



The adventures  
of Wolf Man

DISPONIBLE  
EN  
FRANCAIS

# Joe LaFlamme

Suzanne F. Charron

Jablo

# “The adventures of Wolf Man Joe LaFlamme”... in comics: how this project came to be.

## From the author’s perspective

Engrossed in the writing of the biography of *Wolf Man Joe LaFlamme: Tamer Untamed* (Scrivener Press, 2013; Latitude 46, 2017), I soon realized how colourful this character was. It was easy to imagine his adventures on the big screen and - why not - in cartoons as well. But who would be interested in undertaking the latter project, as much a sizable task as the production of the biography?

As I have known Jacques-André Blouin for a long time, I had the opportunity to discover his potential and his great passion for cartoons. I loved his work, enough so that I once hired him to give my children a workshop on drawing cartoons. What a merry session around the kitchen table! Furthermore, Jacques-André had really enjoyed the biography of Joe LaFlamme. A cartoonist who loves the character of the Wolf Man. Hum! Here is the perfect mix of talent and interest, in addition to the fact that Jacques-André, like me, loves history. So, at the 2018 book fair, or the *Salon du livre du Grand Sudbury*, I tossed him the idea of putting LaFlamme into cartoons. A year later, we teamed up to present you this larger-than-life character, this time in full colour.

The adventures of Joe LaFlamme will be based on his biography as well as on the unpublished fictional stories I wrote. Nothing stops us, however, from inventing other anecdotes which would be in character with the wolf tamer’s extraordinary life. As he was unstoppable, anything is possible.

Finally, enjoy discovering, through Jacques-André’s cartoons, the colourful Wolf Man Joe LaFlamme.

Suzanne F. Charron

## From the cartoonist’s perspective

It was at the 2018 edition of the book fair *Salon du livre du Grand Sudbury* that author Suzanne F. Charron tossed me the idea of putting Joe LaFlamme into cartoons. The project enticed me but my schedule was too crowded at the time. Yet, a year later, we got together and launched the project. Having read her biography of Joe LaFlamme, and her unpublished fictional adventure stories of the wolf tamer, images kept racing in my head. There was no doubt in my mind that Joe LaFlamme’s story warranted its own cartoon series.

Having been a cartoon columnist at Radio-Canada and a devoted consumer of this medium, as well as loving to draw from the first time I held a pencil, I now had to put all my knowledge to the test. I soon realized that it is much easier to read and to assess cartoons than to actually produce them.

Therefore, the prologue to the adventures of Joe LaFlamme presented here is a first attempt, a way of getting my hands in creating cartoons. I hope it will delight you, as this is only the beginning of the adventure. I firmly believe that, as a fictional character, Joe LaFlamme is to Northern Ontario, and even to North America, what Astérix and Tintin are to Europe. He deserves his place. My goal is simply to give you the desire to discover him in his many adventures.

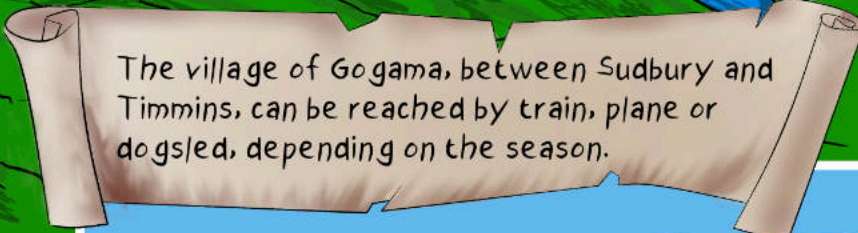
Cartoonists of the world, I humbly join your ranks.

