

Jean Baptiste Perrault, St. Paul Church Founder, and Concomly's Daughter

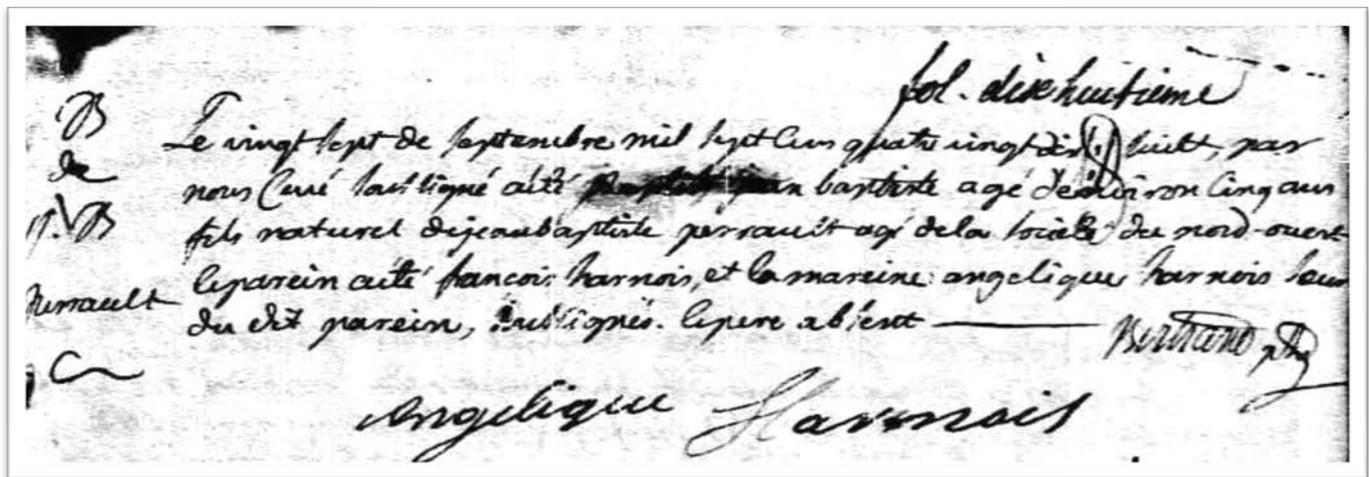
Introduction

Jean Baptiste (J. B.) Perrault was born about 1793 - 1795 in Quebec.¹ He died in late 1849² He had two daughters by a Chinook woman who was proved to be the daughter of Concomly, the Chinook chief. The daughters were Reinette Perrault (ca. 1820 – 1888) and Marie Anne Perrault (ca. 1823 – 1864). Reinette married John G. Larrison in 1843 in St. Paul. Marie Anne married John Baptiste DeGuire in 1840 in St. Paul.

In 1839, when the Catholic priests celebrated the first ceremonies at St. Paul, J. B. married Angele Tchelis (ca.1810 - ?). J. B. and Angele Tchelis had a daughter, Lucie (1844 – 1875). Lucie married John Gould. After J. B. died, Angele married Sylvain Bourjeau on 28 December 1857. She then disappeared from view.

Possible father for Jean Baptiste Perrault

Jean Baptiste Perrault's 1839 marriage entry to Angele Tchelis in the St. Paul Catholic Church Register said he was "of St. Antoine Rivière du Loup, District of Montreal." The only baptism in the Louiseville, St-Antoine-de-la-Riviere-du-loup church records is for Jean Baptiste Perrault, natural son of Jean Baptiste Perrault, an agent of the Northwest Company. The child, aged five, was baptized on 27 September 1798.³ The term "natural son" usually means the parents were not married. No mother is named in this record, which suggests she may have been Indian.



The godfather was Francois Harnais, and the godmother was Angelique Harnais his sister. The father absent. Jean Baptiste Perrault, the Northwest Company agent, had an impressive career with that company. He compiled his memoirs as "Narrative of the Travels and Adventures of a Merchant Voyageur in the Savage Territories of Northern America Leaving Montreal the 28th Day of May, 1783 to 1820."⁴ From that journal, the following items can be listed.

- The Jean Baptiste Perrault family was from Rivieres du Loup. That is where J. B. told the St. Paul priest he was from.
- Jean Baptiste Perrault had a sister named Reine; J. B. Perrault named his first daughter Reinette.
- Jean Baptiste Perrault taught school in the early 1800s. J. B. Perrault was literate and owned a Bible and a New Testament.
- Jean Baptiste Perrault worked as a master carpenter in 1815. J. B. Perrault worked as a carpenter.

Father of the Chinook woman by whom JB had daughters, Reinette Perrault, and Marie Anne Perrault.

An 1887 Clatsop County, Oregon, deed named Ellen Larison of Marion County as the daughter of Ann Shortess, deceased wife of Robert Shortess of Clatsop County.⁵ J. G. Larison was a witness to the deed. While John Larison's wife's name was Reine or Reinette, the similarity of the Larison names led to a search for Robert Shortess.

Robert Shortess of Clatsop County, Oregon, took out Donation Claim 3686 for 639.18 acres in Astoria. The patent was made to Robert Shortess and the heirs at law of his late wife, Ann Shortess, deceased.

In Robert Shortess's settlers affidavit, he described himself as a native-born citizen who arrived in Oregon on 26 November 1839. He went on to state that he married his wife on 5 July 1845 in Clatsop County, Oregon. Her children were Renette, who was married to John Larrison, and Mary Ann, who was married to John B. Deguire. The spelling is slightly off, but the pronunciation of his wife's children and husbands is the same as J. B. children and their husbands.

Now we have an English first name for the Chinook mother of Reinette and Mary Anne. She was Ann.

On 25 June 1850, George Gibbs, Assistant Collector of Customs at Astoria, wrote a letter to the Department of the Interior requesting that an Indian sub-agent be appointed for the lands at the mouth of the Columbia River. In the letter, he stated that Robert Shortess was the person he recommended. Shortess's wife was "the daughter of the late great chief of the Chinooks."⁶ The "late great chief of the Chinooks" was Chief Concomly (1765 – 1830). Information about Ann Shortess is found later in this narrative.

St. Paul Church founder. In the 1830s, eighteen French Prairie settlers (fifteen were former Hudson's Bay Company employees) felt the need to have their marriages blessed and their children baptized by Catholic priests. Because of their efforts, the St. Paul Catholic Church was established. J. B. was one of these men.

Fur Trade

J. B. joined the Northwest Company (NWC) from St. Francois, Quebec, and was stationed at Sault St Marie.⁷ In the spring of 1815, Jean Baptiste Perrault, his probable father, was working at St. Francois as a schoolteacher. J. B. signed on with the Northwest Company as a master carpenter to go to the Sault to repair damage from the war.⁸

J. B. is named in the NWC's 1815 and 1816 ledger books.⁹ In 1819, he crossed the Rockies in a group led by Angus Bethune and Peter Skene Ogden.¹⁰

In 1821, the NWC merged with the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), and Jean Baptiste went to work for that company as a carpenter at Fort George (Astoria).¹¹

Fort George (Astoria)



In 1824, the HBC headquarters were moved to the newly erected Fort Vancouver, and J. B. was stationed there. In 1829, J. B. was with Thomas McKay, John McLoughlin's stepson, and Alexander McLeod on a hunting expedition to the Umpqua in Southern Oregon where they were assigned to recover Jedidiah Smith's property that had been captured by Indians the preceding year. They retrieved most of the furs, some of the arms, and some of the horses. The expedition wintered near Mt. Shasta when their horses died due to the cold. There were

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no horses to transport the furs back to Vancouver in the spring. J. B., along with McKay and Depuy walked the 400 miles to Fort Vancouver to secure horses to be sent to the expedition party.¹²

On 27 June 1831, John McLoughlin, Fort Vancouver's Chief Factor, wrote a letter to Francis Herron, Chief Trader at Ft. Colville. He asked Herron to send supplies to Ft. Nez Perces (Walla Walla).

“J Bapt Perrault goes as a passenger in the Boat that is he is only obliged to Paddle and of which I request you will give notice to the Gentlemen on the other side when you send him across this fall.”¹³

French Prairie

J. B. retired to the Prairie in the early 1830s where he sold furs and grain to the HBC.¹⁴ John McLoughlin, HBC Chief Factor at Vancouver, kept retired employees who went to farm on French Prairie on the books as employees, but no service was expected. This provided a testing period. During that time, if the ex-employee caused trouble, he could be discharged and transported out of the country. McLoughlin gave the men seed grain, a two-wheeled cart, a plow, two cows, and two steers. The men could purchase farm implements at a discount.¹⁵

On 23 October 1833, John Work and his fur-hunting brigade passed through the Prairie on their expedition to California. He mentioned J. B. in his journal.

“Wednesday 23 Fair weather in the morning, but rain the most of the day afterwards, The river has risen to such a height that we could not cross it but with canoes or rafts, and being informed that there are several other streams ahead where we will find ourselves in the same predicament, we determined to change our route, and accordingly proceeded down the river to near its discharge into the Willamut, and borrowed a canoe from one of the Settlers **Peran**, and had the horses crossed in the evening, but it was too late to cross the baggage. This was a very unfavourable day for the sick as we were exposed to a good deal of heavy rain.”¹⁶

Work' mentioned “the sick.” Between 1830 and 1833, malaria ravaged the country. Quinine, the only cure for the disease, was available to people who were affiliated with the HBC. Others simply died.

Slavery was a part of life for Northwest Indians. Lt. William A Slacum of the US Navy reported in 1836,

“Slaves could be captured during war parties, traded, or sold. The price for a slave was eight to fifteen blankets. Slaves were expected to cut wood, hunt, fish, and do whatever else they were asked to do. Each man in a trapping party had two or three slaves to help hunt and take care of camp.¹⁷ The trappers working at Fort Vancouver had from two to five slaves.”¹⁸

“The chief factor at Vancouver says the slaves of the women with whom their workmen belong to men in their employ, although I have known cases to the contrary.”

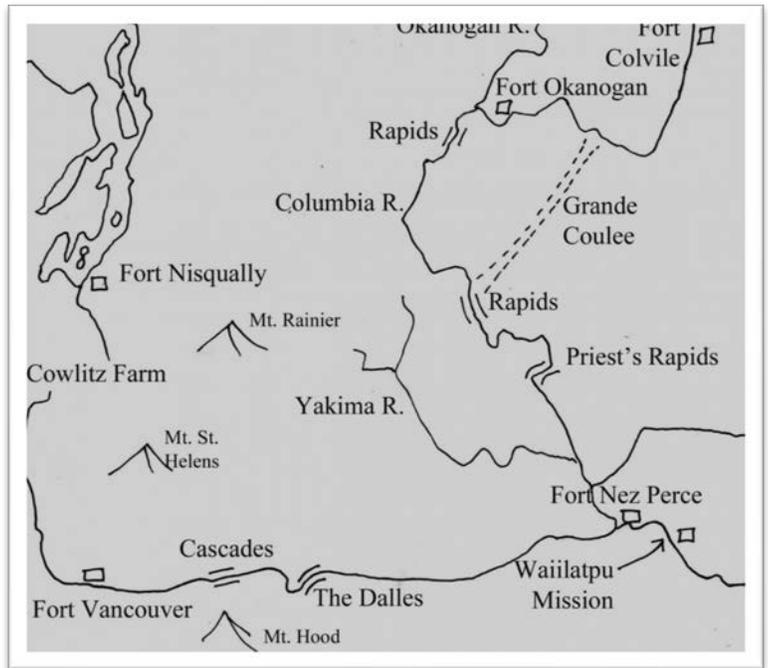
The settlers often built a separate house for their slaves, and the number of houses a settler owned was often a sign that the householder held slaves. When a slave died, he or she could be buried in the St. Paul Cemetery, and the burial record would read like the following entry.

