



# CHEMINS DU LA ROCHELLE

May and September 2018

**Footsteps** in the city of **La Rochelle** where **Marie Asselin** my 7<sup>th</sup> great grandmother was born and lived, before she left France with her father and step-mother.

And where **Jean Beauchamp** my 8<sup>th</sup> great grandfather was born and lived, before he left France.

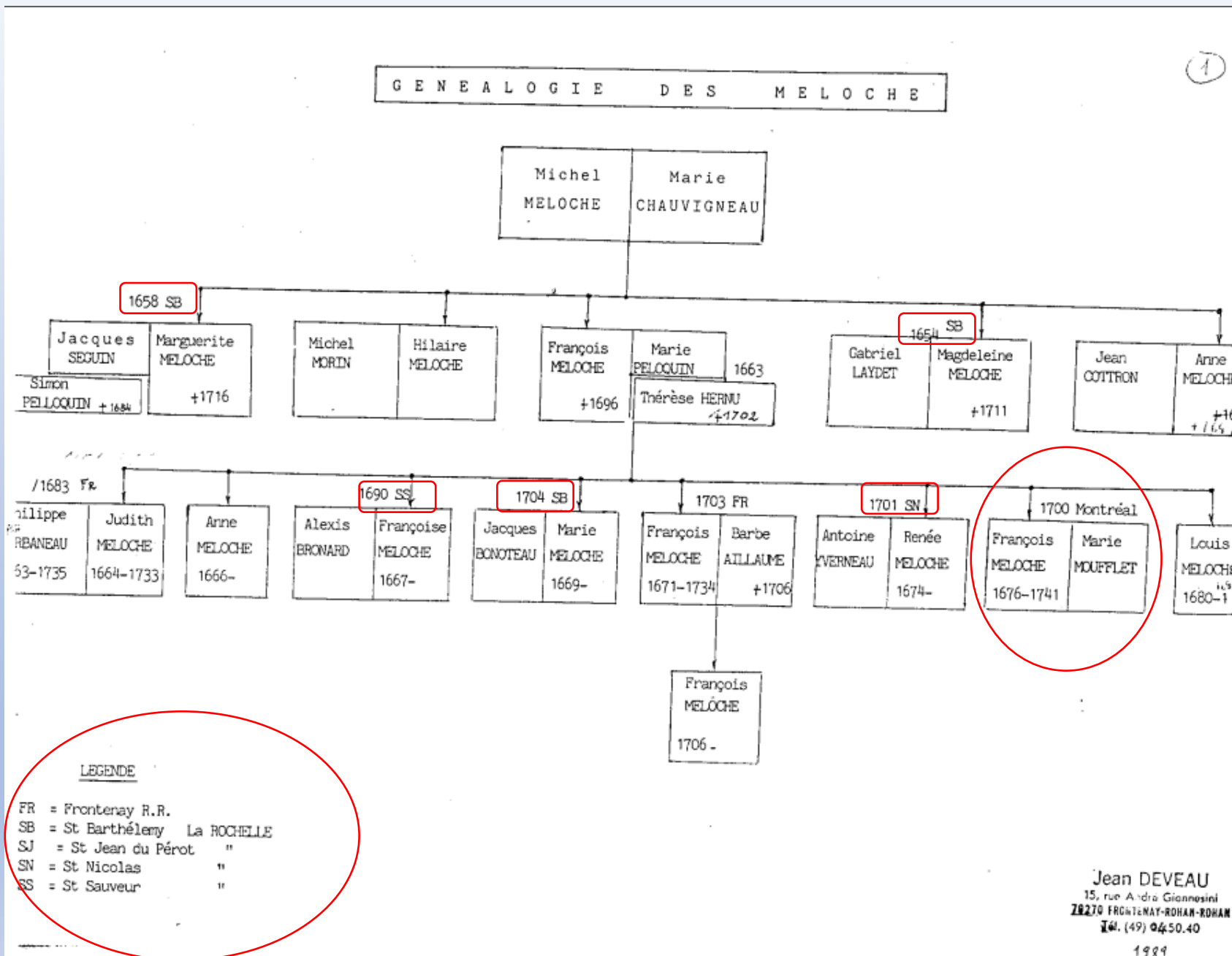
And where **many of my ancestors departed France** and crossed the Atlantic to start a new life in New France.

