

**Franco-Manitoban Memory Online:
“Au pays de Riel” as a Case Study in
Archival Public Programming**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
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BY

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**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University of
Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree
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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to provide a contextualised case study of an archival website of the Société historique de Saint-Boniface (SHSB) of the Centre du patrimoine called *Au pays de Riel*. My personal viewpoint is that the choices an archival institution makes while creating a website have a significant impact on how audiences interpret the exhibited records and ultimately the institution that houses them. The first chapter will explore the contexts behind why *Au pays de Riel* became a facet of the SHSB's public program. The second chapter will provide an overview of the design, navigation, and content of *Au pays de Riel*. The third and most voluminous chapter of this thesis will assess how one module in the Découvertes section of the website, Notre-Dame-des-Prairies, changed the history of the records it exhibited. My overall response to the issues raised by this thesis is that archivists who are involved in public programming activities like *Au pays de Riel* should make available as much information as possible about the history of the records that are used in the project.

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Introduction:

A Case Study of an Archival Website

Why Study an Archival Website?

The purpose of this thesis is to provide a contextualised case study of an archival website called *Au pays de Riel*. My personal viewpoint is that the choices an archival institution makes while creating a website have a significant impact on how audiences interpret the exhibited records and ultimately the institution that houses them. My goal is to analyse *Au pays de Riel* and assess its impact on the history of the records that are displayed on the website. Archival records are usually valued for the information they convey about the history of things other than themselves. But records have histories too. This history begins with the initial inscription of the record and the reasons for it, the technologies used to do so, how records have been organised and then possibly reorganized as they pass through the hands of various users and custodians, how they have been used and interpreted over time, altered, destroyed, secreted away or placed in accessible archives. The history of the record is also shaped by the work done with the records in archives in public programming activities such as *Au pays de Riel*. A better understanding of the history of records improves their value as evidence of human activity and other phenomena and the performance of archival work such as public programming. It is my hope that this case study will spur further debate on the role of public programming in the archival profession and begin a dialogue for archivists to fully reflect on how best to perform this function in an online world.

The ever-increasing presence of a wired world has begun to challenge the traditional ways archives acquire, describe, preserve, and make available their records.

Online public programming initiatives, in particular, have been a beneficiary of this trend as their status within the archival endeavour has, as a result of these changes, risen dramatically.

Archival public programming involves the provision of reference service to researchers and all forms of education that are intended to inform researchers, sponsors of archives, and society about the holdings, services, uses, and roles of an archives. In a way, public programming is simply a need to communicate, a need that dates back to the first attempts of our species.¹

Over the last twenty years archivists have debated two general issues in relation to public programming. The first is whether public programming is a core function, such as appraisal, description, and preservation, or a secondary one, to be done when and if core work leaves room for it. The second argument revolves around the question of how public programming should be done or how much contextual information about records is necessary to perform public programming well. Recently, the rise of the Internet has added yet another layer to the discussion.²

In my view, the increasing role of the Internet in contemporary society has firmly established public programming as a core function because the Internet affords a means to reach a much needed larger audience for archival services, which, in turn, will create a growing reliance upon public programming educational services among researchers and sponsors of archives. The prospect of public programming as a core function also affects

¹ Human communication began through nonverbal gestures, slowly changing into different oral language systems. The most ancient forms of memory were thus primarily oral and transmitted by recitation. According to historians David Crowley and Paul Heyer, as the societal world became more complex, “extrasomatic memory,” or “tools of thought” were required to aid in the process. David Crowley and Paul Heyer (eds.), *Communication in History*. (White Plains, NY: Longman Publishers, 1995), p. 7.

² The debate will be explored further in Chapter 1.

the discussion of how much contextual information public programming should provide, particularly in online initiatives. In my view, the expanded volume and variety of digitised documents online supports those who argue that archivists should provide a great deal of explanatory contextual information about the history of the records.

Online public programming also highlights certain ethical concerns, which also underscore the need for greater contextual information. In essence, the ethical codes of the International Council on Archives (ICA) and the Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA) call for archivists to protect the “intellectual integrity” of records and employ their specialised knowledge and experience “for the benefit of society as a whole.”³ Consequently, in an online context, archivists have a responsibility to their larger, more diversified audiences, and the greater volume and variety of records which the Internet permits archives to make available. In other words, it means that archives play an even greater role in interpreting records and history. In addition, the Internet provides a new technological mediation of records which affects how they are presented and interpreted.

This thesis explores these issues by focusing on an online archival project entitled *Au pays de Riel*, sponsored by the archives of the Centre du Patrimoine, commonly known as the Société historique de Saint-Boniface (SHSB).⁴ It should be noted that the SHSB possesses two websites. The first, may be considered the primary site of the

³ In general, two formal codes of ethics guide the archival profession in Canada. The first is a code of ethics adopted by the General Assembly of the International Council on Archives (ICA) in 1996. This code of ethics is comprised of principles with accompanying commentary. It aims to “provide an ethical framework for guidance of members of the profession, and not provide specific solutions to particular problems.” The codes are not binding and are dependent on archival institutions and associations to implement them. The code of ethics may be accessed in its entirety on the website of the ICA: <http://www.ica.org/>. The second is a similar ethical code with principles and recommendations for their application by the Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA). The code of the ACA may be found on its website at the following URL: <http://archivists.ca/home/>. It should be noted that this code, like that of the ICA, is not binding.

⁴ To view the website *Au pays de Riel*, please refer to the following URL: <http://www.shsb.mb.ca/paysriel/accueil.html>. The URL of the primary site is: <http://www.shsb.mb.ca>.

SHSB. On this website a visitor will learn about the Centre du patrimoine and its various services. A second website, *Au pays de Riel*, was created as a contribution to the larger project: “400 ans de présence française au Canada, 1604-2004.” The SHSB undertook the development of the section: “Les collectivités Francophones et les Métis au cœur de l’Amérique.” Funded in part by the Canadian Culture Online Partnership Fund of Canadian Heritage, the partners of the SHSB were the Centre de recherche en civilisation canadienne-française of the University of Ottawa and the Centre d’études acadiennes of the University of Moncton.⁵ In sum, the website is a representation of the history of French-speaking Manitobans that is designed for various audiences including those who are school-aged. The site was officially launched on 31 March 2004, and the SHSB continues to augment the site as funding is acquired.

The SHSB chose to exhibit its digitised records in three distinctive ways. The first section examines historical places, events, and people in the form of modules called “Découvertes.” Contextual information is provided for each theme by an introductory text, footnotes as pop-up links within the text, and a sampling of digitised records with vignettes. The second type of display is called “Dossiers,” which proposes a more in-depth study of a social, cultural, economic, political, or other issue that concerns the history and documentary evidence of the Métis and Franco-Manitoban communities. This information may be in the form of an academic article, an exhibit, or other aid to highlight a specific series of records. Searchable tools comprise the third section of the

⁵ To visit the site developed in Ottawa for “La présence française en Ontario: 1610, passeport pour 2010:” <http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/crccf/passeport/index.html>. For the site in Moncton for “400 ans de présence française au Canada : Volet Canada Atlantique”: <http://www2.umoncton.ca/cfdocs/cea/index.htm>.

site. They are in the form of databases or links to the resources of the primary site of the SHSB.⁶

The first chapter will explore the contexts behind why *Au pays de Riel* became a facet of the SHSB's public program. There are many different influences, but two factors stand out from the others. The first is the professional climate. Archivists have differing responses to the definition and role of public programming. As an institution, the SHSB had to decide where to define its program within these differing opinions. The second factor is the history and philosophy of the institution itself. The SHSB serves the Franco-Manitoban and Métis communities through a number of roles including an archives, a genealogical centre, the administrator of Riel House, and an historical society. Each of these services plays a role in the development of an online public programming strategy.

Once the decision was made to create a website, the SHSB needed to make decisions concerning the design, navigation, and content of *Au pays de Riel*. The second chapter will provide an overview of the design, navigation, and content of *Au pays de Riel*. A walk through the main features of the site and the navigation process of *Au pays de Riel* will set the stage for understanding how the content was organised. I joined the website production team at the end of the first phase of construction. The group had already conceptualised the design and navigational structure of the website. There were also a number of trial modules in the Découvertes section that had already been completed.⁷ This is why the focus of this chapter is to provide a description of the resultant structure since I had little input into this area. Despite my absence from this process, I believe that an overview of the design and navigational structure should not be

⁶ The fourth and final type of information to be found on the site is pedagogical tools for teachers This fourth section remains undeveloped and will not be considered in the context of this thesis.

⁷ The module La Grenouillère in the second section is one such module.

ignored in this thesis. As I stated earlier, it sets the stage for a better understanding of the organisation of the content and since my introduction to the website was similar to a visitor, it may shed some light on how I chose to present the records of the modules of the Découvertes section that I created.

The third and most voluminous chapter of this thesis will assess how one module in the Découvertes section, Notre-Dame-des-Prairies, changed the history of the records it exhibited. This will be accomplished by a contextualised study of the story behind the selection of some of the records displayed and suggested how the website of *Au pays de Riel* could further enrich the history of these records by utilising other sections of the website, meaning the Dossiers and the Outils. This chapter will also reflect some of my own opinions concerning the role of public programming in the archives, providing insight into my own biases on the subject.

Many archival institutions are part of a wider institutional mandate and a public program generally attempts to answer the needs of the entire institution and not just its archives. In the case of the SHSB, the genealogical, the historical society, the library, and the archives need to be portrayed in any public program. Notre-Dame-des-Prairies finds itself situated in the section dedicated to historical content with a format that was created by the website team. As a result, in my view, a tension resides in this structure because the actual vignettes are based on content rather than the history of the record. This is why I have suggest that the history of the record is important, but not necessarily appropriate in a Découvertes module. All is not lost, however, as these images can serve to illustrate to the user in a different light, these same images (as well as others in the website) in a

context designed towards the history of the records. The possibilities are enormous as many of the suggestions in this thesis illustrate.

An emphasis on wide-ranging knowledge of the history of the record is relatively new to the archival profession. As a result, many of the records that we display possess little contextual information about their history as a record. However, in my view, as an archivist I am ethically bound to add or in many instances begin the history of the record with my own actions in selecting certain images over others for display, as well as the reasons behind the selection of information that accompanies them. The history of the record is an ongoing timeline and despite the gaps, it should not stop me from telling my part in the story. This is the reason why I have taken the time in this thesis to explain why I chose an image, why I chose certain information over others, and suggested how other choices may have changed the content of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. In fact, due to the enormous number of issues, I felt obliged to present them generally in my thesis rather than focus on only one or two. I believe this is both the strength and weakness of the thesis, but with the goal of initiating discussion because ideas become stronger when they are tested by others, I am inclined to think that this thesis could generate such a response.

The conclusion will recapitulate some of the findings of this thesis. My overall response to the issues raised by this thesis is that archivists who are involved in public programming activities like *Au pays de Riel* should make available as much information as possible about the history of the records that are used in the project. The structure of *Au pays de Riel* has this potential through the further exploitation of the advantages that the Découvertes, Dossiers, and Outils sections offer and by minimising, or at the very least being aware of, their limitations.

Chapter 1:

Public Programming in the Archives of the SHSB

Introduction: *Au pays de Riel* as a Facet of the Public Program of the SHSB

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss why *Au pays de Riel* became a facet of the SHSB's public program. Two influences will be considered concerning the decision of the SHSB to integrate an online public program into its daily activities. These background contexts are essential to this thesis as they set the stage for an analysis of this case study in public programming.

The first factor is related to the fact that the SHSB is a francophone archival institution in Manitoba which employs professional archivists. As a result, its public program has been shaped by the profession's literature on the subject in both French and English. *Au pays de Riel* is thus a product of an archival environment where Canadian and American archivists have differing responses concerning the definition and role of public programming in the archives. In my view, it is important to comprehend some of these issues to contextualize the decision of the SHSB to create *Au pays de Riel*.

Secondly, I will reflect on the fact that the site is a facet of a larger public program for the SHSB and a response to its mission to promote the institution's records:

Le Centre du patrimoine a pour mission de conserver et de diffuser les documents et ressources à valeur culturelle, patrimoniale, juridique ou historique, fruits de la présence des francophones dans l'Ouest canadien et au Manitoba depuis plus de 250 ans.¹

Not only is the SHSB an archives, but a genealogical centre, the administrator of Riel House, and an historical society. Each of these services is integral to the institution's

¹ This mission is clearly stated on the SHSB's primary website: <http://www.shsb.mb.ca/>.

history and philosophy, and all affect the definition of what a public program means for the SHSB.

Archival Public Programming in North America²

Online public programming has emerged from a variety of cultural, political, and economic forces that are designed to earn archival material a relevant place in contemporary society. Most archivists agree that public programming is a facet of an archivist's daily work, though some proponents place a greater emphasis on its role than others. Some have challenged the profession to increase society's understanding of the uses of archives by creating significant outreach programs.³ Others have expressed reservations, preferring to put limited funding and human resources to better uses.⁴ Even in the case of those who support public programming, there is dissent as to who archives should be targeting and how the information should be presented. For instance, in an article, Canadian archivist Tom Nesmith explains that at least two camps have emerged on how best to work with archival records and present them for public use:

In one camp were those who argued for a contextual approach to archival work, which meant that archivists should concentrate on setting records in the context of their provenance, rather than focus on their work on the conventional historian's interest in the records' subject concerns. [...] In the other camp, were many who valued the contextual approach, but also maintained that an archivist is also an historian of subject content in the conventional sense.⁵

² The analysis will consider both Canadian and American literature concerning public programming, but will focus on its development in Canada.

³ Bruce W. Dearstyne, *The Archival Enterprise: Modern Archival Principles, Practices and Management Techniques*. (Chicago: American Library Association, 1993), pp. 174-196.

⁴ In the case of electronic endeavours for example, some archival institutions have chosen to concentrate on preserving the growing number of electronic records in their collections, rather than spending resources and time digitising older formats for the web.

⁵ Tom Nesmith, "What's History Got to Do With It?: Reconsidering the Place of Historical Knowledge in Archival Work", *Archivaria* 57 (Spring 2004), p. 11.

The potential areas of conflict are thus numerous, but most of the issues are not new and date back to the professionalisation of archivists in North America.

Nineteenth-century notions of public programming in Canadian and American archives centred on the archivist's role as provider of evidence for historians.⁶ This made the preparation of research guides for historians the public programming priority, while other initiatives were few, scattered, and generally localized.⁷ In other words, public programming was historically linked to access and good reference services.⁸ The trend was to remain largely unchanged until the 1960s, as the occasional exhibit was utilised solely to complement this comparatively narrow range of outreach activities.

Despite a larger role for public programming in the early 1960s, the archival literature on the topic continued to develop slowly. For instance, many of the contributions to the first Canadian archival journal, *The Canadian Archivist*, did not consider the larger impact of public programming on the archival profession, but rather focussed primarily on "how-to" articles and reported on general archival institutional activities.⁹

In Canada, a growing awareness of the impact of archival public programming initiatives may be identified at the end of the 1960s, as nationalistic sentiments, generated

⁶ For instance, the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec petitioned the federal government in 1871 to lament the Canadian historical researchers' lack of access to Canada's public records by comparison with the access their American and British counterparts had to their countries archives.

⁷ The publication of guides remains today an important element in archival public programming. See for instance, Provincial Archives of Manitoba, *Family and Community History: Selected Government Records*. (Winnipeg: Provincial Archives of Manitoba, 1996, 2001).

⁸ The legacy of access and reference service to the notion of public programming is also evident today. See for instance, Barbara Case and Ying Xu, "Access to Special Collections in the Humanities: Who's Guarding the Gates and Why?", *The Reference Archivist* 47 (1994), 75-78; and Richard Cox, *Managing Institutional Archives: Foundational Principles and Practices*. (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992), pp. 117-153.

⁹ *The Canadian Archivist* was established in 1963. Prior to this date, Canadian contributions were relatively sparse in American and British archival journals, and on occasion, in an historical journal. See Gordon Dodds, "Canadian Archival Literature: A Bird's Eye View", *Archivaria* 17 (Winter 1983-1984), pp. 20-21.

in part by the country's Centennial celebrations, began to increase the pressure on archivists to make their holdings more accessible to larger and more diversified audiences.¹⁰ To create an arena for archivists to respond to these changes, *The Canadian Archivist* ceased publication in 1975, and the newly formed Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA) began to publish a new journal. *Archivaria* became the vehicle for archivists to share professional concerns and ideas, and during the 1980s it was the main venue in Canada for various controversies and differing perspectives on the role of public programming.

Many of the initial discussions debated the very definition of public programming, as many could not agree whether it meant outreach, educational activities, reference service, access, or something completely different. The most hotly contested issue, however, was whether to define public programming as a core or peripheral function of archives. These discussions culminated in Canada in the 1991 annual conference of the ACA, which had the theme: "Facing Up, Facing Out: Reference, Access and Public Programming" and a special issue of *Archivaria* based on the conference papers.¹¹

In these debates, Canadian archivist Terry Cook argued that if public programming was to be the core function it should now be, archivists had to be able to provide a rich body of contextual information about the document's provenance. For Cook, this necessary knowledge, more than provision of subject matter content from the

¹⁰ Later, other social issues, such as concern about the lack of public knowledge of Canadian history, worries about the encroachment of American culture, and the steady diversification of archival researchers beyond the academic historians also contributed to these new public programming needs. Two notable publications are J. L. Granatstein's *Who Killed Canadian History?* (Toronto: Harper Collins Publishers, 1998) and Will Ferguson's *Why I Hate Canadians*. (Vancouver and Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1997).

¹¹ *Archivaria*, number 31, 1990-1991.

records, should inform public service, including outreach and public programming in an era of an increasing and diversifying archival clientele.¹² This contextual information was crucial because archivists cannot know well either the subject contents of the now massive volumes of records or the subject matter interests of the increasing number and variety of researchers. Similarly, Canadian archivist Barbara Craig stressed that an archivist should focus on contextualising the record to provide the needed guidance to a now much wider range of researchers.¹³ Both Cook and Craig stressed the need for public programming to focus on making this knowledge available, rather than on making subject content access or mere promotional efforts a high priority.

American archivist Tim Ericson disagreed with this emphasis and saw a more promotional function for archives.¹⁴ Canadian archivist Ian Wilson was also sympathetic to the wider dissemination or accessibility of records and suggested that archivists consider some of the exhibiting practices of museologists.¹⁵ Gabrielle Blais and David Enns took the argument in a different direction, and urged archivists to bring public programming from the margins to a core function.¹⁶

A second trend that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s was the realisation by archivists that they needed to better consider the varying demands of the ever-

¹² Terry Cook, "Viewing the World Upside Down: Reflections on the Theoretical Underpinnings of Archival Public Programming", *Archivaria* 31 (Winter 1990-1991), 123-134.

¹³ Barbara Craig, "What are the Clients? Who are the Products? The Future of Archival Public Services in Perspective", *Archivaria* 31 (Winter 1990-1991), 135-141.

¹⁴ Timothy Ericson, "'Preoccupied With Our Own Gardens': Outreach and Archivists", *Archivaria* 31 (Winter 1990-1991), 114-122.

¹⁵ Ian Wilson, "Toward a Vision of Archival Public Services", *Archivaria* 31 (Winter 1990-1991), 91-100.

¹⁶ Education and cooperation figure more predominantly in their model. Gabrielle Blais and David Enns, "From Paper Archives to People Archives: Public Programming in the Management of Archives", *Archivaria* 31 (Winter 1990-1991), 101-113.

diversifying users of archives, such as the expanding genealogical user group.¹⁷ Academic historians remained an important user group, but others slowly began to receive the attention of archivists. Hugh Taylor's model of a "total utilization" of archives, where records could be used for a variety of reasons by different individuals, is an illustration of this gradual shift.¹⁸ In an attempt to assess these needs, user studies began to abound in the 1980s and 1990s.¹⁹ The creation of these studies also became the subject of inquiry, such as American William Maher's study on the use of user studies.²⁰

The number of differing viewpoints on how best to meet the needs of the growing number of users in the archives continuously expanded in the 1980s and 1990s. In 1982, American archivist Mary Jo Pugh suggested that the first roadblock to overcome is the day-to-day assumptions that archivists make about the needs of their users.²¹ Two years later, Elsie Freeman, in her search for a practical remedy to this barrier, suggested that archival administrators need to shift their outreach programs toward a client-centred rather than a material-centred focus. She felt that it was "already clear that we are well on the way to creating electronic systems that do not supply what users want or, far more important, what they will actually use."²² Freeman based these assertions on what she termed four primary archival mistaken assumptions: that we are oriented to users, that we know who our users are, that we understand how research is done, and that we provide

¹⁷ It should be noted that many different user groups were present early in archives, but their recognised importance to archival survival in a changing society, modified attitudes towards them.

¹⁸ Hugh Taylor, "Canadian Archives: Patterns from a Federal Perspective", *Archivaria* 1, 2 (Summer 1976), p. 19.

¹⁹ Examples are: David Bearman, "User Presentation Language in Archives", *Archives and Museum Informatics* 3 (Winter 1989-1990), 3-7 and Diane Beattie, "An Archival User Study: The Informational Needs of Historians Researching Women", *Archivaria* 29 (Winter 1989-1990), 33-50.

²⁰ William J. Maher, "The Use of User Studies", *Midwestern Archivist* 11, 1 (1986), 15-26.

²¹ Mary Jo Pugh, "The Illusion of Omniscience: Subject Access and the Reference Archivist", *American Archivist* 45, 1 (Winter 1982), 33-44.

²² Elsie T. Freeman, "In the Eye of the Beholder: Archives Administration from the User's Point of View", *American Archivist* 47, 2 (Spring 1984), p. 112.

adequate help in doing it. To resolve the situation, she recommended a thorough examination of the users of archives.²³

Hugh Taylor added to the discussion by stating that he saw archivists as part of a cultural environment rather than “serving small esoteric publics.”²⁴ He also noted the user is a complex person, whose relationship to information is multidimensional.²⁵ For Taylor, the ability to answer the user’s fundamental questions concerning the process is the first step: “Is this the place to have my question answered? How should I communicate in this environment? Can I find my way around? How much am I supposed to know already?”²⁶

Educators in the school system became another important audience to receive attention as archivists began to engage in broader public programming efforts.²⁷ Historically, many archivists have long believed that primary sources were of interest to schools. For instance, at the end of the nineteenth century, Arthur Doughty and John Webster prepared lantern slides for schools at the Public Archives of Canada. The difference of opinion was more a question of how to provide the service.

Some archivists chose to provide concrete practical solutions like Élisabeth Gauthier-Desvaux’ 1984 recommendation of the “Archivobus” solution of the Orner archives.²⁸ During this decade others, like educator Kenneth Osborne, suggested practical solutions but also discussed the role and identity of archivists in the debate. In a

²³ Ibid., 113-120.

²⁴ Hugh Taylor, *Archival Services and the Concept of the User: A RAMP Study*. (Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1984), p. 1.

²⁵ Taylor, *Archival Services and the Concept of the User: A RAMP Study*, 19.

²⁶ Ibid., 22.

²⁷ See for instance, Sharon Anne Cook, “Connecting the Archives and the Classroom”, *Archivaria* 44 (1997), 102-117; Élisabeth Gauthier-Desvaux, “Services éducatifs et enseignement élémentaire. La solution ‘Archivobus’ aux Archives de l’Orner”, *La Gazette des Archives* (June 1984), 46-58; Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland et al. “Integrating Primary Sources into the Elementary School Classroom: A Case Study of Teachers’ Perspectives”, *Archivaria* 48 (Fall 1999), 89-116; Kenneth Osborne, “Archives in the Classroom”, *Archivaria* 23 (Winter 1986-1987), 16-40.

²⁸ Élisabeth Gauthier-Desvaux, “Services éducatifs et enseignement élémentaire. La solution ‘Archivobus’ aux Archives de l’Orner”, *La Gazette des Archives* (June 1984), 46-58.

1986 article, Osborne called for renewed consideration of how archivists might productively contribute to the “educational life of the country.”²⁹

Educator Sharon Anne Cook believed that middle and high school students studying Canadian history were a largely ignored clientele for archival public programming. Cook explored how the debate over the professional role of archivists had over time both included and marginalised educational initiatives through public programming. She also recommended the use of a professional partnership between educators and archivists in the creation of educational kits.³⁰ American archivists, such as Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland, Yasmin B. Kafai, and William E. Landis, were also discussing the same themes.³¹

Recommendations of how to promote archives through public programming also abounded. For instance, American archivist Elsie Freeman Finch suggested that archivists needed to clearly establish a concrete definition of the profession’s philosophy towards the use of primary source materials. Her recommendation: “We acquire, preserve, and maintain archives so that they will be used by anyone who seeks to use them, for whatever reason.”³² For Finch, public programming was a form of public relations where archivists needed to assess public attitudes towards archival institutions, and create a policy in consequence of these opinions. From this perspective of rethinking, archivists would need to learn how to answer the needs of many different publics that are both “interlocking” and “interchangeable.”³³

²⁹ Kenneth Osborne, “Archives in the Classroom”, *Archivaria* 23 (Winter 1986-1987), 16-40.

