

**Judith Rigaud:
Has This Interesting New France Woman Been Treated Fairly in Published Articles?**

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Anyone who has accepted the stereotype of the French-Canadian woman as solely a devoted wife and baby-maker needs to hear the story of **Judith Rigaud**. Married four times and said to be involved with at least a fifth man (to the scandal of Montréal), she actively pursued business affairs herself, bore eight children in her first marriage, three in her second; and her children became respected and influential persons in their own right. As I see it, the historians who have written about her have misjudged, misunderstood, and sensationalized her life. Here is the basic information about Judith's first three marriages, as found on PRDH Online¹ when this data base became available and I first accessed it years ago.

First marriage: 1654-05-06 Trois-Rivières with **FRANCOIS LEMAITRE** Father: LEMAITRE

Second marriage: 1667-01-26 Trois-Rivières with **JEAN THERRIEN**

Father: JEAN THERRIEN Mother: MARIE ELIE

Third marriage: 1675-10-00 Trois-Rivières with **JEAN LAPLANCHE**

Father: URBAIN LAPLANCHE Mother: PILERNIE GILBERT

Child born out of wedlock:

Sex	Birth	Place
m	1671-03-19	LOUIS MICHEL Trois-Rivières

Judith's parents, as identified on PRDH, are Elisée Rigaud and Suzanne Dugas. Judith gave her age as thirty-four at the 1667 census, so she was born about 1633. As will be seen, the child identified as born out of wedlock may not have been at all, the term illegitimate having been applied by the officiating priest at Louis Michel's baptism, possibly without cause. In addition, unknown to PRDH when I first accessed it, she married for a fourth time, a reminder that genealogical study is sometimes ongoing.

An article in English on Judith Rigaud, written by Roland-J. Auger, appeared in the now-defunct *French Canadian and Acadian Genealogical Review* more than thirty years ago.² Auger is a rightfully-celebrated archivist, so it should be quite authoritative. He guesses that Judith may have been from a Huguenot (Protestant) family because of her given name, Judith, and that of her father, Elizée (Elisha or Elijah?), names found in the Old Testament rather than in the New Testament, whose names are favored by Catholics. He could also have mentioned Judith's mother's name, Suzanne, as she also appears in the Old Testament. The story of "Susanna and the Elders," from the Book of Daniel, chapter 12 in the Septuagint, is particularly applicable to Judith's life. Susanna, wife of "Joakim" (Joachim) was a virtuous woman who was falsely accused of having carnal knowledge of a young man. Her accusers were two elders, magistrates who themselves lusted after her and whom Susanna had repulsed. When, on the basis of their testimony, she was condemned to death, the prophet Daniel exposed their lie by cross-examining each accuser separately. He asked each man to name the tree under which the alleged act of adultery had occurred. Each man cited a different tree. As a result of their false accusations, they themselves were then sentenced to death. Let accusers beware!

Because Judith arrived in New France at a young age, hired in 1651, Auger asks: "How can we explain the coming of Judith Rigaud to Canada, alone and scarcely aged 18 or 19? She was, as used to be said at that time, a girl of good rank. She had received a good education and excellent instruction. She signed her name elegantly on many documents."³ Quoting Raymond Douville,⁴ Auger then partly answers his own question by saying that she came to *Nouvelle France* as a servant of the LeNeuf family, one of the most influential in the colony. Actually, according to

¹ *Programme de recherche en démographie historique de l'Université de Montréal online*: <http://www.genealogie.umontreal.ca>, #94451, hereafter PRDH. The entry has since been updated and details added that were not there when PRDH first came online. See her Individual entry #19656, accessed 13 May 2013. PRDH still reports the child Louis Michel as born out of wedlock.

² Roland Auger, "Judith Rigaud," *French Canadian and Acadian Genealogical Review*, Volume IX, Nos. 1-4, 1981.

³ Auger, 15. Fichier Origine #280071 reports "Élie Rigaud, protestant married at La Rochelle (temple protestant) 09-03-1631 with Sara Berthonneau, and their parents are omitted." Accessed 11 August 2013.

⁴ Raymond Douville, "Chirurgiens, Barbiers-chirurgiens, et Charlatans de la région trifluvienne sous le régime français," *Les Cahiers des Dix*, Vol XV (1950), 81-128, this reference on 122. Read at Our Roots, Nos Racines.

Jetté, she was hired by **Marguerite LeGardeur** herself, **Jacques LeNeuf de LaPoterie's** wife.⁵ The incident Douville cites is intriguing:

In an appeal decision handed down by De Lauzon, July 21, 1654, in a case between Marguerite LeGardeur, wife of Jacques LeNeuf de la Poterie, against François LeMaistre and Judith Rigaud, we read: "Extract from the book of Plassais, surgeon of the garrison of Trois-Rivières, in the year one thousand six hundred fifty-two, by which it appears that he once treated the said Rigaud and gave her an enema [*lavage*], the said extract signed Ameau, recorder." These treatments were given while Judith Rigaud was in the employ of Marguerite LeGardeur.⁶

Documents concerning the events exist only in summary, which I have not yet seen, but the decision was handed down "scarcely two months" after Judith's first marriage, 6 May 1654. These surviving details led Auger to ask:

Exactly what happened after the wedding, between the LeNeuf family and the young Lemaistre couple? We do not know, except that, as we reported above, there was some kind of estrangement, and Madame LeNeuf started suit against her *protégés*. A sentence was handed down less than two months after the wedding. The word *lavement* (enema), used by the surgeon Plassais when he took care of Judith Rigaud in 1652 and which we find in the extract from his journal, possibly had some other meaning. Why bring up, in this case, an event which had taken place two years earlier? Had this illness of Judith Rigaud been the subject of conversation at the time of the wedding celebration? But let us not harass the poor child here nor cast any aspersions on her virginity.⁷

Yet this is exactly what Auger is doing, casting "aspersions on her virginity," implying that the "lavement" might have been an abortion. Considering that the full details have not survived, I believe Auger may himself be indulging here in speculation worthy of the *National Enquirer*. Consulting the *Dictionnaire de L'Académie française*, 1st Edition (1694), I see as the first two definitions of "lavement": "Action of washing. In this sense, it is used in Church language, as in the washing of the feet; and, more usually, it signifies a medicine given to refresh and empty the lower abdomen."⁸ In 1694, then, within the lifetime of Judith Rigaud, the word *lavement*, in a medical sense, meant an enema. The French word that translates as abortion is *avortement*.⁹ My examination of many of the legal cases argued in New France demonstrates that our ancestors were very litigious when it came to recovering sums of money owed.¹⁰ Perhaps the source of the litigation was simply an unpaid bill for medical treatment. Could this be the sole reason, that legal action was taken to recover the cost of treating Judith two years earlier?

Auger does not mention another legal hassle that sheds light on the relationship between Judith and Marguerite LeGardeur, Madame LeNeuf. According to Raymond Douville, Judith had signed for five years of service with Madame LeNeuf and had received an advance to her salary in cash.¹¹ Three years into the hiring contract, Judith and François Lemaistre drew up a marriage contract on 24 February 1654 with notary Séverin Ameau. (It is no longer extant.) Marguerite LeGardeur signed this contract as a witness, thereby giving her domestic servant permission to marry. Douville continues:

⁵ René Jetté, *Dictionnaire généalogique des familles du Québec des origines à 1730* (Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1983), with the collaboration of PRDH, 703.

