

Rank in New France: Reconstructing a Society from Notarial Documents

by Peter N. MOOGK*

Social status is such an intangible thing, being an amalgam of personal, social, cultural and material factors, that one is tempted to emphasize the most tangible element, property. Private possessions appeal to our own materialists assumption that wealth and visible assets can buy the respect of others. Property, moreover, can be reduced to a common monetary standard that facilitates comparison. Convenience and our cultural bias will encourage historians to look upon accounts of private wealth as a measure of social status.

However useful the materialist approach is in understanding the distribution of power and influence in our society, it is a deficient tool for unraveling earlier societies. Alice Hanson Jones and Bruce C. Daniels have used probated estate inventories to show that in eighteenth-century New England there was a well-established and growing inequality in the distribution of wealth.¹ This fact did not determine social behaviour since there was, at the same time, a trend towards political equality in New England.² The significance of property in these English colonies is left in doubt.

It appears that in the neighbouring colony of New France the social structure was not built on economic differences. The reverse was true: social rank dictated economic behaviour. There was an economic dimension to rank, but it was a product rather than a determinant of the social order. Social position demanded a certain "lifestyle" and, whether they could afford it or not, people in New France lived on a scale that was deemed appropriate to their rank. They did not live according to their means. Failure to conform brought disapproval. The pious humility of Jean de Lauson, an early governor of the colony, did not protect him from criticism of his frugality. According to a member of the colonial gentry, de Lauson was disliked because he demeaned himself by living

* Department of History, University of British Columbia. The preparation of this essay was helped by comments from W.J. Eccles, R. Cole Harris, F. Murray Greenwood and John M. Norris. I am particularly indebted to Roderick J. Barman of the Hispanic Studies Department at U.B.C. who discussed the paper with me from its birth to completion.

¹ Alice Hanson JONES, "Wealth Estimates for the New England Colonies (in) about 1770," in *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 32 (1972): 98-127; Bruce C. DANIELS, "Long Range Trends of Wealth Distribution in Eighteenth Century New England" in *Explorations in Economic History*, Vol. 11 (1973-74): 123-135.

² Kenneth LOCKRIDGE, *A New England Town: The First Hundred Years* (New York: 1970); Michael ZUCKERMAN, *Peaceable Kingdoms: New England Towns in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: 1970).

without a personal servant and, said the informant, by eating only pork and peas like any craftsman or yokel.³

Since other reference points of social position had been blurred or lost in the migration to the New World, visible marks of rank assumed great importance in New France. The ancestry and community background of each immigrant were not generally known. Social levels were also intermingled in the small, primitive outposts of the seventeenth century. It was necessary to assert one's rank by an outward display of requisite trappings. The proximity of one's seat in church to the altar or precedence in a religious or public ceremony had to be carefully regulated. In 1694 the bishop-designate of Québec and the governor of Montréal quarrelled in church over the location of their respective prayer stools. The military and seigneurial aristocracy of the colony was particularly assertive in its claim to honours and prerogatives. The group was not clearly distinguished by function, as it would have been in France, because the élite had taken full advantage of the royal decree of 1685 that permitted the colonial nobility and gentry to engage in all branches of commerce without a loss of rank. Their attachment to visible symbols of status was shown by their refusal to conform to metropolitan usage and to lay aside their swords, an insignia of nobility, when appearing before the highest court in Canada.⁴ The Crown intervened on several occasions to resolve their disputes of honour and precedence and it defined the protocol of different offices and ranks.⁵ Since such definitions of rank were confined to one segment of society, they are of limited value to the social historian.

The lower orders shared this concern for the proprieties of rank. In the 1640s, when Québec had only a few hundred residents, the local tradesmen attempted to maintain the traditional precedence of crafts in the Corpus Christi processions.⁶ A few ambitious souls took advantage of the confusion of Canadian society and falsely assumed the marks of gentility. In 1684 those who had affected the title of *écuyer* in legal documents were ordered by the Crown to give proof of their nobility or to desist.⁷ The French colonists reacted conservatively to the frontier

³ Archives Nationales de France, Archives des Colonies, Série F3, Vol. 2, ff.4vo; this memoir is said to have been written by Charles Aubert de la Chesnaye in 1697 and it says of de Lauson "il n'estoit gueres aymé a cause du peu de Soin quil prenoit de Soutenir Son caractere Sans domestique, ne Vivant que de lard et de pois comme Un aritsan ou manant."

⁴ Pierre-Georges ROY, *Inventaire des Insinuations du Conseil souverain de la Nouvelle-France* (Beauceville: 1921), p. 193.

⁵ *Edits, ordonnances royaux, déclarations et arrêts du Conseil d'état du Roi concernant le Canada*, 3 vols., (Québec: 1854-56), Vol. 1, pp. 65, 352-355; Édouard RICHARD, *Supplement to Dr. Brymner's Report on Canadian Archives... 1899* (Ottawa: 1901), pp. 83, 102, 118, 136, 142, 157. W.J. ECCLES, *Canada under Louis XIV* (Toronto: 1964), pp. 233-236, provides a full account of the "Prie-Dieu Affair" of 1694.

⁶ C. LAVERDIÈRE & H.R. CASGRAIN (eds.), *Le Journal des Jésuites* (Montréal: 1892), pp. 48-49.

⁷ E.Z. MASSICOTTE, *Répertoire des Arrêts, Édits, Mandements, Ordonnances et Règlements... 1640-1760* (Montréal: 1919), pp. 30-32.

experience; it was perceived as a threat to ordered life and not as an opportunity for innovation. The traditional social hierarchy was, to them, eternal though they did not always accept the permanence of their place in that order.

The obligation to maintain one's social position by outward show depleted upper class fortunes. "You meet with no rich men in this country," wrote one observer in the early eighteenth century, "and it is really great pity, every one endeavouring to put as good a face on it as possible, and nobody scarce thinking of laying up wealth."⁸ The Canadians, he wrote, "make good cheer, provided they are also able to be at the expence of [i.e. afford] fine cloaths; if not, they retrench in the article of the table to be able to appear well dressed." This and other forms of conspicuous consumption necessitated by social pretensions resulted in anomalies of wealth. The élite acquired debts while social inferiors, free of the same obligations, could accumulate wealth.