“The 2 December, 1843, we priest undersigned have buried in the cemetery of this parish the body of Frederic Indian of the tribe of the Tchinouks, deceased at the house of Jean Baptiste Perrault, aged about 60 years, having been baptized at the house of Frederic Despard, present Jean Bte. Perrault and Amable Petit.”¹⁹

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In 1834, J. B. and his wife travelled from Fort Vancouver to Fort Nisqually to recover a woman slave who had apparently been taken by a "Princesse's husband."

Map showing HBC forts.²⁰



William Fraser Tolmie, in charge of Nisqually House, penned the following items in his daily journal.

Oct 1834

"27 Monday. This morning Plomondon and family made their preparation for leaving the place. The ploughers continued at their work. McDonald and Bourgeau were employed at the wagon. Louis still sick; This forenoon **J. B. Perrault and wife** arrived in search of a woman slave which I had taken from the Princesse's husband. They brought us favorable news from Head Quarters and say that the Indians had reported that the express from York had arrived on the 15th Instant. The Americans do not trade furs. The weather fair."

"28th Tuesday. Two more bushels of wheat put in the ground. Ploughing always on the go This morning Plomondon and family left this for Vancouver, as also **J. B. Perrault** with his wife and slave, by them I have written to Mr. Chief Factor Me Loughlin informing him of the state of our affairs. We have had a very stormy night and today the rain and gale continued accompanied by a little thunder."²¹

The identify of the "Princess's Husband" is not certain. Since his name was not given, he probably was an Indian. Prior items from the Nisqually journal provide this information about him.

May 1834

"30th Friday. No change in the employment of the men. The Princess' husband arrived and brought us Letters from Vancouver, enclosing others from London, all's well. The Brig Lama is on her way hither. Fair weather."

Sep 1834

"2 Tuesday. The same employment for the men. This morning At le-mish's sister died she has been unwell this some time back, and all the Indian Doctors did their best but without success. The articles received by them were, on her Death, returned to the relatives. The Princess's husband has gone to Vancouver, and by him I have written to the Gentlemen there. The old Chief Chickalitz arrived and traded 18 Beaver skins besides a few Otters. The weather fair and the nights cool. We are much troubled with mosquitoes."

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“19 Friday. Four strangers arrived from up Hoods Canal and have brought a few skins. The Princess' husband has committed an unbecoming action saying that those people above mentioned had stolen a slave for which the scamp took 7 Beaver skins and a Gun. I of course called him to account, and made him give back the skins. Fair weather.²² “

Chief Concomly (1765 – 1830) of the Chinook Tribe and Chief Si'ahl (Seattle) of the Duwamish Tribe both had daughters who were called princesses. Since the Nisqually journal implies a connection to Fort Vancouver, Chief Seattle's princess daughter isn't brought into the story. Chief Concomly's named princess daughters were

- Elvamox (Marianne) Her husband was Alexis Aubichon. Their first child was born in 1822. He was at Fort Vancouver from 1831 to 1836.²³
- Koale'xoa (Raven) She died in 1824.
- Ilchee (Princess of Wales) In 1813, she was married to Duncan McDougall. He left her in 1817 and returned to Canada. She married Chief Casenove/Kieseno. When Concomly died in 1830, Casenove became the Chinook head chief.²⁴ Ilchee was said to have “trafficked in female slaves for illicit purposes.”²⁵
- Ka-hat-lau (Princess Margaret) She married Louis Rondeau. In the early 1830s, he was stationed at Fort Vancouver.²⁶



Sketch of Chief Concomly²⁷

Even though Jean Baptiste lived on French Prairie from around 1833, he also worked part-time as a wheelwright at Fort Vancouver. His estate's inventory included numerous wheelwright tools, such as planes, saws, augers, squares, compasses, and spoke shaves.

Wheelwright tools²⁸



On 5 July 1834, the French Canadian settlers on the Prairie sent a letter to the Bishop of Juliopolis [at Red River, now Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada,] and asked for a priest.

Several months later, in the fall of 1834, Jason Lee and his fellow Methodist missionaries arrived on the prairie. Joseph Gervais welcomed them, and their first services were held in the Gervais home.

In the spring of 1836, the settlers sent a reminder letter to the bishop.

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“We have nothing to Right to you about the Country but that the farms are All in a very thriving state and produces fine Crops. We have sent theis few Lines to you hoping that it will not trouble you to much for Righting so quick to you but the Country is setteling slowly and oure Children are Learning very fast which make us very eager for youre assistance wich we hope by Gods helpe will be very sone oure prayers will be for his safe Arivele We have sent you a List of the families that Are at present in the settlement...”

J. B. was on this list as the father of two children.²⁹

The U.S. President charged Lt. William A. Slacum of the U.S. Navy “to obtain some specific and authentic information in regard to the inhabitants of the country in the neighborhood of the Oregon, or Columbia river.” Slacum arrived on the Columbia on 22 December 1836. His reports provide information about the area’s living situations.

Slacum described the land and concluded that the “Willhamette” was the finest grazing country in the world. In 1818, the Hudson Bay Company had one bull and two cows. In 1836, they had upwards of 1,000 head of neat cattle. Slacum felt that a large cargo of wheat could be obtained from the Willhamett settlers and sold in the Sandwich Islands [Hawaii], the Russian settlements at Norfolk Sound [Alaska], or in Peru.

Slacum created a census of who was farming, and Jean B. Perault was one of the farmers. According to Slacum, Jean B. started his farm in 1832.

Settler's name.	When begun	Acres en-closed	Acres cultivated	Crop of wheat, bushels	Horses	Hogs	Houses	Remarks
Jean Baptriste McRoy.....	1831	69	35	556	33	22	3	Good.
Andre Longtre	1835	45	24	400	3	33	2	Good.
Charles Plante	1835	60	60	800	12	14	2	Good.
Charles Rondeu	1836	24	24	200	9	10	1	Good.
Louis Fourier	1835	34	34	540	9	10	1	Good.
Joseph Gervais	1832	125	65	1,000	19	55	3 & 1	grist-mill Good.
Xavier Delarout	1834	36	36	350	11	35	2	Good.
Joseph Delor	1832	28	28	280	11	28	2	Good.
E. Arquette	1833	80	50	600	5	31	2	Good.
Jean B. Perault.	1832	80	60	500	4	20	3	Good.
Etteine Lucia	1832	70	45	740	21	45	4 & 1	grist-mill Good.
Pierre Billique	1833	50	45	700	9	28	2	Good.
*Frederick Depau	1833	40	35	500	8	39	2	Good.
Ewing Young	1835	29	29	240	79 & 2 mules	30	2 & 1	distillery Good.
†Lawrence Carmichael								
William Johnson	1834	45	25	300	2	14	2	Good.
‡Jas. A. O'Neil and Thos. J. Hubbard	1836	200	15	70	9	13	1 &	blacksmith's shop.
Wm. Canning, miller and millwright								
Solomon H. Smith								
Winslow Anderson								
Charles Roe, carpenter								
Elisha Ezekiel, wheelwright								
John Hord, carpenter								
Webley Hawkshurst, carpenter								
John Turner								
William Bailey								
Calvin Ebbets, stone mason								
John Rowling								
George Gay								

*The above thirteen are all Canadians, and have been in the employ of the Hudson Bay Company.
 †Works on shares with Young. ‡Besides the crop of wheat, each of the above five have a large quantity of barley, oats, peas, and potatoes, sufficient for their support. || £300 sterling in the hands of the Hudson Bay Company.

J. B. had three houses in good condition. He had enclosed 80 acres and cultivated 60 acres. He harvested 500 bushels of wheat. He owned four horses and 20 hogs.

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The former HBC employees provided the company with furs. William Slacum noted in 1836 that “Madam ‘**Perand**,’ wife of one of the Canadian settlers on the Willhamett, brought twenty to thirty five beaver skins” to sell. No other Willamette settler had a surname that sounded like Perrault, so this must have been J. B.’s wife. When J. B. died, his probate inventory included three beaver traps.

J. B. was one of thirty-six signers of the “Oregon Memorial of 1838.” Jason Lee penned the memorial requesting the Oregon Territory become part of the United States. Members of three population groups signed the petition. Seventeen of the signers were Americans living at Jason Lee’s mission. Ten signers were missionaries or mission employees. Nine French Canadians who were living near the mission signed. The French Canadian signers were Xavier Laderoute, Joseph Delord, Joseph Gervais, Etienne Lucier, Pierre Bellique, Jean B. Perrault, John B. Desportes, Andre Picard, and Joseph Deloze.³⁰

The attention this memorial raised in the Oregon Territory among people on the East Coast foreshadowed the beginning of the end of life as the French Canadians knew it. The panic of 1837 and the resulting depression created interest in the “valuable country west of the Rocky Mountains” that was “well supplied with timber or adapted to pasturage or agriculture.” It wouldn’t take long for the overland wagons to arrive with their American families who considered the French Canadians and their families uncivilized.³¹

The Priests arrive

In November 1838, Fathers Francois Norbert Blanchet and Modeste Demers arrived at the St. Paul wooden church that the settlers had built for them.

After visiting the local French-Canadian settlements, the first St. Paul mass was held on 6 January 1839. Subsequent masses were held until 3 February 1839 and then from 13 May to 10 June 1839. These sacraments were recorded in the Vancouver register.

--Replica of the first St Paul Church



Blessing of the bell

“The 22 December, day of Sunday, 1839, we priest undersigned, missionary of the Columbia, have blessed about one hour after noon, following the form prescribed in the processional of the diocese, a bell under the invocation of Mary, to serve for the use of the chapel of the Mission of St. Paul of the Wallamette; and having been mounted and erected upon the platform prepared for this purpose and resting on the doorway of the said chapel, it has been tolled during all the Te Deum, which has closed the said ceremony; in presence of the parishioners; **Jean Baptiste Perrault** was godfather and **Angele, his wife**, was godmother, who have not known how to sign. In faith of which we have signed.³²



The above cracked bell is in the St. Paul Mission Historical Society’s Murphy House. It may be the original bell.

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Jean Baptiste's marriage and baptism of his daughters at St. Paul.

