

Le Mercien

The Voice of the Merciers of North America



400^{TH} ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF JULIEN MERCIER

House located at 413, Côte Sainte-Anne, Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré on the Ancestral Land of Julien Mercier.

Source: Gisèle Mercier - Facebook Group Page - Association des Mercier d'Amérique du Nord

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MEMBERSHIP FEES 2021-2022

Annual fees are due before May 31st of each year

Annually: \$35/year 65/2 years
Annually + spouse(s): \$40/year 75/2 years

Governor 1 000 \$

Those amounts are in U.S. currency for U.S. residents and in euros for European residents.

This newsletter is named after the Kingdom of Mercia which existed from the 7th to the 10th centuries. It was one of the seven original Kingdoms constituting England. The inhabitants of that territory must have been called Mercien. We are proud to perpetuate that name today.

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L'Association des Mercier de l'Amérique du Nord is a member of the Fédération Histoire Québec

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings to all!

A situation beyond our control forced us to delay the release of our Summer 2021 issue. The greater part of the issue is a commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the birth of Julien Mercier, the first non-clerical Mercier to settle in North America. I want to thank once again Gilmond, our archivist and a history teacher for revising the text and updating the research about our ancestor Julien. I especially invite you to read the references used to update the text as shown on page 12. Since the first publication in 1987, of the volume "Mercier depuis des siècles" by the late Ernest Mercier, research has been ongoing and thanks to the help of several of our members, "amateur but motivated researchers", as well as our archive banks, information from the Internet and elsewhere, we have been able to shed new light on our roots and particularly those of our ancestor Julien.

I am often asked about the connection between Premier Honoré Mercier and the lineage of Julien. Let me tell you that he is part of the line "Jean to Julien". By way of comparison, I am personally part of the line of Pascal to Julien. Honoré Mercier was a cousin.

The last article in this issue is the second part of a writeup about the Merciers in Illinois. It talks about Louis, another son of Julien, known to be a master locksmith, "who died frozen" near Beauport, and most of his sons who had settled in the United States.

In closing, I invite you to share with us your comments on our Facebook page and to do further research - please also visit our web site at www.famillesmercier.org. We can help you find your own Mercier family roots. To do that, when you submit a request, please include the name of the wife or husband of the Mercier whose ancestry you are looking for.

We thank all those who have renewed their membership in our Association. In the coming months, we will make an important decision concerning our next gathering, in the hopes that it will not have to be postponed once more.

Thank you all!
Jacques Mercier
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RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP FEES - NEW MEMBERS AND DONATIONS

[as of October 31, 2021]

MEMBER N°	NAME		CITY - PROVINCE/STATE	FEES	DONA- TIONS	EXPIRY MAY 31
40	Denise	Mercier	Montréal Nord, QC	65 \$		2023
1260	Jacques	Mercier	Saint-Stanislas-de-Kostka, QC	65\$		2023
1358	Roger	Mercier	Beloeil, QC	65\$		2023
1490	Renée	Laurent Mercier	Montréal, QC	65\$		2024
1498	Paul	Mercier (Sandra Gagnon)	New Hampshire, É.U.	75 \$	15\$	2023
1553	Jocelyn	Mercier	Longueuil, QC	75 \$		2024
1579	Roger	Racine (Mme Sibulka)	Gatineau, QC	150\$		2025
1621	Claudine	Mercier	France	90 \$		2024
1627	Francine	Henri	Repentigny, QC	65\$		2023
1638	Patricia	F. Hubbard	Maine, ÉU.	35 \$		2022
1656	Raymond	Roy	East-Angus, QC	65 \$		2024
1663	Laurent n°21	Mercier	Québec, QC	65\$	10\$	2023
1664	Sylvain	Mercier	Montréal, QC	65\$		2024
		Than	k you for your support!			

400[™] ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF JULIEN MERCIER

The patriarch of 85% of the Merciers of North America was the son of François Mercier and Roberte Cornilleau. Julien (also spelled Jullien or Jullian on his birth certificate) was the eighth child of his family. He was baptized on February 27, 1621, in the church of Saint-Aubin in Tourouvre, 140 kilometres west of Paris, in a village located in the Mortagne area in the diocese of Chartres, in the Perche region of the department of Orne, in France.