The relationship between rank and *expenditure*, rather than property and income, is revealed by the assets and debts listed in notarized estate inventories. Under French civil law, an inventory was required of the estate of every person who died with heirs. A full accounting facilitated an exact division of the legacy and it enabled the heirs to decide, knowing the liabilities, whether to accept or to renounce the estate.⁹ A shortcoming of inventories made in New France is that they commonly omit real estate or *immeubles*. When such property is listed it is rarely given a monetary value. This was done because fixed assets acquired before marriage or inherited from kin were only transmitted to blood relations and not to the surviving spouse. The notary and two assessors usually employed for the inventory always dealt with the *meubles* or moveable assets such as furniture, clothes and kitchenwares. Their valuation was a blend of traditional and market values and was expressed in *livres tournois* or, after the 1670s, undefined *livres* of account. When the entire estate was auctioned the amount realized tended to conform to the total of the estimate.¹⁰ The inventories thus were roughly accurate in fixing

⁸ Pierre François-Xavier de Charlevoix, *Journal of a Voyage to North America*, 2 vols. (London: 1761), Vol. I, p. 113. The French text reads "On ne voit point en ce Pays de Personnes riches, & c'est bien dommage, car on y aime à se faire honneur de son bien, & Personne presque ne s'amuse à thésauriser. On fait bonne chere, si avec cela on peut avoir de quoi se bien mettre; sinon, on se retranche sur la table, pour être bien vêtu." — P.F.X. de Charlevoix, *Histoire et description générale de la Nouvelle France*, 6 vols. (Paris: 1744), Vol. V, p. 117.

⁹ It might be asked by those familiar with English-speaking societies why one could not use a last will and testament to ascertain the wealth of individuals. In New France there was no absolute freedom of willing and therefore very few wills. Under the *Coûtume de Paris*, the division of a legacy among the heirs was predetermined. Wills were usually made in New France for religious endowments and by those without living heirs.

¹⁰ Fernand OUELLET, "La mentalité et l'outillage économique de l'habitant canadien," in *Bulletin des Recherches historiques*, Vol. 62 (1956): 131-139, argues on the basis of one case that estate auctions realized more than the assessed value because bidding was turned into a competition for prestige. In the few documents I have seen the prices realized at an estate auction tended to conform to the total reached by the estimators; there was no consistent overbidding. These are three examples: Archives judiciaires de Montréal

the actual value of moveable assets in an estate.¹¹

There are hazards in depending on moveable assets to establish a person's economic position. They do not tell the whole story. Consider the case of a bachelor tanner at Québec who was found to possess only 82 *livres* in clothes and furnishings when he died. A poor man, one might say, to judge from this. However, when his private papers were examined, it was found that he held promissory notes for 4,312 *livres* from people to whom he had lent money.¹² The problem created by the omission of real estate in the inventories was compounded by the incomplete recording of credits. Such assets were easily lost. Business accounting in New France was very haphazard, depending as it did on stray slips of paper, tally sticks, and memory. A baker's widow confessed complete ignorance of her late husband's accounts and that was that.¹³ In a comparison of moveable assets, farmers will be favoured because their equipment and livestock, and even their crops, were classified as *meubles*. Despite these hazards, we are obliged to refer to the moveable assets for a comparison of private wealth because they are the one element that was consistently recorded in estate inventories.

The sample of some fifty estate inventories from the Montréal region shows that wealth in *meubles* did not correspond to the traditional hierarchy of secular occupations in France (see Table I). There was

[henceforth A.J.M.], Greffes des notaires du régime français, N. Senet, 29 oct. — 4 nov. 1708: Estate of Pierre Bazinet and Marie Roy, assessed at 108 *livres* and sold for 97 *livres*, 9 sols; A.J.M., A. Adhémar, 16-18 mars 1713: Estate of Jacques L'Huissier and Cathérine Clerisse, assessed at 626 *livres* and sold for 749 *livres*; Author's collection, Copy by Robert Duprac de Beauport, 15-19 février 1731: Estate of Paul Rainville and Marguerite Giroux, assessed at 917 *livres* and sold for 833 *livres*.

¹¹ An important consideration in accepting these valuations of property is the time at which the inventory was made. If the man were single or died young his estate would likely be small. A person's property tended to increase during his working life. When the first wife of Joseph Maillou, a Québec stone-mason, died in 1690 and he was twenty-seven the inventory of their joint estate listed 187 *livres* in moveable property and a credit of 40 *livres*.—Archives du Québec [henceforth A.Q.], Greffes des notaires du régime français, F. Genaple, 20 juillet 1690—copy owned by William P. Wolfe of Montréal. When he himself died in 1703 the value of his moveables had increased to 735 *livres*, and his credits amounted to 750 *livres*.—A.Q., Greffes des notaires du régime français, F. Genaple, 29 août au 9 sept. 1703. The passage of time beyond middle age could also bring an increase in liabilities and a decline in earning power. These trends can be observed in the successive inventories of Jérôme Lonquetin, a Saint-Lambert farmer, noted in Table I.—A.J.M., Greffes de notaires du régime français, M. LePallieur, 5 nov. 1704; G. Barrette, 22 juin 1723. Retirement in a society without old-age pensions was followed by a gradual dissipation of possessions to pay for one's living expenses. Artisans would sell off the town lots that they had accumulated in their prime and metalworkers disposed of their valuable tools and forge if no son had taken over the trade. Thus the estates of those who died after a long life were reduced in value. To avoid these variables and to obtain the greatest contrast in the comparison of property, one would have to limit the sample of estates to those of married men who had died within a limited period in early middle-age, at the height of their earning powers.

¹² A.Q., Greffes des notaires du régime français, F. Genaple, 27 mars 1706 (estate of Jean Mouchère).

¹³ A.J.M., Greffes des notaires..., J.B. Adhémar, 30 oct. 1730 (estate of Pierre Bardet).

disagreement from one French town to another about the gradation of trades in the middle range, but general agreement existed about the most "honourable" callings and the "base" trades. Since occupations that engaged the head rather than the hand were esteemed, physicians looked down on surgeons. The nobility of one's working material as well as one's clientele placed silversmiths above locksmiths, who in turn could sneer at stonemasons. By virtue of their patron, royal officers preceded municipal officials. The Corpus Christi procession at Angers in 1637 attempted to give visible expression to the hierarchy of occupations in the town. Judicial and municipal officials and the learned professions were placed at the apex of the "ancien ordre." Next came the drapers, booksellers, apothecaries, and goldsmiths. The hierarchy provided for six more ranks and passed down through food retailers, clothiers, iron workers, building crafts, leather workers, butchers, and bakers. At the bottom were the street-porters and journeymen bakers.¹⁴

Since multiple occupations were common in New France, it is necessary to verify the designation given in the inventory with other documents. The identification of the principal occupation is often dependent on the judgement of the historian, but it can be tested against the contents of the inventory. Once the occupation has been confirmed and individuals are ranged according to the total value of moveable goods possessed, the lack of correspondence between wealth and the traditional social hierarchy becomes apparent. In Table I there is only a vague stratification of trades by property. Merchants and government officials are near the top, but so too are the joiners and metalworkers as well as the masonry builders. Clothing workers are near the bottom of the scale with the food trades. There is little consistency in the economic level of any one occupation; among the farmers the value of the *meubles* ranged from 300 to 3,000 *livres*. By adding the value of real estate, one can make the farmers appear to be wealthier than the townsfolk; their occupation, however, required a large investment in land and buildings. This still does not explain the wide disparity in fortunes among agriculturalists.