⁶ Douville, *Chirurgiens*, 16.

⁷ Auger, 18.

⁸ *Dictionnaires d'autres fois*, <http://portail.atilf.fr/cgi-bin/dico1look.pl?strippedhw=lavement>

⁹ *Dictionnaires d'autres fois*, <http://portail.atilf.fr/cgi-bin/dico1look.pl?strippedhw=avortement>

¹⁰ See Michel Langlois, *Dictionnaire Biographique des Ancêtres Québécois (1608-1700)*, Tome 3, Lettres J à M, (Sillery: La Maison des Ancêtres Québécois, 2000) for the multiple times Lemaistre himself was involved with litigation.

¹¹ Raymond Douville, "La Dictature de la Famille Le Neuf," *Les Cahiers des Dix*, Vol. 20 (Montréal: 1955), citing *Contrat Teuleron*, notary at La Rochelle, 22 June 1651. *Dictature* is dictatorship. Article read at Our Roots, Nos Racines. All works originally in French are my translation.

The next day after the engagement she regretted her momentary weakness [*faiblesse d'un jour*] and harassed her former servant with her recriminations. This servant had been hired to serve for five years and had not fulfilled her obligations. In brief, the case [*process*] went on into July [the couple had married in the church of Trois Rivières on 6 May 1654], and it took a ruling [*ordinance*] by Monsieur Lauson [governor of New France, on 21 July 1654] to put an end to it, because Marguerite LeGardeur had appealed the first judgment made by Pierre Boucher [at Trois Rivières].¹²

Boucher had ruled on 19 June that “Judith Rigaud and her husband were to reimburse Marguerite LeGardeur in the amount of 102 *livres*, and [Marguerite LeGardeur] was to return to her servant the personal possessions that she had confiscated.” As for Marguerite LeGardeur’s insistence that Judith Rigaud had failed to serve the five years of her contract, the governor found this demand null because Marguerite LeGardeur “had signed the marriage contract and permitted the publication of banns.” In addition, the governor vetoed Marguerite LeGardeur’s demand to be reimbursed for the damage done to furniture by Judith in an angry outburst before she left her employer’s house. The governor ruled that “the servant may have had reason to have behaved in such a manner and to have caused some damage.”¹³ Did some of the ill will of this 1654 litigation include the debt to “Plassais, surgeon of the garrison of Trois-Rivières” mentioned above, of the same date July 21, 1654, concerning payment for this doctor’s treatment two years earlier? Historians should be wary of making definitive judgments based on partial evidence or conjecture.

Auger is not the only one who suggests immoral behavior by Judith, possibly without proof. She was definitely first married in the Church. The following details from her Church marriage are transcribed by PRDH on its “certificate”:

#89025 Trois-Rivières 1654-05-06
Rank Name Age M.S. Pr. Sex
01 FRANCOIS LEMAISTRE Origin : PICARDIE --- c p m

02 JUDITH RIGAUT Origin : ST-JEAN-D'ANGELI --- c p f

03 LEMAISTRE FATHER OF 01 --- --- m

04 ELISEE RIGAUT FATHER OF 02 --- --- m

05 DE MONGUICHET --- --- p m

06 VOLANT ST CLAUDE --- --- p m

07 LAVALE --- --- p m

08 RENE MENARD Occupation : JESUITE --- c p m

And, if Auger’s suspicions are true and Judith did have an abortion, it certainly did not render her infertile. These are the Lemaistre children born before 1766 and the names of spouses, if they married:

Sex Birth Marriage Death First name of the child [followed by name of first spouse]

1. m 1655-02-02 1682-01-08 1711-08-13 **PIERRE**
Trois-Rivières Trois-Rivières Trois-Rivières
MARIE ANNE CHENET LAGARENNE
2. m 1656-02-09 1683-01-07 1703-05-13 **FRANCOIS**
Trois-Rivières Trois-Rivières Montréal
MARGUERITE POULIN FONTAINE
3. f 1657-07-29 1676-01-22 **MARIE LOUISE**
Trois-Rivières Québec indéterminé
JACQUES PASSARD DE LABRETONNIERE
4. m 1658-12-24 **NOEL**
Trois-Rivières

¹² Douville, *La Dictature*, 75.

¹³ Douville, *La Dictature*, 76.

5. f 1660-02-16 **MARGUERITE**
Trois-Rivières
6. m 1661-10-24 1696-11-22 1710-04-14 **JEAN BAPTISTE**
Trois-Rivières Montréal Trois-Rivières
CATHERINE GODEFROY DE LINCTOT DE VIEUXPONT
7. f 1664-01-23 1676-05-22 **MARGUERITE MARIE**
Trois-Rivières Québec indéterminé
CHRISTOPHE GERBEAU BELLEGARDE
8. m 1666-04-15 1689-10-11 **CHARLES AUGER** [my ancestor]
France Montréal
MARIE MADELEINE CREVIER BELLERIVE

That's eight children in twelve years, six of whom are known to have survived to marry.

Not content with the responsibilities of motherhood alone, Judith allegedly encouraged her husband to become involved with the fur trade, yielding an income that, for a time, allowed Lemaistre "to offer his wife a wardrobe which was exceptional for the period, and superb furniture...."¹⁴ In 1665, mother of seven children, Judith even sailed for France to conduct business for her husband. The last child listed above, Charles, was born while she was there in France in April of 1666. Quoting Father Archange Godbout, Auger says Charles was "baptized in the church of Saint-Jean de La Rochelle April 15, 1666 and had as godfather the Abbé Guillaume du Mouton, pastor of Argeneuils in Saintonge, and as godmother Suzanne Grignon, wife of Arnaud Péré,¹⁵ a merchant, who had numerous clients in Canada." Father Archange Godbout adds that Judith Rigaud contracted debts there, "which placed her husband in a precarious financial condition."¹⁶

Upon her return from her transactions in France, Judith learned that her husband had died. E.-Z. Massicotte tells this part of the story in this way:

About the month of June 1665 [*sic*], Madame Le Maistre left for France. Obsessed [*sic*] by the dream of doing big business, she wanted to establish commercial relationships with the financiers and wholesale merchants of La Rochelle. And it was during her stay in that city that the child Charles was born. "April 15, 1666". This offspring was born three months after the death of the father who had remained in Canada and who, having been found wounded and unconscious, had passed away without recovering his speech. The burial record at Trois-Rivières, dated January 14 1666, states that the deceased was aged 33, and that 'miserabiliter trucidatus est; sine ulla voce interiit' (he was slaughtered most miserably; he perished without regaining his speech).¹⁷

No source is given for the about "June 1665" date for Judith's departure for France. Ships returning there left more commonly as late as November, as verified by the multiple letters and *mémoires* sent to France dated in October and November. Although Massicotte does not come right out and say Lemaistre may not have been Charles's father, he certainly suggests it to anyone inclined to count the months to determine when Charles would have been conceived. In addition, he shows his bias in the phrase "obsessed by the dream of doing big business." Judith was not the only person – nor the only woman – who traveled to France for financial and business matters.¹⁸ To what degree she was "obsessed" cannot now be determined, nor the degree to which she "placed her husband in a precarious financial condition," in Father Archange Godbout's words.

¹⁴ Auger, 18.