"This 21 January, 1839, in view of the dispensation of 2 bans of marriage granted by us Vicar General, and the dispensation of the third between **Jean Baptiste Perrault**, of St. Antoine Rivière du Loup, District of Montreal, in Canada, and farmer of this place, on the one part, and **Angèle, Tichailis** by nation, on the other part, nor any impediment having been discovered, we priest undersigned, Missionary, have received their mutual consent of Marriage and have given them the nuptial benediction in presence of Jean Baptiste Dupati, and of Pierre Stanislas Jacquet, witnesses, before whom the said groom has recognized as his legitimate children by another woman, **Reinette aged 19 years**, and **Marie Anne aged 14 years**. The spouses as well as the witnesses have not known how to sign. F.N. Blanchet, priest³³

"This 28 January, 1840, we priest undersigned have baptized **Marie Anne aged 17 years**, legitimate daughter of **Jean Baptiste Perrault and of a Tchinouk woman**. Godfather Amable Arcouet, who as well as the father has not known how to sign."

[A repeat of the above baptism with slight additions]

"This 28 January, 1840, we priest undersigned have baptized Marie Anne aged 17 years, legitimate daughter of **Jean Baptiste Perrault**, farmer of this place, and of a Tchinouk woman. Godfather Amable Arcouet who as well as the father and the one baptized have not known how to sign."³⁴ [Note: Amable Arcouet's wife was Marquerite Chinook.]

"This 29 January, 1840, after the publication of 3 bans of marriage made at this place, son of Jean Baptiste Deguire and of Eulalia Bernier of Ste. Genevieve, State of St. Louis, on the one part; and **Marie Anne Perrault**, domiciled in this place, minor daughter of **Jean Baptiste Perrault farmer and of . . . Tchinouk** by nation on the other part, nor any impediment being discovered, and in view of the consent of the father of the girl, and inquiries made to certify the liberty of the young man, we priest undersigned missionary of the Columbia, have received their mutual consent of marriage and have given them the nuptial benediction in presence of Amable Arcouet, of Joseph Despard and of Jean Baptiste Mollens, witnesses, who as well as the spouses and the father of the bride present have not known how to sign."³⁵ [Note Joseph Despard's wife was Lisette Chinook.]

Additional missionaries were recruited by the Methodist Mission. One of these was Rev. W. W. Kone who was scheduled to build a mission in Clatsop territory in the fall of 1840. His canoe, filled with household goods, clothing and personal items, overturned on the Willamette River between the Methodist Mission and Champoeg. J. B. and his family were accused to salvaging these items and not returning them to Rev. Kone. When questioned, J. B. denied any knowledge of this, but his wife and daughter, Reine Perrault, turned over dresses, linen, and tools.

The War of 1812 affected the Oregon Territory. As part of the 1818 Treaty of Ghent, Britain and the United States were granted joint occupancy of the Oregon Territory.³⁶ Citizens of both countries could occupy the territory and conduct business. They could not, however, create a formal government.

With no established government in the territory, it was uncertain if J. B. should be tried by Jason Lee or Rev. F. N. Blanchet. J. B. was tried by both the French-Canadian settlers and the Methodist Mission settlers. He apologized to the Catholic congregation and received "discipline on the part of his compatriots." He apologized to the Methodist Mission and paid a fine (25 piastres to the Kones, 25 piastres for the cost of a jail, and 32 piastres for the cost of his jury trial).³⁷

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In 1841, Eugene Duflot De Mofras, a French naturalist and explorer, visited the Prairie and listed the "Principal French-Canadian Settlers on the Willamette." His chart is listed by year of settlement.³⁸

J. B. still had three houses, suggesting he had additional people, perhaps slaves, living with him.

Name	When Settled	Hectares Enclose ^d	Hectares Cultiva	Crop of Wheat Hectolit	Horses	Houses	Mills
Mich. Laframboise	1831	40	20	170	200	2	1
*J. B. Desportes.....	1831	35	20	170	100	3	1
*Joseph Gervais	1832	60	30	225	50	3	1
*J. B. Perrault.....	1832	40	30	225	10	3	
*Jh. Delor	1832	15	15	100	15	2	
*Etienne Luciat	1832	35	30	230	35	4	1
Xavier Lacoste	1832	20	12	95	14	1	
*P. Billique	1833	30	25	195	20	2	
*Jh. Deloze	1833	30	20	175	14	2	
J. Arquette	1833	40	25	185	15	2	
*Xavier Dudevaut	1834	17	17	160	18	2	
Andre Longpre	1835	22	12	90	10	2	
Louis Fourrier	1835	17	16	115	20	1	
Charles Plants	1835	30	30	225	40	2	
Charles Rondeau	1836	12	12	90	15	1	
*Andre Picord	1837	14	12	90	10	1	
George Gay	1838	15	12	90	12	1	
Louis Fortia	1838	12	10	80	12	1	1
Charles Roy	1838	12	10	85	10	1	
Stanislas Jacquet	1838	20	20	180	14	1	
Abbe Blanchet	1839	1000†			1	1	

One hectare is equivalent to 2.47 acres. One hectoliter is equivalent to 2.3 bushels.

Marie Anne (Perrault) Deguire and Reinette (Perrault) Larison had children who were baptized at the St. Paul Church.

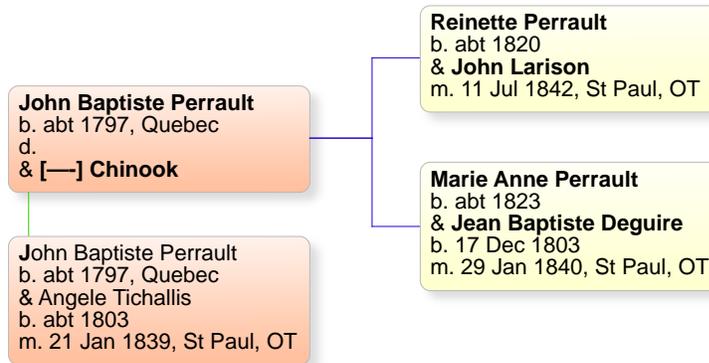
"This 25 December, 1841, we priest undersigned have baptized Jean Baptiste born 8 days ago of the legitimate marriage of Jean Baptiste Deguire, farmer of this place, and of **Marie Anne Perreau**. Godfather Joseph Despard, godmother **Reinette Perrault** who have not known how to sign."³⁹

"This 11 July, 1842, in view of the dispensation of two bans of marriage granted by us Vicar General undersigned, between **John Larison**, domiciled and farmer of this place, legitimate son of John Larison and Nancy Galaspa, domiciled in the state of Ohio, United States, on one part, and **Reinette Perrault**, domiciled in this place, legitimate daughter of **Jean Baptiste Perrault, farmer of this place, and of . . . Tchinouk**, on the other part; nor any impediment being discovered, with the consent of the father of the bride, and after having assured ourselves by the affidavits under oath of the liberty of the said John Larison, and after having previously baptized him, we missionary priest undersigned have received their mutual consent of marriage and have given them the nuptial benediction in presence of **Jean Baptiste Perrault, father**, and of Andre Chalifou, friends of the bride, and of Robert Newell and Richard McKarty, friends of the groom and of several other friends who have signed with us. The bride has not known how to sign."⁴⁰

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The Perrault family in 1842.



In September 1842, Dr. Elijah White, the first Oregon Indian Agent, arrived in the Willamette Valley with a wagon train of settlers. This was a return home for him. In 1836, the Methodist Church appointed him as a physician to the Willamette Valley mission. In 1841, due to differences with Jason Lee over mission policies, White resigned and returned to the States.

In 1843, White made a census of settlers in the Oregon Territory. He intended to show that it was possible to farm the Territory and that the British had a foothold with their retired HBC employees. The Canadians would be in the majority unless American settlers moved in. The Territory was under the “joint occupancy” agreement. Still, an overwhelming number of British settlers could tip the balance of power, and Oregon could become an English possession. His census included the numbers of men, women, and children, a summary of their crops, and the number of farm animals.

The Perrault family consisted of one male over 18 and one female over 18.

There were no children in the household.

The Perraults had 90 acres under improvement.

They harvested 400 bushels of wheat and 150 bushels of coarse grain. They had 40 horses, 20 neat stock, and 13 sheep.⁴¹

Second Sheet

Names of Heads of Families	No of Males over 18	No of Females over 18	No of Children of both sexes	Acres under improvement	Wheat in 1842	Amount of coarse grain	No of Horses	No of neat stock	No of Sheep	No of Hogs
<i>Ann (over from first sheet)</i>	139	87	204	2866	16078	9800	13243	1966 1/2	32	1037
<i>Felix Hathaway</i>	1	1	0				2	3 1/2		
<i>William Bailey</i>	1	1		Absent			0	14		
<i>Charles Rowe</i>	2	2	1	85	300	60	9	9		10
<i>Andrew Longstone</i>	1	1	3	180	300	180	25	15		15
<i>A Charles</i>	1	1		60	250	125	12	2		15
<i>John B Perrault</i>	1	1		90	400	150	40	20	13	30
<i>Michael La From</i>	1	1	3	70	150	80	21	14 1/2		8
<i>J Johnson</i>	1				150	80	3	5		7
<i>Catholic Church Farm</i>	3		4	150	400	380	24	20	4	20

The amount of harvest and the care of the animals is more than what two people could have accomplished. Slaves and other workers were not included in White's census, but clearly, the Perraults had assistance on the farm.

The two Perrault daughters were enumerated in their households. (Remember, the daughters' mother was the unnamed Chinook woman.)

Jean Baptiste Perrault, St. Paul Church Founder, and the Indian Chief's Daughter

by Connie Lenzen

The Marie and Jean Baptiste DeGuire family comprised one male over 18, one female over 18, and one child.

Names of Heads of Families	No of Males over 18	No of Females over 18	No of Children of both sexes	Acres under improvement	Amount of Wheat in 1842	Amount of Corn Grain	No of Horses	No of Cattle	No of Sheep	No of Hogs
Amount brot up	175	115	272	4557	23828	12785	2131	3046	39	1382
Baptiste De gear	1	1	1	25	200	52	4	3		5

The Reinette and John Larrison family comprised one male over 18, one female over 18, and one child.

Names of heads of Families	Males over 18 yrs	Females over 18 yrs	Children of both sexes	Acres under improvement	Amount of Wheat in 1842	Amount of Corn Grain	No of Horses	No of Cattle	No of Sheep	No of Hogs
Amount brot up	208	141	342	5739	29548	15497	2423	3236	39	1603
John Larison	1	1	1				3	12		5

A new baby was born to the Larison family

“The 12 March, 1843, we priest undersigned have baptized Marie Anne born 1 month ago of the marriage of John Larison farmer and of Reinette of this parish. Godfather Etienne Lucier, godmother Nancy Lonetain, who have not known how to sign.”⁴²

Provisional Government

In 1843, wagons filled with resettlers arrived in the Oregon Territory. William E Hill’s trail statistics estimate 125 people arrived in Oregon in 1842, and 875 people arrived in Oregon in 1843.⁴³

These newcomers outnumbered the French Canadians, and foreshadowed changes that would affect the French Prairie, the French Canadians and their families in French Prairie.