The range of fortunes in the Montréal region sample is limited. The ceiling could have been raised if the sample had been drawn from the area of Québec, which was the administrative, religious, and mercantile capital of the colony. There one finds a tannery owner who in 1699 left 5,365 *livres* in moveable property and about 12,000 *livres* in land and buildings.¹⁵ The *meubles* of a secretary-councillor of the *Conseil supérieur* at Québec amounted to 11,080 *livres* in 1718.¹⁶ In general, the extremes of wealth and poverty known in France were absent in New France. Larger fortunes became more common in the eighteenth century;

¹⁴ Meschinet DE RICHEMOND, *Inventaire Sommaire des Archives Départementales antérieures à 1790, Département de la Charente-Inférieure, Série E Supplément* (Paris: 1892), p. 508.

¹⁵ A.Q., Greffes des notaires..., F. Genaple, 12-14 nov. 1699 (estate of Étienne Charest).

¹⁶ A.Q., Greffes de notaires..., F. de la Cetière, 5 déc. 1718 (estate of Charles de Monseignat).

this was a real gain since property values fell or remained stable. They were not pushed up by inflation. The Canadian peasantry had a secure existence and the wealthiest colonials remained small fry by the standards of La Rochelle, the French port that served the American colonies. It was to this city that Canada's successful entrepreneurs, Charles Aubert de la Chesnaye and Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, removed. They had outgrown the little world of the colony.

The anomalies of wealth and rank in New France were partly recognized in the proposed capitation list for Canada in 1754.¹⁷ Clerics were to be lightly taxed while the governor-general, the intendant, and the bishop were made to contribute handsomely, as an example for lesser folk, it appears. The assessors allowed for regional differences; residents of the relatively poor *gouvernement* of Trois-Rivières were to pay the least. Military officers and public officials paid according to their formal rank within a range of 23 to 100 *livres*. Wealth seems to have been the guiding factor for taxing the rest of the population. The most prosperous merchants of Montréal and Québec were rated at 60 *livres*. All of the master tradesmen at Montréal and a fifth of those at Québec were assessed, along with small merchants, 30 *livres* each. Beneath them were the voyageurs, carters, day-labourers, and most of Québec's artisans at three to ten *livres*. A variable impost of one to forty *livres* took account of the disparities of wealth among farmers; the wealthiest farmers were taxed as much as a member of the *Conseil supérieur* or the *lieutenant-particulier*, a magistrate, of Montréal. Although the capitation list was evidently distorted by non-material considerations, it reinforces the impression given by the estate inventories. Personal property rarely corresponded to social position.

Though the estate inventories discourage the belief that there were economic classes in New France, still such documents indicate the value of looking at expenditure rather than at income and property for evidence of a person's social position. The case of the "poor" tanner who was able to lend over 4,000 *livres* has already been mentioned. In 1713 a farmer at Varennes was found to have tucked away, in "Un petit sac," 2,800 *livres* in card money and 1,521 *livres* in *Louis d'or*, *écus* and silver coins of lesser value.¹⁸ He had done this in wartime and when specie was scarce. Could either the tanner or the farmer have put away so much money if their rank had demanded a show of wealth by visible expenditure? Both were in low-ranking occupations, and miserly self-sufficiency was an acceptable trait for a peasant.

For their superiors the situation was reversed. Their way of life discouraged thrift and this is evident from the estate inventories. Military officers and public officials were distinguished by their debts rather than by their assets. Not only did they spend money freely; but they were also

¹⁷ E.B. O'CALLAGHAN, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, 15 vols. (Albany: 1857-97), Vol. X, pp. 271-275.

¹⁸ A.J.M., *Greffes des notaires...*, A. Adhémar, 16 mars 1713 (estate of Jacques L'Huissier).

hampered in their investments by a consideration of social status. They put their capital into land and assumed the costly obligations of a seigneur for the sake of prestige.¹⁹ In commerce they preferred the role of a backer in risk ventures rather than degrade themselves with the safer role of retailer; they customarily invested in the fur trade or maritime ventures. As a consequence of these activities, members of the élite occasionally ran up huge debts. With only 1,600 *livres* in moveable goods and a wretched house, François-Christophe de La Jemerais, a captain in the marine troops, owed 43,800 *livres* as well as debts unknown to his wife "nayant pas Conté avec tous Ceux à qui Elle doit."²⁰ When the list of debts of the Montréal court's *lieutenant-général* approached 13,000 *livres*, the widow halted the inventory by renouncing the estate.²¹ The widow of the governor of Trois-Rivières also waived her inheritance rights to their joint estate in the same fashion "La Croyant plus onéreuse que profitable pour raison de quoy, Elle se tient à ses dot, douaire & Conventions Matrimonialles portées par son Contract de Mariage."²²

Her reference to the marriage contract draws our attention to a document that is far superior to the often-incomplete estate inventories as a gauge of social expectations and consumption patterns. Adeline Daumard and François Furet used 2,600 of these contracts to define the economic strata of Paris in 1749.²³ Their estimate of the wealth of different occupational groups was based on the contribution of the betrothed couple to the community of goods that would exist after marriage. Canadian marriage contracts, however, rarely gave the value of the male's contribution, and a quarter do not mention the bride's dowry. A dowry, *dot*, was not required by law, and, given the scarcity of females in the seventeenth century, it was not always demanded among the lower classes. When humble folk gave a dowry with their daughter, it often took the form of free board in the parents' home, foodstuffs, or a useful contribution to the new household. In 1744 a blacksmith was to receive from his father-in-law "deux Beuf, une Vache, un cheval deux Moutons, un cochon un lit de plume Couvert de laine de Mont-pellier."²⁴ It is impossible to give the precise monetary value of such dowries; and, even when they are given a value, usually in round numbers, one hesitates to accept these figures at face value. It follows that, given the nature of Canadian marriage contracts, it would be very difficult to reproduce the Daumard-Furet analysis for the colony. The marriage contracts of New France are, despite this, invaluable for an analysis of society.

