



Chemin du Blois June 2023

Footsteps in the town of **Blois** where Jacques Fisseaux/Fissiau my 8th great grandfather (matrilineal line) was born (1674) and lived until he left France. Jacques was the father of my 7th great grandmother Marie Louise Ficheaux who was born in 1723 in New France. L'Église Saint Nicholas where Jacques is believed to have been baptized is at the center of the picture (see red outline). Also, described here are **footsteps** along the Loire River just outside of Blois.

THERE IS NO FICHER ORIGINE FILE FOR JACQUES FISSEAU/FISSIAU 1674 - 1731

Jacques Fisseaux aka Fissiau dit Laramée was born in Blois, France. His birth date is reported as either 1674 or 1691 depending on the source. Jacques married Anne Monet in 1708, at Point-aux-Trembles. Their marriage certificate was obtained from Généalogie Québec. Therefore, Jacques' presence in New France is established at the beginning of the 18th century. Jacques' wife Anne Monet was the daughter of Antoine Monet and Francoise Hurteau (my 9th great grandmother). Francoise Hurteau originated from Amboise, France which is located less than 40km away from Blois where Jacques originated from. This is somewhat significant; it would no doubt have been a favorable fact for Jacques as a potential husband for Anne.

The entry for Jacques Fisseaux in "Ces Villes et Villages" records his birth date as about 1647.

If this was true, then Jacques married at age 51 and fathered his last child at age 83. This is highly unlikely. Other sources suggest a birthdate of 1674. Did the birthdate get transposed? If Jacques was born in 1674, then he married at age 34 and fathered his last child at age 56.

Possible. The fact that Jacques is noted as being a master weaver by several sources supports this birth date. As a master weaver Jacques would have been a desirable recruit to the colony of New France, and a desirable suitor to the young Anne Monet.

The couple settled initially at Point-Aux-Trembles and eventually moved to Longue Pointe. They had 13 children together. Good thing Jacques was a tradesman and presumably able to support such a large family. Jacques was buried at Montreal in 1731. Ten children survived to adulthood and were married. Their 9th child Marie Louise Fichaux is my 7th great grandmother.


The baptismal location for Jacques Fisseaux is not certain. During my trip to Blois, France a local historian suggested it was very likely to be Saint Nicholas.

Sources: Ces Villes et Villages <http://www.cfqlmc.org/pdf/Villes-et-Villages-de-France/Livre-n10.pdf> Volume 10, page 134;

Family Search website: <https://www.familysearch.org/tree/person/details/LVZG-6RS>;

Francogene website: <http://www.francogene.com/ymtx/gfangfna.php?no=9700>; GenealogieQuebec.com: marriage act 11553.

Nos Origines website: https://www.nosorigines.qc.ca/GenealogieQuebec.aspx?genealogie=Fissiau_Jacques&pid=27448

<i>Wedding</i>		1708-09-03
Montreal (Pointe-aux-Trembles)		Original act: 
FISSEAU, JACQUES	And. civ. celibate	
Subject - ↑ prdh Residence: VILLE-MARIE		
MONET, ANNE	And. civ. celibate	
Subject - ↑ prdh		
FISSEAU, ANTOINE		
Husband's father - ↑ prdh		
MILHET, JEANNE	death deceased	
Husband's mother - ↑ prdh		
MONET, ANTOINE		
Father of the wife - ↑ prdh		
URTAU, FRANCOISE		
Mother of the wife - ↑ prdh		
PRIAT		
Residence: VILLE-MARIE		
DEBELMONT		
REYNIER, JEAN		
Residence: MONTREAL		
CHOLET, SEBASTIEN		
MONET, MARIE		
ARCHAMBAULT, JACQUES		
BADEY, JEANNE		
PIQUAR, MARY		
ROCK		

CATHÉDRALE

Le monument est le témoin d'un long passé: Ancien sanctuaire dédié à saint Pierre à l'époque mérovingienne, église consacrée à saint Solenne au 12^e siècle, elle connaît une importante campagne de reconstruction au 16^e siècle sous l'impulsion royale.

En 1678, un ouragan s'engouffre et soulève la charpente détruisant ainsi une partie de l'édifice. Grâce à l'intervention de Colbert, dont la femme était blésoise, Louis XIV finance la reconstruction conduite par son architecte Poictevin dans un style gothique. Elle est érigée cathédrale en 1697, sous le vocable de Saint-Louis.

