dolbeau.

His project was already known in Lac St-Jean community probably thru all those hundreds of families that had ran away from Quebec since the end of the 19th Century for better conditions in Northern Ontario.



Meeting in 1937 at Belzille property in Normandin, Lac St-Jean. From left to right: Mr Caouette, Mr et Mrs Belzille, René, Madeleine, Gaston Vincent, André, M. Cimon, et Father Cimon.

A mining Syndicate is born

Alphonse crisscrossed Lac-St-Jean from Chicoutimi, Alma, to Dolbeau and further North in search of partners and financing. He was welcome everywhere by people who were always interested in hearing about new opportunities. First businessmen to get interested in Caouette' project came from Roberval Qc.

Many of them travelled to Longlac and from there went to the mine by canoe.



In the first canoe, J.A. Gagnon from Dolbeau. In the second, sitting in the center, Osias Gagnon from Roberval.

On returning from one of their visits in 1938 they formed a syndicate by the name of Valbeaudin, a portmanteau appellation referring to three of their hometown Roberval, Dolbeau, and Normandin. To assure the financing of the mine they had to choose a name.

The Syndicate members got together with Mr. Caouette at Normandin (Qc) where each member had to write a name of their choice, and a decision had to be made from it.

Thelma, Gold Mines, Therian Company Ltd, Thesaurus Gold Mines, Thessaton Gold Mining, Thib Gold Mines, Terra Nova Mining Syndicate. Other names could also be added.

They discussed, proposed names that were far-fetched to lighten the atmosphere as it was tense. As a joke, one suggested *La mine à Ti-Phonse*. After much discussing, a

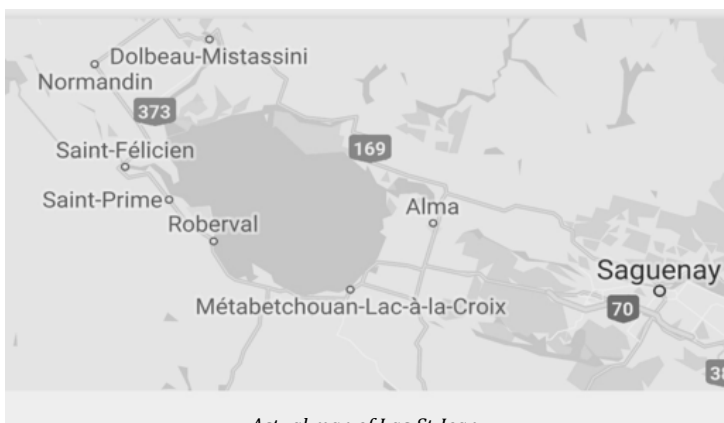
choice was made and the decision was *Theresa Gold Mines*. The head office would be located in Kapuskasing and transferred to Longlac the following year. The people of Dolbeau and Normandin as well as other locals from Saguenay were euphoric!!

Lac St-Jean feels at home

Alphonse continues visiting friends and investors in Lac St-Jean. They in return come very often to see the mine. They feel at home in Longlac region which is a blueberry territory just like theirs in Lac St-Jean.



Businessmen from Lac St-Jean make a stop on their way to Longlac.. From left to right: Mr Gagnon, mayor of Dolbeau, Léonce Levesque, N.P. from Roberval, Mr Turcotte, N.P., Edmond Têtu et Mr Laflamme from St-Félicien. Published in Le Colon 1939.



Actual map of Lac-St-Jean.

First meetings with Mr Caouette were held in Roberval, Dolbeau and Normandin.



An upsetting telegram!



June-08-38

Hearst, Ont.

Buster Caouette, Longlac, Ont

« Bishop Hallé still conscious but unable to speak. Stop. No hope for recovery but may remain in present condition for considerable time. Stop. Figure on leaving here Friday but will wire you again. Let me know developments tonight. Regards from all and cheerio. Stop. Advise. Brother Cote ».

The Caouette are devastated. Mgr Hallé is Michel's brother, their best friend.

At the Apostolic Delegation In Ottawa, one started to look for a successor. Conservative Clergy leaders identified a young emerging priest by the name of Joseph Charbonneau. This young very intelligent priest was considered by many as a menace to then French Canadian religious establishment. Young Charbonneau had studied in Rome in Paris and at the Catholic University of Washington then considered by many to be a reservoir of social scientists. With his two doctorate degrees, Father Charbonneau was directed to a bright religious career. *-Why not send Father Charbonneau to Hearst in replacement of dying Mgr Hallé ?* There, in the woods far from civilization, he would not be a menace anymore. Le Colon Hearst's newspaper has named Alphonse Caouette *"The white who gives work to the Indians"*.



Longlac train station circa 1939

« Mgr Hallé and Father Couture suggested we develop the mine with the goal of procuring work and revenues for the natives. Each engineer we hire must be French-Canadian, catholic and committed to teach the natives what they know... The natives discovered important gold deposits which they kept secret right until Theresa Gold Mines was ready to share the operation of the mine ».

Alphonse Caouette, *Le Colon*, July 15th 1939

Caouette decides to move to the mine where he builds his house on a hill overlooking the mine one mile from the river. He is alone there with his wife and his two teenagers Marcel (Buster) and Thérèse. He often has to walk his way to Longlac.



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Very often, he goes to Quebec by train. He is accompanied by his son Buster who already has an eye on Adrienne, Michel Hallé's daughter. Adrienne loves to discuss aviation with Buster who is a RAF pilot.

One of his friend Mr Ferland a lawyer, has a great idea. Knowing Mr Caouette has limited financing, he proposed in a letter⁵ to Alphonse dated September 2nd 1939:

-Why don't you give a job to those who subscribe 500 to 1000 shares? ... If Theresa hires say 50-100 mine workers, it is easier to sell a 1000 \$ share to their parents. No string attached... Somebody did it here in La Beauce and raised 25,000\$ in a project less attractive than a gold mine...

The idea got implanted in Alphonse' head.

War breaks out in Europe.

⁵ Archives from Fonds Jeanne Daigle, History Centre of St-Hyacinthe, St-Hyacinthe, Box 18.

Chapter 4: Proof of Concept and Tests on the ground

Mgr Charbonneau takes over

Mgr Charbonneau received a very warm welcome by the Hearst Community. A large crowd met him with cheers at the train station.

The very first thing the new Bishop told his priests was that he would follow all of Mgr Hallé's dream. Mgr was soon



*Photo from D. Robillard: the priests of the new Hearst Diocese.
Sitting in the first row, Mgr Charbonneau and to the extreme right
Alphonse Corriveau future chaplain of Theresa Gold Mines*

impressed by an old priest by the name of Alphonse Corriveau, a humble and devoted man who never accepted



Photo 1939: Delvia Caouette at Theresa Gold Mines

praise for his work with parishioners. Mgr Charbonneau had also vowed as a young priest never to accept any honor unrelated to his mission. Mgr Charbonneau was a proud man but very shy and humble at the same time.

Mgr Charbonneau, 6 foot two, was tall both intellectually and physically. One day, he walked his way to Theresa. In Longlac, he has met with Ojibwe and built a very strong relationship with Father Couture whom he admired.

The new Bishop spent the following year covering the territory, straightening friendships and trying to reduce the Hearst diocese's huge deficit. For that task he relied on his administrator, Reverend Lambert who was often called Mgr Lambert although he was not a bishop.

Their first days at Theresa Gold Mines

Many Indians continued to help exploring. Alphonse is convinced they will soon discover plenty of gold. The challenge is huge but Alphonse is ready to move mountains.

Delvia Caouette is helped by an Indian girl named Christine who keeps her company when Alphonse has to spend days, sometimes weeks away from home.

Being alone in the woods is something different for the Caouette family contrary to Indians who are use to this environment.

But Alphonse learns rapidly. So does his wife Delvia who never complains. For the teenagers, it's an adventure. Young Buster however is sometimes worried. War has started in Europe and he has to help both, his father at the mine and his country at war. He has seen the arrival of a man from Sherbrooke as a bit suspicious. He suspects the man to be a deserter.

Leaving the woods for the jungle

Less than a year after his arrival in Hearst, Mgr Charbonneau received a stunning news.

He was ordered to leave Hearst immediately and go to Montreal where he would stand second to the Archbishop of this huge Diocese of 15 000 priests, friars and nuns, the

largest Diocese of the British Empire. A Diocese seen by many as one of the most complicated in the world.

Mgr Charbonneau felt sick about leaving Hearst. He considered Montreal Diocese as being a Jungle. He was weeping and crying while preparing his luggages.

Usually a person of this level would be greeted honorably when arriving at the Montreal Train Station, and there would be lots of people gathering around. It was not the case for Mgr Charbonneau.

No one showed up at the Station when he arrived from Hearst. He had to reach his new home , the Montreal Cathedral, alone and by foot.

The day after his arrival was a day of mourning due to the passing of an important Clergy leader. Three hundred and fifty priests were attending the funeral. No chair was designated by the Cathedral staff for the new second in command (Co-adjutor) of the Archbishop of Montreal.

Mgr Charbonneau had to stand alone in the back of the room. The next day, no one invited him for dinner.

* * *

Meanwhile at the City Hall...

Mayor Camilien Houde had been working late. It was close to midnight when he decided to leave his Office and go home. He noticed two armed trucks at the bottom of the City Hall stairs. Contrary to Mgr Charbonneau, some people were waiting for him.

The Mayor of Montreal was immediately shoved into a truck and brought to a Military camp in Petawawa in Ontario. Camillien Houde was a man of strong character. During his speech of August 2nd 1940, he urged people not to register for the war mobilization effort, which was required by law.

His arrest made the front page of most Canadian newspapers. He spent four years in jail.

Montreal had lost their strongest man. Who would ever think that he would be replaced in that role by Mgr Charbonneau ?

* * *

But Mgr's heart was still with his friends in Northern Ontario.

He took his pen and wrote to Buster:

August 19th 1940⁶

Dear Marcel,

...I happily met your father who has just seen, in the company of Mr Hallé and Vincent, a representative of the now famous American syndicate. .. Since I knew there was no secret between your father and yourself, I felt justified to let him know your anxiety about the conditions of this Theresa Gold Mines. He was a little surprised and told me some facts known to him and Mr Hallé would quite easily calm your apprehensions.

⁶ Archives from Fonds Jeanne Daigle, History Centre of St-Hyacinthe, St-Hyacinthe, Box 18.

Father Couture and yourself know my disposition towards your undertaking. They remain the same today-...

I was very well pleased to see your mother and Thérèse, at your uncle Robert's home.

I spent a few hours with all of them and, for a moment, I forgot all my new troubles as coadjutor of Montreal-...I repeat, rely on me as a helping friend.

Yours devotedly

+ Joseph Charbonneau

A jaw dropping announcement !

A few days passed when another shocking news hit the Press: the sudden death of Archbishop Mgr Georges Gauthier. Being Coadjutor (2nd in command) Mgr Charbonneau become automatically his successor. He is now the new Archbishop of the Diocese of Montreal and at the same time Chancellor of the Université de Montréal.

He becomes a man of strength in Montreal. People in Hearst are euphoric. Alphonse Caouette is honored to see one of his best friends in such a powerful position.

The first major decision of the new Archbishop is to keep by his side all staff members of his predecessor. Was that a wise⁷ decision ?

And a few weeks later, he wrote to Alphonse:

⁷ According to a recent (2016) study at La Beauce School of Entrepreneurship, the worse decision a CEO can make is to keep in his (her) team somebody competent but who doesn't share your objectives.

October 25th 1940 (translation from French)

Dear Mr Caouette,

Mgr Lambert and reverend Pelchat just left my presence leaving me with the soft illusion that I was still a citizen of North Ontario...

I am glad to learn that your return was a happy one and that the situation that has Marcel worried has been clarified.

Thanks for the news concerning Father Couture and of all the others. Despite the distance, I'm still feel very close to you all...

My warm salutes to you, your wife, Marcel and Thérèse And all the best to Father Couture

+ Joseph Charbonneau

Alphonse gets organized

Alphonse Caouette did not stay inactive during the war. His mine workers, mainly the natives, continued to search for the vein on his behalf, this famous vein that would make them rich like Noah. Having paid for the studies of two natives, Alphonse was feeling compensated as now they worked as engineers and are working at Theresa.

People from Lac-St-Jean have given Caouette a welcoming gift: a statue of Saint-Theresa to be installed in front of the future Community Centre. It is a four foot high coloured statue. But it would finally be installed inside the Community Centre.

At this time, there is no road from Theresa to Longlac. Alphonse has to take the canoe or walk his way to meet with Father Couture at his presbytery. He and Delvia live poorly. Their daily menu: oatmeal for breakfast, pea soup with potatoes for lunch about the same for supper. Lemon pie is their favorite dessert.

His friends and partners from La Beauce give him a hand. They invest in the mine and provide a salary to the reduced mine workers.

One day, Alphonse paid a visit to Wilfrid Gilbert notary in La Beauce. He was accompanied by Father Couture and had also brought up his daughter Thérèse. The notary was respected and well known all around. He would personally invest in the mine and advise some of his relatives and clients to do so. Among them, his brother in law, Charles Fortin.

Charles Fortin was head of a family business called *Les sirops de sapin Fortin* and known all over Quebec Province and abroad. While watching his syrup boil, he loved playing bridge with his best friend Louis-Philippe Blais. But he was also watching Alphonse's project closer as he was planning to invest a good amount of money.

In 1941, Caouette had turned down a buying offer of 950 000\$ made by Mr. Spearman from a famous New York Mining Syndicate. Alphonse would have accepted no less than 1 450,000\$.

Wilfrid had two sons Yves and Raymond. One of them seemed to be very interested by Caouette describing his project but more importantly he seemed to prefer digging into Thérèse beautiful eyes than into the Theresa shafts.

A few weeks after Caouette's visit, Yves told his father:

-Dad, I would very much like to go and work at the Theresa, even without pay. I don't want any salary, just money enough for my cigarettes and my lodging...⁸

Around 1942, Alphonse's son "Buster" started dating Adrienne Hallé who was Mgr Hallé's niece. Alphonse's daughter Thérèse fell in love with Yves Gilbert, son of notary Wilfrid. Both of Alphonse's children married one after the other and would live near their father and mother on the same rock bluff on the site of Theresa Gold Mines.



The blessing of the wharf was given by Rev. Lambert in the presence of Bishop Landry and Father Couture.

⁸ Excerpt of a letter sent by Notary W. Gilbert. Archives from Fonds Jeanne Daigle, History Centre of St-Hyacinthe, St-Hyacinthe, Box 18.

A letter from Arch. Charbonneau

April 19th 1942⁹ (translation)

Dear Mr Caouette,

...Today having a few free moments, I can't stop thinking about Longlac. I am wondering if you still can go to Longlac despite of the icy river. I remember that at the same date last year you were unable to attend the funerals of your loving niece Marielle, Mr Robert's daughter, who died so suddenly. But it won't be long that you will be able to take the river with your canoe and go on your way to see our mutual friend, Father Couture...

When I left you, Marcel was on his way to North Bay. Thinking about it, I can imagine your solitude without him. But Thérèse is still with you with her sense of humor, her youth and her affection....

Imagine, A few weeks ago I missed a very special visitor. During my absence, Louis Bisson came at my office while I was away. He was about to leave for England on a Bombardier. Our doorman was left with the impression that it was for a long period of time. I would have loved to have a chat with him before his journey to the unknown.

Best regards to you, your wife and Thérèse. You and Marcel are always in my thoughts. God Bless you all.

+Joseph Charbonneau, Arch. of Montréal

⁹ Archives from Fonds Jeanne Daigle, History Centre of St-Hyacinthe, St-Hyacinthe, Box 18.

Mgr Charbonneau shook the Quebec Establishment.

Mgr Charbonneau with his wisdom and prudence was well in charge of his Diocese. As Chancellor of the *Université de Montréal*¹⁰, he created a Department of sociology. He shown interest in all aspects of Quebec daily life: workers, basic and higher education, health. He presided to the inauguration of *Université de Montréal* new Pavilion. It is under his leadership that the School or Dental Art later became the Faculty of Dental Medicine and the world Center of Orthodontics studies. But his hearth was still in Ontario. He missed his two sisters. He missed Hearst, Father Couture, Louis Bisson, and the Caouette family. Every now and then, he took a break toward Ontario and met with his friends.

When in Caouette house, kids were fascinated by his big amethyst ring.

War continues

In 1944, Caouette pays another visit to Wilfrid his notary friend. They discussed the mine.

Wilfrid says that he had met the day before with a very important business man who asked and guaranteed a 200 000\$ loan from Banque Canadienne Nationale. These funds could be used to dig further the shaft and vein #3.

¹⁰ Today, Université de Montréal is with U. of Toronto, U.of Alberta, McGill and UBC, among the top five in Canada.

Wilfrid writes¹¹:

-Charles Fortin from Robertson City is serious and does not like things to drag on. He will be ready as soon as the War ends to support the mine. I am so glad that he be a personal friend of yours. You'll see, with him onboard, financing will pour into the Theresa.

But how come Beaucerons were so interested into gold mining ?



