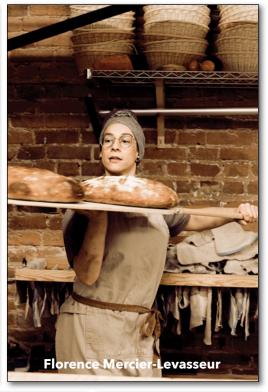
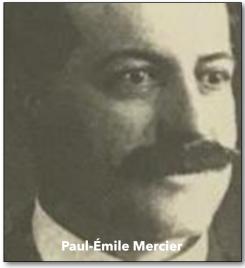


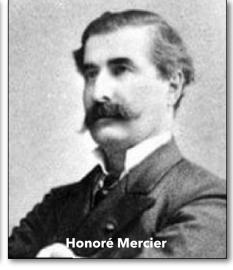
# Le Mercien

The Voice of the Merciers of North America











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Audit:		210	Denise Mercier		denisemercier@videotron.qc.ca

#### **MEMBERSHIP FEES 2020-2021**

Annual fees are due before May 31st of each year

Annually: \$35/year \$65/2 years
Annually + spouse(s): \$40/year \$75/2 years
Governor 1 000 \$

Those amounts are in U.S. currency for U.S. residents and in euros for European residents.

This newsletter is named after the Kingdom of Mercia which existed from the 7th to the 10th centuries. It was one of the seven original Kingdoms constituting England. The inhabitants of that territory must have been called Mercien. We are proud to perpetuate that name today.

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Opinions expressed in the published articles belong exclusively to their authors. The fact that they are published in this newsletter does not mean that the Association agrees with or supports them.

Email : famillesmercier1985@gmail.com - Website : www.famillesmercier.org L'Association des Mercier de l'Amérique du Nord is a member of the Fédération Histoire Québec

### A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

### Greetings to you all!

Here is our Winter 2021 issue. You will notice that we are continuing to talk about two young Merciers from the 12th generation descending from Julien. From Pascal's line, we talk about Florence Mercier-Levasseur, a baker, and from Jean's line, Samuel Mercier, our blade forger or bladesmith. They represent strength in the chain of descendants. We also want you to know about a Mercier from outside of Québec, Paul-Emile Mercier from the Yukon. We are always looking for Merciers from outside of Québec. We also include Gilmond's third text about urologist Oscar Mercier, and there is also a new item for the younger generation of Merciers on pages 13 and 14, about discovering Premier Honoré Mercier, with links for their tablet or computer.



We are still hoping to manage to gather this summer for our general meeting and to share our experiences following our vaccinations. Let us stay hopeful and above all careful for a few more months!

Let us be resilient like our ancestors and we shall overcome!

The past will help us into the future!

Jacques, n°341, President

### RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP FEES - NEW MEMBERS AND DONATIONS [as of MARCH 12, 2021]

Member N°	Name	City - Province/State	Fees	Dona- tions	Expiry May 31
871	Jacques Mercier	St-Charles-de Bellechasse, QC	35\$	10\$	2022
1321	Huguette Desfossés	Gatineau, QC	65\$	20 \$	2023
1630	Jean Mercier	New Richemond, QC	35\$		2022
1633	Ronald W. Mercier & Julie L. Chaloux Mercier	Williamstown, VT, USA	40 \$		2024

Thank you for your support!

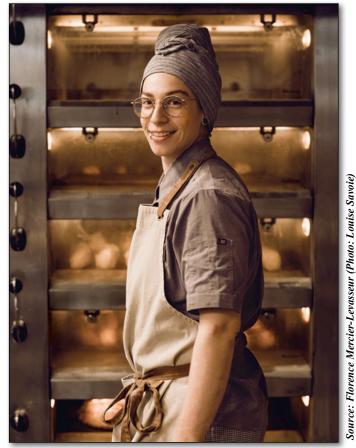
# Let's continue to protect ourselves! Québec COURSE QUÉBEC QUÉBEC

### **FLORENCE MERCIER-LEVASSEUR**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, a lot of people baked their own bread. In the March/April 2020 issue of the magazine *Châtelaine*, Ms. Andréanne Moreau introduced three bakers under the heading "Some bakers share their best recipes". Florence Mercier-

Levasseur was one of them. We reprint below part of the article. Florence is the daughter of Céline Mercier and Jude Levasseur. She is part of the 12th generation of Julien's line (Céline, Paul-Émile, Napoléon, Magloire, François, Marc, Augustin, François, Paschal, Paschal).