³⁰ Sharon Anne Cook, “Connecting the Archives and the Classroom”, *Archivaria* 44 (1997), 102-117.

³¹ Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland et al. “Integrating Primary Sources into the Elementary School Classroom: A Case Study of Teachers’ Perspectives”, *Archivaria* 48 (Fall 1999), 89-116.

³² Elsie Freeman Finch, *Advocating Archives: An Introduction to Public Relations for Archivists*.

(Metuchen, NJ: The Society of American Archivists and The Scarecrow Press, 1994), p. 1.

³³ *Ibid.*, 5.

Those who embraced this type of viewpoint privileged an intimate link between public perception and public programming initiatives. In 1995, Finch further stressed her earlier assertions by calling archivists to implement archival advocacy and public relations into their daily activities. She further believed that:

When archivists understand and practice their role as advocates, certain other changes will take place affecting funding, education and training, products, programs, and collaboration which will further benefit archival institutions and the profession.³⁴

Reference services became a major area of scrutiny for those concerned with advocacy and public relations.³⁵ David Gracy II even proposed that reference archivists become “front-line marketers of archives.”³⁶ To do so, an archivist would be required to learn and utilise the concepts of marketing, customer centred, exchange, and product:

To be customer-centred means that the archivist must study the customer to gain a sound knowledge of the customer’s stereotypes, perceptions, and conceptions about archives, archivists, and the archival service delivered both within and outside the archivist’s own repository.³⁷

In other words, delivering educational messages should not be the only marketing tool of an archives.

Students of the various archival programs in Canada and the United States have also offered studies of the topic of public programming. One example is the thesis of Alison Gregor entitled: “Going Public: A History of Public Programming at the Hudson’s

³⁴ Elsie Freeman Finch. “Archival Advocacy: Reflections on Myths and Realities.” *Archival Issues*, 20, 2 (1995): 114-127.

³⁵ At a basic level, reference service is regarded as the practice of pointing users to potentially useful services, including records.

³⁶ David Gracy II. “Reference No Longer Is a “P” Word: The Reference Archivist as Marketer.” In Laura B. Cohen (ed.). *Reference Services for Archives and Manuscripts*. New York and London: The Haworth Press, 1997: 171-184 : 171.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 178.

Bay Company Archives.”³⁸ In her thesis, Gregor traces how the institution over the years expanded its goals for public programming from the creation of a societal awareness of the company’s role in Canadian history to include the promotion of its records as gateways to a broader understanding of Canadian history for a wide spectrum of the population, rather than just an academic elite.

Differing perspectives on the place of public programming in the archival mission and how best to provide the service are further complicated by the growing popularity of online exhibits.³⁹ As digitised records became electronic records in the 1990s, archivists realised that these records required a great deal of contextual provenance. In 1998, American archivist Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland inquired:

With the rapid development of the global information infrastructure and networked multimedia systems, is it possible to make access to archival materials and their descriptions truly virtual, to make their use more diverse, and user interaction more effective?⁴⁰

To answer her question she examined the trends in K-12 pedagogical and curricular innovation, and how archives may approach the selection, representation, and presentation of digitised and digital archival materials.

³⁸ Alison Gregor, “Going Public: A History of Public Programming at the Hudson’s Bay Company Archives.” (MA thesis, Department of History, Archival Studies, University of Manitoba/University of Winnipeg, 2001).

³⁹ Here are a few examples of articles written related to this topic: Richard J. Cox, “Access in the Digital Information Age and the Archival Mission: the United States”, *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 19, 1 (1998), 25-40; Kathleen Epp, “Telling Stories around the ‘Electronic Campfire’: The Use of Archives in Television Productions”, *Archivaria* 49 (Spring 2000), 53-83; Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland, “An Exploration of K-12 User Needs for Digital Primary Source Materials,” *American Archivist* 61 (Spring 1998), 136-157; Margaret Hedstrom, “How Do Archivists Make Electronic Archives Usable and Accessible?” *Archives and Manuscripts* 26, 1 (May 1998), 6-22; Theodore J. Hull, “Reference Services and Electronic Records: The Impact of Changing Methods of Communication and Access”, *Reference Services Review* 23, 2 (1995), 73-78; William Landis, “Archival Outreach on the World Wide Web”, *Archival Issues* 20, 2 (1995), 129-147; and Jean-Stéphan Piché, “Doing what’s Possible with What We’ve Got: Using the World Wide Web to Integrate Archival Functions,” *American Archivist* 61, 1 (Spring 1998), 106-122.

⁴⁰ Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland, “An Exploration of K-12 User Needs for Digital Primary Source Materials,” *American Archivist* 61 (Spring 1998), 136-157.

Today, whether the function is defined as reference services, outreach, public relations, public programming or something else, new publications on the matter continuously appear in various journals and manuscripts. These new studies and even an ACA conference in 2003 have prompted archivists to reconsider yet again the place of public programming in the daily concerns of an archivist. They have yet, however, to fully reflect on how best to perform this function in an online world. Tom Nesmith sums up the challenge when he noted that:

As computer technologies evolved in the 1990s, it became much clearer that the principal challenge they present is not technical or administrative, but intellectual. The principal question now is: how can this knowledge of the history of records be better conveyed by computers in the future?⁴¹

The intellectual feat that Nesmith raises for archiving electronic records also impacts the history of digitised older records. It is within this environment that the SHSB defined its public program and ultimately lead to the decision to create the website *Au pays de Riel*.

The SHSB and Public Programming

The mission of the Centre du patrimoine today is to conserve and promote records and resources which have a cultural, political, social, judicial, and historical value for the province of Manitoba and the historical North West Territories. Its mission is important since there has been a Francophone presence in Western Canada for over 250 years.

Despite the changing nuances in the mandate of the SHSB over time, public programming has always been an important element of its identity. From the institution's inception, it has possessed an active publication program of books, articles, and its own bulletin. The organising of events celebrating important historical anniversaries has been another important focus. The SHSB has also assisted with other historical initiatives in

⁴¹ Tom Nesmith, "What's History Got to Do With It?: Reconsidering the Place of Historical Knowledge in Archival Work", *Archivaria* 57 (Spring 2004), p. 13.

the province, such as the establishment of the Musée de Saint-Boniface in the former convent of the Sœurs Grises. Exhibits, conferences, and radio programs are a few other examples of ways in which the SHSB has attempted to reach out to the Franco-Manitoban community.

The importance of public programming has grown over time, particularly since the 1990s. Today, the archives of the SHSB offers many services to the public including genealogy, a newsletter, publications, and its websites. Its goal is stated as follows:

Le service d'archives de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface assure la conservation des fonds d'archives ayant une importance juridique, administrative ou historique pour les francophones du Manitoba. Les acquisitions proviennent des organismes et des particuliers. De nombreux chercheurs en histoire, en généalogie et en sciences humaines ainsi que les artistes et les médias consultent régulièrement les archives. Le dépôt, qui comprend aussi une collection de plus de 15 000 photos, compte actuellement plus de 140 fonds.⁴²

This philosophy towards archival service to the public is probably best exemplified in the annual report of 1998-1999:

Un important service au client ou au public est d'assurer que les documents de valeur historique soient conservés de façon permanente pour les générations d'aujourd'hui et futures. C'est dire que ces documents doivent pouvoir être consultés à plusieurs reprises, pendant plusieurs années, par plusieurs générations et pour ce faire, les documents doivent être bien identifiés, bien décrits, facilement repérable (de façon répétée) et donc bien accessibles. De cette façon l'accès reste démocratique et non privilégiée ou accidentelle.⁴³

The SHSB has promoted this outlook by ensuring that the archives contributes to the sense of place, language, culture, and history of the Franco-Manitoban community.

⁴² Le Centre du patrimoine : Le Service d'archives de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface, <http://www.shsb.mb.ca/archives/archives.htm>. The SHSB is also composed of other departments of service such as its genealogical and library services.

⁴³ "Rapport du service des archives." Rapport annuelle de la SHSB, 1998-1999: 9.

The Franco-Manitoban community has always privileged the conservation of its living memory, a history that dates back to the eighteenth century. By the nineteenth century, individuals such as the Archbishop of Saint-Boniface, Mgr. Alexandre-Antonin Taché, began to create a library and archives. In addition to the official record, they also actively transcribed the stories of French-Canadians and Métis.

In 1902, Archbishop Mgr. Louis-Philippe-Adélarde Langevin founded the SHSB to ensure the conservation of the records that were being collected across the province.⁴⁴ The following year, a constitution was adopted and the SHSB received a specific responsibility towards the Franco-Manitoban community:

Se livrer à l'étude de l'histoire du Canada et en particulier de ce qui concerne Manitoba et les Territoires du Nord-Ouest et de poursuivre des recherches sur les anciens lieux historiques qui se rapportent aux premiers voyages d'exploration des découvreurs du pays.⁴⁵

The mandate was as large as the Diocese of Saint-Boniface at the time; it ranged from the Great Lakes to the Rocky Mountains. The SHSB would receive its legal constitution in 1907 with the mandate to:

Promouvoir l'étude de l'histoire du Canada, de faire des recherches et enquêtes concernant les points de repère, les forts, bâtiments, et sites historiques et événements passés relatifs à ceux-ci, particulièrement ceux concernant la Province du Manitoba; de faire ériger bâtiments et monuments appropriés, de collectionner, de préserver et de publier des manuscrits ayant trait à l'histoire, aux sciences, aux antiquités, de constituer un bibliothèque et un musée et de promouvoir les recherches historiques en général.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ The society was founded on a boat following what a search group believed to have located Fort Saint-Charles in the Lac of the Woods.

⁴⁵ Le Centre du patrimoine : Les grandes lignes de l'histoire de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface, <http://www.shsb.mb.ca/histoire/hist92.htm>.

⁴⁶ Le Centre du Patrimoine : Historique, http://www.shsb.mb.ca/centre_patrimoine/centrepahist.htm.

Among the society's various projects, the work of collecting records, stories, legends, songs, and objects was taken seriously. For instance, there was a large campaign in 1941 in all regions of the province of Manitoba.

By the 1970s, the SHSB began to laicise its operations through the establishment of professional structures. Historians and archivists soon gave the SHSB a new direction to meet the changing needs of the Franco-Manitoban society. The concept of place is central to the outreach programs of the SHSB. This is why they negotiated with such intensity to build the Centre du patrimoine after losing a large number of records and books in the fire of the Saint-Boniface Cathedral in 1968. Funding restraints obliged the personnel of the SHSB to find a temporary solution. In 1973, the Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface (CUSB) offered to provide space. By 1980, the inadequacies of their location led the SHSB to explore new alternatives. In the interim, they moved into larger quarters in the college in 1985. The dream of proper facilities would become a reality on 25 September 1998 with the official opening of the Centre du patrimoine. Riel House also became a major outreach program for the SHSB in 1979 by evoking a sense of place and history for the community. For instance, in 1991-1992, 8600 visitors came to the National Historic Site from all over the world and in 1992 students retraced the life and career of Métis leader, Louis Riel.

The role of community watch dog is another important facet of the public program of the SHSB. For instance, in 1992 a Special Commission decided to rename two historically francophone electoral districts of the city of Winnipeg. The SHSB, with the backing of members of the community and other cultural institutions, tried to

convince the Commission of the importance of maintaining the designations of Saint-Boniface and Saint-Norbert.⁴⁷

Exhibits are yet another important element to the activities of the SHSB. Amongst many others, two important exhibits were created in 1991. The first, entitled “Bienvenue à Saint-Boniface,” travelled to a number of communities in Western Canada. The second, “Gens du pays,” highlighted Franco-Manitoban families that had settled in the region prior to 1870. It was organised in relation to the international colloquium, organised by the Rupertsland Society and the Festival du Voyageur.

In the fall of 1992, the SHSB received funding from the Bureau d'éducation française du Manitoba (BEF) within the program of a Federal-Provincial agreement on official languages in education. The aims of the project were to instil a sense of pride concerning Métis and French-speaking peoples and to discover the richness of their heritage. It also aimed to develop a better understanding of their contributions to the history of Manitoba. Similarly on 28 January 1993, the SHSB and the CUSB organised a lecture to underline the 10th anniversary of the language crisis in Manitoba. Publications were another significant service, primarily in the Bulletin of the SHSB and the publication of manuscripts.⁴⁸

The early 1990s marked the beginnings of a concerted effort to create electronic databases of the fonds and collections of the SHSB to augment these public programming efforts. By 1994, there were a number of databases. There was a database that contained information on over 20,000 individuals who were settled in Western Canada by 1875. Another contained approximately the names of 15,000 individuals who

⁴⁷ Their efforts helped to keep the latter designation.

⁴⁸ Luc Dauphinais, *Histoire de Saint-Boniface. Tome 1: À l'ombre des cathédrales. Des origines de la colonie jusqu'en 1870*. (Saint-Boniface : Les Éditions du blé, 1991).

made contracts with the fur trading companies from 1788 to 1822. The 1901 Census has 600 names of people from Manitoba and Saskatchewan. There was a Parish database with 28,000 names (baptisms, marriages, deaths) of various registers in Francophone Manitoba. 12,000 names comprised the 1870 database.

With the completion of the Centre du patrimoine in 1998, a server was housed in the building to support the various computing functions of the SHSB. The general website of the SHSB also came into existence during this fiscal year.



Le Centre du patrimoine

La Société historique de Saint-Boniface

La plus ancienne société d'histoire francophone de l'Ouest canadien !

Le Centre du patrimoine a pour mission de conserver et de diffuser les documents et ressources à valeur culturelle, patrimoniale, juridique ou historique, fruits de la présence des francophones dans l'Ouest canadien et au Manitoba depuis plus de 250 ans.



Le Mur du Patrimoine.

orne l'entrée principale du Centre, attenante au Centre culturel franco-manitobain. L'édifice appartient à la province du Manitoba. Il est géré par la Société historique de Saint-Boniface (SHSB).

Pages dedicated to the archival functions of the SHSB provided visitors with a list of the fonds in the archives and in many cases a RAD-compliant fonds description.⁴⁹ Some descriptions were at the series and even item level, such as the newly inventoried large format documents.

⁴⁹ RAD refers to the profession's Rules for Archival Description.

As the website grew, the SHSB began to offer more descriptions, records, and histories online. In the section Archives et documents numérisés, a researcher can view information and records related to Louis Riel, a popular subject for the institution's public programs. A second category offers various historical topics: Belgians who call Manitoba home; a searchable database to locate voyageur contracts; a document written by Mgr. Antoine D'Eschambault called the Voyageur; the history of relations between Aboriginal peoples and the new arrivals; a history of the Oblate Province of Manitoba; a chronology of the French presence in Manitoba; a chronology of the Diocese of Saint-Boniface; family histories and genealogy; the first registers of Saint-Boniface (1818-1860); the Fonds Cercle Molière; and the Fonds Henri Julien.

In the spirit of its historical public programming initiatives, the SHSB launched the first phase of its secondary website, *Au pays de Riel*, to commemorate its 100th anniversary in 2002.

Découvertes | **Dossiers** | **Outils** | CONTACT | ACCUEIL

Au pays de Riel

Découvertes

Modules

- [LaVérendrye, père et fils](#)
- [La Grenouillère](#)
- [La chanson des Bois-Brulés](#)
- [Riel, père](#)
- [Georges-Antoine Belcourt](#)
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Les Oblats

- [L'histoire des Oblats au pays de Riel](#)
- [Guide pédagogique](#)

Outils

Outils du site Au pays de Riel

- [Toponymie](#)

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Patrimoine canadien Canadian Heritage

ACCUEIL

Au pays de Riel provided the SHSB the means to work with other archival institutions and celebrate 400 years of French presence in Canada. In this case, the SHSB joined forces with the Centre de recherche en civilisation canadienne-française of the University of Ottawa and the Centre d'études acadiennes of the University of Moncton.⁵⁰ The ability to forge partnerships with other archival, cultural, and historical institutions is also of interest to the SHSB. These two partnerships shaped some of the decisions and set a number of obligations for the committee who created *Au pays de Riel* to meet.⁵¹ In short, the website is a representation of francophone history in Manitoba that is designed for various audiences including those who are school-aged.

Despite their collaboration, the projects remained three distinctive sites in order to retain the unique spirit of each region and the needs of the institutions involved. There are, however, a number of similarities between the projects as each institution began the conception of its site from the parameters of the project. Each institution endeavoured to highlight the value and richness of the heritage and culture of the Francophone and /or Acadian communities it serves. The goal is also to make accessible the largest amount of unedited records as possible to its public.

Due to the importance of the historical figure Louis Riel to the province of Manitoba, the website committee of the SHSB chose to conceptualise its website based on the society that developed from the legacy of Riel and the values he possessed. The

⁵⁰ The site may be accessed at the following URL: <http://www.shsb.mb.ca/paysriel/accueil.html>. To visit the site developed in Ottawa for "La présence française en Ontario: 1610, passeport pour 2010:" <http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/crcf/passeport/index.html>. For the site in Moncton for "400 ans de présence française au Canada : Volet Canada Atlantique": <http://www2.umoncton.ca/cfdocs/cea/index.htm>.

⁵¹ A list of the members of the committee is found at: <http://www.shsb.mb.ca/paysriel/accueil.html>.

SHSB was also conscious to include his precursors because they influenced Riel and laid the foundations of the society he lived in and the heritage that followed.

Today, the two websites of the SHSB are designed to complement one another and inform the public about the institution, describe the work of the personnel and the services offered to the public, list the fonds and highlight some of the records that are housed at the SHSB, and advertise some of its special projects.

As more and more archival institutions choose to integrate websites into their plans for public programming, case studies of projects that are already present on the web like *Au pays de Riel* are useful for others to learn from. In other words, *Au pays de Riel* serves as an example of how an institution redeveloped its public programming to meet its mission in the Internet age.

Chapter 2:

The Design and Navigation of *Au pays de Riel* and Notre-Dame-des-Prairies

Introduction: A Virtual Environment to Display the Records of the SHSB

This chapter introduces the reader to the main features of the site and the navigational structure of *Au pays de Riel*. Once the SHSB chose to create *Au pays de Riel*, the site required a design and a navigational structure. The goal was to provide a virtual environment where the records being exhibited reflected the goals of the SHSB's mission and its definition of public programming. This chapter is designed to provide an overview of this enterprise.

The structure of *Au pays de Riel* presents historical themes and records in a non-linear environment. In some ways, the website parallels the spirit of the Internet which was not designed for just one application, but as a general infrastructure of multiple independent networks of arbitrary design on which new applications like the World Wide Web (www) could be conceived.¹ While the design of *Au pays de Riel* is not completely limitless as it embodies three basic divisions (Découvertes, Dossiers and Outils), it does allow for the continual addition of new elements. Many of the themes are explored in a similar fashion, but there are important distinctions within each, particularly in the case of the Dossiers. The only underlying theme is the Franco-Manitoban and Métis heritage.

According to the web strategy specialist David Berman, the design and navigation of a website are more than eye candy or window dressing. They can create a sense of

¹ Wade Rowland, *Spirit of the Web: The Age of Information From Telegraph to Internet*. (Toronto: Key Porter Books Limited, 1999) and David Trend (ed.), *Reading Digital Culture*. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, Inc., 2001).

place for the user and strengthen the message being conveyed. They also frame the records being displayed by highlighting them in a certain light and in a particular order.² This is primarily accomplished by the navigational structure of the website. A record will only appear when a visitor follows the pathways the navigational structure has determined. The design and navigation of *Au pays de Riel* was assured by the webmaster, based on input by the members of the team.

My involvement in *Au pays de Riel* began when the director of the SHSB, Gilles Lesage, offered me a position as an assistant historian and archivist in November 2002. Having completed my coursework in the archival program, I was completing a work experience at the Library and Archives Canada on an educational project for the institution's online services. I had been bitten by the "online bug" and was interested in working on a website project that exhibited archival material.

I joined the website production team in January 2003 at the beginning of the second phase of the website. In the first phase, the team had conceptualised and developed the design and navigational structure of the website. They had also created several "test" or "trial" modules like the one on La Grenouillère in the Découvertes section of the website. As a result, this chapter will focus on providing a description of the end result of the "look" that was chosen for the website. Despite my absence from this process, I believe an overview of the design and navigational structure of the website should not be ignored in this thesis. One reason is that it provides a framework in which the visitor is introduced to the records. In other words, a walk through the main features of the site and the navigation process of *Au pays de Riel*, will set the stage for understanding how the content was organised. In addition, since my introduction to the

² David Berman, "Developing Your Web Strategy", University of Manitoba, 13 February 2004.

website was similar to a visitor, it will shed some light on how I chose to present the records of the Modules of the Découvertes section that I created.

Navigating Au pays de Riel: the Introductory Pages

The website of Au pays de Riel can be accessed directly by its URL: <http://www.shsb.mb.ca/paysri/accueil.html>. It can also be accessed by a general Google search or through the main website of the SHSB (<http://www.shsb.mb.ca/>). Upon accessing the introductory page, the visitor is greeted with the following page:

Découvertes Dossiers Outils

CONTRAT ACCUEIL

Au pays de Riel

Découvertes

Modules

- [LaVérendrye, père et fils](#)
- [La Grenouillère](#)
- [La chanson des Bois-Brulés](#)
- [Riel, père](#)
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Patrimoine canadien Canadian Heritage

ACCUEIL

The introductory page offers a number of choices to the visitor. One option is to learn more about *Au pays de Riel* by reading short texts that present the project, located in a list to the right of the screen under the heading “Présentation du projet”. These general informational pages, including the welcoming page have a red background to situate the visitor within the site. They may be read separately by clicking on one of the links or one after another by selecting the text that follows. For instance, upon reading about the goals

of the site, a visitor may select the button to read about the team or return to the introductory page.



A user may also choose to visit the Découvertes, Dossiers, and Outils at any time by selecting the red tabs in the upper left corner of the screen. In the upper right corner, a visitor may always return to the introductory page or a screen to contact the SHSB by choosing the respective links. It should also be noted that there is a second method to situate the visitor within the site. As a visitor navigates different trails within the website, the pages are indicated along the black band at the bottom of the page. In this instance, a visitor is in the section Accueil/Buts.

The first introductory link explains the goals or intent of the site.³ The SHSB chose as its primary goal to illustrate an important aspect of Canadian society: the

³ Le but premier de ce projet est de faire connaître un volet très important de la réalité canadienne, c'est-à-dire, l'existence et l'histoire unique d'une population d'expression française dans l'Ouest, et plus particulièrement dans le territoire qui constitue le Manitoba actuel. Un deuxième but est de mettre en valeur les vastes richesses du patrimoine franco-manitobain et métis conservées dans les archives de la Société

existence of a French-speaking population in Western Canada with a unique history. The SHSB also specifies that this site will focus primarily on the province of Manitoba. The secondary goal of *Au pays de Riel* is to highlight and share the vast resources of this French-Canadian and Métis heritage that are conserved at the SHSB.

The second text informs the visitor that a number of individuals with differing backgrounds worked on the project.⁴ Historians are the most numerous members of the group. Equally important, however, were the individuals who coordinated the project, digitised the records, and created the conception and look of the website. It should also be noted that the archivists of the SHSB also played an important role in the creation of the website despite the fact that they are absent from the list.⁵ To ensure the success of *Au pays de Riel*, each individual needed to bring their expertise, vision, and knowledge base to the project.

The third option explains who *Au pays de Riel* saw as its audience: “The project was aimed at any individual who was interested in discovering more about the French presence in Western Canada. The simplicity of the texts and the variety of documents highlighted on the site provide interest for many, including students at the university level

historique de Saint-Boniface, et de les rendre plus accessibles aux chercheurs, tant amateurs que professionnels.

⁴ Voici l'équipe responsable de la réalisation du site *Au pays de Riel* : Gilles Lesage, directeur du projet; Diane Boyd, assistante historienne; Lucien Chaput, historien; Lynne Champagne, historienne; Yolande Chandler, recherchiste; Lorne Coulson, numérisation de documents; Patrick Neveux, webmestre et conception graphique.

