

Minnesota Pioneers

*Mathilda Baudreau/Graveline
&
Adolphe Crevier
Of Winsted, Minnesota*

*by
Connie Nelson-Bachman*

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INTRODUCTION

This article, by Connie Bachman, was first published in the Spring 1991 edition of “The Descendants”, the official publication of the Urbain Baudreau Graveline Genealogical Association, Inc. I was fortunate to “meet” Connie by telephone in May, 1999.

Actually, Connie’s name had appeared in my genealogy research a few times before I realized who she was. Mary Crevier-Van Lom told me about Connie via e-mail in May 1999. Then I realized that this was the same Connie Bachman who had written a letter to my 1st cousin, Molly Crevier, back in November of 1988.

When we finally connected up by telephone, Connie and I spoke at length about our French-Canadian heritage, including even some common ancestry in Norway. Research has since shown that Connie and I are 10th cousins. She was kind enough to send me a copy of the newsletter from 1991 where this article first appeared; and she gave me permission to publish the article on my web site.

During the month of July, 1999, I spend several evenings transcribing this article into electronic form. Based on reliable research by Rolland Descheneaux, I have changed the spelling of Marie Beaubier’s name in the first paragraph to “Marie Beaubien.” With few exceptions, I have converted this document word for word. It is certainly possible that I have made an occasional typing error. If you happen to notice any typos or any information that does not make sense, please let me know. I will make any necessary corrections and I will make updated versions of this article available.

If you would like to quote this article in your own genealogy research, please be sure not to confuse me with the author. Though you may wish to note where you got this excerpt from, I suggest you credit the article as follows:

Bachman, Connie. “Minnesota Pioneers Mathilda Baudreau/Graveline & Adolphe Crevier of Winsted, Minnesota.” *The Descendants*. 1991.

For as long as I am alive, I will be very happy to discuss this document or my genealogy data with any of my relatives. If you should happen to have any information, or if you are a distant (or not so distant) relative, please take a moment to say hello. I expect that my e-mail address below will be valid for many years to come. And I also invite you to visit my family history web site.

Enjoy.

Scott M. Crevier

E-mail: scott@crevier.org

Web: www.family.crevier.org

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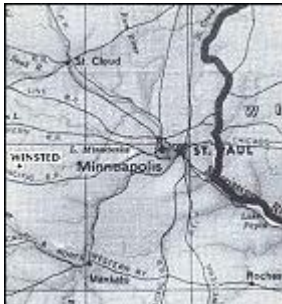
Adolph Crevier was born August 14, 1824 in the parish of St. Francois in Quebec, Canada. He was the son of Pierre and Marie Beaubien. He married Domitilde (Mathilda) Baudreau dit Graveline on January 11, 1852. This was Mathilda's second marriage. She had previously married George Proulx on July 27, 1846 in Cumberland, R.I. at the age of 13. She was the daughter of Charles and Angelique Mathieu of Richelieu County, Quebec. Mathilda's parents married in 1822 at St. Pierre de Sorel.¹ They settled in Woonsocket, R.I. in 1840.² Adolph and Mathilda had 13 children as follows: Louis (b.1852), George (b.1854), Charles (b.1856), Marie (b.1859), Adeline (b.1861), Mathilda (b.1863), Josephine (b. 1865), Philomene (b.1867), Joseph (b.1868), Caroline (b.1870), Johnnie (b.1872), Lucie (b.1875) and a baby girl (b.1878). Most were born in Winsted, Minnesota; Louis was born in Massachusetts.



Adolph Crevier with his daughter Lucie.

Mathilda and Adolph came to the Winsted area in 1858. According to the McLeod County Historical Society, they were one of the earliest settlers in the Winsted area. In fact, there were only two homes in Winsted at the time, one on each side of the lake. In 1857 they left Montreal, Canada along with the Francis Bibeau family. They traveled by boat and came as far as Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. Winter was coming and the river was freezing, so they stayed the winter in Prairie du Chien. They chopped cord wood that winter for a living. In the spring, as soon as the river thawed, they left and headed to Minneapolis, then westward to Rocky Run. They settled and staked their homestead claim west of Winsted due to the good farming opportunities. It was called the French settlement and was also known as Rocky Run.