¹⁹ R.C. HARRIS and John WARKENTIN, *Canada before Confederation, A Study in Historical Geography* (New York: 1974), p. 60.

²⁰ A.J.M., Greffes des notaires..., M. Tailhandier, 27 mars 1720.

²¹ *Ibid.*, A. Adhémar, 2 sept. 1704 (estate of Charles Juchereau de Saint-Denis).

²² *Ibid.*, A. Adhémar, 1 juillet 1693 (estate of René Gauthier de Varennes).

²³ Adeline DAUMARD and François FURET, *Structures et relations sociales à Paris* (Paris: 1961).

²⁴ A.J.M., Greffes des notaires..., F. Comparet, 8 août 1744 (marriage contract of Louis Baudry and Charlotte Janote).

The two precisely-stated items of financial information that were invariably contained in Canadian marriage contracts were the size of the wife's dower (*le douaire préfix ou conventionnel*) and what was called *le préciput*. Under the *Coûtume de Paris*, the civil law that prevailed in the colony, married women were treated as minors and their civil rights were restricted. They were under the tutelage of their husbands, who could manage the couple's community of goods without the wife's consent or approval. As a compensation for subordination, the law provided safeguards for the wife's property rights. A marriage contract strengthened the legal protection given to married women. Claude-Joseph de Ferrière, a jurist of the *ancien régime*, described dower as "un avantage que la femme vivante prend sur les biens de son mari prédécédé, & qui lui est accordé pour lui procurer une subsistance honnête suivant la condition de son mari."²⁵ Dower was then a living allowance for a widow that ought to permit her to live in a manner befitting her husband's station. Title XI of the *Coûtume de Paris* allowed the wife's dower to take two forms: customary or prefixed dower. Customary dower (*le douaire coutumier*), which prevailed in the absence of a marriage contract, was the enjoyment for life of one half of the husband's estate.²⁶ Acceptance of customary dower carried with it the duty to pay outstanding debts and the dues on lands as well as the obligation to maintain the real property so that it would pass to the children or blood relations in good condition. By the provisions of a marriage contract, the widowed female could be given the option of a prefixed or conventional dower in place of her customary portion. *Douaire préfix* was a stated sum to be taken in money or goods from the husband's estate, no matter what its debts were.²⁷ This option protected the wife from excessive debts owed by the community of goods and from the complications attached to the enjoyment of fixed properties. Most marriage contracts made in New France provided a prefixed dower payable at one time to the value of so many hundred *livres*. The élite preferred dower in the form of a life pension or *rente* rather than a lump sum.²⁸

²⁵ Claude-Joseph DE FERRIÈRE, *Dictionnaire de Droit et de Pratique*, 2 vols. (Toulouse: 1779), Vol. II, pp. 487-488.

²⁶ Claude DE FERRIÈRE, *Nouveau Commentaire sur la Coûtume de la Prévôté et Vicomté de Paris*, 2 vols. (Paris: 1770), Vol. II, pp. 121-134; Pierre LEMAISTRE, *La Coûtume de la Prévôté et Vicomté de Paris* (Paris: 1700), p. 563, Titre Onzième, Des Douaires, Articles CCXLVII & CCXLVIII.

²⁷ Claude-Joseph DE FERRIÈRE, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 488, "A l'égard du douaire préfix & conventionnel, de quelque nature que soient les dettes du mari lors du mariage, elles ne diminuent point." Mortgages undertaken by the husband before the marriage were the one exception.

²⁸ Seven examples of upper class marriage contracts that provide for a prefixed dower in the form of an annual *rente* or *pension viagère* have been published in Pierre-Georges ROY, ed., *Inventaire des contrats de mariage du régime français, conservés aux Archives judiciaires de Québec*, 6 vols., (Québec: 1937-38), Vol. VI, pp. 187-292. There is no evidence to support Lahontan's claim that "most of the Officers" married girls with a dowry "consisting of eleven Crowns, a Cock, a Hen, an Ox, a Cow, and sometimes a Calf." — Baron DE LAHONTAN (R.G. Thwaites ed.), *New Voyages to North America*, 2 vols. (New York: 1905), Vol. I, p. 387. Such dowries, however, were known among the peasantry.

The *préciput* or preferred portion was one of several, lesser benefits conferred on the survivor, male or female. By ancient custom, the survivor was entitled to withdraw personal effects from the mass of goods before the joint estate was divided. For the wife, this comprised her clothes, her rings and jewellery, and a fully-furnished bed or room. For males of gentle birth, a horse and one's arms were included among the personal effects. *Préciput* seems originally to have been a monetary substitute for this right. In time it became an additional privilege and not a substitute for personal effects. In New France the widow seems to have retained her right to the *préciput* even when she renounced the joint estate and the customary dower that went with it. It was therefore possible for a woman to repudiate a debt-ridden community of goods and to depart with her personal effects, *préciput*, the value of her dowry and all that she had contributed to the community, as well as taking a prefixed dower out of whatever had belonged to her late husband. The unfortunate creditors would have to scramble for the rest.

The significant element in the marriage contract for identifying social status is the *douaire préfix*. Since the dower was to furnish the widow with "une subsistance honnête suivant la condition de son mari" it was commensurate with the standard of living expected by a person of that social level. A wife was seen as a dependent of her husband and her rank was that of her husband. It might be argued that because conventional dower was not tied to actual wealth and because it was a form of self-evaluation, it would represent personal aspirations rather than reality. In theory a man could choose any amount he liked. After all, when the time for payment came, he would be safe in the grave.

In fact the choice of dower was subject to social approval and this restrained wishful estimates of one's worth. The marriage contract was drawn up in the presence of relatives, friends, and other witnesses. This restraint was most effective with native colonials, who could not pretend to be more than they were, and choices within one occupational group tended to be uniform. Outsiders were less inhibited and they were inclined to overestimate their value in selecting dower. This tendency is apparent in the entries for Sullivan, Payne, and Spennert in Table II on marriage contracts. They may have done this out of ignorance or ambition or because, as aliens, they felt compelled to establish their worth in the eyes of the *Canadiens*. The position of a foreigner in New France was apparently so uncertain that dower would be influenced by the background of his Canadian wife-to-be. For example, when Jean-Fernand Spagniolini, an Italian surgeon, married a commoner in 1737, the dower was 800 *livres*.²⁹ After the death of this wife, the surgeon took as his bride a Boucher de Niverville whose family belonged to the colonial gentry of military officers and seigneurs. The dower for this wife was a life annuity of 250 *livres*, a considerable advance on her predecessor's entitlement. Spagniolini was so overawed by his future in-laws that he

²⁹ A.J.M., *Greffes des notaires...*, A. Loiseau, 3 jan. 1737 (marriage contract of Jean-Fernand Spagniolini and Catherine Bénard).

also let the apparent *préciput*, here said to be the value of a furnished room, be raised from 500 to 1,000 *livres*.³⁰ Among themselves, the native Canadians judged a man's rank by his employment and they had a definite idea of what amount of dower was appropriate for that occupation.

