

From Rodrigue's draft of an Albert Béliveau Biography: "Albert Beliveau was born in Lewiston, Maine in 1887 of French Canadian parents. The Beliveau family migrated up the Androscoggin River to Jay and then Rumford, at the turn of the century, where young Albert worked in local foundries and mills. His experiences combined with opportunity and ambition to convince him of the need for a change in his life. He read law in Rumford and then graduated from the University of Maine's College of Law in 1912. He passed the bar exam with the highest score in state history and graduated a year ahead of his class. Two years later, the people of Oxford County elected him Maine's youngest county attorney and he solved one of the state's most notorious murder mysteries. From the start of his legal career, Albert Beliveau worked as a dedicated promoter of the Maine Democratic Party, contrary to Maine's political predilections since the Civil War.

Beliveau served with the U.S. Army in World War I where his French Canadian heritage and legal expertise made him a valuable resource in allied adjudication of French war claims. His concern for veterans brought him into association with General "Black Jack" Pershing and the founding of the American Legion. After the war, Beliveau returned to private practice in Rumford. He continued his involvement in veterans' affairs and Democratic Party politics. Despite his political affiliation, Republican governors appointed him to their staffs as an advisor. In anticipation of depression politics, Beliveau unsuccessfully ran for Congress in 1928 and 1930. His failure at the polls rerouted his career into a new pathway.

In the early 1930s, as the Great Depression deepened, the years in which Beliveau and his colleagues had spent organizing for the Democratic Party paid off as they were swept into political office. As a result, Beliveau was appointed to be the first Franco-American justice to the Maine Superior Court by the new Democratic governor. However, the Republican Party's return to power and alleged racism confined him to the Superior Court for the next twenty years. Among many other decisions, Beliveau overturned legal precedent in a second major murder case through a precedent-setting use of the Writ of Habeas Corpus. His legal acumen encouraged successive Republican governors to reappoint him and he was finally nominated to the Supreme Court in 1954. He retired from that court in 1958 after the political opportunism of governor Edmund Muskie denied him the seat of Chief Justice. "

Dr. Barry H. Rodrigue, Ph.D.

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Name: Béliveau/ Barry H.
Rodrigue Collection

Interviewer Barry H. Rodrigue

/Depositor:

Narrator: Judge Armand DuFresne

Description: **2351 Judge Armand DuFresne**, interviewed by Barry H. Rodrigue, spring 1994, Lewiston, Maine. Judge DuFresne talks about the Maine judicial and legal system; Franco-American life and history; Judge Albert Béliveau of Rumford, Maine.

Text: no transcript

Recording: **mfc_na2351_c1370.1_01&02, mfc_na2351_c1370.2_0&02** 113 minutes

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Interviewer Barry H. Rodrigue
/Depositor:

Narrator: Judge Donald Webber and Lucy
Webber

Description: **2352 Judge Donald Webber and Lucy Webber**, interviewed by Barry H. Rodrigue, March 1994, Auburn, Maine. Judge Webber and his wife Lucy Webber talk about the Maine judicial system and legal system in the mid 20th century; Franco-Americans; Albert Béliveau of Rumford.

Text: no transcript

Recording: **mfc_na2352_c1371.1_01&02, mfc_na2352_c1371.2_01&02,**
mfc_na2352_c1372_01 137 minutes

Related Collections
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ACCESSION SHEET

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Interviewer Barry H. Rodrigue

Narrator: Margaret McCarthy Beliveau

/Depositor:

Description: 2376 Margaret McCarthy Beliveau, interviewed by Barry H. Rodrigue, fall 1994, Rumford, Maine. Beliveau, wife of the late Judge Albert Béliveau and daughter of Judge McCarthy of Rumford, talks about family life; Franco-American and Irish-American life in Maine during the 19th and 20th centuries; legal and judicial history; University of Maine.

Text: no transcript

Recording: mfc_na2376_c1389_01&02, mfc_na2376_c1390_01&02 127 minutes

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ACCESSION SHEET

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Rodrigue Collection

Interviewer Barry H. Rodrigue

Narrator: Georgina Shields Kidder

/Depositor:

Description: **2503 Georgina Shields Kidder**, interviewed by Barry H. Rodrigue, 1997, Rumford, Maine. Kidder talks about Canadian-American and Franco-American life in the early to mid 20th century; life in Rumford; Prince Edward Islanders in Maine; Judge Albert Béliveau.

Text: no transcript

Recording: **mfc_na2503_c1583_01** 14 minutes

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