

Drouillards are Old Sea-Faring Family of Brittany



The Mayor's father and mother, the late Mr. Alexander Drouillard and his wife.



Are Still Faithful To Fine Traditions

Riverside Mayor Is Member of Ninth Generation Since Fathers Settled in Canada

THEY say that the sea gets into the blood, and once a lover of the sea, one always returns to it. This is certainly true of the Drouillard family. Born of old Breton stock, they have followed the ancient calling of fishing for generations, and while they have lived inland, they have lived up to the best traditions of the sea—strength, bravery and hardihood. East Windsor and Riverside number many of the family among their citizens, devoted, most of them, to the broad river that first invited the early progenitors of the family to its wooded shores.

The first of the name of which we have record, is John Drouillard of Marennes, Diocese of Xaintes, Brittany, France, who, we are told, married Jane Chevreau of the same place. Of their children, Simon, then called Argentecour, who was born at Marennes in 1668, came to Canada and married at Quebec, on the 25th of November, 1698, Margaret Ferret, born at Pointe aux Trembles, Quebec, on the 7th of March, 1681, daughter of Peter Ferret and Mary Lasson. Margaret Ferret was buried at Quebec in 1711. Simon Drouillard, dit Argentecour, married again at Lévis, to Ann Cadoret, and was buried at Detroit on the 21st of October, 1733.

Settled at Walpole

The earliest arrivals of the Drouillard family in Essex County showed them to have settled at Walpole Island. It is said that they received a grant of the island from the Indians, and this gift, written on bark in Indian characters, was a prized possession in the Drouillard family, up to the last generation, but was lost, through some misfortune—most likely through a fire—lost. Of the children of Simon Drouillard and his wife, Margaret Ferret, the branch which is now resident in Riverside and East Windsor, traces its descent from a son, John Drouillard, who was born at St. Francois, Island of Orleans, on the 15th of February, 1707, and married at Lachine in February, 1731, Elisabeth Baillot, daughter of Jean Baptiste Baillot, and Catherine Janson, dit La Pivre. This John Drouillard was buried at the church of the Hurons, Sandwich, May 4th, 1787.

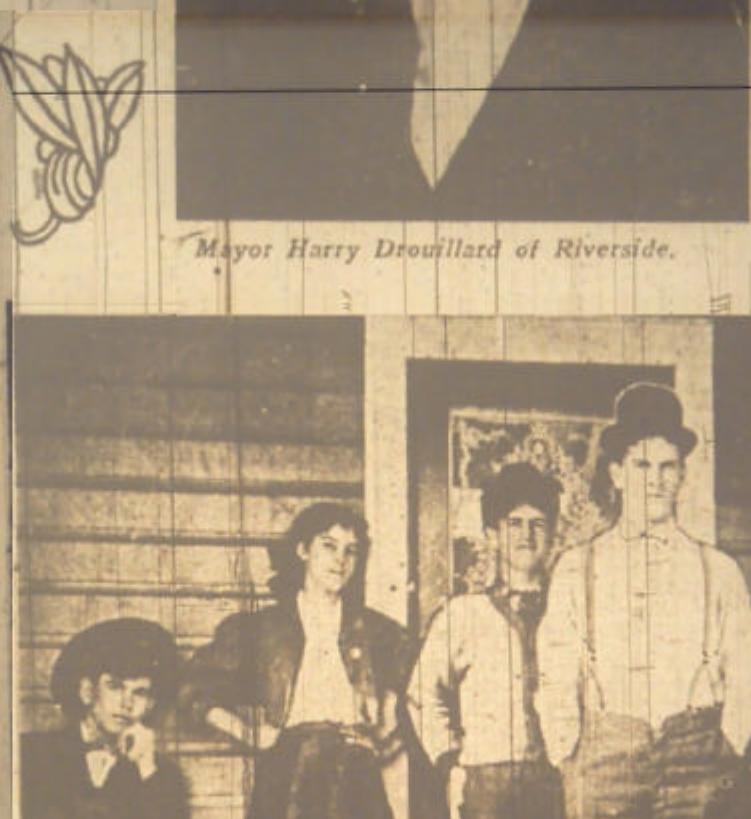
This son, Francois, born at the Huron Mission at Sandwich in 1736, married Mary Ann Villiers, dit St. Louis, daughter of Louis Villiers, dit St. Louis, and Mary Joseph Martin. Both bride and groom, it is said, resided at the south coast of Detroit, and obtained permission from the pastor of St. Anne's Church to be married at the church of the Hurons, "on consideration de la difficile presente du passage de la rivière."

And it was a passage "presenting great difficulty." Had this special permission not been given, the small boat containing the bride and groom might have been wrecked in crossing, and the story of this branch of the Drouillard family would never have been written.

The next in direct descent was Alexis Drouillard, who married Chocia Odeot, dit Maranette. His son Francois, who married Rosalie Gelineau, was in the sixth generation from the original progenitor of Marennes, and his grandson, Francois Xavier Drouillard, who married Eleanor Sulliere, daughter of Frances Sulliere of Sandwich and Rose Pare, was the seventh. The latter was the grandfather of the present mayor of Riverside, Mr. Harry Drouillard, who is in the ninth generation, and has grandchildren of his own. In fact, not only can this family count many generations in Canada, but the mayor's immediate family tree, including only the immediate descendants of his parents, Alexander Francois Drouillard and Ellen Pare, comprises almost 300 members—one of the very largest in Canada. Mayor Drouillard is himself the youngest of nineteen children; his sister in Mount Clemens, Mich., has 17; her daughter has 12; and her granddaughter has



The late Francois Xavier Drouillard, Grandfather of Mayor Harry Drouillard of Riverside.



Mayor Harry Drouillard of Riverside.