¹⁵ Arnaud Péré is the brother of Jean Péré, also an important merchant and a trader, who attended the 1657 marriage of Pierre Couc *dit* Lafleur de Cognac and served as godfather for Marguerite Couc and also for Louis Couc Montour's son. He later returned to live in France and conduct his business in La Rochelle. Jean Péré's name appears multiple times in the church registers as a witness. See my work on the Couc / Montour families.

¹⁶ Quoted from Archange Godbout, *Émigration rochelaise en Nouvelle-France*, 148-49, in footnote 14 on page 19 of Roland Auger, "Judith Rigaud."

¹⁷ Auger, 19, quoting from E.-Z. Massicotte, "Quelques montréalais au XVII^e siècle," in *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, Vol. 48 (1942), 358-361.

¹⁸ See my article "Marie Claude Chamois, *Fille du Roi*, Wife of François Frigon: A Mystery," *Michigan's Habitant Heritage* (hereafter *MHH*), Vol. 34, No. 3, July 2013, 117-130, also on the FCHSM website.

It is not unusual that Judith, like many other New France widows, quickly remarried. Massicotte reports that her second husband was “**Jean Therrien du Ponceau dit Duhaime** [*sic*], native of Saint-Jacques de Dieppe,” “who was twelve years younger than she and who agreed [*sic*] to live with the six [surviving] Lemaistre children.” PRDH excerpts these details from the church ceremony on 26 January 1667:

#89070 Trois-Rivières 1667-01-26

Rank Name Age M.S. Pr. Sex

01 JEAN TERRIEN Origin : ST-JACQUES, DIEPPE --- c p m

02 JUDITH RIGAUT --- v p f

03 JEAN TERRIEN SPOUSE OF 04 FATHER OF 01 --- m --- m

04 MARIE HELIE SPOUSE OF 03 MOTHER OF 01 --- m --- f

05 FRANCOIS LEMAISTRE SPOUSE OF 02 --- m d m

06 MAURICE POULAIN --- --- p m

07 LOUIS GODEFROY DE NORMANVILLE --- --- p m

08 JEAN FREMONT Occupation : PRETRE, CURE --- c p m

Massicotte continues: “The couple seems to have lived on a high scale; there were two hired hands, and he owned a farm of which thirty *arpents* were under cultivation, and where he kept five head of cattle.”¹⁹ Although Massicotte does not add the following detail, it was, of course, not at all unusual for a widow in New France to marry a younger man, especially when she had children to support. In fact, a case can even be made that some younger men were attracted to older women precisely because they had an established financial base. Under the terms of the *Coutume de Paris* / Custom of Paris,²⁰ they often had inherited from their previous marriage(s) and could have had substantial assets in their own right.²¹

PRDH indicates the following Terrien child married before 1800:

Sex Date of marriage First name of the child Place of marriage Name of the spouse

m 1700-11-09 **JEAN BAPTISTE**

Trois-Rivières (Couple) MARGUERITE LAMPRON LACHARITE

In addition, Judith and Jean had sons Dominique, baptized 6 November 1667, buried 6 December, Trois-Rivières; and, most-probably, Louis Michel, whose story will be told shortly.

Jean Therrien / Terrien and Judith Rigaud apparently lived well, but, as Auger reports, Judith was still involved in a series of debts, some resulting from her business in France and others from her husband's death and the subsequent complications resulting from his business affairs. In 1668, she was arraigned before the Sovereign Council (*Conseil*

¹⁹ Auger, quoting from Census of 1667, in Sulte, *Histoire des Canadiens*, Vol. IV, 69b.

²⁰ See my article "Marriage Contract in New France according to *La Coutume de Paris* / The Custom of Paris," *MHH*, Vol. 26, no. 3 (July 2005), 135-137, also available on the FCHSM website.

²¹ My ancestress Marguerite Anthiaume, widow of André Jarret, *sieur* de Beauregard, remarried 13 April 1692 to Pierre Fontaine *dit* Bienvenue, a soldier who was fifteen years her junior. In their marriage contract written by the notary Basset, Marguerite treated him as if he were one of the children of her marriage to him (thus, he would receive the full half of their marital community property and the same portion as each of their surviving children, in this case, one-fourth). She also insured the inheritance that her children by André would receive at her death from her own property and the estate left by her first husband. Pierre could not touch those assets. Her children by Pierre would inherit from the marital community between Marguerite and Pierre. Pierre then remarried, had children by his second wife, and added further complication to the transmission of heritage. I have photo copies of all of the relevant documents.

Souverain) in an appeal to her to discharge her debts. She “applied for a delay of six years,” explaining that this suit was being brought, in Auger’s translation from *Jugements et Délibérations du Conseil Souverain*:

for the debts of the late François Lemaistre, her husband, for which she assumed responsibility in France, believing that she would find her husband alive, and effects to satisfy the debts; but, having found that he had died and most of his property having been absorbed and dispersed, the little which was left to her having been employed by her in the country for the settlement of several debts, so that she only has enough left at present to support her children in very great poverty.²²

A savvy woman (she had *savoir faire!*), Judith apparently held on to several expensive items (as she may have been entitled to do by her marriage contract). Her creditors, Auger continues,

stated that the losses established in fact by the said Rigaud are false (...) and that the truth is that she has a bed evaluated at five hundred pounds [*sic*] and sumptuous clothes, and that she bartered merchandise with the Indians for which she has fine hides which she hid so as to defraud them of their just due.²³

However, Auger does not say that the Custom of Paris almost always guaranteed a widow her personal clothing and “lit garni,” her furnished bed, after the death of her husband. He also does not identify the names of the creditors mentioned in Judith’s 1668 appeal and other details. In a recent search on Bibliothèque et Archives nationale du Québec, I discovered that the summary of the Council’s decision is now online.²⁴ Among the details not cited by Auger, for example, are the words omitted in his elision, (...), the phrase “sauf correction,” without being proved to the contrary, that is, Judith’s losses are false unless proved true. Only two creditors are mentioned on the document: Arnaud Perré (*sic*), merchant dwelling in La Rochelle, with Pierre Duquet, notary in this city, acting in his name and with power of attorney, and **Jean Maheust**, represented by **Marguerite Corrivault**, his wife.” **Arnaud Péré** was owed 1000 *livres*, plus interest, for purchases made in France. Marguerite Corrivault complained that no delay whatsoever should be given to Judith because not all of her debts originated in France, that Judith herself also borrowed funds after her return to Canada now amounting to:

thirty-seven *livres* five *sols* of the fifty-five *livres* for a sale that she Corrivault made to her of a mourning outfit [*habit de deuil*] that [Judith] still owes her and that she [Corrivault] has [presented as an] exhibit, passed before Rageot notary in this city [Québec] the nineteenth of June sixteen hundred sixty-seven [*sic*].

Now, François Lemaistre was buried 14 January 1666, while Judith was in France, and Judith remarried to Jean Terrien 26 January 1667. For this session of the council, she is identified as “Judith Rigaud femme de Jean Terrien auparavant veuve feu François Lemaistre:” wife of Jean Terrien and earlier widow of deceased François Lemaistre. What was she doing buying a mourning outfit in June of 1667? Did the document presented as an exhibit show the balance of the obligation, 37 *livres*, five *sols*, still due? Of course, I had to see whether I could locate any document allegedly written by Rageot, but it does not appear in the published index of his records, nor is it indicated as missing, as some documents are. What are we to believe about this alleged debt? Investigating Corrivault on BAnQ, I learned that she had been judged and condemned by the Council in 1664 for falsifying data in accounting for her first husband’s, René Maheu’s (Maheust’s) estate.²⁵ It is not at all surprising, then, that the Council decided Judith could have three years to fulfill her obligations and, furthermore, also warned her creditors to cease pursuing her and to stop harassing her. She was not, however, allowed to “alienate” or in any way rid herself of property or even the two oxen used to cultivate the said land, “deux boeufs servant à la culture desdites terres.” It is of interest to me that

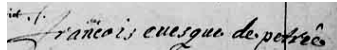
²² Auger, quoting from *Jugements et Délibérations du Conseil Souverain*, Vol. 1, 504-505, July 6, 1668, Auger’s translation.

