

# The Pioneer Families of New France in the Archives of the Central Exchange of the Paris Notaries.

Presented and Annotated by Marcel Fournier

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## Presentation

### The Parish Registers of the City of Paris

The city of Paris is the birthplace of some 900 pioneers of New France including 327 “Filles-du-Roi” (Daughters of the King). Researching Parisian ancestors has historically caused problems for genealogists because of the loss of the civil registers of Paris occurring in 1891. Until the French Revolution, the parish registers of the city of Paris contained the acts, which allowed one to build the family connections of the persons baptized, married and buried within the administrative limits of Paris. The Capital had on hand, since the XVI th century, a quantity of particularly important parish registers because of its population and the high number of its parishes.

Most of the archives of Paris disappeared in the fire of the Paris Commune on May 23, 1871, notably the parish and civil registers from the XVI th century to the year 1860. On the same day, the Palace of Justice was also the victim of the flames. The double records were consequently destroyed.

This immeasurable loss has often made the research of Parisian families difficult. The records that survived

have very little, such as 29 items included in the series V.6E of the Archives of the City of Paris. Of the 395 parish registers for the period of 1529 to 1789, only the one of the parish of Saint-Eustache is available for the period of 1529-1748.

Existing records are often collections of extracts prepared by Abraham Charles Guiblet. These extracts can be very short, because sometimes only the name of the godfather or a witness is collectable. These fragments which often refer to the nobility or to notables are conserved at the Department of Manuscripts of the National Library of France. Some are digitized and can be viewed on the Gallica site of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France: <http://gallica.bnf.fr> .

These parishes are: Saint-Eustache, Saint-Jean-en-Grève, Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet, Saint-André-des-Arts, Saint-Sauveur, Saint-Sulpice, Saint-Honoré, Saint-Mery, Saint-Landry, Saint-Roch and Saint-Médard.

In the 1950s, during a research trip in Paris, Archange Godbout consulted most of these registers to identify our ancestors of Parisian origin. The results of his research were compiled in his archival fund preserved at the French-Canadian Genealogical Society.

In recent years, other genealogists like René Jetté and Roland Auger also explored these sources to supplement family genealogies. The results of these researches are found largely on the website of Fichier Origine: <http://www.fichierorigine.com/index.php> .

The book, “The civil and religious acts of Canadians and their Parisian family pulled from the Paris Archives 1500-1850”, published in 2015, constitutes an exhaustive repertoire of documents known to date of Canadian pioneers, natives of the City of Light. There we will find references to births and baptisms, marriages, marriage agreements, deaths, wills and post-death inventories of some 750 surnames of Parisian families linked to New France.

### **The reconstruction of the parish registers**

Several projects of reconstruction of the civil acts were made between the years of 1872 and 1897. The work was done by crosschecking with family documents (announcements, notarial acts, acts on nobility, parish statements prior to 1871, etc.). In total 2,696,000 were reconstructed; 5 only for the XVI th Century; 5000 for the XVII th century; 242,000 for the XVIII th century and finally 2,454,000 for the XIX th century.

We can consult the reconstructed acts of the civil state of the city of Paris at the website of the Archive of the City of Paris at the following address:

[http://canadp-archivesenligne.paris.fr/archives\\_etat\\_civil/](http://canadp-archivesenligne.paris.fr/archives_etat_civil/)

The alphabetic reconstructed files of the civil state are organized by types of acts (birth, marriage, death), regardless of the place or the date of the act recorded before 1860.

Each type of act, the method of classification was done in alphabetical order of surnames (individual names by individual names) and then by chronological order of the acts. Each card shows the year of the act, the place of its registration, the surname and given name of the person concerned, and finally the specific date of the event (and not the date of the act as used for the period of 1860-1902). For marriages, a card was made for each spouse, search for the bride under her birth name.

### **Notarial acts of Paris**

Notarial acts kept at the central Minutier of Notaries of Paris are undoubtedly the most important archival source to reconstruct much of the old Parisian civil registration. Marriage agreements, wills and post-death inventories often make it possible to establish, with great precision, dates of birth, marriage and death. This information does not only concern Canadians but the parents and grandparents of these people, their brothers and sisters remaining in France.

Several notarial acts, especially marriage agreements, post-death inventories and inventory closings, drawn from some 10,000 bundles conserved at the Centre historique des Archives National in Paris have been digitized and made available to researchers at the Familles Parisiennes website at the following address:  
<http://www.famillesparisiennes.org/patro/b.html>.

In addition to the notarial acts there are many acts of guardianships registered at the Châtelet in Paris are to be found.

### **The presentation of notices**

The repertoire of notarial acts which follows was constituted by the genealogist Jean-Paul Macouin. Since 2003, he travels to Paris each winter to consult the archives of the notaries of Paris of the old regime seeking information on Canadian pioneers natives of Île-de-France. The results of his research are impressive and highly accurate for both Quebec and French researchers. We will find in this publication a summary description of Notarial acts for Canadians and their Parisian families written by John Paul Macouin between 2003 and 2015.

Each signaled card often includes unpublished information on some 350 pioneers of Parisian origins from the XVI<sup>th</sup> to the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century. Under the name of each pioneer, the acts traced are listed chronologically from oldest to newest. The name of the notary who drafted the act is underlined and mention of his study is indicated in Roman numerals when it was identified. The second name is that of his colleague who witnessed the drafting of the act.

### **Notes**

In this digital book project, my job was that of a editor reviewer. It was to identify the pioneers from various Canadian genealogical dictionaries, from the Biographical Dictionary of Canada and from Fichier Origine. Moreover, I arranged alphabetically the names of pioneers, standardized the presentation of the texts except for the names of individuals which are as written in the acts described by John Paul Macouin. I also specified the places names in France described the acts by indicating in brackets the current department. In addition, the names of the notaries were validated with the data from the website of the Parisian notaries :

<http://minutier.free.fr/mc/cherche.php>

Personal searches made of the Familles Parisiennes internet site added more acts of guardianship and inventory closings that are referenced in the Y series the National Archives. These references, in italics, were not systematically stripped. It will be for researchers to consult them in order to draw all available information including such as presence of brothers and sisters of the Parisian pioneers. Some notarial acts concerning families of Parisian origin were from the work "Vielles Familles de France en Nouvelle-France" by Archange Godbout, published in 1976, were added to the cards. A onomastic index was created to facilitate the identification of pioneers from the city of Paris.

### **Citing sources**

This digital publication was made enabling Quebec genealogists to search for their Parisian ancestors. We ask researchers who will use this information to cite the name of the author to justly recognize him for his many years of research in the Parisian Archives.

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Longueuil, March 1, 2016

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