After seven years as a cook in top restaurants such as Le Cadet, in Montreal, Florence Mercier-Levasseur needed a change. "I had had enough of never seeing raw materials and working with nearly finished products. I felt that I was merely reheating foods and placing them on plates", she said, her hair hidden under a large cloth. She went back to school at the age of 24, this time in baking. "Flour and water: nothing is more basic as ingredients go."



Florence Mercier-Levasseur, 25 years old La Meunerie Urbaine, Montréal (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce borough). "Bakers share their best recipes"

At the Meunerie Urbaine, where she was hired directly out of school in 2018, her interest for basic materials was well-served: bakers make their own flour! Occupying pride of place behind the window separating the kitchen from the dining room, a huge wooden mill seems to have come straight out of another era. That is how flours can be made on the spot, giving each bread sold a special signature. "It cannot get any fresher than this! Or more ecological, as a matter of fact. The farmer who supplies the grains recovers our residues (the semolina and the wheat bran), which he uses to feed his animals", says Florence.

Restaurants and bakeries are part of the larger field of cuisine. They are two professions with a lot in common, no? Not at all, thinks Florence. "In cuisine, if one makes a mistake,

Page 4 - Vol. 36 - nº 4

one can always start anew, which is impossible with bread. If you forget the salt, there is no way out. One needs a lot of humility to work with living things such as the

ingredients needed to make bread. I learn something new every day."

For Florence, the art of making bread has some advantages; notably a better balance between one's personal and professional life. When she was a cook, it was quite late at night when she left the restaurant to go home, her mind still in turmoil because of the intensity of her work.

She now starts the process of baking at five in the morning and her task is over - in a calm manner - around midday. "I still have time for my workout, prepare supper and

She now starts the process of baking at five in the morning and her task is over - in a calm manner - around midday. "I still have time for my workout, prepare supper and eat with my partner. I feel that I have found a life again." For her indeed, there is no way that work should be allowed to take over her whole life. She practices with passion one of her other fields of interest, weightlifting. Her loose baker's shirt hides it very well, but Florence is all muscles. It is an asset for her daily tasks. "We lift heavy sacks of flour, vats containing 10 kilos of dough, loaves of bread weighing almost 3 kilos... There is no two ways around it, one must be in shape!"



Source: Florence Mercier-Levasseur (Photo: Louise Savoie)

Florence Mercier-Levasseur, starts baking at five in the morning and her work is over around midday.

"I feel I have found a life again."

### SEE RECIPE FOR WHITE OR WHOLE WHEAT BREAD BY FLORENCE MERCIER-LEVASSEUR

PRÉPARATION BAKING PORTIONS 20 min. 35 min. 1 miche

This artisan bread recipe by baker Florence Mercier-Levasseur reminds one of the comforting foods made by our grandmothers. Served as toast, sandwich or simply buttered, it suddenly transforms into slices of happiness!



ource: Photo: Louise Sav

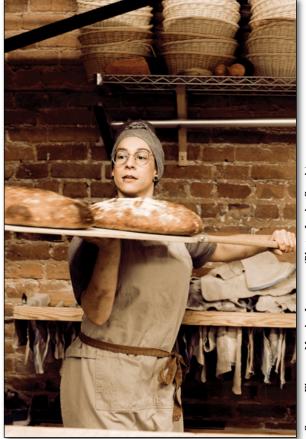
### WHITE OR WHOLE WHEAT BREAD

### Ingrédients

- •1,500 g or (10 1/2 cups) of unbleached and untreated white flour, or whole wheat flour
- •1,050 ml (4 1/5 cups) (white bread) or 1,125 ml (4 1/2 cups) (whole wheat bread) of water, plus 100 to 200 ml of water as "eau de bassinage" (see Note on page 7)
- •2 tbsp. of salt
- •30 g of fresh yeast (see Note on page 7)