The church bears witness to a long history. The original chapel was dedicated to St. Peter in the Merovingian period and then to St. Solenne in the 12th century. Royal patronage in the 16th century led to major reconstruction.

In 1678, a hurricane forced its way inside and lifted the roof off, destroying part of the building. Thanks to the intervention of Colbert, whose wife came from Blois, Louis XIV funded the reconstruction which was carried out under the direction of his architect Poictevin in the Gothic style. The church became a cathedral in 1697 and was dedicated to St. Louis.



CATHEDRALE ST-LOUIS



The signage for the cathedral notes that a hurricane blew the roof off in 1678, so it is possible that Jacques was baptized in this cathedral. However, a local historian in Blois, suggested it was much more likely that Jacques would have been baptized in Saint Nicholas during the year of 1674.



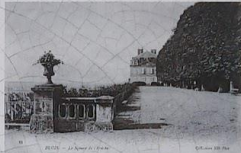
BLOIS TOWN HALL

Located beside the Cathedral



HÔTEL DE VILLE

En 1697, l'évêché de Blois est créé pour réaffirmer le rôle de l'Église catholique. Nicolas de Bertier, premier évêque de Blois, choisit de bâtir le palais épiscopal sur un terrain qui surplombe la Loire de façon avantageuse. Le lieu désigné n'est pas simple à aménager et demande de percer les murs de la ville, de faire disparaître plusieurs habitations et surtout de condamner plusieurs voies de communication entre ville basse et haute. Le chantier est probablement confié à Jacques V Gabriel. À côté d'un palais de style classique, un jardin en terrasses avec vue sur la Loire est aménagé.



Jardin de l'évêché, détail du XIX^e siècle, copie possible de J. de la Roche LAM 2203 Bibliothèque municipale Abel Grégoire

In 1697, the bishopric of Blois was created to strengthen the role of the Roman Catholic church. Nicolas de Bertier, Blois' first bishop, decided to build his palace on a plot of land with fabulous views overlooking the Loire. The designated site was not easy to develop. The town walls had to be opened up, several houses were demolished and, more importantly, a number of roads linking the upper and lower towns were blocked off. Jacques V Gabriel was probably commissioned for this project. Beside the Classical palace, a terraced garden was laid out with a view of the River Loire.





VIEW OF BLOIS FROM JARDINS DE L'ÉVECHE
Looking South towards the Loire River.
Pont Jacques-Gabriel is in the center top of the picture.

15th CENTURY HALF TIMBERED HOUSE at 3 PLACE ST LOUIS
Located steps away from the Cathedral.



ALONG RUE SAINT LUBIN
This is one of the oldest streets in Blois.



LEFT: Hôtel de Villebresme aka Maison de Denis Papin – a Gothic style 15th Century House.

This unusual medieval house as built on both sides of the street and then connected with a wooden footbridge. Is it possible that my ancestor often walked underneath this footbridge?

RIGHT: Saturday Morning Market located in historic center of Blois.



