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Nicolas Marsolet from Saint-Aignan

Nicolas Marsolet , sieur **de Saint-Aignan** , born in 1587 or 1601 in Normandy , died in Quebec in 1677 , is an adventurer , Native American interpreter , fur

Nicolas Marsolet from Saint-Aignan

trader, trafficker, lord of Bellechasse and other places in New France .

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Biography

Birth	Towards <u>1587</u> <u>Rouen</u>
Death	<u>May 15, 1677</u> <u>Quebec</u>
Activities	<u>Interpreter</u> , <u>adventurer</u> , trader, lord
Spouse	Marie Le Barbier known as the Barbid (<u>d</u>)
Child	Louise Marsolet (<u>d</u>)
Other information	
Baptism date	<u>February 7, 1601</u>

Biography

Nicolas Marsolet (sometimes spelled Marsollet, and sometimes called Marsolet de Saint-Aignan) is originally from the Rouen region in Normandy , possibly from Saint-Aignan as his full name seems to indicate ¹ . He was born in 1587 according to his burial record, or in 1601 according to the 1666 census ¹ . Baptized on February 7, 1601 in the parish of Saint-Pierre-le-Portier, in Rouen, he was the son of Nicolas Marsolet, who died before 1615, and of Marguerite de Planes ² , ³ .

Adventurer and performer

He arrived in New France on March 3, 1613⁴ . According to the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* , would be in 1613 happens with Champlain and into countries Algonquin ¹ . He was in Tadoussac in 1623 and 1624; he returned to France and returned in the summer of 1627¹ .

He seems to be active in Tadoussac, Quebec City , Trois-Rivières , and especially in the Algonquin villages of the Outaouais and on the Montagnais (Innu) side with the Amerindians, whose languages he learned and became an interpreter . According to Champlain, he seeks the greatest profits and lives in debauchery ¹ , ⁵ .

Marsolet makes Champlain fail in his plan to take two young Amerindian women, Espérance et Charité, to France, perhaps to keep them near him, or because Esperance had turned him away ¹ . According to another source, Champlain managed to negotiate with Louis Kirke to bring with him two young women ⁵ .

When most of the French left, in 1629, Nicolas Marsolet chose to remain in the colony, and went to the service of the Kirke brothers after the surrender of Quebec from Champlain to the English (1629-1634) ⁵ , for whom he continued his office as interpreter. When the French returned in 1632, Marsolet again changed sides. But he refuses to communicate his knowledge of the local language to the Jesuits , except to Father Charles Lalemant who succeeds in winning it over ¹ .

Lord in New France and trader of furs

Ceasing his adventurous life, he decides to settle and found a home ¹. Returned to France in 1635 upon Champlain's death, he married Marie Le Barbier there in Normandy, by marriage contract signed in Rouen on March 19, 1637; the same year 1637, he returned to New France ^{2, 3, 6}.

Nicolas Marsolet obtains a concession from the Compagnie de la Nouvelle-France in March 1637 and becomes Lord of Bellechasse on October 6 next ¹. He also bought, in 1640, a piece of land on the Sainte-Geneviève hill. He then leads a tidy life, considered by the missionaries as a valuable collaborator. His knowledge of languages led him to be employed as a clerk by the Compagnie de la Nouvelle-France in 1642 ^{1, 7}.

From 1647 to 1660, he also practiced the fur trade on his own. Dissatisfied with the leaders of the Community of Inhabitants, in 1646 he was the initiator of an uprising against them, suppressed by the governor. He manages his affairs from his own funds. He owns a boat for his fur trade trips to Tadoussac. He is nicknamed the "little king of Tadoussac" ¹.

Since trafficking is his main activity, he neglects the many concessions from which he benefits. In addition to his seigneurie of Bellechasse, he received: the "Marsolet prairies", in the seigneurie of Cap-de-la-Madeleine, in 1644; part of the future seigneurie of Gentilly, in 1647, which he sold in 1671; the "Marsolet fiefdom", in the future seigneurie of Lotbinière, in 1672. But it does not seem to deal with any of these fiefdoms. He has other lands, in the censive of Quebec: on the Sainte-Geneviève hill, since 1649; and on the banks of the Saint-Charles river, since 1651. Only his land on the Sainte-Geneviève hill is cultivated, he seems to have it exploited by farmers ¹.