Michel Hallé and Alphonse Caouette having a look at the Theresa Bulletin

The Bretton Woods Agreements

By 1944, Germany is loosing, so is Japan. France is on it's knees. England is recuperating.

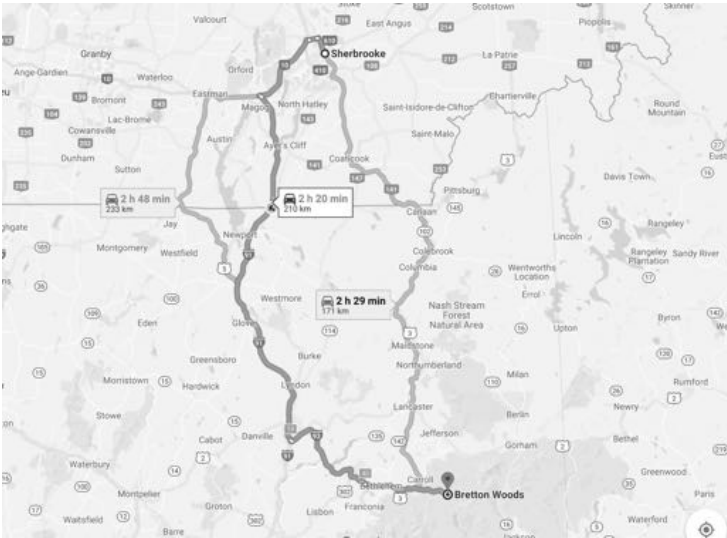
Delegate of 44 countries meet in Bretton Wood New Hampshire. They convene to establish a new monetary

¹¹ Archives from Fonds Jeanne Daigle, History Centre of St-Hyacinthe, St-Hyacinthe, Box 18.

system. Roosevelt, in his third term as US President signs the Bretton Woods Agreements.

USA is prosperous and has the best economy in the world. It will dictate the years to come by founding the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund.

Under the agreement, currencies were pegged to the price of gold, and the U.S. dollar was seen as a reserve currency linked to the price of gold. Unfortunately for Theresa Gold Mines, price of gold was still 35\$ an ounce, far too low considering the expenses.



The Bretton Woods Conference was the gathering of all 44 Allied nations at the Mount Washington Hotel, located in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire 200 km south of Sherbrooke Qc.

Chapter 5: Setting the stage

Now Alphonse can breathe. Theresa Gold Mines will have it's second wind.

Alphonse restarts the work on his exploitation of the mine by hiring Mr. Brassard to build a saw mill which would produce the necessary wood to construct the buildings of the mine as well as homes for the future workers.



Buster and his sister Thérèse

But the promoter of the mine urgently needs to find investors and workers. He has left Lac-St-Jean, his partners having as an objective to eventually get Theresa listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange.

Caouette despised the Stock Exchange. Lac St-Jean entrepreneurs had different opinions on the subject and they both decided to bring their partnership to an end.

-Why don't we concentrate on blueberries instead of gold ?

Theresa is pretty damn far!

Theresa is really far! She is situated 1600 km from Shawinigan Falls, 1700 km from Saint-Georges de Beauce, 2000 km from Chicoutimi and 1400 km from Montreal.

From Longlac, a trip to La Beauce or Chicoutimi is then measured not in hours but in days



Theresa Gold Mines is approximately 100 Km North of Lake Superior

Targetting La Beauce

Alphonse accompanied by Father Couture goes to St-Évariste La Beauce to meet with his friend Wilfrid Gilbert. Mr. Caouette was accompanied by Father Couture. The notary wants to introduce both of them to his brother Joseph who lives nearby at St-Gédéon.

Joseph-A Gilbert and Marie-E had 15 children. Joseph was a strong worker and very handy in practical matters. With the families of his brothers and sisters, there were 25 religious



*Notary Wilfrid Gilbert, Remi Pagé, Mrs Pagé, Buster
Caouette, Father Couture, Alphonse Caouette*

individuals. Joseph not being aware and not wanting to, was part of the French Canadian aristocrats in that era.

Alphonse Caouette told my grand father,

-Your nephew Yves married my daughter Thérèse and they are living at the mine. Your brother Wilfrid invested a fair amount of money at the mine also. They both know the great potential of the mine. Why don't you send your children to Theresa, there is a big future for them.

You know about Chlotilde Gilbert ? She lived here in La Beauce a hundred years ago. She is probably related to your family. Take a look at William Chapman book, -Les mines de la Beauce- and you will learn a lot ! You will learn that many



Joseph Gilbert, his wife Mary and a part of his family

families from La Beauce among them many Poulain, Fortin, Gilbert, Caouette and so many others got rich, very rich.

Six of Joseph's children moved to Theresa Gold Mines. Joseph helped to construct the homes of Eugène, Maurice, Simone and of Laurence. Gabriel and Francois lived with them as they were single.

* * *

Moving to Ontario

Able to move mountains

Alphonse was considered then as a very efficient man. He was seen as being able to make a lot of money out of one cent. Surprisingly he was very trusted by people as different

as Natives, mine workers, Clergymen and businessmen. Some are paralyzed over a grain of sand but not Alphonse. He strongly believed that with the help of Saint-Theresa, he could move mountains.

Charles-Édouard removed his tie

My father and mother respectively originated from St-Martin and St-Gédéon in La Beauce.

My mother Laurence was the eldest of Joseph Gilbert's family. Both of my parents had plenty of brothers and sisters. Around 30 in all, including the children who had passed away at young age.

*Charles-Édouard Fortin
rarely seen without his
necktie*



My sisters and I had 81 cousins where 71 of them are still living in 2019. Twenty five of them lived at Theresa Gold Mines.

My father Charles-Édouard was the second person in Beauce to own a taxi.

He also owned a saw mill. He worked as a lumberjack in the United States in Maine and finished as my mother use to say to run aground to Shawinigan where for a certain

amount of time he sold Fuller brushes and spent a few tine at Alcan on the Pots. He always had the desire to build an enterprise.

His brother-in-law Carmelus Bolduc, husband of Simone Gilbert, who live in St-Théophile de Beauce had no problem in convincing him to move with him to Ontario to explore Alphonse Caouette's mine, and eventually, become one of the co-owners.

It's decided: we are going

For decades migration to Northern Ontario was a family affair.

Charles-Édouard had discussed his intentions with his father-in-law (Joseph Gilbert), his brother Sylvio, his brothers-in-law Ovila Champagne and Maurice Gilbert. They all wanted to answer to the appeal of the promoter. Charles-Édouard at that time was 35 years old, and his wife, my mother was 37. It was then that several people from La Beauce started to train their wives at Theresa Gold Mines.

We move to Ontario

There was a lot of noise during the night. Lights were bright, lots of people talking, laughing and yelling loudly in front of the Shawinigan Falls train station. We left our house to move to Ontario. The train was leaving shortly for

Montreal, and from there we would have to take another train which would bring us to another small village situated a hundred miles north of Lake Superior and a total voyage of 1100 miles.

First contact with the natives

After two days on the train, a large and tall man wearing a habit met us at the station in Longlac. Father Couture prepared beds for us in his presbytery which was a wood cabin. The next day during mass, the natives aligned their babies along the wall, half-choking in a wooden back rack. Two of my sisters, Huguette and Marie-Marthe opened their eyes as big as saucers while one of the native women got up to nurse her baby in front of everyone.



*Indian woman carrying her baby
in a wooden back rack*

Not one person had noticed the 22 calibre rifle Father Couture placed on the altar next to the chalice.

After mass, Father Couture invited my parents to go and buy their provisions at the Longlac general store which was operated by Mrs. Avard and her husband Jean-Louis.

-Because, this afternoon you will be leaving for Theresa by canoe.

Even if I was a small child, I clearly remember our first moments of that trip because of the big waves splashing over the canoe and my mother yelling out of fear.

We utilized the words Indian, savage to designate the Ojibwe or savagery to designate the assembly. The words *Amerindian, Natives, Members of the First Nations* were not utilized.

Arrival by canoe



Arrival of a family at the wharf

- This is it Charles, you've arrived at the mine. We'll go see Buster, said Arthur Rouleau while he tied up the canoe. There are people here already.

-Welcome my Charles to Theresa exclaimed a large voice. Here is where we are going to get rich.

My dad was often just called Charles.

My dad shook Marcel "Buster" Caouette's hand and introduced my mother.

-Where are we going to go? She nervously asked.

-To the bunk house!! We prepared beds for the children and while they are getting set up, I will go with Charles and show him where you and Simone your sister are going to build your houses. You will be side by side near the river. You'll also be next to the Brassard, and on the other side up on the hill, it will be a Magloire Jolicoeur, Rachele's brother (Eugène) henhouse.

-Charles, over there at the end, do you see the three houses on the rock? Mine is at the left, my father's in the middle and the right one is my sister's Thérèse. We call her Tess. And there on the butte, this will be your brother-in-law Ovila Champagne (Armandine) house. This will be one of the two biggest houses because of his large family. Pretty soon we will be receiving and installing a new marble statue of Saint-Theresa. She will be taller than us, and we are going to place her between your house and the Community Centre.

-Come on Charles, I will introduce you to my father. He is in the Office.

-Hi Charles, welcome to Theresa. You won't regret your decision to come, said Alphonse Caouette. Let me give you some details on the mine:

By air, Longlac is 6 miles away and 9 miles by the river. The mine is 760 acres. We don't have any electricity yet, the nearest line being 12 miles away. We should have electricity within a year or two at the latest.

We have a lot of blueberries here, so tell your wife to watch for the bears. Our Indian friends will help and survey the children. They are quite at ease in the woods.

-We already have a bunk house, a cook house and a head frame over the shaft. We have started building a Community Centre and after that it will be the Mill and the water tank.

-You know Charles, we do not decide where the gold is. It is the Providence who decides. Look at Geraldton, a few miles from here: they have a mine which produces already millions of dollars. There is plenty of gold in the area. We almost walk on it.

-A few years ago, Theresa Gold Mines was split in two: the Indian Part and my part. We even built a bridge over the river but after a while, we got it dismantled and concentrated our research on this side of the river. Now the mine is unified. And we call it the Theresa Gold Mines. Mines with an s because we will open many more. The Indians have already identified five other gold spots but we keep it a secret for the time being.

My father was interested and happy to learn about all those details. Thanking Alphonse, he followed Buster in the direction where our future home would be built.

Buster was Alphonse Caouette's son, and like his dad who had abandoned his comfortable career at the Railways, Buster had left his career as a Pilot as well as Pilot instructor for the Royal Canadian Arm Forces. He now was the Executive Director for the mine. He had a lot on his plate.



Eugène Gilbert on the left supervises the construction of the Community Centre

Makwa on the other side of the river was observing this scene with curiosity. He did not know then that he would become one of the most known and liked people at the mine.

Theresa Gold Mines is taking shape

In the following days my father, helped by many men and my gramps Joseph Gilbert built our home and that of my Aunt Simone (Carmelus Bolduc). Green wood fresh from Mr. Brassard's mill with the rip and cartons as insulation. We also built four more for my uncles Sylvio Fortin, Ovila Champagne (Armandine) , Maurice Gilbert (Jeanne-d'Arc)

and Eugène (Rachelle). My uncles François and Gabriel Gilbert who were single had now joined us at the mine. We would get electricity two years after our arrival. Between then, it was nafta for light, a 10 horsepower motor for the canoe to transport us in the summer and a snowmobile during the winter. No refrigerator: families preserved their meat in a container at the bottom of a well or inside a big jug. The road to go to Longlac was constructed two years later. There was no school, and no books. For the children it was pure paradise.

At the beginning, the young guys use to say that the girls at the mine were as rare as books. But beware, they will grow.

Families got installed on the shore of the river.



Marie-Marthe, Nicole, Huguette and Jean-Louis Fortin

Within a few months the men cleared the area while others got busy to finish the construction of the mill and the new

Office and also the digging of the new wells. Everyone was convinced that in a little time, maybe one, two to four years, they would find gold like in Porcupine Lake.

We continue to build and dig the shaft.

Armandine Fortin (Ovila Champagne) and her six children were installed in the log cabin next to the wharf. This measured 12ft by 15ft. Armandine, my father's sister is anxious for the construction of her house to be finished. When it rains, she is forever emptying pails of water.

Several men come and sit on the large porch of her cabin to take a break. The children watch them. They talk of all sorts of things. It is their "Champagne Break"



The Champagne family was squeezed in this small camp while their house was being built.

One day, on her way back from Longlac, Mrs Couture felt uneasy in the canoe. Her navigators had a glass or two too many under their belt. They were chanting and laughing out loud. Rose-Anna was eager to arrive at the pier.

-OK boys, enough of that she said, so happy to see her husband waiting for her at the wharf. But in her rush landing at the wharf, she fell into the water where there were 30 feet of depth. Vidal Saint-Pierre and Georges-

Emile Boutin had the delicate job of pushing her bottom out of the water. Her husband Donat yelled without stopping "*Come out of the water, Jesus Christ!*" "*Come out of the water, Jesus Christ!*" The next day, one of the men dove in the river to retrieve Rose-Anna's glasses.

The Company did not allow alcohol at the mine. But the young mine workers found a way around. They simply hid their cases of beer 2-3 miles away in the woods. Only the Indians found out their game but they let it go.

Indians brought a little angel in our home¹²

Aunt Simone (Carmelus) and my mother were both pregnant at the same time with Raymonde and my sister Nicole. My sister was born in Shawinigan and arrived at the mine less than one year old. Simone announced the birth of her daughter Raymonde while saying "the Indians have brought a little angel" a great mystery for us!



Raymonde Bolduc

¹² In French: Les Sauvages sont passés. This sentence in French announces a birth ! Legend says that outside hunting periods, many young Indian males were invited to stay in nearby families. Surprisingly, after they had left a few months later, young girls were giving birth. It was then said that "The Indians have come and brought an angel...)

We had everything that was needed in our kitchens, except no refrigerator. The majority would get one many years later.

* * *

A working progress

Father Couture often came to the mine.

Fall arrives as well as the missionary takes his turn to survey the digging of the mine, close to where a few years prior Joe Toweda, Muckety and William Bill had found the precious golden rock.



Father Couture

The old British Lorry

Charles-Édouard Fortin, cigarette in his mouth is driving the old British Lorry. At this time he is with Alphonse

Caouette, Buster and Raymond Gilbert, one of the rare who knew how to drive. It was him who was mainly responsible to carry the dynamite. The Lorry was painted in green and red.



Charles-Édouard Fortin

Caouette follows his plan

Caouette continues to distribute the land to each family as per the pre-established plan he had designed for Theresa Gold Mines .

The average age for the adults is 34 years old. The mine counts on twenty young single people.

Alphonse Caouette announces great news: He has recruited an Engineer. His name is Fernand Cloutier and will start working at the mine in June. This is his first employment, having received his diploma two weeks before.

The Community Centre takes form

The men have to go to the river to collect water until the reservoir is built. This will take months. At the same time, the Community Centre which will house a Chapel. Upstairs will house a general store, laundromat, classrooms and to the left the great room.



The Community Centre becomes the central point of Theresa Gold Mines

* * *

The man who proved the Crimson Route

One day, Alphonse came face to face with Louis Bisson in Longlac.

-How are things going for you Louis ? Still flying ?

-Yes and I was quite busy during the war. Crossed the ocean more than 120 times as a Captain in the Ferry Command. And

I was really busy accomplishing a six months mission with Don McVicar.

-What mission asked Alphonse ? Who is Don McVicar ?

-McVicar is a very close friend of mine. He and I very often challenged Jonathan Livingston the famous American pilot. Mind you, he always won. He is a heck of a good pilot. -Well Ti-Phonse, I can tell you secret now that the war is over.

-Can you imagine ? In early 1942, I was invited to a secret meeting in Montreal. There I was asked by the American Government officials to conduct a mission over the Artic. The project was called the Crimson Route¹³. Roosevelt wanted to help Churchill and would send supplies to England by the sea. But most of his ships were sunk by German U-Boats. So they asked me if I could design and prove a Route over the Arctic to reach England. Nobody had ever flown up there.

*I asked them why they had not challenged John Livingston to do it. They said that I was more acquainted with Arctic than John. So I accepted under the condition to be accompanied by my friend Don who is a hell of a good navigator, a pilot and a radio operator. On both of our planes, we we crisscrossed Northern territories establishing a frog-jump route for American warplanes to reach England. We spent months designing and authenticating the route. It made it possible for US Air Forces to fly 10 000 warplanes to England. I was also part of a similar mission thru *Nigeria, Khartoum and**

¹³ McVicar Donald M. , *Ferry Command Pilot*. The Crimson Route would be comprised of three Crystal bases: *Crystal One* south of Ungava Bay, *Crystal Two* near the mouth of Frobisher Bay, *Crystal Tree* on Padloping Island, plus three other called *Bluie* and finally a route from Iceland to Prestwick.

Cairo in order to fly more warplanes to General Montgomery in the Middle East.

-I flew Churchill for a while. I was impressed by his simplicity. He would spend hours in the cockpit asking questions about aviation. He had his scotch up there and would look all around. I think he would have dreamt to be a pilot. Did you know he was half American ?

-No I didn't replied Alphonse.