# ORIGIN FILE FOR MY ANCESTORS who were NEW FRANCE PIONEERS who were born in LA ROCHELLE

see <https://www.fichierorigine.com/>

ANCELIN / ANSELIN, Marie		240052
Statut	Mariée	
Date de baptême	07-05-1651	
Lieu d'origine	La Rochelle (Notre-Dame) (Charente-Maritime) 17300	
Lieu actuel	La Rochelle	
Parents	René ANCELIN et Claire Rousselot	
Métier du père	Filassier	
Date de mariage des parents	03-11-1647	
Lieu de mariage des parents	La Rochelle (Ste-Marguerite) (Charente-Maritime) (17300)	
Première mention au pays	1665	
Occupation à l'arrivée	Migrante arrivée avec son père et sa belle-mère	
Date de mariage	00-11-1667	
Lieu du mariage	Château-Richer	
Conjoint	Pierre Michaud	
Décès ou inhumation	Kamouraska, 18-04-1729	
Remarques	<p>Ses frères et soeur sont baptisés à La Rochelle (Notre-Dame): Fortin/Louis, b. 13-04-1648, roulier marié à La Rochelle (Notre-Dame) le 04-02-1675, cm du 15-11-1674 greffe Jacques Savin, avec Françoise Mesnager (Isaac, saunier, et f. Anne Caillaud); Jean, b. 21-02-1655; Suzanne, b. 29-04-1657, s. 05-06-1662 (Notre-Dame); François, n. 14, b. 15-03-1660, s. 26-08-1661 (Notre-Dame). Sa mère, s. 19-08-1661 à La Rochelle (Notre-Dame). Son père René Ancelin (Mathurin et Marie Garsaud), b. 29-10-1609 à Bouildroux (St-Martin), auj. Thouarsais-Bouildroux (85292), d. avant 1675; veuf m-2 La Rochelle (Ste-Marguerite) le 19-01-1665 avec Marie Jouin (pionnière).</p>	
Identification*	DGFQ, p. 15 ; DGFC, vol. 1, p. 429	
Chercheur(s)	Archange Godbout ; Lise Dandonneau	
Référence*	AG-LAR, p. 4	
Copie d'acte	AD-17 numérisé	
Date de modification	2018-02-05	

BEAUCHAMP, Jean		240239
Statut	Marié	
Date de baptême	08-05-1644	
Lieu d'origine	La Rochelle (Ste-Marguerite) (Charente-Maritime) 17300	
Lieu actuel	La Rochelle	
Parents	Michel et Marie Roulet	
Métier du père	Jardinier, puis charpentier	
Date de mariage des parents	12-05-1630	
Lieu de mariage des parents	La Rochelle (Ste-Marguerite) (Charente-Maritime) (17300)	
Première mention au pays	1666	
Occupation à l'arrivée	Migrant	
Date de mariage	23-11-1666	
Lieu du mariage	Montréal (Notre-Dame)	
Conjoint	Jeanne Loïsele	
Décès ou inhumation	Pointe-aux-Trembles (Montréal), 04-05-1700	
Remarques	<p>Ses frères et soeurs sont baptisés à La Rochelle (Ste-Marguerite): Pierre, 14-03-1633; Jacques (pionnier), 08-07-1635; Marie, 21-02-1638; Guillaume, né en 1646, inhumé à 6 ans le 25-12-1652 (Notre-Dame). Son père Michel Deschamps/Beauchamp est né à Nanteuil-Auriac-de-Bourzac (Dordogne, 24303). Ses grands-parents paternels sont Jean Deschamps, décédé avant 1630, et Louise de Lanterna. Ses grands-parents maternels sont Elie Roulet, décédé avant 1630, et Marie Bardonneau, mariés le 17-06-1607 à La Rochelle (Temple protestant).</p>	
Identification*	DGFQ, p. 60 ; DGFC, vol. 1, p. 33	
Chercheur(s)	Archange Godbout ; Lise Dandonneau	
Référence*	AG-LAR, p. 17	
Copie d'acte	AD-17 numérisé	
Date de modification	2018-02-09	



My 6<sup>th</sup> great grandfather Francois Meloché was baptized at Frontenay Rohan-Rohan in 1676. He is known as “Francois the Canadian”, as he was the only family member to settle in New France. The following slides will refer to him this way. Francois sailed to New France in the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century and married Marie Mouflet in Montreal during 1700.

This family tree notes the marriage dates and locations above the husband and wife. As you can see although some of Francois’ siblings remained in Frontenay Rohan-Rohan, three of his sisters and two of his aunts were married in La Rochelle. My footsteps in La Rochelle included a visit to these church locations.



The medieval towers at La Rochelle would have been the last image of France that many of my ancestors saw as they left France in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century.

Here is a list of some of my ancestors that I am certain departed France from La Rochelle:

Charles Allaire  
Marie Asselin  
Jean Beauchamp  
Rene Binet  
Anne Dodin  
Catherine Fievre  
Marie Jalais  
Jean Lauze  
Laurent Levasseur  
Francois Meloche  
Jean Mouflet  
Pierre Payette  
Antoine Roy

