

The Henri and Rose Anna Giguere Family of Waterville, Maine.

By Stephen Sedgeley, grandson

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Giguere Family Origins

We begin the Giguere story with an overview of the origins of the Giguere Family that immigrated to Canada in the 17th century.

We have traced (7) generations of Henri Giguere's ancestors, starting with Jean Giguere, born about 1590 in Tourouve, au Perche, France. Jean had a son, Robert who settled in Isle d'Orleans, outside Quebec City. There is a direct genealogical line from Robert Giguere to Henri Giguere.

The Perche region, located 100 miles West of Paris, France, is the origin of a large number of 17th Century settlers in Quebec. There is a long list of names in addition to the Giguere name that have settled in Maine and the Waterville area.

Why the immigration to Quebec? The King of France was offering incentives for his people to settle in New France. The emigrants were often hired for a period of three years. Thus they were called "Les 36 Mois." Most of the recruits were bachelors. They were to be paid from 40 to 120 livres per year. In addition they were provided transportation to Nouvelle France and were to receive some land. Most were unskilled and illiterate. Some of the immigrants returned to France after his or her 36- or 60-month contract was completed. Robert Giguere chose to stay in Canada, so here we are today.

Henri and Rose Anna Giguere Story

Henri Giguere, one of (15) children, was the son and oldest child of Alexis Giguere and Sophie Peron Dugrenier. He was born in Disraeli, P.Q. in 1863 and died in Waterville, Me in 1933. He married Rose Anna Boutin in 1890. Rose Anna, one of (12) children, was the daughter and oldest child of Louis Boutin and Henriette Roy. She was born in St. Sebastien, P.Q. in 1875 and died in Waterville, Me in 1963. Upon Rose Anna's death, she had (71) grandchildren and (83) great grand children

It is interesting to note that Rose Anna's sister, Marie married Henri's brother, Francois and her sister, Rebecca married Henri's brother, Cleophe. The Gigueres and the Boutins found a good match for their children!

Henri and Rose Anna became the proud parents of (22) children! Three of their children, Meleda, age 15, Oscar, age 16, and Albert, age 2, died in Disraeli before their move to the states. Two (2) of the (19) living children, at that time, Arthur and Laurena married and stayed and raised their families in Canada.



This is the original Giguere Homestead in Disraeli, P.Q.
All (22) children were born in this house.



The remodeled Giguere Homestead in Disraeli, P.Q.
September 2000

Having been married for almost thirty years, Henri and Rose Anna made the big decision to move their family to the Waterville area in the year 1920. At the time, employment opportunities were considered to be much better in the Waterville area. Also, Henri was

quite concerned about the marriage prospects for his (11) single daughters! He was quite sure that he could significantly improve their marriage prospects here in Waterville! So, as we look back to the year 1920 to this year, 2009, the Giguere's have exceeded all expectations in their decision to move to Waterville from Canada.



The Giguere Farm on the Ridge Road in Fairfield, Me.



**The young Giguere girls on the farm in Fairfield.
The year 1921.**

In 1920, there were (19) Giguere children, in July 2009 there are (4) surviving Gigueres of the original (22) children of Henri and Rose Anna Giguere. They are:



Estelle in 1920.

Estelle Giguere Fortin lives in Waterville.
She was born in 1907 and is 102 years old.



Cecile in 1920

Cecile Giguere Bizier Landry lives in Waterville.
She was born in 1911 and is 98 years old.



Marion in 1920.

Marion (Marie Ange) Giguere, Sedgely, Cody, Murphy lives in Auburn.
She was born in 1912 and is 97 years old.



Lionel in 1920.

Lionel Giguere lives in Waterville.
He was born in 1915 and is 94 years old.

The following are excerpts from an article written by Amy Calder of the Waterville Sentinel in 2005. The occasion was Lionel Giguere's 90th birthday.

