

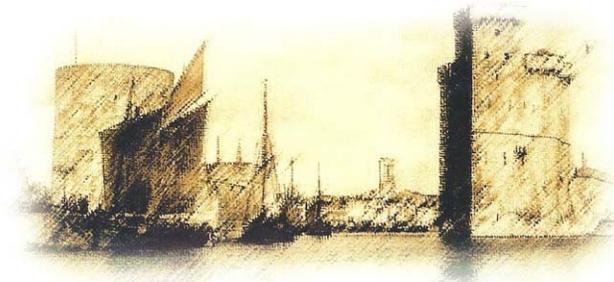
CAJUNS, CREOLES, PIRATES AND PLANTERS

Your New Louisiana Ancestors Format

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LONG JOURNEY HOME

The Ancestry of the Bret, Coco, Drapeau,
Goudeau, Gremillon and Tassin families in France



Cathy Lemoine Sturgell

ANCESTRAL JOURNEY: *Long Journey Home* is Cathy Lemoine Sturgell's story of several early Louisiana families, including Bret, Coco, Drapeau, Goudeau, Gremillon, and Tassin families from France. Sturgell started her ancestral journey in late 1986 just prior to her father's death.

After researching material in the U.S., she realized that she needed to learn more about the family, and this would require research in French records. Some connections came easy. Others were more difficult. Throughout this process, she gained a tremendous amount of knowledge on her early ancestors.

Her book is divided into sections on the first generations of her ancestors. The first one covered Perrine Bret (Brette), born on October 10, 1709 in La Rochelle (Charente-Maritime), France. She was baptized on October 13, 1709 at Eglise Notre-Dame-de-

Couignes in La Rochelle (Charente-Maritime, France and named after her aunt who served as her godmother. Her parents are identified as Louys (Louis) Bret and Elizabet(h) Roy.

Perrine came to the U.S. via the *Dauphine* in 1719 with her parents and siblings. She married Nicolas de la Cour on September 9, 1726. They were married 35 years before her death in 1761. She was buried on March 20, 1761 in Pointe Coupee Parish. All of this is illustrated with pictures of the documents.

From this point, Sturgell moves on to the ancestry of Dominique Balduini dit Coco, the progenitor of the Coco family in Louisiana. Dominicus Balduini was born June 27, 1750 in what is now the Department of Alpes Maritime, France, and Dominicus is the Latin version of the French name Dominique.

His baptism was recorded in the town of Eze (Alpes Maritimes), France on July 22, 1750 although the official record indicates that he was baptized in the chapel of Saint Trinititis. From here, Sturgell carries the ancestry into the next generation, again using old documents to show her devotion to properly illustrating her ancestry. She brings this ancestry through nine generations.

Her next study is of Antoine Drapeau who was baptized on January 11, 1648 at the 15th Century Eglise Notre-Dame. His parents were Pierre Drapeau and Marie Margoton. He married Marie Charlotte Joly, the daughter of Pierre Joly and Marie Milleraye on August 20, 1669. Marie was a King's Daughter, a female who was recruited by the King of France to re-settle in New France for the purpose of becoming the wife of one of the male settlers.

Much of the history is found in Canada. Antoine was buried on August 23, 1717 in Beaumont (Quebec Province), Canada. Marie died the following year and was buried on December 2, 1718.

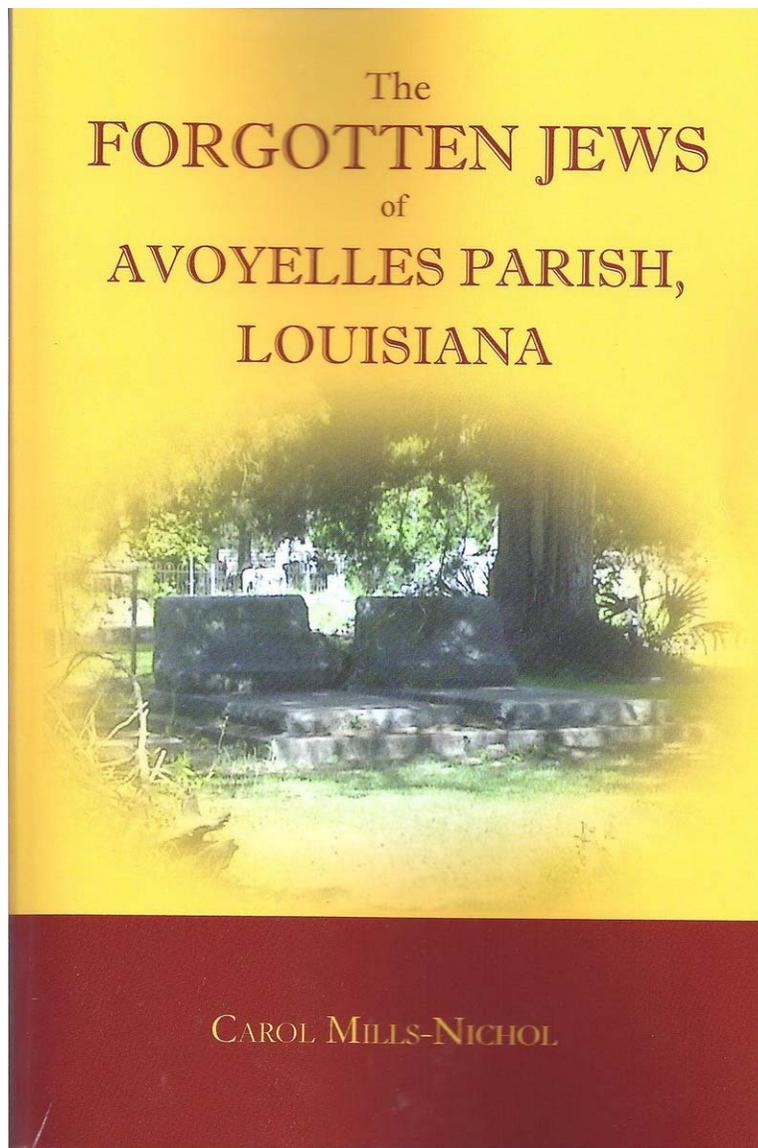
From here, Sturgell moves on to the ancestry of Michel Charles Goudeau, born March 5, 1713 in La Rochelle (Charente-Maritime), France. Baptismal records show his parents as Sieur Charles Godeau (Chirurgien Major de la Marine) and Marie Dergny. He arrived in the U.S. between 1731 and 1734 and was married to Marie Therese Huchet in Mobile on February 19, 1734. He was buried on January 1, 1765 in Pointe Coupee Parish, Louisiana at the age of 51.