When Julien was six, his parents died mysteriously, leaving the family in a difficult situation. His older brother Jean, who was then 21, took over as head of the family. Faced with the challenge of providing for his brothers and sisters, he was not able, on his own, to ensure that Julien received a necessary education, thus Julien never learned to read and write. Jean had to move the family into a small house across the street from la Grandinière, their family home.



Right: The main farmhouse of la Grandinière (depicted with blue shutters in the photo above), in which Julien was born and lived until the age of 6, shown here circa 1891 with closed shutters and prior to its renovation.

Left: The main family home at la Grandinière (seen in the back with blue shutters) is where Julien and his siblings were all born and raised. When Julien was six, he moved with his siblings to the more modest home with reddish brown shutters in the foreground.

La Grandinière circa 1891 1- Source : Mercier-Page_book.pdf par Gregory E. Mercier, page 47.



La Grandinière in 2016 2- Source : Johanne Bergeron #1631, groupe Facebook : Association des Mercier d'Amérique du Nord

HERE IS THE LINEAGE OR ANCESTRY OF JULIEN:

JEHAN MERCIER

His great-grandfather was the first Mercier of that line whose birth was officially registered in 1510 at Tourouvre. He grew up at a time when most people were born, married, and died in the same region. The origin of his first name was derived from the German name Johan. The incorporation of the Perche region under the French Crown, in 1525, contributed to the economic development of the area. France was at the time the most populous and the most prosperous nation of Europe.

Jehan was a contemporary of Jacques Cartier who, in 1534 and 1535, was granted permission from King François 1^{st,} to go and explore North America. The famed seafarer would sail from the Port of Saint-Malo in Bretagne. On his second voyage, he came in contact, in Gaspé, with some Iroquois from the village of Stadaconé, near where Quebec City is now located. The name Canada came out of that encounter, being derived from the word Kanata, which means village in the language of the first inhabitants of the country.

During those years, Jehan married Thiennette (Thinette, Thiénette) Leblond, originally from Champeaux, a town located 24 kilometres west of Tourouvre. The groom, a farmer, worked a plot of land at a place called Grand-Pré de Tourouvre. They had four children: Jehanne, Perrine, Marin (grandfather of Julien) and Marine. Thiennette died in 1557, twelve years before Jehan died, leaving Marin the family home and one third of the farm in Grand-Pré.

MARIN MERCIER

Julien's grandfather was born in 1551 and he was the only son of Jehan and Thiennette. Marin added to his inheritance the lands adjoining his own, through transactions with his cousins Collin and Simone Mercier. He married Jehanne Bisson (Brisson) in the St-Aubin church, on December 9, 1571. We know of two children only: Jehan and François, the latter being Julien's father. It is thought that they had more children, who have remained unknown. Jean-Loup was probably one of them, and so his daughter Jeanne would be a cousin to Julien. She was the mother of Marie Poulain (Poulin), Julien's future wife.



Inside the Church of Saint-Aubin de Tourouvre 3- Source: Mercier-Page_book.pdf par Gregory E. Mercier, page 43.

During the life of Marin, the French ceased to explore North America, the kings of France, François 1st and Henri II, being preoccupied with wars against the Holy Roman Empire of Charles Quint and with the wars of religion dividing Catholics and Protestants on their territory. The Perche region was predominantly Catholic, and so there was rarely any violence there in those days.

FRANÇOIS MERCIER

Julien's father was born around 1580 in Tourouvre and he was raised on the family farm of Grand-Pré. François married Roberte Cournilleau in the church of St-Aubin in 1605. The couple had the following children: Jean, Renée, Roberte, Alexandre, Marie, Jeanne, Mathurine and Julien, the youngest, born in 1621.

Upon his father's death, according to the Custom of Paris, Jean, the oldest son of the family, inherited the family home. As an adult, at the age of 25, François built his own house, which is still standing, to the East of the nearby farm of la Grandinière.

