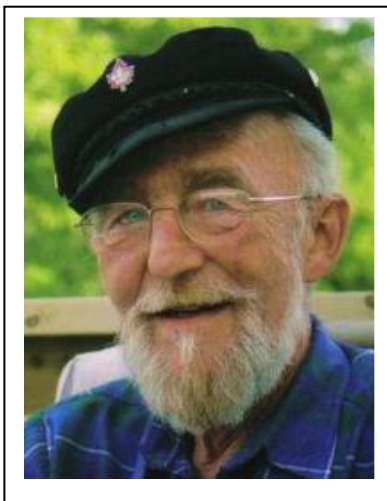


The Family Historian

Patrick Wohler

Column #46

Extra Information



Some time ago I made a note that I wanted to write a column on providing adequate information when asking another researcher for assistance but I was waiting for a good example to use. You guessed it, I now have an excellent case in point.

A researcher in Kansas City, Missouri, contacted me to check the marriage record and find the names of the parents of a couple who lived in a small village in the foothills of the Laurentians, north of Montreal. In addition she supplied the name of one of their children (Paul), his wife's name, and his death date. This latter information does not seem to relate to the query at all - but read on.

There was no such couple. I had someone with the husband's name married to a woman with the same given but different family name. Was this really the couple she was looking for?

In an effort to make the link, I checked the baptismal records for the children of that marriage but there was no son by the name of Paul. At this stage I switched primary targets and started looking for information on the son.

Luckily he was married in the same parish and his wife's name was right. Furthermore, his parents were listed as the ones that I had found. I guess I could have stopped there because I had the base information that the researcher had requested but I was just a little curious about why he was not baptised there. There could easily be any number of reasons, but it would be nice to know.

The date on his burial record agreed with the date provided but there was one added little factoid. His name on that record was not 'Paul' but 'Leopold Paul' and certainly, in the baptismal records, there was a 'Leopold'.

Without the addition of the son's name and the information about him, there was no way I could have proven that the family I found was the desired one.

As a postscript, I was interested in how the original error came about. Someone unfamiliar with French and the format of the parish registers had not only mistaken the bride's mother's maiden name as the bride's but transposed some of the letters in that name.

Lots of confusion, but 'All's well that ends well'.

The Ontario Vital Statistics Project

This is another of the gems hosted by rootsweb.com and is a useful site to bookmark. The three major components, of course, are Births (coordinated by Steve Marshall), Marriages (by Mary Crandall), and Deaths (by Heather Bertram). The dates covered are from 1869, when civil registration was first required in Ontario, to 1907.

Submissions to this site are from volunteers and the transcriptions are updated several times a week. If you don't find what you are looking for, therefore, try again in a few weeks. It is important to note that these are transcriptions and can contain errors, so once you find what you are looking for, it would be wise to check it out on microfilms of the original documents.

Links are also provided to many other sites that contain important Ontario Vital Statistics, so it is a useful portal to a whole category of resources.

In addition to the Vitals, the site also offers links to the Ontario Cemetery Finding Aid and to the census sites of the Ontario GenWeb Census Project, Library and Archives Canada, and the LDS Library in Salt Lake City. You can access what is available on all censuses from 1851 to 1906.

If you would like to try out this site, you will find it at: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~onvsl/>.

I welcome comments, queries, and suggestions at: p_wohler@hotmail.com

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