The *Canadiens'* firm sense of the social hierarchy is revealed when marriage contracts are arranged in a descending order according to the amount of the conventional dower. Since the forty-five contracts assembled in Table II cover the entire Laurentian colony in a fifty year period, the consistency is remarkable. The result is a visible hierarchy of occupations. The colonial élite of royal officials and military officers favoured dower in the form of annuities from 200 to 600 *livres* a year,³¹ but when they elected a lump sum it was in thousands of *livres* with a floor of two thousand *livres*. It was beneath their dignity to deal in lesser sums. Since the rest of the populace elected single payments of so many hundred *livres* as dower, social gradations among commoners appear to be more subtle than they probably were.

The occupational hierarchy based on conventional dower is as follows:

RANKING BY AVERAGE DOWER	OTHER OCCUPATIONS
I. <i>The Elite</i> (2,000–8,000 <i>livres</i>)	
Commissioned military officers	Senior clergy & nuns
Senior judicial & administrative officials	
II. <i>Honourable Employments</i> (800–1,500 <i>livres</i>)	
Architects	Minor clergy
Master builders in stone	Wholesale merchants
Silversmiths	Royal notaries
Non-commissioned officers	
III. <i>Good Trades</i> (600–750 <i>livres</i>)	
Hatmakers	Land surveyors
Surgeons	<i>Huissiers</i>
Shoemakers	
IV. <i>Modest Occupations</i> (425–500 <i>livres</i>)	
Metalworkers	
Woodworkers	
Private soldiers	
V. <i>Base Occupations</i> (400 <i>livres</i> or less)	
Stonemasons	Food retailers
Tenant farmers	Carters
Tailors	Sailors
	Hired servants

The hierarchy established by the amount of dower is confirmed by its correspondence with the formal hierarchy of the colonial garrison troops. Private soldiers elected 300 to 500 *livres*, a sergeant chose 800,

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 10 jan. 1745 (marriage contract of Jean-Fernand Spagniolini and Françoise Boucher de Niverville).

³¹ See footnote 28.

an ensign 1,500, a captain 4,000, a lieutenant 6,000, and their commander, a colonel, settled on 12,000 *livres*. Additional dignities were given their due; the governorship of Trois-Rivières, a hamlet, added a thousand *livres* to a captain's agreed dower. It might be noted that senior officers, as members of the élite, were usually seigneurs too. A *seigneurie* was an appurtenance of high rank, but, by itself, it did not make one a member of the élite group. Witness the small dower assented to by Joseph Giffard, a rural seigneur. In Table II certain civilian occupations also clustered around one amount: three masonry builders are to be found near the 1,000 *livres* mark, two shoemakers selected 600 *livres*, and two metalworkers chose a dower of 500 *livres*. Social esteem seems to have been the critical factor. Note that the six farmers in Table II, whatever their region or actual wealth, limited themselves to 300 *livres* or less. By so doing, they placed themselves close to the bottom of white society.

Although the sample list of forty-five marriage contracts is not comprehensive, it is possible to draw up a tentative outline of the ranks in the white society of New France. To supplement the outline, other occupations are listed in a parallel column in an order suggested by the author's experience of the colony. Marriage contracts will exist for some of these vocations and the scale can be developed with a larger sample. There were, however, members of the colonial society who would never undertake a marriage covenant and who, perforce, would always be missing from a social scale based on prefixed dower. Beneath the farmers, there were the indentured servants and apprentices who were legally incapable of contracting marriage. The clergy, the Amerindians, and the slaves would also be absent. The voids in the picture of European community will occur at the very top, with the senior clerics and the transient French administrators, and at the lowest level where persons, by reason of their age or legal condition, could not enter into marriage contracts.

Even with these omissions, the amount of the conventional dower reveals the social status of most secular occupations in the white community of New France. It brings to light that elusive reality in the minds of a bygone people: how they looked upon themselves and how they were regarded by others. The source is all the more important since the population was largely illiterate and left no other comparable record of the general conception of social status.

Thus far, we have only dealt with the quantitative information contained in marriage contracts. They also contain qualitative information that can perfect our knowledge of the inter-relationship of social groups and can refine our sense of each individual's status. Each deed enumerates the family members and guests present at the signing of the contract. Acceptance by a recognized social group is a major aspect of status and the list of witnesses allows one to judge whether the parties involved truly belonged to the level in which they claimed membership. As those without titles are usually identified by name alone considerable additional research is needed to establish the background of commoners who were present. Intermarriage and participation in each other's family events also

provide a measure of the solidarity of an occupational group. From several examples, it appears that family members were concentrated at, but not limited to, one social level and that close friends came from related occupations. Social superiors, such as former masters or commanding officers were often present to do honour to the betrothed couple. For most *Canadiens*, family accounted for two thirds of the guests at the signing of the contract. Friends were important in the absence of family and there were rarely more than two or three present. This suggests a very weak identification with one's occupational group. The great exception is provided by the administrative and military élite of the colony whose group loyalty went far beyond family ties. The *haut monde* turned out in droves to act as witnesses for one of their own kind. The domination of this group came from its prestige and power, and was reinforced by a solidarity unequalled by any other group in Canadian society.

Since marriage contracts often describe parental occupation as well as the current employment of the groom-to-be, they can be a source for students of social mobility. The honesty of the informant has to be assumed and this is risky for it was easy and beneficial for immigrants to raise the standing of their distant parents a notch or two. Better still are the successive marriage contracts of a native *Canadien* who had a talent for outliving his wives. Jean-Baptiste Maillou called Desmoulins (1668-1753) of Québec is a perfect example. He was the son of a man who made wooden shoes. He was trained as a mason and a stonemason by his older brother and, possibly, by their former employer, Claude Baillif, who was a masonry contractor. Maillou selected a tailor's daughter for his first wife. Their marriage contract of 1695 described him as a "M[ait]re. Masson" and the list of witnesses left no doubt that this was a plebeian event. Apart from his immediate family, the mason's guests were a tool-maker who was a brother-in-law, a cousin who styled himself "marchand," and Baillif "architecte Son amy." The prefixed dower was 600 *livres*.³² Maillou remarried eight years later to the daughter of a merchant seaman.³³ He was still close to his lower class origins, but his star was rising. The premature death of his brother left him in control of their building firm. It was a flourishing enterprise that enjoyed the patronage of the officials and merchants of Québec, the church, and, most importantly, the Crown. Maillou's execution of fortification contracts brought him to the attention of the administration and in 1719 he was honoured with the title *Architecte du Roi*. This led eventually to appointment as deputy

³² A.Q., Greffes des notaires..., 30 jan. 1695 (marriage contract of Jean Maillou and Louise Phillipeau).

