

Genealogy Basics – Researching the Ile Royale (Cape Breton) Census of 1752

By Joe Petrie

BACKGROUND:

I have a number of reasons for researching the French Census of Ile Royale, 1752:

- I have been helping a fellow volunteer at the Genealogy Library at the Irish Cultural Centre of New England (ICCNE) in Canton Massachusetts. She is researching her Cape Breton French Canadian roots. (I believe that her family roots are from Isle Madame.)
- I am giving a Seminar/Lecture at the American-French Genealogical Society (AFGS) in Woonsocket, Rhode Island on June 23, 2018. One of the topics is the French in Cape Breton Island.
- I love nominal Censuses. In my individual consultations at the Morrill Memorial Library in Norwood Massachusetts and at the ICCNE, I often start with the following nominal censuses: United States, Canada, and Ireland.
- The subject 1752 Census is a nominal Census. I believe that it was the first nominal Census of Cape Breton. The only drawback was that it contains only French individuals who were in Cape Breton in 1752.
- Finally, the 1752 Census identifies fishermen from St Malo, France. My Maternal Camus great grandfather was a St Malo native who fished in Little Bras d'Or in the early 1800s. He married Lucy Boutilier. I believe that she was from Little Bras d'Or. Also, my Dad had a Boutilier maternal grandmother (Mary Ann Boutilier from Glace Bay.) Mom and Dad were third cousins but did not know it. It partially explains the French in my Family Tree DNA.

INTRODUCTION:

The version of the subject census that I read was prepared by Maureen McNeil from a book by S. E. Dawson 1906.

I downloaded Maureen McNeil's PDF file from the Cape Breton Gen Web Site (www.capebretongenweb.com).

On the first page, Ms. McNeil wrote:

"TOUR OF INSPECTION UNDERTAKEN BY LE SIEUR DE LA ROQUE

"This said day of Feb., 1752, we, Joseph de la Rocque by orders of M. LeComte de Raymond, left the town of Louisbourg, the Capital of Isle Royal, at one o'clock in the afternoon, in rainy weather and at four o'clock in the evening of the same day arrived at the dwelling of the Sr. Pierre Boisseau, situate on the road to Mire, two leagues from Louisbourg. We found in the said house an old soldier of the garrison of Louisbourg, Pierre Bonne, aged 61. He is a native of St. Pierre de Roumoulon, diocese of Xaintes, has neither trade or profession, and is in the service of the said Pierre Boisseau. Between six and seven o'clock in the morning in the bright sunshine, we set out from the said dwelling for Gabarus."
And so begins the 1752 Census of Cape Breton Island."

I was amazed when read Ms. McNeil's document. I am even more amazed each time that I read it.

CENSUS CONTENTS:

Joseph De La Roque circled the island clockwise. His itinerary was:

- Bay of Gabarus
- St. Esprit
- L'Ardoise
- Port Toulouse
- Census of new settlers, **refugee Acadians**, throughout the command of Port Toulouse
- Old settlers in la Briquerie
- Census of the old settlers who are located on the north coast of the Isles Madame only
- Census of New Settlers **Refugees from la Cadie** on the Isles Madame
- General census, Petit Degrat
- Census of fishermen of Petit Degrat, who have no house built at the fishery
- Census of fishermen engaged in the cod-fishery at Petit Degrat, but who are not domiciled there

- Six Thirty-six months men.
- With Sr. Larcher, Merchant, in this colony are 39 men
- General census of the settlers on the Rivière aux Habitants
- The Isle of Sainte Famille, on the Bras d'or lakes, about two leagues from Port Toulouse.
- General Census of the settlers at the pointe à La Jeunesse, a distance of about seven leagues from Isle de la Sainte Famille
- Census of the settlers of Port Dauphin
- Census of the settlers of the petite Bras D'or
- The Baye Des Espagnols
- Census of The Baye de L'Indienne
- Census of settlers in the Baye de Mordienne
- Census of settlers at the Rivière de Mire
- General census of settlers on the Great Harbor of the Isle of Scatary
- Settlers of Ance Daranbourg
- Ance de Bellefeuille
- Bay of Menadon
- Harbour of La Baleine
- Settlers at Laurenbec
- Port La Joye

Please note that I bolded the word Refugee. I was really amazed at the numbers of refugee families.

