

Nicolas Leblond, ancestor to most Leblond in North America.

(by Denis Leblond #1, April 1990)

Nicolas Leblond is the first ancestor bearing that patronymic to have settled in New France. Consequently he is responsible for the proliferation of the Leblonds in America. Other ancestors came to settle here also, but they are responsables for only about 2% of all the Leblonds. I would like to acquaint you better with this Norman ancestor, dear to several of us.

Nicolas Leblond came from the town of Honfleur in Normandy, in the present department of Calvados. He was baptized in the church of Ste-Catherine parish around the year 1637. His father was Jacques Leblond, burgher in Honfleur, and his mother's name was Françoise de Nollen.

We do not know the date of his arrival in New France, but we can say for sure that he had arrived before 12 February 1655, on which date he received a land grant on the Côte de Beaupré. Thus he was then 17 years old, or less, when he treaded upon the Quebec soil.

Nicolas Leblond, besides being a plowman, was also a great land clearer. On 12 February 1655, he received a land grant on the Côte de Beaupré, a piece of land measuring about 2 acres fronting the river and 126 acres in depth, for a total area of about 270 acres. However, it does not seem that he really worked that land. The land on which our ancestor settled definitively is also the one on which the first "Canadian" Leblonds were born. This land was located on the Ile d'Orléans, in the Ste-Famille parish. It was first granted by Charles de Lauzon-Charny to Louis Côté on 2 April 1656. Nicolas acquired it on 25 March 1658 for the sum of 200 pounds of Tours payable in peas [?], in silver or in beavers. It measured 3 acres along the river and in depth to the line which would divide the island from tip to tip, for a area of about 207 acres. The neighbors were Maurice Arrivé and François Guyon. The 1667 census shows that there were apparently 30 acres of plowed land, which proves that he must have had to work hard, as he had no farm hands around, and his children were much too young at that time to help him. In 1725, we find that about 60 acres are plowable.

Once settled and his house built, time came for Nicolas to start a family. The future wife's name is Marguerite Leclerc, daughter of Jean Leclerc and of Pérette Brunel, baptized on 12 February 1642 at St-Rémi in Dieppe in Normandy. She arrived in New France a few months before her wedding. Nicolas and Marguerite were married on 13 October 1661 in the Notre-Dame-de-la-Visitation parish in Château-Richer, as the Ste-Famille parish was not yet established. This wedding was the third one to have been celebrated there. The couple had previously signed a marriage contract in front of the notary Claude Auber on 11 September 1661. In that contract, we learn that Nicolas was the heir of his deceased parents and a resident of the Ile d'Orléans, and that Marguerite resided as well in said island. The contract was signed in Simon Lereau's house (he was the ancestor of the L'Heureux people), Nicolas's second neighbor to the East. Nicolas signed with a flourish, as he had done the first time on 25 March 1658, while Marguerite placed her regular mark.

Nicolas and Marguerite had ten children, all of them were born in the Ile d'Orléans, the first 4 were baptized at Château-Richer and the last 6 at Ste-Famille. These children were: Jean (1662-1662), Jacques (1663-1663), Catherine (1664-1758) future wife of Jean Riou, Marie-Madeleine

(1665-1722) future wife of Nicolas Roy, Nicolas (1667-1734) future husband of Louise Baucher, Jean-Baptiste (1668-?), Jean-Baptiste (1670-1719) future husband of Cécile Rocheron, Thérèse Létourneau and Marguerite Amaury, Joseph (1672-1757) future husband of Catherine Drouin, Marie (1674-1729) future wife of Pierre Martineau, and Martin (1676-1760) future husband of Anne-Françoise Bissonnet. Future texts will help us to know better those people's lives.

Nicolas Leblond died at the beginning of September 1677 in the Hotel-Dieu of Quebec City when he was about 40 years old. This very important detail is brought out in the inventory of his possessions drawn up on 23 February 1679 by the notary Paul Vachon. All the children were present for the inventory, as well as Marguerite Leclerc and her second husband, Jean Rabouin. From that second marriage, celebrated on 26 September 1677, three children were born: Marguerite (1679-?) future wife of Noël Leroy, Jean-Baptiste (1681-1698), and Jeanne (1683-?) future wife of Etienne Corriveau. Marguerite Leclerc was to die at the age of 64, and was buried on 24 January 1705 in Ste-Famille.

Nicolas Leblond and Marguerite Leclerc, having come early in the period of colonization of New France, can be considered, rightly so, as pioneers. We can thus be proud of those courageous ancestors of our beautiful LEBLOND family.