

## The What, Where and How of a Genealogical Treasure Trove

### Background

- System came from Europe with the beginnings of New France.
- Considered legal professionals, open private practice and have extensive powers.
- End of practice, records to fellow notary or applicable Palais du Justice.
- Most legal documents of a personal/civil matter are produced by notaries, which is why their records can be a comprehensive source of genealogical data.
- Archived/open records up to 1934 at centres d'archives of the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ) [http://www.banq.qc.ca/accueil/index.html?language\\_id=1](http://www.banq.qc.ca/accueil/index.html?language_id=1)
- Search tool – *Pistard* – *archives catalogue* on BAnQ website to verify holdings [http://pistard.banq.qc.ca/unite\\_chercheurs/recherche\\_simple?p\\_anqid=&P\\_rech\\_type=A](http://pistard.banq.qc.ca/unite_chercheurs/recherche_simple?p_anqid=&P_rech_type=A)

### French Regime Period - 1626 to 1763/94

–Records easiest and quickest to locate. Note that dates do run slightly into the English Regime, as the Société de recherche historique Archiv-Histo updates.

–Search tool - *Parchemin* – *banque de données notariales du Québec*, databank of over 300,000 notarial acts, on in-house computers at centres d'archives of the BAnQ.

### Historic Period - Post Parchemin to 1934

–Records not as easy to locate. The quickest way is if the name of a notary is known, though records of any notaries within a region/district applicable to an ancestor can be searched.

–Search tool - *Archives des notaires du Québec des origines à 1934*, database for over 1,396 notaries, at <http://bibnum2.banq.qc.ca/bna/notaires/index.html> on BAnQ website.

### Current Period - Post 1934 to Present

–Records most difficult to impossible to obtain. They are not yet archived, so not open to the public, and are held at a notary greffe (office) or the Palais du Justice (Court House)

–Search tool - *Chambre des notaires du Québec* (CNQ) at <http://www.cnq.org/fr/accueil.html>, contact with notaries or Palais du Justice, and exceptionally within land records.

### Miscellaneous

–Investigate holdings at local archives and libraries, or societies whether genealogical or historical and check documents already held for any reference to a notary name.

–Search tools - [www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca) and [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) have notary collections that, though not all inclusive, can be browsed.

### Conclusion

- Notary records are an important and valuable resource in family history research.
- Quebec notaries played a vital role in recording an abundance of personal data.
- Their records can shine new light on our ancestors' lives. Don't miss out on them.