### **Préparation**

- 1. In the bowl of a Stand Mixer with a Dough Hook, mix all the ingredients at Speed 1 (very low) for 10 minutes, then at Speed 2 (low) for 3 or 4 minutes, incorporating the "eau de bassinage" (see Note on page 7). The temperature of the dough should reduce from about 54°C (130°F) to 23°C or 24°C (73°F or 75°F). Let stand for 3 hours.
- 2. Divide the dough by weight, according to the bread type desired 2.5 kg for a whole French round loaf, 500 g for a Belgian loaf, 350 g for a half-Belgian, 350 g for a baguette. Let stand 15 to 30 minutes, then shape the breads.
- 3. Let the dough ferment at room temperature for 30 minutes, then place the breads, with the seam on top, all night in the fridge (for 12 to 15 hours).



Florence Mercier-Levasseur, "I learn something new every day."

PLACE A BAKING SHEET IN THE OVEN AND PREHEAT TO 250°C (480°F) FOR HALF-BELGIAN LOAVES OR BAGUETTES, OR BETWEEN 230°C AND 240°C (445°F AND 465°F) FOR A WHOLE FRENCH ROUND LOAF OR FOR BELGIAN LOAVES.

4. Take the hot baking sheet out of the oven and place the loaves on it. Scarify (make shallow incisions in the skin - see Notes on the following page) the loaves before putting them in the oven. Bake 35 to 40 minutes for a whole French round loaf or for Belgian loaves, 25 minutes for half-Belgian ones, and 20 to 22 minutes for baguettes. Set the baked loaf or loaves on a baking rack and allow to cool before cutting.

Source: Florence Mercier-Levasseur (Photo: Louise Savoie)

### **NOTES**

Fresh yeast looks like a firm paste and can be bought at the bakery. It can also be replaced by active dry yeast, sold in grocery stores, but using only one third of the quantity. In order to activate the yeast, mix it with the water used in the recipe and let stand as per the manufacturer's instructions.

### **Bassinage**

Adding water in small increments during the frasage (first stage of kneading)

### **Scarify**

Make shallow incisions on top of the bread just before putting it in the oven, to facilitate the removal of carbon dioxide during baking. It is often said that these cuts are the baker's signature.

**Source**: https://fr.chatelaine.com/recettes/pains/pain-blanc-ou-brun/

Gilmond Mercier n°28

# OSCAR MERCIER "FIRST FRENCH CANADIAN UROLOGIST"

This is the third of four articles concerning Hélène Mercier, a renowned concert pianist, and her ancestors. In this article, we introduce her grandfather Oscar.



Oscar Mercier 1898-1945 He was of the 5<sup>th</sup> Generation from the line of Charles Mercier also known as Lajoie

He was a member of the fifth generation from the line of Charles Mercier also known as Lajoie, the son of Oscar-Félix, a surgeon (See Le Mercien, volume 36, number 3) and Alexina Rolland. Born in Montreal, on February 19, 1898, he was baptized the next day in the presence of his godfather and grandfather the Honorable Jean-Damien Rolland, Legislative Councillor and businessman, and his godmother, who was his paternal grandmother Zoé Gauthier.

Once he finished school at *Collège Sainte-Marie*, he studied medicine at *Université de Montréal*, graduating in 1922. He went on to further his studies at *Université de Paris*, where a great master in urology, Professor Georges Marion, taught him all the secrets of that medical specialty. Prior to leaving for France, Dr. Mercier had married Jeanne Bruneau, daughter of Dr. Théodule Bruneau and Lucie Lamoureux.