Marsolet ceased his back and forth trips to Tadoussac before 1660. He took care of his business in Quebec, where he died on May 15, 1677 ¹.

Posterity

Descendants

Nicolas Marsolet married in 1637 in Rouen Marie Barbier or Le Barbier, daughter of Henri Barbier and Marguerite Le Villain ².

They have as children ^{3, 8}:

Marie-Marthe Marsolet (1638-1711), who ep. in 1652 in ND of Quebec Mathieu d'Amours de Louvière, sieur de Chauffours, major of Quebec, ship owner, member of the Sovereign Council of New France, Lord of Matane, including several children, among whom:

Mathieu d'Amours de Freneuse (1657-1696), seigneur, member of the Sovereign Council of New France;

Charles d'Amours de Louvières (1662-1716), Lord of Lac-Matapédia, who m. Marie-Anne Genaple Belfond, whose posterity;

Louise Marsolet (1640-1712), who m. Jean Lemire, master carpenter and trustee of Quebec, including several children, among whom:

Marie-Anne Lemire, who m. Gédéon de Catalogne (1662-1729), cartographer, officer, lord of the fiefdom of the Prairies Marsolet;

Geneviève Marsolet (1644-1702), who m. Michel Guyon dit Rouvray or du Rouvray, whose posterity;

Marie-Magdelaine Marsolet (1646-1734), who m. François Guyon, whose posterity;

Jean Marsolet de Bellechasse (1651-1715), who ep. Marguerite Couture (1656-1690), daughter of

the pioneer Guillaume Couture , then remarried to Marie-Anne Bolduc; and five children who died young: Joseph Marsolet (born in 1642, died before 1666); Louise Marsolet (1648-died before 1666); Anne Marsolet (1653-died before 1666); Élizabeth Marsolet (1655-died before 1666); Marie Marsolet (1662-1677).

Posterity in toponymy

Its name has been preserved in various place and street names:

- The “fief Marsolet”;
- The “Prairies Marsolet”;
- Lake Marsolet, in Nord-du-Québec ;
- The Marsolet township, in Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean ;
- Rue Marsolet in Quebec , borough of Sainte-Foy – Sillery – Cap-Rouge , name given in his honor around 1963⁹ ;
- Nicolas-Marsolet Street, in Trois-Rivières¹⁰ ;
- Marsolet Street, in Sept-Îles .

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- Pierre-Georges Roy, *The Marsolet family from St-Aignan* , Levis, 1934, 32 p. (read online (<http://www.ourroots.ca/page.aspx?id=3690266&qryID=b5402218-dcf9-4cc6-9008-13e75b6a7747>)).

Notes and references

1. *Dictionary biogr. of Canada* , v. I.
2. Larson 2008 , p. 143.
3. “Nicolas Marsolet de Saint-Aignan” (<http://genealogiequebec.info/testphp/info.php?no=4114>) on genealogiequebec.info. and Jetté genealogy.
4. Jetté genealogy.
5. Jacques Lacoursière , *Nos Racines* , chap. 5 , 1979, p. 104-105 .
6. Drouin, *La Masculine* ^[insufficient source] , p. 38.
7. According to Brother's Keeper software.
8. Larson 2008 , p. 143-145.
9. Website of the City of Quebec , “Marsolet Street” (<http://www.ville.quebec.qc.ca/toponymie/repertoire/fiche.aspx?idFiche=2382>)
10. “Nicolas-Marsolet, rue” (<http://toponymie.v3r.net/fiche/1161/rue-nicolas-marsolet.aspx>) on toponymie.v3r.net.

See also

External links

- Notice in a dictionary or general encyclopedia : *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (http://www.biographi.ca/fr/bio/marsolet_de_saint_aignan_nicolas_1F.html)
- Authority records : Virtual international authority file (<http://viaf.org/viaf/316938808>) · WorldCat Id (<https://www.worldcat.org/identities/viaf-316938808>)

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