THE MAIN ENTRANCE TO CHATEAU BLOIS



CHATEAU DE BLOIS: A CHATEAU WITH FOUR DISTINCT STYLES

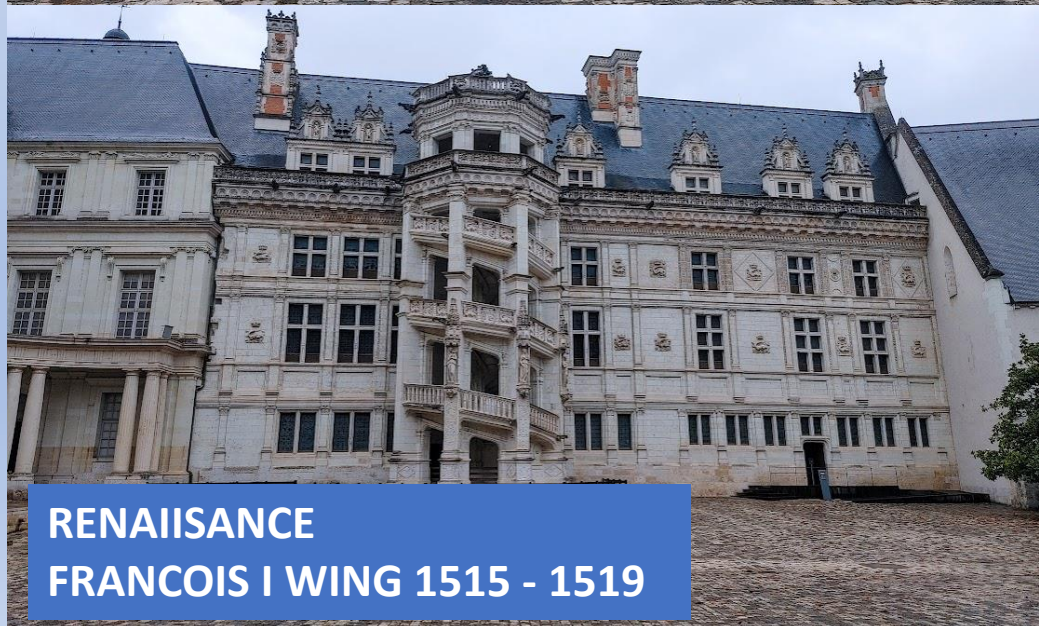


**FLAMBOYANT
LOUIS XII WING 1498 - 1508**

**GOTHIC 13th C
Only the seigneurial hall remains**



**ABOVE:
View from
Chateau looking
at Place Louis XII**



**RENAISSANCE
FRANCOIS I WING 1515 - 1519**



**CLASSICISM
GASTON OF ORLEANS WING 1635 - 1638**

VIEW OF EGLISE SAINT-NICHOLAS FROM CHATEAU BLOIS
The Loire River is visible on the lower left.





**Left: Tower at
Chateau Blois
(Tour du Foix)**

**Right: Alleyway
in the Historic
Center of Blois**





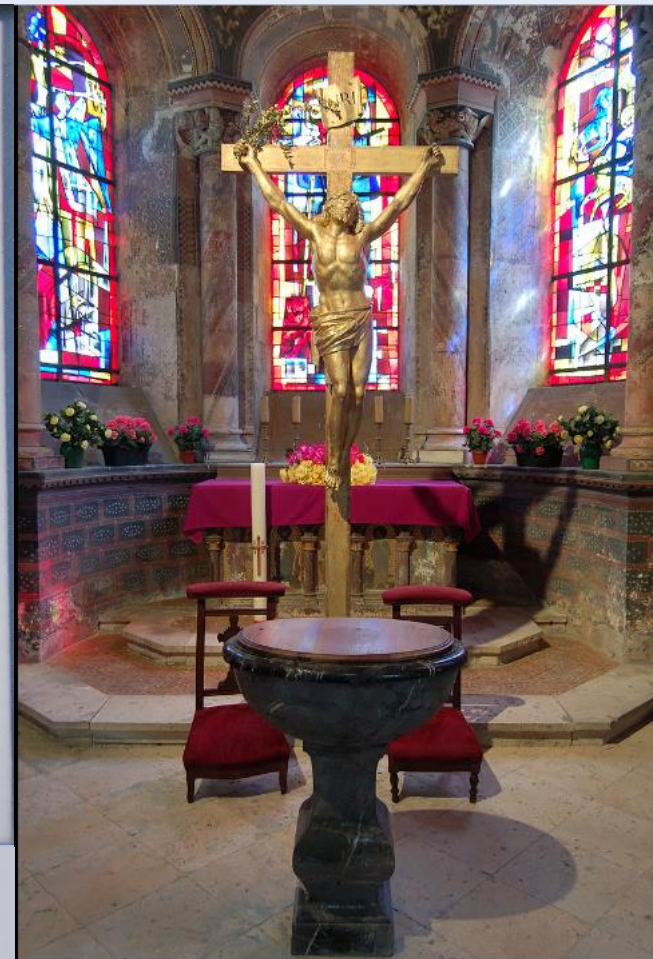
EGLISE SAINT-NICOLAS

Records FOR JACQUES FISSEAU do not include his baptism location. It is likely that he was baptized in this church.

