
MARIE MERCIER GIRL OF THE ROY

The first contingent of the Daughters of the King arrived in 1663 and their arrival will extend over a period of 10 years. More than 800 came to settle in New France to found a family. The genetic heritage of French Canadians comes mainly from these brave women. They can be considered as "the Mothers of the Nation". They arrive in a historical context to know.

More than fifty years after the founding of Quebec, New France has barely 3000 inhabitants despite the efforts of Samuel de Champlain. There are sixteen men for a woman! The economy of the colony rests on the coureurs des bois who provide fur supplies to the Amerindians. The few families of settlers must overcome the pitfalls of a new environment: the cold, famine, mosquitoes, the constant threat of the Iroquois ...

In 1663, the monopoly of the territory is withdrawn from the trading companies. The new king, Louis XIV, decided to make Canada a colony under his administration. The royal government promotes settlement through immigration and measures natalist, the protection of the



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the arrival of the Carignan-Salières Regiment and the improvement of the seigneurial regime for the distribution of land. It is in this effort to found a true colony of settlement that arrives the Daughters of the King.

Most of them were orphans mainly from the Paris region. A good physical constitution to overcome the harsh conditions of the new world and to have good morals are essential conditions to be chosen by the authorities. The king gave them a little dowry and a trousseau. Between 1663 and 1673, eleven arrivals of these women to marry came to restore the demographic balance of the colony. In ten years, the population of New France has almost tripled. The survival of the colony is assured.

Marie Mercier arrived in Quebec City in July 1671. She is about 14 years old. She is the daughter of Nicolas and Marie Bourot from Ile de France. She has a dowry of 350 books including 50 pounds of Roy. Less than three months later, she married in Quebec, the soldier Jean Chevaudier said Lépine. Marie fulfilled her mission of promoting the country's population since, at the time of her death in the parish of Champlain at only thirty, she was already the mother of eight children. The Daughters of the King will have an average of 9.1 children.

There would have been only one Mercier to marry a Daughter of the King. This is Antoine Mercier who married Françoise Aubry September 22, 1673, only 22 days after his arrival in New France. He died in April 1675. The couple, established in Bellechasse, had three children whose

Françoise will give birth to seven more children in a second marriage with Vincent Chatigny of Île Percée.

References :

La Société des Filles du Roy, *Les filles du Roy et leurs époux* , Québec 2011.

Site Internet : www.migrations.fr