

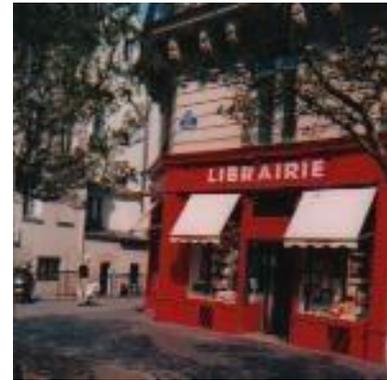
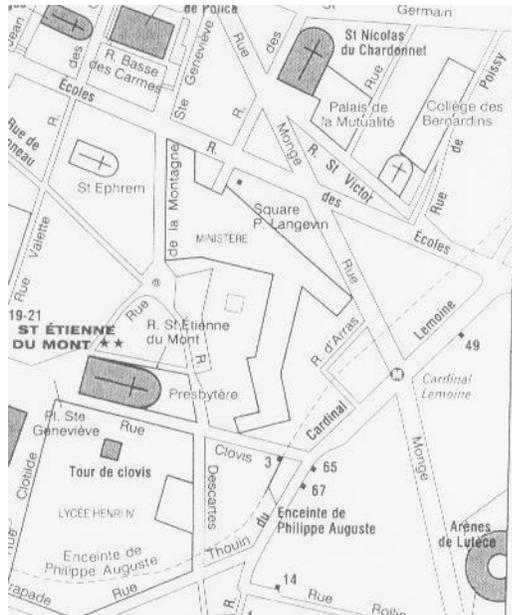
Robert Navarre, First Royal Notary in *Détroit*
Part III

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The *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*¹ says that “Robert Navarre was educated in Paris,” apparently a true statement. Jean-Marc Moriceau, in the book *Les Fermiers de l'Île-de-France XV^e-XVIII^e siècle*, says that Robert Navarre was an “ancien boursier de la fondation Pluyette au collège des Bons-Enfant [a former scholarship recipient of the Pluyette Foundation at the *collège des Bons-Enfants*]” and “Aux Bons-Enfants, la bourse Pluyette profite en 1723 à un Robert Navarre, futur intendant en Nouvelle-France [At *Bons-Enfants*, the Pluyette scholarship helped Robert Navarre, future *intendant (sic)* in New France, in 1723].”²

However, Moriceau gave no specific information about the *collège des Bons-Enfants*. An internet search revealed that there were two *collèges* with that name in Paris at the same time. One was the *collège des Bons-Enfants de St-Honoré*; the other was the *collège des Bons-Enfants-Saint-Victor*. The first one was located on the street of the same name – *rue des Bons-Enfants* near what was once the *collégiale* church of St-Honoré on the *rue Saint-Honoré*. The second college was located in what is now the 5th *arrondissement* in Paris at the corner of *rue des Écoles* and *rue de Poissy*.



Above is a modern map of Paris showing the remains of the *rue Saint-Victor*. The faint dotted line is where the wall of Philippe-Auguste once stood. The *rue d'Arras* is one of the few remaining streets left from about 1552, as can be seen on the map on the next page. The *librairie* above is located at the corner of *rue des Écoles* and *rue de Poissy* in Paris, the location of the western end of the old property of the *collège des Bons-Enfants* (Saint-Victor).³