³³ A.Q., Greffes des notaires..., F. Genaple, 29 juin 1703 (marriage contract of Jean Maillou and Marguerite Caron). On this occasion Maillou described himself as "Architecte entrepreneur de bâtimens" This meant that he was a draughtsman as well as a builder. His future father-in-law, Vital Caron, styled himself "march[an]d bourgeois;" though the 1716 census of Québec simply listed him as "navigateur, marchand." The prefixed dower in this contract was 1,000 *livres*, exactly equal to the bride's dower.

Overseer of Highways (*Grand Voyer*) for the Québec region in 1728.³⁴ When Maillou made his third marriage contract in 1720 the bride-to-be, the prefixed dower, and the list of witnesses proclaimed his new position as a minor officer of the Crown. His future wife, the daughter of a ship's captain, was socially superior to the first two wives. Maillou agreed to a dower of 2,000 *livres* which was suitable for the public office he held. His guests comprised a cousin who was a royal notary, three members of Montréal's mercantile community, a close friend who was *écrivain du Roi*, and the Intendant of New France and his wife. "Sieur Jean Maillou Architecte" was almost a member of the colony's élite.³⁵

The rapid social advancement apparent in the successive marriage contracts of Jean-Baptiste Maillou was exceptional in eighteenth century Canada. Social lines were hardening and the building trade remained one of the few avenues by which enterprising individuals could rise from a base trade to an honourable occupation. Maillou's ascent resulted from a combination of ability and good fortune. The final stage depended on official favour; property and initiative could only carry one so far. Admission to the élite required official patronage and social connections with the dominant group.

The *Canadiens* were social conservatives who continued to judge occupations by French cultural standards. Tailors were still despised and poorly paid despite their utility in the colony. Silver-smiths were still exalted by the patronage of church and gentry. Above all, the colonials venerated the military, which was the traditional function of the French aristocracy. In 1755 an officer from France was taken aback by the exaggerated deference of the Canadians. In New France, he wrote, "those who had headed armies of only three hundred men, were respected... as Marshals of France. A captain of the king's fleet coming into the country was looked upon as a divinity."³⁶ The effect of this veneration was that private soldiers in the colony, though recruited from the riff-raff of France and an endemic source of crime, were allowed to chose dower above that of the more reputable farm folk.

The deeply-rooted traditionalism of the Canadians did not prevent changes that distinguished their society from that of the motherland. The high nobility of France had not migrated to the colony and was, with the odd exception, absent from New France. Others of lesser rank took over as the dominant group. After 1677 there were no municipal or guild officials nor any elected spokesmen allowed in the colony; that was royal policy.³⁷ Certain occupations did not survive because they were too

³⁴ See P.N. MOOGK, "Maillou," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto and Québec City: 1974), Vol. III: 419-421.

³⁵ A.Q., *Greffes des notaires...*, J.C. Louet, 30 oct. 1720 (marriage contract of Jean Maillou and Marie Catherine Amiot).

³⁶ Pierre POUCHOT, *Memoir upon the Late War in North America*, trans. by F.B. Hough, 2 vols. (Roxbury: 1866), Vol. I, p. 36.

³⁷ The royal administration under Louis XIV was hostile to private bodies that might claim a share in the government of the colony and to elected spokesmen of the people. The royal policy in New France after the assumption of direct rule in 1663 was to

specialized or unwanted in New France. Colonial conditions, however, allowed soldiers, shoemakers and builders to become more prominent. Thanks to an abundance of fertile land, the Canadian peasantry was infinitely better off than the peasantry of France. By European standards, the social spectrum in Canada was compressed, simplified, and adjusted to colonial needs. The scale of occupations based on dower bears witness to this transformation. It also shows that, in spite of the changes, the *Canadiens* retained a traditional sense of rank and that they knew their place in the social order.

The sample of less than two hundred notarial acts used for this study is too limited to permit a detailed reconstruction of society nor does it allow one to take account of the changes that occurred over the entire history of New France. A larger sample would also reveal regional variations in the social structure. The present analysis will tend to make the society of the colony appear more static and more uniform than it probably was. Other researchers will have a great deal of room for correction and refinement. The main point that is to be made here is that marriage contracts rather than estate inventories offer the best source for understanding the social order in New France. This is so because property rarely corresponded with rank and because of a peculiarity of the *Canadiens*: they were able to separate social value from material resources. They ranked people by non-material criteria, principally by social function, and they expected individuals to conform to the mores of that group. These mores comprised a scale of living that was deemed appropriate for that rank. The emphasis on visible marks of rank in Canada magnified the importance of this requirement; it could not be shirked. In the prefixed or conventional dower people expressed the scale of expenditure required of a person of their position. From this amount, we can read backward to obtain an idea of that person's place in the social hierarchy.

The separation between rank and revenue was not absolute. Income tended to increase the higher one went up the social scale. Admission into the colonial élite brought greater opportunities for revenue from the perquisites of office. Servants of the Crown were given preference in the granting of royal pensions. Such gains that resulted from elevation could scarcely keep pace with the expenditures demanded of a notable; very little would have gone into a productive investment. Wealth was a consideration for advancement but it was not a reason for promotion. For example, an objection could be raised against the ennoblement of a poor man on the grounds that he would not be able to maintain himself in a manner befitting a noble.³⁸ The Crown controlled access to the

eliminate elected officials and to discourage the formation of private interest groups. See, for example, Colbert's directive of June 13th, 1673 to Governor Frontenac to suppress *syndics*.—*Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec*, 1926-27, p. 25.

³⁸ This point was raised in 1707 in connection with the proposed ennoblement of Joseph-François Hertel de la Fresnière, a distinguished officer. See the biographical note by Raymond DOUVILLE, in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto and Québec City: 1969), Vol. II: 282-284.

military and aristocratic élite and its criteria for granting titles and appointments were past service to the King, ability, and family connections. In New France public offices, commissions, and patents of nobility were not for sale. Money by itself did not bring preferment.