The following list contains **my** 20th Century view (pre-1995 view) of where the 1752 population was inventoried:

1. Dwelling of the Sr. Pierre Boisseau, situate on the road to Mire, two leagues from Louisbourg
2. Bay of Gabarus—Richmond County south of Louisbourg
3. St. Espirit – Richmond County between Louisbourg and St Peters
4. L'Ardoise - Richmond County between Louisbourg and St Peters
5. Port Toulouse - Richmond County now named St Peters
6. Census of new settlers, refugee Acadians, throughout the command of Port Toulouse
7. Old settlers in la Briquerie - Richmond County now named St Peters
8. Census of the old settlers who are located on the north coast of the Isles Madame only -Richmond County, Isles Madame
9. Census of New Settlers Refugees from la Cadie, on the Isles Madame Richmond County, Isles Madame
10. General census, Petit Degrat – Richmond County, Petit-de-Grat, an Island on the Strait of Canso
11. Census of fishermen of Petit Degrat, who have no house built at the fishery – Richmond County, Petit-de-Grat, an Island on the Strait of Canso
12. Census of fishermen engaged in the cod-fishery at Petit Degrat, but who are not domiciled there – Richmond County, Petit-de-Grat
13. Six Thirty-six months men. – Richmond County, Petit-de-Grat
14. With Sr. Larcher, Merchant, in this colony are 39 men– Richmond County, Petit-de-Grat
15. General census of the settlers on the Rivière aux Habitants *Inverness County*
16. The Isle of Sainte Famille, on the Bras d'or lakes, about two leagues from Port Toulouse. – Richmond County
17. General Census of the settlers at the pointe à La Jeunesse, a distance of about seven leagues from Isle de la Sainte Famille
18. Census of the settlers of Port Dauphin – Victoria County, St Anns
19. Census of the settlers of the petite Bras D'or – Cape Breton County, Little Bras d'Or
20. The Baye Des Espagnols – Victoria and Cape Breton Counties, Spanish Bay
21. Census of The Baye de L'Indienne – Cape Breton County
22. Census of settlers in the Baye de Mordienne – Cape Breton County, Port Morien and other communities
23. Census of settlers at the Rivière de Mir – Cape Breton County, Grand Mira and other Communities
24. General census of settlers on the Great Harbor of the Isle of Scatary – Cape Breton County, Scataria Island
25. Settlers of Ance Daranbourg – Cape Breton County, Ance Daranbourg

26. Ance de Bellefeuille – Cape Breton, County
27. Bay of Menadon – Cape Breton County, Menadon
28. Harbour of La Baleine.- Cape Breton County, Baleine
29. Settlers at Laurenbec, Cape Breton County, Little Lorraine
30. Port La Joye – Cape Breton County

The following is a sample from Ms. McNeil's 38 page PDF formatted document.

St. Esprit

Le Sieur Perriez, conducting a fishery, native of Plaisance, aged 42 years, married to Marguerite Dion, native of La Cadie, aged 48 years

Land granted him verbally by M. de St. Ovide and M. Lenormant de Mezy.

François Picard, fisherman, native of Pleherel, diocese of St. Brieux, aged 39 years, 24 years in this colony, married to Anne Barbudeau, native of the place, aged 28 years.

Their children are:

Julien, aged 8

Suzanne, aged 5

Angelique, aged 2

Françoise 1 year

Five hired fishermen:

Jean Gauthier, aged 36, native of Mandes, diocese of St. Malo

Julien Thomas, native of Couet, diocese of St. Malo, aged 30 years.