⁵ The archivists were Jacinthe Duval, Gilles Lesage, and Diane Boyd. The latter individuals also worked in other capacities (as the coordinator of the project and as an assistant historian). Jacinthe Duval in later editions of the site also served an historical role. The primary reason for this omission is because the list was never updated.

as well as serious researchers.”⁶ The fourth presentation of the project is a general explanation of how to navigate through the site.⁷

The SHSB was assisted by a number of institutions that it wished to publicly thank.⁸ The funding for the project was largely provided by the partnership fund of Heritage Canada. The project was not possible without the collaboration of its two partners, the Centre de recherche en civilisation canadienne-française of the University of Ottawa and the Centre d'études acadiennes of the University of Moncton. Lucie Pagé of the Centre de recherche en civilisation canadienne française of the University of Ottawa and Maurice Basque of the Centre d'études acadiennes of the University of Moncton, were given a special nod from the SHSB for their contribution. The Provincial Archives of Manitoba, the National Archives of Canada, and the Société Radio-Canada were also instrumental for their assistance in the research and reproduction of many of the records

⁶ Le projet vise toute personne intéressée à en savoir davantage sur la présence française dans l'Ouest canadien. La simplicité des textes et la variété des documents numérisés rendent ces pages très conviviales même pour les élèves du niveau présecondaire, tandis que les études plus poussées et les outils de recherche peuvent être appréciés par les chercheurs sérieux.

⁷ The navigation of the site is the topic of the chapter, and as a result, this text will not be described here other than in its original text in this footnote. Ce site Web est composé principalement de modules, chacun portant un titre et traitant d'un sujet particulier, par exemple un thème très spécifique de l'histoire du Manitoba français et des Métis, ou encore un personnage, un lieu ou un événement qui a marqué son évolution. Les modules sont constitués d'abord de documents numérisés et de textes de présentation, mais les liens hypertextes et les tiroirs dans la partie *Pour en savoir plus* de chaque module permettent d'ouvrir des fenêtres séparées qui apportent des précisions au sujet abordé. L'architecture non linéaire du site permet d'accéder à un module donné par une variété de parcours. On peut également passer d'un module à un autre, d'un module à une fenêtre ou vice-versa, par l'entremise de mots-clés. Enfin, on peut facilement retracer le parcours suivi, car il est identifié sur la bande noire au bas de la page, ou retourner directement à la page d'accueil pour commencer à neuf.

⁸ Ce projet a été rendu possible grâce au financement de Patrimoine canadien dans le cadre du Fonds des partenariats du Programme de culture canadienne en ligne (PCCE) et de Francofonds. La Société historique de Saint-Boniface (SHSB) tient à remercier ses deux institutions partenaires, et plus particulièrement Lucie Pagé, responsable des archives au Centre de recherche en civilisation canadienne-française (CRCCF) de l'Université d'Ottawa et Maurice Basque, directeur des Études acadiennes au Centre d'études acadiennes (CÉA) de l'Université de Moncton. Le CRCCF et l'Université d'Ottawa d'abord et Lucie Pagé en particulier pour avoir mené le dossier de la demande financière; le CÉA ensuite pour leur appui et leur collaboration. La SHSB désire également souligner la précieuse collaboration des Archives provinciales du Manitoba, des Archives nationales du Canada et de la Société Radio-Canada au niveau de la recherche, de la reproduction de documents et de la permission d'utiliser leurs ressources sur notre site. Enfin, il ne faut pas oublier l'aide indispensable de tout le personnel du Centre du patrimoine. Merci à tous!

on the site. The SHSB ends its list with a special thanks to the personnel of the Centre du patrimoine.⁹ Their role is mentioned here in brief, but the interrelationships could certainly be analysed in greater detail in the future. The final introductory text is a word on the legal issues that are essential for any publication.

This marks the end of the introductory pages. The goal of the pages is to provide users with an idea of the type of site that they are visiting, and ultimately encourage them to further discover the website.

Navigating *Au pays de Riel*: the Découvertes

The section Découvertes is the largest section of the website and where most of the digitised records of the project reside. The visitor enters the Découvertes section by either selecting the upper left red Découvertes tab or the Découvertes title in the green box.

The screenshot shows the website's main navigation and content structure. At the top, there are tabs for 'Découvertes', 'Dossiers', and 'Outils'. Below this is a header with the title 'Au pays de Riel' and a 'CONTACT' button. The main content is organized into three primary columns:

- Découvertes (Modules):**
 - [LaVérendrye, père et fils](#)
 - [La Grenouillère](#)
 - [La chanson des Bois-Brulés](#)
 - [Riel, père](#)
 - [Georges-Antoine Belcourt](#)
 - [La fondation de la SHSB](#)
 - [Les écrits de Manie Tobie](#)
 - [Saint-Léon](#)
 - [Saint-Norbert](#)
- Dossiers (Expositions):**
 - [Tracer un espace en arts visuels](#)
 - [Henri Julien dans l'Ouest canadien - Une exposition virtuelle](#)
 - [Centenaire de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface](#)

Les Oblats

 - [L'histoire des Oblats au pays de Riel](#)
 - [Guide pédagogique](#)
- Outils:**
 - Outils du site Au pays de Riel**
 - [Toponymie](#)
 - Outils du site parent SHSB**
 - [Voyageurs](#)
 - [Familles](#)
 - [Fonds d'archives](#)
 - [Bibliothèque](#)
 - Troussees pédagogiques**
 - [Introduction](#)

On the right side, there is a 'Présentation du projet' section with links to: [Buts](#), [Équipe](#), [Clientèle](#), [Navigation](#), [Remerciements](#), and [Mentions légales](#).

The footer contains the text '2004 © Société historique de Saint-Boniface' and logos for 'Patrimoine canadien' and 'Canadian Heritage'.

⁹ Their role is mentioned here in brief, but the interrelationships could certainly be analysed in greater detail in the future as it relates to the history of the record.

The introductory text explains that the Découvertes are a series of modules with topics about people, events, and places that relate to the heritage of Franco-Manitobans and of Métis from Manitoba. Each module comprises a variety of digitised records that are accompanied by a presentation text. They are divided into three historical period themes: “Les précurseurs;” “Métis et Canadiens, société en définition;” and “Le pays de Riel au 20^e siècle,” or in other words, those who came, those who built, and those who live the culture. They are generally accessed by the subject or theme of the module, but a visitor may select from four options in the black bar in the upper left corner of the screen at any moment within the Découvertes section: “Thèmes,” “Personnages,” “Événements,” and “Lieux” are the options.

Découvertes

Thèmes

- [Les précurseurs](#)
- [Métis et Canadiens, société en définition](#)
- [Le pays de Riel au 20^e siècle](#)

Le volet « Découvertes » du site Web *Au pays de Riel* comprend une série de modules ayant trait aux personnages, aux événements et aux lieux qui font partie du patrimoine métis et francophone du Manitoba. Chaque module présente une variété de documents numérisés, avec un texte de présentation du sujet abordé.

On peut également accéder aux modules par l'entremise des listes de [personnages](#), de [lieux](#) et d'[événements](#).

Les modules sont organisés selon trois grands thèmes représentant de façon globale l'évolution de la présence française dans l'Ouest, et plus particulièrement au Manitoba.

Ces trois thèmes sont :

- Les précurseurs
- Métis et Canadiens, société en définition
- Le pays Riel au 20^e siècle.

ACCUEIL / DÉCOUVERTES

By selecting one of the historical period themes to the left of the introductory text, the visitor is welcomed by a text that provides a general overview of the epoch in question. In the case of the option “Métis et Canadiens, société en definition,” the following page

opens to explain that the modules in this historical period date from the nineteenth century:

The screenshot shows a website interface with a yellow header. The header contains navigation tabs: 'Découvertes', 'Dossiers', and 'Outils'. Below these are sub-tabs for 'THÈMES', 'PERSONNAGES', 'ÉVÉNEMENTS', 'LIEUX', 'CONTACT', and 'ACCUEIL'. The main content area is titled 'Métis et Canadiens, société en définition'. On the left, there is a list of modules, each with a bullet point and a link: 'Louis Riel', 'La Grenouillère', 'Chanson des Bois-Brulés', 'Riel, père', 'Georges-Antoine Belcourt', 'Les missionnaires à la Rivière-Rouge', 'L'éducation des femmes à la Rivière-Rouge', 'La colonisation francophone au Manitoba 1870-1914', 'Notre Dame des Prairies', 'Club de raquettes « Le Voyageur »', 'Les Belges au Manitoba', 'Les soeurs Grises et l'Hôpital général Saint-Boniface', and 'Relations entre Métis et Canadiens-Français'. On the right, there is a paragraph of text: 'Au début du 19e siècle, la lutte pour le contrôle du commerce des fourrures dans le Nord-Ouest devient un combat acharné, parfois même violent entre les deux grandes entreprises commerciales, la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson (CBH) et la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest (CNO). À des endroits-clés le long des cours d'eau du Nord-Ouest s'élevèrent, souvent l'un en face de l'autre, des postes de traite des compagnies rivales. Chacun cherche à séduire et à garder la clientèle autochtone et à s'allier les chasseurs métis et canadiens indépendants ou « hommes libres » qui leur fournissent de précieuses pelleteries.' Below the text is a link labeled 'Prochaine page'. At the bottom of the page, there is a navigation bar with the text 'ACCUEIL / DÉCOUVERTES / MÉTIS ET CANADIENS' and a left-pointing arrow.

The introductory text may be several pages long and a link will appear to access the “Prochaine page.”

To the left of the text is the list of modules that are currently available to the public in this historical period theme. If the visitor selects the module “L’éducation des femmes à la Rivière-Rouge,” an introductory page opens and invites the visitor to click to enter.

Découvertes **Dossiers** **Outils** **Au pays de Riel**

THÈMES PERSONNAGES ÉVÉNEMENTS LIEUX CONTACT ACCUEIL

Métis et Canadiens, société en évolution

- [La chanson des Bois-Brulés](#)
- [Riel, père](#)
- [Georges-Antoine Belcourt](#)
- [Les missionnaires à la rivière Rouge, 1818-1844](#)
- [L'éducation des femmes à la rivière Rouge](#)
- [La colonisation francophone au Manitoba, 1870-1914](#)
- [Notre-Dame-des-Prairies](#)
- [Le club de raquettes « Le Voyageur »](#)
- [Immigration belge](#)
- [Les Sœurs Grises et l'Hôpital général Saint-Boniface](#)
- [Relations entre Métis et Canadiens-Français](#)

ACCUEIL / DÉCOUVERTES / MÉTIS ET CANADIENS / ÉDUCATION DES FEMMES

It should also be noted that the list of the other modules within the historical period theme are always presented to the left of the introductory page of the module such as the image provided here.¹⁰

In keeping with the spirit of a non-linear architecture, a specific module may be accessed from the main page of the site if the navigator does not wish to read the introductory texts. At the moment there is one major disadvantage to this method; due to the constraints of space, not all the Découvertes are available from this page.

Navigating Au pays de Riel: the Dossiers and the Outils

There are two ways to navigate the Dossiers. By clicking on either the upper red Dossiers tab or the Dossiers tab in the blue box, the visitor is led to an introductory page that explains the types of texts and records that are located in this portion of the website. The Dossiers propose in-depth studies of a social, cultural, economic, political, or another

¹⁰ A description of how to navigate within a Découvertes will be described with the introduction of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies in the next chapter.

issue that concern the history and documentary evidence of Métis and Franco-Manitoban communities. They may be in the form of an academic article, an exhibit, or other format to highlight a specific series of records. The digitised record, whether it be a photograph, a drawing, a map, a textual document, or an audio or audio visual recording is intended to figure as the prominent feature of these Dossiers. At the moment, there are two categories: Exhibits and a series of inter-related modules about the history of the Oblats de Marie-Immaculée.

Upon entering the Dossiers section, a visitor is greeted by the following introductory text:

Dossiers

Exposition
[Tracer un espace en arts visuels](#)
[Henri Julien dans l'Ouest canadien - Une exposition virtuelle](#)
[Centenaire de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface](#)

Les Oblats
[L'histoire des Oblats au pays de Riel](#)
[Module pédagogique](#)

Le volet « Dossiers » du site Web *Au Pays de Riel* propose des articles de fond, des expositions virtuelles, des dossiers de presse, des analyses et des études qui examinent de façon plus approfondie certains thèmes sociaux, culturels, économiques, politiques et autres du Manitoba français. Le document numérisé, soit photographie, dessin, carte, document textuel, enregistrement sonore or audio, figure toujours au premier plan dans ces dossiers.

ACCUEIL

To the left of this introductory text, a Dossier may be selected by clicking on the title of the link. In this instance, by selecting “Tracer un espace en arts visuels” the visitor enters a visual art tour. A screen opens and pans the Salon Empire of the SHSB that is reserved for physical exhibits. This is accomplished using Quick Time and the visitor may zoom

in or out at any moment to view the images going by. The visitor may also select the option “Show Hot Spots” which indicates the main features of the exhibit.



The second navigational option is a quick reference to a specific Dossiers where the visitor bypasses the introductory text. This is done by selecting directly from the welcoming page the options in the blue box:

Découvertes Dossiers Outils

CONTACT ACCUEIL

Au pays de Riel

Découvertes

Modules

- [LaVérendrye, père et fils](#)
- [La Grenouillère](#)
- [La chanson des Bois-Brulés](#)
- [Riel, père](#)
- [Georges-Antoine Belcourt](#)
- [La fondation de la SHSB](#)
- [Les écrits de Manie Tobie](#)
- [Saint-Léon](#)
- [Saint-Norbert](#)

Dossiers

Expositions

- [Tracer un espace en arts visuels](#)
- [Henri Julien dans l'Ouest canadien - Une exposition virtuelle](#)
- [Centenaire de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface](#)

Les Oblats

- [L'histoire des Oblats au pays de Riel](#)
- [Guide pédagogique](#)

Outils

Outils du site Au pays de Riel

- [Toponymie](#)

Outils du site parent SHSB

- [Voyageurs](#)
- [Familles](#)
- [Fonds d'archives](#)
- [Bibliothèque](#)

Trousses pédagogiques

- [Introduction](#)

Présentation du projet

- [Buts](#)
- [Équipe](#)
- [Clientèle](#)
- [Navigation](#)
- [Remerciements](#)
- [Mentions légales](#)

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 Patrimoine canadien Canadian Heritage

ACCUEIL

By selecting “Henri Julien dans l’Ouest canadien – une exposition virtuelle,” for example, from the list in the blue box, a visitor enters directly into the exhibit and is not obliged to read the introductory text, explaining the purpose of the Dossiers. This is a useful feature for individuals who frequently visit *Au pays de Riel* or for individuals searching for something specific. The introductory page of the exhibit is a short biography of Henri Julien’s life and his works.

Découvertes Dossiers Outils **Au pays de Riel** CONTACT ACCUEIL

Henri Julien dans l'Ouest canadien Une exposition virtuelle

Henri Julien, artiste illustrateur d'origine québécoise, a connu une grande renommée dans le milieu de la presse écrite à la fin du 19^e et au début du 20^e siècles. Cette exposition virtuelle des œuvres de Julien qui font partie des collections de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface met en évidence son lien avec l'Ouest canadien et plus particulièrement avec l'archidiocèse de Saint-Boniface.

Né à Québec en 1852, Henri Julien manifeste très jeune un talent naturel pour le dessin. Après avoir fréquenté le collège d'Ottawa, il entre comme apprenti graveur à l'imprimerie Leggo and Company de Montréal. Dès 1869, il travaille comme dessinateur dans les ateliers du *Canadian Illustrated News* ainsi que pour *L'Opinion publique*, qui paraît de 1870 à 1883. Il collabore aussi à d'autres publications montréalaises à titre de caricaturiste.

Henri Julien fait également des dessins de reportage. À l'invitation du colonel G.A. French, commandant de la Police à cheval du Nord-Ouest, il accompagne la force policière lors d'une expédition jusqu'aux pieds des montagnes Rocheuses en 1874. Une série de dessins de cette expédition, dont plusieurs représentent des scènes manitobaines, sont publiés dans *L'Opinion publique* du 30 juillet 1874 au 25 février 1875.


Introduction

- Album ▾
- L'Opinion publique* ▾
- Illustrations ▾
- Liens ▾
- Bibliographie ▾

01 de 03 ▾

The exhibit offers a number of virtual tours. The first is a reproduction of a forty page album of his drawings called: "Dessins Souvenirs par Henri Julien." Here is an example of the presentation:

Découvertes Dossiers Outils **Au pays de Riel** CONTACT ACCUEIL



Indiens Chippewyan ou Montagnais des Rocheuses, aquarelle par Henri Julien c1903

Archives de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Fonds Henri Julien, 053/13

14 de 40 ▾

The second is a reproduction of his illustrations from an expedition where he accompanied a police force to the Rocky Mountains in 1874. These sketches were then published in “L’Opinion publique.” The third option is to view a selection of others drawings by the artist. The fourth and fifth options provide references to other websites or studies about Henri Julien.

The third section is called Outils and they are accessed through the same methods as the Découvertes and Dossiers, but this time the background colour is burgundy. There are three types of Outils: “Outils du site *Au pays de Riel*” (research tools created for the site); “Outils du site parent SHSB” (research tools from the SHSB’s parent site); and “Trousses pédagogiques” (learning resources). The introductory text of this section describes the Outils:

Parmi les outils offerts au navigateur du site *Au pays de Riel* on trouve des bases de données toponymiques et généalogiques, des répertoires, des inventaires de documents, des instruments de recherche et d’autres aides indispensables pour les chercheurs.

Each Outils works a little differently, but allow a visitor to search for various types of information. In the case of “Les voyageurs,” a visitor may perform a search for the names of voyageurs who signed contracts with the fur trading companies:

Découvertes | **Dossiers** | Outils Au pays de Riel

Recherche dans la base de données des engagements de voyageurs


Entrer le mot que vous cherchez dans la case au-dessous :

Word Wheel

Pour améliorer la recherche utilisez &, / et ! symboles de [et], [ou] et [sans].
L'astérisque [*] ajouté à une partie de mot permet de chercher des variantes du mot (ex. [agric*] permet de chercher [agriculteur], [agriculture], [agricole], etc...)

[Retour au menu](#)
[Page d'accueil](#)

Ce projet a été réalisé grâce à l'aide financière du gouvernement du Canada et du gouvernement du Manitoba.



Upon performing the word search “Cloutier,” for instance, a list of the results will appear indicating the name of the voyageur, the name of the notary, and the destination of the trip:

Découvertes | **Dossiers** | Outils Au pays de Riel

voyatable < <<

Nom	Notaire	Destination
CLOUTIER CHARLES	CHABOILLEZ, LOUIS	GRAND PORTAGE
CLOUTIER CHARLES	CHABOILLEZ, LOUIS	GRAND PORTAGE
CLOUTIER CHARLES	CHABOILLEZ, LOUIS	MICHILIMAKINAC
CLOUTIER CHARLES	CHABOILLEZ, LOUIS	NORD-OUEST
CLOUTIER FRANCOIS	CHABOILLEZ, LOUIS	GRAND PORTAGE
CLOUTIER FRANCOIS	CHABOILLEZ, LOUIS	DANS LE NORD-OUEST
CLOUTIER JACQUES	CHABOILLEZ, LOUIS	POINTE-AU-BARRIL
CLOUTIER JEAN-BAPTISTE	CHABOILLEZ, LOUIS	MICHILIMAKINAC
CLOUTIER JEAN-BAPTISTE	CHABOILLEZ, LOUIS	MICHILIMAKINAC
CLOUTIER JEAN-BAPTISTE	CHABOILLEZ, LOUIS	TEMISCAMINGUE
CLOUTIER JEAN-BAPTISTE	CHABOILLEZ, LOUIS	ENDROITS INDIQUES DU NEPIGON
CLOUTIER LOUIS	CHABOILLEZ, LOUIS	TOUTE LA PARTIE DU SUD
CLOUTIER PIERRE	CHABOILLEZ, LOUIS	POINTE-AU-BARRIL
CLOUTIER LOUIS	CHABOILLEZ, LOUIS	MICHILIMAKINAC
CLOUTIER PIERRE	CHABOILLEZ, LOUIS	DANS LE SUD

In selecting one of the names of the voyageurs (Jean-Baptiste Cloutier), a pop-up screen will appear with the information found in his contract:

Voyarapport ▼	Previous Record	Next Record	Close
Engagement pardevant les notaires publics			
Nom de l'engagé CLOUTIER, JEAN-BAPTISTE		Date de l'engagement 1798-08-09	
Paroisse de l'engagé POINTE-CLAIRE		Notaire devant qui est signé l'engagement CHABOILLEZ, LOUIS	
Commerçant avec qui est pris l'engagement P.-G. COTTE			
Destination de l'engagé MICHILIMAKINAC			
Code 2			

The pedagogical tools are designed for teachers of varying grades.

Utilising Découvertes, Dossiers, and Outils to Their Full Potential

The design and navigational structure of the Découvertes provide the virtual book covers of the stories told in the modules.¹¹ This virtual book is not linear, but the structure is still limited to allow a story to unfold. The advantage of the Découvertes is that this type of presentation allows for the exploration of a large number of possible topics. This is advantageous to the archival service of the SHSB, because its goal is to promote as large an amount of records it houses as possible. The only limitations are the types of records housed at the SHSB, the theme of Franco-Manitoban and Métis heritage in Manitoba, and the number of topics the website committee conceptualises. They are relatively small, cohesive, and independent from one another. A visitor can learn quickly

¹¹ One source that was frequently used was the tutorial offered by Cornell University: "Moving Theory into Practice: Digital Imaging Tutorial," <http://www.library.cornell.edu/preservation/tutorial/contents.html>

about the topic and see a large number of records that accompany the theme. Once the structure of one Découvertes module is learned, a visitor will know what to expect from the next. This type of exhibit also responds to the historical society service of the SHSB.

There are, however, a number of disadvantages from an historical and an archival point of view. The constrained structure of the Découvertes can also be viewed in negative terms. The limited space does not allow for an in-depth study of any given topic and it is difficult to forge links between the modules other than by their placement within an historical period and theme. The stories that are told also provide only one version of a story and do not analyse varying interpretations. Additionally, the records that are digitised come from a variety of sources, thus removing the context behind their original order and provenance. Original order and provenance are two important tenets of the archival profession. It is generally believed that an archivist should provide as much information as possible about the original order of a fonds or collection, meaning how the creator(s) used the records and details concerning where it came from (provenance). These two tenets are essential to understand the history of the records housed in an archives. Focussed on the subject of the module, the introductory text and the vignettes do not generally discuss the history of the record prior to its digitisation and placement within the Découvertes.

Unlike the Découvertes, the structure of the Dossiers, and to some extent the Outils, is only limited by the imagination and creativity of the members of the website team and the technologies that are available during the process. The Dossiers that have been created to date still serve a similar function as the Découvertes and many of the disadvantages concerning the archival point of view that were expressed earlier (history

of the record, original order, and provenance) are still present in this section. The Outils, while limited to databases and pedagogical tools, do not, to date, forge an important link with the Découvertes and Dossiers from an archival point of view.

The structure of the Dossiers and Outils, however, leads me to believe that the topics discussed in the Découvertes could be further enriched in this section. In other words, the Dossiers and Outils could serve as a place to discuss the processes that went behind the creation of the modules for the Découvertes. Through the creation of complementary Dossiers and Outils concerning the history of the record, an explanation of the decisions made by the historian when writing the text and selecting the records, the effects of technology during the digitisation process, are but a few suggestions of the types of topics that could be undertaken by the Dossiers and Outils.

Unfortunately, this is not a simple task. The sheer number of variables would create an enormous amount of topics to be considered. Funding, time, and resources may also be an important constraint. There is also the question of whether the public would even be interested in this type of information. Moreover, the goal of the website is to promote the records of the SHSB and these types of discussions would not necessarily introduce any new records to the site.

As previously stated, however, I believe that we are professionally obligated to provide information concerning the history of the record, including the portion of the story related to the display of the records online. The Internet in contemporary society has firmly established public programming as a core function because the Internet affords a means to reach a much needed larger audience for archival services, which, in turn, will create a growing reliance upon public programming educational services among

researchers and sponsors of archives. It also highlights certain ethical concerns, which also underscore the need for greater contextual information. An archivist has the responsibility to protect the “intellectual integrity” of records and employ their specialised knowledge and experience “for the benefit of society as a whole.” Due to the fact that every website requires choices, I believe as archivists we need to try to remain accountable to archival principles and methods of our profession. My stance on the matter is that, like the different types of books that are found on a topic (academic or more generalized, and so forth), options should be given to the visitor. If the visitor is not interested in learning about the history of the record, then that person should not be obliged to do so. The next chapter will accept this challenge, and examine the module Notre-Dame-des-Prairies, reflecting on how the Dossiers and Outils could further enhance the history of the records being displayed in the Découvertes.

Chapter 3:

The Images of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies:

Pop-Ups and a Virtual Drawer of Records

Introduction: The History of a Record

If my premise that the choices that an archival institution makes while creating a website have a significant impact on how audiences interpret the exhibited records and ultimately the institution that houses them, then the Découvertes section of *Au pays de Riel* is certainly a testimony to this process. Moreover, the first module that I created entitled Notre-Dame-des-Prairies is certainly no exception. Through an examination of the decisions behind the creation of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies, this chapter will consider the story behind the records in the pop-ups and the virtual drawer of this module. It will also assess whether the structure of *Au pays de Riel* can enrich the understanding of the displays by pondering some of the different aspects of the history of the record that could have been considered in addition to the barebones description that accompanies the records.