The first generation of the Gremillon family is shown as Louis Gremillon, the progenitor of the Louisiana Gremillon family. He was born March 12, 1714 to Toussaint Gremillon and Marie Bregion and baptized the next day at Courcival (Sarthe), France. The ancestry of Joseph Tassin follows. He was baptized on January 19, 1712 in La Chapelle-Reanville (Eure), France. His parents were Francois Tassin and Marie Le Roy. Very little is known about him other than the fact that he married Marie Barbe Bourgeois, daughter of Jean Baptiste Bourgeois and Marie Anne Chevalier on April 30, 1743 at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Destrehan, St. Charles Parish, Louisiana.

Sturgell's book is just one of the best I have ever reviewed when it comes to pictures, documents, and even maps. It is just so nice to see someone take so much time to present this family history in such a pleasant and delightful format. You can find out more about her book and its availability by contacting her at cathysturgell@yahoo.com or writing to her at 83 Hiwassee Road, Lebanon, TN 37087-9258.

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FORGOTTEN JEWS: In an earlier format, I told you about *The Forgotten Jews of Avoyelles Parish, Louisiana* by Carol Mills-Nichol. The book is now available for purchase, and it is definitely one I would recommend for all major genealogical library collections. You can check out the ordering of this volume at Janaway Publishing, Inc., 732 Kelsey Ct., Santa Maria, CA93454, or at www.janawaygenealogy.com.



Containing an index, 45 illustrations, and 610 pages of data, this is the first ever book written about the Jewish men and women who came to Central Louisiana to settle as early as the 1830s in Avoyelles Parish. Far more than a genealogy, the author takes the reader on a journey through time from the parishes earliest beginnings, through the Civil War, and two World Wars, finally, to the last man standing who practices Judaism today in this mostly agrarian section of the state.

The lives of the earliest immigrants: Maurice Fortlouis, Adolph and Charles Frank, Abe Felsenthal, Sam and Alex Haas, Simon, Leopold and David Siess, Isaac Lehmann and Leopold and Lazard Goudchaux, who intermarried with the Porché, Bordelon, Gaspard, Aymond, Guillot, Marshall, Cole, Blount, Chatelain, and Cochrane pioneer families of Avoyelles Parish, are analyzed in the context of the external forces of history which shaped their lives, the major event being the Civil War. The conflicts between Union sympathizers and Confederate loyalists in Avoyelles Parish, the catastrophic consequences of the Red River campaign, the fall of Fort DeRussy, and the Union army's final march through Marksville and Mansura, may now be seen through the eyes of the immigrants who lived through them.

These first Jewish men were followed by numerous post-bellum arrivals including the Levy, Karpe, Wolf, Weill, Weil, Moch, Hiller, Kahn, Bauer, Weiss, Gross, Anker, Rich, Warshauer, Elster, Goldring, Rosenberg, Schreiber, Schlessinger, and Abramson families who, along with the sons and daughters of the first Jewish immigrants, continued to shape the destiny of the parish during the difficult years of Reconstruction, which brought with it the brief specter of anti-Semitism.

By the way, this is the book I told you had information on Lieutenant Governor Jay Dardenne's Jewish ancestry. His family background is discussed by way of John Leigh Dardenne, a fourth generation resident of Plaquemine, Iberville Parish, who married Janet Lucille Abramson on December 9, 1950 at the Synagogue in Lafayette.

In the nineteenth century, the Dardenne family had been prosperous sugar cane and cotton planters. John and Janet had two sons, Richard James and John Leigh Dardenne Jr. The latter became known as Jay Dardenne and became the first person of Jewish faith to have held a statewide office since the nineteenth century. The Dardenne family never lived in Avoyelles Parish but were frequent visitors there with the Abramson family.

Be sure to check this book out. It is beautifully written and illustrated.

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FREE SERVICE: Correspondence to this column should be directed to Damon Veach, Cajuns, Creoles, Pirates and Planters, 709 Bungalow Lane, Baton Rouge, LA 70802-5337. The e-mail address is ancestorslaveach@cox.net. Queries can be any length, and book reviews are printed as space permits, and you are encouraged to take advantage of this free service. All genealogical/historical/preservation books are reviewed in this column format, but a review copy is necessary for this service. Another service is offered here too.

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