Jablo




1930

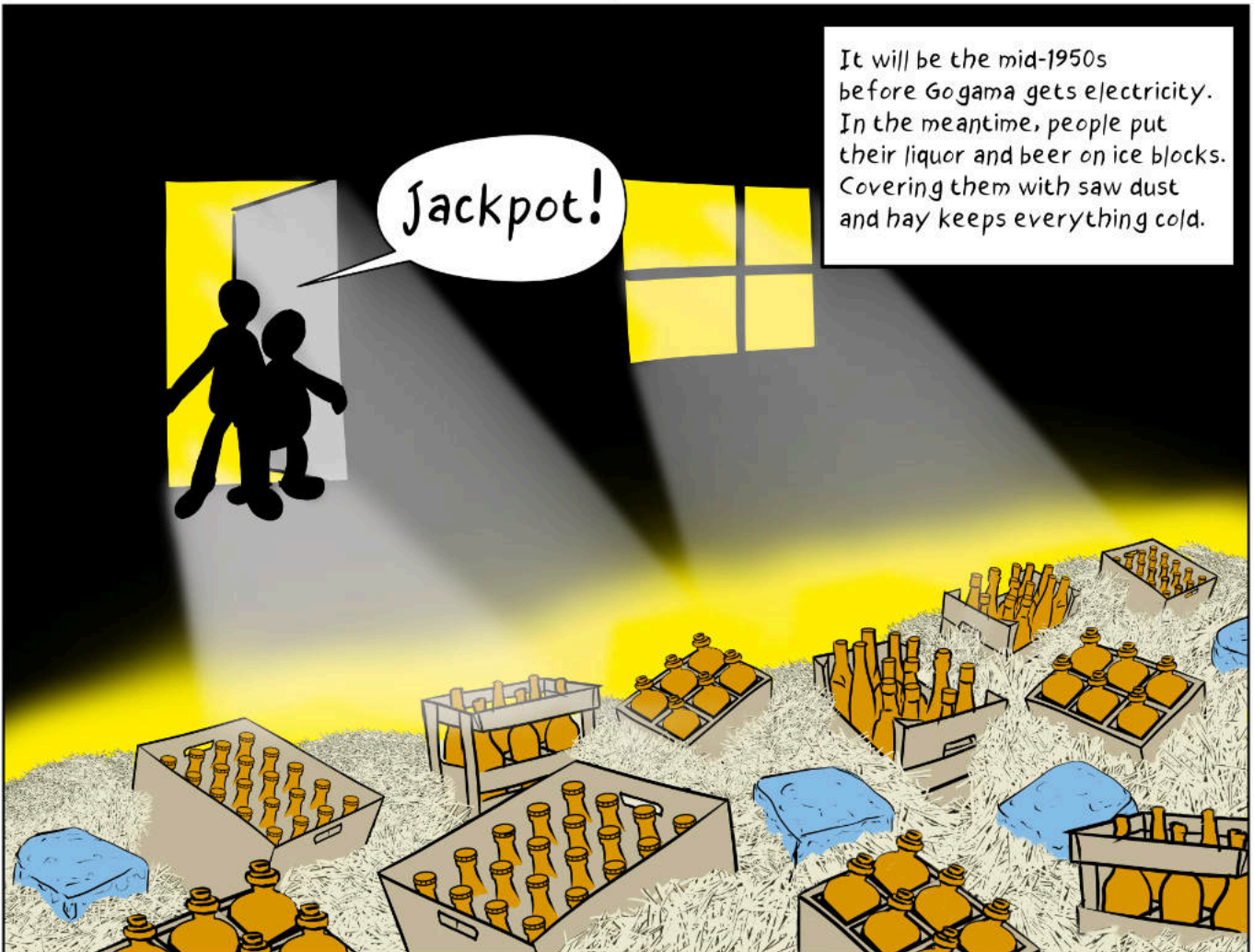
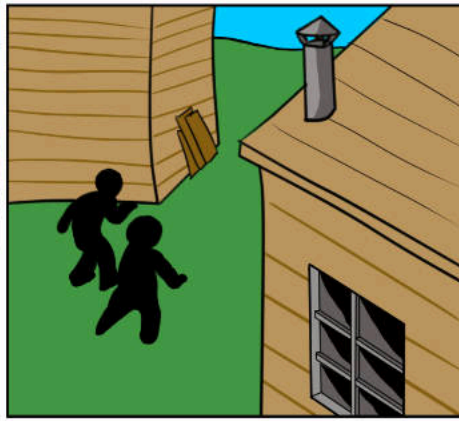
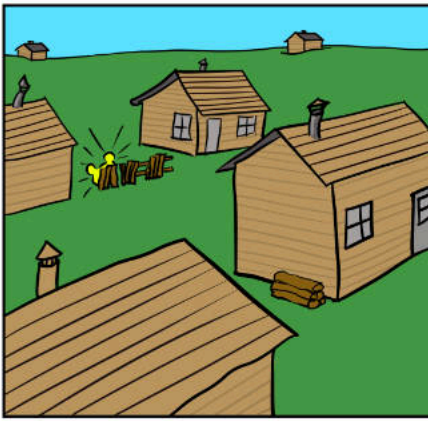
Canada's Northern Ontario  
is wild and remote.



The village of Gogama, between Sudbury and  
Timmins, can be reached by train, plane or  
dogsled, depending on the season.