²³ Auger.

²⁴ BAnQ, Cote: TP1,S28,P585, Fonds Conseil souverain, Jugements et délibérations, Centre: Québec, 6 août 1668.

²⁵ BAnQ, Cote: TP1,S28,P1603, Fonds Conseil souverain, 27 mars 1664, and Cote: TP1,S28,P1631, 4 avril 1664.

one of the members of the Sovereign Council present at this session was Bishop François de Laval, at that time called bishop *in partibus* of Petraea, vicar apostolic in New France.²⁶ This is his signature:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "François de Laval". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

By 1670, though, two years later, Judith was widowed again. Jean Terrien died “prematurely and doubtless [*sic*] accidentally,” Auger says, “in the course of a trading trip in the fall of 1670.” He had declared his age as 23 in the 1667 census at Trois-Rivières, so he was only about 26 when he died. For evidence of his death “in the fall of 1670,” Auger cites the notary Becquet, 4 November 1670, an *obligation* to “Louise de Mousseau, wife and proxy of Pierre Pellerin *dit* Saint-Amand,” which “reveals to us the fact that she [Judith] was then the widow of Jean Terrien du Ponceau *dit* Duhaime.”²⁷ I have not yet seen this record, but the inventory of Romain Becquet’s acts indicates that the loan was repaid 1 October 1671, the following year.²⁸ Auger does not mention this fact. Langlois says Jean Terrien was deceased between the month of June 1670 and the same 4 November 1670 notarial record.²⁹ I am not aware of when he actually left on this “trading trip.” He could easily have left, as many trading ventures did, in the spring and been scheduled to return in the fall, only to have the news delivered that he had died when his companions returned. And Judith, at about 37 years old, was pregnant again, with her eleventh baby, the third Therrien (Terrien *dit* Duhaime) child. It is the birth of this boy that has been recorded as illegitimate. Auger’s English-language version of the entry, a **transcription** made at a later date, reads:

In the year of grace 1671, on April 5, I, fr. Hilarion Guérin [*sic*, Guénin], Recollet priest, serving in the capacity of pastor at Trois-Rivières, conferred the baptismal ceremonies on an illegitimate child which had been baptized by me March 19 at home, due to the fact that he could not be transported to the church because of being sick. The father’s name is Jean Duhaime [*sic*] and the mother Judith Rigaud. The godfather was Louis Michel Godefroy dit Normanville, the godmother Perrine Picoté, wife of Michel Godefroy, and the child was named Louis-Michel.³⁰

A child born in mid-March of 1671 would have been conceived in June of 1670, if he was full-term. To this day, on PRDH, the entry of Charles’s illegitimacy prevails, even though Auger, in 1981, observed:

A curious act, this, which suggests evil where none exists! Why does the pastor Guérin [*sic*, Guénin], of Trois-Rivières, speak of an illegitimate child and specify that the parents are Judith Rigaud and Jean Duhaime [*sic*], whose widow she had been for scarcely six months? The actual fact is that Jean Duhaime was more commonly known under the name of Jean Terrien. The pastor Guérin, and following him two hundred years later Fr. Germain Lesage, did not know that Jean Terrien and Jean Duhaime were one and the same person: Jean Terrien du Ponceau, dit Duhaime. In all fairness to Judith Rigaud, her little Louis-Michel was neither an illegitimate nor carnal child. And had she been able to attend the baptism, she would have explained it properly to the récollet Hilarion Guérin who had just arrived in Canada.³¹

²⁶ Bishop Laval was beatified 22 June 1980 by Pope John Paul II. See also André Vachon, “LAVAL, FRANÇOIS DE,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed August 11, 2013, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/laval_francois_de_2E.html.

²⁷ Auger.

²⁸ Antoine Roy, *Inventaire des Greffes des Notaires du Régime français*, Vol. III (Québec: 1943), 58. A survey of the number of times Louise de Mousseau, as wife or widow of Pierre Pellerin *dit* Saint Amand, appears in notarial or judicial records indicates that she, too, was very active in business matters.

²⁹ Langlois, *Dictionnaire Biographique des Ancêtres Québécois* (1608-1700), Tome 4 (Sillery: Les Éditions du Mitran, 2001), biography of Terrien.

³⁰ Auger, quoting from a transcription of the Register of Trois-Rivières, April 5, 1671. I have seen both the original church record, with original signatures, and the transcription of the act. Some question this *dit* name *Duhaime* for Terrien, but I do not know why.

³¹ Auger, 23.

Father Hilarion Guénin's first recorded act in the parish was on 11 November 1670, and he wrote the act just before this one but not those following it in this section. He signed neither record. A search at PRDH isolated only five records recorded by him in the parish, the last, a marriage on 7 April 1671. He appears next in November in Québec City and was in Percé by 1672, according to the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*. It is questionable whether Judith ever saw the contents of the register, and, if she did, she could not have easily challenged the priest's entry.

Further complicating the issue, the certificate shown on PRDH references the birth as the same day as the baptism at the home of the child, like the entry quoted above, which says the child was "baptized by me [Guérin / Guénin] **March 19** at home," but does indicate that "L'ACTE A ETE REDIGE LE 05-04-1671": the act was entered on 5 April 1671. The priest's name is spelled "Guérin," on the transcription, a quite natural misreading for Guénin. What actually happened on 5 April 1671 is that the priest supplied the formal rites of the emergency baptism, *ondoyement*, he had originally performed at the home of the baby in March. The Church ceremony added all of the other ceremonies associated with the Sacrament of Baptism: application of holy oils, renouncing of Satan in the name of the child by the godparents, conferring a name, *etc.* PRDH also indicates that the mother was present at this Church ceremony and so was the father! How could the father, if it was Jean "Duheme," be present if he was deceased? The answer to this latter question is quite simple. PRDH assumes the father and mother are present, indicated by the "p" in the following excerpt from PRDH, if they are not specifically mentioned as being absent in the text of the record itself.³² This is another example of a misleading transcription on a published index. PRDH does indicate, however, that the baby's baptism had been recorded in the register after the "birth," 19 March, but not that this 5 April event was a **supplied** baptism, as the text actually says, with the presence of godparents and all the usual rituals.