On 2 May 1843, the settlers took a vote was taken at Champoeg to decide if a Provisional Government should be established as a preliminary step for aligning with the United States. By a 52 to 50 vote, the Provisional Government won.⁴⁴ J. B. cast one of the 50 opposition votes.

Taxation was an issue at the meeting, and a resolution was adopted that there would be no taxes. Rather, there would be a voluntary subscription. Unfortunately, that subscription did not bring in enough money to pay for running the government. In 1844, a voluntary tax act was passed by the legislature. There was a “catch” to the voluntary part. If a person did not pay the tax, he would not be allowed to vote or to defend his rights in court. The rights included land ownership and debts.⁴⁵

John Batiste Pero was taxed on horses valued at \$355, cattle valued at \$630, and hogs valued at \$24.00.⁴⁶

Jean Baptiste Perrault, St. Paul Church Founder, and the Indian Chief's Daughter

by Connie Lenzen

Tax Book, 1844 Names	Town Lots	Pleasure Carriages	Mills	Clocks	Watches	Horses	Mules	Cattle	Hogs	Merchandise	Total Valuation	Poll Tax Amount of tax at the rate of 1/2 of 1 per cent
Nailor, [Naylor] Thomas						100	300				400	1.00
Obishaw, Alexander [Aubichon, Alexis].....						270		1800	155		2225	3.23x
Obishaw, [Aubichon] Babtiste						200		200	180		580	1.23x
Oncal, [O'Neil] James				12		340		2400	120		2872	4.93x
Oneil, [O'Neil] Bennett												
Oregon Milling Co.			5950								5950	7.94
Olinger, Abraham						35		200	5		240	.80
Osborn, N[ell]						20					26	.53x
Otey, Morris	300					130					430	1.04x
Ough, Richd						120		200	60		380	.98x
Osaw, [Osant] Louis						300		300	100		[700]	
Portia, [Portier] John						75					75	.59
Pero, John Batische						355		630	24		1009	1.76x

John Larrison, Reinette Perrault's husband, was on the tax list. He was taxed on \$120 worth of horses, \$180 worth of cattle, and \$100 worth of hogs.⁴⁷

Tax Book, 1844 Names	Town Lots	Pleasure Carriages	Mills	Clocks	Watches	Horses	Mules	Cattle	Hogs	Merchandise	Total Valuation	Poll Tax Amount of tax at the rate of 1/2 of 1 per cent
Lee, Henry												
Larock, [Laroque] Joseph						300		360	95		755	1.44x
McClane, J. B.						75					75	.59x
Lesly, [Leslie] David					30	150		360	24		564	1.20x
Luny, [Looney] Jesse						200		1110	12		1322	2.15
Lior, Moses [Lore, Moysse]						220		160	60		440	1.05x
Lafontaye, [Lafontaine] Charles						150		150	10		310	.89x
Larock, Pier [Laroque, Pierre]						150			24		174	.72x
Larock, [Laroque] Louis						100			18		118	.65
Lacourse, Pier[re]						400		400	100		900	1.63x
Lapratt[e], Alexe						140		80	36		256	.82x
Lishopel, Andrew [Lachapelle, Andre].....						320		240	100		660	1.32x
Laruze, Minard						100		100			200	.75
Labomdarde												
La[y]son, A[a]ron						25		90			115	.65
Lar[r]ison, John						120		180	100		400	1.00x

A new addition to the Perrault family – as recorded in the St. Paul Church register.

“This 4 August, 1844, we priest undersigned have baptized **Lucie** born 3 days ago of the legitimate marriage [of] **Jean Baptiste Perrault farmer, and of Angele Tchinoik, of this place.** Godfather Francois Bernier, godmother Genevieve Belique. The father alone has known how to sign.”⁴⁸

The provisional government authorized a census to be taken after the first Monday in March 1845. Jean Bt. Perreault was enumerated in Champoeg County with the following members of his household.⁴⁹ Note: the census enumerated white men and their immediate family members.

- 1 female under 12 years
- 1 female aged 18 and under 45
- 1 male over 45 years

The John Larrison household was enumerated in Yamhill County.⁵⁰

- 1 male under age 12
- 1 female aged 18 and under 45
- 1 female aged 18 and under 45

The Jean Bt. DeGuire household was also enumerated in Yamhill County.⁵¹

- 1 female under age 12

Jean Baptiste Perrault, St. Paul Church Founder, and the Indian Chief's Daughter

by Connie Lenzen

- 1 male between the age of 18 and 45
- 1 female between the age of 18 and 45

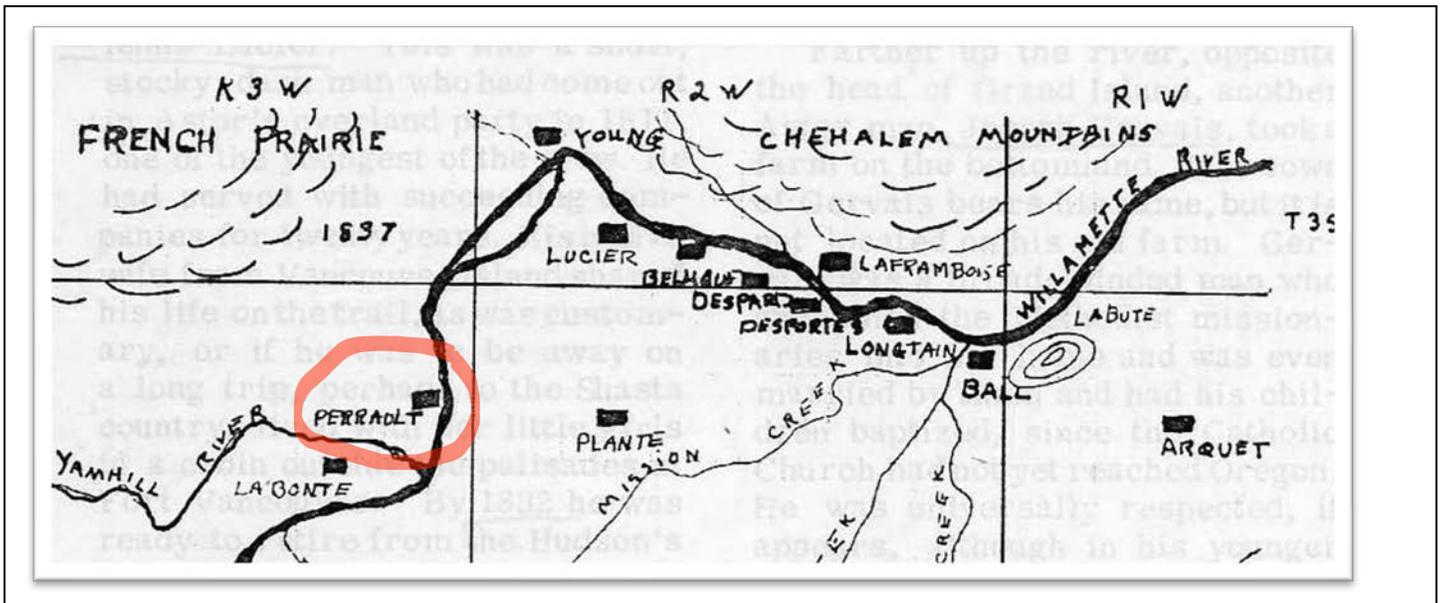
J. B.'s name appears in the St. Paul Church register when two Indians who were living at his house died and were buried in the St. Paul Cemetery. In 1845, Jean Baptiste again signed his name.

“The 2 December, 1843, we priest undersigned have buried in the cemetery of this parish the body of Frederic Indian of the tribe of the Tchinouks, deceased at the **house of Jean Baptiste Perrault**, aged about 60 years, having been baptized at the house of Frederic Despard, present **Jean Bte. Perrault**.”⁵²

“The 28 May, 1845, we the undersigned priest have baptized at the **house of Jean Baptiste Perrault** an Indian girl aged about 20 years in danger of death and have given her the name of Marie Anne. Godfather **Jean Baptiste Perrault**, who has signed with us.”⁵³

Oregon's provisional government permitted inhabitants to stake out claims and survey them by the metes and bounds method. A legislative committee created a constitution that included rules for the land claims. Any male could claim 640 acres, and within six months of recording their claim, they were to build a home.⁵⁴ Jean Baptiste did not file a claim, but he was named as a neighbor in the claims of Louis Monique, Etenne Lucier, F. X. Liard, Paul Guilbeau, and Andre Samatar.⁵⁵ He was on the Willamette River, south of Louis Monique, west of Etienne Lucier, between F. X. Liard and Lucier, between Paul Guilbeau and Blanchet, Accotti and Company, and near Andre Samatar.

Harriet Munnick created the following map showing the location of the French Prairie settlers as of 1837. She placed the Perrault home on the Yamhill side of the Willamette River where the Yamhill River drained into the Willamette.

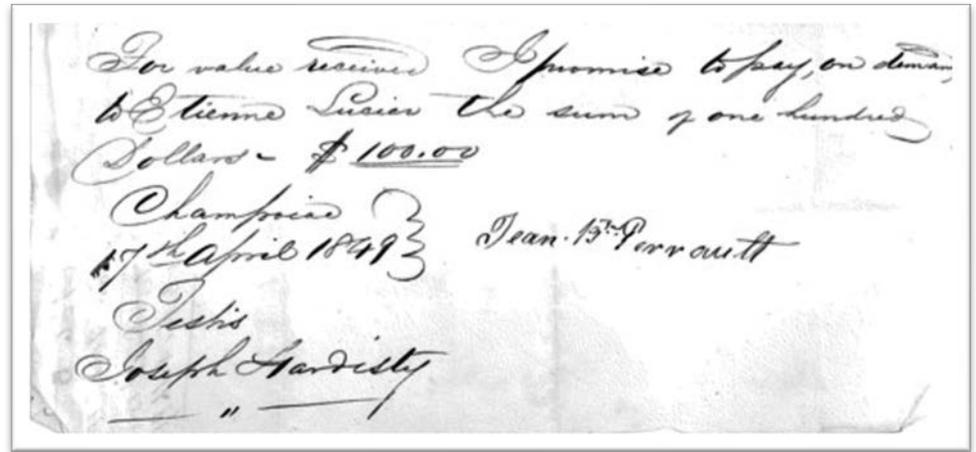


Jean Baptiste Perrault, St. Paul Church Founder, and the Indian Chief's Daughter
by Connie Lenzen

Death

There is no burial record for J. B. in the St. Paul or the St. Louis Church registers. He died before 1 September 1849 when his son-in-law, John Baptiste Deguire, submitted his estate for probate in Marion County,