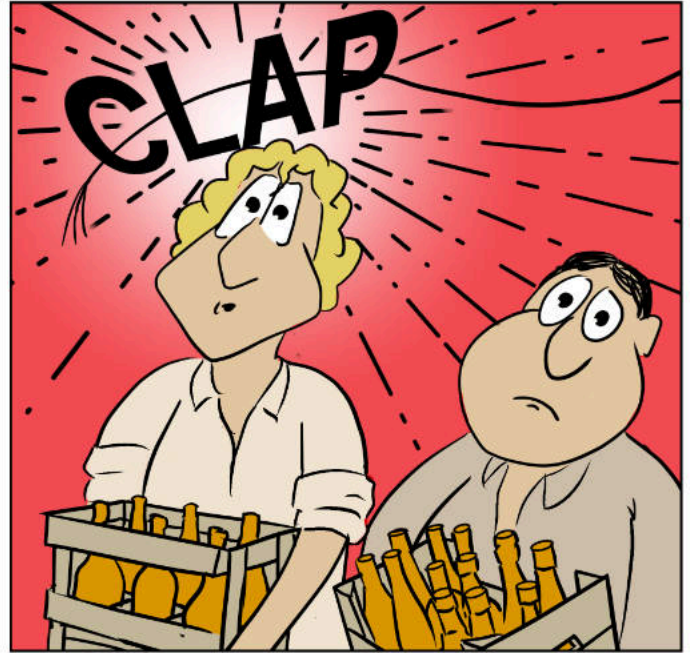
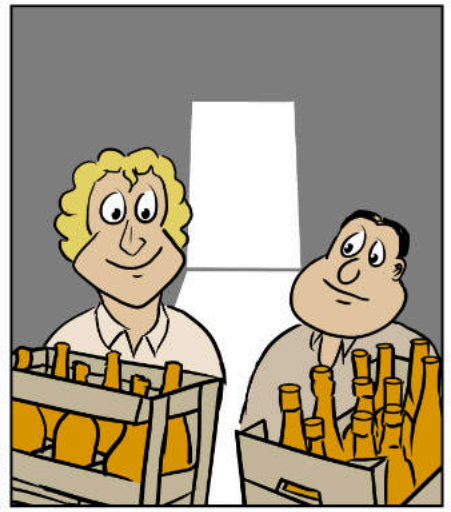
First a trading post,  
Gogama quickly became a  
forestry center.

