

TRANSLATING FRENCH SACRAMENTAL RECORDS

Common words and phrases found in these documents

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Note: I viewed many old Baptism, Marriage and Burial records to create this list. **These items are not always spelled correctly on the sacramental documents and this document will often reflect the spelling of the time period.** In addition, a particular statement can be written many different ways on a document. This is definitely true of marriage documents. However, it is impossible to cover them all but this list should provide some help in translating these documents.

Also, keep in mind that French does not translate to English literally and it was impossible to include all of the rules of the French language when creating this list. At the same time, two people could translate sentences in a slightly different way and both translations could be correct.

There is a separate section for Baptisms, Marriages and Burials but the Baptismal section contains many common words used in all three documents. Also, words that are capitalized in English are not always capitalized in French (such as the day of the week, month) and punctuation is not always accurate or present. Many old French documents do not contain the French accent marks.

In addition, many words have a masculine and feminine version and the two are spelled differently (such as né or née – translates to ‘born’ – the one with a single ‘e’ at the end is the masculine version) so keep this in mind. (The plural version is often spelled with the letter ‘s’ at the end but this is not always the case.)

FRENCH

ENGLISH

<i>BAPTISMAL RECORDS & COMMON WORDS/PHRASES</i>	
L'an (année)	The year
aujourd'hui	Today
cejourd'hui	This day
du mois	of the month
jour	day
le même jour	the same day
le jour d'avant	the day before
le jour précédent	the day before
la veille	the day before

d'hier	yesterday
nuit	night
dernier, dernière	last
suivant	following, next
amis	friends
épouse	wife
époux (also 'mari')	Husband
les mariés	the bride and groom
feu, défunt, défunte	late (deceased)
fille de	daughter of
fils de	son of
père et mère	father and mother
frère	brother
sœur	sister
homme	man
J', Je	I
J'ai (sometimes incorrectly written as 'J'ay')	I have
la femme	the wife
leur	their
marraine	Godmother
parrain	Godfather
notre Seigneur	Our Lord
nous	us, we
oncle	uncle
tante	aunt
inconnu	unknown person
sa, son, ses	her, his, its
veuf, veuve	widowed, widow/widower
habitant	resident
habitant propriétaire	land owner, property owner, plantation owner
évêque	Bishop
prêtre (prestre) missionnaire	Missionary Priest
Curé	Priest
soussignés	undersigned
témoins	witnesses
par moi (often spelled 'moy')	by me

par devant moi (or par devant nous)	in front of me (in front of us)
nom, nommé	Name; To name (verb 'nommer')
âgé (âgée)	age
âgé d'environ (âgée)	age about
légitime	legitimate
mariage	marriage
né, née	born
église	church
a été	was
l', le, la, les	the
un, une	a, an ('un' also means the number 'one')
dans	in
de, d', de la, du, des	of the ('des' can mean 'some')
à, au, aux, à la, à l'	At, to, at the, to the
en	in
et	and
ou	or
lequel, laquelle, lesquels	which, who, whom
avoir (ai, as, a, avons, avez, ont)	have (I have, you have, she has, etc.)
faire (fais, fait, faisons, faites, font)	to do
ce, cet, cette	this
dit, dite	called
aussi (sometimes incorrectly spelled 'aussy')	also
la paroisse	the parish
de la ville	of the town
évêché	Bishopric (similar to Diocese)
ne savoir signer	does not know how to sign
ont déclaré savoir signer	have declared knowing how to sign
a signé	have signed
ne savoir écrire	does not know how to write
lesquels ont déclaré ne savoir signer de ce enquis (requis) suivant l'ordonnance	who have declared to not know how to sign when asked following the ordinance (ceremony)
qui a signé avec nous	who has signed with us
tous deux	both (all two)
tout, toute, tous	all, every
lui	(to) him, (to) her (often spelled 'luy')

marier ensemble	married together
MARRIAGE RECORDS	
la marié	the bride
les mariés	the bride and groom
le mari or le marié	the groom
entre	between
d'une part	of one part
d'autre part	of the other part
licence de mariage	marriage license
apres les fiançailles et la publication des trois bans de mariage	after the engagement (betrothal) and the publication of three bans of marriage
ayant donné dispense du second et du troisième (banns)	having given waiver of the second and third
apres les fiançailles faites et publication d'un ban seulement	after the engagement (betrothal) made and publication of one ban(n) only
ne s'etant découvert aucun empêchement légitime	not having discovered any legitimate impediments
leur mutuel consentement	their mutual consent
mariés avec les ceremonies accoutumée	married with the usual ceremonies
Je sous signe ai reçu le consentement mutuel	I, the undersigned, have received mutual consent
ai marier et leur ai donné la benediction nuptiale selon la forme prescrite par la sainte mere l'église	(I) have married and given them the nuptial (wedding) blessing in the manner prescribed by the Holy Mother Church
leur mutuel consentement par moy pris	mutual consent taken by me
je les ai solennellement par paroles de présent conjoints in mariage	I have solemnly by words joined them as husband and wife in marriage
J'ay (J'ai) donné la benediction nuptiale	I have given the nuptial benediction
qui ont signé ainsi que l'epoux et l'epouse par marque ordinaire	who have signed along with the husband and wife by ordinary mark
BURIAL RECORDS	
inhumé	buried
enterré	buried
enterrement, inhumation	burial
décédé, décédée	deceased
avec les sacrements	with the sacraments