-You know Alphonse, my mission with Don McVicar over the Arctic made me think about the beauty of life and the majesty of our planet. And thanking God for such beauty.

-You know, I never stop dreaming of becoming a priest. I often discuss the idea with Father Couture with whom I spent nearly five years flying over Indian territories and with Mgr. Charbonneau while in Montreal.

Alphonse was blown away.

-I'm not the only dreamer, thought Mr Caouette.

* * *

A national hymn

At this time French-Canadians were cut off from the rest of the world. They felt threatened and drowning by the number of anglophones. They fought fiercely to conserve their language, their culture and their religion. One of the

ways for this was to sing old French songs wherever they went. At school this was a rule, and with family reunions it was a way of life. When the children (or the parents) were lonely, they would start to sing *Sur la route de Berthier* or *Alouette, gentille Alouette*. Everyone knew at least 200 songs by heart.

Religious had an agreeable habit to choose a common song and modify the words to adapt to circumstances. How many songs that have been transformed have we heard!! We have to say that where Religious vocations are concerned, my mother's family had provided a generous effort of 25 religious. The Fortin family was pretty mean: not one.

A priest in one of the Hearst parishes loved one old French song in particular *Auprès de ma blonde*. This was a military song of the XV11e century composed during the war between France and The Netherlands (1672-1678). This made up part of 500 French folk songs that Reverend Gadbois had identified between 1935 to 1938.

Father Corriveau had therefore borrowed the melody and composed in 1947 what would become the *national hymn* of Theresa Gold Mines. His song was called: *Chantons Sainte-Thérèse*. Poor him, because the Bishop of Hearst, Monseigneur Landry appreciated the song so much and the engagement of Father Corriveau that he choose him to be the priest to the people of the mine. This is how Father Corriveau found himself at Theresa Mines.

Because of his kind personality and because of this song:

The “National Hymn” of Theresa Gold Mines

Also known as « *Auprès de ma blonde* »

1

*Chantons sainte-Thérèse
En un lieu si plaisant
Où l'on respire à l'aise :
Tout le monde est content.*

Refrain :

*Près de notre mine,
Qu'il fait bon. fait bon, fait bon !
Près de notre mine
qu'il fait bon rester !*

1I

*De l'or en abondance
Partout dans le rocher
Nous avons l'espérance
D'avoir un beau clocher !*

11I

*Cet or c'est bien l'image
De tout cœur généreux;
Chacun par son visage
Nous dit qu'il est heureux !*

The image shows a page of a musical score for a song titled "Chanson de la Mine Sainte-Thérèse". The title is written in a large, elegant cursive font at the top. Below the title, there is a line of smaller text: "Paroles de ALAIN COCHRÉVAL, père" and "Musique de (P. K. L.)". The score itself consists of several staves of music with lyrics written below them. The lyrics are in French and match the text provided in the other blocks. The score is numbered "2" at the bottom left and "4" at the bottom right.

1V

*O Patronne chérie l'image
Gardez les travailleurs
Et eux toute la vie
Seront reconnaissants !*

V

*La chose la plus chère
plus aimable que l'or
C'est la petite mère
Et le bébé qui dort !*

V1

*Longlac et sa rivière,
aimés pour leur beauté;
surtout le presbytère,
où règne la gaité ...*

But Father Corriveau was coming from far.

As a young man, he was also dreaming of becoming a priest. But his family was too poor to pay for his studies. He then decided to become a lumberjack in the States. After a few years in the woods, he returned back home, paid all of his parents' debts and asked his Pastor to help him becoming a priest. He was then over 30.

His Pastor told him physically he was in bad shape and could not sustain long studies.

-People here say that you are so skinny that you won't finish the year. Come on, forget about it.

But Alphonse Corriveau was stubborn. He worked, paid all of his studies and finally was ordained a priest.

He started his mission in Thedford Mines, Quebec before being sent to a very small parish in Ontario, called Hallébourg. The small parish was named about Mgr Hallé. Under his leadership, Hallébourg became a devotion Centre to Ste-Anne. Parishioners from all over the place came annually into the tiny Community to celebrate Ste-Anne.

Father Corriveau was very comfortable managing misery. So, when Alphonse Caouette asked the bishop of Hearst to assign a priest to Theresa, it was no wonder that the Bishop immediately thought of Father Corriveau to do take on the job.

* * *

Rose-Anna, her husband and daughter started the only restaurant at the mine. They were helped by the young girls who washed the dishes and the young boys who on their side carried the heavy boxes. Gisèle evidently knew and met all the men at the mine. She chose one by the name of Louida Nadeau who became her husband. The newlyweds were married at the Community Centre in front of Father Corriveau and all the people of the mine helped. All on their 36! Louida was seduced by Gisèle beauty but also by her delicious pies that she prepared every Monday for all the workers of the mine.



Standing up, the Couture family: Donat, Rose-Anna and Gisèle. Sitting at the right is Father Corriveau. Also at the table, Maurice, Yves et Raymond Gilbert, Fernand Cloutier, Sylvio Belgrade, Laurent Mercier and Jules-Marie Leblanc.

The little flower

Father Corriveau arrived at Theresa Gold Mines October 5, 1947 and started to count the number of his parishioners. 137 in all.

In fact there were only 136, as he had counted Thérèse Caouette twice. Maybe, did he want to add Theresa statue in the hopes of being able to count on her help.

Little Thérèse Martin was a religious Carmelite born in France January 2, 1873 and died at the age of 24 years old.

Determined and stubborn (like Mr. Caouette) out of the



*From left to right:
Miss Charbonneau et Miss Duval*

ordinary, she had gone visit the Pope to get permission to enter Carmel before the required age. The Pope refused her request. She had the guts to appeal His decision. The Pope was charmed by her strong character and changed his mind.

Because she saw herself as being a flower among many others in the field, Thérèse of Lisieux was called *The little flower*. She is represented by a white statue carrying a cross on her left, and some roses.

A brand new Buick for every mine worker

About thirty houses were built at Theresa. They measured for the most part, 16ft by 24 (384 sq. feet). In this small restricted space, there was a kitchen, living-room, bathroom, cold room and two, sometimes three bedrooms.

This was only until the mine started producing!! These homes were destined to be garages in the future



The Bolduc new kitchen

when every worker would get a new Buick. My father was to receive a bonus at the end of his five year contract which was a Buick carrying number 14. The Company would engrave his name in gold. This was a handshake contract for all the mine workers.

Chapter 6: Life at the mine

The Ojibwe

The Ojibwe became our friends. Between ourselves and everywhere we talked about the "Savages" with no negative connotation. It was several years later that we started to use the word "Indian" or "Natives". All the natives considered Father Couture like their best friend.

At Theresa Gold Mines, Natives had their say in the conduct of the mine. Maybe for the first time in modern Canadian mining history. Apart from being employed as miners, truck drivers, engineers, equipment operators and maintenance operators they had their right of vote in the General Assemblies usually held at Caouette's house.

In the winter we were all wearing moccasins made by the Indian women who lived on the other side of the river. Some moccasins were knee length, and there were short ones. They were beautiful. Our feet never got cold even in 20F or 30F below zero weather. One day, a record-low of minus 60F.

A meal with friends

-Just do like us, my mother used to say to the Ojibwe family she had invited for super. She had shown them how we ate

at the table. Makwa, his wife and two children were doing very well.

My mother made us promise to never laugh if they did not eat like us. To show that they had enjoyed their meal, the natives pretended that they were not able to rise from the table. They would literally pretend they were be glued to their chairs. Their message was that they didn't want to leave after having had such a good time. That is when we were permitted to laugh.

It is true they had different manners. They had such big hearts. We had so much to learn from them. My cousin Anita (Bolduc) often repeated and still repeats today that the Ojibwe were our Guardian Angels. Many of us surely owed them our lives.

Blueberry Pudding

For Father Couture a plate of baked beans was as good as gold. His recipe was to soak them for a while, then boil them for 2 minutes, then put them in the oven during 7 to 8 hours. He also loved blueberry puddings. One day, he talked to the people in front of the bunkhouse and told them that he had been invited in full winter to an Ojibwe family. He said the Native woman had baked him with pride a blueberry pudding.

-I ate it with pleasure and greediness, he talked to the people in front of the bunkhouse. To the Native woman he asked:

-But where have you found these beautiful round blueberries ? They look so fresh and you don't even have a fridge! How does that happen ?

-Oh it was my husband who killed a bear yesterday, and he found the blueberries in his stomach.



From left to right: Sylvio Fortin, Carmelus Bolduc, Father Couture, Donat Couture, Rose-Anna Couture, Lionel Duval, Maurice Hallé, Jean-Louis Lapointe, ing. , Alfred Rouleau, Sitting: Yves Cloutier, ing. , Charles-Édouard Fortin

Do not disturb !

Father Couture was tight lipped when not laughing

Getting ready in his presbytery to say mass in Longlac, he arrived with his prayer book, placed it on the altar then started singing a Chippewa Hymn, and his Parishioners

who were 90% native accompanied him. His powerful voice, his mastery of the language enchanted them. A white person who speaks our language so well, we have never seen, recalled one native.

All of a sudden, prayer book in hand, the missionary stopped singing: Total silence in the room, nobody moves.

He slowly placed his prayer book on the altar, grabbed his 22 calibre rifle and in a theatrical gesture shot a large rat who came to watch the mass. Unshaken, without saying a word, he placed his rifle on the altar, and without interruption he continued singing with more gusto. No one laughed, but the Indians applauded and approved with their traditional cry: Wa! Wa! Wa!

Chippewa Hymm

Father Couture had as big a voice as his torso. The natives loved to hear him sing and were amazed to listen to him speak the Ojibwe language with such ease. Father Couture gave us two records that he taped, and which we have preciously preserved. I have played a thousand times the record *Chippewa Hymm, Mi Ajigwa Wi Tibikak*. I knew the song by heart, but did not understand a single word.



Father Couture gave this record to every family,

The Natives knew the forest and could find a hidden object they had placed beside a tree 3 months before, and after having travelled some 200 miles to hunt. They never became impatient. The ones who worked at the bottom of the mine were never late. The Ojibwe were very honest people my father would say. We could depend on them. My father's best friend's name was Isidore Pettabam Makwa. He was a social butterfly who was a well known native very much appreciated by everybody in the mine. In Ojibwe language, Makwa means "Bear".

-Makwa Makwa! my mother was yelling from the end of the yard by the river. *Yes? he replied*

-Neejawnisug! Free translation: *Can you watch the children? I am going to the Community Centre*

-Ok I am coming replied Makwa as he pulled his rowboat

Makwa often came to look after us and protect us against the bears. The natives looked out for the children of the mine, for sure without them certain ones of us would have perished under the claws of a bear or wolf. *-Migwetch Makwa* (Thank you)

Who is Makwa?

The Ojibwe belonged to the great Aboriginal cultural group of the Asishinaabes, who also understand the Outaouais and the Algonquins.

The term Ojibwe comes from Outchibou, a name given in the 20th century to a group living North, which is today called Sault Sainte-Marie in Ontario.



Photo: Makwa

Like the Incas, the Ojibwe had a fear of the eclipse of the sun. Therefore, that is why Father Couture with slides gave them astronomy classes.

Young French Canadian miners of Theresa, as far as they were concerned, would give into fears and legends.

At the beginning they adamantly refused to go down to the bottom of the shaft, because as far as they were concerned, this was Lucifer's residence.

This sickly fear made the Ojibwe miners laugh. *Wa!! Wa! Wa!*

With all his strength of persuasion Alphonse Caouette tried to convince the young ones to go down. The Natives would also join Mr Caouette in that delicate mission. Finally, one young minor Tom Dupont decided to go first. He came back and said to his fellow workers that he had not found any

trace of Lucifer. One by one, they decided to go down the shaft. They quickly realized that even if it was sometimes hell at the bottom of the mine, there were no devils.

Anecdotes

Toffee from between the bark and the tree

Here Buster, this is for the children of the mine said Father Couture while taking a large bag filled with fifty cones made of birch bark and containing maple taffy. *-My sister from Longlac made these. They are going to like that.* Father Couture and Marcel (Buster) Caouette were great friends even with the age difference.

My father too loved Father Couture. Even though he had secretly stopped believing in the Church since the death of his mother Leda Poulain after her 15th or 16th pregnancy.

He believed she was forced by the village priest from Saint-Martin-de-Beauce to have child after child. He blamed the Church of this, rather than the cancer that was eating his mother.

My mother often said: *-Father Couture loves the Indians and helps them a lot, and the Indians loved him too.*

Clarisse's thigh

We never forgot the day when Clarisse Gilbert (Eugène's daughter) got hooked in the thigh by an adult who was fishing on the Wharf. All the children were screaming, but the fisherman unheedingly thought they were having fun. He kept tugging his line harder and harder believing he had caught a large fish. It was Ovila Champagne who had the delicate task of removing the hook which was deeply embedded in her thigh.

Clarisse had forgotten about the incident until later in Longlac when she got married to Léo Paradis.

On top of a moving rock

My sister Huguette had brought a group of children across the river on the adventure of looking for blueberries. They were amusing themselves jumping from rock to rock.



There was a big one and Huguette jumped on it and the rock started to move. She had jumped on the head of a moose who was drinking from the river. The moose got up, and everyone burst into laughter.

A large snake

-Nicole, look at the large snake

I held the largest snake by the head that was ever found at the mine. It measured over 2 feet. It was so strong that it slipped from my hand and I dropped it in the house. We looked for it all day, but during the night I was awakened by the snake who had comfortably installed itself in my bed. Today, I would think twice before holding a snake by the head, even a 6 inch snake!

The mischievous players

Ti-Bi (Gabriel Gilbert) and his accomplices Lorenzo Bizier and Francois Nadeau were the three best pranksters. Ti-Bi played the most memorable when he succeeded to start a fight between my father Charles-Édouard and Alphée (Quirion), by the aggressive notes placed in their bucket which was lowered then brought up from the bottom of the mine. Both thought the aggressive notes were written by the other. At the end of this they were strongly arguing.

The three pranksters surely inspired my sister Marie-Marthe because since then she always plays tricks on everyone.

We were used to the cow

At home we heated the house with a wood stove, and our homes were lit with nafta. We slept under mosquito nets, and we ate meat provided by the Ojibwe. Mind you, one morning while getting up Raymond Gilbert found a bag with the butt of a moose left as a gift by the natives. Young

Raymond , my mother's cousin, was a good friend of many Natives.

The home menu: Pea soup, moose meat, potatoes, bacon fat sprinkled with sugar, beans and lemon pie. We had oranges, bananas or apples especially during Christmas time. Same regime at the Caouette's. We drank powdered milk which tasted terrible as we were used to cow milk.

During this time at Buster and Adrienne

From the window, they saw the mine! A little park was built close to the three houses on the rock. Buster's children would play with their cousins Michel and Marcie Gilbert. But beware, the bears are near. They are attracted by the blueberries.



Delvia Caouette takes a moment to relax with one of her grandchildren



Raymond, Hélène and Marielle



Thérèse Caouette (Gilbert) with the children: Hélène on the left, Marcie, Michel and Raymond. Marielle was just a glint in Buster's eyes then.

Theresa Gold Mines also grows

The statue of Saint-Theresa recently arrived was installed halfway from the Community Centre and the houses of Carmelus Bolduc and of Charles-Édouard Fortin.

Uncle Eugène Gilbert was good for so many things. We were told that he went to Quebec to get the statue and he would pay half the price. At that time, it was a large amount of money .

The marble statue was built in Belgium and purchased by the Quebec City



Photo: Rev. Corriveau

Bishop. The Company bought it from the Bishop at the cost of \$600.00

But finally, Uncle Eugène actually paid the entire amount. It was a large sum, at a time when his wife Rachelle was charging 50 cents for a Tony hair do to make extra money.

Laval Page carried the statue in his truck.

Black and white ?

All could think that Theresa Gold Mines was in black and white. But no, Theresa was all in color! Blue, pink, green, yellow....

The sky was blue as the river with beautiful white clouds. The cab of the truck driven by my father was green. The roof of our house was red like uncle Carmelus's. The outside walls of the two identical houses were green. They had been painted by Bertrand Paradis. He had spread the rest of the red paint over the dumpster of my father's truck.

The caterpillar tractor was a violent red.

Makwa often wore a dark blue hat just like his pants which were also blue. Narcisse was often seen dressed in red. It was nice to see them both arrive in their canoe where they would present the fruit of their hunt.



Up on the hill the three Caouette's houses. In yellow, the Champagne' and the Community Centre. On the right, the Mill and the Headframe. In red and green near the river, Carmelus'(Simone) and Charles-Édouard' (Laurence) houses. Makwa supervises the children swimming near the wharf. (Illustration: Christine Lizotte)



All color images come from video footage



Men working on the river



In yellow, Magloire Jolicoeur's hen house

Meeting points

The Wharf like the Community Centre and the Statue of Saint-Theresa was one of three places to assemble the people of the mine.

We would see people arriving from Longlac, Indians, bishops, large bonnets, important visitors but for the children it was the municipal swimming pool. There were a



Children swimming near the wharf. Marcel Gilbert can be seen in the forefront

lot of fish. We would swim where the water was 30 feet in depth and use old abandoned tires as buoys. We would see who had the most blood suckers on their skin. Sometimes the older braver ones would swim across the river to pick

blueberries on Ojibwe territories. The wharf was sometimes very busy with men all over the places.