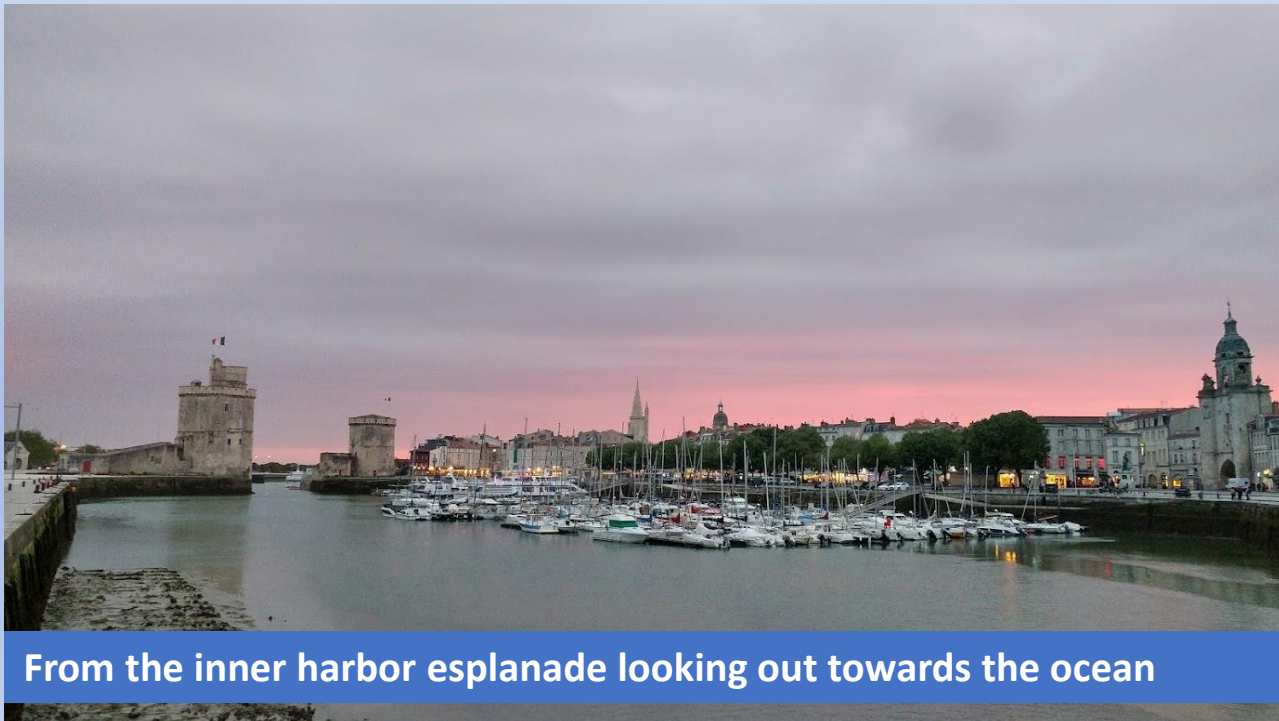




## More views of La Rochelle's Inner Harbor



From the ferry boat looking back at the Old Port (La Vieux Port) of La Rochelle

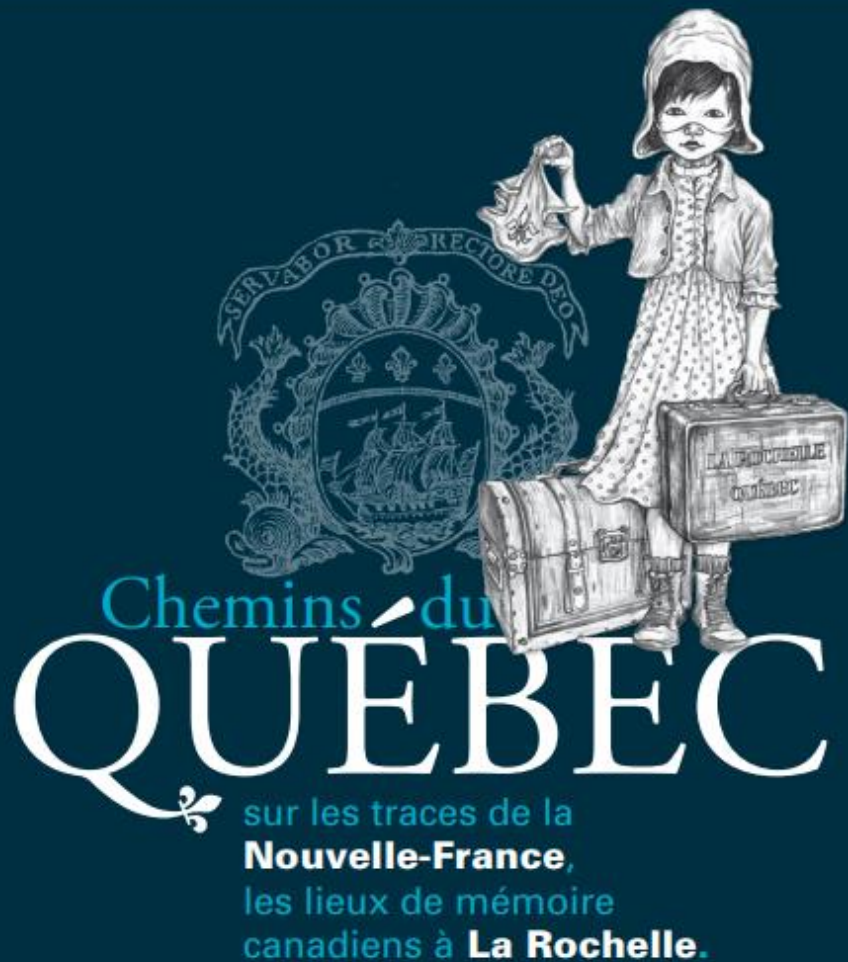


From the inner harbor esplanade looking out towards the ocean



From the inner harbor esplanade looking back into the old section of La Rochelle –Eglise Saint-Sauveur is in the middle background