In the meantime, France was getting interested in the fur trade with the Aboriginals of Eastern America. Starting in the early XVITH century, Basque and Breton fishermen were very active along the banks of Newfoundland. Samuel de Champlain sailed westwards along the Saint Lawrence River and in 1608, he established a trading post at a site called Quebec, which means where the river narrows. The French Authorities started very soon then to think of establishing a settlement: New France.

The province of Perche became an area from where immigrants came to Canada, and in fact, 347 citizens from Perche emigrated to Quebec, including 25 families from Tourouvre. Aside from the descendants of Julien Mercier, there were the Pelletiers, the Gagnons, the Guimonds.... Some well known Canadians and Americans have their roots in Perche: Céline Dion, Hillary Clinton, Madonna, Jack Kerouac, Justin Trudeau, Justin Bieber....

Two days before his 26th birthday, on February 25, 1647, Julien took a big jump and accepted a 3-year contract signed before Notary Choiseau to come and work in New France. The contract was likely agreed to at Hôtel du Cheval Blanc in the centre of Tourouvre across the street from the Saint-Aubin church. He was single at the time and working as a farm hand. The hiring contract tied him to Noël Juchereau, Sieur des Chatelets from Quebec City. He would be paid 75 pounds a year, 24 of which, paid immediately, would be deducted from his first year's wages, presumably to pay for his passage. He was to receive one pair of shoes per year. He would also be fed, and his clothes would be laundered and ironed. Transportation costs, both ways, would be paid by the employer.

In June 1647, he boarded the sailing ship "La Marguerite", a 70-ton ship, owned by Pierre Le Gardeur and Noël Juchereau. He sailed from the port of Aunis, near La Rochelle, with his companions: Jacques Le



Outside View of the Saint-Aubin Church in Tourouvre with its XVTH Century Spire. 4- Source: Mercier-Page_book.pdf par Gregory E. Mercier, page 44.

Roy, Jacques Poupar, Pierre Aloignon, Jacques Loiseau, Martin Huan and Pierre Tremblay. The ship arrived in Quebec City on August 6th, after a long Atlantic crossing of almost two months.

Julien left all his relatives back in Tourouvre, and the descendants of his brothers and sisters earned a living from farming until close to the French Revolution, that caused major upheavals in their several families. In the early 1800s, there was not one Mercier left in Tourouvre until the arrival, four decades later of a man named François Mercier, a baker by trade, who would become the father of many children. Today, there is nobody named Mercier left in the village where Julien was born.

At the time Julien arrived in New France, the trading posts in Quebec City, Trois-Rivières and Ville-Marie (Montreal) were small villages. The total immigrant population of New France was less than 2000. The new colony was living under constant threat from the Iroquois. As of the first official census, in 1666, nineteen years after the arrival of Julien, the total population of the colony was 3418 inhabitants distributed as follows: Quebec City 555, Beaupré 678, Beauport 172, île d'Orléans 471, Sillery 217, Montreal 584 and Trois-Rivières 461.



Tourouvre, where emigrants to New France came from in the XVIITH Century 5- Source: Mercier-Page_book.pdf - par Gregory E. Mercier, page 30.

On July 22, 1649, through a contract signed before Notary Laurent Bermen, Julien was hired as a servant to Michel Huppé, also known as La Croix, who had been running for three years the seigniory of the Jesuits of *Notre-Dame-des-Anges* (where the *Hôpital Général de Québec* is located). On October 18 of the same year, he left his employer on good terms, with a note signed by Jesuit Father La Place authorizing Julien to buy 60 pounds worth of goods at the store. His period of servitude ended prematurely. With his purchases, Julien was showing that he had chosen to settle permanently in New France. Nothing is known about his occupations during the following two years.