A dozen mine workers brought this tractor from Longlac

Our Snowmobile

In winter we were able to get to Longlac by borrowing a snowmobile, our snow bus.

Bombardier built approximately 2500 B-12 between 1941 and 1951 the date where the Valcour Enterprise stopped producing them.

Our snowmobile had the capacity to carry 12 people and in good weather conditions reach up to 50 km an hour.

It would plow a road between the trees and bring us food, mail and other commodities.

Sometimes we would attach a large sled to transport our biggest parcels, or the catalogue orders made up by my dad through Eaton's catalogue.

Saying, the snowmobile had a lot of different uses. It transported and hauled some very large equipments.



Our snowmobile had different uses

The older ones had found a pleasant use for it.

Memories

Some unforgettable memories of people around us

There were Carmelus Bolduc, the blacksmith; Alphée Quirion, the barber; Sylvio Belgrade who did ironing for 25 cents; Mr. Brassard where , in a single day, 16 children had their tonsils removed by Dr. Gérard Noël.

There was Hélène Poulain, though tiny I was secretly in love with (the author named his daughter Marie-Hélène); the little Doyon who always jumped for joy, we called him *moon*; Mr. Maheu and his glass eye. Magloire Jolicoeur and his henhouse. And Tom Dupont the strong man of the mine.

Then there was Léo Dupont who was starting to ogle cousin Anita. Young men hiding their beer in the woods. There was my mom who would chase the bears with her broom, Maurice Gilbert who loved to discuss politics and philosophy; Miss Duval, the school teacher. Arthur Rouleau who sold sewing machines. Charles-Édouard Fortin Rawleigh products.

There was my uncle Ovila Champagne who had the sniffles; Sylvio, the uncle who would always stop work to take the time to listen to us. Rachelle an elusive aunt. All the other neighbors of the mine, the uncles, aunts, cousins male and female.

There was also uncle Eugène Gilbert who was with his cousins Yves and Raymond Gilbert, the one in the family who was the most knowledgeable about the affairs of the mine.

And Mr Caouette...

In Ontario we called him the *Mine Speaker*. In Quebec, Alphonse Caouette was called *the Golden Lion*. Others called him the Lion of the North.

Alphonse was a born speaker who was convincing and had piercing eyes. He was a strong businessman like we rarely see in a generation. He had earned the support of many business men especially the Casavant brothers who were organ builders from Saint-Hyacinthe and Charles Fortin from *Le Sirop de sapin Fortin* plus many others.

His favorite “ally” was none the less Mgr Joseph Charbonneau, chancellor of the *Université de Montréal* and archbishop of Montreal who he had known before when he was the Bishop of Hearst. Mgr Charbonneau for several reasons supported the Theresa project. For example, he indirectly encouraged several parishes from Quebec to promote it. The priests could even purchase shares in the mine.

The Caouette children did not mingle very much with the children of the mine and the parents from the mine told their children not to go in the other direction. It wasn't until 1951 that the Caouette children would go down the hill and mix with other children.

Mr. Caouette had forbidden the consumption of alcohol at the mine. Not by ideology or religious conviction but only to give a better image of French-Canadians who at this time

had a bad reputation, often well deserved, in towns like Geraldton, Hearst and Timmins...

They would yell, scream!
-Those fucking French-Canadians !

The Children of the River

Mr. Caouette called us the *children of the river*. In 1948 the Northern Miner newspaper mentioned that 50 children were living at the mine.

I remember one Christmas where two of the Caouette children had sang *Minuit Chrétien*. Also, some of my cousins Mireille, Jacqueline and Denise Champagne did a show put on by the teacher Miss Jeanne Duval. Denise and Mireille with dolls in their arms advanced to sing in front of



Appear on the photo, Jean-Louis Fortin , Richard Tanguay, Jean-Marc and Gilles Quirion, Jean-Guy Champagne, Colette Champagne, Marie-Marthe and Huguette Fortin, Anita Bolduc, and many others

the people of the mine *Bonne nuit, cher enfant*. Jacqueline who always had a contagious laugh had well recited her role as an Angel, but she could not behave as she was dying with laughter. Her sister Colette came to replace her at the last minute, but it was too late; the audience was doubled up with laughter.

Happy children yes, except when we were sick and our mothers forced us to swallow fish oil or yet Epsom salt.

What an honor !

Marcie Gilbert and her brother Michel (children of Thérèse Caouette and Yves |Gilbert) were received at the age of 5 - 6 years old as members of the Canadian Ojibwe Society. The Ceremony a great to-do was held in the Community Centre. Everyone was at his best.

Marcie did not know what exactly was going on, but she understood it was important. A big moment for her and her brother.

The skiing nuns !

A particular day, five nuns from the Point (Indian Reserve) came to the Caouette's. They were part of the Congregation of Christ the King, recently established in Longlac.

To their great pleasure they started to dance, sing, play in the snow, slide on saucers, veils in the wind. What a spectacle for the 5 children on the rock.

The three houses on the rock had a lot of visitors. They sometimes held general assemblies for the members. There were many investors, Indians, ministers and lot of



religious people. Thérèse, not always prepared, threw the children's toys under the sofa.

Mgr Charbonneau would have his turn, and what impressed the children was his large Archbishop amethyst ring. Father Couture would accompany on the piano and sing Ojibwe songs.

Theresa vs Longlac



Theresa Hockey Team

We would take the best hockey players against the Longlac team. Adrien Noël was the coach.

The Longlac team would arrive by snowmobile. The players would disembark in front of the Community Centre and on to the ice all the men went.

There were two minor hockey clubs at the mine, the *Theresians* and the *Knights of Columbus*. All boys but one girl: Huguette.



Marcel Gilbert up on the left and Huguette in the center. One can also recognize Yvon Quirion and Réjean Bolduc.

She was the guardian of the net for one of the clubs. The guardians of the goal used Eaton catalogue as leggings.

The Indians watched the games. They knew the rules of hockey as it was similar to the game of *La crosse*.

Not so bad a life

Contrary to what one might think, living at the Theresa could also be pleasant even for the adults. Aunt Armandine said that at St-Martin-de-Beauce she was used to getting up at 5 a.m. and go to bed late at night: go milk the cows, look after the children, help her husband to remove rocks from the land... Few contact with neighbors and even less with her siblings... and this was 7 days a week. No toilet, no electricity for 75% of them, no telephone, no movie theatre. They understood the rough life.

But surprisingly, life was better off for them at the Theresa: plenty of neighbours and family members, toilets, phones, no cow to milk, no rock to remove...Only bears to watch for and daily concern of avoiding accident...because there were no doctor and no road to hospital, only transport by the river.

Lorenzo Fortin and the Black Riders.



Lorenzo Fortin at the guitar. Alphée Quirion at the violin singing Hallelujah I'm a bum, halleluja bum again...

Two brothers of Charles-Édouard, Lorenzo and Lionel were country singers. They were known under the name Black Riders (*Les Cavaliers noirs*). They crisscrossed Quebec and Ontario.

One day Lorenzo and the Black Riders came to Theresa. Lorenzo spent some time afterwards working at the mine and at Pulp Wood in Longlac.

First accident at the mine

Alphée Quirion our barber and violin player was delayed at home because he had had a long discussion with an insurance agent.

Arriving late to the shaft, he hurried down to the bottom of the mine. His companions did not have the time to warn him that they were doing some repairs.

The miners at the bottom of the shaft recount the following



Alphée Quirion

-Alphée came out of the elevator cage to join us. He had come out and the cage went back up. Suddenly we heard a loud noise like an explosion. And there we only saw Alphée's feet poking out from under the cage which had collapsed and crushed him.

Alphée died on the spot.

The diesel quit working

Big turmoil at the mine, the diesel suddenly stopped working. The shutdown would last four months.

Some workers took advantage to do other things, go falling trees in the woods, enlarge their houses, learn to cook, or simply go fishing or shopping in Geraldton.

Sylvio Fortin quit the mine temporarily to go and learn English. My dad did some orders by Eaton catalogue. He got the urge to learn how to cook.

The workers were not paid during this unintentional shut down. Of course the children did not notice. We eat as we need. The direction of the mine paid the rent of the young single people.

The mine will resume life at the end of 1948

Our parents

Our mothers never let be known at any time when the living conditions at the mine were the hardest. There was never a single sex scandal at the mine, nor any gold reported stolen at any time, neither any industrial sickness due to health conditions down into the shafts.

When a woman became pregnant, it was a celebration. It happened four or five times at the mine.

The women played cards Hearts. Those who had a hand crank telephone would gossip, but the signal never went further than a few hundred feet. They cooked, good food.

From the kitchen to the Plato cave.

My father tried at times to cook, but everytime it scared us. <Buyer> he had one day ordered a recipe book, probably ordering it from Eaton's catalogue.

In receiving the recipe book, worried, my mother asked
-What do you want to do with that?



-Cakes

-No way, you are not to touch that.

My mother was always doubtful of my father's cooking. She declared to him that he did not need a recipe book to burn a cake or to make pea soup which he would have stick to the bottom of the pot.

Whew, we were reassured.

From Eaton

My father had ordered again by Eaton catalogue a book on Noranda Gold Mines. He wanted to know how a mine could prosper and function.

On his side Sylvio Fortin, enjoyed talking to the engineers at the mine and get informed on the technical details.

Like the large majority of men in his day, Charles-Édouard had rarely attended school, but he was an avid reader. He devoured everything that passed by his nose. His great discovery through his reading before the war, was to learn what the Plato's cave was.

Allegory had subjugated him. *We are manipulated by the Press* he said! *There are men hidden behind who tell us what to think. Camilien Houde, him, he knew that !*

His 25th Anniversary

-I want to see the mine

The Archbishop watched from his window the vehicles that traveled on the Dorchester Boulevard in Montreal. He was pensive. At Asbestos, the miners were preparing something. All of a sudden, his face lightened up and he called his secretary.

-Reverend, I want to attend Father Couture 25th Anniversary. I am going to see our friend in Hearst and Longlac. I want Reverend Gadbois to accompany me. Would you please look after organizing the trip?

Mgr Charbonneau wanted to go down the shafts to get the feeling. The Archbishop wanted to immerse himself into the hard life of the miners, because he had in his head a delicate dossier to settle in Asbestos. A historical strike. in perspective.

* * *

Hey, we can hear the motor. They are arriving...!

The Bombardier snowmobile appeared around the corner of the road going towards the Community Centre where a dozen families of workers from the mine came to welcome Mgr Charbonneau and several priest who had accompanied him.

My mother shouted:

-It is him, him down there with the red cassock. The other one is Mgr Landry. We are going to please him. We shall sing the song of the mine.

-Let's all sing Chantons Sainte-Thérèse. All started to sing. My father remained silent.

My mother did not miss telling Monsignor proudly that her family had 25 religious people. One in Peru, another, canon in Gaspé and another in Cuba. That her two uncles were notaries and her grandfather a justice of the peace. And that....



From left to right, Mgr Landry and Mgr Charbonneau

But, Mgr was already 10 feet ahead of her and was not



Father Couture arriving at the Cookery for his 25th anniversary of priesthood

listening. Having 15 000 religious in his Diocese to support

and sometimes endure, he was mostly interested to meet with the miners of Theresa.

After a good meal at the cookery. Mgr Charbonneau accompanied by several priests, went to the bottom of the mine, a smile on his lips. With this impressive religious delegation, the devil didn't show up.



On the left, Father Couture and Mgr Charbonneau facing Delvia and Alphonse Caouette

Implication of the Church at Theresa

Many members of the Clergy were openly supporting Alphonse's project. They thought that the success or the Theresa Gold Mines would bring more French Canadian settlers in the Region. For his part, Father Couture saw an opportunity for the well-being of the Natives who in turn wanted to be part of a winning project. All knew about Ontario's history of astonishing achievements in the mining industry: Porcupine area, the Ring of Fire, Sudbury, Elliott Lake, Kirkland lake and so many others.

How could a project based on a partnership with Natives, Clergy, French Canadian businessmen not become a huge success ? After all, was not Ontario the second richest gold territory in the world ?

And what about beaucerons workers ? Were they not at the origin of the very first Gold Rush in the Canadian History ? With the Hudson Bay Company installing in the 1850's the first gold mine near St-Georges-de-Beauce on the River Touffe-les-Pins ?

And has not the Vatican through Ottawa Diocese ordered Hearst Bishop to manage a 400,000\$ debt inherited under Mgr Hallé ?

- *Tell us WHAT to do but not HOW to do it !*

Mgr Charbonneau was a man of Social Sciences. As chancellor of Université de Montréal, he left his mark by creating the Department of sociology. He had given a big boost to Dental Studies specially in Orthodontics. He was also a lot closer to the workers than his successor Cardinal Paul-Emile Leger was.

What about Reverend Gadbois ?

Reverend Gadbois was the "René Angelil" of his time. One of the best cultural entrepreneurs that French Canada and Franco Americans has produced. He founded a famous radio station CJMS (Canada Je Me Souviens).

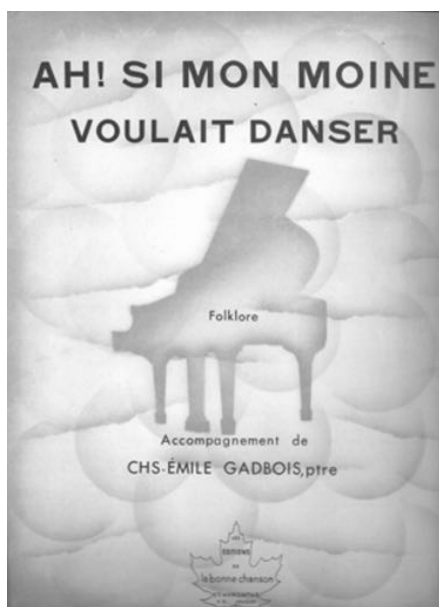
In the 30's with the strong support of the Rector of Université Laval, the priest took on the inventory of La Bonne Chanson de France, great songs of France. He had identified more than 500. He got the rights to import them in Canada and became a music book publisher. He will edit more than 20 million. He became known as the greatest editor of music in the history of Canada.

The *Bonnes Chansons* were all intrinsically positive songs. Nothing to do with the then modern songs of La Bolduc or Josephine Baker despised by the Catholic Clergy. The Bonnes Chansons came almost obligatory in all the schools of Quebec. One hums them everywhere in Ontario and New England.

The Theresa project challenged Reverend Gadbois. He helped to build together *the Clubs Thérésiens*, a financial organization devoted to support the mine. He entertained the gents on his piano, made the people sing in unison. He dreamt of founding a theatre, and a radio station. He organized competitions and shows at the *Colisée de Québec*, at the Montreal Forum and in the State of Maine in the United States.

He had a plan to finance Theresa Gold Mines. This plan was to create a large cultural centre near St-Hyacinthe by a river on the way to Valcour (Homeland of Bombardier Ski-doo's) where his parents lived. The profits of one would help to finance the other. This location is known today for hosting the famous *Théâtre de la Dame de Coeur*. But Reverend Gadbois had a Plan B in case his selected location in Upton would not be available.

In hindsight one can only celebrate the courage, vision and dedication of this clergy who have sided each in his own way for Theresa Gold Mines. One has to remember that at that time the best entrepreneurs and builders found themselves in the clergy.



Charles-Émile Gadbois was a composer and a publisher. He established La Bonne Chanson to assemble and publish the best French songs. His papers are held at the St-Hyacinthe Seminary.

Balance sheet as of December 1948

« By December 31, there was a total of 110 feet of gallery, 4,425 feet of cross-sections and 158 feet of drilling. Diamond drilling consisting of 28 holes totaling 9,698 feet underground.

Twenty four homes were built and 5 served as offices for the mine. There were 62 employees. The road was finally opened between Theresa and Longlac. It was built by Longlac Pulp and Paper at the cost of \$15,000.

(Simoneau p. 149)

This road will transform the lives of the people of the mine. Young mine workers were now free to go to Geraldton to have some fun. The road was inaugurated on Christmas day. What a beautiful gift that will help to transform the lives of the people at the mine, especially the adults. Of the 25 Indians who worked at the mine prior to the war there is only one left in 1948, George Spen. Our miners are no longer afraid of the devil.



*Lunch time for young mine workers at the bottom of the shaft
(From BAnQ Archives in Sherbrooke)*

Chapter 7: In full speed

In 1949, all the essential services are firmly established at Theresa. We are more organized than most small communities of Quebec. The children have their skating rink, they go swimming off the dock, walk in the woods, build cabins, and play hockey. We all have means of transportation. We trade regularly with the indians. We play cards, and play pool. We play music and watch films.

There is only one detail: it is missing the gold ! But, it will come.

First Communion

Father Corriveau kept the Register as strict as possible.



First Communion, May 6th 1949 . From left to right: Pierre Hébert, Gilles Quirion, Anita Bolduc, Father Corriveau, Jean-Louis Fortin, Henri Asselin, Richard Tanguay.

Being a man of details, he identified by handwriting nearly all the people of the mine. The photo is from May 6, 1949.