The control of the Crown over careers at the élite level and the limited social benefits of wealth made it possible for the *Canadiens* to separate rank from property. Their behaviour, as revealed by the estate inventories and marriage contracts, would seem irrational to us. People who spend money and who undertake financial obligations without regard for actual property or income appear to be irresponsible. In contrast with our assumption that wealth brings prestige, the *Canadiens* of the *ancien régime* began with a system of ranks founded on cultural tradition and they adjusted their economic behaviour to their rank. In this way economics conformed to, rather than determined, social status. This paradox is a reminder, once again, to historians to allow for cultural imperatives that can override material realities.

Table I

ESTATE INVENTORIES

*Montréal Region, Part A, The late-seventeenth century*Valuation in *livres* of account to the nearest *livre*. (— not given)

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Moveables</i>	<i>Immoveables</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Debts</i>
Officer-Seigneur (Sidrach Dugué 1688)	3,879	—	1,966	721
Masonry Builder (Urbain Tessier 1690)	1,882	—	75	745
Joiner (Nicolas Godé 1657)	1,663	—	—	—
Officer-Regional Gov'r (René Gauthier de Varenes 1693)	1,156 ^a	—	—	—
Brewer (Louis Prudhomme 1673)	1,127	—	—	—
Farmer (Jean Desrochers 1684)	771	2,657	—	462
Armourer (Jacques Thibierge 1700)	699	—	—	—
Carpenter-Farmer (Honoré Danys 1690)	475	—	—	15
Merchant-Townsmen (François LeBer 1698)	450	3,100	—	1,656
Cooper (Pierre Perras 1684)	426	200	—	—
Farmer (Jean Bourbon 1695)	295	800	—	94
Toolmaker-retired (Jean Milot 1700)	289	—	—	—
Miller (Michel Louvard 1662)	277	—	—	590
Baker (Etienne Forestier 1700)	231	—	—	1,142

Joiner-Farmer (Georges Allets 1675)	156	listed	—	114
Surgeon (Étienne Bouchard 1676)	127	—	—	—
Miller (Louis Biteau 1658)	97	—	102	220
Farmer's widow (Catherine Moitié 1688)	39	1,200	—	368

^a Estate renounced before completion of the inventory.

Sources: Archives judiciaires de Montréal, Greffes des notaires du régime français, A. Adhémar, 28 juillet 1690, 1 juillet 1693, 6 mars 1700, 21 août 1700; B. Basset, 7 nov. 1657, 19 fév. 1658, 29 juin 1662, 11 jan. 1673, 27 mai 1675, 24 juillet 1676, 6 août 1684, 9 oct. 1684, 20 déc. 1688, 16 mars 1698; C. Mauge, 9 juillet 1695; M. Moreau, 21 oct. 1688; J.B. Pottier, 20 avril 1690; P. Raimbault, 4 fév. 1700.

Montréal Region, Part B, The early-eighteenth century

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Moveables</i>	<i>Immoveables</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Debts</i>
Royal Notary (Antoine Adhémar 1714)	3,309	—	1,119	2,202
Lieutenant-général (Charles Juchereau de Saint-Denis 1704)	3,108	—	11,995	12,701 +
Farmer (François Lefebvre 1718)	2,784	listed	—	—
Mason (Bernard Bleigné 1731)	2,387	450 (house)	—	—
Tailor-Farmer (Louis Brien 1718)	2,141	—	—	1,200
Military Officer (Christophe Dufrost de La Jemerais 1720)	1,588	230 (house) other buildings & lands listed.	25,694	43,796 +
Blacksmith (J.B. Pitallier 1730)	1,359	200 (house)	536	1,008
King's Lieutenant-Seigneur (Charles Gaspard Piot d Langloiserie 1722)	1,331	—	furnishings held by his children	2,956
Joiner (Vincent Lenoir 1703)	1,285	listed	248	426
Roofer (François Gacien 1729)	1,117	listed	—	1,624
Farmer-Tailor (Jean Poupart 1734)	1,056	listed	—	120
Farmer (Jérôme Lonquetin 1704)	942	—	25	48
(Jérôme Lonquetin 1723)	816	400 in buildings, lands listed	—	300
Farmer (Joseph Dumay 1708)	796	—	—	802
Miller (Simon Thomas 1735)	677	—	156	710
Shoemaker (J. Bte. Mallet 1738)	653	listed	159	711
Farmer (Jean Péras 1736)	631	listed	879 ^a	49

Sabotier-Farmer (François Bourassa 1710)	627	listed	—	100
Farmer (Jacques L'Huissier 1713)	626 ^b	listed	4,322 ^c	—
Butcher (Jean Brunet 1732)	573	—	—	167
Carpenter-Farmer (Joseph Lefebvre 1742)	572	1,880	—	1,669
Military Officer-Seigneur (Pierre de Saint-Ours 1737)	404	—	1,704	800
Baker (Nicolas Perthuis 1733)	374	—	—	—
Surgeon (Henri Bélisle 1740)	312	480	161	631
Sculptor (Charles Chaboulié 1708)	293	—	242	201
Ex-Soldier (Pierre Moreau 1704)	261	—	—	1,640
Baker (Pierre Bardet 1730)	197	—	—	—
Shoemaker (Bernard Dumouchel 1733)	187	—	—	216
Miller (Pierre Gibault 1738)	186	—	—	762 ^d
Farmer (Claude Faye 1709)	183	listed	—	278
Farmer (Pierre Bazinet 1708)	175 ^e	—	35	376

^a Children's debt of 877 *livres* for land bought from their parents was later cancelled.

^b Sale of the moveables realized 749 *livres*.

^c This was a hoard of coins and card money.

^d Expenses of evaluating and closing the estate added 99 *livres* to this amount.

^e Moveables, which were appraised at 108 *livres*, sold for 97 *livres*. Unthreshed grain was not given a value and is not included.

Sources: Archives judiciaires de Montréal, Greffes des notaires du régime français, A. Adhémar, 12 mars 1704, 4 juin 1708, 16 mars 1713, 2 sept. 1704; J.B. Adhémar, 30 oct. 1730, 15 fév. 1734; G. Barette, 20 juin 1710, 14 jan. 1718, 22 juin 1723, 2 juin 1742; F. Comparet, 8 fév. 1738, 14 nov. 1740; M. Lepallieur, 16 nov. 1703, 5 nov. 1704, 30 oct. 1708, 14 mai 1714, 17 oct. 1736; C.J. Porlier, 16 mai 1738; J.C. Rainbault, 29 mars 1729, 9 mai 1731, 8 mai 1732, 3 jan. 1733, 17 juin 1733, 13 sept. 1735, 28 août 1737; N. Senet, 29 oct. 1708, 29 mars 1718, 5 déc. 1722, 2 oct. 1730; M. Tailhandier, 27 mars 1720. Pièces judiciaires, Clôture d'inventaire, 10 déc. 1709.