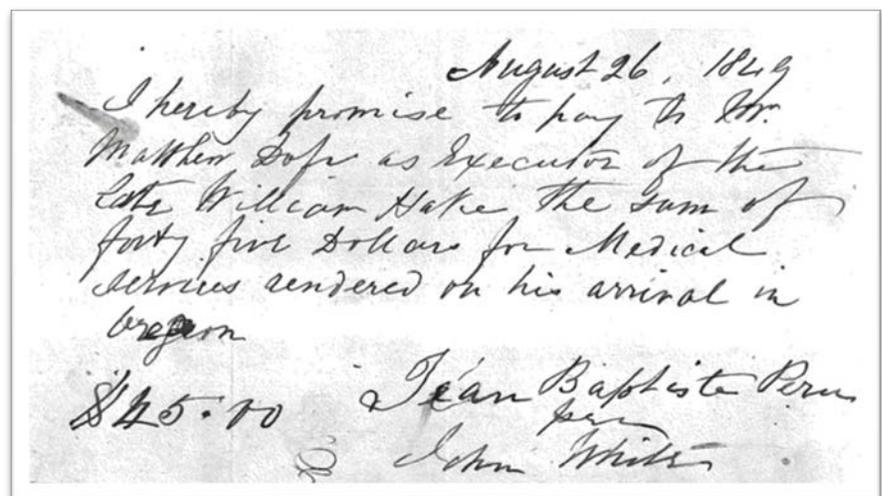
He was alive in Champoeg on 17 April 1849 when he signed a promissory note to pay \$100 to Etienne Lucier. His probate file stated he was "of Marion County, Oregon."⁵⁶



For value received I promise to pay, on demand,
to Etienne Lucier the sum of one hundred
Dollars - \$100.00
Champoeg }
17th April 1849 } Jean B^t Perrault
Testis
Joseph Garristy
— " —

On 26 August 1849, a note was made "to pay to Mr. Matthew Dofa Executor of the late William Hake the sum of forty five dollars for Medical services rendered on his arrival in Oregon." John White signed for Jean Baptiste Perro.⁵⁷

Nothing in Jean Baptiste Perrault's probate file shows this debt was paid.



August 26, 1849
I hereby promise to pay to Mr.
Matthew Dofa as executor of the
late William Hake the sum of
forty five dollars for Medical
services rendered on his arrival in
Oregon
\$45.00 Jean Baptiste Perro
John White

Matthew Dauphin and Dr. William Hake arrived in the West in 1838. In 1845, they were in the Yuba River area of the California gold fields, and Dauphin was working for Dr. Hake.⁵⁸ Dr. William Hake made a will on 22 August 1849. John White, a San Francisco Notary Public was one of the witnesses. The will was admitted to probate in Marion County, Oregon, on 9 July 1850 with Matthew Doffa/Dauphin as the administrator. The administrator collected debts in gold dust from five people. "Bateas Deguir" was one of these people, and he paid \$45.00 in gold dust.⁵⁹ This is likely the \$45.00 debt for medical expenses.

The presence of this note suggests J. B. could have been in California when he died. Many French Prairie settlers temporarily left home to seek their fortune in the California gold fields. The absence of a burial record from the St. Paul or the St. Louis church records increases this possibility to this theory.

Jean Baptiste Perrault, St. Paul Church Founder, and the Indian Chief's Daughter

by Connie Lenzen

The inventory of Jean Baptiste's personal property shows a number of items a carpenter and wheel wright would use.

1850				
February 18	1 Set of Saw mill irons	300.00	1 pair of long match Planes	2.00
	1 Turning lathe	100.00	2 Planes	4.00
	1 Cooking Stove	35.00	2 ditto	2.00
	1 Cross-cut saw	8.00	1 Lash plane	1.50
	1 do do	5.00	1 Rabbit Plane	4.00
	1 Set of Plough Irons	12.00	4 Moulding planes	14.00
	1 do do	8.00	9 do - do (Small)	9.00
	1 Brass & Bits	5.00	3 gauge Augers	1.00
	9 Mill-Saw files	9.00	2 do do	.50
	11 chisels	3.00	4 do do	4.00
	4 do -	2.00	1 Grafting knife	1.00
	Nails	1.00	1 Drawing knife	1.00
	1 Spoke Shaver	3.00	1 Pair of long gouge planes	7.00
	Very small tools	3.00	1 Dressing plane	2.00
	3 Pocket Knives	2.00	1 Common Square	1.00
	1 Watch	10.00	1 Iron Square	3.20
	1 Step Saw	1.00	1 Pickaxe	1.00
	1 Pocket Compass	1.00	1 Foot adze	1.00
	1 Thrush	.50	old plane Bits	2.00
	2 Lamps	3.00	1 hand Saw & Saw Set	1.50
	1 French axe	1.00	1 Compass	1.50

The personal items were sold at auction in March 1850. This segment of the sale items shows that Etienne Lucier purchased a Bible for \$2.00. John Larrison purchased a New Testament for 75 cents.

Jean Baptiste Perrault, St. Paul Church Founder, and the Indian Chief's Daughter

by Connie Lenzen

2 Pythes	Duypard.	3. 82 1/2	1 P. Molester in Parute	Ladivoute	5. 25
2 Iron Rods	Weston	— 50	2 Shirts	Hood.	4. 50
2 Garden hoes	Botane	7. 25	1 Capot	Arcont	1. 00
3 Beaver Traps.	Bayerin	6. 25	1 Feet	Lonetain	1. 75
3 do	Bellay.	6. 75	Small Books.	Larrou	— 25
2 Iron Dogs.	Bernier	3. 25	1 Bible	Lupier	2. 00
Iron Draw	B. Deguire	50	1 New Testament	Larrou	— 75
4 Cart Saddles.	Lupier	4 00	1 Trunk	Hunt	3. 00

Jean Baptiste's land claim was split between his two sons-in-law. A \$50.00 payment was made "for building a log cabing," perhaps for the widow.

The Widow

When the 1850 Marion County, Oregon, Territorial Census was enumerated on 3 February 1851, "Achile" Perault, age 40, lived next to the Baptiste Deguire household. She had real estate valued at \$3,000.⁶⁰

22	Dwelling	Family N	Name	Age	Sex	Race	Real Estat	Birthplace	Married
17	452	457	Baptiste Deguire	46	Mr		3000	Moey	
18			Maryann	25	W			O.S.	
19			P. Baptiste	9	Mr			"	
20			Drau Gos-Louis	71	Mr	Sabourin		"	
21			Alexis Vilrais	67	Mr			Moey	
22			Vasiph Silvestre	19	Mr	Sadour		La	
23	453	453	Achile Perault	40	W		3000	O.S.	

The next dwelling was the boarding school run by the Sisters of the Notre Dame de Namur. Luce Perault, age 7, was included in the school household as a student. The charges in Jean Baptiste's probate included \$75.00 for boarding his daughter for a year.

Jean Baptiste Perrault, St. Paul Church Founder, and the Indian Chief's Daughter

by Connie Lenzen

In January 1851, Robert Shortess, Indian sub-agent in Astoria, took a census of the Chinook tribe of Indians. There was a "Widow Perow" living in the Willamette Valley. There were two Indians living in her household.⁶¹ This is likely Angele, the widow Perrault, and her daughter, Lucie.

Chinook women, married to whites.	Location	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Mrs Louisa	Wahlamet valley										3
Obrshaw	"										4
widow Perow	"										2
Charles Jon	"										3
Frederick	"										6
Kipland	Cape Disappointment										2
Scarboro	"										4
Hubbard	Cheshatem										1
Bilecq	Wahlamet										6
Shortess	Astoria										6
widow Lattie	"	1	1			3		2			7
Child of Mrs Allen	Chinook							1			1
Wm L. A. McC Kay	Oregon city & Milton		3								2

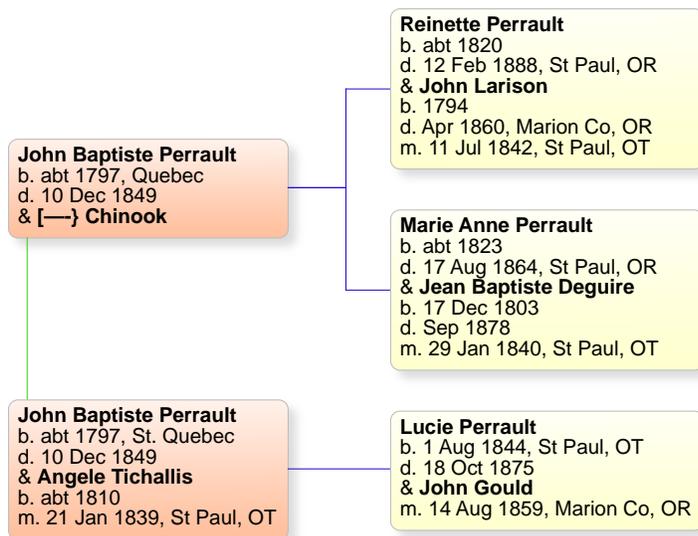
Note that Shortess enumerated a Mrs. Shortess living in Astoria. There were six Indians in her household and two slaves.

Widow Perault married Sylvain Bourgeau on 28 December 1857 at the St. Paul Church.

"The 28 December, 1857, after the publication of 2 banns of marriage (the other having been dispensed) between Sylvain Bourgeau, widower, son of Joseph Bourgeau and of Angelique Henri of Canada, on the one part, and **Angele Perault, widow of Baptiste Perault**, on the other part, nor having discovered any impediment, we undersigned have received their mutual consent to marriage and have given them the nuptial benediction in the presence of Baptiste Ducharme and Amable Petit, witnesses."⁶²

That was the last account of Angele. She was not included in Sylvain's 1860 Marion County, Oregon, census

The chart to the right shows Jean Baptiste Perrault and his children.



Jean Baptiste Perrault, St. Paul Church Founder, and the Indian Chief's Daughter

by Connie Lenzen

Robert Shortess

Robert Shortess of Clatsop County, Oregon, took out Donation Claim 3686 for 639.18 acres in Astoria. The patent was made to Robert Shortess and the heirs at law of his late wife Ann Shortess, deceased. From the 1851 Chinook Indian census cited above, a Mrs. Shortess was living in Astoria. Since only one Shortess was living in Astoria, this was presumably Ann Shortess, the wife of Robert Shortess, and she was a Chinook Indian.