Education

No discrimination of people, of their status or language. Everyone was considered in the same class. Two pupils in first grade, one in second, six in third and the rest from 4th to 8th.

I was always proud of my report card from grade one; I was often first, sometimes second. This was until the day I realized that we were only two in grade one. In the morning classes were in English and afternoon in French, And visa versa.



Standing, Colette et Clarisse Gilbert... Sitting, Marie-Marthe and Huguette Fortin, Colette Champagne, Gaston Bolduc...

Mrs. Jeanne Duval had been preceded by Mrs. Rouleau and Mrs. de Villier as teacher. But, she and Mrs. Charbonneau who taught us the most during our life at Theresa. Fernand Cloutier and Buster won their fight in having Theresa become a Schoolboard Commission. It was called the *Roman Catholic Separate School of Theresa*. Mr Morin was it's first chairman and Miss Charbonneau it's first general secretary.



Primary and secondary

from left to right :

*First row : Colette Champagne. Anita Bolduc. Jacqueline Hébert. Thérèse Jolicoeur.
Jacqueline Champagne. Henri Asselin. Jean-Louis Fortin. Richard Tanguay. Gilles Quirion.
Jean-Marc Quirion.*

*Second row : Jean-Guy Champagne. André Quirion. Gaston Bolduc. Gaston Gilbert. Yvon
Quirion. Camille Jolicoeur. Réjean Bolduc. Robert Jolicoeur. Pierre Hébert. Robert
Brassard.*

*Third row : Clarisse Gilbert. Hélène Poulin. Yolande Quirion. Lucille Quirion. Huguette
Fortin. Marie-Marthe Fortin. Camille Brassard. Léo Dupont. Yoland Brassard. Marcel
Gilbert.*

*Last row : Colette Gilbert. Anita Quirion. Judith Quirion. Françoise Gilbert. Ernest Dupont.
Robert Poulin. Yvon Poulin. Jacques Brassard.*

*Les enseignantes: Jeanne Duval à gauche (élémentaire) et Annette Charbonneau à droite
(secondaire).*

Photo credit : Studio Donald Bélanger, Sherbrooke, May 9th 1949.

A communist vote

Oh boy, there is a communist at the mine, peddled François Gilbert. Somebody voted *communist* yesterday.

Who is the dangerous one that did that ?

Everyone was stunned over this communist vote. No one expected a communist to hide somewhere in the area. One started to suspect their neighbor. Lots of people looked at Charles-Édouard suspiciously. Other took a gander at Mr Maheu.

Everyone was trying to identify WHO had voted for the Communist Party of Canada. François laughed in his beard. He savored the moment, and at times he doubled in laughter!



*François Gilbert keeping
an eye on Father
Corriveau*

It is now 1949, the day before at the Federal elections François, at the age of 18 years old had voted Communist, hoping to plant confusion and fear at the mine, just for laughs.

Father Couture has died

-Ovila, my old friend, Father Couture passed away yesterday.

I was alone with him. He died a peaceful death. Would you share the news with everyone? Buster asked as he stepped out of his car.

In very little time, the Champagne children went to all the houses. After hearing the news, my mother went to the shore of the river and yelled:

-Makwa! Makwa!

-Yes, replied our friend

-Father Couture is dead

-Yes we know! We all know. God Bless him!

My mother was astounded to hear that Makwa already knew.

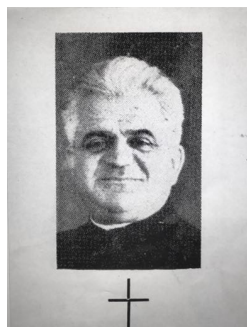
Laurence: - *How did you know that? He just died yesterday.*

Makwa:- *Oh every Indian already knows.*

The Ojibwe had a way of communicating with each other quickly. We called that method, the « *moccasin telegraph* » great inspiration for Mark Zuckerberg.

The news of the death of the Flying Priest had already spread hundreds of miles around.

The Archbishop of Montreal, Mgr Charbonneau very sad, called his private secretary and asked him to bring a photo



of Father Couture, the only photo that dominated the Office of the Chancellor at Université de Montréal. When he was faced with a crisis or a complex problem, Mgr Charbonneau would fixate on the photo. And all of his problems would seem futile.

Hundreds of people assisted at Father Couture funeral, several indians, people from Geraldton, Longlac and the mine, thirty some odd priests and two Monsignors. The Indians were crying, others placed totem poles upside down as a sign of mourning. The others were wailing Wa! Wa! Wa! -*We both lost a dear friend and a good pilot* said Buster to Louis Bisson. -*Oui, mon ami* replied Bisson coming out of the Church.

After his death, there was loads of visits to Theresa, and the creation of the *Clubs Thérèsiens* in Quebec.

Miscellaneous

Francois Gilbert thought he could get away but...

Three weeks after the elections, Francois still savored the effects that he himself had planted at the mine. Cross, Rev. Corriveau who is well aware of the turmoil after the elections. Francois walks away with tight buttocks.

Francois tried in vain to avoid the priest!

- *Young man, it has been a long time since you have been to confession*

-*It's true* replied Francois fearing the worst.

-Come let's settle that right now! said Father.

The priest takes Francois by the arm and drags him to the chapel.

Francois kneels down in the confessional:

-Bless me Father for I have sinned...

After hearing the young man tell him his sins of the week, the priest, aware of the role Francois had in the electoral votes:- *Are you sure you have nothing else to confess, a communist vote for example?*

Nobody could get away from Father Corriveau !

The mine, a religious trinket ?

Of course not, not at all!

Apart from the statue and the call to Providence in the customary language, everything looked like a normal mining complex.

Except maybe the presence of several members of the clergy. But, they were not coming to the mine to save souls. They were interested in the project. We saw them laughing, having fun, playing baseball, playing tricks, tell stories, sing and get informed about the mine as well as line up to descend to the bottom of the shaft...

What are they doing here at the mine?

The investors profited from the new built road between Theresa and Longlac to come in groups to visit the mine.

They would have travelled more than a thousand miles to come to see us. Certain people would do the voyage by train, which was chartered.

-What are they coming to the mine for? asked my cousin Lise Bolduc.

-They are coming to see if it works, invariably her mother Simone responded.

Alphonse Caouette continued to collect sums of importance to exploit the mine. He had formed fundraising clubs across Quebec. The most influential was that of the Eastern Townships. In these clubs, leaders organized raffles corn roasts, dances and bingos. They amused themselves, got motivated, dreamed, and invested. From \$100. or \$200. for the poorest, \$1000. for the richest. Everyone wanted to see at least once in their life this beautiful project in which certain investors invested all their savings. This little corner of paradise which was Theresa, allowed them to dream.

What the hell is that?

The trains left Montreal, and the visitors would stop in Longlac for one or two days. The morning, feverishly, they took the canoe or the snowmobile depending on the season to our destination of Theresa. Now, with the new road they take the car, a truck or a bus. In five years there were 1,500 visitors which equates to 300 per year. That was a lot.

Among the visitors, sometimes there were some English people. When they saw the statue we would hear them say: what the hell is that ?

The mine was so well known at the Canadian post-offices, that it was considered sufficient to leave mail from anywhere in Canada, by simply addressing, for example

Gisèle Couture

Theresa, Ontario



*The Argouin in front of the
Post Office*

... and the letter would reach Longlac which would then be picked up by Raymond Gilbert who had the position of post man of the mine. And delivered to Gisèle.

The mine « turds »

On the ground around the Mill, the children played with the mine turds.

La mine fait des crottes ! The mine is making turds! cried Roland Beaudoin to the children who were amused by the image.



We would learn much later that the « *turds-/crottes* » was a deformation of the French word *carotte* . I have conserved one which still lives besides my many souvenirs of trips taken.

Beautiful teenage years

At the mine, the girls stayed with the girls, and the boys stayed with the boys, except of course Huguette playing hockey.

Sylvio Fortin

Sylvio Fortin often would be sawing wood. When we approached him, he would stop working to talk to us and answer our questions. Often he would admiringly speak of Father Couture's plane. *-One day, I am going to have one, and I will bring you all for a ride*, he would promise.



The seven children of aunt Simone, our immediate neighbor also lived at the mine

It is surely looking at this photo of aunt Simone that a famous inventor got the idea of a snowboard.

Maurice Gilbert

My uncle Maurice and my father Charles-Édouard started discussing religion when they lived at the mine and continued up to 1990 when my father wore his tie for the last time.

A kick in the...!!

At arm and leg wrestling, Asselin always had the upper hand. When he would hit me too hard, my dad would separate us while telling him to go home. Henri refused with an air of defiance and start again.

My dad would finish by kicking him in the... A good actor; Henri moved away, spread his legs holding his butt cheeks with both hands all while hollering with strong exaggeration Ayoye, ayoye, ayoye...



Then two days later he would start all over again.

The bear and the moose

A bear was playing in front of one of the houses. Us, the children trapped and played with him right up to when the adults arrived to kill it. They were afraid of its mother arriving.



Yves Gilbert (Thérèse Caouette) has a chat with a friendly visitor.

Near the river

The Jolicoeur hen house contributed in feeding the residents of the mine. Like the bears, we enjoyed the small fruits especially the blueberries. We also chewed spruce gum.

The wooden cabins

The children would amuse themselves by building cabins in the woods. They had a lot of talent. Also the cabins always had a second floor just like The Brassard's house. But, there were construction rules:

1. Everyone supplied their planks,
2. Everyone kept the ownership of his planks,
3. Everyone could remove their planks when they wanted.

Huguette, the naughty one, always wanted to be in charge of the floor and thus put her planks first. As the cabin was

finished being built, she would evoke the number three rule to everyone's despair.

Then, we would undo the cabin and re-build another one two days later!

Fola and the porcupine

Our dog Fola was attacked by a porcupine. Ovila Champagne helped by Maurice Gilbert removed the quills with a pair of pliers. Everyone at the mine heard it howling in pain. Huguette was furious in seeing and hearing Fola suffer, she decided to go search for the villain porcupine and kill it, even if it took two days. The porcupine didn't stand a chance against my oldest sister. The search lasted several days. Huguette won! The porcupines of the region remember that today.

The great King



Hélène Caouette and King

We listened to the howling for several minutes. It came from behind the henhouse of Magloire Jolicoeur. We went to go look. It was « the big King » who got his paw trapped in one of our bear traps. We stopped placing traps.

King was given to Buster by Father Couture. He was a sled dog. King is printed in the memories of all the people who lived at the mine.

The longest night

-Charles-Édouard, it is still dark, the sun is not rising!

My mother looks outside and becomes very nervous. It is 7 am, and at this time of the year, the sun usually rises at 6 o'clock. At 10 AM it is still black.

All the people of the mine were assembled outside looking at the sky. It is still night. At noon, it is still total darkness. There was no smoke or smell of fire. It would be night the whole day. We walked holding a lantern.



Sylvio who had a scientific mind, remarked that there were no stars. So something was obstructing, but what ? Nevertheless, the next day, the sun came up.

This was the day where the sun did not rise, but also the day where more confessions were said. Father Corriveau mentioned that later.

It was the « Great smog » at Theresa, but, contrary to the one from England in 1952, no one would die!

The play room

As well as being used as a store, as well as a meeting place for the Lacordaires as well as the chapel, *the Community Centre also served as a school* and a cinema centre. The movies the children rushed to the parish hall to see were Hopalong Cassidy and The Lone Ranger always ended the same.. .the good guy would put himself in a situation or get trapped. *Continued the next week..* The next week, the hero would get himself caught on a branch...

Father Corriveau ends up banning the children from watching films. The « Play Room » which he called the Community Centre is for the adults, ping pong and pool. He was a little scrupulous. The older children did not listen, they played climbing ladders, and watched movies looking through the windows of the hall. The ones below, would listen directly to their commentaries. This was the beginning of the video description!

Mickey get loose

One day I find myself with my dog Mickey on the right side of the road leading me to the Caouette houses. I heard a car approach with Buster in it. My dog becomes nervous and more vigorous than me, so much so that he got loose and went to bite the back tire of the car.

We hear howling. Buster stopped, and my dog returned to die at my feet.

Armandine recounts

While visiting the Mine aunt Thérèse (Gilbert) dressed in while had a lot of fun finding Aunt Armandine (Champagne) who told her that she had given birth to her seventh child on route to Geraldton.



*Armandine Champagne
welcoming aunt Thérèse
Gilbert arriving from St-
Gédéon-de-Beauce.*

Her contractions had started at the mine, and we had transported her to Longlac by the river and from there she went by car which was on its way to Geraldton. But, the baby was in a hurry. They had to stop on the side of the Trans-Canada Highway to salute his arrival.

(Simoneau p. 153).

Annette Charbonneau remembered
« *The joke was that he was named Trans-Canada* ».

A year later, Paulette did not have the same chance as Trans-Canada. She died a few days after her birth, and was exposed on the kitchen table of the Champagne. Father Corriveau had the time to baptize her. The children remember this.

The first official gold brick

Excitement peaks in May 1949 with the mine first gold brick. Caouette prepared a ceremony and later, Raymond

Gilbert would transport the precious brick to Longlac where it was put in the CPR's wagon en route to Ottawa.

For the occasion, to celebrate, Mr Caouette invited all the people of the mine, including the children. We were waiting for important visitors: a minister, two Bishops, the Timmins, people from Ontario and Quebec, two hundred investors.

Carmelus Bolduc was waiting for Alphonse' signal to start pouring the gold. It was a great day !



Carmelus Bolduc pouring the first official gold brick

Meanwhile somewhere in the bunkhouse stood Avaré with his *fiancée*. He was seriously ill and knew he was about to die. To make matter worse, Dr Noël had opposed his ultimate request: which was to be married to his loved one.

- *Marriage is a sacred institution. It's only purpose is to procreate, the doctor decided.- You are about to die, you can't be married.*

But Father Corriveau had an open mind on the question. He bypassed the doctor's decision and married them on the spot. Both newlywed spent the night discussing ...

In the morning Avard was confirmed dead...



Visitors came by bus, cars and by the river

Price of gold

The price of gold had been relatively stable for the past 200 years. But Roosevelt with his *Gold Reserve Act 1934* had made a king of a *reset of the economy* by forcing investors to sell to the US Government their gold at 20,67\$ an ounce. To fix it after to 35\$.

In 1949, 15 years later,, it was still too low for Theresa!

During the war, gold was regulated. in Canada. One could only sell gold to the Government. However, costs of equipments and labour had risen. This is when the Emergency Gold Mining Assistance Act (EGMA)... was put in place to assist Canadian Gold Mine operators in meeting the great increases of cost in production of gold.

And if the fulgurating increase in the price of gold had arrive in 1949-50 instead of the '70's after President Nixon abandoned the Gold Act Reserve!

Or also September 6, 1951 instead of September 6, 2011, when gold hit an all-time high of \$1,917.90. A Super Tuesday!

Theresa would probably still exist today. Our houses at the mine transformed into garages. And a beautiful Tesla in front of each door !

Asbestos Strike

The 1949 Asbestos strike

As did Camillien Houde, the Mayor of Montreal confronted the Federal government, so did Mgr Charbonneau openly challenging Maurice Duplessis the then Prime Minister of Quebec.



Prime Minister Maurice Duplessis and Mgr Charbonneau

As foreseen by many, Asbestos miners who were seen as badly treated by the Johns-Manville Mining Company went into a strike. They were followed by Thedford miners. 5000 miner workers in all. The strike last several months. Premier Duplessis sided with the American company

There were many unknown people who jumped into the debate. Among them journalists, syndicate people and University professors. On the first line of confrontation were Pierre-Eliott Trudeau, Gérard Pelletier, Jean Marchand and...Mgr Charbonneau.

The Montreal Archbishop asked all of his priests to collect money to help the miners. More than 160 000\$ was raised in a single day. Mgr Charbonneau then asked the Prime Minister to give workers a new Labor Code. The Archbishop sermon delivered from the pulpit of Notre Dame Church enraged Premier Duplessis.

It was the first time in Quebec History that an eminent member of the Clergy would openly confront a Prime Minister. Premier Duplessis used to say that Quebec Archbishops eat from his hand but such was not the case with Joseph Charbonneau.

At the end of the day, Asbestos Strikers returned to work humiliated and with very small gains. Just like the famous *Fro' mine workers strike* which had occurred a couple of years before in Noranda, Quebec. No gains or almost none but a great potential for changing their way of life for years to come.

But that strike became a legend as it opened up the way to the French Canadian *Révolution Tranquille* which completely changed the face of History in Quebec.

Confirmation Day

Mgr Landry was dressed in his beautiful garments. He was a 35 years old man who was discrete and very shy. The Community Centre was packed and febrile. The boys were wearing dark sombre garments, and the girls were wearing white dresses.



Rev. Lambert arriving on the wharf. He would accompany Mgr Landry for an important event: Confirmation Day!

Mgr Landry accompanied by Rev. Lambert had arrived by canoe and had been greeted by Mr Caouette and Delvia at

the wharf. For some reason the Longlac road to Theresa was impassable.

The Bishop went to dress in Father Corriveau's small Chapel. There was a lot of mud outside and he risked dirtying his beautiful garments. He was afraid to get into the hall by the outside door.