Jean Colinet, aged 22, native of Trebedeau, diocese of St. Malo

Pierre Briand, native of St. Carle, diocese of St. Malo

Toussaint Picard, native of Pleherel, diocese of St. Brieux, age 17.

Le Sieur Picard has no dwelling.

Jean Granne, fisherman, native of Tade, diocese of St. Malo, age 35. 17 years in the colony, married to Marie Papou, native of St. Pierre, aged 30 years. Their children:

Augustin, aged 3 years

Isabelle, aged 7 years

Agathe, aged 5 years

Genevieve, aged 14 mos.

Nine hired fishermen of whom six are working for their board:

Jean Fougere, native of Chateauneuf, diocese of St. Malo, aged 39

Andre Groey, aged 24, native of Caronne, diocese of Avranches

Toussaint Tramond, age 15, native of Hebedau, diocese of St. Malo

Julien Papou, age 24, native of St. Esprit

Pierre Jourgouche, native of Bayonne, aged 22 years

Gabriel Tourin, aged 30 years, native of BayonneThe dwelling that he occupies was given to him by the widow Scau.

Georges Barbudeau, master surgeon of St. Esprit, native of the Island of Oleron, diocese of Saintes, 36 years in the colony,

m to Françoise Vrigneau, aged 52, native of Plaisance. They have with them their nephew:

Simon Halbert, native of Island of Oleron, aged 16 years. He is to remain in the country in the capacity of a surgeon. They have no grant of the land they occupy.

Herbe Desroches, fisherman, native of Coral, diocese of Avranches. In the colony for 22 years, aged 35, married to Marie Barbudeau, native of this place, aged 30 years. They have three son and one daughter:

François, aged 8 years

Jean, aged 3 years

Pierre, aged 3 mos.

Marguerite, aged 10 years

Louise Duneau, aged 14, native of Louisbourg, servant.

Three hired fishermen:

Yves Galles, aged 30, native of parish of Guille, diocese of St. Malo.

Alexis Renard, aged 30, native of Ste. Broulade de Hoi.

Louis Mange, aged 23, native of Carmel, archdiocese of Paris.

Please note that the phrase “La Cadie” in the census identified an Acadian.

Also, please note that Plaisance was a French fishing village in Newfoundland. When Newfoundland was transferred by the French to the British, Plaisance French were offered relocation to Ile Royale. Some may have opted to stay in Newfoundland.

In addition, please note that six years after the census of 1752, according to Wiki,

“On 26 July 1758, after the Siege of Louisbourg, the French Governor Augustin de Drucourt gave the keys of the city to the British and Edward Boscawen after one of the greatest assaults—led by James Wolfe—in the history of colonial Canada. After that, 4,000 Acadian inhabitants were deported. However, a group of ten families from Port-Toulouse fled to Isle Madame where their descendants still live today.”

Commented [JP1]:

Also, according to some historians, the deported were allowed to return to Cape Breton a few years after the deportation.

Finally, I believe that my fellow ICCNE volunteer’s Cape Breton ancestors may have descended from the families that fled to Isle Madame. Now I need to help her to prove it. In fact, I hope that the proof is in Jeanne Joyce Stone’s Isle Madame Parish records (<http://users.eastlink.ca/~islemadam/parishrecords.html>).

SUMMARY:

I added the PDF document to my genealogy toolkit! It joins Jeanne Joyce Stone’s Isle Madame Parish records (<http://users.eastlink.ca/~islemadam/parishrecords.html>).

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Your corrections, comments and suggestions are appreciated. Please Email me at:

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Please note that Friends of Irish Research is the repository for my published genealogy articles in the *Newfoundland Ancestor*; and in *EZINE*, the electronic magazine of the Cape Breton Genealogy and Historical Association. (See friendsofirishtresearch.org; specifically, the Tabs for Publications and Joe’s Free Web Sites.) Also, please note that I am the author of the Genealogy Basics Series.