#87702 Trois-Rivières 1671-03-19 **Birth: 1671-03-19**
Rank Name Age M.S. Pr. Sex

01 LOUIS MICHEL DUHEME --- c p m

02 JEAN DUHEME FATHER OF 01 --- m p m

03 JUDITH RIGAUT MOTHER OF 01 --- m p f *****

04 LOUIS MICHEL GODEFROY DE NORMANVILLE --- --- p m

05 PERRINE PIQUOTE --- --- p f

06 HILARION GUENIN Occupation : RECOLLET --- c p m

• L'ACTE A ETE REDIGE LE **05-04-1671** • ENFANT ILLEGITIME

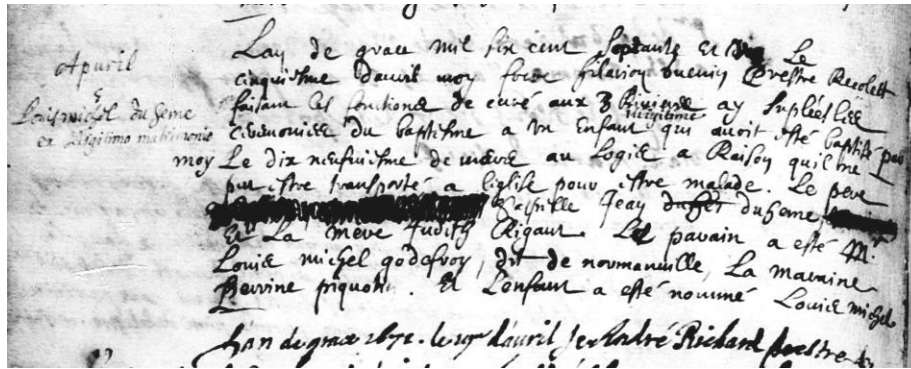
Although the PRDH "certificate" does not identify them as such, *Louis Michel Godefroy de Normanville* and *Perrine Piquote* (Picoté de Belestre, aunt of **Marie Anne Picoté de Belestre, Alphonse de Tonty's** first wife)³³ are the godparents. The record reads, in my translation:

³² I have seen several examples of baptisms for which the father is said to be present but other documents show him elsewhere, a notable one the baptism of Lamothe Cadillac's child in Québec in 1695, when he was very definitely in Michilimakinac. When I reported this fact, an e-mail message from Bertrand Desjardins confirmed for me PRDH's practice of assuming the presence of both father and mother. The original purpose of the PRDH re-reading of the original registers was demographic in nature, that is, counting individuals; determining numbers of marriages, births, deaths; estimating life expectancies, *etc.*

³³ Jetté, 915 and 509. A Louis Godefroy de Normanville had been present at the 1667 marriage of Jean Terrien and Judith, PRDH, #89070. A reference in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*, Vol. LXV, suggests that the "du Hemme" Father Gravier met in 1701 on the Mississippi is Louis Michel. I have not investigated this, but it may be related to a 16 September 1694 contract written by Antoine Adhémar for a loan given by Jean Baptiste Poulin to a "*Louis Duesme*," a loan also mentioned in a document at BAnQ, Cote: TL4,S1,D2148, 25 July 1717, which reports that a man named *Louis Duesme* had died in Saint Domingue in 1716, and a copy of the 1694 document is required to settle his estate. Antoine Adhémar's son, Jean Baptiste, also a notary, had his father's papers and was requested to supply a copy. I will investigate further.

In the year of grace sixteen seventy-one the fifth of April I *frere hilarion guenin*, *Recolett* priest performing the functions of pastor at 3 *Rivieres* have **supplied** the ceremonies of baptism to a child [*illegitime* inserted between the lines] who had been baptized by [*par*] [in the margin: *moy, me*] the **nineteenth of March at home** because he could not be transported to the church since he was ill. The father [section crossed out] called Jean [duher{?}] crossed out] *duheme*, [section crossed out] and the mother *Judith Rigaut* The godfather was Mr *Louis michel godefroy, dit de normanville*, the godmother *perrine piquote*. and the child was named Louis Michel

This is the image of the Church baptism record as found at FamilySearch.³⁴ Note the sections crossed out.



Side margin annotation: April 5, Louis michel du heme, ex illegitimo matrimonio.

On the transcribed version, which is too large to copy here, the word *illegitime* appears in the text, not inserted above the line and not in the margin.³⁵ Transcriptions must always be treated with caution, especially when they “correct” spelling or modernize the original, as this one does. So, was Louis Michel illegitimate or not? And, if so, who was the father? No “Jean Duheme” has been found, but the *dit* name PRDH standardized as *Dueme* has this frequency as a name in all of its records, the name and its variations appearing among the Lemaitre family, particularly by Judith’s grandsons and their children, as of August 2013:

Frequency	Name	Nickname
12	DUEME	AUGER
1	DUEME	BARIL
1	DUEME	CREQUY
1	DUEME	GERBEAU
108	DUEME	LEMAITRE
8	DUEME	QUERCY

Even during the pregnancy and after Louis Michel’s birth, once again Judith was pursued by creditors in 1670 and 1671. According to Auger, the legal documents are, unfortunately, missing. The following year, Judith, probably with her younger children, relocated to Rivière Manereuil, also known as Rivière du Loup and later called Louiseville, where Joachim Germaneau, husband of Isabelle Couc, had land, as did my ancestor François Dupuis’s future father-in-law, François Baillac *dit* Lamontagne. Several of my ancestors lived there. Judith’s son Pierre Lemaitre was already in Rivière du Loup, and Judith acquired property there from which she derived income. Arriving about the same time as Judith was **Jean Laplanche**, surgeon from La Flèche in Anjou. Laplanche became involved in fur trading, as well as serving as doctor; and, having met the “interesting” Judith, he married her at Trois-Rivières 6 October 1675.

³⁴ FamilySearch, Trois-Rivières > Immaculée Conception, Baptêmes, mariages, sépultures 1634-1790, image 119 of 2759.

³⁵ FamilySearch, Trois-Rivières > Immaculée Conception, 1641-1699, image 133 of 283, transcription.

Couple (Family) of JEAN LAPLANCHE Father : URBAIN LAPLANCHE Mother : PILERNIE GILBERT Couple and MARIE JUDITH RIGAUD Father : ELISEE RIGAUD Mother : SUZANNE DUGAS Couple Previous marriage with JEAN THERRIEN Marriage: 1675-10-00 Trois-Rivières

#89094 Trois-Rivières 1675-10-00
Rank Name Age M.S. Pr. Sex

01 DE LAPLANCHE --- --- p m

02 MARIE RIGAUD --- v p f

03 LEMAITRE SPOUSE OF 02 --- m d m

04 DE NORMANVILLE --- --- p m

05 GRANDMENI --- --- p m

06 MARTIAL Occupation : CURE --- c p m

• LE QUANTIEME DE LA DATE DE L'ACTE A ETE OMIS, IL EST SITUE ENTRE M 1677-05-30 ET B 1679-10-06
The exact date of the act was omitted. It is between a marriage on 30 May 1677 and a baptism on 6 October 1679.³⁶ [sic]

On 21 January 1676, Jean Laplanche and Judith Rigaud registered their previously-written marriage contract with Antoine Adhémar by which they declared separation of property. This meant that the new husband would not be liable for his wife's debts, nor she for his. Auger omits this latter (and crucial) detail, saying only that he, the husband, would not be liable for hers. As I see it, having five years earlier, 4 November 1670, been in the position of having to borrow money after the death of Jean Terrien, and in 1668 financially damaged by "the debts of the late François Lemaistre, her husband," Judith did not hesitate to afford herself of the provisions granted by the *Coutume de Paris*, the Custom of Paris, to safeguard her assets. She is definitely not the only woman in New France to do so. The Custom of Paris included this clause concerning the separation of *les biens*, real and personal property, as a possible legal choice to specifically protect wives from misappropriation of funds by husbands, not vice versa. The Custom of Paris provided for the protection of the children of a marriage first, and, once this was secured, for the financial support of widows. It also allowed *separation de corps*, of the body, in other words, a legal marital separation. Of course, the Church did not allow remarriage while a former spouse was still alive.