On October 15, 1651, he obtained from Olivier Letardif the concession of a plot of land in the seigniory of Beaupré at Sainte-Anne-du-Petit-Cap. The plot was near the present location of the Basilica. It was five acres wide by one and a half leagues deep starting from the Saint Lawrence River. That plot of land has been identified and it corresponds to Lot Nos. 81, 82, 83 and one part of Lot No. 84 in the land registry of Sainte-Anne. The new farmer received a temporary allowance to help him get settled. Just like other settlers, he probably built a small temporary log house using the trees cut down to make room for his future farmland. Under the seigniory system, the settler or *censitaire* committed to clear his land, to execute some chores and to pay the seigneur his due (*cens*). The seigneur must in return build a mill and reserve some land for common use.

On October 7, 1652, Julien, at the age of 31, signed a marriage contract at the Poulain house, before Notary Aubert, with Marie Poulain, daughter of Claude Poulain and Jeanne Mercier. The parents of the bride had been married in Quebec City on August 8, 1639. They had gone back to France in 1641 and returned to Quebec in 1648. They lived six lots away from Julien's lot in the seigniory of Beaupré. Jeanne, Marie's mother, was born 12 kilometres from Tourouvre. As mentioned earlier in a previous paragraph, some authors have claimed that Jeanne and Julien were cousins, while in fact their parents, brothers François and Jean-Loup (Loup) had married the two Cornilleau sisters, Roberte and Jeanne.

The witnesses to the marriage contract were Charles Boivin and Guillaume Pépin. The contract stipulated that the future father-in-law, a carpenter by trade, committed to build a barn 40 feet long, by 20 feet wide and 8 feet high under the beams. Marie was to get linens and dishes as needed.



Departure of Julien Mercier for New France in 1647. Stained Glass Window Inside the Saint-Aubin Church in Tourouvre.

6-Source: site Internet: Tourouvre, berceau d'émigration



Visit by Honoré Mercier to Tourouvre in 1891. Stained glass window inside the Saint-Aubin Church in Tourouvre.

7-Source: site Internet: Tourouvre, berceau d'émigration

The prospective bride was only 11 years old, so the marriage was not to be celebrated until January 18, 1654, after Marie had reached the age of 13 (or 14). Father Paul Ragueneau registered the act of marriage at Notre-Dame-de-Quebec parish, writing that he married them in a solemn manner in the neighbouring house of Robert Giguère. The Jesuit had the act of marriage registered at Notre-Dame-de-Quebec

because the parish of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré was not established until five years later. Marie Poulain, born in Trois-Rivières on January 1, 1641, was one of the rare ancestors born in New France, to have spent her childhood in France and then to have returned to build her family in North America.

The new couple moved in together to become a family and Julien worked at clearing his land to transform what was a forest into arable lands. At the age of fifteen, Marie bore their first child, Pascal. Over the following twenty-one years, she gave birth to nine more children.

Around the age of 40, in1661, Julien was struck with an illness "that made him dry up and waste away completely" according to Father Thomas Morel. "After offering masses for his recovery and finding no relief through human remedies, Julien put his faith in Sainte Anne and was healed completely." That same year, some parishioners suffered more hardships. Two neighbours were kidnapped and massacred by the Iroquois. Also, René, a young brother of Marie, disappeared, either he was eaten by wolves, or he was kidnapped by the Iroquois. When the church in his new parish was being restored, Julien gave some wheat, peas and barley for a total value of 18 pounds. According to the 1667 census, he owned five head of cattle and 16 acres of farmed land. In 1669, he was made a churchwarden for the parish, a position he occupied for two years. Upon leaving that position, he donated six pounds and four sols (Canadian currency at the time).

On October 18, 1676, after 22 years of marriage, Julien died at the age of 55. Father François Fillon presided over the funeral ceremony on October 19 at Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré. Marie, then 35, was pregnant with twin girls who were born four months later: Marguerite and Angélique.

In 1682, after six years as a widow, Marie decided to remarry, with Charles Monmainier (Montmigny) also known as Jouvent. He was the father-in-law of her son Jean. She made an inventory of her assets, with the help of her two neighbours, Étienne Lessard and Robert Giguère before Notary Aubert. The livestock were comprised of four draft oxen, four cows, one calf and eight pigs. There were 150 bushels of wheat and 14 bushels of peas in the granaries. The land and the farm buildings were valued at 2,000 pounds.