The history of a record refers to the story behind the life of a record.¹ It begins with the decision of the creator to produce a record to meet a certain need or to serve a particular purpose. In many instances, a record is generated by more than one creator in

¹ The history of the record is currently being discussed by a number of scholars. The most influential to this thesis are the work of Tom Nesmith, Verne Harris, and Terry Cook. Tom Nesmith, "Still Fuzzy, But More Accurate: Some Thoughts on the 'Ghosts' of Archival Theory", *Archivaria* 47 (Spring 1999), 136-150 and "What's History Got to Do With It?: Reconsidering the Place of Historical Knowledge in Archival Work", *Archivaria* 57 (Spring 2004), 1-28. Verne Harris, "Redefining Archives in South Africa: Public Archives and Society in Transition, 1990-1996", *Archivaria* 46 (Fall 1996), 6-27 and "On (Archival) Odyssey(s)", *Archivaria* 51 (Spring 2001), 2-13. Verne Harris and Carolyn Hamilton were co-editors of the following book: *Refiguring the Archive*. (Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002). Terry Cook, "Archives, Evidence and Memory: Thoughts on a Divided Tradition", *Archival Issues* 22 (1997): 177-182 and "What is Past is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas Since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift", *Archivaria* 43 (Spring 1997), 17-63.

view of a combination of needs and purposes. The ideas are then assembled by the creator and a media is chosen. These are influenced by time, place, the society in which the creator is situated, and by recording technologies of the day. ² The process of creation may occur in a brief or over a lengthy period of time. It may undergo a number of versions and variations until the record meets the requirements it was set out to accomplish. It may be a unique record or have several copies.³

The newly created record is then used in an active fashion for a period of time. The record is generally linked to other records. Each of these records will subsequently influence the interpretation and use of one another. The record may be used by the creator, transferred to one or various users, or both. Each user will utilise the record in sometimes similar or different ways. A record is used, shared, and stored in view of its public or confidential nature, interest, or any other reason. It is also regulated, among others, by societal views, corporate policies, legal obligations, or legislation. They are sometimes used by balancing the need to know (or the right to access) and the right to privacy. They can hold a person accountable, tell a particular story, or have any other meaning that the creator and subsequent users attribute to them. At any time, a user may change various aspects of the record, thus creating a new record from the old. Sometimes the old record is also kept, but it may also be destroyed. They are also understood or

² For instance, students will interpret and create records in a different way than their teachers. Ronald W Evans, "Lessons From History: Teacher and Student Conceptions of the Meaning of History Revisited: Ideology, Curriculum, and Student Belief", *Theory and Research in Social Education* 18, 2 (1990), 101-138. See also: Peter Seixas, "Historical Understanding among Adolescents in a Multicultural Setting", *Curriculum Inquiry* 23, 3 (1993), 301-327.

³ John Seeley Brown and Paul Duguid suggest that the information of a record has a social life of its own: *The Social Life of Information*. (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2000).

misunderstood, according to the knowledge of the person using the record or other information that is available from other records.⁴

Eventually, a record becomes less active and is sometimes destroyed or filed for a period of time. In the case of multiple copies, each copy may have a different outcome. When a record is no longer used by the creator or a user, it may find its way into a long-term storage facility and a small portion eventually finds its way to an archival institution. Again new meanings are attributed to the record.⁵ The institution that houses the record, other similar material linked to the record, and its physical condition upon crossing the threshold of an archival institution are some examples of how the interpretation and subsequent history of a record will be understood.

The acquisition, conservation, classification, and description of the record by an archives are also a part of a record's history. An archivist will attempt to archive records according to their provenance and original order, pending the types of information that are available. At times, however, an archivist must attempt to recreate or impose an order to the records. In many cases little is known about the history of the record prior to its arrival in the archives. Moreover, older archival practices did not always consider the changes made to a record within the archives as a part of its history.⁶ Today, archivists recognise the importance of documenting all changes to a record, whether it is in the

⁴ The process of interpretation invariably affects all subsequent views on a topic. This idea is elaborated in the article by Jocelyne Létourneau, "L'avenir du Canada. Par rapport à quelle histoire?" *Canadian Historical Review* 81, 2 (2000), 230-259. See also: Helen Samuels, "Who Controls the Past?" *American Archivist* 49 (Spring 1986), 109-124.

⁵ There are a number of articles and books about the subject. For instance, Carol Couture, "Les archives, miroir de la société, mémoire de l'humanité: Une ressource essentielle pour l'éducation au XXI^e siècle", *Archives* 27, 2 (1995), 17-24 and Richard Cox, "The Concept of Public Memory and Its Impact on Archival Public Programming", *Archivaria* 36 (Autumn 1993), 122-135.

⁶ Terry Cook provides a good synopsis of the transitions in archival thought over time in his article: "What is Past is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas Since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift", *Archivaria* 43 (Spring 1997): 17-63.

ordering of the records, changes required to conserve the record, or when they are utilised in exhibits such as online websites such as *Au pays de Riel*.⁷

The result of creating Notre-Dame-des-Prairies is that the history of the records exhibited has been changed by placing them in a different context. The very creation of a topic to discuss the history of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies and exhibit some of the records housed at the SHSB introduced a new framework or initial context that changed the history of the records in two fundamental ways.⁸

The records that are displayed in this module belonged to a variety of fonds and collections, each with its own unique provenance and original order. By selecting certain records from these various fonds, the first level of change occurred the moment I chose some records and left others out. In many ways, the process created a new framework in which the newly amalgamated records interacted with one another. As the process is not unique, any individual who composes a text will select a source or a record to illustrate an argument and ignore or dismiss others. In each instance, the history of a record is changed. I personally do not believe that the process is detrimental to the record, but I do think that when a project is both archival and historical in nature, archivists need to accept certain responsibilities with regard to the records. The role of an archivist is to provide context or information about the history of the record rather than solely

⁷ The role of the computer and later the Internet has dramatically changed the way archives preserve and present their records. For an example of how these views have changed over time, see the perspectives of the role of the computer, electronic records, and the Internet between the following articles: Michael Cook, *Archives and the Computer*. (London: Butterworth, 1980), David Bearman, "User Presentation Language in Archives", *Archives and Museum Informatics* 3 (Winter 1989-1990), 3-7; Theodore J. Hull, "Reference Services and Electronic Records: The Impact of Changing Methods of Communication and Access", *Reference Services Review* 23, 2 (1995), 73-78; Richard J. Cox, "Access in the Digital Information Age and the Archival Mission: the United States", *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 19, 1 (1998), 25-40; Margaret Hedstrom, "How Do Archivists Make Electronic Archives Usable and Accessible?" *Archives and Manuscripts* 26, 1 (May 1998), 6-22; and Kathleen Epp, "Telling Stories around the 'Electronic Campfire': The Use of Archives in Television Productions", *Archivaria* 49 (Spring 2000), 53-83.

⁸ It should be noted that I was both the archivist and the historian assigned to create Notre-Dame-des-Prairies.

concentrate on the content or the interpretation of the content with specific research areas or subject themes.⁹

The second level of change to the initial context relates to the information chosen to include in both the general text and in the vignettes that accompany the exhibited record. Once again, there was a process of selection as some details were highlighted and others were left out. In many instances, the decision to include information was dictated by the storyline. In the case of the vignettes, at times there existed little contextual information about the history of the records and instead historical anecdotes were discussed in the vignettes. In yet other circumstances, the contextual information that was known about the record, did not fit the direction of the story being told. As a result, this part of the history of the record was suppressed and other historical details were provided in their place.

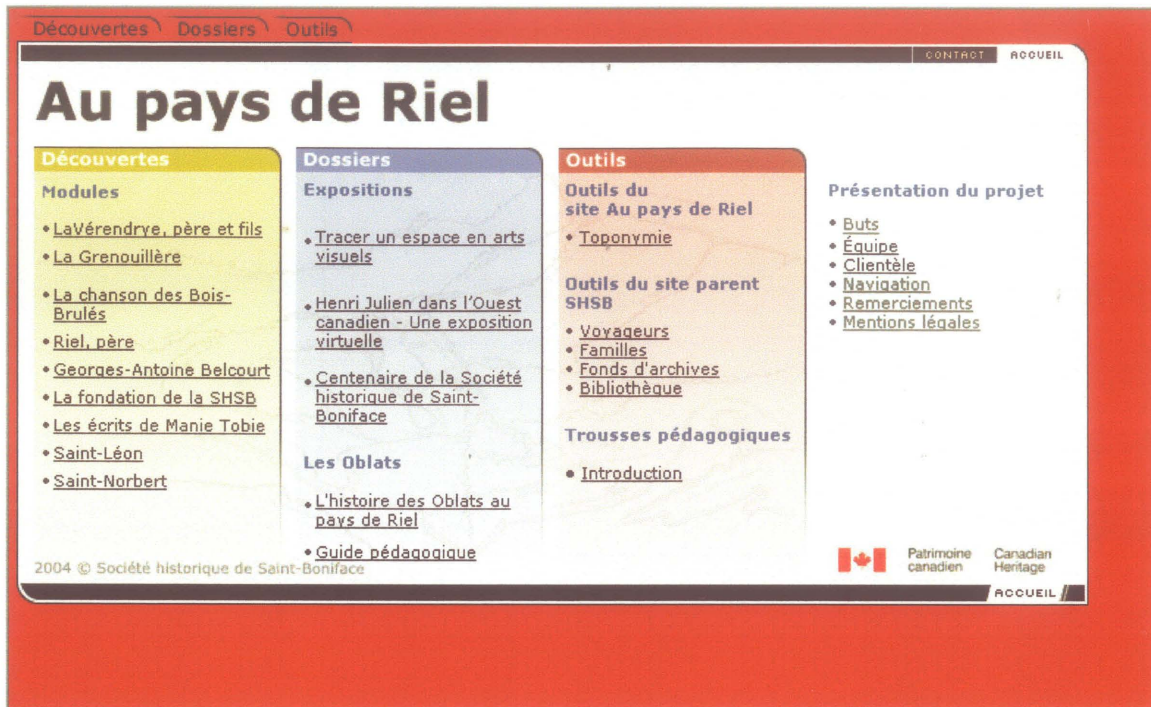
An important segment of the SHSB as an institution is its role as an historical society. The Découvertes section of the website reflects this reality with historians creating modules and utilising records from a content perspective. There are many ways to write a history, but most include a historiography or some kind of discussion about the sources that influenced the work. When the story centres on records that are displayed, this process becomes fundamental in understanding the history of the record. To meet my obligation as the historian of this module, I will examine the reasons behind some of the choices that were made during the selection process of the records highlighted in Notre-Dame-des-Prairies.

⁹ Terry Cook "What is Past is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas Since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift", *Archivaria* 43 (Spring 1997): 17-63 and Richard Cox and David Wallace (eds.), *Archives and the Public Good: Accountability and Records in Modern Society*. (Westport: Quorum Books, 2002).

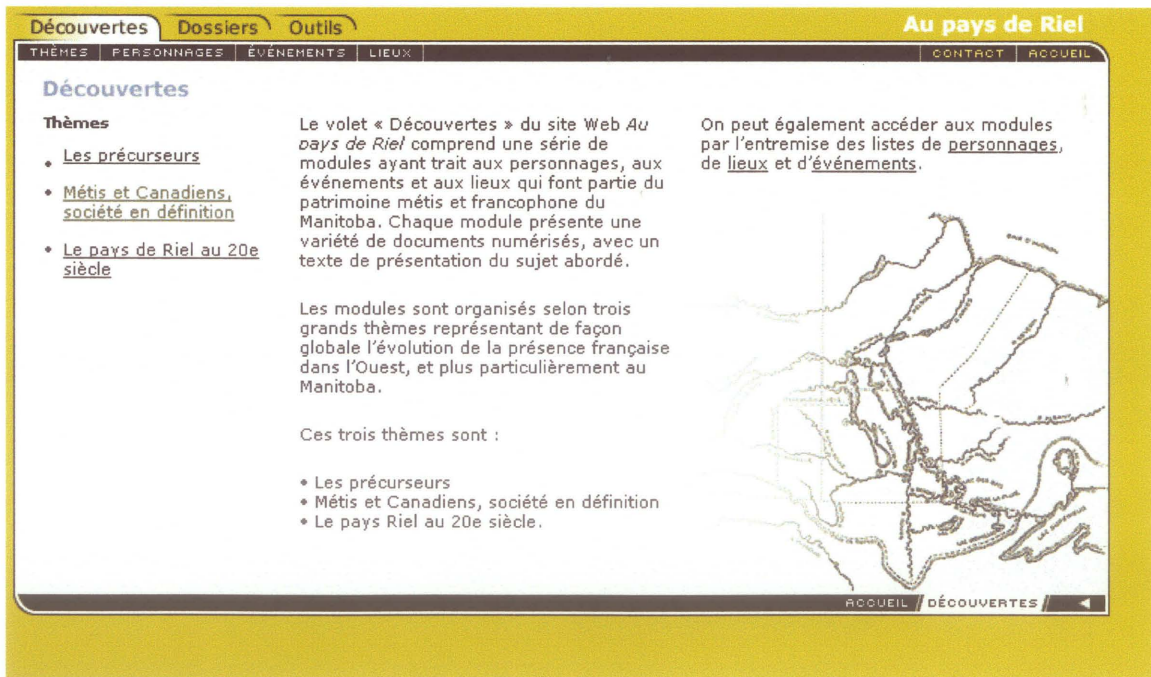
Au pays de Riel, however, is also a part of the SHSB's archival public program. The Dossiers and Outils sections provide a significant opportunity for the archivists of the SHSB. Alongside the databases, the exhibits, and other special topical features, there could be a place to discuss the contexts that influence the history of the records that are found in the Découvertes. In this case study of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies, I will point out possible topics for the Dossiers and Outils sections of the website with contextual elements that are not discussed in the module or some of the new contexts raised by their integration into a module.

Navigating the Découvertes Notre-Dame-des-Prairies

The module Notre-Dame-des-Prairies is located in the Découvertes section of *Au pays de Riel*. Due to the constraints of the website design, this particular module is not available by quick reference, and is only accessible through the traditional route. To begin, a navigator must select one of the two Découvertes tabs (upper left red tab or the tab in the green box).



Upon entering the introductory text to the Découvertes, the visitor must then select the historical period theme: “Métis et Canadiens, société en définition”.



The next step is to select the appropriate module listed to the left of the screen. The module is listed as Notre Dame des Prairies.

Découvertes Dossiers Outils **Au pays de Riel**

THÈMES PERSONNAGES ÉVÉNEMENTS LIEUX CONTACT ACCUEIL

Métis et Canadiens, société en définition

- [Louis Riel](#)
- [La Grenouillère](#)
- [Chanson des Bois-Brulés](#)
- [Riel, père](#)
- [Georges-Antoine Belcourt](#)
- [Les missionnaires à la Rivière-Rouge](#)
- [L'éducation des femmes à la Rivière-Rouge](#)
- [La colonisation francophone au Manitoba 1870-1914](#)
- [Notre Dame des Prairies](#)
- [Club de raquettes « Le Voyageur »](#)
- [Les Belges au Manitoba](#)
- [Les sœurs Grises et l'Hôpital général Saint-Boniface](#)
- [Relations entre Métis et Canadiens-Français](#)

Au début du 19e siècle, la lutte pour le contrôle du commerce des fourrures dans le Nord-Ouest devient un combat acharné, parfois même violent entre les deux grandes entreprises commerciales, la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson (CBH) et la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest (CNO). À des endroits-clés le long des cours d'eau du Nord-Ouest s'élèvent, souvent l'un en face de l'autre, des postes de traite des compagnies rivales. Chacun cherche à séduire et à garder la clientèle autochtone et à s'allier les chasseurs métis et canadiens indépendants ou « hommes libres » qui leur fournissent de précieuses pelleteries.

[Prochaine page](#)

ACCUEIL / DÉCOUVERTES / MÉTIS ET CANADIENS

The title page of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies then appears.

Découvertes Dossiers Outils **Au pays de Riel**

THÈMES PERSONNAGES ÉVÉNEMENTS LIEUX CONTACT ACCUEIL

Métis et Canadiens, société en évolution

- [La chanson des Bois-Brulés](#)
- [Riel, père](#)
- [Georges-Antoine Belcourt](#)
- [Les missionnaires à la rivière Rouge, 1818-1844](#)
- [L'éducation des femmes à la rivière Rouge](#)
- [La colonisation francophone au Manitoba, 1870-1914](#)
- [Notre-Dame-des-Prairies](#)
- [Le club de raquettes « Le Voyageur »](#)
- [Immigration belge](#)
- [Les Sœurs Grises et l'Hôpital général Saint-Boniface](#)
- [Relations entre Métis et Canadiens-Français](#)

CLIQUEZ POUR COMMENCER



ACCUEIL / DÉCOUVERTES / MÉTIS ET CANADIENS / NOTRE-DAME-DES-PRAIRIES

Upon the selecting the option “Cliquez pour commencer,” the visitor is presented with a text that tells the story of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies.

Au pays de Riel

[Découvertes](#) | [Dossiers](#) | [Outils](#) | [THÈMES](#) | [PERSONNAGES](#) | [ÉVÉNEMENTS](#) | [LIEUX](#) | [CONTACT](#) | [ACCUEIL](#)

Métis et Canadiens, société en évolution


- [La chanson des Bois-Brulés](#)
- [Riel, père](#)
- [Georges-Antoine Belcourt](#)
- [Les missionnaires à la rivière Rouge, 1818-1844](#)
- [L'éducation des femmes à la rivière Rouge](#)
- [La colonisation francophone au Manitoba, 1870-1914](#)
- [Notre-Dame-des-Prairies](#)
- [Le club de raquettes « Le Voyageur »](#)
- [Immigration belge](#)
- [Les Soeurs Grises et l'Hôpital général Saint-Boniface](#)
- [Relations entre Métis et Canadiens-Français](#)


Notre-Dame-des-Prairies


La fondation du monastère [Notre-Dame-des-Prairies](#) remonte à la fin du 19e siècle. Cet établissement est le résultat des efforts de l'abbé [Joseph-Noël Ritchot](#), curé de Saint-Norbert, qui désire fonder dans sa paroisse un monastère de [Cisterciens Réformés](#), aussi connus sous le nom « Trappistes ». L'archevêque de Saint-Boniface, Mgr [Alexandre-Antonin Taché](#), l'appuie et les deux partagent leur idée avec l'abbé des Trappistes de Bellefontaine, France, Dom [Jean-Marie Chouteau](#) en 1890, lors d'un voyage à Oka, Québec où Dom Jean-Marie est en visite chez les moines du monastère [Notre-Dame-du-Lac](#).


Lors de leurs discussions, Taché et Ritchot apprennent que le monastère français de Bellefontaine ne possède pas les ressources nécessaires à une telle entreprise. Mais l'abbé de Bellefontaine promet de collaborer de son mieux. Les négociations continuent par [correspondance](#) et la fondation du monastère trappiste à [Saint-Norbert](#) devient réalité en 1892. La charge des premiers travaux est confiée au frère [Antoine](#), un frère [convers](#). Il engage des ouvriers et entreprend la construction du [monastère](#) et le défrichement des terres. Il achète des [animaux](#), des matériaux et de l'[équipement agricole](#).


Pour en savoir plus

 PHOTOS

 TEXTES

 TEXTES PDF

 AUDIO

 VIDEO

BIBLIOGRAPHIE

IMPRIMER CE MODULE

01 de 06 ▶

ACCUEIL / DÉCOUVERTES / MÉTIS ET CANADIENS / NOTRE-DAME-DES-PRAIRIES ◀

In this case, the text of the module is six pages long. The navigator moves through the subsequent pages by clicking on the arrow beside the page indicators in the lower right corner. The text also offers a number of virtual footnotes. By selecting an underlined keyword, either a text or a record with a vignette pop-up window will appear. The keyword “convers,” for instance, is a textual pop-up.

Découvertes **Dossiers** **Outils** **Au pays de Riel**

THÈMES PERSONNAGES ÉVÉNEMENTS LIEUX CONTACT ACCUEIL

Métis et Canadiens, société en évolution

- [La chanson des Bois-Brulés](#)
- [Riel, père](#)
- [Georges-Antoine Belcourt](#)
- [Les missionnaires à la rivière Rouge, 1818-1844](#)
- [L'éducation des femmes à la rivière Rouge](#)
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Notre-Dame-des-Prairies

La fondation du monastère [Notre-Dame-des-Prairies](#) remonte à la fin du 19e siècle. Cet établissement est le résultat des efforts de l'abbé [Joseph-Noël Ritchot](#), curé de Saint-Norbert, qui désire fonder dans sa paroisse un monastère de [Cisterciens Réformés](#), aussi connus sous le nom « Trappistes ». L'archevêque de Saint-Boniface, Mgr [Alexandre-Antonin Taché](#), l'appuie et les deux partagent leur idée avec l'abbé des Trappistes de Bellefontaine, France, Dom [Jean-Marie Chouteau](#) en 1890, lors d'un voyage à Oka, Québec où Dom Jean-Marie est en visite chez les moines du monastère [Notre-Dame-du-Lac](#).

Lors de leurs discussions, Taché et Ritchot apprennent que le monastère français de Bellefontaine ne possède pas les ressources nécessaires à une telle entreprise. Mais l'abbé de Bellefontaine promet de collaborer de son mieux. Les négociations continuent par [correspondance](#) et la fondation du monastère trappiste à [Saint-Norbert](#) devient réalité en 1892. La charge des premiers travaux est confiée au frère Antoine, un frère convers. Il engage des ouvriers et entreprend

La société historique de St-Boniface - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by ...

Au pays de Riel

convers

Les Trappistes sont divisés en deux catégories selon leur fonction. Les religieux de chœur, appelé « pères » sont surtout destinés à chanter les offices pendant six à sept heures par jour. Ils passent le reste de leur temps à la méditation, l'étude, les travaux agricoles et l'exercice des divers arts et métiers. Ils se rasent la tête et conservent seulement une étroite couronne de cheveux. Ils portent une robe de laine blanche. Les frères lais ou convers, comme le frère Antoine, sont plus particulièrement appliqués aux travaux manuels. Ils participent aux exercices spirituels, mais qui sont de plus courte durée. Ils sont revêtus d'un costume brun. Les pères et les frères portent un capuchon noir.

FERMER CETTE FENETRE

The keyword “Saint-Norbert” opens a reproduction of a photograph with a vignette. The vignettes provide the visitor with either information pertaining to the record or other contextual information that adds to the understanding of the text. They are also accompanied by a reference to situate the record to its original fonds or collection.

Découvertes | **Dossiers** | **Outils** | **Au pays de Riel**

THEMES | PERSONNAGES | EVENEMENTS | LIEUX | CONTACT | ACCUEIL

Métis et Canadiens, société en évolution

- [La chanson des Bois-Brulés](#)
- [Riel, père](#)
- [Georges-Antoine Belcourt](#)
- [Les missionnaires à la rivière Rouge, 1818-1844](#)
- [L'éducation des femmes à la rivière Rouge](#)
- [La colonisation francophone au Manitoba, 1870-1914](#)
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- [Les Soeurs Grises et l'Hôpital général Saint-Boniface](#)
- [Relations entre Métis et Canadiens-Français](#)

Notre-Dame-des-Prairies

La fondation du monastère [Notre-Dame-des-Prairies](#) remonte à la fin du 19^e siècle. Cet établissement est le résultat des efforts de l'abbé [Joseph-Noël Ritchot](#), curé de Saint-Norbert, qui désire fonder dans sa paroisse un monastère de [Cisterciens Réformés](#), aussi connus sous le nom « Trappistes ». L'archevêque de Saint-Boniface, Mgr [Alexandre-Antonin Taché](#), l'appuie et les deux partagent leur idée avec l'abbé des Trappistes de Bellefontaine, France, Dom [Jean-Marie Chouteau](#) en 1890, lors d'un voyage à Oka, Québec où Dom Jean-Marie est en visite chez les moines du monastère [Notre-Dame-du-Lac](#).

