

## Joseph Bailly

(7 April 1774 – 21 December 1835), was a fur trader and a member of an important French Canadian family that included his uncle, Charles-François Bailly de Messein.

Bailly was one of several Canadians from prominent families who were important in the western fur trade. In 1822, he established a trading post near present-day Porter, Indiana, making him the foremost pioneer of that area.

Joseph Bailly was an early fur trader on the Great Lakes. He and his children had significant influence as the region transitioned from English colonialism to frontier expansion of the United States. He was born Honore Gratien Joseph Bailly de Messein on 7 Apr 1774 in Vercheres, Quebec; a village which originated with a land grant to his great-great grandfather Francois Xavier Jarret, Sieur de Vercheres in 1672. It is located twenty miles (32 km) up the St Lawrence River from Montreal, on the opposite bank. Bailly was a sixth generation French-Canadian, descending from Jehan Terriault and Perrine Brault, who were original colonists in Acadie in 1637. Bailly's great-grandfather Nicholas Antoine Coulon, Seieur de Villiers was a trader and Army officer who was killed by Fox Indians on the shore of Green Bay, Wisconsin in 1733. His uncle, Father Charles-Francois Bailly de Messein spent more than twenty years as a catholic missionary to the Micmac Indians of Nova Scotia, and was appointed coadjutor Bishop of Quebec in 1788. Following the family interest in the fur trade, Joseph Bailly received a college education in Montreal, and served a clerkship with the Northwest Fur Company.

In the winter of 1792-93, Bailly entered into extensive fur trading with Ottawa Indian villages in central Michigan. From 1793 to 1810, his winter residence was a trading post located near an Ottawa village at the foot of the Maple River Rapids, in Lebanon township, Clinton County, Michigan. Bailly owned additional trading posts from 1793 to 1822 on Lake Muskego, Muskegon River, Michigan (now Muskegon, Michigan); from 1793 to 1810 in Chig-au-mish-kene village on Grand River (now Lyons, Michigan), from 1807 to 1815, in Parc aux Vaches village on St Joseph River, (south of present day Niles, Michigan); from 1807 - 1828 on the Calumet River Indiana; and from 1807 - 1828 on the Kankakee River, Illinois .

Joseph married Angelique McGulpin (Bead-Way-Way or Mecopemequa) in 1794 in Maketoquit's village at the foot of Maple River rapids, Michigan. Angelique was born about 1780 in Chig-au-mish-kene village on Grand River, Michigan. She was a daughter of Maketoquit (Black Cloud), the chief of a large band of Grand River Ottawa. He located his main village in what became Essex Township of Shiawassee County, on the south side of the Maple River, but the band used a winter camp in Lebanon Township of Clinton County (now the village of Maple Rapids) for gathering maple sugar. Children of the marriage were Francis Bailey, born in 1795; Alexis Bailey; born in 1798; and Sophia Bailly, in 1807. The marriage ended in divorce. Francis remained with Maketoquit's band and Alexis was sent to boarding school in Montreal. Sophia was adopted by a close friend of both parents, fur trader Marie LaFramboise; who summered on Mackinac Island and wintered on Grand River (now Lowell, Michigan).

Joseph Bailly entered into a financial partnership with Dominic Rousseau of Montreal which dominated the fur trade on the upper Great Lakes out of Mackinac Island and challenged the giant Northwest Fur Company. Rousseau and Bailly maintained large warehouses on Mackinac and in Montreal; trading in numerous locations with several fleets of voyageurs.

Joseph married Marie Lefevre de La Vigne (Mo-nee or Tou-se-qua) in 1810. She was born in 1783 in Ma-con, a large mixed-band Indian village on the Raisin River west of present Monroe, Michigan. Her mother was a Potawatomi of the St. Joseph Band. Marie married Kougowma (or Kiogima), also called La Vigne, a medicine man in the Mackinac band of Ottawa, who took her to Mackinac Island. Kougowma died between 1804 and 1809. Bailly adopted the two daughters from this marriage, Agatha born in 1797 and Therese, born in 1803. Five more children were born of this second marriage, who were Esther in 1811, Rose in 1813, Eleanor in 1815, Robert in 1817 and Hortense in 1819.

Bailly attempted to avoid involvement in the War of 1812, but found that he could not maintain neutrality. He was a Canadian citizen, and had a huge business headquartered in Montreal. Bailly was appointed a Lieutenant in the Michigan Fencibles, a regiment of Canadian militia, in January 1813. He was seized as a prisoner of war in January 1814, while visiting his post at Parc Aux Vaches, by United States militia. He was taken to Detroit and held until March for two months. Bailly was on Mackinac Island when it was recaptured by US forces, and was deported with the other Canadian Loyalists to Drummond Island, Canada (now Chippewa County, Michigan). He sent his eight year old daughter Sophia to live with her adopted brother, trader Joseph LaFramboise in Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin; but the war theater soon expanded westward to that village.