Upon his return to Montreal, in 1926, he went to work at *Hôtel-Dieu*, where he opened the first urology service in French-speaking Québec, but not without a few difficulties getting his specialty recognized as a useful one. Dr. Mercier published two significant works on the subject, some articles in Canadian and American medical journals, spoke at conferences, all of which quickly brought him great renown. Trainees from across North America came to work with him to further their knowledge in this field.

He was also professor of urology at *Université de Montréal* and he was vice-dean of the Faculty of Medicine (1944). His proficiency led him to be chosen to head various medical associations.

Showered with honours, at the height of his profession and recognized as "the father of French-Canadian urology", Dr. Mercier met with a tragic end. He drowned after falling out of his boat, while his wife and one of his sons watched helplessly. This happened in September 1945 on Lake *l'Achigan* in the parish of Saint-Hippolyte in the Laurentians.

The couple had eight children: Louise, Denise, Francine, Jean, André, Pierre, Paul and François. The fourth and last article in this series will appear in the next issue of Le Mercien.

### Sources:

- 1- https://www.nosorigines.gc.ca/GenealogieQuebec.aspx?genealogie=Mercier\_Oscar&pid=450533
- 2- Charbonneau Jean, Histoire de l'urologie montréalaise, l'Union médicale du Canada, tome 114, 1982, 98-104
- 3- Desjardins Édouard, L'évolution de la chirurgie au Québec, l'Union médicale du Canada, tome VI, 1945
- 4- La Patrie, 23 septembre 1945, pp43, 78 Les circonstances de la mort tragique du Dr Oscar Mercier
- 5- Mercier, Ernest, Mercier depuis des siècles, 1987, pp 374-375.

Gilmond Mercier n°28

### **ERRATUM**

In the article entitled "A family of politicians and experts in law" in Le Mercien, volume 36, number 1, according to Anne Mercier, great-granddaughter of Héva Mercier and Homère Fauteux, we omitted some facts. The entry should have read:

Héva Mercier (1873-1932), born of the second marriage of Honoré Mercier, married Homère Fauteux, a dentist. They were the parents of Mercier, Gaspard, Aimé, Gérald, Héva, Héva "Nouchette", Clothilde and Françoise.

Gilmond Mercier n°28

### **«PAUL-ÉMILE MERCIER HONOURED IN THE YUKON"**

In May 2020, the *journée de la francophonie yukonnaise* was marked by the announced opening of a new francophone high school in Whitehorse. It is called *Centre scolaire secondaire communautaire Paul-Émile-Mercier*. The building is also used as a community centre for the city's population. After more than ten years of arduous negotiations with the federal and territorial governments as well as before the courts, the *Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon* finally achieved its goal. The new school, with a capacity of 150 students from grades 7 through 12, is a complement to *école Émilie-Tremblay*. A pupil from that elementary school, Vincent Bélanger, suggested the name *Paul-Émile-Mercier* for the new teaching establishment.



New Francophone High School in Whitehorse, Named Centre scolaire secondaire communautaire Paul-Émile-Mercier

In the Spring 2020 issue of Le Mercien, we characterized Premier Honoré Mercier and his descendants as "A family of politicians and experts in law". However, some members of the family excelled in other fields. Paul-Émile, son of Honoré Mercier and of Virginie Saint-Denis, was a civil engineer. Working for the Department of Public Works, he went to the Yukon, not long after the gold rush, around 1900. He was the assistant of Jean-Charles Taché in charge of infrastructures: roads, bridges, waterways, railway and telegraph lines in that remote land.

In June 1901, Paul-Émile married Marie-Louise Taché, his boss's daughter. The bride's wedding ring was made with gold from the Klondike region. According to Thomas Mulcair, ex-politician and great-grandson of the couple, "they were the first white couple to marry and settle in the Yukon". They left the region in 1903. The family's six children, Simone, Jeanne, Yvonne, Héva, Pauline and Paul were born in Québec. Paul-Émile occupied, among

other positions, that of chief engineer for the city of Montréal where he died at the age of 49. His wife Marie-Louise wrote her memoirs when she was 85.