La Rochelle et Québec, deux villes situées sur le 46<sup>e</sup> parallèle Nord, sont unies par leur histoire. Dès le XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle La Rochelle est l'un des principaux ports français à entretenir des relations commerciales avec l'Amérique du Nord, notamment à travers la pêche à la morue sur les bancs de Terre-Neuve. Elle est au XVII<sup>e</sup> le véritable « port canadien » du royaume, les bateaux rochelais transportent les colons et les soldats qui peupleront la Nouvelle-France. Au retour, les cales sont chargées de peaux et de fourrures qui sont ensuite exportées dans toute l'Europe du Nord. Marchands et négociants rochelais sont au cœur d'un vaste réseau économique et financier. Pour des milliers de migrants, l'image des tours de La Rochelle est le dernier souvenir de la terre de France. De la fondation de Québec (1608) à la cession de la colonie à l'Angleterre (Traité de Paris - 1763), aucun autre port du royaume n'a armé autant de navires pour le Canada, contribuant ainsi à son développement. Les relations sont encore bien vivantes de nos jours et l'histoire toujours présente dans les esprits.

#### ON THE QUEBEC TRAILS

La Rochelle and Quebec : two cities located on the 46<sup>th</sup> North parallel and related by their history. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century La Rochelle was one of the main French ports to trade with North America : fishing cod on Newfoundland banks. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century it became « The » French harbour for Canada. The Rochelais shipped settlers and soldiers to Nouvelle France in order to increase its population. On the way back, the ships were loaded with pelts and furs, then exported all over Northern Europe. Both catholics and protestants were involved. For thousands of emigrants the towers of La Rochelle were their last memory of France. From the foundation of Quebec (1608) to the transfer of the colony to English rule (1763), no other port in the French kingdom had charged and sent as many ships for Canada as La Rochelle.

This brochure outlines 17 stops in the city of La Rochelle. This walk was inaugurated on May 16<sup>th</sup> 2013, to commemorate 350 years since the first Daughters of the King (Filles du Roi) emigrated from France to New France (now Quebec, Canada).

I completed this walk on September 17 and 18, 2018.

I have only included the stops that are most relevant to my ancestry.



# The old port of La Rochelle view from the Lantern tower.

This is stop 1 of the commemorative walk “Chemin du Quebec” –In the footsteps of New France, Canadian places of Memory in La Rochelle.

## 1 LE VIEUX PORT

Entre 1604 et 1763, la ville est étroitement associée à la fondation puis au développement de la « colonie » du Canada. Durant cette période, le port monopolise à lui seul plus de 50 % des armements de navires à destination de la Nouvelle-France. Il exporte des produits manufacturés (outils, vêtements, armes, vaisselle, etc.), du sel, des vins et des eaux-de-vie. Il reçoit en retour des peaux et fourrures qui sont ensuite réexpédiées dans l'arrière-pays ou revendues à l'étranger (principalement du castor pour la fabrication des chapeaux de feutre). Mais La Rochelle s'impose aussi comme le principal port d'embarquement des migrants à destination du Canada. La couronne utilise également les services des armateurs rochelais pour le transport de ses soldats, de ses ouvriers spécialisés (chantiers royaux) et de ses équipements militaires.

### THE OLD PORT

Between 1604 and 1763, life was closely associated with the founding and subsequent development of the colony of Canada. During this period, the port alone monopolized more than 50% of the ship's boats destined for New France. It exports manufactured products (tools, clothes, weapons, dishes, etc.) of salt, wines and spirits. In return, it receives skins and fur, which are then returned to the hinterland or resold abroad (mainly beaver for the making of felt hats). But La Rochelle is also the main port of embarkation of migrants to Canada. The crown also uses the services of the ship owners of La Rochelle for the transport of its soldiers, its specialized workers (royal brokers) and its military equipment.







