

Our Terrien Story. France to the New World

Our Terrien family came from the old, historic city of La Rochelle, France. La Rochelle, a famous city in the turbulent history of France, is located on the Bay of Biscay on the Atlantic coast. La Rochelle is first mentioned in late tenth century documents; by the twelfth century it had become a chartered, self-governing town.

The earliest records I'm now aware of list an N. Terrien as being the father of Andre Terrien. As Andre was born in 1611, N. Terrien's birth was in the 1500's but no more is now known. They lived in the La Fond District of La Rochelle and were members of the Parrosse de Notre Dame de Cogne. Research indicates that this was the only Terrien family living in La Rochelle at the dawn of the 1600s.

Andre, the son of N. Terrien, emerges from history as a more complete character, but let's first look at La Rochelle at the time these early ancestors were raising their families, some of whom would soon make the great leap to the New World.

France in the mid to late 1500's was a time of great turbulence and religious fervor. The monarchy and all key institutions throughout the realm had been intimately tied to the Roman Catholic church for many centuries. Yet the Protestant Reformation, begun in Germany in 1517 was dominant in many areas of late 16th century France. In particular, the La Rochelle area of Western France became a center of Protestant religious fervor and politics. Many treaties had given this region religious and political autonomy, but the road to bloodshed for La Rochelle had been laid.

During the period of relative quiet during the early 1500's, the Terrien family certainly saw great changes in their world-view. Christopher Columbus had recently set sail westward from Spain in search of a sea passage to the Orient for the Spanish monarchy. His daring and skill opened what would soon become a highway across the mid Atlantic. Word spread quickly, and the active seaport of La Rochelle must have been alive with word of the new discoveries.

Indeed, a group of French Huguenots had followed closely on the heels of the Spanish and English in planting a colony in the New World. A group of these French Protestants had left La Rochelle to settle the wild shores of Eastern Florida in 1652. What a ripple this must have made in the local culture of La Rochelle to see the flags waving as this small fleet set sail Westward. What a great tear in the fabric of this small community to hear that every man, woman

and child of this settlement, hundreds of their former neighbors, had been killed by Catholic Spanish conquistadors.

Adventurers led by De Gourges, sailed from France in 1567 determined to seek revenge. Their fleet returned to La Rochelle in 1568 to announce their victories.

Our La Rochelle Terriens must have listened, and watched, and discussed the hazards and the opportunities represented by the emerging New World to the west.

The religious and political upheavals at La Rochelle surely weighed heavily. Many historians paint the region in black and white... all Protestant or all Catholic. This appears to be an over simplification. During the 1500's there were many La Rochelle expeditions and public ventures involving both Catholics and Protestants, not the least of which included fishing fleets to the newly 'discovered' cod banks off eastern Canada and the US. There appears to be a genuine ebb and flow of participants, both Catholic and Protestant in these ventures. But political developments challenged this cooperative spirit. The Catholic monarch Henry II laid siege to La Rochelle to break its Huguenot strength. This siege failed and a new era of tension ensued. By 1585 the Catholics had lost all their rights as citizens and most of their churches had been burned down.

The Terriens of La Rochelle must have planned their daily lives around political and religious warfare, sieges, attacks from religious zealots from every corner and finally, feeding and nurturing the small children who would grow to become our distant ancestors.

It is from these times that documents of our Terrien family emerges. Our earliest known ancestor, N. Terrien had struggled through this period of tumult. 2 sons we know of were born to him as the 1600s dawned. Barthelemi was born in 1604 and our ancestor Andre Terrien was born in 1611 (others were most certainly born into this family but their records have not yet been located). Young Andre would have been 10 to 12 years old as the imperial forces of the French monarchy swept across the local countryside. The King of France lay siege to La Rochelle 3 separate times in the 1620s. Think of your own children, or better yet, think of your own childhood, when at the age of 10, what sheer power existed in the realm of wonder; how a sense of perspective was still forming and even small events seemed grand. How all this warfare and catastrophe must have appeared to the young eyes of our Andre Terrien we can only imagine, but it certainly would have stayed with him into his old age, when his children would begin wondering aloud if there might be a better, more fulfilling life available in the wild rivers and forests of New France.

Our La Rochelle Terrien family must have struggled mightily to build a life for themselves amid the carnage and chaos following years of religious wars in

France. What could have been left for them? The rebuilding would go on for centuries.

From the chaos, danger, and opportunities of La Rochelle, France in the early 1600's, our Terrien family emerges.

###

A note about my genealogy charts. More complete genealogy charts are located in other sections of this collection. This section, which employs some of the early charts, is used for housing notes and further information about our earliest North American ancestors.