Lors de leurs discussions, Taché et Ritchot apprennent que le monastère français de Bellefontaine ne possède pas les ressources nécessaires à une telle entreprise. Mais l'abbé de Bellefontaine promet de collaborer de son mieux. Les négociations continuent par [correspondance](#) et la fondation du monastère trappiste à [Saint-Norbert](#)

Pour en savoir plus


- PHOTOS
- TEXTES
- TEXTES PDF
- AUDIO
- VIDEO

SHSB - Au pays de Riel - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by CBC/SRC Internet Explorer 6.0

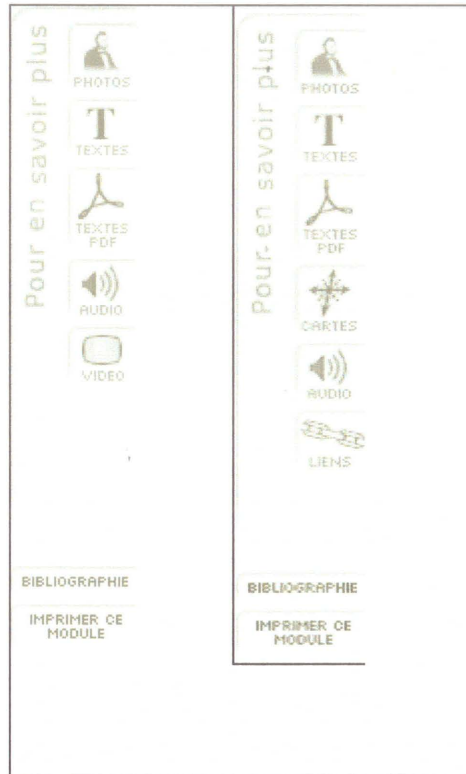
Au pays de Riel

Vue générale du monastère Notre-Dame-des-Prairies (ou la Trappe) à Saint-Norbert. Pendant 86 ans, les Trappistes travaillent leurs terres et contribuent à la vie religieuse et économique de la paroisse. Dès les débuts et jusqu'à leur départ en 1978, ils font partie intégrante de l'histoire du village. En général, les relations sont bonnes avec le monde de l'extérieur du monastère. Mais ce n'est pas toujours le cas. En 1897, un fermier poursuit les Trappistes pour dommages et intérêts lorsqu'un feu s'étend sur sa propriété.

Archives de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Collection générale de la SHSB, 14582



To the right of the screen is a virtual drawer “Pour en savoir plus.” All the digitised records that are found in the pop-ups are located here as well as many other records. The drawer is divided by media and the visitor is invited to select one of the options. It should also be noted that not all media are found in each module. There can be any number of combinations of “Photos,” “Textes,” “Textes PDF,” “Audio,” “Vidéo,” “Cartes,” and “Liens.”



There are “Photos,” “Textes,” “Textes PDF,” “Audio,” and “Vidéo,” records in the module Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. To view the records, the navigator clicks on one of the icons such as “Photos” and the virtual drawer opens.

Au pays de Riel

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- [Les Soeurs Grises et l'Hôpital général Saint-Boniface](#)
- [Relations entre Métis et Canadiens-Français](#)

Notre-Dame-des-Prairies

La fondation du monastère [Notre-Dame-des-Prairies](#) du 19e siècle. Cet établissement est le résultat de l'initiative de [Joseph-Noël Ritchot](#), curé de Saint-Norbert, qui parvint à faire accepter par le évêque de Saint-Boniface, [Antonin Taché](#), l'appui et les deux partagent le nom « Trappistes ». L'archevêque de Saint-Boniface, [Antonin Taché](#), l'appuie et les deux partagent le nom « Trappistes ». L'archevêque de Saint-Boniface, [Antonin Taché](#), l'appuie et les deux partagent le nom « Trappistes ». L'archevêque de Saint-Boniface, [Antonin Taché](#), l'appuie et les deux partagent le nom « Trappistes ».

Lors de leurs discussions, Taché et Ritchot ont convenu que le monastère français de Bellefontaine ne possédait pas les ressources nécessaires à une telle entreprise. Mais l'abbé de Bellefontaine a voulu de collaborer de son mieux. Les négociations ont abouti à la [correspondance](#) et la fondation du monastère trappiste est devenue réalité en 1892. La charge des premiers frères [Antoine](#), un frère [convers](#). Il engage des frères pour la construction du [monastère](#) et le défrichement des [animaux](#), des matériaux et de l'[équipement](#).

Photos

- [Notre-Dame-des-Prairies Trappistes](#)
- [Cartes postales...](#)
- [La grille](#)
- [Chemin](#)
- [Le travail...](#)
- [Église et monastère...](#)
- [Carte mortuaire](#)
- [Nouvel émetteur](#)
- [Deuxième hôtellerie](#)
- [Groupe en retraite](#)
- [Nouvelles Prairies](#)
- [Personnages...](#)

FERMER CE TIROIR

[ACCUEIL](#) | [DÉCOUVERTES](#) | [MÉTIS ET CANADIENS](#) | [NOTRE-DAME-DES-PRAIRIES](#)

To select an image, the visitor must select one of the options provided in the list. “Carte mortuaire” will open a pop-up window of the image and its accompanying vignette.

The screenshot shows a website titled "Au pays de Riel" with a navigation menu including "Découvertes", "Dossiers", "Outils", "THÈMES", "PERSONNAGES", "ÉVÉNEMENTS", "LIEUX", "CONTACT", and "ACCUEIL".

On the left sidebar, under "Métis et Canadiens, société en évolution", there is a list of links:

- [La chanson des Bois-Brulés](#)
- [Riel, père](#)
- [Georges-Antoine Belcourt](#)
- [Les missionnaires à la rivière Rouge, 1818-1844](#)
- [L'éducation des femmes à la rivière Rouge](#)
- [La colonisation francophone au Manitoba, 1870-1914](#)
- [Notre-Dame-des-Prairies](#)
- [Le club de raquettes « Le Voyageur »](#)
- [Immigration belge](#)
- [Les Soeurs Grises et l'Hôpital général Saint-Boniface](#)
- [Relations entre Métis et Canadiens-Français](#)

The main content area features a section titled "Notre-Dame-des-Prairies" with text describing the foundation of the monastery in the 19th century. A "Photos" sidebar on the right lists various image categories like "Notre-Dame-des-Prairies", "Trappistes", "Cartes postales...", "La grille", "Chemin", "Le travail...", "Église et monastère...", "Carte mortuaire", "Nouvel émetteur", "Deuxième hôtellerie", "Groupe en retraite", "Nouvelles Prairies", and "Personnages...".

A pop-up window titled "SHSB - Au pays de Riel - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by CBC/SRC Internet ..." is open, displaying a detailed view of a "Carte mortuaire". The card features a religious illustration with a cross and a portrait of a man. The text on the card reads:

« Ce que n'est rien, nous allons ailleurs, reposons nous en Dieu et nous vivrons en Dieu. (St. Révifman) »

Below the illustration, there is a caption:

Archives de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Collection du Musée de Saint-Boniface, MSB 0974

At the bottom of the pop-up window, there is a button that says "FERMER CETTE FENÊTRE".

At times, the records are grouped in series. They are indicated by three dots after the keyword. In these instances, another pop-up window will appear with a list of records to choose from such is the case with “Cartes postales.”

Découvertes Dossiers Outils **Au pays de Riel**

THÈMES PERSONNAGES ÉVÉNEMENTS LIEUX CONTACT ACCUEIL

Photos Retourner au module ▶

Série de cartes postales

- [La passerelle](#)
- [La fromagerie](#)
- [Le réfectoire](#)
- [Les ateliers](#)
- [La scierie](#)
- [Les étables](#)
- [Travail agricole](#)
- [L'hôtellerie](#)
- [La buanderie](#)
- [Le couloir](#)
- [La chapelle d'été](#)
- [Vue générale](#)
- [Statue](#)

ACCUEIL / DÉCOUVERTES / MÉTIS ET CANADIENS / NOTRE-DAME-DES-PRAIRIES

The images will then appear by clicking on the desired keyword such as “Le réfectoire.”

Découvertes Dossiers Outils **Au pays de Riel**

THÈMES PERSONNAGES ÉVÉNEMENTS LIEUX CONTACT ACCUEIL

Photos Retourner au module ▶

Série de cartes postales

- [La passerelle](#)
- [La fromagerie](#)
- [Le réfectoire](#)
- [Les ateliers](#)
- [La scierie](#)
- [Les étables](#)
- [Travail agricole](#)
- [L'hôtellerie](#)
- [La buanderie](#)
- [Le couloir](#)
- [La chapelle d'été](#)
- [Vue générale](#)
- [Statue](#)

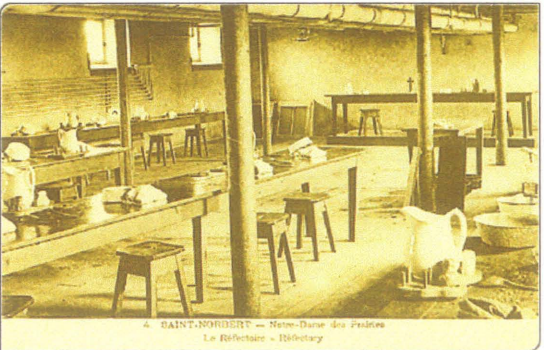
SHSB - Au pays de Riel - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by CBC/SRC Internet Explorer 6.0

Au pays de Riel

Le réfectoire où les moines prennent leurs repas se trouve au sous-sol de l'aile du monastère. C'est une salle très simple dans son ameublement. Les moines suivent un régime alimentaire végétarien et sont contraints à des jeûnes fréquents. La règle du jeûne est aujourd'hui moins sévère et le moine est responsable de gérer son propre régime alimentaire.

Archives de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Fonds Oblats de Marie-Immaculée Province du Manitoba, SHSB 22508

FERMER CETTE FENÊTRE



4 SAINT-NORBERT — Notre-Dame des Prairies
Le Réfectoire - Refectory

Each module is accompanied by a bibliography of the secondary references that were used to assist in the composition of the texts for the module. One improvement that could be done to the module is to have a space to list the primary sources that were consulted but not digitised for the website. Some of the modules also have a link to other websites that served as references, but this is not the case with Notre-Dame-des-Prairies.¹⁰

The screenshot shows a web page with a yellow header. The header contains the text 'Découvertes', 'Dossiers', and 'Outils' on the left, and 'Au pays de Riel' on the right. Below the header is a navigation bar with links: 'THÈMES', 'PERSONNAGES', 'ÉVÉNEMENTS', 'LIEUX', 'CONTACT', and 'ACCUEIL'. The main content area is titled 'Bibliographie' and contains four entries:

- DIRECTION DU PATRIMOINE. Notre-Dame des Prairies, [Winnipeg], Manitoba, Direction du patrimoine, 1982.
- DIRECTION DU PATRIMOINE, Notre-Dame des Prairies, [Winnipeg], Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Recreation, Historic Resources, c1988.
- [NICOL, François, père]. *Une Trappe dans un pays de missions : cinquante années de vie contemplative*, [Saint-Norbert, Manitoba : s.n., 1943].
- PRUD'HOMME, Louis-Arthur. *Monseigneur Noël-Joseph Ritchot : vicaire général, protonotaire apostolique, curé de la paroisse de Saint-Norbert, 1825-1905*, Winnipeg, Canadian Publishers, 1928.

At the bottom of the page, there is a breadcrumb trail: 'ACCUEIL / DÉCOUVERTES / MÉTIS ET CANADIENS / NOTRE-DAME-DES-PRAIRIES / BIBLIOGRAPHIE'.

The final option available to the navigator is the option to print the module in a PDF format. The first step is to select “Imprimer ce module.”

¹⁰ It should be noted that there used to be links to other websites, but they were later removed because these sites were no longer active.

Découvertes Dossiers Outils **Au pays de Riel**

THÈMES PERSONNAGES ÉVÉNEMENTS LIEUX CONTACT ACCUEIL

Métis et Canadiens, société en évolution

- [La chanson des Bois-Brulés](#)
- [Riel, père](#)
- [Georges-Antoine Belcourt](#)
- [Les missionnaires à la rivière Rouge, 1818-1844](#)
- [L'éducation des femmes à la rivière Rouge](#)
- [La colonisation francophone au Manitoba, 1870-1914](#)
- [Notre-Dame-des-Prairies](#)
- [Le club de raquettes « Le Voyageur »](#)
- [Immigration belge](#)
- [Les Soeurs Grises et l'Hôpital général Saint-Boniface](#)
- [Relations entre Métis et Canadiens-Français](#)

Imprimer

Télécharger le document PDF pour imprimer

Module 215
[Notre Dame des Prairies - La Trappe](#)

Retourner au module ▶

ACCUEIL / DÉCOUVERTES / MÉTIS ET CANADIENS / NOTRE-DAME-DES-PRAIRIES / IMPRIMER

The visitor will then be prompted to download a PDF version of the module. A version of the module appears with the text to the left and a thumbnail of the records to the right.

Au pays de Riel www.shsb.mb.ca/paysriel Page 1 - module 215

Notre-Dame-des-Prairies

La fondation du monastère Notre-Dame-des-Prairies remonte à la fin du 19^e siècle. Cet établissement est le résultat des efforts de l'abbé Joseph-Noël Ritchot, curé de Saint-Norbert, qui désire fonder dans sa paroisse un monastère de Cisterciens Réformés, aussi connus sous le nom « Trappistes ». L'archevêque de Saint-Boniface, Mgr Alexandre-Antonin Taché, l'appuie et les deux partagent leur idée avec l'abbé des Trappistes de Bellefontaine, France, Dom Jean-Marie Chouteau en 1890, lors d'un voyage à Oka, Québec où Dom Jean-Marie est en visite chez les moines du monastère Notre-Dame-du-Lac.

Lors de leurs discussions, Taché et Ritchot apprennent que le monastère français de Bellefontaine ne possède pas les ressources nécessaires à une telle entreprise. Mais l'abbé de Bellefontaine promet de collaborer de son mieux. Les négociations continuent par correspondance et la fondation du monastère trappiste à Saint-Norbert devient réalité en 1892. La charge des premiers travaux est confiée au frère Antoine, un frère

Photos


Notre-Dame-des-Prairies


Trappistes


La passerelle


La fromagerie

The presentation and interpretation of the records that are displayed in Notre-Dame-des-Prairies is certainly influenced by the design and the navigational structure of the module. While there are a number of ways to consult the module, there is still a defined organisation of the content.

Organising the Content of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies

Similar to the design and navigational structure of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies, the content and the way that it is organised affects the interpretation of the module. The Découvertes Notre-Dame-des-Prairies is generally based on the decision to begin the story with the idea to establish a Trappist monastery in Saint-Norbert at the end of the nineteenth century. This decision is significant, because the majority of the story and most of the records displayed in this module date from the twentieth century. The content of the text was thus designed to meet the necessity of creating a storyline for both the history of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies and the records that are displayed in the module. The end result was a text that was driven by these two needs.

Beginning the story in the nineteenth century places Notre-Dame-des-Prairies in the second category: “Métis et Canadiens, société en definition” of the Découvertes section of the website. The goal of this category is to share the history and the records of the SHSB that reflect the building stages of a French-speaking society in Manitoba.¹¹ The initial statement about the foundation not only situates the module within the imposed delineation of the website, but also provides a space to exhibit one of the most unique documents of the module: an artistic representation of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies.

¹¹ The first section houses modules that reflect the days of exploration and contact between new nations. The third section is the coming of age of a society.

The story begins by explaining that the idea to found a monastery of Reformed Cistercians, commonly known as Trappists, belonged to Father Joseph-Noël Ritchot. His actions are later clarified when he revealed the reasons why he pushed to bring the Trappists to Saint-Norbert. When he blessed the new church of the Trappists in 1904, he explained that before he had become a priest, he had dreamed about monks cultivating the land of his parish. In the eyes of Ritchot, the role of the Trappists was to serve as role models for the French-speaking community on how to work hard and be a good Catholic. The Trappists thus meet the criteria of builders of the Franco-Manitoban society.

The concept of building a society is further emphasised in the text as it states that Ritchot's idea was supported by the Archbishop of Saint-Boniface, Alexandre-Antonin Taché. The text implies that Taché believed that the foundation of a monastery was important to the development of the francophone community in Saint-Norbert. From an historical perspective, it was important to highlight the work of Taché since he would greatly influence the lives of the French-speaking population in Manitoba, by the continuance of the works began by his predecessor as well as the creation of new ones. As a result, he allowed Ritchot to share his vision with the Abbot of the Trappists of Bellefontaine in France.

The length of this text is typical of the modules in the Découvertes section of *Au pays de Riel*. At times, the paragraphs were not separated in the format they were originally intended to be in. Nor does this type of design allow for an in-depth study of any portion of this theme. This constraint of space thus fuelled how the story unfolded. One strategy to add further interest or additional details to the text was to create a number of pop-ups throughout the text. For instance, pop-ups in the first paragraph encompass

additional ideas such as the fact that the history of the Trappists dates back centuries. This history impacts both the foundation and the lives of the Trappists in Saint-Norbert. Other vignettes and pop-up texts in the module are certainly coloured by this earlier history, yet little is shared about the beginnings of this order.¹² Some of this background information, however, is provided in the pop-ups about the Cistercians and Bellefontaine. The role of these pop-ups is to provide additional contextual information for a greater understanding of the remainder of the story and the later interpretation of many of the records that are displayed in the module.

There is perhaps one disadvantage to the pop-ups, the textual and image pop-ups are not differentiated within the text. They simply appear as a keyword that is underlined. The information found in these pop-ups, however, is not obligatory to the understanding of the historical interpretation that is presented.

Due to the fact that many individuals worked on the module (the archivist, the historian, the image specialist, the webmaster, and the reviewers), a system was required to organise the material. Each module was given a code. Notre-Dame-des-Prairies received the identifier MD 215. The material was then divided into four types of information and each would possess this identifying code. The first was dedicated to the content, the second to the media, the third to links, and the fourth to the biography. Every record and every link received three additional identifiers. The first one always began with an A which meant the archival code. These references were used to name the newly

¹² For a more in-depth history of the order, see the histories from the New Advent Encyclopaedia, <http://www.newadvent.org/>. See also: O.C.S.O., <http://www.ocso.org/net/ocso-en.htm>, Casimir Gaillardin, *Les Trappists, ou l'ordre de Cîteaux au XIX^e siècle. Histoire de la Trappe depuis sa formation jusqu'à nos jours, 1140-1844*. 2 vols. (Paris: Librairie de L. Maisson, 1853) and Polycarpe Zakar, *Histoire de la Stricte Observation de l'Ordre Cistercien depuis ses débuts jusqu'au généralat du Cardinal de Richelieu*. (Roma: Éditions Cisterciennes, 1966).

digitised record that was kept as a TIFF on a gold CD-R. In a way, these newly digitised records became their own fonds, with their own new identifying codes. The records, however, are linked to the history of their original source. The creation of a Dossiers based on a sampling of the texts written for each module to explain this transition would certainly enrich the records being displayed. While it is possible to search the general database of the SHSB in the Outils section, a database that houses only the digitised records could be provided and linked to the database. This would provide an easier link to the archival descriptions and the earlier history of the records that are on display in the website.

The second code began with an S and was used by the image specialist during the digitisation process. The third code began with a W, which told the webmaster where to insert the text, link, or record within the website. All these texts are saved on the server of the SHSB. All documentation pertaining to *Au pays de Riel* was divided into the topics within the Découvertes, Dossiers, and Outils themes. In the folder dedicated to Notre-Dame-des-Prairies, there were also the metadata texts.

For instance, the image of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies could be tracked down by consulting the organisation texts and locating the following codes:

A: baudouxdiapo5869
W: md215-01-pht
S: md215-pop_tir-01

All the organisation and introductory texts were designed solely for the purpose of creating a filter in which the records would be consulted by a visitor. The filters do not end here since every record displayed also possesses a story.

The Stories behind the Exhibited Records of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies

The records of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies are located in the pop-ups in the introductory text and the virtual drawer called “Pour en savoir plus,” located on the right side of the screen.¹³ Similar to the intent of the textual pop-ups, the decision to highlight certain images in pop-ups was to provide additional information not found in the general text about the history of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. They may be a reproduction of an image, a textual document, a map, an audio recording, or a video recording. All records that are employed for these pop-ups are accompanied by a vignette and a reference that situates the record to its fonds. The visitor, however, is not obliged to view these images to comprehend the text. The records in the virtual drawer, located to the left of the screen on the website are presented in the same format. What follows is an assessment of the information provided in the vignettes that accompany the records, by pondering the other portions of the history of the records that were left out. The result is a number of ideas that could be pursued in greater detail in the Dossiers et Outils sections of *Au pays de Riel*.

Image 1: A Symbolic Reproduction of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies, Descriptive Influences

An image depicting a symbolic interpretation of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies can possess a myriad of possible elements within the history of this record that could be shared in a vignette. Due to the constraints of space that are inherent in a vignette, there needs to be a method of selection. What follows is the thought process that went behind the composition of this particular vignette. The discussion points out some of the alternative routes that could have been chosen and an explanation as to why they were rejected. The goal of this exercise is to illustrate how different aspects of the history of

¹³ It should also be noted that the records in the pop-ups are also located in the virtual drawer.

the record could have dramatically changed the direction of the vignette that accompanies the image.

When an image appears, either from a pop-up from the introductory text or from the virtual drawer, it resembles this first image entitled: Notre-Dame-des-Prairies.¹⁴ The image is a reproduction of a slide from the Fonds Maurice Baudoux. The caption informs the reader that the name of each Trappist monastery is inspired by the Virgin Mary. In this instance, an unidentified artist portrays a symbolic representation of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies.

¹⁴ This image would be what a visitor to the module would see on the screen. All subsequent images of this chapter will be without the module in the background.

Découvertes Dossiers Outils **Au pays de Riel**

THÈMES PERSONNAGES ÉVÉNEMENTS LIEUX CONTACT ACCUEIL

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- [Riel, père](#)
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- [Les Soeurs Grises et l'Hôpital général Saint-Boniface](#)
- [Relations entre Métis et Canadiens-Français](#)

Notre-Dame-des-Prairies

La fondation du monastère Notre-Dame-des-Prairies remonte à la fin du 19e siècle. Cet établissement est le résultat des efforts de l'abbé Joseph-Noël Ritchot, curé de Saint-Norbert, qui désire fonder dans sa paroisse un monastère de Cisterciens Réformés, aussi connus sous le nom « Trappistes ». L'archevêque de Saint-Boniface, Mgr Alexandre-Antonin Taché, l'appuie et les deux partagent leur idée avec l'abbé des

en savoir plus PHOTOS T TEXTES

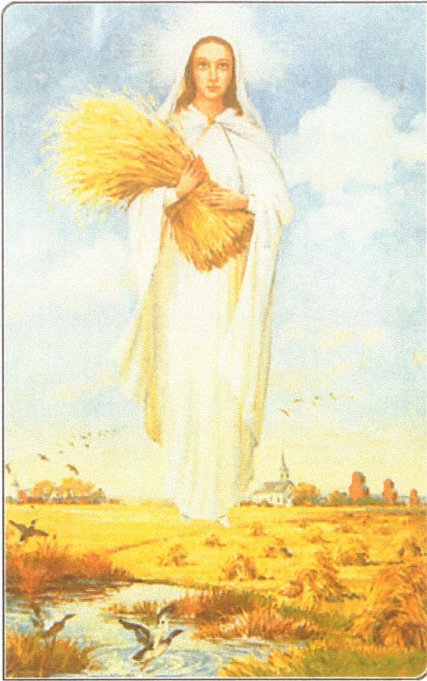
SHSB - Au pays de Riel - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by CBC/SRC Intern...

Au pays de Riel

Le nom de chaque monastère trappiste s'inspire de la Vierge Marie. Ici, un artiste non-identifié évoque une représentation symbolique de Notre-Dame-des-Prairies.

Archives de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Fonds Maurice Baudoux, 5869

FERMER CETTE FENÊTRE



The vignette could have told a very different story based on some of the other information found in the entry in the InMagic database of the SHSB:

Fonds: 0200, Maurice Baudoux, Intérêts sacrés, Collection de diapositives, Our Lady of the Prairies.

Côte: 5869

Date: février 1971

Portée et contenu: Notre-Dame des Prairies, artiste non identifié; peinture; [20e siècle]; provenance non identifiée (Saskatoon?); lieu de conservation non precise.

Notes: Une note accompagnait la série: "Prêt à sœur Maria Ciccarelli, S.N.M., Couvent Saint Ignace, Winnipeg/ prêt le 16-03-1990 et retour"

Créateur/Auteur: F. Michiels, reproduction à partir d'une carte postale, sans précision.

Caractères matérielles: 1 diapositive; 35mm; couleur.

Restrictions: Il n'y a pas de restriction à l'accès. Toute reproduction est sujette aux lois régissant les droits d'auteur et à la permission des détenteurs de droits.¹⁵

Upon reading the entry, it is clear that a vignette could not possibly explore every aspect of the description or be appropriate for the context of the image in a module about the history of the Trappist monastery in Saint-Norbert. There were thus a number of reasons behind the choice of the document and the text of the vignette.

