



Uncle Felix of St. Louis-Marie, who inherited the “Maison Natale”

MONTFORT-SUR-MEU, France January 31, 2023 - Félix Grignion de la Noë (1663-1737), uncle of Saint-Louis-Marie de Montfort, husband of Jacquette Thierry (1663-1714) and then of Françoise Ramaceul (1695-1725), is the heir to the Birthplace of Louis-Marie in Montfort-sur-Meu (Maison Natale). He and his children lived there from 1691 to 1780.

In the article of the *“Dictionary of Montfortian Spirituality”* (Novalis 1994) concerning the Grignion family, Fr. Marcel SIBOLD, SMM (1921-1999) presents the family of St. Louis-Marie, and that of Félix Grignion, his uncle. In an excerpt from this article, it is said:

“Nevertheless Louis will admit himself that he had inherited from the Grignions a temperament given to excesses of violence. On this level, his uncle Félix Grignion took this violence to the extreme. He will be imprisoned in Rennes for embezzlement, in his charge of collector of the city community of Montfort and his eldest son, Jean Mathurin Grignion (born in 1692), together with Antoine Elliot (another cousin of Saint Louis), will be sentenced to die for murder, because he had murdered south of Rennes in 1722, Hubert de la Massue, gentleman of Redon, to rob him”.

In his 1st volume of *“Sang des Grignion”* (1987), very important, very interesting and detailed, Fr. Sibold gives a too negative and theatrical conclusion on Félix Grignion and his family after the death of Jeanne Grignion (1698-1780), which throws total discredit on this family: *“With his death, died out (as far as we know) the younger branch of the Grignion de Montfort: a kind of curse had fallen on the poor offspring of M^o Félix Grignion, the Terrible one”* (p. 648).

It is to forget the value of his two wives Jacqueline Thierry and Françoise Ramaceul, that of his sons and daughters: Jeanne, Marie-Rose, Jean-Baptiste-Luc and Joseph. It is also to forget the qualities of Félix, as a husband and father.

It is certain that Félix Grignon, “*miseur*” (treasurer of the municipality) of Montfort-sur-Meu from 1690 to 1725, for 30 years, sometimes had a management that resembled that of Zacchaeus of Jericho. On August 17, 1716, he was accused of financial embezzlement. He is imprisoned in Rennes and his personal property is confiscated. He leaves prison, on the bail of a friend, adviser to the Parliament of Brittany in Rennes. Officially, “*Mr Grignon de la Noë, treasurer of the town of Montfort is released, in charge of clearing his accounts*” (fol. 157 - Répertoire AD Loire-Atlantique - B - Chambre des comptes de Bretagne - B 668).

In the document from the Archives of Loire-Atlantique in 1720 which shows the census, for parishes and for the five departments of the former province of Brittany, we see the names of all the taxpayers (heads of families) at each of the collection of this tax. In this document, we see that Félix Grignon still lives in his house in Rue de la Saulnerie, as evidenced by a notarial deed of September 27, 1700: the residence of Félix Grignon and Jacqueline Thierry is “*in the enclosure of the city de Montfort, Rue de la Saulnerie, parish of Saint-Jean*”. (Notary Robert de Plélan AD 35 – 4 E 21/22). He must shed 18 pounds. This is a good sum which is close to that of the Seneschal de Montfort, Lemoyne des Grippeaux, who must pay 24 pounds. Félix therefore resumed his activities as a “*miseur*” and still lives since 1691, the house Rue de la Saulnerie, n.15.

To his eldest daughter **Jeanne** Grignon de la Noë (1698-1780) who was unmarried, returned to the Birthplace of Father de Montfort in 1733. She lived there until 1780, appreciated by all. After her death, Simone Jouno (1737-1795) inherited this house, as a cousin of Jeanne, the granddaughter of Eustache Jouno. She will own it for 15 years, then she will sell the house to the family of the notary Alliou who had rented part of it for more than 50 years.

Marie-Rose Grignon (1701-1760) is the only married daughter of Félix Grignon and Jacqueline Thierry. Wife of Claude-Dominique Filly (1703-1741), wedded in Breteil, on January 31, 1736, in the presence of her cousin Jean-Baptiste Grignon (1689-1770), and her cousin Françoise-Thérèse Grignon (1681-1752). Aged 39, she finds herself a widow and childless. She then decides to live in Breteil. Marie-Rose Grignon, died in Breteil, at the age of 59, on April 26, 1760, watched over by her sister Jeanne Grignon and her cousin Jean-Baptiste Grignon.

Regarding the eldest son of Félix Grignon, **Jean-Mathurin** Grignon, born in 1692, a trial opened in Rennes in December 1722 following the assassination of Messire Louis-Hubert de la Massüe, a young noble living in the castle de la Sillandais, in the parish of Chavagne, 10 km from Rennes. It involves Jean-Mathurin Grignon who is not present. In fact, the sentence announcing the death sentence will remain a dead letter. The story of this assassination had large gray areas. It is complex and involves several people, some of whom have given false testimony. It should be added that the cousin Elliot implicated in the murder was not Antoine, future rector of Plumaugat (Côtes-d'Armor) for 30 years, but his younger brother Michel, a refugee in England.

Another son of Felix Grignon, **Jean-Baptiste-Luc** Grignon, 30 years old, single, on January 12, 1732, the day of his burial in Drain (now Orée-d'Anjou) near Ancenis, had in his pocket a “*Baptismal certificate*”. He had left Rennes a few days earlier, walking on foot taking the road from Rennes to Ancenis which leads to Poitou. Did he want to make a pilgrimage to the tomb of his uncle in Saint-Laurent-sur-Sèvre, or to join the community of the Missionaries of the Holy Spirit? The Baptismal certificate he had in his pocket would be a sign of this.

We also know that his youngest son **Joseph**, born in 1704, became a Capuchin in Rennes in 1734.

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