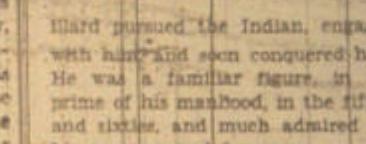
The Mayor at 16, with his cousins, Louise and Zoe Laforet.



The Mayor's eldest daughter, Marie, Mrs. John Martin of Riverside.



Richard (Dick) Hanson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Hanson and grandson of the Mayor, who was two years old this week.



Edmund Drouillard, great-grandson of the late Francois Drouillard, and cousin of the Mayor.



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Wilfred Drouillard, brother of the Mayor.

Even as an old man, he was a most commanding figure. In his high boots, riding breeches and familiar red woolen shirt, which all guides wore to distinguish them in the woods, which earned for him among his grandchildren the soubriquet of "Papa Rouge." They were very fond of sitting at the feet of "Papa Rouge," and listening to his stories of early days in Upper Canada, as he was a marvelous raconteur, and possessed of a won-

derful memory. Though a man of such hardihood and daring, he was devoted to his church, and was untiring in his attendance. With his splendid ability to speak the Indian language, he would represent the Indians in the annual celebration of the St. Jean Baptiste festival, dressing in full Indian costume, and responding in their language. His son, Francois, who also spoke Indian most fluently, will also be remembered in the same capacity, and was a familiar figure in the yearly celebrations. The latter also gave the land for Our Lady of the Lake Church, and was instrumental in building it.

Mr. Randolph Drouillard, son of

Francois, and grandson of Francois Xavier, inherits a great deal of his grandfather's spirit and his excellent memory. Though a man up in his seventies, he has not forgotten an incident of his early days, and can relate many an interesting tale of early days in the Border Cities.

Belle Isle was a familiar spot to him, while it still went by the name of "Hog Island." He used to spend a great deal of his childhood there with his father, hunting and fishing. When he was about nine years of age, he remembers, he spent about a month there. His father having been asked to watch the fish in his absence by one Charles Pitre, who had fishing rights there,

and whose wife having died, he had to take her down to Sandwich for burial.

At that time there was a bear on the island, who had become quite a pet of the fishermen. One morning when the boy lay still asleep, he saw his black dog beside him. The bear came around, and bearlike, was full of curiosity. The boy was badly frightened, but keeping brave on account of the nearness of his big dog, who felt it his duty to guard his little master. In his father's absence away with the boat, he quickly realized that the bear did not mean to do him any harm. Human beings were not always so harmless though, as a little later two rough men appeared, and if it had not been for the dog, might easily have molested him. But the dog promptly chased them away and then guided him through the bush right to the spot where his father was. The dog was a big Newfoundland and could easily tackle a man or two men and put them to flight. Dogs were not only pets in those days but proved often useful.

The Playful Bear

The bear which had frightened the little lad might have been called the nucleus of the present noo, as it was for many years the inter-

"Watch that pig," his father

said, "there is a snake there." They stopped and watched proceedings. The pig caught the snake and cut it in two. There were plenty of rattlesnakes in those days on Belle Isle, Mr. Drouillard says, but the pigs made short work of them. He remembered going with Mr. Raccoon home to dinner. He did not want to go, as he was shy and could not speak any English, but he went. While there he heard the phone ring. They were new then, and, in common with the phones of those days, the mouthpiece was in the wall. The man talked into it, and the boy thought that he must be crazy. He said nothing to his host, but afterward asked his father why that man talked into a hole in the wall. His father showed him the wire, and then he wanted to know if the wire were hollow.

Three Fishing Grounds

Not long before Mr. Drouillard was married, about 35 years ago, they still had the horse carts in Detroit. He remembers that where the Ambassador Bridge is now was the city limits of Detroit, the last was pushed. When he was 16, Mr. Drouillard started fishing on "Buttonwood Point" on the island for the Booth Fish Company. Off this point in their smallest seine, they would catch as many as \$3,000 herring in one day. There were three fishing places, Buttonwood Point, Middle, where the big dock is, and East, where the lighthouse is.

At these spots they used to catch from eight to ten thousand herring at a haul on the run. They fished there three years, but in the fourth year they did not get enough to pay the men. Since then there have been literally no herring. At that time there were no gill nets used, and hardly any pound nets. Only the seine nets were used. Nowadays, the use of gill nets in the lake, some of them two miles in length, blocks the fish from coming into the river.

Peches Island was originally owned by one of the Drouillards, but later passed into other hands.

Where the Drouillards settled near Lauzon Road used to be known as Drouillard's Point. Their property extended from the river right up to the railway track. Part of this was marsh land and in the spring and fall a irregular creek on which sailboats and barges could go, ran through their property. In the early days most of the visiting was done in boats. The marsh also contributed to the family prosperity, as a thriving business was done in Detroit in the making and sale of straw hats from the marsh grass. This was of course a home industry, as the hats were all made by hand.

Long-Lived People

The Drouillards are a long-lived race, the great-grandfather, Francois, living to the great age of 101. His wife, who was Rose Gelineau, died at the age of 99.

The mayor of Riverside, Mr. Harry Drouillard, is a son of Alexander Drouillard and a grandson of Francois Xavier. His father also lived to a good age, being almost 83. His first wife was Florence Hollie and his second wife, the mayor's mother, was Helen Pare. The latter died in 1918 at the age of 74. Her father was also long-lived, as he died at 98 years.

For 30 years the mayor's father and grandfather lived at the old home at Island View, where the town hall of Riverside now stands at the back of the original property. It is peculiarly fitting that Mr. Drouillard should occupy the position of chief magistrate there, on the spot where he was born and brought up. This is his eighth year to be elected, which is another proof of his well-known personal popularity. Before becoming mayor, he served for one year as councilman and one year as reeve, and has always been untiring in his work. It

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