Marie Poulain died at the age of 75, at Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré on July 16, 1716, two weeks after the death of her second husband Charles Monmainier (Montmigny). She was buried the next day.

The couple, Marie Poulain and Julien Mercier, had ten children: six boys and four girls between 1656 and 1677. Only five of their sons married and contributed to the spreading of the name Mercier in America. They are: Paschal (1656), Charles (1658), Louis (1662), Jean (1667) and Pierre (1671).

Paschal, the eldest of the family, and his wife Anne Cloutier, raised three sons who settled in Côte-du-Sud, Berthier, Bellechasse.... Their offspring were quite numerous. Their descendants settled in various regions of Quebec, Canada, and the United States, but particularly at *Ile d'Orléans*, Repentigny, Pointe-aux-Trembles and Montreal. More than half of the Merciers in North America who were descendants from the line of Julien Mercier, were descendants from his oldest son, Pascal. He was the first Mercier born in North America, and, like his father, he did not go to school. Four years after the death of Julien, Pascal bought a concession three acres wide along the Saint Lawrence River at Saint-Joachim. (See Le Mercien, volume 32, number 2, Summer 2016, pages 11-12)

Charles married Anne Berthelot at Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré. They had ten children: two boys and eight girls.



Ancestral Mercier House at 413 Côte-Sainte-Anne in Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré 8- Source : Gisèle Mercier du groupe Facebook de l'Association des Mercier d'Amérique du Nord

Louis was remarkable in several ways. He was one of the best-known master-locksmiths of his time, a particularly important trade in that era. He helped train three apprentices between 1685 and 1694, and he was listed in "Les Armuriers de la Nouvelle-France". His three wives Marguerite Rabouin, Anne Jacquereau and Louise Simon produced between them 14 children for him, including eight boys. Three of them chose the priesthood, and each one of the priests was born of a different mother. Louis-Pierre became head of the

parish of Beaumont and he died during an epidemic in 1715. The other two, Jean-Paul and Jean-Auguste were missionaries, in Cahokia, along the Mississippi, in the United States. Jean-Paul died there, but Jean-Auguste came back to serve the Church in Quebec. Another son, Jean-François, a travelling salesman, was one of the first European settlers to choose the American Midwest, in the same region chosen by his brothers. (See Le Mercien, volume 37, number 1, Spring 2021, pages 12-13).

Jean married Barbe Monmainier (Montmigny), and one of their descendants was Honoré Mercier, who was Premier of Quebec from 1887 to 1891. A good number of lawyers, judges and politicians came from that lineage.

Pierre, the youngest of the boys, married Marie-Catherine Chamberland, and they had five children: two boys and three girls. The couple settled on Julien's lot and built a house 20 feet (6.1 metres) long by 18 feet (5.5 metres) wide. That house was the first construction stage, which was followed by three major renovations: the result being the house that can be seen now on Côte-Sainte-Anne in Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré.

Here is a list of a few well-known descendants of the couple Julien Mercier and Marie Poulain: Honoré Mercier, former Premier of Québec, stand-up comedians Claudine Mercier and Jean-François Mercier, actor Denis Mercier and journalists Catherine Mercier, Marie-Pier Mercier, and Noémie Mercier. Two famous Quebec singers whose name is not Mercier, but are directly connected to the family of Julien, through their father or mother are: Céline Dion and Diane Tell (Diane-Sophie Fortin).

Sources:

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- 9. Navires venus en Nouvelle-France, navires nouvelle-france.net la marguerite.
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Gilmond Mercier # 28

IN ILLINOIS (U.S.A.) BEFORE 1760 - PART II

Source: Le Mercien Vol. 7 No. 1 January 1991.

