

IMMIGRATION: 1619/1620  
OCCUPATION: Wheelwright/Cartwright

"The Family of Helene Desportes" by William Stone, The Genealogist Vol 15, Issue 2, Spring 1989.

Morin or Maurin is a surname which can mean "brown of skin like a Moor". For a long time a Morini family, of Italian origin had been settled in the region where Noel Morin was born. The Morin family are perhaps descended from the original Morini. During the French regime, at least 17 settlers bearing the surname Morin appeared in the Canadian registries. Noel Morin was the first of his name however, to come to the New World and found a family.

Noel was born about 1609 in Brie, a region of the Paris basin. He was the son of a Claude Morin. The boy learned how to write his name, to count and to make wheels and carriages. It is unknown whether he practiced his trade with his father. His mother died before he came to New France.

It is unknown how Noel got to Quebec. He first appears in the registers on Tuesday, December 27, 1639 at the signing of his contract of marriage. Many important people were there to witness this signing. This is because the bride was Helene Desportes, the first white child born in New France, daughter of Pierre Langlois and his wife Francoise and niece of Abraham Martin. Although Helene was born in Canada in 1620, she went with her parents to France in 1629 and returned in 1634. Helene had been married previously to Guillaume Hebert but he died in 1639 leaving her with three children.

Noel gave his bride a dowery of 200 livres guaranteed by " a house located at Brie-Comte-Robert where hangs a sign with the blue horse in the parish of St-Etienne on Rue des Fontaines near the gate of the town which the said groom received from the succession of his mother."

Therefore Noel was not a vagabond. On her part, Helene brought to the newly formed marriage the ownership of a house located near the church of Notre-Dame, with 2 arpents of land near Mont-Carmel and a garden measuring 40 perches belonging to said house.

On Monday, January 9, 1640 the union was blessed in the presence of Jesuit Nicolas Adam, and witnesses Nicolas Pivert and seigneur Robert Giffard.

The 40 perches in area, which were found north of the storehouse of the One Hundred Associates, in the Upper Town, were officially ceded to the couple on September 4, 1640. Helene continued to be a wife and mother in her house which measured 24x18 feet. Noel also lived there until 1645, practicing his trade as a cartwright.

On January 21, 1641, Noel Morin determined to buy a homestead. On April 26, 1645 Governor Montmagny gave him 50 arpents of land on the St-Genevieve Coast for 90 livres. He moved his household there. And there, in a period of 20 years he built "three frame dwellings, two of which had a heated room each, cellar and attic, the third serving as a shop and attic above, with a barn and two and a half arpents enclosed with stakes and serving as a yard."

It seems very likely that the move to the St-Genevieve coast was carried out before September 9, 1648, the day on which Jean Guyon and Michel Leneuf were to examine the first Morin house and its lot located on the tip of the Cap-aux-Dimants. Later, the Fabrique de Quebec would purchase it all for 800 livres. At the same time, Morin requested the recruiter Noel Belanger to find him a hired man in France. On June 4, 1649, Pierre Paillereau a laborer from Villedoux, hired to work for Noel Morin, resident of Quebec. In 1650, Antoine Rouillard and Thomas Touchet promised to build on Noel Morin's land the framework of a house "which will be 30 feet long and 20 feet wide six feet under the beams". Noel paid 250 livres for this work, in addition to 20 minots of peas to be given to the two carpenters.

Noel was a man of responsibility and judgment. In 1652, Marie d'Abancourt, the widow of Jean Jolliet, called on his services to appraise the cartwright tools left at the home of Jean Bourdon. On November 15, 1653, Jean de Lauzon, Governor of New France ceded to Noel Morin a quarter league of frontal property by a league deep, beginning an arpent below the LaCaille River and going up the St. Lawrence towards the south side. The Ile-aux-Oies were included in this concession. Thus Seigneurie Morin became the owner of a portion of the seigneurie of la Riviere-du-Sud, today part of the town of Montmagny.

This acquisition as a fief came with rights and duties. The new recipient must render faith and homage to the West Indies Company. Noel named his domain St-Luc, and thereafter bore the title of Sieur de Saint-Luc.

On May 17, 1655 Noel and Helene were granted a pew by the Fabrique of Quebec. It was located on the north side, in the nave, near that of Charles Sevestre. In return, the Fabrique received the 2 arpents of land which the Morins owned, today the land on which we find the Citadel of Quebec. The following July the terms of the transaction were drawn up. The two arpents were appraised at 180 livres. Of this, 100 livres was used to pay the tuition of son, Germain at the Seminary.

On June 5, 1658, Louis Sedillot and Noel Morin agreed each to build their half of a boundary fence between their property at St-Genevieve. Sedillot delayed carrying out his promise for more than 4 years. More land transactions occurred. On May 23, 1666, Noel ceded 30 arpents of land to Jean Pannier for 60 livres. On August 2, 1666, Jean Poitras bought the other half of the same land. Noel also had an apprentice cartwright, Zacharie Jolliet who was 17 years old.

On January 4, 1671, Helene and Noel indicated their intentions; on the day of their death all their furniture and real estate would be divided between their sons Charles and Alphonse, on the condition they support their parents. Furthermore, the sons would give their young sister, Marie-Madeleine 300 livres when she married.

Even at the age of 64, Noel Morin did not resign himself easily to idleness, On June 15, 1673 he agreed to make and perfect 24 cannon mountings and to furnish the necessary wood. "I am familiar," he said, "with these cannons in the Upper and Lower town." Charles Legardeur, first councilor to the king and commandant of Chateau Saint-Louis, promised to pay for this special work by giving Morin 40 livres per mounting, 960 livres.

In 1675, Helene died. On October 30 after her death, son Jean-Baptiste agreed to support his elderly father on condition that the latter pay him 1500 livres and half the income from the fief of St-Luc. On the following day, all the members of the family agreed to sell to Charles Bazire all the property at St Genevieve for 3000 livres.

Noel Morin, probably on a visit to the home of his son, Alphonse, died at Montmagny on January 10, 1680, in the middle of winter. The body of the deceased was buried in a small crypt at St. Thomas. The funeral was 5 days later in Quebec.

FAMILY NAME VARIATIONS Beausejour, Bellegard, Bonsecours, Boucher, Canuel, Chenevert, Cloridan, De Valcour, Ducharme, Langevin, Laverdure, Marron, Maurin, Maurrin, Moore, Moran, Morand, Moren, Moreau, Morel, Moret, Morice, Moriceau, Moris, Morillon, Moring, Morizot, Morry, Murray, Perrault, Rochebelle, Valcour and Valcourt.