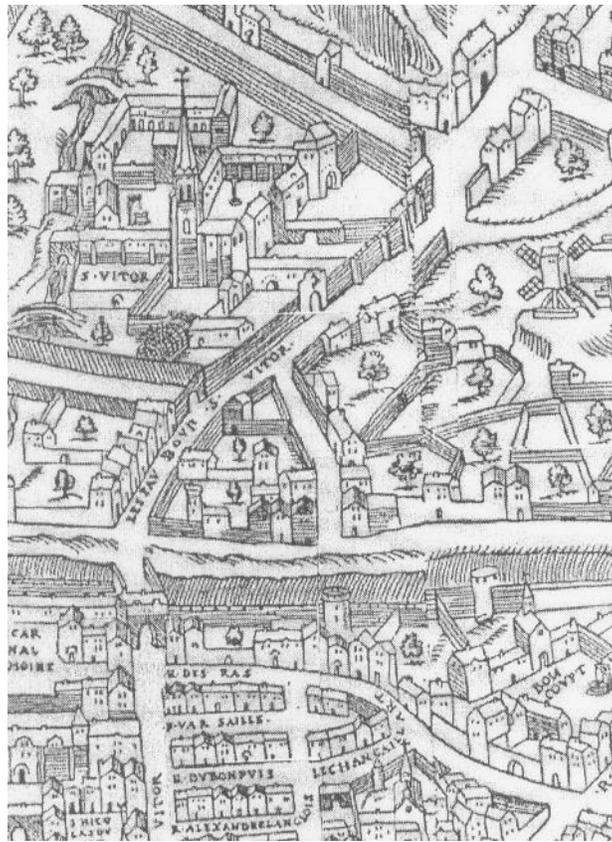
¹ “Robert Navarre,” in collaboration with the Burton Historical Collection Staff, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* [hereinafter **DCB**]. Vol. 4 (Toronto, 1979), pp. 581-582.

² Moriceau, pp. 682, 734. The sources for this information as cited in the book are: AD (*Archives départementales*) Seine-et-Marne, MDZ 69, *fonds Théophile Lhuillier, notes sur la famille Navarre*.

³ http://www.famvin.org/wiki/Bons_Enfants The website is that of the Vincentia Encyclopedia and is part of the Vincentian Provincial Website. The modern map is adapted from Michelin Tourist Guide of Paris, 1996, p. 165.

Moriceau gave no definite location or name for the college, but the website of Thierry Straub gave the name of **Jean Pluyette** was given as the creator of the scholarship which permitted for several centuries two descendants from the Pluyette family, through either a male or a female line, to study at the *collège des Bons-Enfants*.⁴ I searched online for the key terms of *Jean/Jehan Pluyette, la bourse Pluyette* and *la fondation Pluyette*. By using the name of Jean Pluyette, I found some biographical information on him. He had studied at the *Université de Paris*, was associated with the *collège de Navarre* (in Paris – no connection to the family of Robert Navarre) in 1442 and, in 1455, was the principal of the *collège des Bons-Enfants-Saint-Victor*. He speculated in buildings, accumulated money from this and left his fortune to the foundation of two scholarships in perpetuity at the *collège* where he had been a principal.⁵

In 1723, Robert Navarre attended the *collège des Bons-Enfants-Saint-Victor* as a scholarship student, qualifying for the scholarship because his mother was a Pluyette. The college was located on the Grand *Rue Saint-Victor* leading to the *Porte Saint-Victor* and ultimately to the *Abbaye Saint-Victor*, a center for learning, as early as 1113. [Pluyette, p. 31. See footnote #7.] The following maps show the location of *collège des Bons-Enfants-Saint-Victor* during three different periods in Paris. [In the next two maps I have pieced together the necessary parts to form a “whole image.”]



Plan de Bâle circa 1552⁶

Le collège des Bons-Enfants-Saint-Victor was one of several colleges located on *la montagne Sainte-Genève* in Paris. It was located on *rue Saint-Victor* near the *enceinte* (fortified wall) of Philippe-Auguste. Near this area was the *porte Saint-Victor* through which one could go out into the countryside where there were vineyards and cultivated fields and also to the *Abbaye Saint-Victor*. The *collège des*

⁴ <http://jomave.chez-alice.fr/ferlab/pluyette.html> One of Thierry Straub's websites.