Joseph Bailly returned to Mackinac Island in 1817 to establish US citizenship, prior to re-entering the fur trading business. By 1820, he was the principal trader on the Calumet River of northern Indiana. In 1822, Bailly moved his young family there. His daughters Agatha and Sophia remained on Mackinac Island. Therese was in school in Montreal, but joined him later. They were the first family of European descent in northern Indiana, and their home became a popular and lively stop for travelers between Chicago and Detroit or Fort Wayne. The family was well-known for their refinement and graciousness. The extensive trading post that Bailly established hosted the Indian bands of the region, especially the Potawatomi. His trading influence extended westward to the Sac and Fox villages of Illinois. Bailly purchased over 2,000 acres (8.1 km<sup>2</sup>) of land, drafting plans for developing a commercial harbor, city and infrastructure at the mouth of the Calumet. The Bailly home was a center of the Catholic faith in northern Indiana, but Joseph also strongly supported the Baptist Carey Mission to the Indians. His wife and daughters also acquired extensive land holdings through treaty grants and skillful speculation. The town of Monee, Will County, Illinois is named for Mrs. Bailly.

Joseph Bailly was an exceptional father on the frontier of the midwest. He ensured that all of his children were highly educated, spoke multiple languages, and contributed to society. Bailly's son Francis Bailey became a medical doctor, and a medicine-man of the Grand River Ottawa band. Following the forfeiture of the Ottawa lands on Maple River,

Francis, his cousin Maketoquit, and a sub-chief man named Wintagowish purchased the land containing their village on Maple River in an attempt to co-exist with the new inrush of settlers. When it became impossible, they agreed to resettle on a reservation at Elbridge, Oceana County, Michigan. Alexis Bailly was a prominent pioneer fur trader to the Sioux bands in Minnesota, founding the town of Wabasha and the Wabasha County government; and serving in the Minnesota legislature. Daughter Sophia Graveraet and her husband lived on Mackinac, and traded with the Ottawa and Chippewa in the region of Traverse Bay, Michigan. She was the "Indian grandmother" in the tales from the books of Ottawa-Chippewa chronicler John Couchois Wright. Daughter Agatha Biddle was a leader of the Mackinac Island community, and became chief of the Mackinac band of Ottawa Indians. Her home, which was in her family for several generations, is an historic feature operated by Mackinac Island State Park since 1959 which demonstrates life on the island from the early fur trade era. Therese Nadeau died as a young mother, at the Bailly homestead in Indiana. Her sons, all traders, became leaders of the relocated Prairie Band of Potawatomi Indians and pioneers of Shawnee County, Kansas. Esther Whistler was in charge of the fledgling stages of Bailly's grand development called Baillytown, which ceased on her sudden death in 1842. Her trader husband and sons followed the relocation of the Sac & Fox tribe, and were pioneers of the towns of Burlington, Coffey County, Kansas and Stroud, Lincoln County, Oklahoma. Rose Howe was the wife of an early Chicago banker and entrepreneur. Following his early death, she and her mother became active investors in Chicago's commercial development. From 1869 to 1874, Rose and her daughter extensively toured Catholic shrines of Europe and the Middle East. Eleanor became Mother Mary Cecelia Bailly of the Sisters of Providence of St Mary of the Woods, based in Terre Haute, Indiana. She was a protegee of founder Saint Mother Theodore Guerin, and succeeded her a leader of the order. Her biography of Saint Mother Guerin, published posthumously, was part of the formal evidence supporting canonization in October 2006. Robert Bailly died in childhood, while a student at Carey Mission. Josephine Bailly married Chicago businessman and developer Joel T. Wicker, one of two brothers for whom the Wicker Park neighborhood is named. One of his many projects was to clear the lands acquired by Joseph Bailly, subdividing them and selling farmsteads to pioneering families of modest means. She also died as a young mother.

Joseph Bailly died of illness on 21 Dec 1835 in his home in Porter Co, Indiana; and was buried in the family cemetery nearby. The trading post, family home and cemetery remained in the family through three generations, until after 1918. They became focal historic features of the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore in 1966; and are currently in use demonstrating everyday life and culture before the settlement of Indiana by people of European origin. Nearby Chellberg Farm, part of the original Joseph Bailly land holdings which was purchased from Joel Wicker by a Swedish immigrant family from Chicago, showcases life from the subsequent pioneer period. Joseph Bailly is the subject of two published semi-fictional biographies, *The Story Of A French Homestead In The Old Northwest*, by Frances Howe, James Dowd Publishers - Bowie, Maryland 1907 / repub. Heritage Books 1999; and *Wolves Against The Moon*, by Julia Cooley Altrocchi, MacMillan Company, New York 1940 / repub. Black Letter Pres, Grand Rapids, Michigan 1994; and several pamphlets and papers. In 2005, teams under the direction of Valparaiso University professor Randa Duvick began translating Joseph Bailly's 1799-

1802 fur trade business account book from the original French language. As an important historic resource, Duvick has compared the translation to an archaeological dig, revealing rarely discovered intricate detail about everyday life over the large areas of Michigan, Indiana and Illinois that Bailly covered in his trade.