The image was primarily chosen because it created an opportunity to explain why the monasteries of the Trappists were named after the Virgin Mary. The limited space allocated for the introductory text created an environment where a part of the story needed to be presented in a pop-up. To add visual interest, and with the intent of the website in mind (exhibit records of the SHSB), some of the digitised records became a means for explanatory information.¹⁶

The representation suggested, to some extent, how the monastery Notre-Dame-des-Prairies was perceived by an artist from Western Canada.¹⁷ The theme was not pursued in the vignette because there is a lack of concrete evidence about the provenance of the record in regards to its creator/author and to its place of origin.¹⁸ Despite the fact

¹⁵ Descriptive database of the SHSB.

¹⁶ In this instance, the archivist constructed a new meaning for the record by highlighting certain information and dismissing others in the vignette. In doing so, the archivist contributed to a view that may affect the interpretation of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. At the very least, the history of the record has changed. Francis X. Blouin, "Archivists, Mediation, and Constructs of Societal Memory", *Archival Issues* 24, 2 (1999), 101-112.

¹⁷ It is uncertain, but the artist may have been from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

¹⁸ This is why the vignette reads unknown artist. The views about the principle of provenance and its utility vary greatly within the archival profession. To view an example of some of the implications of provenance see: Peter Horsman, "The Last Dance of the Phoenix, or the De-discovery of the Archival Fonds", *Archivaria* 54 (Fall 2003), 1-23. In his article, he speaks at length about a number of questions: Why do archivists all over the world try to respect a thing or a situation that is so problematic? What is the reason that again and again archival thinkers try to solve the puzzle caused by the unruliness of the material with which they work? Why do they try to get all situations to fit into their paradigm? In 1993, Tom Nesmith was editor of a book with various contributions about the concept of provenance: *Canadian Archival Studies and the Rediscovery of Provenance*. (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1993).

that the entry in the database names F. Michiels as the Créateur/auteur, there was not enough information to confirm that this individual was the original artist or an owner of the postcard during its history.

Similarly, Saskatoon was placed in brackets in the description. The interpretation of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies by someone who had lived or visited Saint-Norbert could have presented a viable vignette for this image, but there is a lack of definitive evidence. Besides, the views of some of the members of the community were highlighted elsewhere in the text with additional details in a pop-up that described the celebrations when the Trappists moved away from the town:

Un comité spécial est créé pour la coordination des préparatifs des fêtes marquant le départ des Trappistes de Saint-Norbert en 1978. Les membres sont : Raoul Ferraton (président), Georges Boisjoli (responsable de la publicité), Gabriel Cloutier (conseiller), Germaine Roy (secrétaire), Georgette Major (thé-rencontre) et l'abbé Bernard Bélanger, curé de Saint-Norbert.¹⁹

The date of the artwork corresponds to the departure of the Trappists from Saint-Norbert. This theme could have been explored if either the theme of the artist or community perception had been employed in the vignette. It also characterises the various types of artwork in different media that are housed at the SHSB. In a different context this image could have been employed to speak about religious artwork or the history of the record. These ideas were rejected for a number of reasons.

The topic discussed in the module is about the history of a religious group and its monastery and not about the artwork it has inspired or possessed. This particular collection of slides was created out of an interest by Mgr. Maurice Baudoux.²⁰ An

¹⁹ Pop-Up for the phrase comité spécial.

²⁰ Born in La Louvière, Belgium, Maurice Baudoux (1902-1988) was ordained as a priest in 1929. He became the Archbishop of Saint-Boniface in 1955 and resigned in 1974.

analysis of Baudoux's artwork collection was not appropriate for the context because it contained examples of work from all over the world with varying themes.²¹ In addition to the fact that the context behind the creation of the record is sketchy, it is unclear how it came into the possession of Mgr. Maurice Baudoux. While a portion of the history of the Trappists is linked to the influence of Baudoux, it was felt that his story belonged to a different context and not the module of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. Had the image been exhibited in yet another context, why Sister Maria Ciccarelli borrowed the slide could also have been an interesting story.²²

Finally, the image of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies was also chosen for exhibit on the website because it gave a chance to view a record that is in a media that is not easily or typically viewed by researchers. The slides are described in the SHSB's database, but the media requires a slide projector and is thus not as easily viewed, for example, as a photograph. The decision to exhibit the slide was also influenced by the technology of digitising records for the web, by making the image more easily accessible to a larger number of individuals.²³ A final example of an additional topic would have been a discussion about the recording technology of the slide itself and how the image changed to a digital format.

These alternative topics are certainly candidates for presentation in the Dossiers. While they do not necessarily fit the context of the module Notre-Dame-des-Prairies, an

²¹ There is also a question of copyright on some of the reproductions.

²² The ideas surrounding the various types of criteria that need to be answered to properly document a photograph came from the following two articles: Joan Schwartz, "We Make Our Tools and Our Tools Make Us": Lessons from Photographs for the Practice, Politics, and Poetics of Diplomats", *Archivaria* 40 (Fall 1995), 40-74 and Fred Ritchin, *In Our Own Image: The Coming Revolution in Photography. How Computer Technology is Changing Our View of the World*. (New York: Aperture Foundation, Inc., 1990).

²³ Once again, the arguments presented by Fred Ritchin in his article inspired my selection of this representation of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies in a media that is not commonly consulted by researchers. I certainly agree that emerging technologies most definitely affect our process of interpretation and selection.

in-depth study of the various topics to be explored from the information that an archival description raises are endless. What would certainly be needed would be additional research into these questions. In the context of the Découvertes section of the website, the SHSB has privileged its historical role more than its archival role to the community.

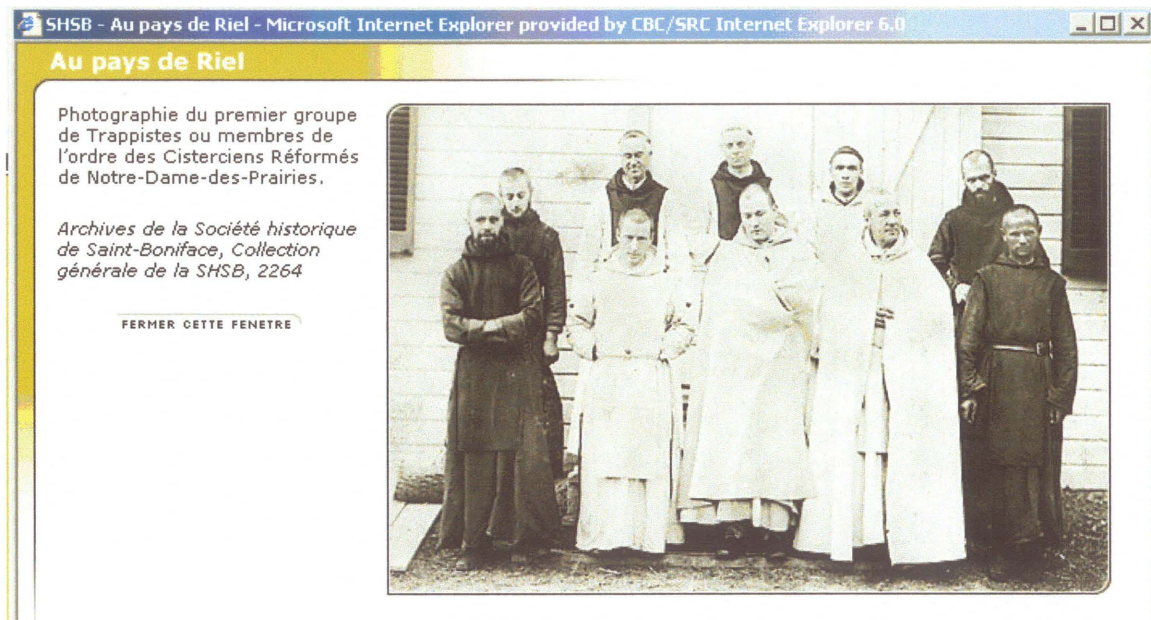
Image 2: A Group of Trappists Invite You to Click to Discover, the Art of Selection

This second image was utilised for a specific purpose. In addition to its role as a record within the Découvertes, it invites the visitor to learn more about Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. The image was selected from both an aesthetic and an historical perspective, and it is an example of how the entire group that worked on the website is now a part of the history of this record. The role of each member has left an imprint on the record, and a discussion about these influences should be considered as an important topic to further pursue as a Dossiers or as an Outils.²⁴



²⁴ This idea came to me during the workshop that I attended that was offered by David Berman, entitled: "Developing Your Web Strategy." University of Manitoba, 13 February 2004.

In this instance, the historian did not select the image to introduce the module. The decision fell to the webmaster. Upon reading the module and viewing all the records, the webmaster chose the image that he felt reflected the story being told. The decision was also influenced by the fact that not all images were appropriate for the structure of the introductory page of the Découvertes. The committee decided that the webmaster was best suited for this job because he was the most familiar with how the images worked with the structure.²⁵ Whether the image successfully invites a visitor to learn more or go somewhere else, will be answered by an individual accepting the invitation of the Trappists to click and discover their story.²⁶



From an historical perspective, the image was chosen for exhibition primarily because it portrays the first group of Trappists to call Notre-Dame-des-Prairies home.

²⁵ See: Cornell University, "Moving Theory into Practice: Digital Imaging Tutorial," <http://www.library.cornell.edu/preservation/tutorial/contents.html>, section pertaining to the Technical infrastructure.

²⁶ Just as Diane Beattie reminds us in the relation to researchers in women's history, a visitor to *Au pays de Riel* will be searching for particular information to meet a certain need. In this case, rather than the study of women, it may be about religious life, the history of Trappists, the history of Saint-Norbert, or a whole host of other reasons. It is difficult to fully meet the needs of everyone. Diane Beattie, "An Archival User Study: The Informational Needs of Historians Researching Women", *Archivaria* 29 (Winter 1989-1990), 33-50.

While many monks have graced the halls of the monastery and its adjoining lands, the story begins with this group. Despite its historical relevance, the image was not selected as a pop-up within the text, but located only in the virtual drawer.

The decision was primarily based on a question of numbers. There are many pop-ups within the text and not all of the records could be used. In the end, it was decided that the image and its vignette did not fully reflect the intention of the pop-ups.²⁷ The role of the pop-up is to provide secondary information to assist in the understanding of the text. While not critical, the information can significantly contextualise the story. In the end, it was decided that the image and the vignette could have provided additional information to the story of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies, but it was either found elsewhere in the module or not explored. The image of the first group of Trappists certainly provides a visual aid to the text, but they are already discussed in the introductory text and it was felt that other details needed to be highlighted. From another point of view, the different habits or clothing of the monks in the photograph could have provided a space to discuss the hierarchy and different roles within the community. The theme of the habit was not pursued in this module because the habits are the same for all Trappists and not solely unique to those of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies.

The process of selecting an image could be an important topic to explore in the Dossiers section of *Au pays de Riel*. The aesthetic versus historical reasons for selecting a

²⁷ In the end, the story that is being told in this vignette is largely what the historian privileges as opposed to other information. The process is certainly subjective, and a visitor to the site must be made aware of this phenomenon. Perhaps this type of discussion could be packaged as a type of Outils with a short tutorial briefly teaching how the historical process works and contextual information behind the reasons of the historian in selecting a record for a particular purpose or why the historian leaves others out. Jocelyne Létourneau. "L'avenir du Canada. Par rapport à quelle histoire?" *Canadian Historical Review* 81, 2 (2000): 230-259.

record are two examples of variables that come into play when an archives appraises the large volumes of records that enter its doors.

Image 3: Displaying Typical Records of the SHSB Concerning Notre-Dame-des-Prairies

The discussion in this section will turn to what are the responsibilities of an archives to its clients. Does an archives only exhibit the records that are felt to be the most exciting or unique, or should some of the common types of records be placed on the web? Is there a happy medium?²⁸

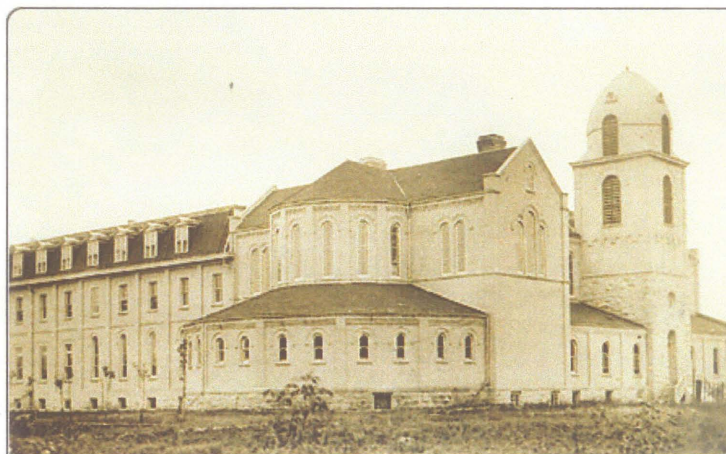
The image below is a typical iconographic record found in the archives of the SHSB. Additionally, much of the contextual information known about the image is typical, centred on historical fact. In this instance, a visitor will learn that the construction of the Notre-Dame-des-Prairies monastic church began in 1903. This type of church receives its name from the fact that a monastic wing, where the Trappists live, is attached to the edifice. The vignette briefly provides other details about the style and architecture of the church: the materials employed in its construction come from Manitoba and its simple style is inspired by the Trappist belief that an elaborate architecture is opposed to the community's spiritual values.

²⁸ Cornell University, "Moving Theory into Practice: Digital Imaging Tutorial," <http://www.library.cornell.edu/preservation/tutorial/contents.html>, Anne Ten Cate, *Promoting Archives: A Handbook*. (Ottawa: Association of Canadian Archivists, 1992), and Abby Smith *Why Digitize?* (Washington, DC: Council on Library and Information Resources, 1999).

Au pays de Riel

La construction de l'église conventuelle de style néo-romain commence en 1903. Une église conventuelle désigne une église comportant une aile monastique adjacente. L'église est en forme de croix latine à transept, ayant à son centre une nef haute surmontée d'une claire-voie. On utilise de la brique et de la pierre du Manitoba pour la construction de l'édifice. Les moines croient qu'une architecture trop remarquable s'oppose aux valeurs spirituelles.

Archives de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Collection du Musée de Saint-Boniface, MSB 0084



FERMER CETTE FENETRE

This image belongs to a series of photographs that are exhibited in this Découvertes.

The SHSB possesses a significant number of images that relate to the buildings of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. The selection of this image was based on the belief that it was only fair to illustrate examples of some of the “common” types of records found in the fonds and collections of the SHSB. The image also provides a space to discuss some of the features of the main buildings of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. In this case, I wanted to provide a definition for those unfamiliar with the term “monastic church.” Additional information about the style, provenance of materials, and general architecture were to serve as a point of interest.

This type of “typical” record performed a practical solution to a constraint in the architecture of the virtual drawer “Pour en savoir plus.” The drawer has a limited amount of space to list the digitised images per medium (photographs, texts, audio files, etc.). In the case of photographs for Notre-Dame-des-Prairies, there were too many images and

some had to be grouped together in a series. Upon clicking on the series, a new window opens to reveal a new list of records. To alert the visitor that there is more than one record, three punctuation points, such as “Église et monastère...” follow the key words.

This function, while useful for the navigation of the site, does affect the history of the records found in the series. Not only has the original order and provenance of these records been changed to create this online module, but the creation of a new series within the Découvertes links these images once again to others in new ways. For example, in “Église et monastère,” the records originated from three different fonds and collections: Collection du Musée de Saint-Boniface, Collection générale de la SHSB, and Fonds Oblats de Marie-Immaculée, Province du Manitoba. This type of image would certainly serve as a starting point of a Dossiers discussion about the archival concepts of original order and provenance and how the meaning a record’s history can change by modifying its context.²⁹

Image 4: Father Joseph-Noël Ritchot and the Presbytery of Saint-Norbert

The process of selection has a number of different layers of influence on the history of a record. Another important issue is the initial intended use of a record at the time of its creation as opposed to its later use by other users.³⁰ This particular photograph is of the presbytery of Saint-Norbert with a group of individuals standing out front, including Father Joseph-Noël Ritchot. The vignette informs the reader about a variety of topics such as the fact that Father Ritchot was a member of the regular clergy and was parish priest of Saint-Norbert between 1862 and 1905 and when the Trappist church was

²⁹ Tom Nesmith, “Still Fuzzy, But More Accurate: Some Thoughts on the ‘Ghosts’ of Archival Theory”, *Archivaria* 47 (Spring 1999), 136-150.


³⁰ John Seeley Brown and Paul Duguid suggest that the information of a record has a social life of its own: *The Social Life of Information*. (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2000).

blessed in 1904, Ritchot revealed that he was happy because he had realised one of his childhood dreams. The photograph was also taken in front of the presbytery around 1890, which housed the first Trappists who arrived in 1892. From an archival perspective, the photograph originated from the Fonds Alida Laporte Gendreau et Claire Gendreau Bartmanovich.

SHSB - Au pays de Riel - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by CBC/SRC Internet Explorer 6.0

Au pays de Riel

Membre du clergé régulier, l'abbé Joseph-Noël Ritchot est curé de Saint-Norbert de 1862 à 1905. Lors de la bénédiction de l'église du monastère des Trappistes en 1904, il avoue qu'il est heureux de voir se réaliser son rêve de jeunesse. Il n'était pas encore prêtre lorsqu'il avait eu un rêve de moines blancs qui défrichent et cultivent une région de l'ouest canadien dont il est pasteur. Cette photographie est prise devant le presbytère vers 1890. Le presbytère héberge les premiers Trappistes fondateurs en 1892.



Archives de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Fonds Alida Laporte Gendreau et Claire Gendreau Bartmanovich, SHSB 26080

FERMER CETTE FENÊTRE

Despite the various topics, the vignette certainly focuses on Ritchot and his role in bringing the Trappists to his parish of Saint-Norbert. From this perspective, the choice of the image may be puzzling to the reader. Instead of an image of Ritchot, the presbytery is the primary focus.

The first reason for the decision to highlight this image was variety. Many of the other religious figures that are mentioned in the module are represented by a portrait. In the case of Ritchot, few photographs survive of him and are often utilised in other situations. This particular photograph has not received the same amount of attention and

it was taken shortly before the Trappists arrived in Saint-Norbert. The building has a significant place in the history of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies, because the first Trappists lived in the presbytery during the construction of their monastery.³¹

The history of the presbytery could have been the focus of the vignette, but the person who lived in it had an even greater influence on the history of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies and a brief biographical sketch of Ritchot was required as a footnote to the general text. The most obvious reasons to provide Ritchot with a background context was simply based on the fact that it was his idea to bring the Trappists to Saint-Norbert, and that he was an important figure in the community during the foundation years of the monastery. In other words, this image serves as an example of how a record can evoke different meanings with additional information. The main issue of this decision is that an archives should consider the repercussions of these types of decisions. By straying too far away from the original intention of the record, it could be perceived as propagating misinformation, a significant concern for users of the World Wide Web. It is for this reason, that additional space on the website should be allocated for these types of discussions.³²

Image 5: Trappists as an Example for Others

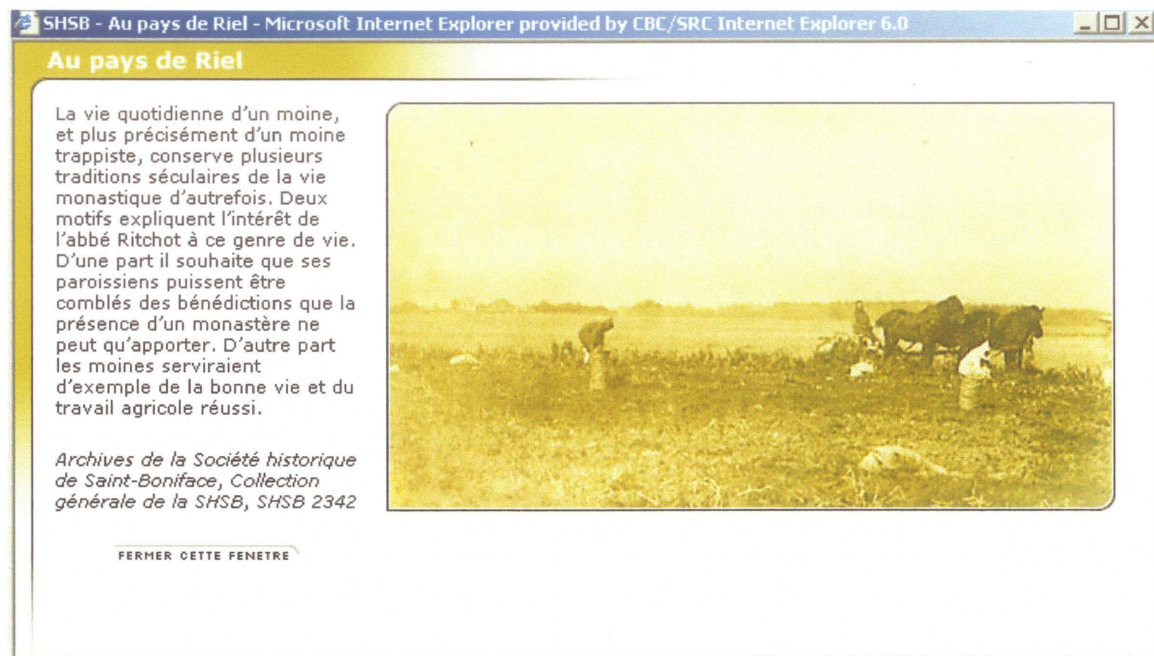
A question posed by educator Kenneth Osborne summarises the focus of this section: “Who Wants What and Why?”³³ I view this statement in terms of whose voice is heard when it comes to an interpretation; why this version and not another; and how will

³¹ Barbara Case and Ying Xu, “Access to Special Collections in the Humanities: Who’s Guarding the Gates and Why?”, *The Reference Archivist* 47 (1994), 75-78

³² James W. Loewen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong*. (New York: The New Press, 1995) and Anne P. Mintz (ed.), *Web of Deception: Misinformation on the Internet*. (Medford, NJ : Cyber Age Books, c2002).

³³ Kenneth Osborne, *Education: A Guide to the Canadian School Debate, or, Who Wants What and Why?* (Toronto: Penguin Books, 1999).

others react. This image was chosen to illustrate a part of the daily life of a Trappist and the importance of conserving traditional elements from their history. The Trappist traditions and way of life appealed to Father Ritchot on two levels. On one level, he hoped that his parishioners would be inspired by the work ethic of the Trappists in both agriculture and prayer. On another level, he intended them to serve as an agricultural example for others to emulate.



This image was chosen because additional space was required to explain the motives of Father Ritchot to request the services of the Trappists rather than another religious community such as, for example, the Oblats de Marie-Immaculée. In other words, images in the modules of the Découvertes section serve a multitude of purposes.³⁴ In this case, the information found in the vignette dictated the choice of image. It is difficult to portray the spirituality of the Trappists in an image, but a photograph of

³⁴ Ibid. Osborne reflects on the various debates over what is taught and why, reminiscent of the challenge faced by archivists to decide the role of an exhibited record and the messages that will affect the interpretation of the record in question and thus its history.

monks working in the fields was possible from the options available in the records of the SHSB.

These two images linked to Father Ritchot raise important questions concerning interpretation which could be explored in a Dossier. Records are created by individuals for various reasons. The process of writing history confers new meaning on the records as they serve to illustrate an argument. For instance, these two images could evoke other stories such as the general history of Saint-Norbert and the agricultural roots of many Manitoban families from an era gone by. In other words, the information that was selected for this image has an historical slant and would certainly not meet the needs of all visitors to the module. It is not an easy task for the archivist to choose, but in practical terms, a decision needed to be made. Regardless of whether or not it was an ideal decision, the rationale behind the thought process should be shared whenever possible.

Image 6: A Postcard of a Trappist and his Agricultural Equipment

In general, agriculture has had an enormous role in the history of Manitoba and Western Canada. Ironically, the proportion of records pertaining to farming in the archives of the SHSB is not as large as other subject areas. The module Notre-Dame-des-Prairies exhibits many agricultural images. Since there are a large number of records relating to the theme of farming in Notre-Dame-des-Prairies, it was decided to share many of them with the public. This should not be surprising since it played a significant role in their history that continues to this day.³⁵ The question that arises, however, from

³⁵ Francis X. Blouin, "Archivists, Mediation, and Constructs of Societal Memory", *Archival Issues* 24, 2 (1999), 101-112.

this decision is whether or not this is an actual portrayal of the records housed at the SHSB?³⁶

In the end, this particular image was chosen to allow a visitor to discover one of the historical agricultural methods of the Trappists. The vignette states that despite the fact that the Trappist tradition finds its roots in medieval times, they readily embraced new agricultural technology. This was not done blindly, but by carefully considering the most efficient ways to accomplish their work, and still remain economical in their choices. The vignette provides a couple of examples of their views on the subjects of economy and technology.