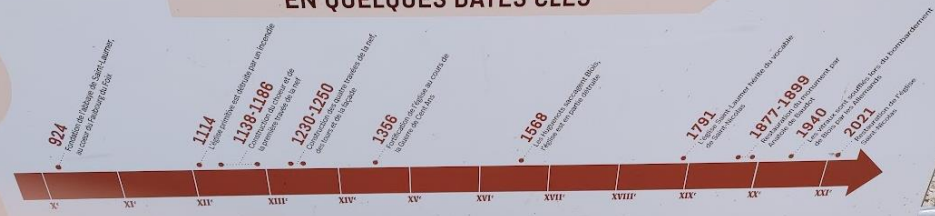
EGLISE SAINT-NICOLAS

Au 9^e siècle, une communauté de moines fonde une abbaye où sont vénérées les reliques de saint Laumer. Au 12^e siècle, le chantier d'une nouvelle église débute dans un style de transition entre le roman et le gothique : le chœur est composé de voûtes d'arêtes et de voûtes d'ogives archaïques. La nef, construite au 13^e siècle, est représentative du style gothique élaboré à Chartres. En 1791, les moines quittent l'abbaye. Elle prend alors le vocable de Saint-Nicolas en souvenir d'une église voisine détruite.

In the 9th century, a community of monks founded an abbey where the relics of St. Laumer were worshipped. In the 12th century, building work began on a new church, in a transitional style midway between Romanesque and Gothic. The chancel has ribbed vaulting and ogival vaulting of an early design. The 13th-century nave is representative of the Gothic style developed in Chartres. In 1791, the monks left the abbey and it was renamed St. Nicholas in memory of a nearby church that had been destroyed.



L'église Saint-Nicolas EN QUELQUES DATES CLÉS



Note: During my visit I did not locate the baptistery –this is from Wikipedia

EGLISE SAINT-NICOLAS



AXIAL CHAPEL OF THE VIRGIN 14th C
Sculpture by Imbert 17th C



THE SCUPLTED DOORS 1643
The central portal is decorated with
angels, apostles and confessors



THE NAVE 12th C

VIEW FROM THE "PONT FRANCOIS-MITTERAND"

Eglise St-Nicholas

Cathedrale St-Louis

Pont Jacques Gabriel



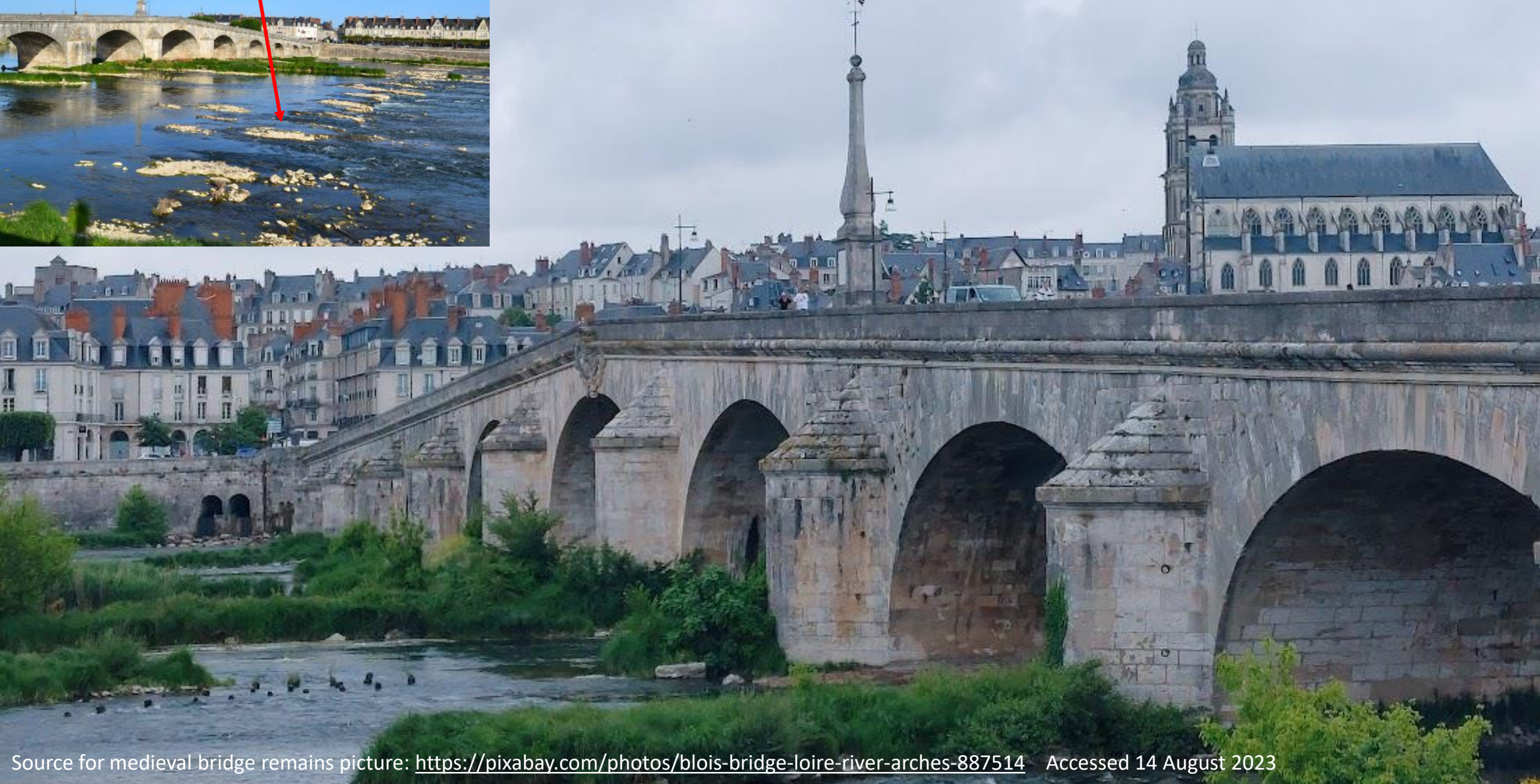
Pictures taken while walking along LE CHEMIN DE HELAGE between the two bridges in BLOIS.