2

## L'ÉGLISE SAINT-SAUVEUR (quai Maubec)



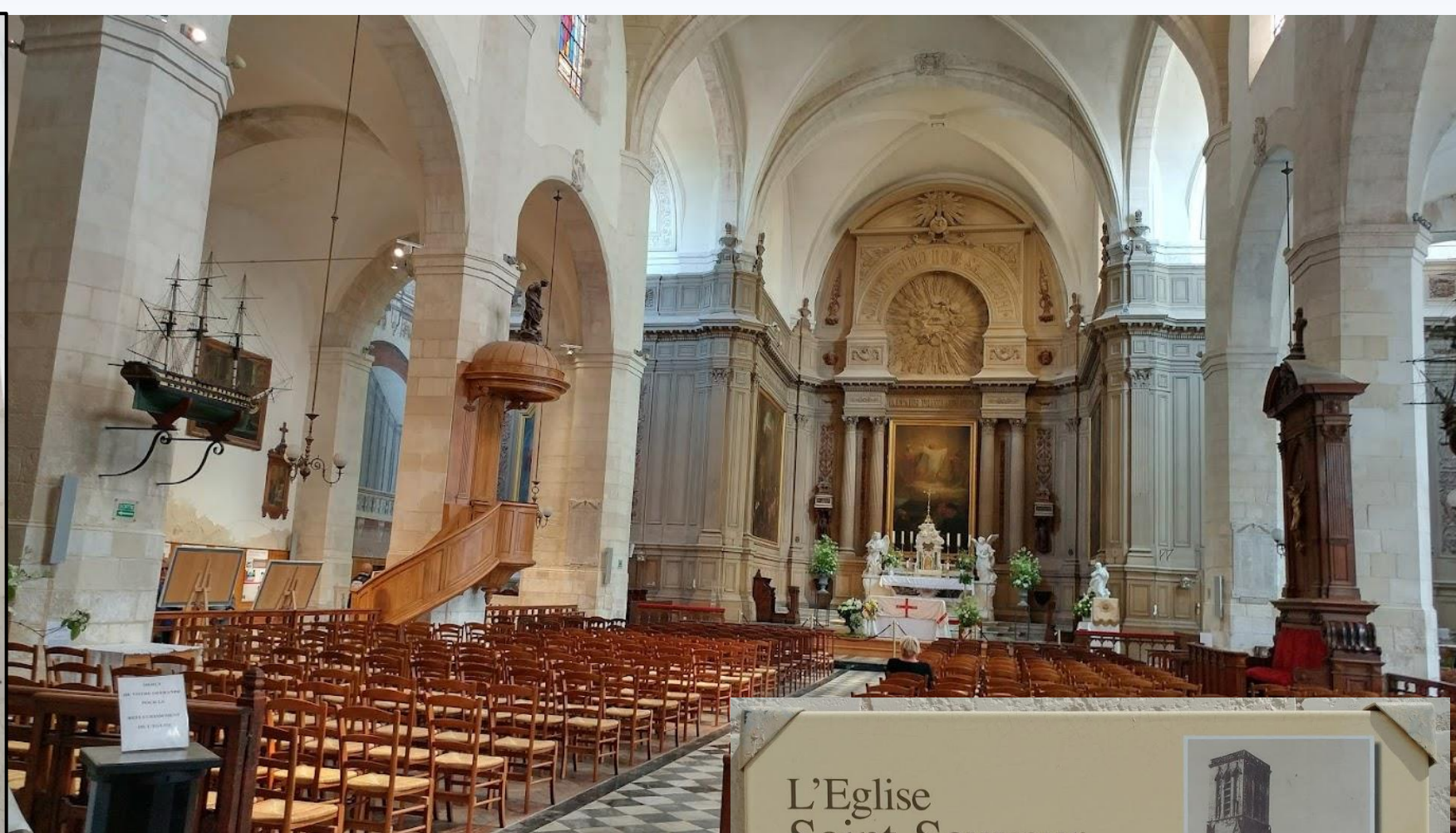
De nombreux migrants à destination de la Nouvelle-France s'y sont mariés ou y ont été baptisés. C'est également un lieu de culte très prisé pour tous ceux, marins ou « terriens », qui s'apprêtent à prendre la mer : on vient en effet y prier avant d'entreprendre le long et périlleux voyage qui mène aux Amériques, avec l'objectif de s'attirer la protection divine. Les paroisses Saint-Barthélemy, Notre-Dame, Saint-Jean-du-Pérot et Saint-Nicolas enregistrent également de nombreux baptêmes ou mariages de futurs colons. De jeunes Amérindiens, domestiques ou esclaves, y sont même baptisés au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, après leur arrivée à La Rochelle.

Many migrants to New France got married there or were baptized there. It is also a place of worship very taken for all those, sailors or earthlings, who are preparing to take the sea: one comes indeed to pray there before undertaking the long and perilous voyage which leads to America, with the goal of attracting divine protection. The parishes of Saint-Barthelemy, Notre Dame, Saint-Jean-du-Pérot and Saint Nicolas also record many baptisms or marriages of future settlers. Young Amerindians, domestic or slaves, are even baptized in the eighteenth century, after their arrival at La Rochelle.

This is stop 2 of the walk "Chemin du Quebec" –In the footsteps of New France, Canadian places of Memory in La Rochelle.



## Interior of Saint-Sauveur



Francoise Meloche (the sister of Francois the Canadian) was married in this church in 1690. It is likely that Francois attended the wedding as he had not yet departed for New France.

## L'Église Saint-Sauveur

*Saint Saviour's Church*

L'église actuelle, consacrée en 1718, a succédé à une église romane du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, puis à une église gothique détruite en 1568 lors des conflits religieux, dont subsiste le clocher du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle et enfin à une troisième église du milieu du XVII<sup>e</sup>. Elle fut ravagée par un incendie en 1705 à l'exception de la façade. L'église Saint-Sauveur fut longtemps la paroisse des marins.