après avoir reçu les sacrements	after having received the sacraments
dans le cimetière de l'église	in the cemetery of the church
a été enterré dans le cimetière de cette paroisse	has been buried in the cemetery of this parish
a été enterré le corps de	have buried the body of
l'extrême-onction, le viatique, L'Eucharistie, La Pénitence	(Catholic sacraments)(extrême-onction - last anointing) (Viatique - communion)
en la maison de	in the home of
et ont assisté à son inhumation	and has assisted at his burial
DATES - YEAR	(See section entitled NUMBERS for last two digits)
mille six cent ...	1600s (16xx)
mille sept cent ...	1700s (17xx)
mille huit cent ...	1800s (18xx)
DATES - MONTHS	
janvier (first letter not always capitalized)	January
février	February
mars	March
avril	April
mai	May
juin	June
juillet	July
août	August
septembre	September
octobre	October
novembre	November
décembre	December
DATES - DATE	
premier,	1st
deuxième, 2ème	2nd
troisième	3rd
quatrième,	4th
cinquième,	5th
sixième,	6th
septième,	7th
huitième,	8th

neuvième,	9th
dixième,	10th
onzième,	11th
douzième,	12th
treizième,	13th
quatorzième,	14th
quinzième,	15th
seizième,	16th
dix-septième,	17th
dix-huitième,	18th
dix-neuvième,	19th
vingtième,	20th
vingt et un	21st
vingt deuxième	22nd
vingt-troisième	23rd
vingt de suite	24th
vingt-cinquième	25th
vingt six	26th
vingt soixante-dix	27th
vingt-huit	28th
vingt-neuf	29th
trente	30th
trente et un	31st
<i>DATES - DAY OF WEEK</i>	
dimanche (often not capitalized)	Sunday
lundi	Monday
mardi	Tuesday
mercredi	Wednesday
jeudi	Thursday
vendredi	Friday
samedi	Saturday
<i>NUMBERS</i>	
un	1
deux	2
trois	3
quatre	4
cinq	5

six	6
sept	7
huit	8
neuf	9
dix	10
onze	11
douze	12
treize	13
quatorze	14
quinze	15
seize	16
dix-sept	17
dix-huit	18
dix-neuf	19
vingt	20
vingt et un	21
twenty two	22
twenty three	23
twenty four	24
twenty five	25
twenty six	26
twenty seven	27
twenty eight	28
twenty nine	29
thirty	30
quarante	40
cinquante	50
soixante	60
soixante-dix	70
quatre-vingts	80
quatre-vingt-dix	90

NOTE:

Here are a few examples of how the year (of the event) is written on a sacramental document:

mille six cent soixante cinq (=1665)

mille sept cent quatre vingt dix deux (=1792) (quatre-vingt-dix =90; deux=2)

OCCUPATIONS

apothicaire	apothecary
armurier	amrrorer, gunsmith
arquebusier	gunsmith
barilleur or barillier	cooper
boucher	butcher
boulangier	baker
cabaretier	tavern-keeper
chanoine	canon
chapelier	hatter
charpentier	carpenter, shipwright
charretier	waggoner
charron	wheelwright
chemisier	shirt maker
chirurgien	surgeon
cloutier	nail maker
défricheur	clearer, settler
dégrossisseur	one who rough hews, trims
diacre	deacon
ébaucheur	workman employed to rough-hew
édificateur	builder
embatteur or embateur	cooper, smith
engagé	pledged to military, engaged to be married
farinier	flour dealer
fermier	tenant farmer
forgeron	blacksmith
fournier	oven keeper, parish baker
greffier	registrar, recorder
huissier	crier of the court, usher
indigotier	indigo manufacturer
jardinier	gardener
jugé	judge
laboureur	plowman, farmer
marchand	merchant
matelot	sailor, seaman
menuisier	joiner, carpenter
meunier	miller
milicier	militiaman
notaire	notary, solicitor
nourrice	wet nurse
outilleur	tool maker

parcheminier	parchment maker
pêcheur	fisherman
pilote	pilot, guide
poudrier	gunpowder maker
pouldiller	poulterer
roulier	wagoner, carter, carrier
sabotier	shoemaker
saunier	salt-maker, vendor
savonnier	soap boiler, manufacturer
seigneur	lord, nobleman
sellier	saddler
serger or sergier	serge weaver
serrurier	locksmith
sertisseur	setter, mounter
taillandier	edge tool maker
tailleur d'habits	tailor
tavernier	tavern keeper
tireur	marksman, rifleman
tisserand	weaver
travailleur	worker, labourer
usinier	mill owner, manufacturer
vendeur	vendor, seller
voyageur	traveller

Large French occupation list available at:

[https://familyhistory.byu.edu/Downloads/French Extraction Guide/French Extraction Guide-Appendix A.pdf](https://familyhistory.byu.edu/Downloads/French%20Extraction%20Guide/French%20Extraction%20Guide-Appendix%20A.pdf)