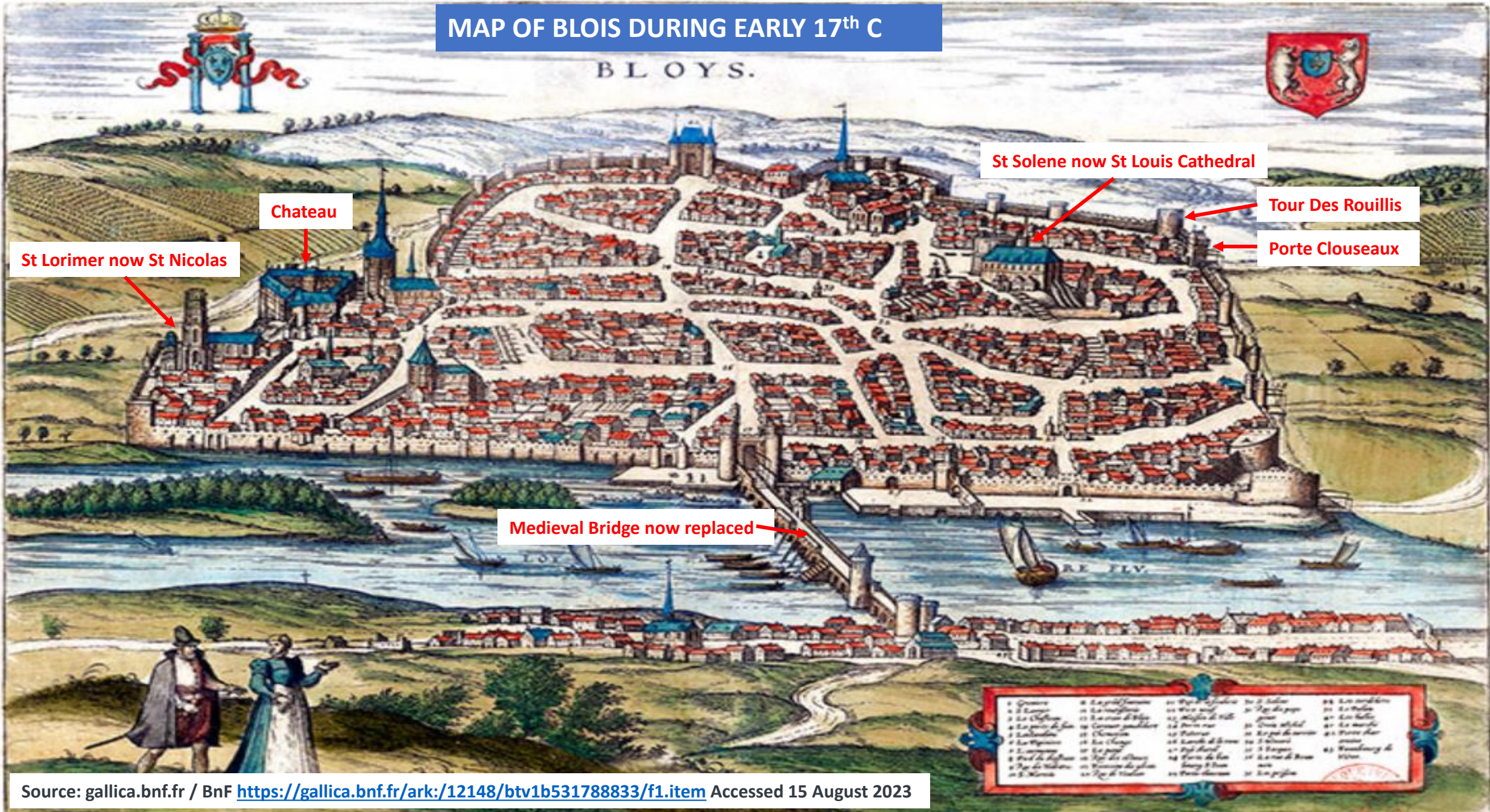
Remains of former St Louis medieval bridge