Giguere owned the former Giguere's Market in Waterville and started a co-op of grocers that grew statewide and beyond. "That was the light of my life in business -- the co-op," he said. "If it wasn't for that co-op, there would be a lot of people who wouldn't be in business." Giguere worked for various markets, including A&P and Joseph's Market, and learned to cut meat. Ultimately, he went into business for himself, opening Giguere's Market in Ticonic Street. Then he bought a market in Fairfield and opened a store in Lincoln.

"My parents were farmers." The Gigueres bought a farm on Ridge Road in Fairfield, on 48 acres near the Waterville line.

"We worked in the mills, in the shirt factory, at Lockwood Mill," he said. "My father traveled in a Model T Ford."

Ten years later, the family swapped the farm for an apartment house on Leighton Street in Waterville, Giguere said. At one time, the family owned four buildings on that street.

In addition to Lionel Giguere's supermarkets, there are several other prominent Waterville area businesses with Giguere family ties that are contributing to the growth and well being of the local economy.

Ware-Butler has been a lumber and building supply specialists since 1925! In 1934, at age 21, Gerard Giguere, the 19th child of Henri and Rose Anna, began working at Ware-Butler as a truck driver and shop man. In 1952, Gerard purchased a controlling interest in the company and began creating the modern Ware-Butler business. Ware-Butler Inc., based in Waterville, is now in its second generation as a family business. The management of Ware-Butler today is in the hands of Richard 'Dick' Giguere, of Waterville.

The following are excerpts from an article written by Emily Rowden, about **Mathieu Auto Body Shop**. This write up appeared in the *Town Line* newspaper in South China, dated, July 16, 2009

.....soon cars appeared everywhere....and so were car accidents, even a thoroughly wrecked car was still considered an expensive piece of machinery, something to be salvaged, not junked. David Mathieu, of Waterville, decided to fix them and the company he founded has been in business for 81 years, remaining an active part of Waterville history. David one of 11 children, came from Beauville, Quebec, Canada, around 1922, looking for work. He was first employed at Hollingsworth and Whitney Paper Company, but quickly left there to work at Waterville Ford Motor Company. David made another big move: he married Yvonne Giguere (10th child of Henri and Rose Anna). David liked painting cars and, a mechanic by trade, he enjoyed assembling radiators. With these skills, he decided he could start his own business working on cars. Opening in 1928 as David Mathieu Auto Body. In 1955, David was diagnosed with cancer. David's only son, Gus, helped his father continue the business. Gus energetically took over in his father's place and dedicated himself to making the noteworthy business what it is today. Gus

purchased an even larger property on Allen Street...was built in three increments and now comprises 15,000 square feet. Today, a third generation, Gus' son, Jim, owns and operates, the business, where historical pictures line the walls.

Mainely Trusses is a roof and floor truss manufacturer located in Fairfield. A privately owned, Maine-based company founded in 1991 by John Boulet. John married Louise Giguere, the daughter of Joe Giguere, the 9th child of Henri and Rose Anna. John and Louise's son Mike took over the helm of the company and has been instrumental in developing Mainely Trusses as a leader in truss systems. The U.S. Small Business Administration recognized Mike Boulet's achievements by giving him Maine's 2007 Small Business Person of the Year Award.

Waterville Custom Kitchens is the oldest originally owned kitchen cabinet retail dealer in Maine, serving its customers since 1971. This Waterville family business is owned by Ray and Rachael Cote. Rachael is the daughter of Gerard Giguere, the 19th child of Henri and Rose Anna.

Champions Fitness Club is Central Maine's largest multi-recreational fitness center, offering quality facilities, professional staff, innovative and fun programming for the entire family. This Waterville family owned business believes in the importance of healthy living. Champions is owned by Charlie Giguere, son of Lionel, the 20th child of Henri and Rose Anna.