(b) = Born	(m) = Married	(d) = Died
(*) = Marked as our direct ancestor		(...) = Unknown

N Terrien	(m)	Living at La Rochelle. Only children's names survive
(b) ...		(b) ...	
(m) ...		(m) ...	
(d) ...		(d) ...	
Barthelemi	(b) 1604	(m) 2/4/1641 to Marie ...	(d) 3/29/1668
* Andre	(b) 1611	(m) 1629 to Marie Foucald	(d) 10/29 1661
Jean	(b) 1613	(m) ...	(d) ...

There is an early record of N. Terrien living at La Rochelle. His wife's name of information about their lives has not yet emerged.

N. Terrien was the father of our Andre Terrien, born in 1611. Andre appears to have had two siblings, Barthelemi and Jean. At this writing, Barthelemi and Jean have not been directly identified as a brothers of Andre or as children of good old N. Terrien, but they were born at the right time and the right place, so we'll put them in the family for now. Their births were recorded at the parish of Notre Dame de Cogne on the dates listed; as no other Terrien family appears in the records of this church we'll assume their direct family. Given the time and political circumstances of the day, it's apparent that record keeping was tenuous at best. This family undoubtedly had more children and a more complex history, which remain as yet unrecorded.

Andre Terrien, born in 1611, survived these dangerous times, emerging from the siege years to grow into his early adulthood. I believe that he first married Marguerite Le Rousey, who died in the late 1630s. He wed our ancestor Marie Anne Foucald (or Foucault) in 1639, at the church of his baptism, Notre Dame de Cogne. Records indicate Andre was a farmer. They quickly began to raise their family, having at least 3 daughters and 3 sons within the next ten years. Among these children is our direct ancestor, Pierre Terrien, who was to make the dangerous voyage to New France with his older brother Andre in 1656.

Andre Terrien and Marie Foucald's family looked like this:

Andre Terrien	(m)	Marie Anne Foucald
(b) 1611		(b) ...
(m) 1629		(m) 1629
	at Notre Dame de Cogne, La Fond District, La Rochelle	
(d) 10/29/1661		(d)

Andre	(b) 1/24/1630 (m) 2/2/1655 to Madeline Desoignes (d) ...
Marie	(b) 10/9/1631 (m) 2/9/1661 to Barthelemi Tesson (d) 5/13/1664
Blaise	(b) 3/22/1633 (m) ... (d) ...
Madeline	(b) 11/9/1636 (m) ... (d) ...
* Pierre	(b) 11/1/1640 (m) 5/7/1670 at St. Famille, I.O. Quebec to Gabrielle Minaud/Mignot (d) 9/12/1706
Perrine	(b) 11/1/1640 (m) 2/12/1662 to Jean Allair at Quebec (d) ...

Some notes about this 'first family'.....

(1) Andre (b 1630), the first born son, married Madeline Desoignes in 1656. He then contracted to work as an indentured laborer in New France. He apparently completed his 3-year contract and returned to La Rochelle, where several children were born into their family. Nicholas was born about 1657, Dennis was born in July 1664, Jean Francois was born 4/21/1666, Mathurin was born 4/21/1667. All were born baptised at Notre Dame de Cogne at La Rochelle.

(2) Perrine is listed in most documents as being the twin sister of our Pierre. However, in some data, she is shown as having a different birthday and a different mother (Marguerite Le Rousey). Her birth date listed in one place as 1643, with a christening date of 11/1/1640 (the same shown elsewhere for our Pierre). This is confusing; dates seem out of sequence and it's quite likely that the documents are in error; this could use further research.

The Family Travels Into The Unknown.... (parts reproduced from original texts)

New France had been receiving settlers from the homeland for several decades by June of 1656, the time Pierre and his older brother Andre left the comfort of their family's home and love.

Cartier first sailed up the St. Lawrence river in 1535, on his second voyage to the region. On this trip he landed at both l'le Aux Coudres (Island of the Hazelnuts) and l'le d'Orleans, both future homes of our direct Terrien ancestors. Little more had been done in the succeeding decades. Champlain attempted several settlements, his effort at Quebec finally taking tenuous hold in 1611. In 1620 the Mayflower landed at Plymouth Rock in New England as the French settlers battled the severe conditions further north. By 1626 Jesuit letters indicate that there were only 43 French inhabitants in all of New France. The little colony grew fitfully, surviving attacks from native American allies of the British, inevitable interruptions in their North Atlantic supply line and their own fears, growing daily amid the howling winds and wild waters of their new home.

By 1640, the year of our Pierre Terrien's birth, the population of what would become Quebec stood at a mere 356 people. This included 29 Jesuits, 53 soldiers, and a civilian retinue that included 116 women and 158 men.

The next two decades would witness explosive growth in both New France and New England, but in vastly different proportions. In 1660, 4 years after Pierre's arrival, the number of French living within the territory of New France stood at 3,418. However, in a statistic that would presage historical developments for the next several centuries, the population of New England had grown to 80,000. The seeds of conflict and its bloody resolution were sown in the two key decades of

1640-1660, decades that saw our Terrien family take flight from their home and hearth for this rapidly changing New World.