CLOSE UP VIEW OF PONT JACQUES GABRIEL
Built between 1716 and 1724 it replaced the medieval bridge.



MAP OF BLOIS DURING EARLY 17th C

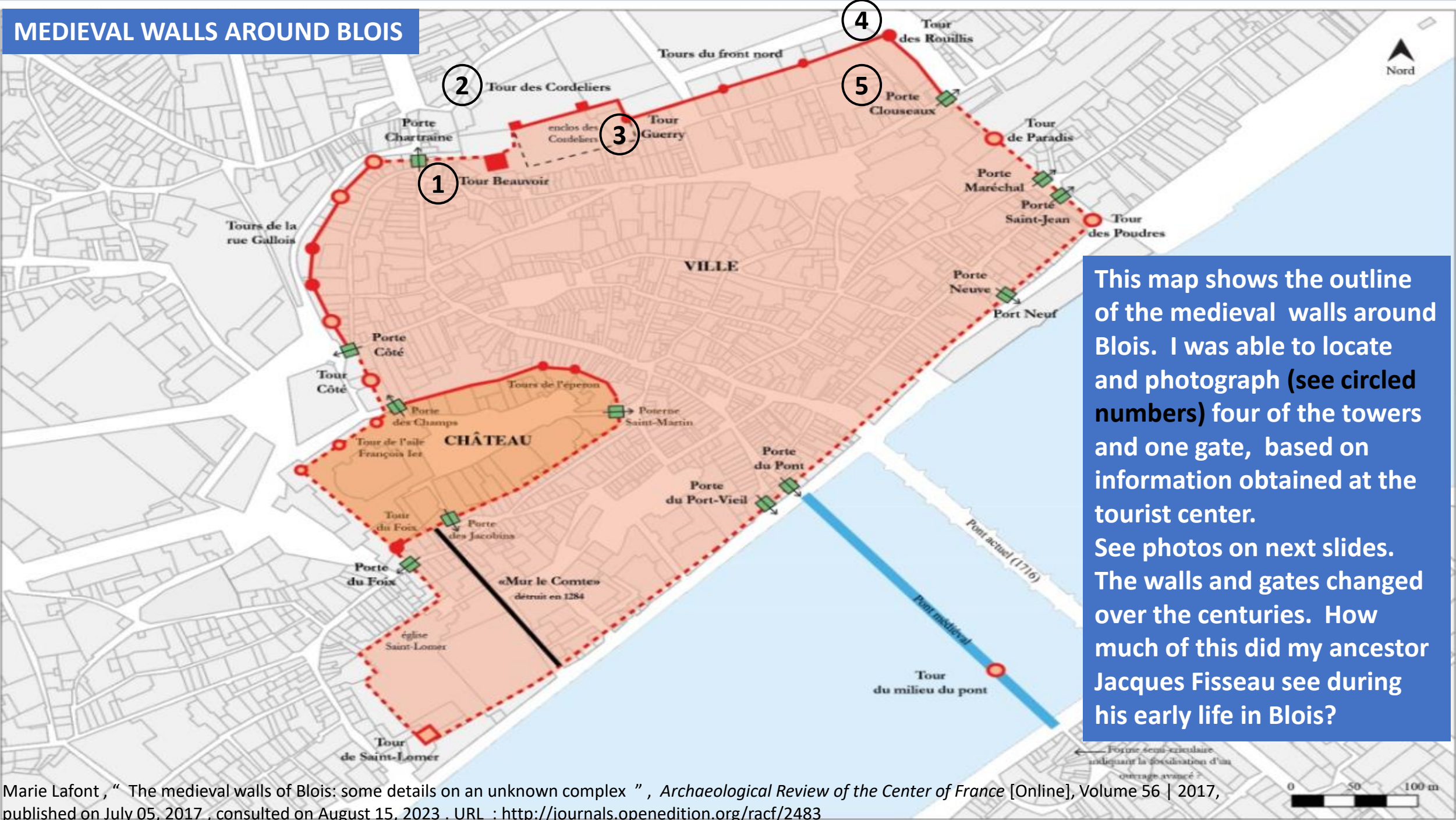


Source: gallica.bnf.fr / BnF <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b531788833/f1.item> Accessed 15 August 2023

1. Grande	26. La grand'fontaine	51. Rue de la Chapelle	76. St Julien	88. Les ardoisiers
2. La Chapelle	27. La Chapelle	52. Rue de la Chapelle	77. St Julien	89. Les ardoisiers
3. La Chapelle	28. La Chapelle	53. Rue de la Chapelle	78. St Julien	90. Les ardoisiers
4. La Chapelle	29. La Chapelle	54. Rue de la Chapelle	79. St Julien	91. Les ardoisiers
5. La Chapelle	30. La Chapelle	55. Rue de la Chapelle	80. St Julien	92. Les ardoisiers
6. La Chapelle	31. La Chapelle	56. Rue de la Chapelle	81. St Julien	93. Les ardoisiers
7. La Chapelle	32. La Chapelle	57. Rue de la Chapelle	82. St Julien	94. Les ardoisiers
8. La Chapelle	33. La Chapelle	58. Rue de la Chapelle	83. St Julien	95. Les ardoisiers
9. La Chapelle	34. La Chapelle	59. Rue de la Chapelle	84. St Julien	96. Les ardoisiers
10. La Chapelle	35. La Chapelle	60. Rue de la Chapelle	85. St Julien	97. Les ardoisiers
11. La Chapelle	36. La Chapelle	61. Rue de la Chapelle	86. St Julien	98. Les ardoisiers
12. La Chapelle	37. La Chapelle	62. Rue de la Chapelle	87. St Julien	99. Les ardoisiers
13. La Chapelle	38. La Chapelle	63. Rue de la Chapelle	88. St Julien	100. Les ardoisiers