Elm City Photo has developed into a full service imaging company. They provide online printing, custom graphics, portrait studio; other products and services include frames and albums, learning center and film processing. This Waterville family business is owned by John Goodine who is married to Celine Giguere Goodine who heads up the accounting department at the firm. Celine is the daughter of Lionel Giguere.

Prime Cut has been in business since in Waterville since 1989. They are located in the former Butler's department store basement. Prime Cut employs (7) stylist and nail technicians, offering hair, nail and tanning services. This hair salon is owned by Claire Giguere Ocando, a daughter of Lionel Giguere.

Of particular interest is Joseph Giguere, the 9th child of Henri and Rose Anna. Joe opened Giguere's Barber and Beauty Shop in 1933 right in the middle of The Great Depression. This was a well-known business on Waterville's Main Street for over (40) years until his retirement in 1973. Joe's business during that period created other business opportunities for some of his employees. He employed his sister Yvette (the 15th child of Henri and Rose Anna) as a beautician, and her husband Louis Vigue, a barber. Yvette went on to open her own beauty shop in her home, and continued in business into her mid nineties. Having outlived most of her clients, Yvette decided it was time to close her beauty shop. Her husband Louis went on to open Louie's Barber Shop in 1947 on Common Street off Main Street in Waterville. After WWII, Joe employed his younger brother Leo Paul, the 21st child of Henri and Rose Anna. After several years, Leo Paul went on to open two different barber shops. The first shop, Paul's Barber Shop was on Temple Street on the

side of Joe's Smoke Shop. Later, he moved his barbershop to upper Main Street, opposite the old Post Office. Among his customers was Senator Ed Muskie, a Waterville resident at that time. So, at one time there were three different barbershops owned by the Giguere family in downtown Waterville.

Then there was this young salesman, Nelson Sedgeley that called on Joe Giguere's Barber and Beauty Shop to sell him barber and beauty supplies. Nelson got to know the Giguere family and was introduced to Marion (Marie Ange), the 18th child of Henri and Rose Anna. Marion and Nelson were married in Waterville in 1934; Marion was the first child to break the Giguere tradition of only marrying into a French family. Marion, as one of the (4) remaining survivors of the original (22) children, has also survived her husband Nelson and two other husbands, Paul Cody and Donald Murphy. Marion was once asked the question, on the secret to her longevity at a family funeral in Canada. Her response was, "mariez vous souvent". Translated, marry often!

And still with us today at 98 years old is Cecile Giguere Bizier Landry, the 17th child of Henri and Rose Anna. Cecile with her spirited personality was employed by the Hathaway Shirt Factory during its boom years. Cecile rose through the ranks to the position of floor supervisor in charge of several women in the shirt manufacturing process.

Even more remarkable at 102 years old is Estelle Giguere Fortin, the 14th child of Henri and Rose Anna. Estelle worked as a seamstress for the former Waterville clothing stores, Emery Brown, Squires and Alvina & Delia. In 1957, Estelle started her own alteration business and was a very busy lady. A very interesting story about Estelle is that she was the child that was almost left behind at the train station in Canada, when they were about to move to Fairfield. As they were counting heads they noticed one child was missing. Estelle had fallen asleep while the others were boarding the train. Of course, they found her and she is still with us today! And with so many Giguere girls getting married, Henri and Rose Anna, decided that Estelle and her sister Bertha (11th child) have a double wedding, which took place in Waterville on July 3, 1928. This was good example of Franco American economics!

It is quite amazing that in August of 2009, with (5) generations of descendants from Henri and Rose Anna Giguere, they have been blessed with (423) grandchildren and great grandchildren. These grandchildren live all over the world and their achievements and contributions make the Giguere Family of Waterville, Maine, very proud of them. They have distinguished themselves in many ways, including education, communications, technology, architecture, and engineering, as well as in the legal and medical fields and as entrepreneurs. But, this is a story for another time.

The Giguere's Franco American heritage has taught them the value of hard work and commitment to purpose to make a better life for themselves and make this world a better place to live and work by helping others.