According to an interview with Homer Bibeau, which is documented at the McLeod Historical Society, Francis Bibeau and Adolph Crevier asked a surveyor where the best land was. Adolph was either a very envious man or he was very respectful about Francis Bibeau's judgement. Francis knew Adolph well and he also knew that no matter what piece of land he would choose, Adolph would want it. Francis knew what piece of land he wanted, so he told Adolph that he wanted the opposite piece of land. Sure enough, the piece of land that Francis said he wanted was the same piece of land that Adolph also wanted. However, we do not know Adolph's version of the story; it could be different, of course.



According to a taped interview with Clarence Bebo (Bibeau) at the McLeod Historical Society, he stated that before any of the old settlers came to this area, there was a person named Crevier, an explorer, who was considered to be a doctor by the Indians. He traveled by rivers to visit the Indians when they were sick. The medicine he brought, although not as advanced as the kind we have today, cured the Indians. As a reward, the Indians made him an honorary Chief. Since only Crevier is mentioned with no first name, it is not certain that the person that Clarence is talking about is Adolph. It is known, however, that Adolph was one of the first settlers in the

Winsted area. Peter Crevier, Adolph's brother, also lived in the Winsted area. He came later and Clarence said in his interview that it was not Peter, so we can only assume that it was Adolph.

There was no Catholic Church at the French settlement when Adolph and Mathilda first settled. They used their home for church services until a church could be built. Missionary priests would come from St. Paul by foot or horse, visiting with scattered Catholic families along the way. In 1868, ten years after the settlement, the first Catholic church was built. It was called the Church of St. John the Baptist, and it was the very first church built in McLeod County. It was six miles west of Winsted. Adolph gave the Catholic church five acres of his land to build a 40' x 26' structure. Less than a year after the completion of the church, some of the German Catholics who belonged to the congregation petitioned for permission to build a more central church in Winsted. Gradually, the people left the parent parish and the French Catholic Church was closed after a short existence. A cemetery was next to the church where 42 of the original parishioners were buried. Years later, lightning struck the church and it burned down. The foundation was removed and the site was converted into a field. The only landmark left is the cemetery which is surrounded by a farmer's field (McLeod Historical Society).



Church of St. John the Baptist also known as the French Catholic Church built in 1868 on Adolph Crevier's property.

According to Homer Bibeau's interview, "One of Adolph's boys got bit by a rattlesnake when he was out in the field helping his father cut hay. He pushed some straw with his bare feet and at that minute a rattlesnake bit his foot. He showed his mother and she put salsoda (baking soda) in her mouth and sucked out the blood. The soda was used so the poison wouldn't spread in her mouth. The boy was all right after that."

Adolph was friendly with the Indians and they had a lot of respect for him. He had the Indians into his home and he would let them eat at his table. Other settlers fed the Indians but made them sit on the floor and eat like dogs. Adolph spoke a little Indian, and the Indians spoke a little English, thus, they could communicate with each other. The Sioux Indian war of 1862 created a lot of fear within the French settlement. Because of Adolph's friendship with the Indians, however, they always warned him before an outbreak. He would then take his family to Fort Snelling in St. Paul where they would be safe. They could get guns and ammunition for protection but Adolph never took a gun because he knew that his Indian friends would not harm him. After a few days when the Indian attack calmed down, Adolph brought his family back home. While they were gone, his Indian friends watched his home and kept the unfriendly Indians from burning it down. Although Adolph did not believe in using a gun, or even keeping one in his house, he did have a little fear in him as he kept his axe by the door just in case he would run into a problem with an unfriendly Indian. Needless to say, Adolph never needed to use it (McLeod County Historical Society and Father Joe Guillemette).

The French always worked together to help each other out and they never expected any money in exchange for their work. They all cut wood, butchered pigs and worked in their fields together. When they needed any equipment such as sleds and wagons, they built their own as these items could not be bought in stores (McLeod County Historical Society).