Joseph-François Mercier (1706-)

Joseph François Mercier is the son of Louis Mercier and Louise Simon (third marriage). He was born in Quebec on March 13^{th,} 1706 and was married there on the first of October 1729 to Elisabeth Dupras (Prat). Recognized as a qualified locksmith he was hired to work in the western Mission on the 29th of September 1730. Where did he settle in Illinois? Possibly in the vicinity of his cousin Jean Mercier's farm in Kaskaskia. Nobody knows for sure. At that time, the «west» meant all territory located west of Montreal. The way to go to «Fort-de-Chartres» was the Ottawa River as far as Sudbury today, then la «Rivière-des-Français», the lakes Huron and Michigan as far as Chicago (today), then the «Rivière-des-Plaines» and the «Rivière-des-Illinois» as far as the Mississipi River.

Louis Mercier Jr. (1708-)

Louis Mercier, junior, was also born of the third marriage of Louis Mercier and Marie-Louise Simon. Born in Quebec on May 25th 1708, he married Marie-Anne Roy in Longueuil (Chaumont) on March 23rd 1729. Shortly after, the young couple decided to join their many relatives and emigrated to the land of the Illinois.

Joseph Marie Mercier (1720-?)

Joseph-Marie Mercier, another son of Louis Mercier and Marie-Louise Simon rejoined his relatives in Illinois around 1743. Joseph-Marie was born in Quebec October 9th, 1720 and married Suzanne Mailhot in Montreal on the 24th of October 1735. He challenged the validity of the will of his half brother Jean-François Mercier. The latter has received an inheritance from a Mercier cousin likely Jean at Fort-de-Chartres (near Prairie-du-Rocher) in Illinois, and later willed this property to his sister in law Marianne Dornon (born Lafontaine), the widow of Antoine Girard.

Summary

The Merciers who left Quebec to settle in Illinois between 1712 and 1760 are descendents of the pioneer couple Jullien Mercier and Marie Poulain. Moreover, five of the six married men are direct descendents of Louis (the third son of the pioneer couple) who « was found frozen to death on the Beauport river shores » and buried in Quebec the 22nd February 1728. Married three times, this remarkable locksmith had fourteen children whose descendents for the most part, are now living in the United States of America. The sixth Mercier boy and his sister Dorothée établis who settled in Illinois, are descendents of Louis brother Jean. The circumstances surrounding the lives of these Mercier expatriates, may be found in the book **«Mercier depuis des siècles»** 104-111 and 352-357 at 1987.

Lineage of Québec Merciers who settled in Illinois (É.-U.) prior to 1760 Seven grandchildren of Jullien Mercier and Marie Poulain⁽¹⁾

Mercier individual ⁽²⁾	Name of spouse	Date et place of marriage ⁽³⁾	Date of departure from Québec
A. Childr	en of Louis Mercie	er and Anne Jacquere	au (2 nd marriage)
Jean-Paul	Priest	Ordained May 8 th 1718,	1718
	Bachelor	at Quebec, QC	
Jean-François	Catherine	17 Feb. 17. 1726,	1725
	Lafontaine	at Ste-Foy QC	
B. Childr	en of Louis Mercie	er and Marie-Louise Si	imon (3 rd marriage)
Joseph (François)	Élisabeth	Oct. 1,1729	1730
	Dupras	at Quebec, QC	
Louis Jr.	Marie-Anne	March 13,1729	?
	Roy	at Longueuil, QC	
Joseph-Marie	Suzanne	Oct. 24,1735	1743
	Mailhot	at Montreal, Qc	
C. Childr	en of Jean Mercie	r and Barbe Monmair	nier
Dorothée	Pierre	May 16,1718	1718
	Chabot	at Ste-Anne-de-Beaupré,	QC
Jean Jr.	Marie	May 16,1718	1718
	Baret (te)	at Ste-Anne-de-Beaupré,	QC
Sources:			

Sources:

- (1) Mercier, Ernest (1987). Mercier depuis des siècles.
- (2) Lessard, Renald et al. (1988). Peuplement colonisateur au pays des Illinois. L'Ancêtre vol. 14, numéro 6, pages 214-224.
- (3) Dates and places of marriage mentionned in the present article are draw from various sources: Tanguay, Jetté, Faribault-Beauregard, Talbot and others.





Association des Mercier de l'Amérique du Nord

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