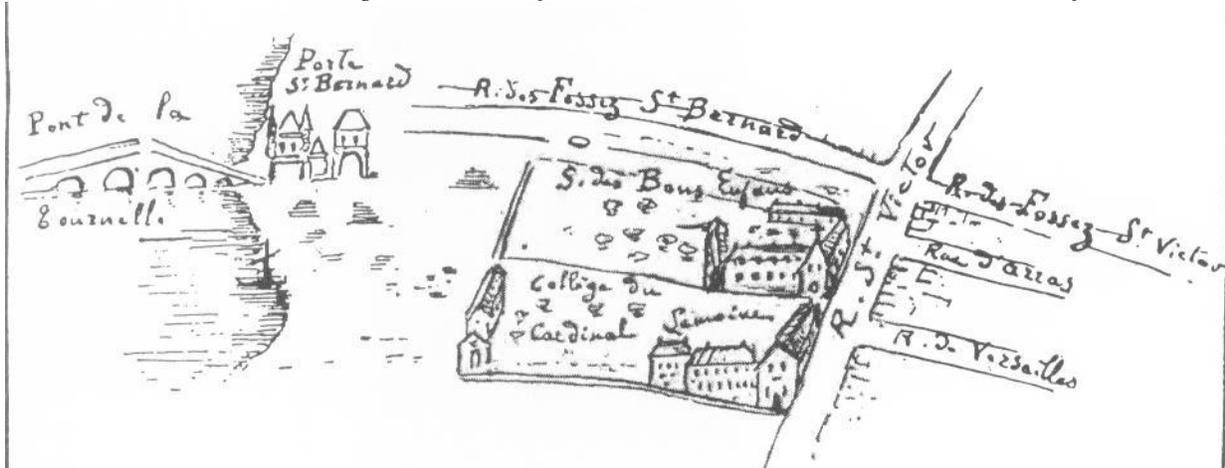
⁵ http://j_mirou.club.fr/p2.htm

⁶ <http://www.paris.org/Maps/Map6/mapf.cgi/h633?17=17>

brought prosperity back to the school through the acquisition of property in Fontenay, his native town, other rural areas, and finally purchasing land and houses in Paris across from the *collège des Bons-Enfants*.¹² The acquisition of other buildings was necessary for the *collèges* for housing some of the students and for rooms where learning could take place. The *collège de Navarre* became a public school where scholarship students were fed and lodged and also attended classes with students who did not live there and who paid for their education. The *collège des Bons-Enfants* was not as large and was only for scholarship students.¹³ Jean Pluyette continued to buy houses near the *collège*, including the houses at the corner of *rue de Versailles* and *rue Saint-Victor*. The rent from these houses and his other properties allowed the school to remain open and to regain its previous importance. Upon his death, he left his money to the school, including money for a *Fondation* for students from the Pluyette family, through both the male and female lines. If no students from his family were eligible to receive the scholarship, then two students from the towns of Mesnil-Aubry and Fontenay-en-France could be accepted. If no students were available in those two towns, then two students could be accepted from other parts of France. He wanted the scholarships to be used.

Since at the beginning of his will Jean Pluyette wrote: “Considérant ...que c’est belle chose de faire apprendre enfans à l’école...” (considering that it is a beautiful thing for children to learn at school...),¹⁴ Pluyette knew well the value of an education. Through education he was able to rise above his “humble condition” and received intellectual culture, the true ennobling of man, and harvested from this consideration, honors and wealth.¹⁵

In 1624, Vincent de Paul, who would one day be named a saint, became the principal of the *collège des Bons-Enfants*. He had founded the *Congrégation des Prêtres de la Mission* and was under the patronage of the Archbishop of Paris. Vincent de Paul was able, as a result of this patronage, to combine the wealth of the *collège*, including the money of the *fondation Pluyette*, with his own community. In 1632 the Congregation was transferred to the priory of Saint-Lazare and the priests of this community became known as Lazarists. The *collège des Bons-Enfants* then became the *Séminaire des Bons-Enfants*.



The *Séminaire des Bons Enfants* next to the *collège du Cardinal Lemoine*, after the removal of *la porte Saint-Victor* and fortified wall of Philippe-Auguste which took place in 1683. [Extract from a map by Jaillot in 1717.]¹⁶

¹² Pluyette, p. 39.

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 41.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 45. Author’s translation.

¹⁵ *Ibid*. Author’s translation.