*Replacing a XII<sup>e</sup> century Romanesque church, a gothic version was pulled down in 1568 during the religious conflicts: all that remains is its bell-tower. Rebuilt for the third time in the XVII<sup>e</sup> century, the church was burnt down in 1705 save the façade. The present church, consecrated in 1718 has long been the sailors' parish church.*

HORAIRES OUVERTURE: Mardi à Samedi: 10h00-12h30 14h30-18h00 Dimanche: 16h00-19h00  
Dimanche: MESSE à 18h00

*La Rochelle, belle et rebelle*



## Stop 6 of the walk.

### 6 LE « MAGASIN » DE FRANÇOIS PERON (17 rue Saint-Yon)

Né à La Rochelle, dans une famille de marchands protestants, François Péron (1615-1665) parvient à développer d'actifs liens commerciaux avec la Nouvelle-France, comme le rappelle sa maison au sein de laquelle il aménage un magasin. Il recrute de nombreux « engagés » pour le compte de colons canadiens. Afin d'asseoir ses affaires sur de solides bases familiales, il n'hésite pas à envoyer son fils Daniel à Québec, avec la mission de le représenter sur place et d'y défendre ses intérêts. Depuis peu, une allée porte son nom à La Rochelle.

#### FRANCOIS PERON'S SHOP

Born in La Rochelle in a family of Protestant merchants, Francois Peron (1615-1665) managed to develop active commercial links with New France, as recalled by his house where he built a shop. He recruits many engagements for Canadian settlers. In order to consolidate his business on solid family foundations, he does not hesitate to send his son Daniel to Quebec, with the aim of representing him on the spot and defending his interests. Recently, an alley bears his name in La Rochelle.

My ancestry note: Le Taureau was a merchant ship which was 75% owned by Francois Peron. It departed La Rochelle in 1658. Francois Peron had “engaged” or contracted 16 men for Jean Bourdoin of Quebec City. Jean and Charles Allaire (my 7<sup>th</sup> great grandfather) were among them. These hires were required to work as farm laborers for 3 years and then were free to either remain in New France or return to France. Of the 16 hires, 8 returned to France, one died and only 7 remained in New France, including both Jean & Charles Allaire.





ENTRE 1663 ET 1673

PLUS DE 770 JEUNES FEMMES PARTIES DE FRANCE DÉBARQUÈRENT À QUÉBEC  
ENVOYÉES PAR LOUIS XIV POUR PRENDRE MARI  
ET CONTRIBUER AU PEUPEMENT DE LA NOUVELLE-FRANCE  
ON LES APPELA

### LES FILLES DU ROY

38 D'ENTRE ELLES QUITTÈRENT LE PORT DE LA ROCHELLE EN 1663  
DONT PLUSIEURS ORPHELINES DU COUVENT DE LA PROVIDENCE

LA ROCHELLE 15 JUIN 2013  
350<sup>e</sup> ANNIVERSAIRE DU PREMIER DÉPART DES FILLES DU ROY

COMMISSION FRANCO-QUÉBÉCOISE  
SUR LES LIEUX DE MÉMOIRE COMMUNS

CONSULAT GÉNÉRAL DE FRANCE  
À QUÉBEC

Stop 9 of the commemorative walk-"In the footsteps of New France, Canadian places of Memory in La Rochelle."  
I have documented 9 "Filles du Roy" in my ancestry (so far).



### THE OLD CONVENT OF PROVIDENCE

The convent was established in 1659 by Isabeau de Mauriet, member of the congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Providence. The small community quickly aims to collect the young orphan girls to educate and preserve them from any moral and religious perversion. Many of them are sent to New France as Daughters of the King, dowryed by it to encourage their marriage on the spot and to promote the demographic development of the colony. A commemorative plaque was installed on its oldest part on the occasion of the 350 anniversary of the first departure of the Daughters of the King (1663) for Canada.







Below: This is the side of the building shown. Note the chapel windows. Today the oratory is used as an event hall.

## Stop 11 of the walk.

### 11 L'ORATOIRE (rue Albert 1<sup>er</sup>)

Jusqu'aux années 1660, une soixantaine de migrants à destination de la Nouvelle-France y ont été baptisés ou s'y sont mariés... avant d'entreprendre leur long voyage. L'édifice est donc associé à la destinée des premiers « pionniers » partis peupler le Canada.

#### THE ORATORY

Until the 1660's, about 60 migrants to New France were baptized or married there ... before embarking on their long journey. The building is therefore associated with the destiny of the first pioneers to populate Canada.



This is the front of the building.

The SAINT MARGUERITE CHAPEL (now known as L'Oratoire). Jean Beauchamp (b1644) my 8<sup>th</sup> great grandfather and his sisters and brothers were baptized here. . Jean's parents were married here in 1630. Jean's older brother Jacques was married (1656) here to Marie Dardenne. Rene Ancelin married his second wife Marie Jouin (stepmother to my ancestress Marie Ancelin) here in 1665. Rene, his new wife and his young daughter Marie, would sail to New France shortly thereafter.





**NOTRE-DAME-DE-COUGNES**  
Exterior views.  
Sign below provides details  
& views in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century.