-Follow me Mgr, I have an alternative, we will take my secret corridor. said Rev. Corriveau.

Mgr was taken by the hand almost crawling under the hall until he arrived under a trapdoor situated under the altar. Nobody in the hall wanted to miss the Bishop's entrance. Everyone in the Community Centre was staring at the entrance door of the hall, when suddenly their eyes are turning to the trapdoor which was opening very slowly.

We then saw a large colored hat which was long and pointy slowly coming out of the floor. Amused, the parishioners waited for the next thing to happen. The hat rising, allowing to appear the Bishop's head and his beautiful garments.

The latter who was not used to making such an entrance, was having a difficult time seizing the scepter offered to him by a young boy. He found himself on all fours on the floor, his hand hanging on to the episcopal crosier. He got up as red as a tomato, sorting himself in all his dignity and directed himself towards the altar with elegance. The people contained themselves from laughing through the whole ceremony.



Confirmation Day for the boys



Confirmation Day for the girls

Powerful words

Mr. Caouette took his new car and rode to Sherbrooke to tell the members of the Theresian Club his good news. He is anxious!



Meeting at the Sherbrooke Theresian Club. Alphonse Caouette at the microphone and at his left his wife Delvia, Mgr Vel and Rev. Gadbois. Photo credit: Mr Leblanc.

Look Mr. Caouette has arrived! Mrs. Simoneau said to her son. Go home the children are not allowed to enter.

The room was full. One can see several priests at the head table, and there were even two Bishops. After the banquet a man in a habit invites Mr. Caouette to speak.

Alphonse Caouette goes to the microphone

Mr. Chairman,

Mgr, dear friends of the Eastern Townships, and dear Theresians,

Thank you for welcoming me once again in your Theresian Club. I feel at home here in Sherbrooke amongst so many friends, and members of Theresa Gold Mines.

The French-Canadians who support the mine have demonstrated by their courage, their devotion, their piety, their humility that it is possible to dream of a better world and to do everything to realize it.

I am proud to announce to you today that three days ago Theresa melted its first gold brick... And we managed to do it without the help of the Trusts.

-A thundering applause as well as a standing ovation!

And I promise this shall not be the last. I see here some new faces. Welcome to the Theresian Club.

You realize that Theresa has come far. It has never been easy, but today we can affirm that the Longlac region and area will become one of the great attractions of French-Canadians in Northern Ontario. I do not want to preach. Monsignor , my friend, who is here now can do a lot better than me.

I wanted to tell you that the shaft has presently attained the thousands of feet in which we have found 14 veins. We shall surely hit THE VEIN one day soon, and if not, within a few weeks or months. I ask the Providence to guide us.

Reverend Gadbois, I salute you. I salute in you the man that has done so much for the French Canadian culture by making

known and spreading throughout the country the old songs of our motherland.

Your constant and enlightened support to all of Theresa Gold Mines has profoundly touched me. A big thank you Father.

I ask you all to applaud!

Our next neighbour pays us a visit

Father Christmas lived in the great North, a few miles from Longlac.

He even came one day in a truck surrounded by fir trees.



Santa Claus at Theresa Gold Mines

A good twenty kids went to welcome him at the entrance of the mine by the rock cliff. We ran behind the red truck all the way to the Community Centre. He gave us chocolates, skates and even cigarettes for the older ones. Certain ones received sleds, and Colette Gilbert, the lucky one got a camera. Nobody but Colette recognized who was behind Father Christmas disguise. It was Donat Couture (Rose-Anna's husband) himself!



A happy day!

* * *

Letter from Miss Duval

Theresa Gold Mines

January 11, 1950

Dear Madame,

First of all, my apologies for my tardiness. I would like to thank you for your kind gift and your photos that I was waiting for, they gave me such joy.

I am late because we organized a celebration for the children. This party was held December 18th. There was a Santa Claus Parade (and lots of other activities that were the most

important.} and that of the stripping of the Christmas tree. This represented a lot of work as I was in charge of the dramatic part, it is to tell you that free evenings were rare. After that there was the Christmas exams in the class, preparing the report cards, reports to the government that were brief for the end of the year, we were literally buried in work. I was not able to find a moment to write... Can you imagine that I had in my head, that I wanted to send you what you would have really loved... this fall: a rock from Theresa.

One evening last week after my failures which I will not tell you about, I had the chance to go down into the mine and I went myself and looked for the piece of mineral that I am sending you. The mineral outside is covered in snow, that was why it



Jeanne Duval looking for a nice piece of mineral

was necessary that I go underground. This will remind you of Theresa and remind you that although they seem to forget, the people of the mine remember...

We have heard from Mr. Caouette the great work that the Theresian Clubs do in the Eastern Townships. It elevates the

moral knowing that over there others think and work for the same success enterprise as us. Everything is well here, the mill is finished being built, and we are installing the machinery. We have to believe that the spring will bring us the realization of this great enterprise!

As I leave you my dear lady, I offer you and your husband my best wishes for a happy and prosperous year.

The little teacher of Theresa

Jeanne Duval

* * *

Brutal dismissal and Papal nomination

1950, a brutal dismissal

The Archbishop was shocked and terribly nervous. He was pacing up and down the Palace corridor. The day before, while in Ottawa, Mgr Antoniutti, the Apostolic Delegate in Canada had asked him to resign, and this decision was made by Pope Pius XI.

Mgr Charbonneau was devastated. The Apostolic Delegate had given him no reason and had refused any right to appeal. Mgr Charbonneau didn't know what to do. He went to his Office at the *Université de Montréal* to seek some advise from friends. One of them advised him to give a call

to Cardinal Francis Spellman of New York who was very close to Pope Pius X11. *-Maybe he could arrange an urgent meeting with the Pope ? He put himself together and picked up the phone:*

- *Mgr. Hi Francis ! You probably already know what's happening to me; can you arrange for me to meet the Pope ? I am ready to fly to Rome today. I just want to know the reasons of my dismissal.*
- *Cardinal: I didn't like Jos the way you treated the Johns Manville at this despicable strike saying that an American company was at the head of a conspiracy to destroy the working class and French Canadian workers' unions. That was pure nonsense !*
- *Mgr: I never targeted the Johns Manville for it's being an American company, Francis. I just wanted to help relief poor Catholic families without revenues. That is what our Mother the Church is all about, don't you think ?*
- *Cardinal: Well Jos, sorry, I can't help you. I won't intervene.*

On February 9th 1950 the official resignation of Mgr Charbonneau was announced.

- Due to extreme fatigue Mgr Charbonneau is now recuperating in Victoria B.C. At his demand, he was relieved from his fonctions of Archbishop of Montreal and Chancellor of the Université de Montréal. -

To many, his resignation came as a surprise. Mgr Charbonneau was still under 60 and in excellent shape.

Nobody believed the announcement. The Media got crazy !

- *It's Duplessis- fault ! He was sacked because he was a leftist religious leader! He was on Ontarian, therefore an enemy of the race ! He was a victim of religious enemies such as Mgr Courchesnes Bishop of Rimouski and Mgr Langlois, Bishop of Valleyfield ! Ultra French nationalists wanted his destruction ! The Rector of the Canadian College in Rome wanted the job!*

The *Université de Montréal* Students' Association was very annoyed and declared:

-IT IS AN INSULT TO MONTREAL, TO THE ENTIRE PROVINCE, TO THE UNIVERSITY AND TO ALL OF IT'S STUDENTS

It took only a few hours before all would blame Duplessis. Had not the Prime Minister sent a small Delegation to Rome a few weeks before? Was that meeting in Rome a direct cause of his dismissal ?

The Toronto Daily Star recalled when announcing his resignation that Mgr Charbonneau has been keenly interested in labour problems as a young parish priest -*"Why, it may be asked, was such a man ever chosen to be Archbishop, if the sympathy of Rome is against prelates with such views ?"* The New York Times asked if the Vatican had taken position against workers unions.

But knowing the Vatican proverbial wisdom, could two members of the administration of P.M. Duplessis, in a brief visit to Rome secure the removal of an Archbishop within a matter of days ?

Were not many other like Mgr Roy, the Archbishop of Quebec, or Mgr Duranleau the Bishop of Sherbrooke also very supportive of Asbestos mine workers ? And how come they were not targeted by the Vatican ?

For some however, Mgr Charbonneau dismissal had been welcome. He was too unconventional!. He would skip many meetings at the Bishop Assembly and would mention to someone asking for advise or help: *-Just send me a note-* to which he never responded. This would infuriate many of his colleagues.

All documentations and archives related to Mgr's dismissal were put in the Vatican vault not to be opened and made public before the next 70 years. (*Note: on March 2019, Pope Francis, in a dramatic gesture, decided to make public Pope Pius XI's archives on March 2nd 2020, well before the usual 100 years period. Some believe that the box containing the archives of Mgr Charbonneau' dismissal will be empty.*).

Arriving alone, leaving the same way

On January 31st 1950, alone and with his two suitcases with only 70\$ in his pocket, he headed to Dorval Airport. To avoid curious passengers and the media, the Apostolic Delegation in Ottawa had previously made an arrangement with Dorval Airport authorities to let Mgr Charbonneau limousine drive on the tarmac straight to the stairs of a North Star Aircraft bound to Vancouver. His lonely arrival in Montreal in 1940 and his lonely departure ten years later to

Victoria could have inspire a very popular song of Georges Moustaki : *Humbly he came*¹⁴...

*Humbly he came
Nobody knew his name
He was so poorly dressed
Looking for a place to rest
Because his feet was bare
They didn't really care*

...

*So humbly he came
His leaving was the same
Like a ship without a crew
A stranger passing through
He left the way he came
And never came again*

Charbonneau and the Chief

Twenty one years after Asbestos strike, an historical drama in two acts featuring Jean Duceppe (father of Gilles of Bloc Québécois) as PM Duplessis and J. M. Lemieux as Charbonneau premiered at the *Théâtre du Trident*. The play had been written by John Thomas McDonough an Ontario born priest. After it's debut on CBC Radio, the play was staged in French at the Quebec City's Théâtre. The play had a successful run of 293 performances before a total audience of 276,634. Based on historical facts and the masterful performance of the actors, the play had a powerful effect on spectators and critics. Nowadays, it is common belief in Quebec that the reason why Mgr

¹⁴ Available on YouTube

Charbonneau was sacked was due to his taking the side of mine workers in Asbestos against Prime Minister Duplessis' will.

But, was that really the case ?

A Papal Nomination

There are speculation and rumors circulating in the streets of Rome. *-Who will replace Mgr Charbonneau ?* All bets are off. On March 14th, Cardinal Piazza asked the Rector of the Canadian College in Rome to come to his Office.

-Mgr Léger, you will be nominated Archbishop of the Diocese of Montreal in replacement of Mgr Charbonneau. But you are required not to diffuse the nomination before the next four days as our Holy Tradition does command. Take that time to meditate !

Four days of silence and meditation is too much for the newly coronated. That very same day, he writes to his parents:

- *Tonight, the whole world knows that your dear little Paul had become the successor of the Apostles. And that he will have the terrible responsibility of leading one of the largest dioceses in the world.*

Then, eager to show up, he dressed himself with an Archbishop cap and slowly drove his car everywhere in the streets of Rome where such a religious piece of cloth had but one meaning!

- *-Monsignor Léger è diventato vescovo!*

- *-Sicuramente Arcivescovo di Montreale, al posto di Monsignor Charbonneau ! (Mgr Leger is wearing an Archbishop cap. He must surely be replacing Mgr Charbonneau.)*

A secret weapon

Reverend Lambert was never out of ideas. One day, he unleashed a “secret weapon”: The Company should give a share to each mine worker !

Being an influential man at the Hearst Diocese and a Theresa supporter, he suggested Mr. Caouette to give one share to all mine workers. *-This would maintain their motivation.* Also, added Reverend Lambert the workers will have the sentiment of being co-proprietors.

They will be less inclined to protest and try to reclaim. Alphonse found the idea to be ingenious and proposed to his Board of directors to grant one share to each one.

Since the Diocese was responsible for self financing, Reverend Lambert had another great idea: Sell rocks, large rocks. Twenty-five dollars each. Each parishioner was being solicited. With the money that was collected, they will build a Cathedral in Hearst.

These rocks will be used to build the church. The Diocese collected an estimation of approximately \$300,000.

For us children, Reverend Lambert was not seen as an administrator but as the best dancer. He made us laugh with his funny dancing.

No. 1953

Shares

INCORPORATED UNDER THE LAWS OF THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

Theresa Gold Mines Limited

1000 PERSONAL LIABILITY AUTHORIZED CAPITAL \$5,000,000.00
DIVIDED INTO TEN THOUSAND SHARES HAVING A PAR VALUE OF FIVE DOLLARS

This Certifies that MAURICE SILBERT

is the registered holder of ONE share of the Capital Stock of

Theresa Gold Mines Limited

fully paid and non-assessable shares of the Capital Stock of the Company by the holder hereof in person or by attorney upon surrender of this Certificate properly endorsed.

This Certificate is not valid until countersigned by the Transfer Agent and Registrar of the Company.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the Company has caused this Certificate to be signed by its duly authorized officers and its Corporate seal to be hereunto affixed this 1st day of 1953

Transfer Agent

GUARANTY TRUST COMPANY OF CANADA, OTTAWA, ONT.
Transfer Agent and Registrar

SECRETARY-TREASURER

PASSEPORT

Chapter 8: Clouds

1951

Clouds at the horizon

At the mine, the people were showing signs of impatience. Some had started doubting that this enterprise would become a success. *-Some were trying to hide the evidence, so they thought.* Quite a normal phenomenon for a project of this magnitude.

The more curious like Sylvio Fortin, inquired to the engineers about the viability of the mine. My father ordered books, probably from Eaton's catalogue, so he could learn about the exploitation of gold mines around the world. These readings taught him that the value of one share in Noranda was \$100.

Some would say that the equipment of the mine was poorly adapted, that the large mill rejected too much gold. One of my maternal uncles believed that the young engineer did not have the experience required to run the mine. Also that Mr. Caouette had good intentions but that he did not consult sufficiently with the English who are more familiar than he was with mining exploitations.

The grumbling won over the people of the mine. Some became preoccupied not only of their future but also for the investors. Many small investors like them, had put all their money in the mine. These were also members of their

family, of their parents, and of their neighbors. People like them. Some people had mortgaged their future, sold their land to invest in Theresa.

The chief engineer was worried too. So was Buster. Both were about the same age and close friends. Wherever you would see one, you would see the other.

-Theresa is like a spider. We have only discovered the tip of one of it's legs, the chief engineer would say.

On several occasions over the years, Buster had privately questioned the profitability of the mine: *-too much rocks, he would say and inadequate equipment!* He later mentioned in an interview with Simoneau that *-The Theresa was at the state of a project, but not yet a mine into operation¹⁵.*

Mr. Maheu



*Photo: Mr Maheu with my mother
and my three sisters*

Mr. Maheu had one eye. But, this eye was always focused on the performance of the mine. He was one of the workers of

¹⁵ Thérèse by J. Simoneau p. 252

the mine who had invested the largest amount of money in Theresa. He had become critical of the mine. Some said he was a bit of a complainer. Just like my father! Mr Maheu was the one who kept the investors of Theresian Clubs up to date.

A caucus

Ovila and Charles-Édouard are meeting at Uncle Maurice Gilbert. Not wanting to talk in front of the children, they took advantage of the fact that Maurice's wife Jeanne-d'Arc left with daughter Charlotte to do the laundry at the Community Centre.

-It has been five years that we are at Theresa. And there is not a lot of gold here. It is nearly all rock that they are taking from the mine.



- *I feel like leaving, said one of them.* Then they started to hum the song *Chantons Sainte Thérèse* while modifying the word « Gold » for a word that would make the kids laugh. Within little time, a new song was born and

several would go after and sing in secret away from Father Corriveau.

Negotiations

-Marie-Marthe, Jean-Louis, Nicole go play outside. We adults have things to discuss. Huguette, you can stay.

My mother opened the door. Alphonse Caouette and his son Buster entered the house and sat down at the table.

-Charles said Alphonse, you and Laurence are not very happy at the mine eh?

-Absolutely, replied my dad in front of Huguette who was anxious to hear what was to follow.

-Charles we do not want to keep you by force. Are you ready to sell your house and your 5,000 shares asked Buster?

-It depends on the price replied Charles-Édouard.

-We could offer you \$1,600 for both if you are in agreement.

-My father looked at my mom. Huguette did not budge.

My mother immediately answered *Yes*.

- *It is settled. Let's remain good friends! We wish you good luck,* said the Caouette's while they got up.

- *Good luck to you too,* replied my dad.

Going back on a snowmobile

Makwa said to his wife:

-Look, the snowmobile is in front of Charles' house !

-They are leaving the mine !

We all got into the snowmobile. The boxes were left in the house and were going to be sent to Shawinigan.

The snowmobile went across the snow towards Longlac. Before going into the forest we saw *Makwa in front of our house waving. This image of Makwa is still very clear in my head.*

-Goodbye Charles, never see you again !

We arrived at the mine in a canoe, and we leave on a snowmobile. Back to Shawinigan Falls!