Engineer Paul-Émile Mercier who was in 1903 a Director for the Department of Public Works in Whitehorse gave his name to the Centre scolaire secondaire communautaire francophone.

Throughout the nineteenth century, French Canadian *voyageurs* explored the Yukon in search of pelts. François-Xavier Mercier was one of them (see Le Mercien, Winter 2018). Before the gold rush, there were more of them than anglophone ones. The Yukon Territory had a lot of place names attesting to their early presence and their contribution to the development of the region. Whitehorse, the capital, got its name from the White Horse Rapids (*rapides du cheval blanc*) on the Yukon river, named because the rapids looked like the mane of a white horse. The city's population is more than 25,000, including a little less than 4,000 who speak French. According to the 2016 Census, about 1,500 have French listed as their mother tongue. The city of Whitehorse is home to 70% of the Yukon's population.

The Yukon Territory, with an area that is one third of that of the province of Québec, or a little larger than that of California, has a population of less than 40,000 inhabitants. The population of European origin represents a very large majority of that. The First Nations, the Metis and the Inuit together represent about 20% of the total population.

"These voices which speak softly to each of us, a taste for adventure despite the cold, despite the hard times which impel us to endure, to the ends of the country, to the ends of our lives." From hymne franco-yukonnais, translation from Caroline Boucher's lyrics.

#### Sources:

- Bernard Michèle, Marie-Louise au Yukon, 1896-1903, Récit historique, Fondation littéraire Fleur de Lys, Lévis, 2015
- Mercier Ernest, Mercier depuis des siècles, 1987, p. 319
- Samson Caroline, reportages, Radio-Canada, 15 mai 2020 et 13 novembre 2020
- Le site Internet de l'Association franco-yukonnaise

The Wikipédia internet site about the Yukon and Whitehorse.

Gilmond Mercier n°28

## A UNIQUE TRADE: BLACKSMITH/ CUTLER SAMUEL MERCIER

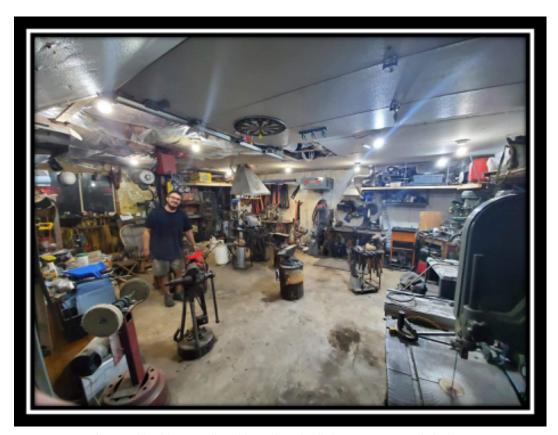


Samuel Mercier at work on the anvil that used to belong to his paternal grandfather:

André Mercier

Samuel, from Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, had to use knives occasionally when training cadets, but he found them to be of poor quality, so he thought "why not make some myself". He then started working on that project in his own workshop. He had a certificate in the art of metal working so this was not unknown territory. He worked at it part time, two or three days a week, crafting customized knives for his customers. That type of occupation provided him a way to relieve his mind from the worries brought on by his work as a social worker for the Youth Protection Agency. At the age of 24, Samuel already has a lot of experience: Blacksmith/Cutler, special educator and pilot.

Samuel, the son of Serge Mercier and Christine Daigle, is part of the twelfth generation from the line of Pascal to Julien. He shares his experience in metalworking by giving training sessions ranging from one-day to one-week to those who are interested. He also sometimes organizes demonstrations for young people searching for educational guidance or thinking of dropping out of school.