**NOTRE-DAME-DE-COUGNES –interior. Marie Asselin my 7<sup>th</sup> great grandmother (matrilineal) was baptized here in 1651. Her father Rene Ancelin (French ancestor to the Ancelin(Asselin) families of French North America) is commemorated on a plaque. Rene Asselin’s was married first to Claire Rousselot (1647) and their 5 children, including Marie Ancelin/Asselin were all baptized here. Also, Francois Meloche’s father married his 2<sup>nd</sup> wife Therese Hernu here in 1663.**





**ST LOUIS CATHEDRAL** The great protestant temple (a prior building on this site) is where Jean Beauchamp's grandparents were married in 1607. The Saint Louis Cathedral we see today is typical of those built in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century during the Catholic counter-reformation. It has an amazing chapel that commemorates La Rochelle as the "French harbor for Canada". (see the chapel window on the right)







## SAINT BARTHELEMY

Attached to the east end of the present cathedral (Saint Louis) see previous page is the late medieval Gothic bell tower of the Church of Saint Barthelemy, which was first constructed in 1152 by monks from the Ile d'Aix. The rest of the church was destroyed by the Huguenots in 1568. The tower which is on one of the highest points of La Rochelle, was used as a gun tower against the besieging army of Louis XI in 1467.



Mary Meloche (sister of Francois the Canadian) married Jacques Bonneteau at St Barthelemy parish in 1704.

Two of Francois Meloche's aunts were married at St Barthelemy parish: Magdeleine Meloche in 1654 and Marguerite Meloche in 1658



## SAINT-NICOLAS

Only the façade of the former church remains. It fronts a hotel these days.

Renee Meloche (sister of Francois the Canadian) married Antoine Yverneau at St Nicolas in 1701. Francois Meloche married Marie Mouflet at Notre Dame in Montreal, so he was not present at this sister's wedding.



### L'église Saint-Nicolas *St Nicolas church*

Le quartier Saint-Nicolas fut érigé en paroisse au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle. Sa population était constituée essentiellement de marins. L'église paroissiale, construite à l'emplacement d'une ancienne chapelle, fut détruite par les protestants en 1568. Reconstituée dans le style jésuite après le siège de 1628, elle fut désaffectée en 1887. Le bâtiment servit d'entrepôt des Douanes. En 1978, l'église fut détruite, à l'exception de la façade, pour faire place à un hôtel. La rue de la Fabrique contiguë, évoque le «Conseil de fabrique» qui veillait aux finances de la Paroisse.

### La Place du Commandant Christian de la Motte Rouge

Officier d'Active, il rentre dans la Résistance pendant la seconde guerre mondiale et rejoint La Rochelle. Responsable du secteur Nord et Nord-Est de La Rochelle, il est arrêté le 7 janvier 1944, par la Gestapo. Déporté au camp de Schirmeck, il y meurt en avril 1944.



*St Nicolas district became a parish in the XIV<sup>th</sup> century. It mainly had a seamen's population. The parish church replacing a former chapel was destroyed by the Protestants in 1568. Rebuilt in a Jesuit style after the siege of 1628, it was deconsecrated in 1887 and later used as a bonded warehouse. In 1978 the church was destroyed except the façade and transformed into a hotel. The adjoining rue de la Fabrique draws its name from the "Fabrique Council" which supervised the parish spending.*

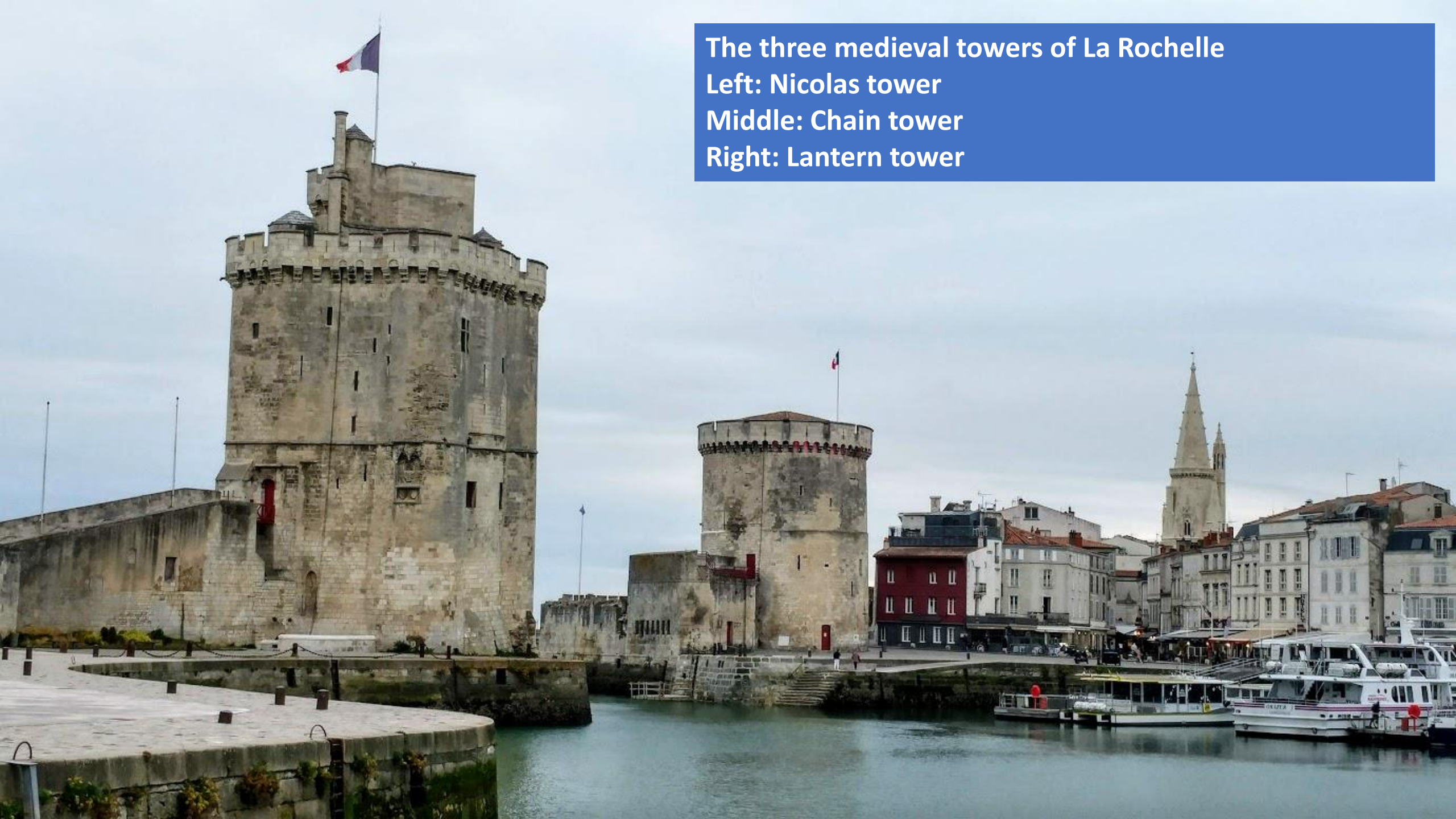
**Place du Commandant Christian de la Motte Rouge**  
*Officer who entered the Resistance during World War II and joined La Rochelle. He supervised the north and northeast sectors. Arrested on January 7th 1944 by the Gestapo, he was sent to a concentration camp in Schirmeck where he died on April 21<sup>st</sup> 1944.*