Mathilda died August 13, 1878 in childbirth with her 13th child. She was buried, with her newborn daughter who also had died, in the cemetery that was on their property. After Mathilda's death, Adolph had his hands full raising his 12 children. Several of the oldest children were grown, however, Lucie was only three, Johnnie was six, Caroline was eight, and the rest of the youngsters were about two years apart in age. After Lucie grew up and married, Adolph moved in with them. He lived with Lucie's family in Minneapolis until his death May 1, 1911 (Father Joe Guillemette).

PHOTOS



Charles Crevier, son of Adolph & Mathilda Crevier, his wife Annie and son Louis.



Son of Adolph & Mathilda Crevier



Caroline Crevier, daughter of Adolph & Mathilda Crevier



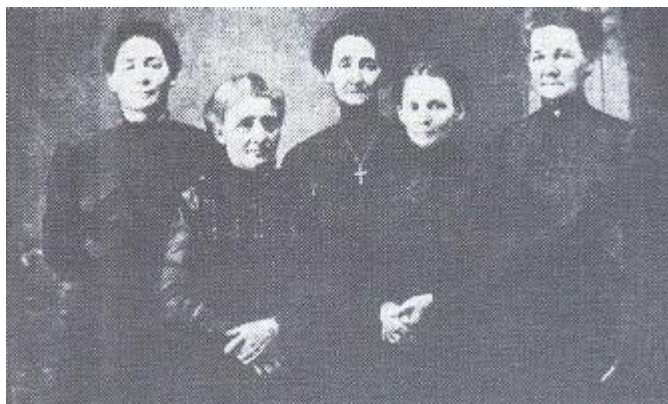
Son of Adolph & Mathilda Crevier



Charles Crevier, son of Adolph and Mathilda Crevier



Wedding of Luci Crevier and Honore Guillemette



Daughters of Adolph and Mathilda Crevier. This photo was taken in May 1911 when they were all together to attend Adolph's funeral. From left to right are Caroline, Adeline and Mathilda. The front row is Mary and Lucie.

ANCESTRAL LINE OF CONNIE BACHMAN

- I. Urbain Baudreay/Graveline married Mathurin Juillet, 20 Oct 1664 Notre Dame Church, Montreal
- II. Jean Baudreau/Graveline married Francoise Bazinet, 7 Jan 1715, Pointe-aux-Trembles, Montreal
- III. Joseph Beaudreau/Graveline married Marie Josephte Peloquin, 25 Nov 1751, St. Pierre Church, Sorel, PQ
- IV. Jean Baptiste Beaudreau married Marie Monique Thibeault, 21 Jan 1793, St. Pierre Church, Sorel, PQ
- V. Charles Beaudreau/Graveline married Angelique Mathieu, 18 Feb 1822, St. Pierre Church, Sorel, PQ
- VI. Domitilde Beaudreau/Graveline married Adolphe Crevier, 11 Jan 1852
- VII. Caroline Crevier married Soloman Marquis Jr., 3 Apr 1888
- VIII. Frederick Joseph Marquis married Julia Erickson, 15 Jan 1913, Brainerd, MN
- IX. Fredericka Marquis married Elmer Nelson, 17 Oct 1937, Little Falls, MN
- X. Constance Ann Nelson married Lee Bachman, 18 Apr 1959, Brainerd, MN

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Connie Nelson Bachman was born on the 24th day of July 1940 in Brainerd, Minnesota. She graduated from Brainerd High School in 1958. She is married to Lee Bachman. They have three grown children and one grandchild.

Connie became interested in genealogy after she inherited a very old photo album that once belonged to her great grandparents, Solomon and Caroline Crevier Marquis (Caroline was the daughter of Domitilde Beaudreau dit Graveline). This album dates back to the 1800s and also contains some tin type pictures. Although she has not identified all the pictures in the album, she has been able to identify over half of them through research, many of them being descendants of Domitilde. Besides genealogy and an interest in old pictures, some of her hobbies are bicycling, cross country skiing and woodcarving. She works in the corporate office of Mills Fleet Farm as an accounts payable supervisor.

¹ Researchers of Thomas P. Boudreau, Readsboro, VT

² “Debuts de la Colonie Franco-Americaine de Woonsocket, RI” by Marie Louis Bonnier; Framingham, MA; 1920