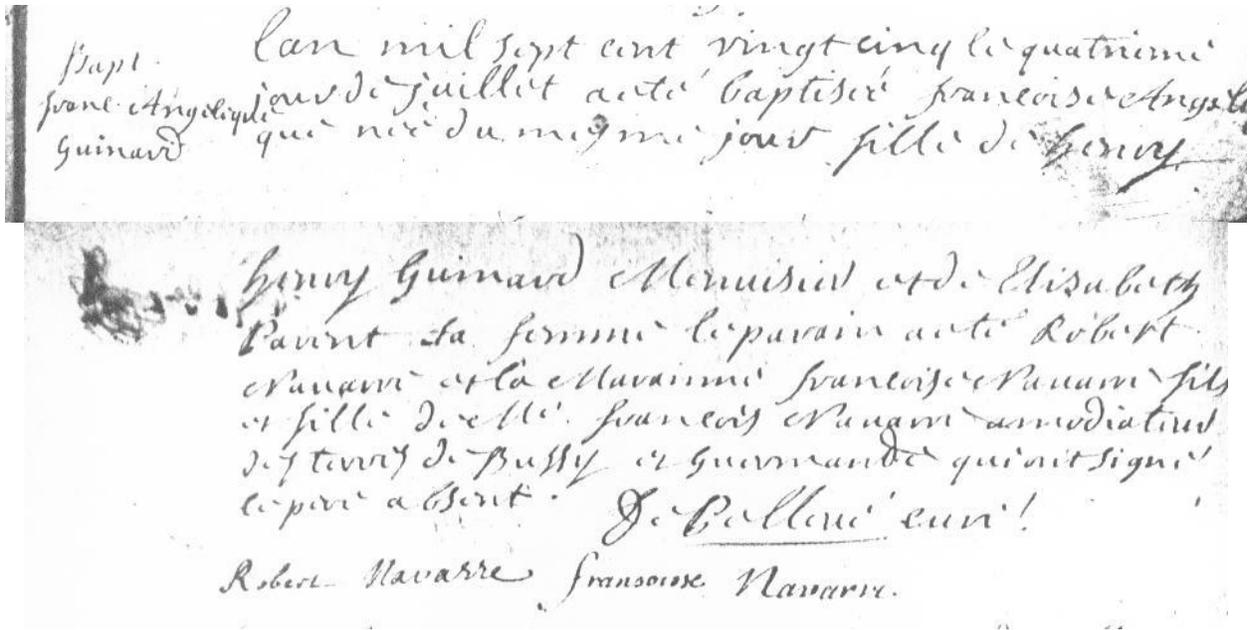
¹⁶ *Ibid*, between pages 70 and 71.

In 1707 the *collège des Bons-Enfants* was officially transformed into a seminary, by the *ordonnance* of Cardinal de Noailles and took the name of *séminaire Saint-Firmin*.¹⁷

The book by Charles Pluyette lists scholarship students through the centuries, beginning in 1479. In the 18th century, specifically on 3 January 1723, Robert Navarre, from the Pluyette family, succeeded François Pluyette. It is not known how long he remained at the *collège*.¹⁸

29 juillet 1706	Gilles PLUYETTE.	Nommé par lettre de provision du cardinal de Noailles, archevêque de Paris.
21 septembre 1710	François PLUYETTE.	idem
26 janvier 1714	Hubert PLUYETTE.	Originaire de Fontenay, demeurant chez son oncle, curé audit lieu.
3 janvier 1723	Robert NAVARRE.	De la famille Pluyette, succède à François Pluyette.
1728	Etienne PLUYETTE.	Deviens maître ès arts.

Possibly the last signed act of **Robert Navarre** in France was on 4 July 1725, when, at the age of 15, he was godfather to Françoise Angélique Guinard, daughter of Henry Guinard, a *menuisier* (carpenter), at Bussy-St-Georges. The godmother was Robert's sister, **Françoise Navarre**. In the record they were said to be the son and daughter of M^r. François Navarre, *amodiateur des terres* (lessor of lands) *de Bussy et Guermande*.



To be continued.

¹⁷ Pluyette, pp. 72-73. The remaining history of the *collège des Bons-Enfants* can be found in this book. French text.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 82.