A second contextual variation that this image imposes is the manner in which this image is exhibited, affecting the archival principles of provenance and original order.³⁷ Historically, postcards were a popular medium for images as they could be widely distributed and relatively inexpensive. Important questions are why do they exist and why did the monks commission these postcards. Other possible related questions about the history of these records are: What is the role of the photographer in this enterprise? How were they used and do they have any meaning for today? Unfortunately, these postcards made their way into the archives with little contextual information concerning their history. There is only contextual information concerning their life in the archives.³⁸

³⁶ Mary Jo Pugh, "The Illusion of Omniscience: Subject Access and the Reference Archivist", *American Archivist* 45, 1 (Winter 1982), 33-44.

³⁷ Tom Nesmith (ed), *Canadian Archival Studies and the Rediscovery of Provenance*. (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1993).


³⁸ François Debrix and Cynthia Weber (eds.), *Rituals of Mediation: International Politics and Social Meaning*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003) and Tim Jon Semmerling, *Israeli and Palestinian Postcards: Presentations of National Self*. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004).

SHSB - Au pays de Riel - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by CBC/SRC Internet Explorer 6.0

Au pays de Riel

Malgré leurs traditions médiévales, les Trappistes n'utilisent pour leurs travaux agricoles que l'équipement le plus moderne de l'époque car ils sont conscients de l'importance d'économiser. Par exemple, pendant les premières années, ils élèvent leurs propres chevaux. En 1897 six ouvriers agricoles décident de faire la grève juste avant les semailles. Les engagés reçoivent leur salaire et sont congédiés, et les frères convers prennent la relève. Plus tard les tracteurs et autres outils modernes remplaceront les chevaux et les instruments plus rudimentaires.

Archives de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Collection générale de la SHSB, 14580



8. SAINT-NOBERT — Notre-Dame des Prairies
Au labour - Plowing

FERMER CETTE FENÊTRE

The image of the ploughing horses is the eighth in a series of postcards about Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. Unlike the new series that were created in the module, these records form an original series that are located in the virtual drawer “Pour en savoir plus.” Other than the numbering system of the postcards, evident on the digitised copy, there is no distinction between this series and those created solely for the purposes of this module. Additionally, some of the postcards are randomly used in the pop-ups with no link to the others. One reason is because they represent a variety of topics that are dealt with at different moments in the module.

Perhaps more importantly, the decision not to highlight the series as a cohesive unit is because the SHSB is missing some of the postcards. Due to the nature of the Découvertes section, it was decided that an explanation of why some of the images were missing and why they were not presented in order did not fit the context of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. This discussion could certainly take place as a Dossiers.

One way to treat this subject would be to explain how records find their way to the archives and why it is possible not to have a complete collection. The active life of a series of common postcards, make this type of record sometimes difficult to collect. On one hand, their commonality gave the impression of plenty and people did not keep them because they were not deemed special. On the other hand, the SHSB may, one day, possess the entire collection as they acquire new collections. This eventuality has possibilities since the postcards of this series are to be found in a number of different fonds and collections of the SHSB. This certainly raises a number of interesting issues to be explored in the Dossiers section of *Au pays de Riel* because it discusses how we privilege certain records over others for exhibition and how the collection of records has a history of its own.

Image 7: Depicting Manual Labour in the Lives of the Trappists

Work is highly valued by the Trappists, both indoors and outdoors. While all members of the community share in the chores, the majority is performed by the lay brothers. Despite the fact that many of the monks possess personal interests or a specific talent in some area, each member is generally responsible for a variety of jobs. The goal of their long hours of work is not to accumulate riches, but to guarantee a self-sufficient lifestyle. The Trappists also believe that manual labour fortifies their spirituality, for it is an important path in their search for God. The main contextual question that arises in my mind is how do archivists convey what they have interpreted or read in the record that they have chosen to exhibit in a specific fashion?³⁹


³⁹ This is an important topic that requires a major study. In her thesis, Bronwen Quarry speaks of some of these issues: "Photography/writing with light: the challenge to archivists of reading photographs." (MA thesis, Department of History, Archival Studies, University of Manitoba/University of Winnipeg, 2004).

SHSB - Au pays de Riel - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by CBC/SRC Internet Explorer 6.0

Au pays de Riel

Les Trappistes, et surtout les frères convers, consacrent la grande majorité de leur journée au travail manuel. Ce travail comprend les travaux à l'extérieur et à l'intérieur du monastère. Même si plusieurs d'entre eux possèdent des compétences spécialisées, la plupart cumulent plusieurs emplois. Le but du travail n'est pas l'accumulation des richesses, mais plutôt de garantir aux Trappistes une vie presque autonome consacrée à la fortification de leur vie spirituelle. Leur raison d'être, c'est la recherche de Dieu.

Archives de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Collection générale de la SHSB, 2334



FERMER CETTE FENETRE

Due to the centrality of manual labour to the Trappists, this type of image was an easy choice to include in the Découvertes Notre-Dame-des-Prairies.

When I initially began to research the various collections and fonds, I was surprised that there were very few images that illustrated the hard work of the Trappists of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. The bulk of the images were of the interior and exterior of their various buildings or of the physical features of their lands. For instance, there are photographs of the interior of the rectory or the bridge that linked Notre-Dame-des-Prairies to the village of Saint-Norbert. The images depicting the Trappists at work were generally staged for the public. Since the Trappists of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies are probably best known for their cheese and honey making, there are many images of these aspects of their labour. While there are a number of images that reflect the work in the fields, such as the previous image, there are few that focused on the monk hard at work. In this instance, a Trappist, dirty from his work around the farm, is what is highlighted.

An important consideration arose, however, with the selection of this image. The reality is that the SHSB does not possess many of these types of images that relate to the theme Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. When the goal of the site is to illustrate the records of the SHSB, is this image a good choice? In the end, the image was chosen for a number of reasons.

As the case with many of the records that were picked for the Découvertes, this image of a monk hard at work appealed to my personal sensibilities. In this instance, I enjoyed the simplicity of the photograph and that the monk with a smile seemed to be enjoying his work. Since manual labour is such a central aspect to the lives of the Trappists, a candid illustration of someone satisfied with his job seemed appropriate to me.

My desire to share certain pieces of information concerning the lifestyle of the Trappists of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies also fuelled the decision. A space was needed to note the hierarchy within the community, and that the majority of the manual labour was reserved for the lay brothers. It was equally important for me to explain that work was defined in terms of spirituality for the Trappists.

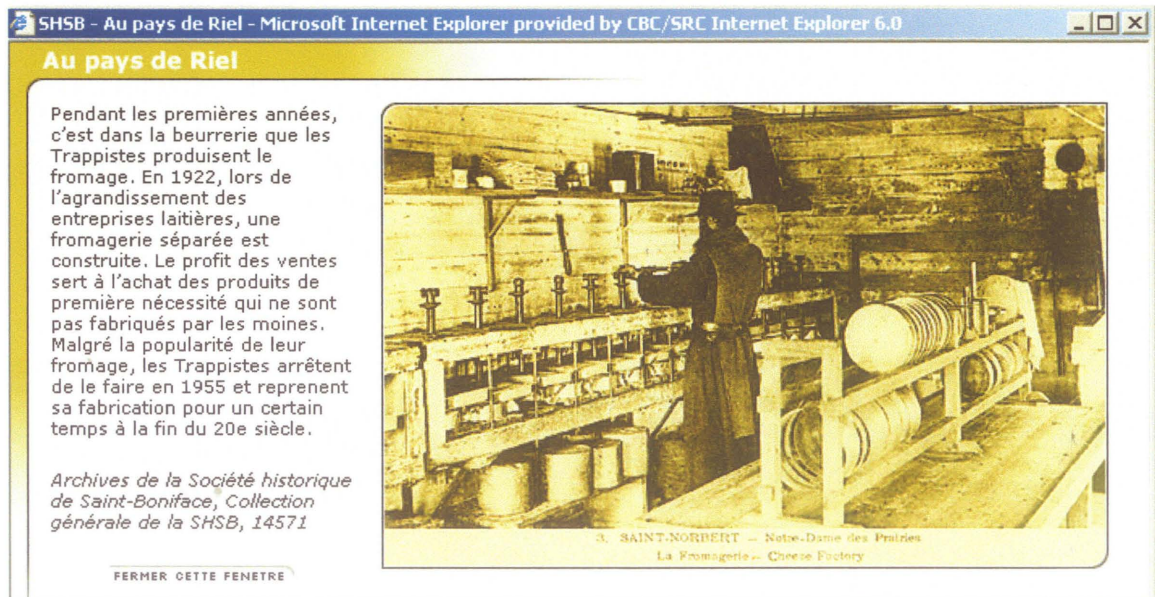
The absence of these types of images also reflects, I believe, the Trappist outlook on life. In a world that is centered on work and prayer, these goals are not necessarily addressed by taking photographs. From another perspective, not unlike lay people, it also illustrates their humanity because people generally take pictures of special events, such as the construction of a new barn, but not of the events our everyday lives.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Ibid.

In my view, an archives has the obligation to share its special records as well as those that are more typical within its collections.⁴¹ It may even encourage others to come to the archives to find their own treasures or to even donate other records. When an archives is proud of its records, it may encourage others to feel assured that their donations are desirable and will be well cared for in the archives.

Image 8: The Famous Trappist Cheese, Records Created for Popular Consumption

This image is an example of a record that was created for popular use. Initially the Trappists made their cheese in the same building as their butter. Their cheese became extremely popular in Saint-Norbert and the surrounding communities. The demand and financial potential of this product encouraged the Trappists to expand their operations and build a new building solely dedicated to cheese in 1922. The Trappists terminated their cheese-making in 1955, and would later recommence in their new installations near Holland, Manitoba.



⁴¹ Cornell University, "Moving Theory into Practice: Digital Imaging Tutorial," <http://www.library.cornell.edu/preservation/tutorial/contents.html> and DigiCULT, <http://www.digicult.info>

The picture of a Trappist making cheese was staged for a particular purpose and disseminated as a part of the series of postcards mentioned earlier in this chapter. The picture was selected due to the popular nature of its subject, but the issue of staging photographs was not considered in this context, because the topic is far-reaching and warrants a study of its own, perhaps in the form of a Dossier. For instance, there could be a discussion or a specialised exhibit about the art of photography and how the various technologies from analogue cameras to digital camera phones influence, and in many instances change the record. Software, once a record has become digital, will often be utilised by the creator to change the history of the record. The options are limitless, considering all the different possible frames that photography can create.⁴²

This image has yet another story that was not explored in the context of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. One advantage that the historians working on the website *Au pays de Riel* had was the ability to consult unprocessed records. A number of these records found their way into the Découvertes exhibits. The module Notre-Dame-des-Prairies is not an exception and this image was an unprocessed postcard.⁴³

As an historian, the ability to use unprocessed records provided further intrigue because it added another level of discovery to the research process and some of the records were used for the first time in a publication. The decision to exhibit these records also modified the records' priority in the processing schedule of the archives. They ended

⁴² Joan Schwartz, "'We Make Our Tools and Our Tools Make Us': Lessons from Photographs for the Practice, Politics, and Poetics of Diplomats", *Archivaria* 40 (Fall 1995), 40-74 and Bronwen Quarry, "Photography/writing with light: the challenge to archivists of reading photographs." (MA thesis, Department of History, Archival Studies, University of Manitoba/University of Winnipeg, 2004).

⁴³ Cornell University, "Moving Theory into Practice: Digital Imaging Tutorial," <http://www.library.cornell.edu/preservation/tutorial/contents.html>

up being processed more quickly in case someone who viewed the site saw the image and desired to consult the original or obtain a copy. The story of processing would be another important consideration for a topic within the section called Dossiers.

These records also modified the codification of these records in the descriptive database of the SHSB. In order to digitise these records, an identifying code was required, such as the 14571 of this image. Once it was described with its new identifying designation SHSB 2312, there needed to be a note to indicate the older code in the database in the event that a visitor to the website saw the picture and provided the former code to the archives to make a copy or to consult the original record. Due to the fact that the record possessed little contextual information concerning its provenance and was not particularly attached to an original order, the content of the vignette influenced the description:

Photographe de la beurrerie du monastère Notre-Dame-des-Prairies des Trappistes à Saint-Norbert, en été.⁴⁴

In other words, the function of archival description may become a topic within the Dossiers section of the site using different examples within *Au pays de Riel*.

Image 9: The Role of Other Personalities from the Community

This image is an example of the use of related records in the module Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. These new relationships change the history of the records involved.

⁴⁴ Richard Cox, "Arranging, Describing, and Providing Reference in Institutional Archives," in Richard Cox. *Managing Institutional Archives: Foundational Principles and Practices*. (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992), 117-153.

Au pays de Riel

Mgr Louis-Philippe-Adélarde Langevin succède à Mgr Taché comme archevêque de Saint-Boniface. Il fournit un grand appui moral et financier aux Trappistes.

Archives de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Collection générale de la SHSB, 8856

FERMER CETTE FENETRE



The story of Langevin is not the primary focus of this module, nor does this photograph belong to a key word search in the descriptive database of the SHSB about Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. The image was chosen for historical purposes because Langevin's influence affected the daily life of those who lived within the walls of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. Due to the fact that he is mentioned in the introductory text, a photograph was added as a visual interest to the pop-up. The vignette provides little contextual information because it was felt that the image sufficed in situating Langevin

within the story and that he would be considered in greater detail elsewhere in the website.

From this perspective there is certainly an historical reason to include an image of Langevin to the module because his role as Archbishop influenced the lives of all Catholics. Questions arise, however, concerning the selection of this specific image as opposed to others found in the collection. Does it relate to the date 1899 being discussed in the text? Was the photograph taken in the context of an event, meeting, or in the presence of the Trappists? Would the photograph in a different context influence its interpretation?

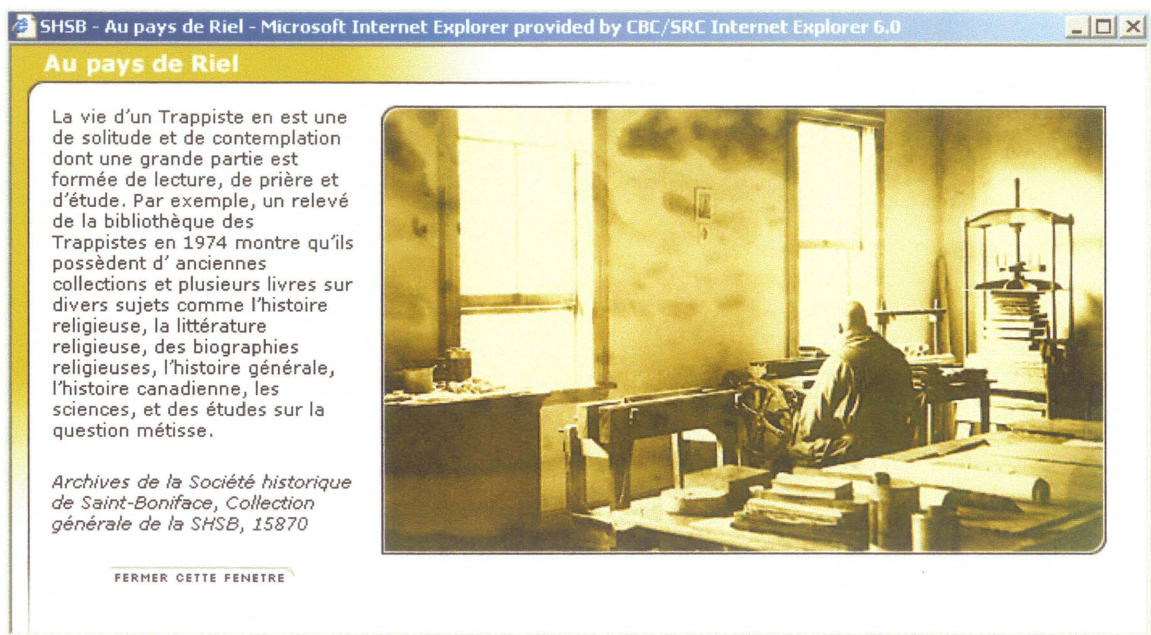
The choice was simply because it is one of my favourite photographs of Langevin. In my eyes, there is something about the way that he is posing that I personally find intriguing. Moreover, it has rarely been used in publications. When I was writing the text, I wanted to give a bit of contextual information to situate the Archbishop in time, as the successor of Taché, in order to give the reader an idea of where in the history Notre-Dame-des-Prairies did he exert any form of influence over the lives of the Trappists. This example of the process of selection is practically inevitable during the construction of an online display for public programming. A discussion about the process of selection and the implications of personal choice is an ideal candidate for a Dossiers.

An important Dossiers could certainly result from the image of Langevin. As archivists, we tend to limit ourselves to the history of the records within a specific collection or fonds. This does not work for an historian who situates the records in relation to the larger community. We do not live in a vacuum and perhaps examples such as the selection of the photograph of Langevin can serve as a means to consider the

history of the records in relation to other fonds and collection, based to a certain point on content. Why not take advantage of the process of creating an exhibit to enrich the history of the records being displayed? For instance, records from various fonds and collections were created during the same time period, on similar media, and influenced by the society in which they were created.

Image 10: The Solitude of a Trappist Life

The Trappist leads a life of opposition. Half of their time is spent doing manual labour. The other half is spent in another type of work that is done in solitude and contemplation through reading, prayer, and study.



Just as history is partially comprised of personal opinions about the past, so too are exhibits. To provide a balance, exhibits should present different versions of an event or indicate differences of opinion about its significance. This image was chosen to provide the visitor with another view of the Trappist world. There are many forms of work, some physical and others spiritual. The goal to display records of both types of work was

intended to illustrate that life has many different facets. Unfortunately there is little contextual information related to the image. For example, the picture of a monk in a library may trigger an interest in the visitor about the recording, writing, and archiving practices of the Trappists. Sadly, the archives housed at the SHSB do not offer an clues to this question. One possible Dossiers could certainly be a series of interviews and a visit to the monastery near Holland, Manitoba. Perhaps there is a collective memory of this type of work. Another option would be to study the history of other Trappist monasteries that are historically more documented and learn some of the tendencies and practices that may have been applied to the work of the monks of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies.⁴⁵

The world of the Trappist is a complex one, and it is impossible to share all its elements in the confines of a module. There could certainly be a Dossiers about this issue. For instance, there is very little talk in the module about the spiritual viewpoint of the Trappists towards their world or about their relation to the Catholic Church. From one point of view, the world is not meant to be viewed in terms of actuality or history, but rather spirituality, faith, and the belief in God. In other words, life can be interpreted through a number of reconstructions, each defined by the perspective of the one telling the story. The concept of audience also comes into play. For example, a storyteller will focus on different aspects of a story when it is intended for an adult audience as opposed to a youthful group or a Catholic and a non-Catholic audience. In the case of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies, the story was told from an informational perspective for a general audience.

Image 12: Facsimile of a Mortuary Card: The Death of Jean-Baptiste

⁴⁵ Richard Cox, "The Concept of Public Memory and Its Impact on Archival Public Programming", *Archivaria* 36 (Autumn 1993), 122-135.

In a world where societal views continually re-evaluate the popularity or the unpopularity of a topic, it is sometimes a challenge for archives to exhibit records that could be viewed as sensitive in nature. The topic of religion is an obvious case in point. The discussion of this section will reflect on how I came to terms with a topic that could be considered sensitive in nature. I did not choose Notre-Dame-des-Prairies, but was rather assigned the topic. Due to my interest in the nineteenth century and the fact that a great deal of the records that are housed at the SHSB are from religious sources, it was not particularly a surprise that I would agree to take on this topic. The challenge was to come up with a balance between the needs of the records and the needs of today.

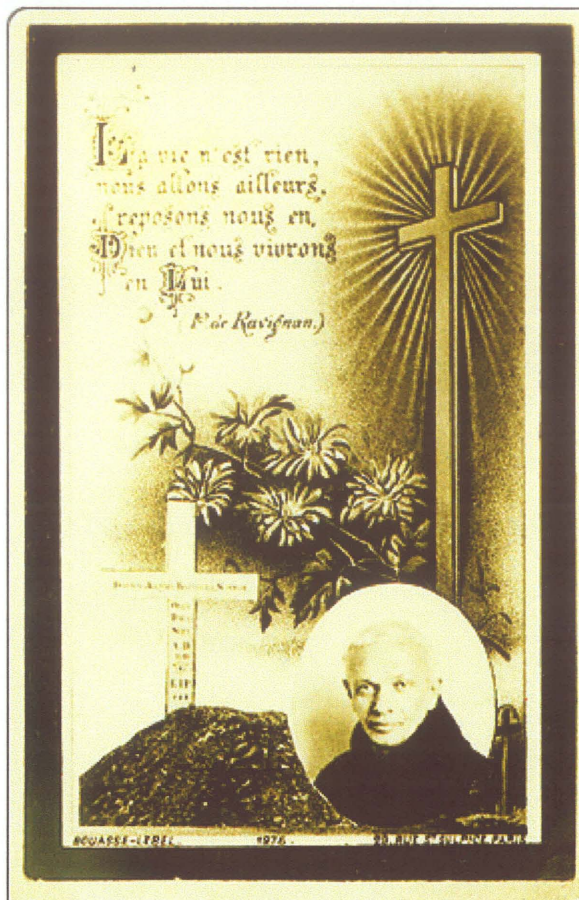
There is a Catholic tradition to have a mortuary card printed to remember those whom have died. These cards are generally distributed at the funeral of the individual. In this instance, this image is a reproduction of the mortuary card of Dom Jean-Baptiste, Superior of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies.

Au pays de Riel

Selon la tradition catholique, une carte mortuaire est imprimée en souvenir du défunt et distribuée aux funérailles. Celle-ci est la carte mortuaire du supérieur de la Trappe, le Dom Jean-Baptiste Gaudin (Joannes Baptista), décédé au mois de septembre 1910. Les funérailles du défunt ont lieu dans la chapelle du monastère.

Archives de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Collection du Musée de Saint-Boniface, MSB 0974

FERMER CETTE FENETRE



This digitised version of the mortuary card is not the original intent of the creator for this document. In turn, these modifications may impact the viewer's perception of the historical record. Moreover, the cards are certainly generational and may not have a great deal of meaning for non-Catholics. They are also not as popular as they once were and the younger generation may not be as familiar with this type of record.

For schools, the use of religious records is also problematic.⁴⁶ In a story of a culturally diverse country like Canada, it is difficult to place religious records in the

⁴⁶ Sharon Anne Cook, "Connecting the Archives and the Classroom", *Archivaria* 44 (1997), 102-117.

curriculum.⁴⁷ Because of the difficulty of teaching religious themes in the schools, it was decided that Notre-Dame-des-Prairies would not be a candidate for a pedagogical tool. This perspective would change later with the Dossiers on the Oblats de Marie-Immaculée and their residential schools. My reasons for exhibiting this image are based on the fact that mortuary cards have evolved over time and I think it is important to honour the religious nature of this module. It is also an image and a celebration of the life of one of the Superiors of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies.⁴⁸

There is room to create Dossiers to discuss audience, the use of religious records in society today, and the original intentions and uses of the records. Ideally, a Dossiers about school-aged audiences would not resemble general textbooks that always know what should have been done in every crisis. Instead, the Dossiers should present conflicting views and let students debate ideas rather than tell them what they are supposed to believe.

Images 14 Through 16: The History of A Digitised Record.

The process of digitising a photograph and displaying it in an online exhibit plays an important role in the history of a record. Michael Ester, president and founder of Luna Imaging Inc., suggests that visual collections present unique questions and concerns when they are digitised.⁴⁹ As a result, one of the biggest challenges of the digital imaging realm is to bring high quality images to the user and still maintain an archival standard of authenticity. Regardless, the history of the record does change and an archival institution

⁴⁷ Kenneth Osborne, "Archives in the Classroom", *Archivaria* 23 (Winter 1986-1987), 16-40.

⁴⁸ Peter N. Stearns, Peter Seixas, and Sam Wineburg (eds), *Knowing, Teaching, and Learning History*. (New York: New York University Press, 2000).

⁴⁹ Michael Ester, *Digital Image Collections: Issues and Practice*. (Washington, DC: Commission on Preservation and Access, 1996). In this report, Ester shares his experiences at the Getty Art History Information Program and Luna Imaging Inc., and suggests ways of thinking about this activity for the long-term benefit of preservation and scholarship. This is accomplished by focusing on what sets the digitisation of visual collections apart from other scanning projects.

must reflect on how best to balance all the issues that come into play during the process of putting a record online. Three images will be employed here to serve as examples of how a digitised record changes during the conversion of an analog record to a digital signal.