In Robert Shortess's settlers' affidavit, he described himself as a native born citizen who arrived in Oregon on 26 November 1839.⁶³

He went on to state that he married his wife on 5 July 1845 in Clatsop County, Oregon. Her children were Renette, who was married to John Larrison, and Mary Ann, who was married to John B. Deguire. The spelling is slightly off, but the pronunciation of his wife's children and husbands is the same as Jean Baptiste Perrault's children and their husbands.

and that he was born in *Wumboldt* county *Tennessee* in the year *1799*; that he has personally resided upon and cultivated that part of the public land in Oregon, particularly described in the annexed notification to the Surveyor General of Oregon continuously, from the *1st* day of *September* 1845 to the *21st* day of *September* 1853. And he further says that he ^{was} intermarried with *Ann Shortess* his wife; and that he was legally married to her on the *fifth* day of *July* 1845, in *Clatsop* county in *Oregon* and that she died on the *6th* day of *May* 1853 leaving three daughters, *Renette* intermarried with *John Larrison* and *Mary Ann* intermarried with *John B. Deguire* and *Susan Shortess* the daughter of this deponent, an infant

Subscribed and sworn to before me, this *21* day of *Sept.* 1853 } in her seventh year
 in *Astoria* *Cyrus Olney* *Robert Shortess*
Associate Justice of Oregon

Robert Shortess was an early Oregon "mover and shaker."⁶⁴ He arrived in Oregon in 1839 and lived near the Methodist Mission for a number of years. In 1842, he was single. He had 40 acres under improvement and had harvested 650 bushels of wheat and 100 bushels of coarse wheat. He had 11 horses, 27 neat stock, and 3 hogs.⁶⁵

first sheet										
names of heads of families	No. of males over 18 years old	No. of females over 18 years old	No. of children of both sexes	acres under improve ^{ment}	Amth of wheat in 1842 Bush.	Amth of Coarse grain in 1842 Bush.	No. of Horses	Neat Stock	Sheep	Hogs
<i>Robt. Shortess</i>	<i>1</i>			<i>40</i>	<i>650</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>27</i>		<i>3</i>

Jean Baptiste Perrault, St. Paul Church Founder, and the Indian Chief's Daughter

by Connie Lenzen

He served on numerous Provisional committees while living on French Prairie. He moved to Astoria and was listed in the 1844 Clatsop County tax book.⁶⁶

CLATSOP DISTRICT												24
[Valuations in total column; units in other columns]												
Tax Book, 1844 Names	Town Lots	Pleasure Carriages	Mills	Clocks	Watches	Horses	Mules	Cattle	Hogs	Merchandise	Total Valuation	Poll Tax amount of tax at the rate of % of 1 per cent
Solomon H. Smith	0	1	0	1	0	13	0	25	15	0	724.50	will pay
Calvin Tibbets	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	37	8	0	724.50	will pay
Wm. T. Perry	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	10	4	0	197.50	will not pay
Edward Williams	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.50	will pay
Elbridg[e] Trask	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	5	0	95.50	will not pay
H. B. Hall	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	75.50	will pay
Robert Shortess	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	22	0	0	360.50	will not pay
Lewis Taylor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	1	0	163.50	will not pay
Thomas Owens	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	1	0	92.50	will not pay
J. M. Shiveley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.50	will pay
James Birnie	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	40.50	Dont now
Geo. Summers	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	80.00	will not pay
J. L. Parrish	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	40	13	0	884.50	will pay
Daniel McKesick	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.50	will not pay
Mr. Hunt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.50	Dont now
Mr. Wood Wallamet	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.50	Dont now
Wm. Hobson	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	53.50	will not pay
Yattan, Joseph												
Zacrey, [Zachary] Ubiar												
	26370	485	18170	520	3671	47562	1975	101280	9279	5200	2145121	
[Total Clatsop district.....]											\$ 3,492]	
[Total all valuations.....]											\$218,004]	
[Taxes due, including 50 cents poll tax.....]											\$ 442.07]	
[Taxes due, including 50 cents poll tax, Clatsop district.....]											13.86]	
[Total taxes due.....]											\$ 455.93]	

[Total taxes marked x, apparently collected, \$304.34 plus unknown collections from Clatsop district.]
 [Bracketed figures inserted by editor; letter x in original roll evidently indicates sums paid.]

LESLIE M. SCOTT

The Shortess family was enumerated in the 1850 Clatsop County census.⁶⁷ Ann was an Indian. Ann and Robert's daughter, Susan Shortess, was born about 1846.

SCHEDULE I.—Free Inhabitants in _____ in the County of Clatsop State _____

of Clatsop enumerated by me, on the 21st day of February 1850. Samuel Wallace Ass't Marshal.

Dwelling houses and order of valuation	Parcels numbered in the order of valuation	The Name of every Person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1850, was in this family.	DESCRIPTION.			Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each Male Person over 15 years of age.	Value of Real Estate owned.	Place or Distr. Naming the State, Territory, or Country.	Manned within the year At a School Within the year. Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.			
			Age.	Sex.	Wife, Child, or Inhabitant.							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1	26	J. Lamphire	62	M		Farmer	1000	Wash	✓			
2		E. Lamphire	56	F				Wash	✓			
3	27	J. Mc Shively	46	M		Merchant	2500	Ny.	✓			
4		Mrs Shively	25	F				Wash	✓			
5		Chas Shively	13	M				Wash	✓			
6		J. Shively	1	M				Oregon				
7		O. Elliott	30	F				Wash	✓			
8	28	R. Shortess	54	M		Farmer	2000	Pa.	✓			
9		Mrs Ann Shortess	45	F	Ind			Oregon				
10		S. Shortess	4	F	Ind			Oregon				
11		T. Schlutt	24	M		Farmer		Ind.	✓			

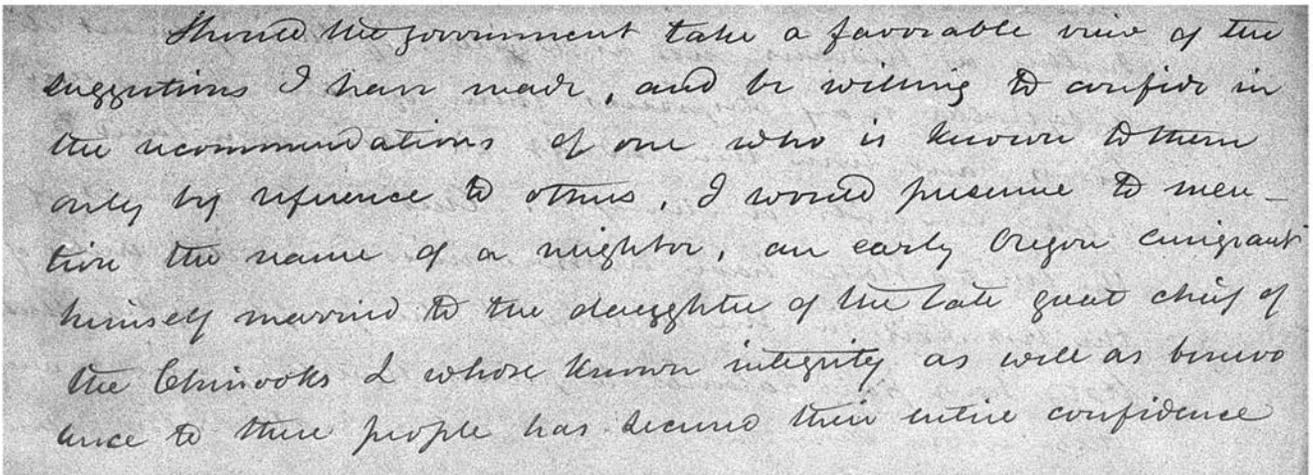
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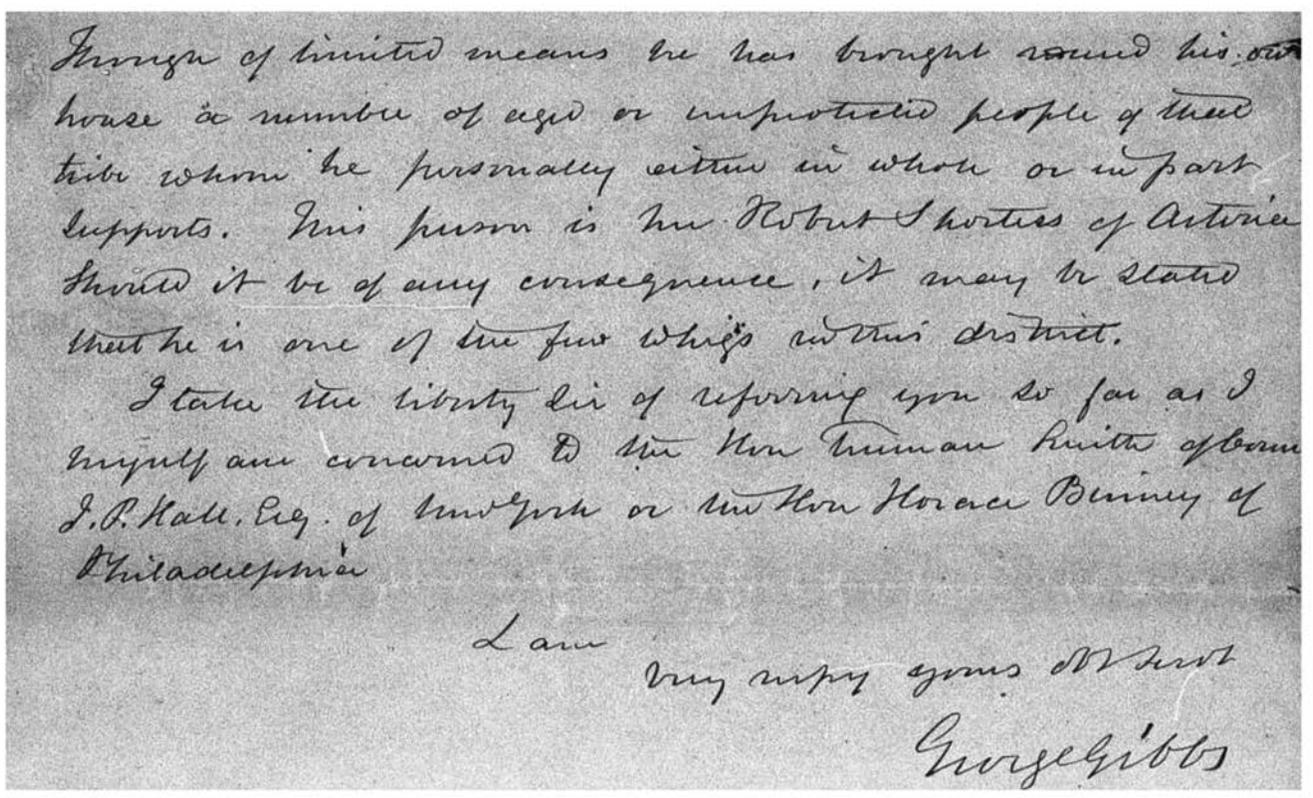
David Gene Lewis, in his "Oregon Encyclopedia" article for Robert Shortess, wrote,

"Shortess claimed that he owned two miles along the shoreline because of a hereditary title he received from his wife's family, although such Indian claims had no legal standing under U.S. law at the time."

On 25 June 1850, George Gibbs, Assistant Collector of Customs at Astoria, wrote a letter to the Department of the Interior requesting a sub-agent be appointed for the lands at the mouth of the Columbia River. In the letter, he stated that Robert Shortess was the person he recommended. Shortess's wife was "the daughter of the late great chief of the Chinooks."⁶⁸



Should the government take a favorable view of the suggestions I have made, and be willing to confide in the recommendations of one who is known to them only by reference to others, I would presume to mention the name of a neighbor, an early Oregon emigrant himself married to the daughter of the late great chief of the Chinooks & whose known integrity as well as benevolence to these people has secured their entire confidence



Through of limited means he has brought round his own house a number of aged or unprotected people of that tribe whom he personally either in whole or in part supports. This person is Mr Robert Shortess of Astoria. Should it be of any consequence, it may be stated that he is one of the few whites in this district.