Shawinigan Falls City Hall

Life continues at Theresa

The children have grown. Beautiful girls! In the summer they go for picnics at the Rocky Shore three miles away.



From left to right: Lucille Quirion, Judith Quirion, Colette Gilbert, Clarisse Gilbert, Anita Quirion, Françoise Gilbert



From left to right: Colette Gilbert, H el ene Poulain, Anita Roy, Clarisse Gilbert, Judith Quirion, Fran oise Gilbert

A Cultural Centre as a way to finance the Theresa

Reverend Gadbois was heating the room somewhere near Drummondville, Quebec. People sang and laughed. Some women held statues of Saint-Theresa in their hands.

-Today I am not here to talk to you as a shareholder of Theresa, but as a priest...

We have sold more than 20 million song books. No one else has done the same as this in Canada. It is an huge success. We are going to do the same thing for the mine.

Mr. Caouette always stated in his meetings that he wanted his mine to be a Catholic mine. Therefore, we cannot be surprised if the good Lord demands more from the shareholders of Theresa than of the others. To continue to help us, the Divine Providence now requires more of us all.

The Clubs function very well. It is a great success. But it is not sufficient. I have a plan. A project that will ensure for years the financing of the mine. Here as well, near St-Hyacinthe, we can construct a large cinema centre, with a theatre, radio station, and music studios.

We have found a beautiful site close to here on the road to Valcour. This could become the largest cultural centre in the Province. The Theresian Club could invest in this project and in return, some of the profits would go to the mine. We could therefore count on a permanent financial source...



People attending a Theresian Club meeting in Drummondville

Mr. Caouette took the microphone and started to praise Reverend Gadbois on the project. His intervention did not escape a listener present in the hall.

-Any questions from the hall, asked the chairman ?

This man was listening silently in the back of the room. What he was hearing was a conflicting message. The man seems to be known and respected by all. He raised his hand.

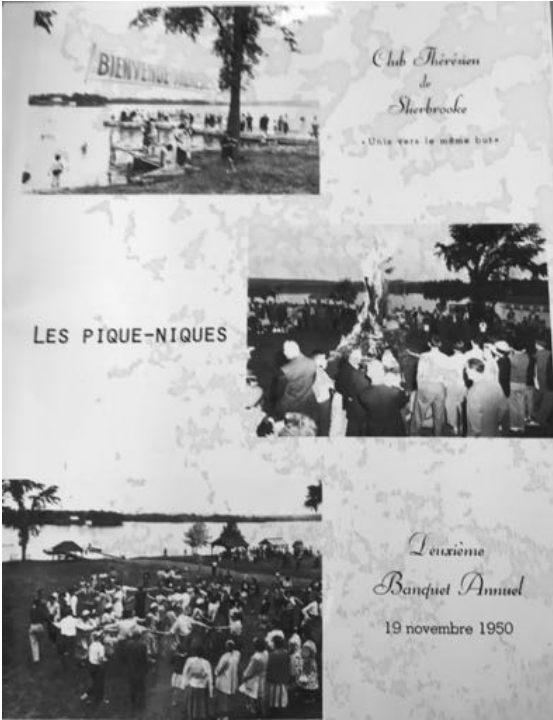
Mr. Chairman, Mr. Caouette,

Reverend Gadbois has already shown his great organization talents and his project seems most interesting. But, this project has nothing to do with the purpose of our Club which is exclusively financing Theresa Gold Mines. To go in the direction suggested by the Reverend, would constitute in my opinion a deviation from our main objective.

I respectfully submit to this Assembly, that the Club continues devoting all of its efforts to exclusively support the mine.

He went back and sat down.

Alphonse felt he was stabbed in the back. The harm was done. Confidence had been shaken.



Second Annual Banquet, Sherbrooke Theresian Club

A hunting expedition turns into a nightmare

Anita Bolduc was 13 years old. She was babysitting her young sister Raymonde while her parents Simone and Carmelus, were both shopping in Geraldton. All of a sudden the door opens and her brother Réjean comes in screaming:

-Gaston is about to die ! Gaston is about to die ! And he threw himself on the couch crying out loud.

-What's happening said Anita ? *What' happening ?*

-Gaston has been shot. He is about to die , he is about to die replied Réjean

Anita springs out of the house forgetting about her baby sister.

She saw a loud speaking group of people in front of her house and a man carrying her brother on his shoulders. - *What's happening*, kept repeating Anita.

She then heard her brother Réjean who had followed her saying:

-We were a bunch of kids hunting near the river and a bullet accidentally hit Gaston in the back. He went down and is unconscious. Maybe, he is dead.

Somewhere on the Trans Canada Highway, on their way back from Geraldton to Longlac, Simone says to her

husband Carmelus: *-Look at that car coming so fast. They will kill themselves. They are going too fast !*

When both arrived at the mine, they learned what happened. The car they had met on their way to Longlac was carrying their son to Geraldton hospital. Gaston was the 12 years old. He remained on a wheel chair paralysed for the rest of his life. He died during the summer of 2018.

Things get stirred up a bit

A few months later, Reverend Gadbois heats up the room which is full to capacity. It is an extraordinary Assembly of the Theresian Club from Sherbrooke. This time, people do not sing. They discuss. The atmosphere is pretty thin. Hundreds of investors are present. In the front, there are two bishops and about 20 priests.

Reverend Gadbois goes to the microphone and start praising the mine. His enthusiasm does not seem to be shared by everybody in the room. He is interrupted. Some men get up and start to yell. The Reverend tries to defend himself. The temperature rises. One of the men, a very known photographer, advances close to the speaker; the exchange of words becomes bitter. The man administers a few jibes to Reverend Gadbois. One Bishop swallows his saliva. Some women cry: *-Why don't you stop fighting.*

Reverend Gadbois keeps his calm. A true gentleman.

Francois Gilbert had inherited our house after we departed from the mine. One day, wanting to make beer, he could not find an adequate recipient, so he and his friends had the "brilliant idea" of using the wood washing machine to help ferment their beer. This was my mother's wooden washing machine that she used. They did not know that she used caustic stuff in her wash. They all became sick, and not just a little sick!!

Father Corriveau is aging. He often falls in the snow. Some people from the mine help to get him up. They are worried. Father Corriveau would be 77 years old May 31, 1952.

Many years before while he was in charge of his Hallébourg Parish which was very small, Reverend Corriveau had a serious need of financial help in order to restore the church. He had drawn up an exhaustive list of potential donors in the Parish. But all would say they didn't have the money.

A merchant was the last on his visiting list.

-Hi. You know that our church needs urgent repairs. Here is the detailed list of the repairs to be done. It amounts to 800\$. Can you help me ?

The man silently looked at the detailed list for more than two minutes.-Which is a very long time without saying a word-. His body language was telling a lot. He was about to say no, just like the others when Father Corriveau caught him off-guard.

He looked at the man straight in the eyes.

-Sir, have you ever heard in your lifetime that somebody would have had regrets in helping people in need? Have you ?

The man looked down again at the shopping list. He remained silent for another minute or two. The observation was very painful as one could see in his face.

-OK Father, I will help you.

* * *

To make matters worse...

Theresa, Ont. May 30, 1952

*Dear Father Sylvain,
Dear Friend,*

I want to write you a few words, but it is tiring. I just heard some bad news. The Champagne family is leaving. I'm surprised. Theresa is such a nice place. Will they find as good elsewhere? I doubt it. I am having a hard time saying Mass. I am walking slowly with a cane. one man told me. if you leave, you won't be replaced...

Father Corriveau's health was deteriorating. His small chapel in the Community Centre was damp, so the Company decided to move him a floor above. There he would be more comfortable.

Winter of 1952 arrived, Father Corriveau will turn 78. It is time for him to retire. He has served the Theresa

parishioners well. That had been the case for every place he had been asked to serve !

With devotion and humility. He was always there to help. What a great man !

Father Corriveau went back in Quebec, his native Province.

* * *

Mr Caouette's last call

My dear friends,

After a short visit to the mine on October 17, I have good news to give you.

We have worked the mill during 48 hours and we are happy to tell you that we have recouped an average of \$25.00 a ton.

I am convinced that Theresa will become financially capable after having paid it's actual debt and hiring appropriate personnel to replace those that have quit after the last General Assembly.

But for the moment, we need to repay a certain part of the debt. It is us the shareholders of Theresa who must do all our part no matter how small it is.

The following table gives us an idea of how possible it is to make:

2,500 shareholders @ \$100.00 ea. = \$250,000.00

2,500 shareholders @ \$ 50.00 ea. = \$125,000.00

2,500 shareholders @ \$ 10.00 ea. = \$ 25,000.00

We suggest \$100.00 by shareholders, because it is unlikely that one could not find the funds, even if it means borrowing to save the mine.

Several shareholders could certainly loan more than the \$100.00, they could make a point to compensate for other families who cannot reach this amount. The amount of effort from each individual should be so much that it hurts. If the effort you will make to borrow is as great as the effort that it takes me to ask, the results should be assured.

In all good faith, I feel obliged to make this last request to underline the urgency of the situation at Theresa. It means that each of us must ask if we did our best for the mine, It is up to EACH OF YOU to save YOUR mine.

This is urgent!!

*Let **EVERYBODY** do his best ----- **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE***

I thank you in the name of each of the family of the Theresa Gold Mines.

Alphonse Caouette, October 23rd 1952

Until my very last penny!

Reverend Gadbois had been summoned at the Bishop Palace. Just like reverend Lambert, he never lacks ideas. He

is an entrepreneur. He is about to put release on air, with the help of his brother Raoul, a new radio station. The logo has been chosen, so is it's name. It will be CJMS (Canada Je Me Souviens), a French acronym meaning, *Canada, I do remember*. His bank account is said to be over 300 000\$

Reverend Gadbois is a bit nervous. He knows that, being a religious, his entrepreneurship is bothering some of his superiors.

Without any preamble, the Bishop said:

-Reverend Gadbois, by signing this document, you will immediately transfer to the Church all of your belonging, including your bank account. And you will move today to Sherbrooke where you will serve as the chaplain of the Holy Family Parish.

Reverend Gadbois knew that this was an order and that there was nothing else to do. He hesitated a minute, took the pencil the Bishop was handing him and leaned toward the document.

He then stopped and for a moment, remained still. The Bishop opened suspicious eyes. What's happening ?

The Reverend raised his head, looked at the Bishop straight into the eyes reached into his pockets and showed a handful of dimes and cents. He slowly put them on the Bishop table and said:

-In this way Mgr, I will be able to say that you deprive me to until my very last penny.

Without saluting the Bishop, Reverend Gadbois turned his back, and walked his way home.

By 1953, not far away

-Montreal, oh my dear City, you dressed up so beautifully to welcome your Pastor and your Prince.



Camilien Houde, Mayor of Montreal kneeling before the new Cardinal.

With these words, the newly elevated Cardinal by Pope Pius X11, salutes a jubilant crowd welcoming him at the Montreal Train Station. Mgr Charbonneau successor had made a stop in New York where he met friends before following his way to Montreal.

Mayor Camilien Houde kneels before him. He had been released from detention after the War and had been twice reelected Mayor of Montreal.

Contrary to his predecessor Mgr Charbonneau, the new Cardinal was very comfortable with honors.

Money talks

Faith can move mountains but Money talks.

One by one the people quit the mine. One by one the investors pull back.

No one knocks at Father Corriveau' door any more.

Ovila Champagne is now working at the Carburundum Corp in Shawinigan.

One day in 1953, twenty five people left Theresa the same day.

Eugène has left for Longlac.

The Bolduc are among the last one to leave the mine in 1954. Gabriel Gilbert is still keeping an eye on the Theresa buildings and equipments. Buster is still backing his father, He had refused to leave his dad alone.

Several house have already been transported to Longlac including Champagne, but as it was too large, they had to cut it in two to be able to have it transported by truck to Longlac.

A very nice story happened during those moves to Longlac. A young child was saved from death by a young dog. Bogged down in the moving mud, Aline, aged maybe one year old, was suffocating when the Beaudoin dog tugged her by the collar and pulled her out of the precarious and dangerous position.

One day, while studying at UBC, my cousin Marcel Gilbert stepped in on Mgr Charbonneau himself. He has not changed. He seems in very good shape.

Investors and mine workers get in a blaming game.

-It is Caouette' fault. He should have worked closer to English Canadians. No, no, it's the engineer's fault, he was too young.

-You got it all wrong, says another, it's Roosevelt fault. He should have never frozen the price of Gold to 35\$. The costs of equipments, of labour, of transportation were always rising while the price of Gold remained at a level flat, said another.

When a boat sinks...

After twenty years at the mine, Alphonse comes to conclusion. He cannot continue.



* * *

The aftermath

Turning the page

Theresa Gold Mines ends its activities on February 12th 1954, 20 years after the discovery of that precious gold nugget by the Natives. Alphonse did not have the chance of Chlotilde Gilbert and Charles de Léry 100 years before.

The investors are nervous. Some miners want to get paid. The Indians begin to lose hope that this easier life Father Couture wanted for them was not attainable. Even with all the efforts, the Theresa project is slowly breaking down.

This did not affect the children. These moment will be quickly forgotten as their childhood and adolescent years at the mine will have left great souvenirs. The souvenir of having lived in the middle of the forest, observe these adult who worked so hard to ensure a better future. To live 100 feet from Ojibwe families. No notorious fights, no sexual scandals, and very few accidents!

The Lion of the North had set up a large scale company with relatively few resources, and designed and implemented a gold mine which seemed so promising especially since the huge success of the Porcupine Gold Rush located a few hundred milles from Longlac. . He would have been one of the rare Canadians who would have started a business project with the Indians, the support of the church, and of hundreds of investors for such a vast and complex project as the one created to exploit a gold mine. A partnership founded simply on the handshake of a man.

Alphonse Caouette however showed the way of business to French-Canadians, to instill in them a spirit of entrepreneurship, especially to those in la Beauce.

From now on, we can think big !

The end !

¡Bienvenidos a México!

¡Damas y caballeros procedentes de Canadá: ¡bienvenidos a México!

(Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to Mexico)

Speakers were talking out loud at the airport of Mexico. We are in 1986.

A confident 77 years old man, shows his passport to the custom.

¿ Capitán Luis Bissón?

¿Es Usted el famoso pilota canadiense? says the Officer with a smile.
(Are you the famous Canadian Pilot)

-Yes, that's me, but I'm not so famous, you know replies Louis Bisson

¿Por adonde va Usted? (Where are you going ?)

-At the Catholic Parish of South Mexico.

¿Para que? (What for ?)

-I'm very privileged to be ordained a priest next week!

¿Un pilota sacerdote? ¡Caramba! Lo felicito Capitán, ¡Buena suerte!

(A Pilot to be a priest ! Caramba, my congratulations Captain Bisson. The best of luck !)

Louis Bisson was about to realize an old dream. How many times, while flying with Father Couture over Northern territories or discussing with Mgr Charbonneau, had he discussed this dream ?

-I want to become a priest !

Louis Bisson would be ordained in Mexico and three years later, at the age of 80, he was consecrated a bishop.

Congratulations Mgr Bisson ! You followed and realized your dream !

* * *

Sylvio quits smoking!

To assure his dream of becoming a pilot, Sylvio had stuck a cigarette on the head of a nail, which was close to his head in 2" X 3" space.



*Sylvio Fortin made the aircraft all by himself
in his garage in St-Étienne-des-Grès a few miles from Shawinigan*

Each time he would look at them, he would say that all unsmoked cigarettes helped to economize and help pay for his plane one day.

A plane he would build by himself in his garage at St-Étienne-des-Grès, near Shawinigan.

The day his son Richard brought him a registered letter from the Post Office which was his pilot's license, was one of the happiest days of his life.

Just like Father Couture, Sylvio realized the dream he had from the time of Theresa: that of being a pilot. He learned to fly solo close to the age of 50 years old. He piloted until he was 75 years of age.

* * *

Caouette life afterwards

Alphonse had to face trouble mainly from investors. He spent months getting rid of the equipments and legal problems.

Alphonse Caouette retired in Hearst where, at the end of his life, he was driving a school bus and worked part time as a gas station attendant.

The Indians got their interests protected during the closure of the mine.

The Golden Lion died neither rich or poorer than the habitants of Theresa. Tho thousand people attended his funerals among which hundreds of Indians. They were crying and chanting *Wa, Wa, Wa !*

If he had sold the mine in 1951 he would have become wealthy. But, he didn't do it, by principle, stubbornness and moral ethics. All to his credit.

* * *

Mgr Charbonneau in Victoria

November 1959

A man is heading for Mount St-Mary Hospital information desk in Victoria.

- Is the tall Father who resembles President Eisenhower still here asked the man? -Are you related to him replied a nun that was passing by?

-No, but I am a good friend of his and would like to see His Grace. If possible?

-Oh my God, unfortunately, he passed away yesterday, said Sister Marie-Dosithée with a choke in her voice. -Come on in the visiting room and have a seat. If you are in no hurry, we could have a chat about His Grace.