In June of 1656 a small fleet of ocean sailing vessels left the port of La Rochelle, France carrying our Pierre Terrien and his older brother Andre. The fleet consisted of 6 ships: The Rene (80 tons), The Taureau (150 tons; master, E. Tadourneau), The Sebastien (Captains, Guilliame and Jean Poulet, and The Fortune (100 tons; master, Elie Raymond). Approximately 200 new immigrants made the trip in these ships, most bound for the Quebec area. It was The Fortune that carried Pierre and Andre west, to North America.

What a world they left; recovering from decades of siege warfare, they plunged across wild North Atlantic seas to an unknown world shrouded in rumor, myth and misinformation. The most current map of North America in 1656 was one created in Paris earlier that decade (search Wikipedia for Nicholas Sanson to see his 1650 map of North America)

On that map, only the Appalachian Mountains separate New France from what was thought to be nearby Florida. The interior was still largely unknown. Only a thin veneer of civilization clung to the St. Lawrence River as it passed to the sea from mysterious points inland.

Both Pierre and Andre had signed up to work for 3 years work in New France. Pierre's contract was witnessed by the notary P. Moreau of La Rochelle on April 1, 1656. His salary was to be 60 livres per year (aprox. \$40.00) with all expenses paid by his employer. After his 3 year obligation was completed, Pierre chose to remain in New France; Andre returned to La Rochelle and his wife shortly thereafter. In 1661, their father Andre died. He was buried on October 29, 1661. The distribution of his assets included grants to all of his children but Pierre. The cause of this omission may have been some family break, but more likely the distance and time may have overridden any ability to include him.

On the 25th of February, 1669 Pierre obtained a grant of land on the l'le D'Orleans in the Parish of St. Jean on the southern shore of the island. The l'le D'Orleans is located in the St. Lawrence river across from the city of Quebec. It was originally named Bacchus Isle because of the abundance of wild grapes Cartier had found there on his early voyages. In the period of the mid to late 1600's it was attracting a growing population due to several factors. It was highly defensible which proved attractive in this age of Iroquois invasions (another relative, Jacques Le Maitre was killed by the Iroquois near Three Rivers at this time). It was also a highly productive agricultural area that must have greatly impressed Pierre.

Pierre's concession to the land was granted to him by the Bishop of New France, Francois de Laval. His land totaled 3 arpents (approximately 7 acres) bordering on the St. Lawrence. Land was divided on the island, and throughout the early settlement of New France in a way that granted access to the water for all. Grants of land on l'le D'Orleans were long and thin, terminating at the waterfront.

Three arpents was the typical size parcel for the island, although some two and four arpent parcels were granted on the island, probably for reasons of topography. The three-arpent standard appears to have been the standard for the mainland also.

The l'le D'Orleans is divided into 6 parishes today, as it was then. Pierre's land was located in the parish of St. Jean, directly south across the island from the parish of St. Famille which would also play a prominent role in the family's history.

After finding the land on which he would establish his family, Pierre turned his heart toward that end. One year later, in 1670 Pierre married Gabrielle Minaud (Mignot). Gabrielle was the daughter of French immigrant pioneers who had arrived earlier. She had been born in the wilderness colony to Jean Minaud and Jeanne Caille. Gabrielle was one of four Minaud children known to us (Marie, Gabrielle, Jean and Rene). Pierre Terrien and Gabrielle Minaud wed on May 17, 1670 at St. Famille parish on the north shore of the l'le D' Orleans. Imagine the spring wildflowers, the migrating songbirds, the warm spring winds, the tumbling banks of northern clouds, and the ever present St. Lawrence river moving powerfully past the tiny chapel as a backdrop for this simple, hopeful wedding. From this union countless thousands of children have come to life, perhaps all still carrying the tiny spark of hope and courage that walked with Pierre and Gabrielle up the aisle that spring day so long ago.

l'le D'Orleans is the major land form in a series of islands resting in the St. Lawrence river off Quebec. Pierre and Gabrielle apparently set about organizing their homestead during the first years after their marriage, then turned their attention to employment elsewhere. In 1672 they moved to a smaller island nearby, l'le aux Grues (Island of the Cranes). At this new location several key events occurred. Their first two children, Pierre (10/16/1672) and Louis (4/8/1674) were born here and they acquired another parcel of land on

Pointe LeMoine on the eastern edge of the island. Why they left, or what became of their land isn't yet known.