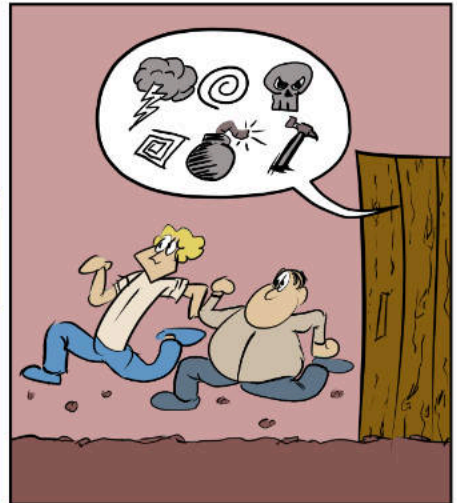
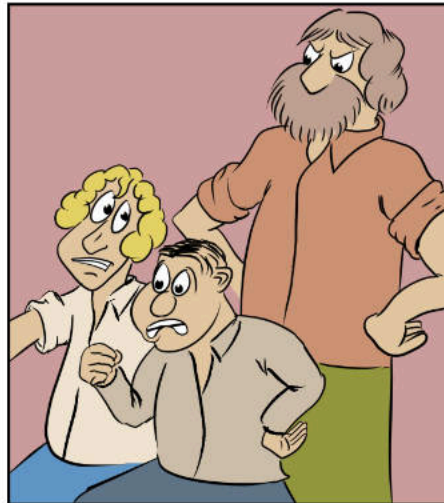
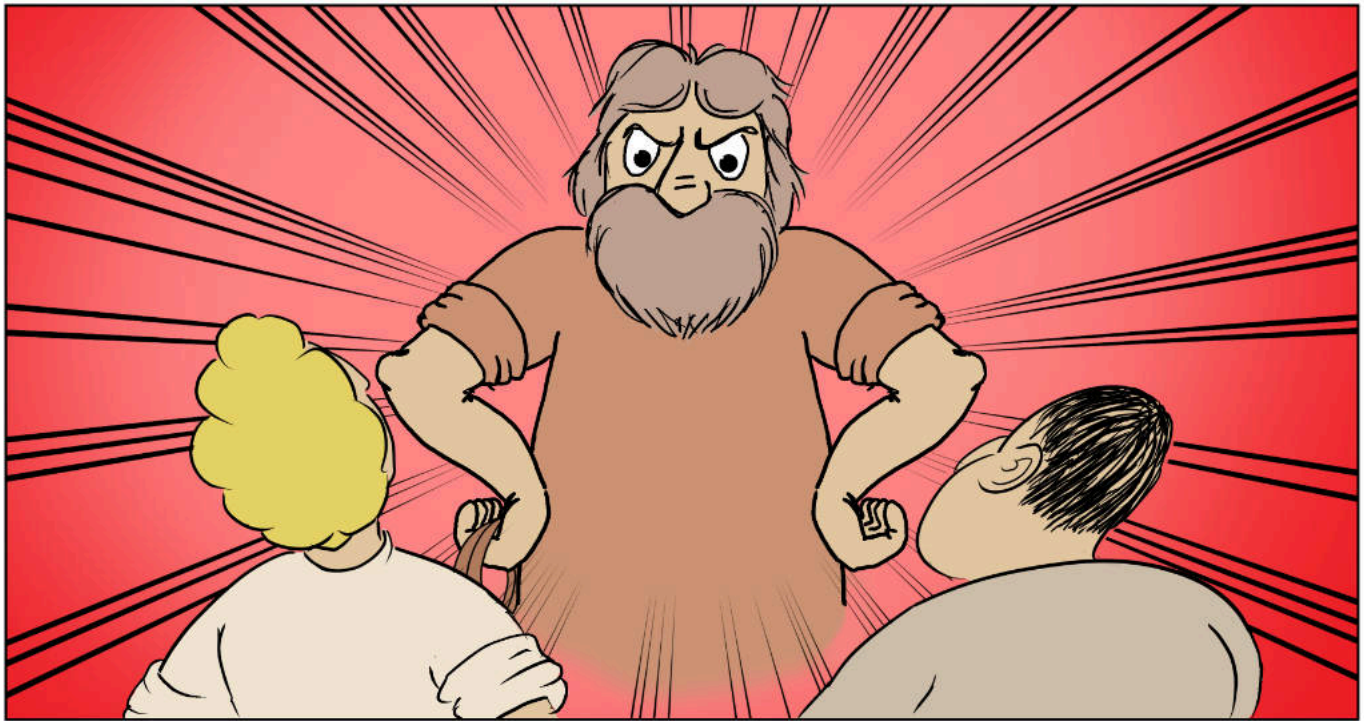


It will be the mid-1950s before Gogama gets electricity. In the meantime, people put their liquor and beer on ice blocks. Covering them with saw dust and hay keeps everything cold.









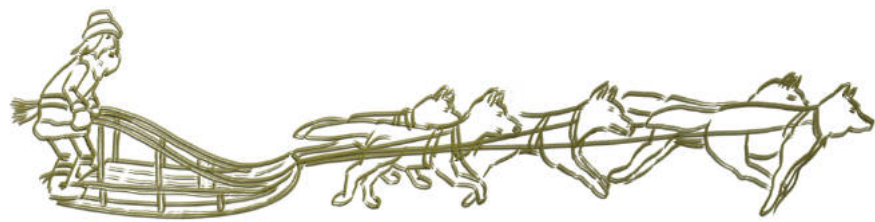
Good grief! They have no right to poke their nose into my business.

That'll teach those wannabe bootleggers.

Joe LaFlamme once declared that, to be happy, he and his wolves needed fresh air, exercise, snow, and work. He should have added alcohol production as well. This last activity, however, required extra vigilance from the Wolf Man.

to be continued





# Did you know?



On page 6 of the prologue (first panel on the right), you will notice that one of the boys has a handful of what looks like dollars. They are actually quarters. Yes, paper quarters !

In 1930, in the era of the Wolf Man, five fractional coins (dividing the dollar into units) were in circulation in Canada. The 10 and 20 cents were the first to appear on the market in 1858. Then followed the 25 cents in 1870, the 50-cent coin in 1908, the penny in 1920 and, two years later, the five cents.

All of these denominations, except the 25 cents, were silver, bronze or copper coins. The 25 cents, however, was printed on paper and was commonly known as *shinplaster* because it closely resembled the American *shinplaster*. The latter was emitted during the American Revolution (1765-1783) by the government of the Thirteen Colonies. As the paper currency was not redeemable at face value, it was worth so little that the American soldiers used it as dressing for wounds or as padding in their boots to protect their feet from the cold.

But why did the Dominion of Canada produce a paper 25 cents when all other fractional denominations were made of metal?