-You know, said the nun, when Father came here in 1950, he seemed devastated but he did recuperate very rapidly. We prepared him a comfortable room where he would read many daily newspapers. He went walking around Beacon Hill Park every day. Once he walked 16 hours. He had many visitors even some from Europe. He never wore his Bishop ornaments and visitors would kiss his hand because he got rid of his amethyst ring. He was nice to everyone. He kept a wonderful front. Our Bishop Mgr James Hill was so good with him. We were pleased to have Mgr. Charbonneau with us. It was an honor for our city. He...he...The nun nervously could not stop talking.

-By the way, how did you get to know Mgr Charbonneau, she asked?

-Well, I met him for the first time 20 years ago in Longlac Ontario, replied a saddened Louis Bisson. We had a friend in common, Father Couture, the Flying Padre.

The Victoria Daily Times described Mgr Charbonneau - Sunny, smile, pleasing personality, erudition. simplicity and humanity...He was in every sense an outstanding Canadian.



Mgr Charbonneau lived in Mount St-Mary Manor in Victoria British Columbia from February 1950 until his death in November 1959. He was 67.

* * *

Note from the author

All of my life, I heard about Theresa Gold Mines. Sometimes by my uncles, aunts, cousins and always by my parents. But with always the same point of view.

I was a bit mixed up with all those people Mgr Lambert, Mr Caouette, Reverend Gadbois, Makwa, Madame Couture, having all played a part in the Theresa project. But what kind of part ? I didn't know. I was unable to respond to simple questions such as: *-What exactly were you doing in that part of the word ? -Why did your parents move into a deep forest among Natives and mine workers ?*

So I decided to ask for photos and short summaries on Theresa. With these I put together a photo album, with comments, which was circulated among friends and relatives. This brought up more direct questions.

-Was there gold at the mine and in the region ? Why Northern Ontario ? Who was Mr. Caouette ? Was he a dictator ? Was he related to Réal Caouette this famous leader of the Canadian Social Credit Party ? (No !). What was the role of the Natives in the conducting of the mine ?. How much money was invested and by whom ? Is the mine still in activity ? Did Mgr Charbonneau play a role in the Theresa project ? Any accident at the mine ? Anybody among the miners accused of stealing gold ? Any sexual scandal ?

Did the owners of the mine get rich? Did you learn something at school ?

Ouf ! I have to get the answers of those legitimate questions. This inspired me to do more serious research.

By accident I found that a lot of archives on Theresa Gold Mines were at the BANQ in Sherbrooke. Why Sherbrooke?

This led to the discovery of a Master Thesis by J. Simoneau and a further published book on the same subject.

I then contacted my cousin Colette in Longlac and asked her if she could get me in touch with the Caouette family. This is how Marielle Caouette-Kirzinger and I came to know each other. We never met but we discussed a lot by e-mails and phone. I spoke frequently with my little cousin Marcie, daughter of Yves Gilbert and Thérèse Caouette. Yves was my mother's cousin. Surprisingly they knew very little about the mine. They were so happy to learn more about their grandfather's project from Simoneau's book, BANQ archives in Sherbrooke and Fonds Jeanne Daigle in St-Hyacinthe. When the French version of the book was finished, Marielle offered to translate the book from French to English. Many children who lived at Theresa and Longlac were more comfortable with English.

She spent a lot of hours trying to guess what I meant by writing this or that phrase, or why I made this or that comment.

Being responsible for the research, I decided to publish the book and made it free to consult or download. It was my personal contribution to Theresa Gold Mines. I do know that Marielle's translation was done pro-bono for the same

reasons as myself. Keeping the history alive for the children of the river and future generations.

I am honored to share this book *The City that Was* with Marielle. How nice it is to see the grand-daughter of Theresa President and Buster' s daughter, the Executive director sharing views with the son of a mine worker. A serendipity !

Jean-Louis Fortin

April 2019

Annex 1: Selected Bibliography

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Many documents related to Theresa Gold Mines were deposited in the *Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec* (BAnQ). These archives that we can view at the BanQ of Sherbrooke contain ,74 linear meters of documents and texts, 571 photographs, 55 audio tape, another document and one drawing.

The 55 audio tapes are registrations of conversations, interviews and discussions with 70 mine workers, investors, supporters of Theresa Gold Mines.

Address: BAnQ, 740 Galt Ouest, Sherbrooke, Québec Canada.

Other precious documentation can be found at *Le Centre d'histoire de St-Hyacinthe, Fonds Jeanne Daigle*, 650, Girouard E. , Qc.

Annex 2: Chronology of events

| The 20 years of Theresa Gold Mines | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1934 | Aftermath of The London Economic Conference and the US Presidential elections. The American New Deal. Discovery of a gold nugget on Indian territory near Longlac, Ontario. The establishment of a partnerships for mining exploration. Claims filed by Mr Caouette. The Gold Reserve Act. |
| 1935 | Area is divided in two parts. Big Longlac Mine Co. explores the eastern part (the Indian part) with vein #1. Afton Mine Co. takes care of the western part (the Caouette part) with vein #2. A bridge is being built over the Making Ground River. Mine workers would be mainly Indians for the next 10 years or so. |
| 1936 | N.A. Timmins Co. takes over mining exploration and regroupes the area. Mining exploration concentrates on the western part. |
| 1937-38 | Caouette become sole owner of the area. A search of new partnerships. Entrepreneurs from Lac St-Jean get involved. Creation of Valbeaudin mining Syndicate and official founding of the Theresa Gold Mines. |
| 1939 | Death of Mgr Hallé. Nomination of Mgr Charbonneau as Bishop of Hearst. Declaration of the Second World War. Caouette builds his house near the river, |
| 1940 | Mayor of Montreal being arrested and jailed. Mgr Charbonneau becomes Archbishop of Montreal and Chancellor of the <i>Université de Montréal</i> . |
| 1942-'45 | The Crimson Route. Louis Bisson and Don McVicar. Entrepreneurs from La Beauce get involved. Bretton-Woods Agreements. End of the War: Newly wed Alphonse' children, Buster and Thérèse, join their father up on the hill at Theresa. |
| 1946 | Arrival of a strong contingent of mine workers all coming mainly from La Beauce, Qc. |
| 1947 | Arrival of Father Corriveau. First shut down. Fatal accident in the mine. Electricity has arrived. First Communion. |
| 1948 | Opening of a road between Theresa and Longlac. First Official Gold Brick. |
| 1949 | Death of Father Couture. Strike in Asbestos. Federal Elections. Official portrait of Theresa's pupils. Opening of Theresian Clubs. |
| 1950 | Mgr Charbonneau' dismissal. Letter from Mrs Jeanne Duval. Repeated visits of Mr Caouette at the Theresian Clubs. Reverend Gadbois steps in. Confirmation Day. |
| 1951 | Turbulence. First family leaving the mine. |

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| 1952- '54 | Looking for more investments. Many families leave Theresa for Longlac. Theresa Gold Mines struggles for life. |
| 1954 | Theresa Gold Mines ceases it's activities. |
| The aftermath | |
| 1962- '64 | The Newrich Exploration Ltd digs another 3500' |
| 1983 | Jean Simoneau, a family related investor, conducts a major comprehensive research on Theresa Gold Mines. He makes it the subject of his Master Degree Thesis at the <i>Université de Sherbrooke</i> . He further publishes a book named <i>La Thérèse</i> . |
| 1988- '89 | Duration Mines and Locator Exploration reopens the mine with a 16 800,000\$ Investment Program. Company Chairman David Rogers, confirms there is plenty of gold in the area but that it is not cost-effective. |

Annex 3: People interviewed

By J. Simoneau

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Abbé Léo d'Auteuil | | | |
| Abbé Jean Lagacé | Fortin, Jean-Louis | Lavallée, Jean | Paradis, Bertrand |
| Abbé R. Grandmont | Fortin, Sylvio | Leblanc, Jules-Marie | Paradis, Eudes |
| Father Roland | Gauthier, Guy | Leddars, A. (Mme) | Paradis, Mme |
| Avard, J.L. Mme | Gauthier, Mme | Léger, Marcel | Pellerin, A. Mme |
| Beaudouin, Normand | Gilbert, Colette | Lessard, Hervé | Perron, Agenor |
| Bergeron, Anatole | Gilbert, Eugène | Lessard, Mme | Phellan, Gerry |
| Bertrand, Georgette | Gilbert, Laurence | Lévesque, Léonce | Poulain, Jean-Paul |
| Bolduc, Omer | Gilbert, Maurice | Morin, Grégoire | Poulain, Robert |
| Brassard, Camille | Gilbert, Raymond | Morin, Mme | Quirion, Philippe |
| Brassard, Pierre | Gilbert, Simone | Nadeau, Donat | Quirion, Mme |
| Caouette, Buster | Groncin, Rose | Nadeau, Florian | Rouleau, Arthur |
| Charbonneau, A. Mlle | Groulx, Omer | Nadeau, Louida | Roy, Yvon |
| Cloutier, Éloi | Jodouin, Bruno | Nadeau, Gisèle (Couture) | Savoie, Gilbert |
| Cloutier, Fernand | Jodouin, Normand | Noël, Adrien | St-Arnaud, André |
| Deshaies, Ben | Kirk, M.A.T. | Noël, Gérard Dr | Tardif, Patrice |
| Duval, Jeanne | Laflamme, Pierre | Noël, R. Mme | Simoneau, J. (Mme) |
| Fortin, Charles-Édouard | Lambert, Antonio | Pagé, Laval | Vallée, Jules |

Note: transcript of these interviews can be read at BAnQ, Sherbrooke.

Annex 4: What happened next ?

Whatever happened to the mine? The Indians, the families, the houses, the equipments, the buildings, and the shafts ?

Here it is in bulk

All the families left Theresa ? Some went to Longlac, others to Manitouwage, Hawkesbury, Vancouver, Shawinigan, La Beauce...

The statue has been removed and placed in a Longlac cemetery. Theresian Clubs have ceased their activities.

Buildings at the mine were all dismantled, the shafts filled with water and the entrances cemented. One of the shafts became a snake haven.

Yves Gilbert and his brother-in-law Marcel (Buster) Caouette went to Longlac and became Insurance Brokers. It was called *Gilbert and Caouette Insurance*.



Photo: Adrienne Caouette (Hallé)

In 1960-61 Buster moved to Cochrane with this family where he had purchased an Insurance Agency which was named *M.D. Caouette Insurance*. His wife Adrienne worked with him for many years. Yves Gilbert later moved to Sherbrooke.

Marielle and Hélène Caouette now live in British Columbia.

Makwa remained a social butterfly always warmly welcoming back many ex mine workers and their family revisiting the Theresa.

Anita Bolduc got married to Léo Dupont. Colette was elected Longlac municipal councillor.

Raymond Gilbert (brother of Yves) lives in Sherbrooke. Michel Gilbert (son of Yves) made a career at ALCAN as a chemical engineer.

Gaston Bolduc lived his life on a wheelchair and passed away in mid-June 2018. François Gilbert left Theresa Gold Mines to Elliot Lake. Clarisse Gilbert has lived in the Laurentides and now in Laval(Qc). The Champagne are all established in Shawinigan. And the Fortin (Charles-Édouard) in the Montreal area.

Miner Companies have tried to revive Theresa. One of them had a \$16 million program between 1986 and 1988.

Today, there is nothing left of Theresa Gold Mines but trees that range up to 30' high.

Today, Makwa's children hunt bears, moose while recalling the time when 10 miles from Longlac, there was once a gold mine with its 50 children playing along the river.



*Circa 1962: Makwa with Huguette's
husband ,Orlando Olaechea*



*The Champagne family. From left to right Jacqueline, Colette,
Armandine, Denise, Mireille. In the back, Yvon, Jean-Guy, Denis
and Gaétan. All lived at Theresa except Gaétan.. Photo circa 1980*

Annex 5: Technical and Historical Datas

Technical¹⁶

The area consists predominantly of altered mafic metavolcanic rocks, agglomerates and metasediments. These units have been intruded by massive quartz diorite-granodiorite bodies. These units are all cut by northeast-trending diabase dykes. The Theresa Gold property covers a large area of the quartz diorite-granodiorite intrusion.

The remainder of the intrusion is mostly in Indian Reserve #77. The workings are almost entirely restricted to the area of the contact between the intrusion, the volcanics, and the metasediments. The most important showing is on claims TB16373 and TB17784, about 0.25 mile west of the Making Ground River.

A steep-dipping shear zone averaging 5 feet in width over a length of 300 feet, strikes N40 degrees East along the contact of a sheared agglomerate and massive hornblende-quartz diorite. The shear zone contains a quartz vein averaging about 1 foot in width and shows coarse visible gold in many places.

The zone has been traced at least 650 feet and apparently dies out to the southwest. The results of surface sampling and of preliminary drilling are reported to warrant more extensive operations (Shaft 1 area). The 2 best showings on the Indian

¹⁶ Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, Ontario)

group are No. 2 vein and No. 3 vein. The former consists of a network of small quartz stringers spread over a zone 10 feet wide on the contact of hornblende-quartz and a fine, highly altered, greyish dyke rock.

The contact strikes N85 degrees E and dips 55 degrees N. The No. 3 vein is highly deformed and discontinuous. The showing on the east end consists of an altered hybrid rock, probably greenstone, which contains a drag-folded quartz vein about 3 feet wide. This vein has been traced for 65 feet and contains irregular gold values

Picture¹⁷ of the mine in the early 40's

Historical

This report is based upon the facts visible on the property, works done in presence of the writer and informations secured by sources mentioned below...The informations used here have been obtained from Mr Caouette, president of the Theresa Gold Mines and a report written by Mr J.G. McCombe, geologist who visited the property in 1939.

Location Accessibility

Situated 6 miles, air line, south of Longlac, station of C.N.R., the property is easily accessible. During summer, the

¹⁷ Archives from Fonds Jeanne Daigle, History Centre of St-Hyacinthe, St-Hyacinthe, Box 18.

property is reached by way of Long Lake and Suicide River which runs across the claims. The water route is about nine miles in length. Heavy transportation may be done during the period of high water. There is a winter road across the bush which strikes the railroad and the highway some four miles east of Longlac.

Presently, Pulp Wood Co is doing an outline of a road available during the whole year.

Area

The property of Theresa Gold Mines consists of nineteen claims in one block of which sixteen are registered. The claims have approximately forty acres each, giving an approximate total area of seven hundred and sixty acres.

Spruce and Jack Pines are the predominant type of timber present upon the property with some amounts of birch... The nearest available transmission line of electric power is the line of Ontario Hydro, twelve miles, west of the property.

Topography

The relief of the area covered by the property is not much hilly. There are some low and rounded hills, characteristics of intense glaciation...The whole area is drained by the Suicide River, which flows from south to north...

History

The property was staked in 1934 by A. Caouette and associates, when they discovered several gold bearing veins. At this time, the property was divided into two groups, eastern and westearn group. The eastern one, consisting of nine claims, located east of the river, was known as the Indian property, while the western one, seven claims, was known as Caouette group...

Developments

Large amount of development has been carried out by above mentioned companies on the property previous to the work done by the Theresa G.M.L.

The Afton Mines carried out surface development and diamond drilling on vein No 1, west to the river. This company shipped thirty three tons of ore to Noranda and 400 lbs as sample to Sudbury.

A small amount of surface drilling was done by Big Longlac Mines on eastern claims.

The Timmins Corp. carried out the major part of past development. Two shafts were sunk, one west to the river, on vein No 1 and the other on vein No. 2, 4800' north-east of shaft No. 1...

When the Theresa Gold Mines Ltd took over the property, a limited amount of underground workings has been done.

A small 12 ton Gibson mill and amalgamation tables were installed in purpose of treating the ore from vein

No 2. ... Later on the recommendation of J.W. Morrisson, a shaft was sunk near the north-east corner of claim T.B. 15 775, to intersect the "Theresa" vein at about 150'in depth.

Present development

From the beginning of summer months, several constructions have been erected as, bunk house, cookery, power house, office with adjacent warehouse and assay office, water tank, headframe of new shaft No 3, a few employees houses. A saw mill is constructed at about 500' from the mine to supply timber required by present operations...

* * *



Illustration of Theresa Gold Mines: Christine Lizotte, Valleyfield, QC



Alphonse Caouette was endorsed by 3000 investors, mineworkers and patrons of all sorts. Although his dream did not come true, he deserves a place in history.

THE CITY THAT WAS

The Story

In 1934, in the wake of the Porcupine Gold Rush of Northern Ontario, five times more important than the Klondike, the Ojibwe Indian from Longlac, found a gold nugget on their property. This discovery brought them to Father Couture, a Jesuit missionary who lived in Longlac Ontario. From there started a partnership that led to the creation of the Theresa Gold Mines project. This book recalls 20 years of history of Theresa Gold Mines, a shining city that has been since totally forgotten: the City that Was !

The Author

Graduated (Ph.D.) from the Université de Montréal, Jean-Louis Fortin has been successively Assistant Dean at the Université de Montréal Faculty of Dental Medicine, Director of the Université de Montréal Office of Industrial Liaison (BLEU) and subsequently Director of the Office of International Cooperation. He then joined the National Association of Book Publishers (ANEL) as Executive Director. He is actually among other things Coordinator, Research, Partnerships and Innovation at the Quebec Aluminum Research and Development Centre (CQRDA).

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