By 1676 they had returned to their original home on l'le D'Orleans. In that year, they are listed as being the "principal purchaser" at an auction sale. Other writers have suggested that this was the occasion of Pierre and Gabrielle increasing their farmstead, as it was soon to be listed as six arpents, double their original three. In 1676 their third child Jeanne was born (3/13/1676). Jeanne died 13 years later, on 11/20/1689 but we don't yet know the cause of her early death.

After young Jeanne, the next child born to Pierre and Gabrielle was our ancestor Andre Terrien. Andre was born on May 29, 1678 and baptised at St. Famille. Andre would later marry Marie Charland and their family would grow to include 15 children.

After Andre, 10 more children would be born to Pierre and Gabrielle, for a grand total of fourteen New World Terriens beginning life from our original North American family. This large group of children – 12 boys and 2 girls - has intrigued and challenged Terrien family historians through the generations

At this point it might be informative to note that one other Terrien family was also growing in the new world. Interestingly enough, our own branch of the family is related to these folks through marriage. Jean Terrien du Ponceau was a soldier working in the New France at Three Rivers. His wife was a character of great notoriety in the colony. She has been described as a beautiful woman who actively defied the social and moral scruples of the time. Her name was Judith Rigaud. Jean Terrien du Ponceau was killed by the Iroquois at a young age.

The widow Judith soon found comfort in the company of a man named Francois Le Maitre. The Le Maitre family was large and proud; their descendants prolific. Among these descendants was our Duaime family.

The story of Bruno Duaime paddling the Wisconsin river alone in the 1830's will soon follow, but for now, suffice to know that Bruno's daughter Elsie Duaime was the mother of Nellie Seymour who married our Louis Terrien (II).

So now we turn back again to our own first North American Terrien families. The family of immigrant ancestor Pierre Terrien and Gabrielle Minaud appears to us as follows:

Pierre Terrien	(m)	Gabriel Minaud
(b) 11/1/1640 at La Rochelle		(b) 1657
(m) 5/17/1670 at St. Famille		(m) 5/17/1670
(d) 9/12/1706, Quebec		(d) 11/27/1707, Ile. d'Orleans

Pierre	(b) 10/16/1672
	(m) 11/29/1693 to Jeanne Ducheron
	(d) 12/2/1749

Louis	(b) 4/8/1674
	(m) 4/20/1700 to Catherine Bidet
	(d)...

Jeanne	(b) 3/13/1676 at St. Famille, I.O.
	(d) 11/20/1689

* Andre	(b) 5/29/1678
	(m) 1710 to Marie Charlan
	(d) (d) 12/9/1749

Jean Baptiste	(b) 2/10/1680 at St. Jean, I.O.
	(m) ...
	(d) ...

Ignace	(b) 2/1/1682
	(m) 11/25/1706 to Anne Cochon
	(m) 5/2/1709 to Marguerite Plante
	(d)...

Augustin	(b) 10/25/1683 at St. Jean, I.O.
	(d) 12/19/1683

Etienne (b) 10/28/1684 at St. Jean, I.O.
(d) 4/19/1686

Etienne (b) 9/29/1686 at St. Jean, I.O.
(d) 6/13/1715

Alexis (b) 9/21/1688 at St. Jean I.O.
(d) 12/10/1688

Jeanne (b) 12/18/1689
(m) 10/10/1712 to Jacques Greffard
(d) ...

Guillame (b) 1/20/1692
(m) 1714 to Marie Anne Jahan
(d) ...

Barthelemi (b) 3/11/1694
(m) 11/29/1721 to Marguerite Fontaine
(d)...

Jacques (b) 5/1/1696
(m) 4/27/1718 to Marie Bareau (Perrault)
(d) 6/11/1730

Notice little Augustin dying soon after is birth. This is followed by the child Etienne who was to die at two years of age. Another Etienne follows who lives until the age of 29. Little Alexis then dies in his first months of life in the wild Canadian snows. This seems so bitterly sad, yet the pioneers of New France faced these trials with every new birth.

Our own direct family line evolves through Andre Terrien (b 1678), but as the family spreads out through history, other connections to this original Terrien family will again develop. We find later connections through the marriage of Ignace Terrien and Marie Cochon as well.

A more complete history of our immigrant ancestor Pierre Terrien, taken from the magazine, Our French Canadian Ancestors (vol. 29) will be included in this initial edition of our family history.

To be continued...

My best wishes to you all.

Rick Terrien

rick.terrien@gmail.com

Richard (Rick) Terrien	(b) 1953
Conrad Terrien	(b) 1920
Raphael Terrien	(b) 1893
Louis Terrien (II)	(b) 1866
Louis Terrien (I)	(b) 1822
Pierre Terrien	(b) 1790
Joseph Marie Terrien	(b) 1751
Barthelemi Terrien	(b) 1717
Andre Terrien	(b) 1678
Pierre Terrien	(b) 1640
Andre Terrien	(b) 1611
N. Terrien	(b) ...