I take the liberty here of referring you so far as I might be concerned to the Hon Truman Smith of Conn
J. P. Hall, Esq. of New York or the Hon Horace Binney of Philadelphia

I am
Very respectfully yours
George Gibbs

An article in the 16 July 1903 issue of Portland's Oregon Journal mentions Mrs. Shortess.⁶⁹

MAY BE THE GRAVE OF CHIEF CONCOMLY

Theory Advanced that Bones of
Illustrious Indian have
Been Uncovered.

(Journal Special Service.)

ASTORIA, Or., July 16.—Considerable interest attaches to the finding, by workmen engaged in repairing an East Astoria street, of the grave of some Indian chief. Speculation is rife as to the position held in life by the unknown occupant of the grave, but the belief is general among old residents that perhaps the bones of the great Concomly reposed there until the workmen unearthed them.

The grave was uncovered at Alderbox, an East End suburb, and occupied a position on what was known as the Robert Shortess donation land claim. Shortess himself was an Indian, and another theory has been advanced that the bones were those of his Indian wife. Mrs. Shortess committed suicide here 50 years ago, and her body was buried somewhere in the neighborhood of the recent find.

In the grave were many articles dear to the heart of the red man. There were a musket and rifle, two large hunting knives, a bullet mold, powder horn and pipe. The pipe is perhaps the most interesting of the relics, for it is of elaborate design. The design is so elaborate, indeed, that old residents jump to the conclusion that it must surely have belonged to some noted warrior. The presence of these articles in the grave disprove the theory that the bones are those of Mrs. Shortess, for even the most enthusiastic Indian woman would not have been possessed of such articles as muskets and hunting knives. The Indian custom was to bury with dead heroes all their personal effects, but this rule was not followed in the burial of squaws.

Charles McEwan, an old resident, expresses the conviction that old Concomly was buried in the spot just uncovered. Concomly's burial place was on a hillside in the vicinity of Alderbrook and Mr. McEwan is satisfied that the illustrious chief's grave has been found.

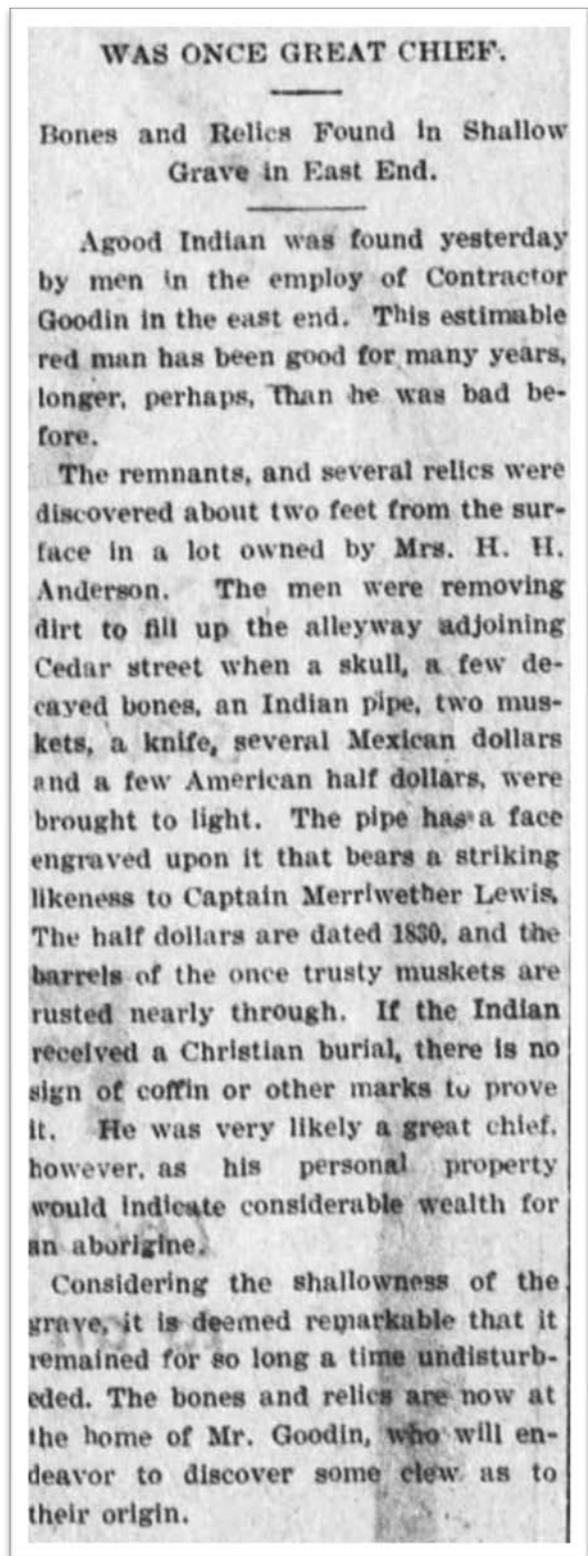
... Concomly was a great man in his day. When John Jacob Astor's first expedition reached the Columbia, Concomly was there to give welcome to the intrepid explorers, and when, after Fort Astoria was built, an English sloop-of-war made her appearance off the river and threatened to blow up the American post, old Concomly, with a fiery look in his one eye, nastily visited the American camp to offer his services in expelling the intruders. He was genuinely aggrieved when the British hauled down the stars and stripes and rechristened the post Fort George, and correspondingly elated when, some years later, the American flag again fluttered from the flagstaff. Concomly loved the Americans, and gladly gave in marriage to one of Mr. Astor's partners the hand of his daughter, on this occasion providing her with an unlimited quantity of fish oil for hair-dressing purposes.

So if the grave is really that of the old chieftain who did so much to assist the history-makers of 100 years ago, it is entitled to more consideration than has thus far been shown it.

It is unlikely that the grave was that of Concomly. He died in 1830, likely from malaria. He was placed in a raised canoe in the family burial ground near Point Ellice on the Washington side of the Columbia River. After a few years, he was taken down from the canoe and buried in the forest. In 1835, Hudson Bay Company physician, Meredith Gairdner, stole his skull and sent it to England.⁷⁰

While the author of this article wrongly claimed Robert Shortess was an Indian, Ann, his wife, was Indian. The claim that the burial was that of an Indian man is logical. The Shortess family was known to host Ann's relatives. The buried man could have been one of her Chinook relatives.

Another article about the same event goes into additional details about the artifacts.⁷¹



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An article in the 2 July 1903 issue of the Sunday Oregonian reported the grave contained “two gun barrels, badly ripped sack containing a dozen Mexican dollars, strings of beads, knives, spears, a red stone pipe engraved with the image of Benjamin Franklin, the hat [page cut off] as the cover for the pipe.”⁷²

A photo of the pipe accompanied the article.

A painting of Benjamin Franklin on the cover of Life Magazine's special edition about Benjamin Franklin resembles the pipe photo.

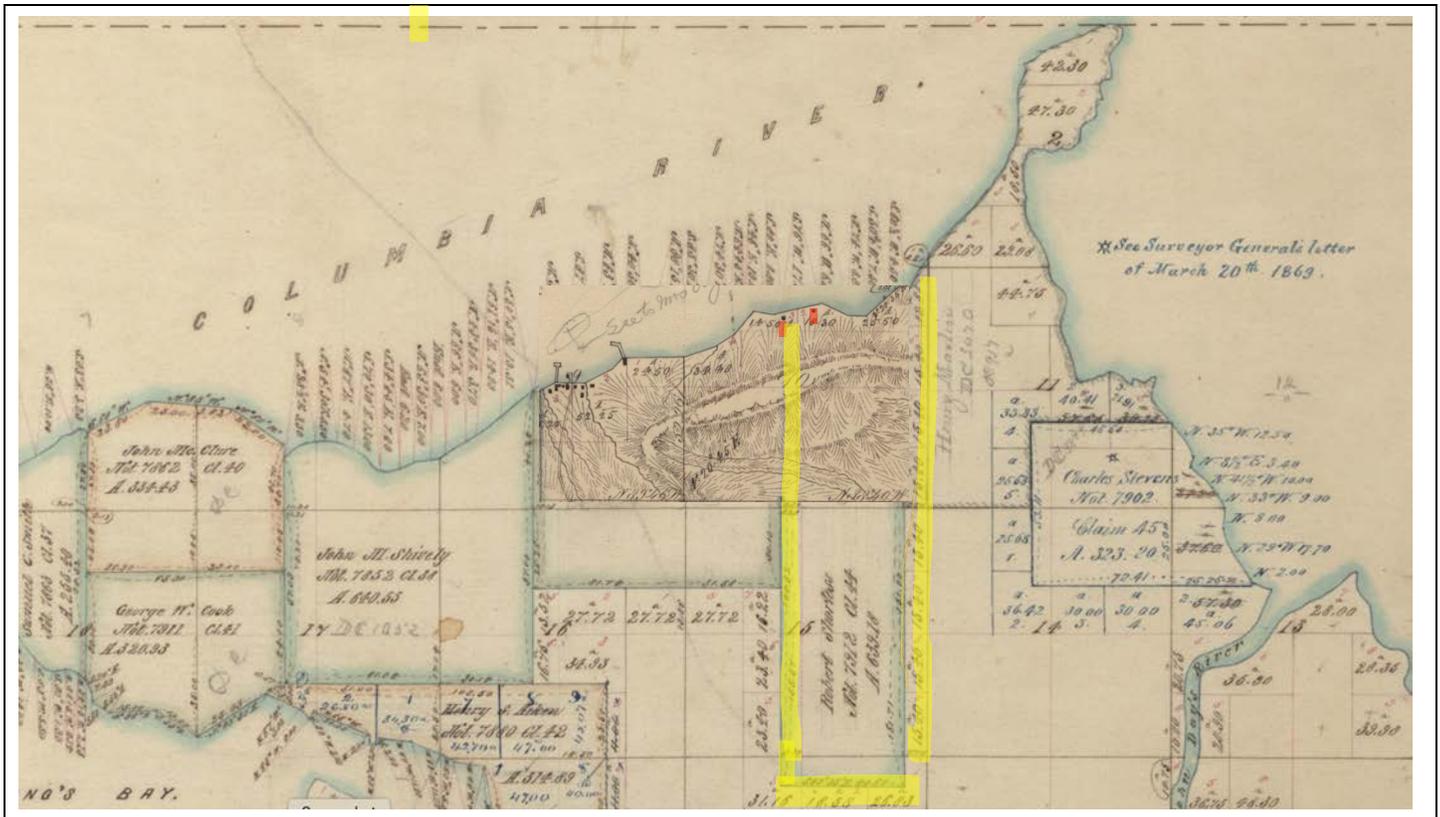


The painting was from a 1783 event. Franklin was born in 1706 and died in 1790.