Samuel in his metalworking shop in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu

His business is called **Samuel Mercier Knives** and he has a full order book for the next 12 months. For readers who would like to know more about his products or his training sessions, they are invited to visit his Facebook page samuelmercierknives or send him an email at <a href="mailto:samuelmercierknifes@hotmail.com">samuelmercierknifes@hotmail.com</a> or even give him a call at 514-915-7221. We wish good luck to this young entrepreneur in his multiple endeavours.

### Sources:

- Interview with Samuel Mercier by Gaétan Mercier, a member of the board of the Association des Mercier de l'Amérique du Nord.
- Interview with Samuel Mercier by André Robitaille for a show called "Pétillant et cores", ici première, Radio-Canada.
- Conseil québécois du patrimoine vivant, La forge 2020 les traditions culturelles du Québec en chiffres, vol. 5, Éditeur Antoine Gauthier. See Internet site: api.patrimoinevivant.gc.ca

Gaétan Mercier n°881 and Gilmond Mercier n°28

# FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

### A PIVOTAL FIGURE IN QUÉBEC HONORÉ MERCIER

See: RÉCIT - UNIVERS SOCIAL - https://www.recitus.qc.ca/ Shows Honoré Mercier (1840-1894), Premier of Québec from 1887 to 1891 https://primaire.recitus.qc.ca/sujet/organisation/quebec-1905/content/honore-mercier

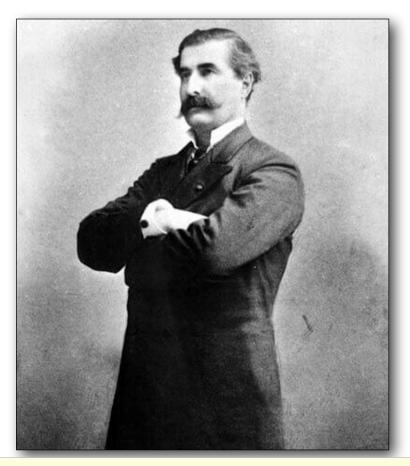


<u>Monument Honouring Honoré Mercier,</u> Montreal, 1911 © Domaine public / Paul Chevré / Bibliothèque et Archives Canada, PA-029952

Antoine accompanies his grandfather all the way to Parliament, in Québec City, on Dufferin Avenue. A statue honouring Honoré Mercier stands there. "Who is Honoré Mercier?", asks Antoine of his grandfather, who is happy to share his interest in history.

Antoine learns that Honoré Mercier was Premier of Québec from 1887 to 1891. His grandfather was not even born then, as it was more than one hundred years ago! Before becoming Premier, Honoré Mercier worked as a journalist, then later as a lawyer, but he had always had an interest in politics.

The government of Honoré Mercier put great emphasis on agricultural development in part by establishing a new ministry: The Ministry of Agriculture and <u>Colonization</u>, and to make the regions to be developed more accessible, he extended some railway lines, notably the one between Québec City and Lac-Saint-Jean, which reached Chicoutimi, in 1893.



<u>Portrait of Honoré Mercier</u> © All rights reserved / Archives nationales du Québec, collection Centre de Québec, P1000,S4,PM79-1.

With the aim of uniting Québec French Canadians, Honoré Mercier formed a new political party, called the *Parti national*. He vigorously defended the autonomy of the provinces with respect to the federal government's role in Ottawa, something that no other Quebec Premier had ever done since <u>Confederation</u> (1867). And to get even more respect from the federal government regarding the provinces, Honoré Mercier convened the very first interprovincial conference in Québec City, in 1887. He invited all the other premiers in order to discuss the autonomy of the provinces.

Why does Honoré Mercier have a statue in front of the Québec legislature? Antoine is now able to answer this question. Honoré Mercier accomplished several important things as Premier of Québec.

<u>Try to view this video on www.youtube.com</u> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\_ryTLaAj0Ug

Source: Service national du Récit de l'univers social



### Association des Mercier de l'Amérique du Nord

560, rue Desbiens, Sainte-Madeleine (Québec) JOH 1S0 Website: http://www.famillesmercier.org - Email: famillesmercier1985@gmail.com

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Until next time!			

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