By the end of 1676, the Laplanche couple was in Montréal. There, Judith allegedly "deserted" her husband for a lover. Here is Auger's version:

By a contract by private agreement of May 25 1677, Jean Laplanche gave a farming lease to one Pierre Cavelier. The poor surgeon must have bitterly regretted doing so subsequently because as we shall see, very soon afterwards, the couple no longer got along together. Cavelier, who must have been an attractive fellow, received all of Judith's attention, and it resulted in a misadventure.

However, on the following August 11, 1677 Judith was the god-mother of François Gerbaud, her grandson, whose parents, likewise from Manereuil, were at Montréal "due to the trading with the Ottawas Indians." Her husband Jean Laplanche did not attend. The reason why was, alas, that she had deserted her bed and board, or was to do so soon, so as to live together with Pierre Cavelier as husband and wife, that is, with her husband's tenant, to the great scandal of the Montréal population. She likewise took with her the fine furniture which she had still succeeded in keeping. But alas, the lovers were not to experience happiness for very long.³⁷ [Underlining mine.]

³⁶ This seems to be an error in the dates, but the Trois-Rivières registers exist in several versions. On FamilySearch: Quebec, Catholic Parish Registers, 1621-1979, Trois-Rivières, Immaculée Conception, Baptêmes, mariages, sépultures 1654-1677, it is image 20 of 26, marriage of "Monsieur dela Planche" and "Marie Rigauet" [blank] October 1675, in Latin.

³⁷ Auger, 23. Louis Couc, under his *dit* name of Lafleur and standing in for a "François Lemaistre," absent, was also present and signing at the 11 August 1677 baptism mentioned above. Images from FamilySearch.

Auger here falls into serious speculation and innuendo. His repeated use of the word “alas” and the phrases “must have been an attractive fellow” and “deserted her bed and board, or was to do so soon” do not make me take his judgment very seriously. I fear he may have fallen into the very error he has accused others of making. PRDH’s “certificate” of Judith’s presence as godmother of her grandson provides additional details that were evidently unknown by Auger. Laplanche was not the only family member who may have been absent. Most likely Auger did not consult the full record itself.

#40451Montréal 1677-08-11

Rank Name Age M.S. Pr. Sex

01 FRANCOIS GERBAUX Residence : RIVIERE-DU-LOUP --- c p m

02 CHRISTOPHE GERBAUX SPOUSE OF 03 FATHER OF 01 Residence : RIVIERE-DU-LOUP --- m p m

03 MARGUERITE LEMAISTRE SPOUSE OF 02 MOTHER OF 01 Residence : RIVIERE-DU-LOUP --- m p f

04 LOUIS LAFLEUR SON OF 05 --- c p m

05 PIERRE LAFLEUR FATHER OF 04 --- --- m

06 FRANCOIS LEMAISTRE --- --- m

07 JUDITH ROGAUT [sic] SPOUSE OF 08 GRANDMOTHER OF 01 --- m p f

08 JEAN DE LAPLANCHE SPOUSE OF 07 Occupation : CHIRURGIEN --- m --- m

09 GILLES PEROT Occupation : CURE --- c p m

• "LA MERE EST PRESENTEMENT ICI A CAUSE DE LA TRAITE DES OUTAOUAIS" • M. LAFLEUR A TENU LA PLACE DU PARRAIN, M. LEMAISTRE: The mother [*sic*, of the baby] is presently here [in Montréal] because of the fur trade with the Ottawa. Mr. Lafleur took the place of the godfather, Mr. Lemaistre [who was absent].

Note that this PRDH summary states that it is the mother, not the parents, present “because of the fur trade with the Ottawa, *sta8ojs* [*sic*], but the actual record mentions that both father and mother of the baby are in Montréal for this reason:

my aiauu. a-a traite des sta8ojs.

*Louis La Fleur, filz de Pierre La Fleur
Lafleur pour Francois a la naissance de
Judith Rogaut a M. de la Roche
Jean de la planche Chirurgen*

Louis Lafleur

This son of Pierre Couc *dit* Lafleur, Louis, was to be later known as **Montour**, and he was both a licensed trader and later a *coureur de bois* and fugitive who traveled to New York with Indians so that they could trade there. If this “Louis Lafleur” son of “Pierre Lafleur” is truly Louis Couc *dit* Lafleur, he evidently knew Judith Rigaud at least this one time that is documented, and his signature on the church record may be the only example of his signing with this name. As he was chosen to be a proxy for the absent godfather, he must have been known by the family. Indeed, he himself was granted property at his father’s, Pierre Couc *dit* Lafleur de Cognac’s, place of residence, Saint François du Lac, just across Lac Saint Pierre from Rivière du Loup. He had been baptized under the last name Lafleur in 1659 and does not seem to have used the *dit* name of Montour until about the time of his sister Angélique’s marriage in 1682. He signed his 7 January 1688 marriage record simply Montour:

Montour

icy a cause de La traite des 8ta8ojs: presently here because of trade with the Ottawa

I should add that at this time the trading fairs were held at Montréal, with the Natives descending to the mother colony to do their business there. Not until after 1681, when the *congé* or permit-to-trade system went into effect, was there any extensive legal travel by French Canadians from the mother colony to the *pays d'en haut*, the country up river, to trade with the Indians away from the St. Lawrence Valley colony.

But to return to Judith's story, it is true that Jean de Laplanche is not said to be present at this baptism. Not all of those present are recorded in the text of an act, the priest often noting "others" were present. It is also true, at times, that a signature on a record will reveal the presence of an individual not mentioned in the text of the act. The PRDH [index](#) ignores these signatures, not transcribing them at all for its "certificate." Was Laplanche not interested in family religious events? Could there be other reasons that he did not attend the baptism—if he did not—other than that his wife was interested in another man? Would she have been allowed to serve as godmother if her "scandal" was known at this time?³⁸ The priest did not object to Judith serving as godmother in August of 1677 or earlier. She signed the register:



Years ago, H  l  ne Lamarche, now editor of *M  moires, Soci  t   g  n  alogique canadienne-fran  aise*, reported to me that "Both Pierre Cavelier and Judith Rigaud served as godparents to Pierre Barbary, b. [baptized] in Lachine April 23 1677, leaving open the question whether or not, their «living in sin» was publicly known."³⁹

Jean Laplanche returned to France the following year, 17 June 1678, according to Auger (I cannot find the record); he refers his readers to "Jugements et D  lib  rations du Conseil Souverain, Vol. II, page 280," and adds the snide comment that Laplanche was "abandoning his unfaithful wife to her fate. He was never to return to Canada." It could just as well be Laplanche who deserted Judith. Only months earlier, in March of 1678, a series of lawsuits were filed against Judith, all attempting to obtain money or seize furniture in repayment of debts. Is there a pattern developing? Judith's husbands die or abandon her, and she is left to handle the debts. Pierre Cavelier was also having financial trouble. Auger writes:

Pierre Cavelier, Judith's lover [*sic*], had leased a piece of land from the Abb   Jean Cavelier, brother of the celebrated Robert Cavelier de La Salle. There was no family relationship between this Pierre and the two brothers Jean and Robert. Pierre Cavelier, failing to fulfill the obligations of his contract, was sued by the Abb   Jean Cavelier. But as E.-Z. Massicotte [in *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, Vol. 48 (1942), p. 360] writes:

"The Sieur Abb   did not have just one adversary to contend with. Besides the one whose life style he sought to change, there was a woman, and what a woman? Perhaps there were never any who displayed more masculinity than Judith Rigaud, and it was above all regarding the Abb   Jean Cavelier or his representatives that she displayed the full measure of her aplomb.