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This GLO survey shows where the Shortess claim was located in Astoria.⁷³ The claim is outlined in yellow. Another map that shows dwellings (marked in red) and contour lines is superimposed on the claim map.



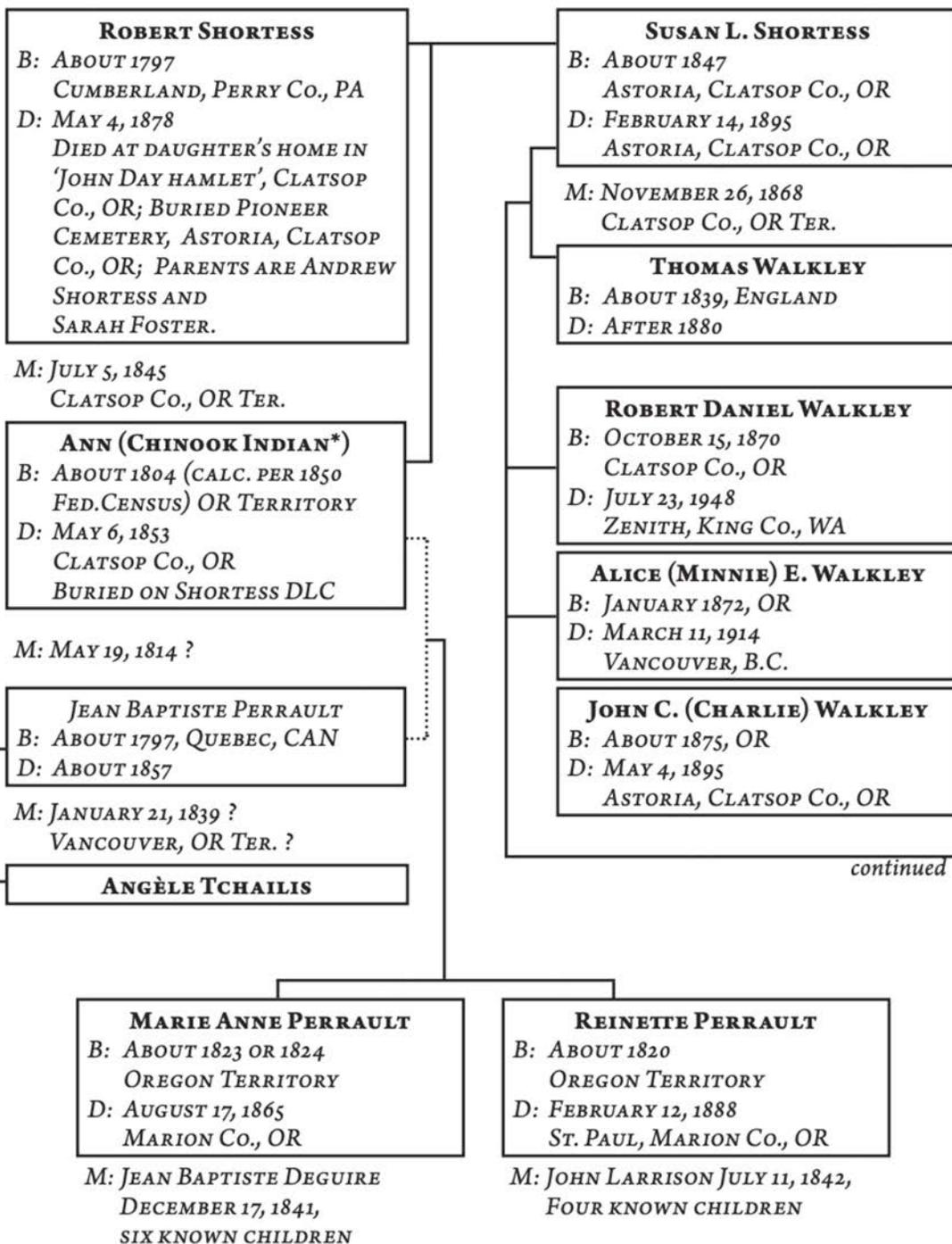
Ann assisted Robert Shortess prepare a native language dictionary for George Gibbs. Solomon Smith, husband of Celiast, a daughter of Chief Coboway of the Clatsops, was another person who helped with the dictionary. We may never find direct evidence naming Ann's parents. The indirect evidence that we have includes the following:

- Ann was a Chinook Indian. The Chinook Indians lived on both sides of the Columbia River near the Pacific Ocean and up the Columbia to present day The Dalles.⁷⁴
- When she lived in Astoria, she hosted family members at her home – suggesting they lived in the area.
- According to the 1850 census, she was aged 45 – born about 1805.
- She was the daughter of a high-ranking Indian chief. In 1805, Concomly was the Chinook Indian chief. He met Lewis and Clark on 17 November 1805.⁷⁵
- Marriages between daughters of Indian chiefs and white men were made to cement relationships, and the husbands were usually of a high rank. Jean Baptiste Perrault was a skilled craftsman. By the standards of the times, he was wealthy.

Ann (Chinook) Perrault Shortess's French Prairie daughters were known to Robert Shortess and presumably to other relatives and friends. An article was published about the Shortess family in the Winter 2018 issue of *Cumtux*, the quarterly of the Clatsop County Historical Society.⁷⁶

The article includes the Shortess and Perrault family tree.

ROBERT AND ANN SHORTESS FAMILY TREE



Note: Some sources say J. B. Perrault's first wife died then he married her sister, however Ann was alive at the time of marriage #2 so this link is unclear.
 *Catholic Church records state Chinook, others vary.

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End Notes

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- ² John Baptist Perroult Estate File, Marion County, Oregon, #5; original at Oregon State Archives, Salem, Oregon.
- ³ Quebec, Canada, Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), for Jean Baptiste Perrault. Louiseville, St-Antoine-de-la-Riviere-du-loup, 1798, image 18 of 29; *Ancestry*, https://www.ancestry.com/.../1091/images/d1p_25250495...
- ⁴ Jean Baptiste Perreault, "Narrative of the Travels and Adventures of a Merchant Voyageur in the Savage Territories of Northern America Leaving Montreal the 28th Day of May, 1783 to 1820." *French-American Heritage Foundation of Minnesota*; <https://fahfminn.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Perreault-Travels1.pdf>.
- ⁵ "Clatsop, Oregon, United States records," images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSRD-CV8C?view=fullText> : Jan 25, 2025), image 91 of 898; Clatsop County Deed, Vol. 11, p. 649-50.
- ⁶ George Gibbs to the Secretary of the Interior, *FamilySearch*, DGS 8276177, image 117; citing List of Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1842 – 1880, Oregon Superintendency, NARA M234, reel 607, image 692 and 693.
- ⁷ *Lives Lived*, p. 769.
- ⁸ Jean Baptiste Perreault, *Narrative*, p. 4.
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- ¹⁰ *Lives Lived*, p. 769.
- ¹¹ *Lives Lived*, p. 769.
- ¹² Rev. J. J. Parrish, "Origin of the Rogue River's Hatred," *Oregonian*, Portland, April 26, 1885, page 2.
- ¹³ Burt Brown Barker, *Letters of Dr. John McLoughlin, written at Fort Vancouver 1829 – 1832* (Portland, OR: Binford & Mort), 201.
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- ¹⁵ John A. Hussey, *Champoeg: Place of Transition* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1967), 51, 52.
- ¹⁶ Alice Bay Maloney and John Work. "Fur Brigade to the Bonaventura: John Work's California Expedition of 1832-33 for the Hudson's Bay Company (Concluded)." *California Historical Society Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (1944): 144; <https://doi.org/10.2307/25155841>.
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- ¹⁸ Slacum, *Memorial*, p. 6.
- ¹⁹ Harriet Duncan Munnick, *Catholic Church Records of the Pacific Northwest: St. Paul, Oregon 1839–1898* (Portland, OR: Binford & Mort, 1979), Vol. 1, p. 58, S-14.
- ²⁰ Nancy Marguerite Anderson, "York Factory Express: Ft. Vancouver to Fort Nez Percés," <https://nancymargueriteanderson.com/first-leg-fort-vancouver/>.
- ²¹ Clarence B. Bagley, "Journal of Occurrences at Nisqually House, 1833-1835 (Continued)." *The Washington Historical Quarterly* 7, no. 2 (1916): 174 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40474610>.
- ²² Clarence B. Bagley, "Journal of Occurrences at Nisqually House, 1833 (Continued)," p. 60, 73, 74.
- ²³ *Lives Lived*, p. 164-65.
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²⁸ B Askholm assumed (based on copyright claims), "Wheelwright tools;" *Wikimedia Commons*; <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>.

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³³ Munnick, *Vancouver*, p 27, M-8.

³⁴ Harriet Duncan Munnick, *Catholic Church Records of the Pacific Northwest: St. Paul, Oregon 1839–1898* (Portland, OR: Binford & Mort, 1979), Vol. 1, p. 4, B-11 and B-12.

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⁴⁵ Leslie M. Scott, "First Taxes in Oregon, 1844." *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (1930): 3, 4, 5, 6, *JStor*; <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2061051>.

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⁵¹ Julie Kidd, *1845 Census*, p. 19.

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⁵⁶ J. B. Perrault Probate File.

⁵⁷ J. B. Perrault Probate File.

⁵⁸ "Bio: Mathieu Dauphin – Dofa – Mcdofa – Duffy," *Frenchtown Historic Site*; <http://www.frenchtownwa.org/dauphin-dofa-mcdofa-duffy/>.

⁵⁹ William Hake Probate File, #17, original at Oregon State Archives, Salem, Oregon.

⁶⁰ 1850 Marion County, Oregon Territory, census, p 102 B, dwelling 452, family 452, Baptiste Diguire and dwelling 453, family 453 and dwelling 453, family 453, Achile Perault; *Ancestry*. (Enumerated 3 Feb 1851.)

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⁶⁵ Lists of settlers west of Rockies, 1842 by Elijah White, Indian Agent," *FamilySearch* DGS 8276177, image 121; citing List of Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1842 – 1880, Oregon Superintendency, NARA M234, reel 607, image 116

⁶⁶ Leslie M. Scott, "First Taxpayers in Oregon, 1844," p. 24..

⁶⁷ 1850 Clatsop County, Oregon, territorial census, p. 47B, dwelling 28, family 28, R. Shortess; *Ancestry*.

⁶⁸ George Gibbs to the Secretary of the Interior, *FamilySearch* ,DGS 8276177, image 117; citing List of Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1842 – 1880, Oregon Superintendency, NARA M234, reel 607, image 692 and 693.

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⁷³ 1863 Survey, T 8N, R 9W; *GLORecordsBLM.gov*, https://glorerecords.blm.gov/details/survey/default.aspx?dm_id=351097&sid=tvk4550h.v0g&surveyDetailsTabIndex=1.

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