It so happens that, during the American Civil War (1861-1865), the American army purchased supplies in Canada and often paid the small items with 10-, 25-, and 50-cent coins. This practice, among others, contributed to a surplus of American coins in circulation in Canada. Furthermore, the Canadian foreign exchange dealers imported large quantities of American coins. And, for some unknown reason, Canadians preferred the American quarter (from the

Imperial system) to their 20-cent coin (from the metric system).

In 1870, the Canadian government addressed the glut of American fractional currency circulating in the country by replacing the 20-cent coin with a silver 25 cents. As the latter were a long time coming from the Royal Mint in London, the government issued a temporary paper version of the 25 cents. The paper currency became so popular with the public that it remained in circulation for 65 years or until 1935! The last *shinplasters* were printed in 1923, the year Joe LaFlamme started working with wolves.

In 2020, the 1930 *shinplaster* would be equivalent to \$3.73 CAD.

## References:

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Wikipedia. *Shinplaster*, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shinplaster>, retrieved August 26, 2020.



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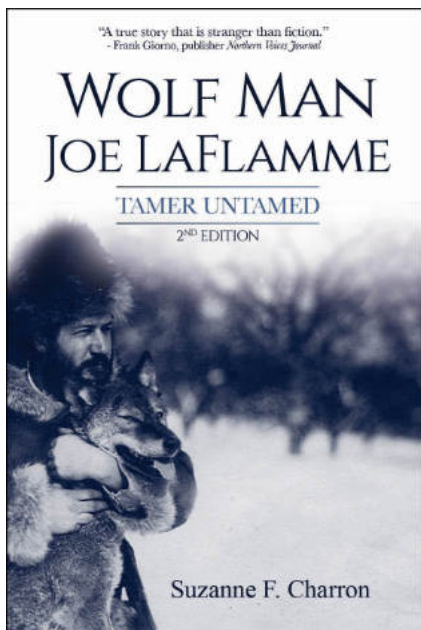
## The many faces of Wolf Man Joe LaFlamme

Joe LaFlamme was a man of many faces whose adventures spanned a whole lifetime. In order to keep the character timeless, we have chosen to ignore the passage of time and give him a fairly consistent look, as is often the case for characters in cartoon series. Most of the time, Joe will be depicted sporting a thick, full beard. This was part of his signature costume as a *musher*, or driver of a dogsled. On occasions, however, he will appear clean-shaven as he was in his younger days.

The reader might question why we have chosen to start with a story about Joe LaFlamme as a bootlegger. Eventhough he has practiced this trade for many years, the Wolf Man was much more than that. Quite simply, the prologue was based on the opening chapter of his biography written by Suzanne F. Charron. This allowed for a colourful scenario and one that was sufficiently short to try our hand at this medium.

Note that, in the next chapter of the cartoon series, you will discover another one of LaFlamme's many faces.

# Wolf Man Joe LaFlamme : Tamer Untamed



When, in 1920, Joe LaFlamme settled in Gogama, in remote Northern Ontario, Canada, he discovered a passion for the wild animals of the boreal forest. Taming wolves soon turned him into a legend, his fame spreading throughout Canada and the United States.

Imagine a strapping trapper mushing his wolf team in the heart of big cities such as Montreal, Toronto, Boston, and even on Broadway in New York; and travelling by plane with unleashed wolves!

Not only did the wolf tamer's passion lead him to tempt fate by rubbing shoulders with wild beasts, he also defied the law by bootlegging moonshine to make ends meet and spice up his life.

LaFlamme's biographer, Suzanne F. Charron, has done extensive research to bring his story back to life and establish the Wolf Man in the canon of Canadian legends. The book is available at Latitude 46 Publishing: [www.latitude46publishing.com](http://www.latitude46publishing.com).



(Photo: Josée Blake)

Biographer Suzanne F. Charron grew up in Sturgeon Falls, in Northern Ontario, Canada. She holds a bachelor of arts degree from the Université du Québec à Montréal. She has over 15 years of experience in the field of communications, in addition to working in administration, journalism, and as a qualified teacher. She has established roots in Greater Sudbury where she has developed a passion for wolf education.



(Photo: courtesy)

Born and raised in Quebec City, in the province of Quebec, Canada, cartoonist Jacques-André Blouin has also worked in the field of communications on the air at French CBC, in Northern Ontario. Starting as a technician/host, he ended his career as an associate-producer/technician. He then obtained his master's degree in history at Laurentian University in Sudbury, where he has lived for over 40 years before moving back to Quebec.