14. La Chapelle	39. La Chapelle	64. Rue de la Chapelle	89. St Julien	101. Les ardoisiers
15. La Chapelle	40. La Chapelle	65. Rue de la Chapelle	90. St Julien	102. Les ardoisiers
16. La Chapelle	41. La Chapelle	66. Rue de la Chapelle	91. St Julien	103. Les ardoisiers
17. La Chapelle	42. La Chapelle	67. Rue de la Chapelle	92. St Julien	104. Les ardoisiers
18. La Chapelle	43. La Chapelle	68. Rue de la Chapelle	93. St Julien	105. Les ardoisiers
19. La Chapelle	44. La Chapelle	69. Rue de la Chapelle	94. St Julien	106. Les ardoisiers
20. La Chapelle	45. La Chapelle	70. Rue de la Chapelle	95. St Julien	107. Les ardoisiers
21. La Chapelle	46. La Chapelle	71. Rue de la Chapelle	96. St Julien	108. Les ardoisiers
22. La Chapelle	47. La Chapelle	72. Rue de la Chapelle	97. St Julien	109. Les ardoisiers
23. La Chapelle	48. La Chapelle	73. Rue de la Chapelle	98. St Julien	110. Les ardoisiers
24. La Chapelle	49. La Chapelle	74. Rue de la Chapelle	99. St Julien	111. Les ardoisiers
25. La Chapelle	50. La Chapelle	75. Rue de la Chapelle	100. St Julien	112. Les ardoisiers

Ge D.D 1605 1607

MEDIEVAL WALLS AROUND BLOIS



This map shows the outline of the medieval walls around Blois. I was able to locate and photograph (see circled numbers) four of the towers and one gate, based on information obtained at the tourist center. See photos on next slides. The walls and gates changed over the centuries. How much of this did my ancestor Jacques Fisseau see during his early life in Blois?