"When the attempt was made to evict her from the farm, she received the process-server and his men at the point of a pitchfork, and they had to back off.

"Pierre Cavelier having been jailed, she had to give in. Realizing that the cause was a lost one, poor Judith disappeared."

³⁸ Isabelle Couc (another woman suspected to have engaged in "scandalous" behavior) was also allowed to serve as godmother in Detroit in 1704 (the very year she was so accused by Cadillac) and again in 1706.

³⁹ Personal e-mail from H  l  ne Lamarche. A Pierre Cavelier (Rivet *dit* Cavelier) and his wife, Louise Dusouchet, appear in the 1681 census at Lachine. Whether this is the same Pierre is unknown.

On April 14, 1679, the judge Jean-Baptiste Migeon de Branssat sentenced Judith Rigaud in absentia to “ten consecutive years of banishment from the Island of Montréal, forbidding her to violate her ban under penalty of corporal punishment.”⁴⁰

This is another record I have not seen. Judith was **accused** of deserting her marital home and of living “maritalement” (as husband and wife) with Pierre Cavelier. An accusation is not a verdict. It is interesting to note that Massicotte criticizes her for being “masculine.” The men of the same historical period, both married and unmarried, were fighting and dueling, and siring illegitimate children, many of whom never had the father’s name declared; but “poor” Judith, accused of having an adulterous relationship, or of simply dwelling with a man who was not her husband, was banished from Montréal. Auger believes she returned to Manereuil (Rivière du Loup) at this time, the winter of 1678-79, therefore before the sentencing, and in 1681 she was still at Rivière du Loup.⁴¹ Auger asserts that Judith sought refuge at Rivière du Loup, and also speculates that:

she must have lived in obscurity and in an uneasy frame of mind. She did not meet with the census-takers of 1681, contrary to what Fr. Lesage (*Louiseville*, p. 36) leads us to believe, and the enumerators do not tell us anything about her four sons François, Pierre, Jean, and Charles Lemaistre. Two of them owned grants at Manereuil, and it is more than likely that, while dealing in furs at a distance, they kept their foothold in the seigneurie.⁴²

Auger is here attempting to read the mind of a woman living at another time, in another place. Who can say what her “frame of mind” was or to what extent she lived “in obscurity”? And whether the surviving records show the Lemaistre sons as involved in “furs at a distance,” while possibly true, is not proven. Joachim Germaneau was not recorded on the census of 1681 either. In fact, these are not the only persons known to be alive who are not accounted for in 1681. The census of 1681 does report that, living with Judith’s daughter, Marguerite Lemaistre, and Judith’s son-in-law, called here Guillaume Gerbault, is a woman named Judith Desauneaux, forty-five years old, no marital status given. Judith is an exceedingly uncommon name at that time, and PRDH thus links this Judith to Judith Rigaud; her age seems right. Why Christophe is called “Guillaume” here, I will never know! The extant records for the censuses of 1666, 1667, and 1681, and the several transcriptions of these records, have multiple errors. I know of no Guillaume Gerbault in the colony. Here is how PRDH transcribes the record (yet another transcription, “as read” from the original).

```
#97587 Rivière-du-Loup (Louiseville) 1681-00-00 Census
Rank Name Age M.S. Pr. Sex
01 GUILLAUME GERBAULT Occupation : HABITANT 038 m p m
-----
02 MARGUERITE LEMAISTRE 026 m p f
-----
03 FRANCOIS GERBAULT SON OF 01 004 c p m
-----
04 JUDITH DESAUNEAUX 045 --- p f
-----
```

Whatever the accuracy of the 1681 census, Judith continued to involve herself in business affairs along with her sons, and with a new person who had arrived at Rivière du Loup, someone else who was involved with the my Couc/Ménard/Delpé family, Joseph Petit *dit* Bruno. Auger observes that from this time on Judith called herself “Madame Rigaud.” I have not yet examined the extant transactions, and he does not cite any. On 9 June 1684, according to Langlois, Jean Lechasseur, Secretary of Frontenac, “conceded land to her [measuring] nine *arpents* and a half in front at Rivière-du-Loup.” That is a large plot of land. Langlois adds that she then traveled to France.⁴³

During a visit to the Archives du Québec in Montréal in June 2000, at the time I began to revise this article from the one I wrote in my Family History, I found a record establishing yet another marriage for Judith Rigaud. I have since

⁴⁰ Auger, 23-24.

⁴¹ Did she and Isabelle Couc / Madame Montour, Louis Couc Montour’s sister, ever meet? It seems possible, if Louis knew the family. Joachim Germaneau, Isabelle’s first husband in 1684, had property there.

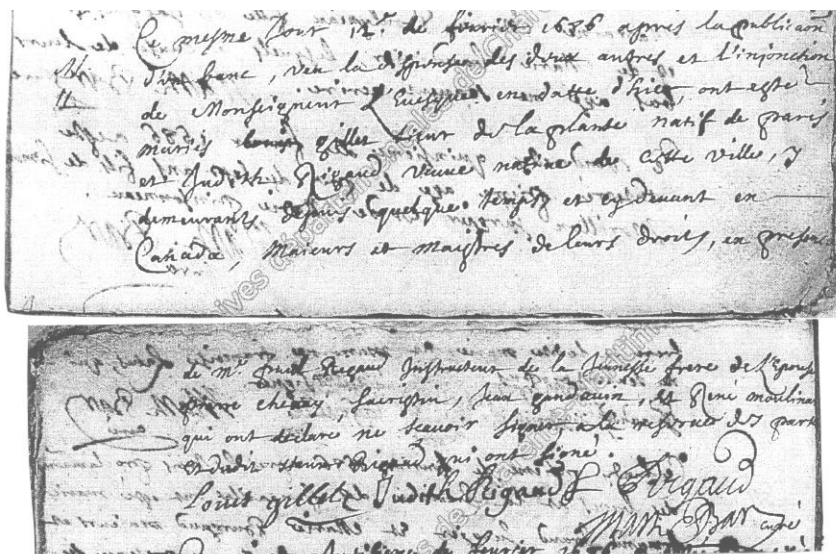
⁴² Auger, 24.

⁴³ Langlois, Tome 4, 253.

seen no one else cite it, except for Langlois in Tome 4, 2001,⁴⁴ until I again consulted PRDH in 2013 to see whether this contract had been brought to their attention. It has. See the Individual Certificate for Marie Judith Rigaud, #19656. I originally found evidence for this fourth marriage on *Parchemin—banque de données notariales* (1635-1775), in the *Insinuations de la Prévoté*. The records of the *Conseil Supérieur*, on 18 March 1690, include the filing of a marriage contract drawn up by the notary **Hardy** in France on 6 February 1686. As I understand it, "insinuations" included establishing the legality of acts performed outside of the colony or not previously recorded. The excerpt reads, in my translation:

Contract of marriage between **Louis Gillet de Laplante**, bourgeois of the city of Paris, native of the city of Paris, dwelling at present in the city of *Saint Jean Dangely*, son of deceased Jean Gillet and of Anne Goujon; and **Judith Rigaud**, originally from and dwelling in the city of *Saint Jean Dangely*, **widow** of *Jean de Laplanche de Couillé*, master surgeon, daughter of deceased Elie Rigaud, teacher of youth, and of Suzanne Dugast.⁴⁵ [Emphasis mine.]