Table II

MARRIAGE CONTRACTS, 1678-1729

Amounts are in undefined *livres* of account; Fr. indicates French *livres*.

* An amount withheld from the community of goods beyond this sum.

— No information M—Montréal region Q—Québec region TR—Trois-Rivières region

<i>Male's Occupation</i>	<i>Prefixed Dower</i>	<i>"Préciput"</i>	<i>Female's Dowry</i>	<i>Male's Contribution</i>
Colonel-commander of the troops in Canada (P. Rigaud de Vaudreuil 1690 Q)	12,000	3,000	5,000 in revenues, she retains the principal. her inheritance	—
Crown-Attorney (J.F. Martin de Lino 1712 Q)	8,000	1,000	4,000 in silver, she retains half.	35,000*
Lieutenant of Troops (Charles Juchereau 1692 M)	6,000	1,500	—	—
Captain of Troops-Governor of Trois-Rivières (Claude de Ramezay 1690 Q)	5,000	—	—	1,300 <i>pistoles</i> in French properties
Captain of Troops (Guillaume de Lorimier 1695 TR)	4,000	2,000	4,000	—
Governor's Secretary (Charles de Monseignat 1693 Q)	200 annuity	1,000	3,000	—
Physician-Surgeon (Timothy Sullivan 1720 M)	Fr. 2,000	Fr. 1,000	widow's estate	Fr. 1,000*
Barrister of the <i>Parlement</i> of Paris (Jean-François Hazeur 1708 Q)	200 annuity	500	5,000 & trousseau	4,000* and 1,600 in board from his father 1,500
Architect-BUILDER (Jean Maillou 1720 Q)	2,000 or 100 annuity	500	500	—
Ensign of Troops (J.A. de Fresnel 1694 TR)	1,500	2,000	3,000	—
Silversmith (Samuel Payne 1725 M)	1,500	500	—	—
Surgeon (Henri Bélisle 1690 Q)	1,500	300	—	—
Masonry Builder (Noël de Rainville 1727 Q)	1,200	400	600 she retains 400 as her own	500
Masonry Builder (François de la Joue 1689 Q)	1,000	600	300 with food & shelter	—
Rural Seigneur (Joseph Giffard 1700 Q)	1,000	500	1,013	—
Hatter (Joseph Huppé 1728 Q)	1,000	500	—	—

Architect-Builder (Dominique Janson 1726 M)	1,000	300	300	600 in land
Tanner (J.L. Plessy 1713 M)	1,000	300	300	1,000 currency
Shoemaker (André Spennert 1690 Q)	1,000	nil	300 in furnishings and land	—
Sergeant of Troops (François Dumontier 1695 TR)	800	300	800 in food & shelter	—
Shoemaker (Jean Ferron 1692 M)	600	400	—	—
Mason (Jean Maillou 1695 Q)	600	300	300 to remain hers	—
Shoemaker (Edmé Moreau 1706 M)	600	300	—	—
Military Surgeon (Jean Barodot 1696 TR)	500	500	500 in board & shelter	—
Joiner (Antoine Forestier 1701 M)	500	300	—	—
Soldier-Hatter (Barthélemy Couton 1691 Q)	500	250	widow's estate	—
Blacksmith (J. Bte. Pepin 1729 M)	500	250	—	—
Armourer (Olivier Quesnel 1680 M)	500	—	—	—
Merchant (Jean Minet 1693 Q)	500	200	200 in land	—
Soldier (Jean Prime 1695 TR)	500	200	250 in food & furnishings	—
Mason (Nicolas Dasilva 1722 Q)	500	200	—	—
Carpenter (Léonard Paillé 1678 Q)	400	200	furnishings & livestock	—
Shipwright-Carpenter (David Corbin 1707 Q)	400	200	her inheritance	—
Joiner (Noël Levasseur 1679 Q)	400	—	400	farm & town lot
Surgeon (Henri Bélisle 1705 TR)	400	nil	widow's estate	estate & furniture
Baker (François Blot 1685 M)	customary	300	200 in livestock, grain & masonry-work	—
Mason (Joseph Maillou 1690 Q)	300	—	400 <i>écus</i>	—
Soldier (Jean Germain 1698 TR)	300	200	400 in money & goods, she retains half	—
Immigrant Farmer (Pierre Drolet 1688 Q)	300	200	her inheritance, 150 in a cow and clothes	—
Farmer	300	150	120	—

(Jean Baribeau 1697 TR)			in a heifer and clothes	
Farmer (Jean Daniau 1686 Q)	300	100	wedding dress, furnishings, cow and calf	—
Farmer (Noël Chappelot 1692 M)	300	nil	her inheritance, 8 months' board, and a cow.	—
Farmer (Jean de La Fond 1697 TR)	200	100	—	—
Farmer (Joseph Arcand 1718 Q)	100	100	Fr.500, she retains half	a farm
Soldier-Tailor (Guillaume Goyaud 1685 M)	customary	nil	—	—

Sources: Archives judiciaires de Montréal, Greffes de notaires du régime français, A. Adhémar, 20 avril 1692, 8 sept. 1692, 14 août 1701; M. LePallieur, 24 août 1706, 24 fév. 1713, 28 juillet 1725, 11 fév. 1726; C. Maugue, 14 jan. 1680, 30 nov. 1685, 2 déc. 1685; M. Moreau, 13 fév. 1692; P. Raimbault, 22 avril 1720; M. Tailhandier, 24 avril 1729.

Archives judiciaires de Trois-Rivières, Greffes des notaires du régime français, J.B. Pottier, 25 nov. 1705; F. Trottain, 24 sept. 1694, 26 jan. 1695, 24 avril 1695, 22 déc. 1695, 12 sept. 1696, 16 avril 1697, 26 août 1697, 29 août 1698.

Archives du Québec Greffes des notaires du régime français, C. Auber, 26 juin 1678; J. Barbel, 2 nov. 1727; L. Chambalon, 30 jan. 1695, 24 fév. 1707, 4 mars 1708; F. de la Cetière, 30 oct. 1712; J.E. Dubreuil, 1 nov. 1718, 7 avril 1722; F. Genaple, 25 oct. 1683, 30 oct. 1689, 20 mars 1690, 22 juillet 1690, 7 nov. 1690, 10 déc. 1690, 23 sept. 1691, 25 sept. 1693, 3 nov. 1700; J.C. Louet, 30 oct. 1720; J. Pinguet, 27 oct. 1728; G. Rageot, 25 juin 1679, 2 juin 1686, 21 sept. 1688, 19 juin 1690.