Marie Lafont, " The medieval walls of Blois: some details on an unknown complex ", *Archaeological Review of the Center of France* [Online], Volume 56 | 2017, published on July 05, 2017, consulted on August 15, 2023 . URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/racf/2483>

1. Tour Beauvoir along Rue des Remparts



TOUR BEAUVOIR

La tour Beauvoir est à l'origine un donjon entouré d'un fossé, dépendant du fief particulier des seigneurs de Beauvoir. Elle devient la propriété des comtes de Blois en 1256. A cette date, le donjon est rattaché aux fortifications de la ville et il est aménagé en prison au 14^e siècle.

Les fortifications d'une ville répondent aussi bien à un souci de défense qu'au désir de délimiter un espace propre à une communauté d'habitants. A Blois, un texte atteste l'existence d'un mur avant la fin du 13^e siècle mais son tracé sera modifié ou consolidé suivant les événements liés aux guerres.



La ville de Blois fortifiée. BRUNEL ALPHONSE BELLEFONEST. 1876, collection musée de Blois-arch. du château royal de Blois.

The Beauvoir Tower was originally a keep surrounded by a moat, dependent on the private fiefdom of the Lords of Beauvoir. It became the property of the Counts of Blois in 1256 and was then joined to the town walls. In the 14th century, it was turned into a prison.

A town's fortifications are designed to provide defence and to mark out the area lived in by the population. In Blois, one text describes the existence of a town wall before the end of the 13th century but its layout is said to have been changed and consolidated as and when required by events during periods of warfare.



2. Tour Des Cordeliers at Rue Trouessard



3. Tour Guerry along Rue de Pere Brottier



4. Tour Des Rouillis at Mail Clouseau



5. Porte Clouseaux at Place Jean Jaures This medieval gate



HISTORIAL BLOIS

Here are a few extracts (see source below) about life & trade in Blois during the 17th- 19th Century.

This pleasant town is situated on the edge of the same river which waters the walls of Orléans. Its soil is so fertile and its Country so beautiful, that it is commonly called the granary of France, as Sicily was formerly of Rome, and the soil is so rich, that if it rains for a while, it is almost impossible to be able to walk; that's why we put this Proverb in use: *In Beauce good land and bad path* .

The Air is so pure and so sweet that Kings have often stayed there, and raised their children there, as the cleanest place in the Kingdom.

The trade of this town and the surrounding area consists of brandies and wines for Paris, hollyhocks and draped serges; cheesecloth, crepons, gloves, hats and leathers.

There is a beautiful forest towards the west, which is called the forest of Blois: it contains one hundred thousand three hundred arpents; this is why there is a captaincy of hunting in Blois, and a particular control. The city walks are lovely. It has a royal castle in the vicinity, and the proximity of that of Chambord, and more than 150 lands and country houses within 10 leagues around; this country is the most beautiful of France.

There are many foreigners in Blois, attracted by the beauty of the climate, the temperature and the healthiness of the air, the pleasant aspect of the hills and the banks of the Loire.



Blois sur la Loire around 1660.

BLOIS TODAY

LOCATION: Blois is a commune and the capital city of Loir-et-Cher Department in the Centre-Val de Loire Region of France. Blois is located on the banks of the lower Loire river between Orleans and Tours. It is 63 km from Orleans and 58 km from Tours. Blois is known for its beautiful historic architecture, including the Chateau Blois which was once the residence of several French Kings.

POPULATION: In 2020 just under 47,000

BLOIS and AMBOISE are two medium sized cities located in the Centre-Val de Loire region. This region has 4% of today's French population, 2.6 million inhabitants. The major cities are Orléans and Tours. Over the past 20 years or so the globalization movement together with the increasing move toward larger urban centers has meant that smaller city centers are being de-populated, and their old centers are being degraded. By relying on their architectural and cultural heritage, the revitalization of these cities will require efforts to maintain city center commerce and housing, as well as digital access and the strengthening of quality hospitality and tourism.

I enjoyed my visit to Blois. It is set on a hillside overlooking the river with a large historic center. I walked along the Loire River from the base of the town across the bridge "Pont Jacques Gabriel" then along the south banks of the Loire River and across the bridge "Pont Francois-Mitterrand" back into the town. The information center was very helpful to identify and suggest another walking route within the town that included some of the remaining medieval walls of the town. The oldest part of the town is centered around the Place Louis XI. Today this large plaza has several restaurants, with an open market on Saturdays. We sat under cover during a rainstorm and admired the young girls to the right.