Thus Judith, at about fifty-five years old, three times widowed, had traveled to Saint Jean d'Angely, France, some time before the drawing up of this marriage contract there on 6 February 1686 between her and **Louis Gillet de Laplante**, born in Paris and a bourgeois. An interesting detail in this excerpt reveals that her deceased father had been a teacher of young people. In 2013, Gail Moreau-DesHarnais found the Church record for the marriage 12 February 1686.⁴⁶



[signed] Louis gillet Judith Rigaud P Rigaud

The same day 12th of February 1686 after the publication of one bann, the two others having been dispensed, and the injunction of *Monseigneur L'Evesque* [the Bishop] dated yesterday, were married **louis gillet sieur de laplante** originally from *paris* and **Judith Rigaud** widow originally from this city residing here for some time and before this in *Canada, maieurs et maistres de leurs droits* [adults and masters of their legal rights], in the presence of *M.^e* [Master] *paul Rigaud* instructor of youth, brother of the bride *pierre cheney sairisin* [?], *Jean gaudouin*, and *René Mouliner* [?],

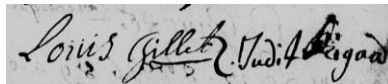
⁴⁴ Langlois, Tome 4, 253.

⁴⁵ I sent for a copy and now have it. It is photocopied on film #1208 ANQ Montréal.

⁴⁶ Archives de Charente-Maritime, Registres paroissiaux et d'état civil, Saint-Jean-d'Angély, Collection communale, baptêmes, mariages, sépultures 1686, vues 7 & 8, courtesy of Gail Moreau-DesHarnais.

who declared not knowing how to sign, with the exception of the parties and of the said *maistre* [?] Rigaud who signed.

Just as Judith's father had been, her brother Paul was an instructor of youth. After the wedding, Judith and Louis returned to New France by 8 May 1688 because Adhémar wrote a contract that day for the sale of a house situated in *Villemarie* (Montréal) on "rue St Paul" by François Pougnet, bourgeois merchant, to Louis Gillet and Judith Rigaud, his wife, also of *Ville Marie*. Evidently, she had established residence in Montréal by then. The contract is a lengthy one, and it is signed by both Louis and Judith.⁴⁷ Because of the insurgence of Iroquois assaults, especially after the attack at Lachine in 1689, almost all the families at Rivière du Loup left for safer territory. Auger says Judith was "allowed" to return to Montréal before the ten-year ban against her presence there expired. Or can it be the accusation against her had been reconsidered? Her son **Charles Lemaistre dit Auger**, who had been born in France, married **Madeleine Crevier** on 11 October 1689. I already knew that Judith was present and signed both the record of the marriage ceremony and the contract, but having learned of the Gillet / Rigaud marriage contract and before sending for it, I once again checked the microfilm of the church marriage record of Judith Rigaud's son Charles Lemaître to Magdelaine Crevier, daughter of Nicolas Crevier and Louise LeCoutre, in Montréal on 11 October 1689. There next to Judith's distinguished signature is that of Louis Gillet.⁴⁸

A photograph of a handwritten document showing two signatures in cursive ink. The first signature is 'Louis Gillet' and the second is 'Judith Rigaud'. The ink is dark and the paper appears aged.

Judith Rigaud was not said to be deceased when her son **Jean Lemaistre dit Lalongé** married **Catherine Godefroy de Vieuxpont**, at Montréal 22 November 1696. Auger affirms Judith died 13 May 1703 at Montréal, about 70 years old, but does not give a source. The microfilm of the Montréal registers does not clearly show any such burial. At least, I could not find it, and PRDH does not indicate a burial date. Langlois says only that she died sometime after the marriage contract of her son, 21 November 1696. He also reports that she received the "scapulaire du Mont-Carmel," the Scapular of Mont-Carmel, six years earlier, on 25 August 1690.⁴⁹ She must have been in the good graces of the Church to receive this sacramental rite.

The families into which her children married were important members of the colony. It apparently did not bother them that they were allying themselves with a "notorious" and outspoken woman who defended her rights vigorously, a suspected adulteress with prior financial liabilities. The more I examine the primary documents the more obvious it becomes to me that almost everyone was in debt at one time or another in this relatively "cashless" society. To outline the successes (and the adventures) of her children and grandchildren would take too much space here. Suffice to say that some entered into religious orders, a fitting irony for a woman who has been so maligned by her (primarily male) historians. She is one of my seventh great-grandmothers through her son Charles's marriage to Madeleine Crevier. The extant documents appear to have more to be examined that could modify the existing interpretations confidently presented but based on partial evidence. I believe Judith Rigaud has been treated in a shoddy and sensational manner by writers in the past, even by the respected genealogist Roland Auger. As the older biographies and histories become more-widely available, readers must take into account the documents available to those writers and their sometimes obvious prejudices. Judith Rigaud deserves better.

Anne Morddel's "French Genealogy Blog" titled " 'Mastering Genealogical Proof' and French Genealogy - Part 5," on 1 August 2013,⁵⁰ reminds genealogists and historians about

how important it is to clear one's mind of prejudices and assumptions when analysing and correlating. One must leave aside every belief, hope, fear, suspicion, prejudice, dream, assumption

⁴⁷ Photocopy from ANQ Montréal.

⁴⁸ FHL film #0375840 and image from FamilySearch on the internet, as are the other images in this article.

⁴⁹ Langlois, Tome 4, 253, citing ANDQ CS (Archives de Notre-Dame de Québec, Confrérie du Scapulaire du Mont-Carmel). The records for Montréal in May 1703 include many deaths from the smallpox epidemic. The month of May can be viewed at FamilySearch, Quebec, Catholic Parish Registers, 1621-1979, Montréal, Notre-Dame, Baptêmes, mariages, sépultures 1700-1712, beginning about image 220 of 1388.

⁵⁰ To subscribe to Anne Morddel's blog, go to <http://french-genealogy.typepad.com/genealogie/>

and so forth held about the people and lives under scrutiny. Stop suspecting pre-marital sex every time a child is born less than nine months after a marriage, stop suspecting bigamy, stop suspecting false identity, false parents and false ages, stop hoping for nobility or a connection to celebrity [or, I add, in North America, a connection to Indian ancestry]. While any of that may turn out to be the case later, it is catastrophic to the process to have such assumptions or suspicions in mind at the time of analysis for they will becloud vision.

One must have the clarity and observational habits of the scientific researcher who with a pure celibacy of mind sees only what is there and not what he or she desires to see.

I say Amen! To succumb to these temptations can sometimes lead only to historical fiction. And, from Anne Morddel's blog for 6 August 2013, quoting Dr. Jones's "Mastering Genealogical Proof": " 'Not all conflicting evidence can be resolved.' How we wish more people would simply accept this and not try to force documentation to say what it does not!" Better to say, "I don't know" than to accuse someone unjustly. Judith may not have been a saint, but who among us is?
