

Cabin Boy on the Tonquin

compiled by

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On October 12 1803, Jean-Baptiste Perrault merchant from Louiseville brings three children to the Catholic church of the parish. They are not baptized.

The first is a girl, Marie-Anne, said to be 5 years old. The second is another girl, Judith aged 10 months and the third is a boy, Michel-Guillaume or William, age not mentioned.

The three are 'naturel' or 'illegitimate' children of the same mother named Mary Harys. We do not know if she is dead or alive and where she came from. Although her name implies a British origin, she cannot be Irish. The Irish immigration starts in Canada around 1830.

She is either the daughter of a Scot working in the fur trade, a Metis, or of an American (Harris). The place of birth of the children are not mentioned either. It seems that the three have been brought to St-Antoine de Riviere du Loup (Louiseville) by their father and that they have to be Catholics in order to live in Louiseville.

Their godfathers and godmothers are important people of the parish as well as the father himself described as 'ecuyer'.

Guillaume is not a very common surname amongst French Canadians, William being the English version. It may be the same Guillaume that went on the Tonquin as cabin boy in 1811.