The digitisation process is both simple and complex, mainly because so many variables come into play. Briefly, digitisation is a process that converts an image into a series of picture elements of pixels. Pixels are little squares that are either black or white (binary), a shade of grey (greyscale), or colour. Each pixel is represented by a single series of binary digits (1 and 0). The pixels are then arranged in a two-dimensional matrix called a bitmap. This is referred to as a raster image, a series of rows and columns of square pixels. Once the digital image has been created there is a corresponding digital to analog conversion that allows a computer to present the image in human readable form. In other words, there are a number of technological filters that affect the images of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies that should perhaps be examined in further detail.⁵⁰

It should be noted, that the technological story is not discussed in any of the vignettes that accompany these three images.⁵¹ In many cases, there is little contextual information about many of the records that relate to Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. To ameliorate the history of the records, a discussion about their technological story is at least one piece of the puzzle. When a record possesses few clues to its history,

⁵⁰ There are a number of resources available to assist an archivist to make sense of the digitised world. A useful tutorial from Cornell University is highly recommended. Cornell University, "Moving Theory into Practice: Digital Imaging Tutorial," <http://www.library.cornell.edu/preservation/tutorial/contents.html>. Basic terminology, selection, conversion, quality control, metadata, technical infrastructure, presentation, digital preservation, management, and suggestions for continuing education are the topics that are covered in the tutorial.

⁵¹ The technological story of a record is not always easily conveyed. There are a number of useful publications to assist in this type of discussion: Trend, 2001, Rowland, 1999, and Asa Briggs and Peter Burke, *A Social History of the Media: From Gutenberg to the Internet*. (Cambridge, UK: Polity; Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002).

documenting the process of digitising the record as least provides the record with a portion of its story. In other words, it is never too late to start compiling the history of a record!

The first image is of the Trappist sawmill. The vignette describes how it was erected around 1904, and was designed to facilitate the work of the monks. It was during this period that many of the temporary buildings, built in the foundation years were replaced with new and better equipped structures.

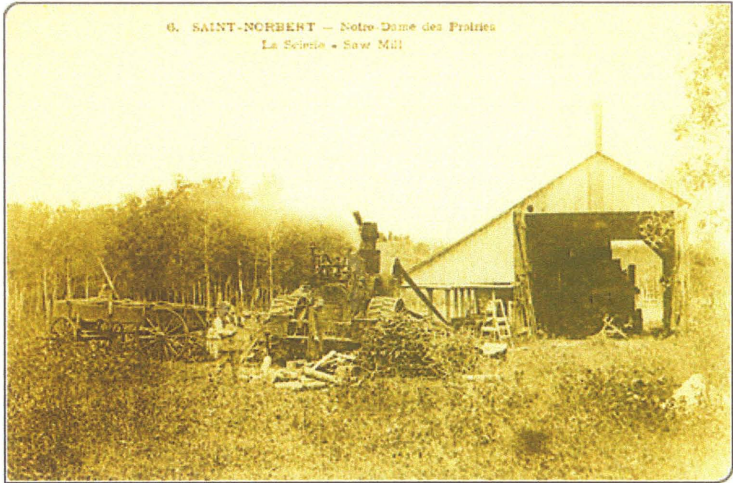
SHSB - Au pays de Riel - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by CBC/SRC Internet Explorer 6.0

Au pays de Riel

La scierie en plein air est construite vers 1904. Il devient alors possible d'ériger plus efficacement des constructions permanentes pour remplacer les abris temporaires des premières années.

Archives de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Collection générale de la SHSB, 2316

FERMER CETTE FENETRE



The second image is a portrait of the politician Alphonse-Alfred-Clément La Rivière. What is important about his role in the Trappist story is that he was responsible for obtaining the Act of Incorporation of the Reformed Cistercians of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies in 1897.


SHSB - Au pays de Riel - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by CBC/SRC Internet Explo... [min] [max] [close]

Au pays de Riel

Pendant plus de 40 ans, Alphonse-Alfred-Clément La Rivière (1842-1925) participe à la vie politique de la nouvelle province du Manitoba. Parmi ses contributions, il représente le comté de Provencher au parlement fédéral de 1889 à 1904. C'est lui qui fait en 1897 les démarches afin d'obtenir l'acte d'incorporation des Cisterciens Réformés.

Archives de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Collection générale de la SHSB, 361

FERMER CETTE FENETRE

A sepia-toned portrait of Alphonse-Alfred-Clément La Rivière, shown in profile facing right. He has a prominent mustache and is wearing a dark suit jacket over a white shirt and a dark tie. The background is a plain, light color.

The third image is of the Archbishop of Saint-Boniface and a member of the Oblats de Marie-Immaculée. The vignette provides brief biographical information and his relationship with Ritchot and the Trappists.

Au pays de Riel

Oblat de Marie-Immaculée, Alexandre-Antonin Taché arrive dans la colonie de la Rivière-Rouge en 1845. En 1853 il est nommé évêque de Saint-Boniface et en est l'archevêque de 1871 à 1894. Il appuie l'idée de l'abbé Ritchot d'établir un monastère trappiste à Saint-Norbert. Lors des premières constructions, l'abbé de Bellefontaine, Dom Jean-Marie Chouteau, lui demande de conseiller le frère Antoine sur les affaires financières.

Archives de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Collection générale de la SHSB, 8850

FERMER CETTE FENÊTRE



The information that is presented in the vignettes is certainly important to the understanding of the story of the Trappists in Saint-Norbert, but there is a distinct lack of contextual information relating to history of these three records.

In the first instance, the sawmill postcard was selected because it was the sixth of a series of postcards mentioned earlier in this chapter. Other contextual information that could have been useful was why was this image selected to be a part of the postcard series? Why was it staged the way it was? What is the make and model of the machine? Where was this building situated in relation to the other structures of the Trappists? In

addition to the first reason why the record was selected for digitisation (being part of the postcard series), a further element intrigued me. The image revealed a great deal more detail that I had initially not seen. I had not noticed the Trappist and the labourer working at the woodcutter.



In fact, in addition to the digital history of the record, new questions began to arise. Who are the individuals in the picture? Why was it decided to have them in the picture when they are barely visible? The questions become endless, but one major issue that confronted me was how best to present this image on the web. In the end, the picture was still presented from the larger view because it belonged to the series of postcards. Admittedly, I had been tempted to display a close-up version of the image such as the one above, but in the end I felt that I was changing the record to a degree that I no longer felt comfortable. It should be noted, however, that in a subsequent module “L’éducation des femmes à la Rivière-Rouge,” I displayed two versions of a photograph: the integral image

and a close-up of the individual I was highlighting in the story. The reason why I did this in the latter case and not the former is because I was highlighting one particular individual for whom I possessed sufficient contextual information. In the instance of this image, I had no idea who the monk and labourer were and could thus not legitimize the close-up. Had I chosen to describe how the digitised image of this postcard changed my perspective and how my attention to new details occurred, I may have well chosen to display both versions of the image.

An important question arose in my mind in relation to the situation and that was to what point can an archivist modify, or allow to be modified, an image for display in an exhibit? The question is not easy to answer since the record already changes form a great deal during the digitisation process. What I believe is necessary is a Dossier or a series of Dossiers that explain in greater detail the digitisation process and how it affects the record. There should also be a discussion concerning the degree to which an archival institution modifies the records that it displays in its online exhibit. Every member of the team has a different point of view: the historian, the image specialist, the webmaster, and the archivist. I believe that every website team should clearly discuss these issues and make them public to those who are interested in the topic.⁵²

In some cases, the image was displayed differently from the original image. Unlike the decision not to display the zoomed-in image of the Trappist and labourer

⁵² There are a number of works that pertain to the issue of whether the archival profession needs standards concerning the modification of records when they are displayed online. One example is the book by Franziska Frey and James Reilly, *Digital Imaging for Photographic Collections: Foundations for Technical Standards*. (Rochester, NY: Image Permanence Institute, Rochester Institute of Technology, 1999). See also: Maxine K. Sitts (ed.), *Handbook for Digital Projects: A Management Tool for Preservation and Access*. (Andover, MA: Northeast Document Conservation Centre, 2000) and Abby Smith *Why Digitize?* (Washington, DC: Council on Library and Information Resources, 1999).

working at the woodcutter, the second image was cropped. The actual image was an advertisement for a photographer and his company.



The decision was influenced by the fact that the emphasis was on La Rivière and not the photographer and his studio in Ottawa.

Moreover, the digitisation process is not only the time where a record is modified during its history. When the image is blown-up, it is evident that part of the chin of La Rivière was erased on the photograph. Only after seeing the digital version did it become apparent to me on the original photograph.⁵³

⁵³ The work of Joan Schwartz is invaluable to a discussion about photographs and how archival practices both influence and are influenced by images. See for instance, "We Make Our Tools and Our Tools Make Us': Lessons from Photographs for the Practice, Politics, and Poetics of Diplomats", *Archivaria* 40 (Fall 1995), 40-74. Diplomats and its role in establishing authenticity to the archival record is certainly a major consideration in the examples discussed in this section. See also: Fred Ritchin, *In Our Own Image: The*



In the case of the third image, its online version was drastically different than the original image. In the case of records displayed on Au pays de Riel, records that were in poor physical condition were sometimes greatly modified such as the case of the image of Taché. The primary reason for modifying the record was based on preservation. Due to the fact that the original is in poor physical condition and may not last a great deal longer, at least another version is available for future generations. Due to his historical significance, it was deemed an acceptable change.



These issues are relevant to the history of the record because they have, in some instances, changed dramatically from their original state. The Taché photograph was ameliorated using Photoshop and other photographs of the Archbishop to ensure that the details were as close as possible to what the image intended to look like. This raises a number of questions regarding the manipulation of photographs that have obviously aged significantly. Since they are no longer in the form that they were created, should they be displayed at their current state or can technology assist the archivist to regain the vivacity of an old photograph? These issues are hotly debated within the archival community and

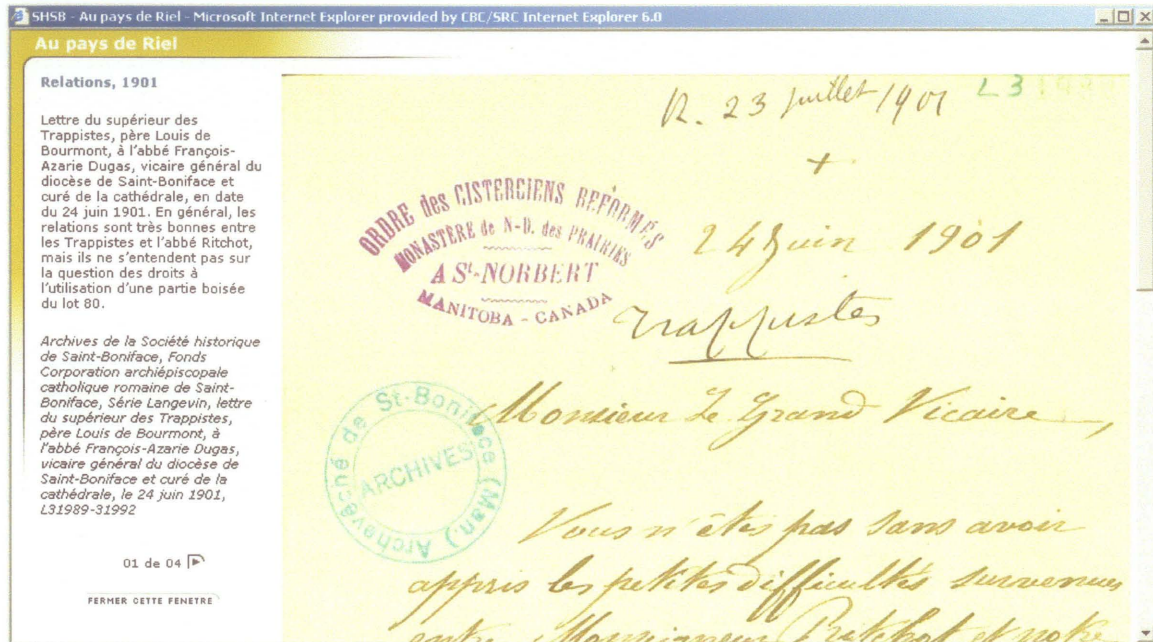
they should be made known to the public as well as the institution that deems it necessary to modify an image for display purposes.⁵⁴

Images 17 and 18: Textual Images

The digitisation of textual records faces many similar questions and concerns as pictorial images. They also differ in a number of ways as well and they will be considered through the analysis of the two records in this section. The information that was chosen to be shared with the viewer in the first instance was that Father Louis (de Bourmont), Superior of the Trappists of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies wrote a letter to Father François Azarie Dugas on 24 June 1901. In this letter he explains that in general the relations between the Trappists and Father Ritchot are very good, except for the question of land rights on the wooded area of lot 80 of the Parish of Saint-Norbert. Here is the first portion of the first page of the four-page letter.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Once again these issues are explored in the work of Joan Schwartz, ““We Make Our Tools and Our Tools Make Us”: Lessons from Photographs for the Practice, Politics, and Poetics of Diplomats”, *Archivaria* 40 (Fall 1995), 40-74

⁵⁵ The image is both large and many pages in length and only a portion of it is displayed here. To view it in its entirety, please refer to the website.



The content of the record is extremely important. It talks about the relations between Father Ritchot and the Trappists as well as the importance of land rights at the turn of the 20th century.

There is another aspect to this letter that is just as important to the history of this record. Two stamps are present on the letter. The first indicates that it was saved in the archives of the Trappists of Notre-Dame-des-Prairies and the second the archives of the Archdiocese of Saint-Boniface. There is also a numbering system that dates back to the early coding system of the SHSB. Should there be any explanations about these attributes on the site? Is there a place in the structure of the site to accommodate them? The way we reference materials and the security features we employ have changed with the times and there is a philosophy among many archivists to not leave any permanent imprints on the records. The provenance of a record throughout its life is just as important to the archives

as its original creation.⁵⁶ I think there could certainly be a place for such topics as well as how archival practices have changed over time.

Some of the texts were digitised in a PDF format.⁵⁷ The reasons for this were to allow longer texts to be searchable by keyword. This was often difficult as the software could not always recognise the case and the typescript during the scanning process. This limitation is particularly true for texts written in French. Significant revisions were required for each record, with corrections to the text made with the software Dreamweaver. The corrections were generally related to the fact that some of the spellings were not maintained during the process. Another common error was that the software did not always recognise the accents and made up its own. The work, I must admit, was very tedious.

On the pop-up, it was decided to add an image of the first page of the PDF to give the visitor an idea of what they were going to view. In the end, making a record available in PDF format has changed the history of the record because it can now be used in ways in which it had not been previously intended. One of the main differences was that the record is not searchable by keyword, another is that the PDF version is often more legible than the original. In my view, the major drawback is that the font of the text becomes standardised and loses some of its original charm. These are all important issues to consider when creating a website.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Tom Nesmith, "What's History Got to Do With It?: Reconsidering the Place of Historical Knowledge in Archival Work", *Archivaria* 57 (Spring 2004), 1-28.

⁵⁷ Training Tools.com, <http://www.trainingtools.com> and W3C, <http://www.w3.org>

⁵⁸ Abby Smith *Why Digitize?* (Washington, DC: Council on Library and Information Resources, 1999).

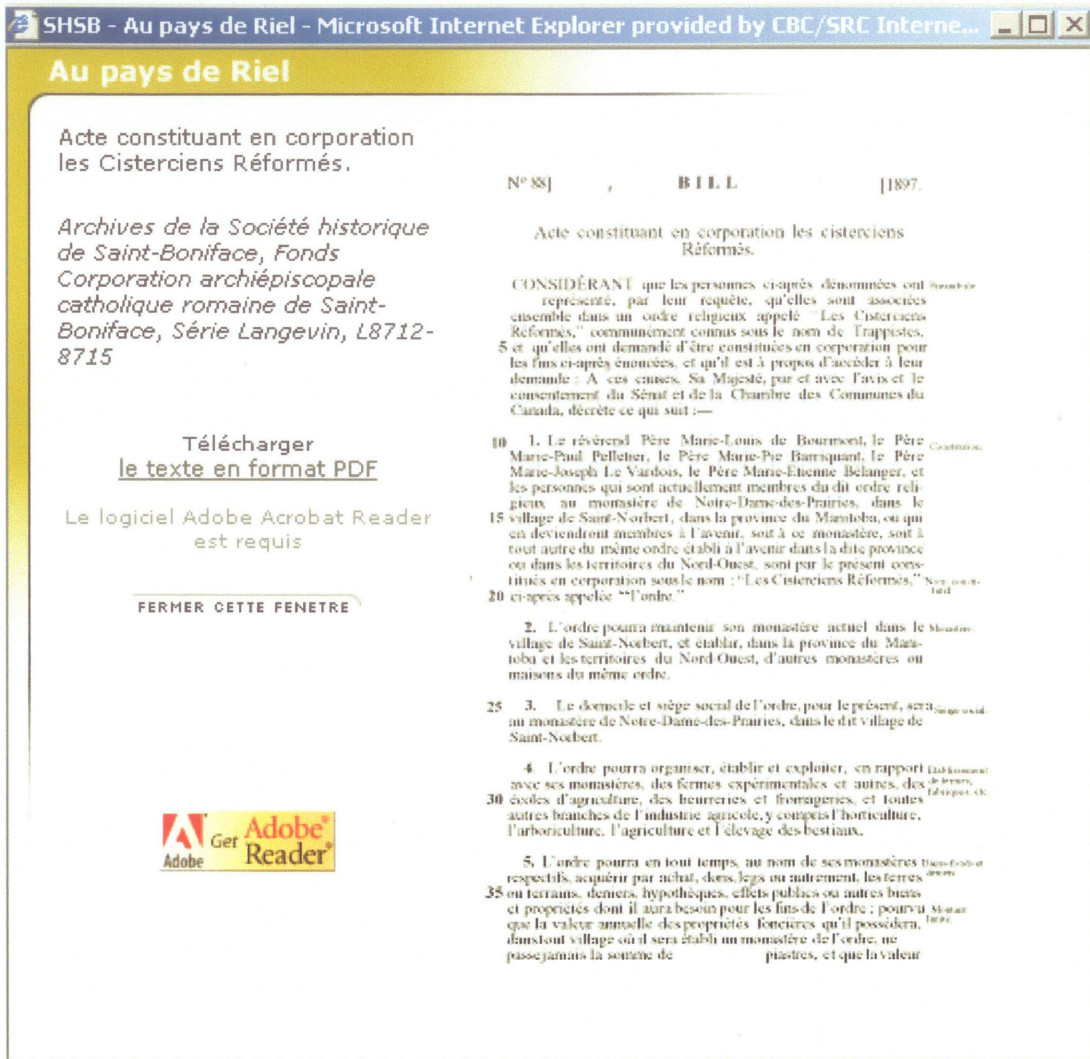


Image 19: The Use of Modern Photographs


This image was chosen because it was a colour photograph and there were not many colour images for the theme Notre-Dame-des-Prairies in the archives of the SHSB. I also wanted to illustrate that while things may modernise, there are still elements of our past that continue on over the ages. In the case of the Trappist honey, it has been an

important staple since 1907. it is also an example of how the technology of photography has evolved over time and should perhaps be a topic of discussion.⁵⁹

SHSB - Au pays de Riel - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by CBC/SRC Internet Explorer 6.0

Au pays de Riel

Détail d'une carte postale d'un rucher des Trappistes. Dès 1907, les Trappistes élèvent des abeilles et vendent leur miel. Le rucher est détruit par le feu en 1912, mais on ne tarde pas à reconstruire. Parmi les moines qui travaillent dans le rucher, le père François est un des plus célèbres. Arrivé peu après la fondation, il est le titulaire du rucher pendant 25 ans. Il est connu pour ses nombreux renseignements et ses cadeaux de petits pots de miel. Il est aussi responsable de l'hôtellerie pendant dix ans. Plus tard il se spécialise en liturgie et en rédaction. De plus, il forme les jeunes lévites.



Archives de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Collection générale de la SHSB, 26281

FERMER CETTE FENETRE

Conclusion

The story that is presented in the module reflects as much the society of today as the time in which the records were created. For instance, much of the archival record that has been preserved in French-speaking Manitoba is heavily influenced by religion. In our relatively secular world, the ways in which these records are interpreted differ greatly from the time of their creation. There is nothing new in this practice as historians, novelists, textbook writers, and others have been doing this for quite some time. What is new is archivists joining this interpretive process rather than remaining “neutral”, objective, hands-off custodians.

⁵⁹ Joan Schwartz, “We Make Our Tools and Our Tools Make Us’: Lessons from Photographs for the Practice, Politics, and Poetics of Diplomats”, *Archivaria* 40 (Fall 1995), 40-74.

The audio and audio-visual records will not be discussed in this thesis as they are a topic all on their own. This is largely due to the fact that they require a great deal of technological filters that would be very lengthy to describe here. Their analysis will have to wait for another day.⁶⁰

The archives has a role to share the records that are preserved in its institution. In the world of history, we teach individuals how to read a record, but we are frequently not critical of the recording media and the reading processes. We need to remind visitors that online documents were not originally designed for the web. What is put on the web is only the tip of the iceberg of what exists in the collections and the collections themselves are only a tiny fragment of the totality of records that once existed in society. And finally, a website that is designed to be both historical and archival must meet a number of obligations to the records that it exhibits. Here should be a space to describe the thought process behind the selections that were made and analyse them or at the very least pose the questions for others to consider when they visit the pages of a website like *Au pays de Riel*.

⁶⁰ A good piece of literature is the work of Christopher Ann Paton, "Preservation Re-Recording of Audio Recordings in Archives: Problems, Priorities, Technologies, and Recommendations", *American Archivist* 61 (Spring 1998), 188-219.

Conclusion:

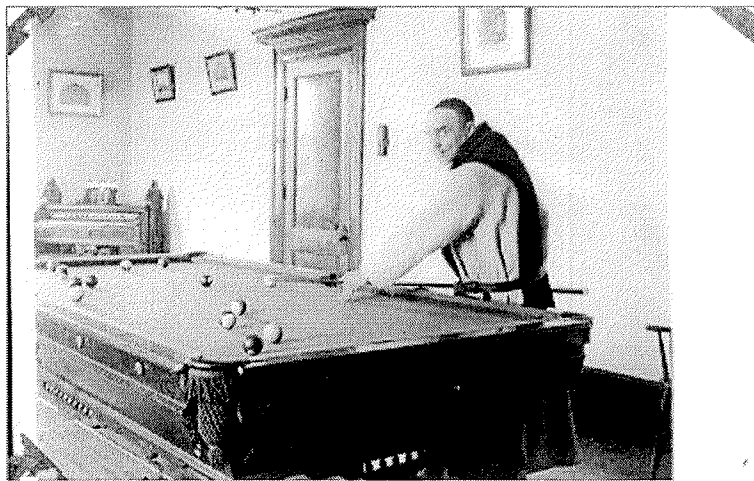
An Archival Viewpoint about Public Programming

I have argued in this thesis that archivists should consider the social impact of what they put online. It is time to consider that the Internet affords both the advantage and the responsibility to assess the varied contexts that comprise the story that a record tells as well as its history as a record. In a way, a revised edition of this thesis could be the type of Dossiers that would be a useful tool to explore the different contexts of the modules like Notre-Dame-des-Prairies. Furthermore, the texts that have been translated here in this thesis could be interpreted as yet another layer to the understanding of the text that was published on the Web.

One of the major disadvantages to the documents highlighted in the pop-ups and those chosen for the virtual drawer is that they are not situated within the fonds that they originated from. They also become another fonds in a way because they are conserved with a new numbering system on CDs once they have been digitised. There are many ways to link the records of exhibits more fully to their provenance and original order. One example would be to illustrate the process of preparing a fonds for use and preservation. Obviously not everything can be included, but it is useful for the audiences of *Au pays de Riel* to have an appreciation of what it looks like at the beginning point and what the process is all about. How we make choices, preparation, and so forth can be included. We already do a form of this documentation, so why not create a Dossiers to document the process for consumption by various audiences?

Notre-Dame-des-Prairies was the first module that I wrote for *Au pays de Riel*. Were there things that I would change? The answer to that question is certainly yes. Did

the project make me consider the repercussions on to the history of the records that I was selecting for the module? The answer to this one is absolutely. In many ways, this thesis has asked more questions than it has answered. It is a type of revisionist history that I hope will open new avenues of thought and discussion within the archival field. It is only in this way that we as a profession will continue to grow and perhaps employ the web for all its public programming opportunities in the future. And finally, archival thinking should be viewed as constantly evolving. As new records are unearthed, the way we interpret our records continually changes. When I found this image in the unprocessed materials three months later, I would certainly have added this photograph because it illustrates a lighter side of the Trappist world.¹



¹ This photograph has since been integrated into the databases of the SHSB. Reference: SHSB 9761, Fonds Josaphat-Alexandre Donat McDougall.

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