*La Rochelle, belle et rebelle*



The three medieval towers of La Rochelle  
Left: Nicolas tower  
Middle: Chain tower  
Right: Lantern tower





# Old Market of La Rochelle (Vieux Marche de La Rochelle)





**View of Old La Rochelle from the Lantern tower**

**Saint Barthelemy tower and Saint Louis Cathedral (directly behind the tower) are in the center of this view.**





La Rochelle is known as the White City (Ville Blanche) with its limestone facades.







Rue St Jean de Perot, a pedestrian only street in the center of the old section of La Rochelle.





Rue des Merciers shows typical arcades, limestone façades and some half-timbered buildings



Below is a view of Les Minimes Marina from the Lantern Tower and to the left a close-up of the marina while walking by. The modern marina contrasts sharply with the old harbor (Vieux Port) of La Rochelle.





The maritime tradition of La Rochelle is displayed with many vignettes found throughout the old port area.



Ship engraved above portal at City Hall



Along the street close to the Lantern tower



Light boxes seen in the touristed walk around old harbor and medieval towers



Another ship engraving found along the sea walk in the old port







## LA ROCHELLE VISIT NOTES

I visited La Rochelle in May and September of 2018. In May I undertook my first ancestral visit to France, a whirlwind tour that included Rouen, Niort, Le Bourdet, Frontenay Rohan-Rohan and La Rochelle. In La Rochelle I had an opportunity to ask a local lady in a coffee shop if she recognized the names Meloche or Jolicoeur. “Pas de tout” she replied, never heard of the name Meloche. As for Jolicoeur she is surprised to learn that this is my last name, and tells me that Jolicoeur is a common expression in France for a “womanizer”, it is not known as a surname.

This first trip really sparked a keen interest in my ancestry. It was not long before I prepared plans to combine this new interest with my passion for long distance walking.

In September I flew to La Rochelle spent a few nights, completed an ancestral long distance walk in the Vendee department of the Pay de la Loire region where some of my ancestors originated from and ended my visit with a few more nights in La Rochelle.

Upon my arrival in September, I attended a mass at Saint Sauveur church. I was surprised to see that there were not that many people attending. The attendees seemed to be predominantly locals with only a few tourists. Upon leaving the church, I found a copy of a commemorative walk that had been made in 2013, to acknowledge the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first group of Filles du Roi that sailed to New France. I had actually discovered this walk on Guy Peron’s blog on the internet and had a copy of this with me, so it was very exciting to pick an original brochure! This was a fun walk to explore La Rochelle with and together with some Ancestral notes, my footsteps truly seemed to following that of my ancestors.



## LA ROCHELLE TODAY

**LOCATION:** La Rochelle is situated on the central west coast of France, on the Atlantic Ocean.

La Rochelle is 400 km to the southwest of Paris. Of relevance to my ancestry, it is less than 70 km from Saint Philbert du Pont Charrault, less than 65 km from Niort and less than 55 km from Frontenay-Rohan-Rohan.

**POPULATION:** 2019 just over 77,000

### **MAIN ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES:**

La Rochelle is a port city with a strong administrative and services sector that is reinforced by the university and the rapidly developing Tourism industry.

