

Sulte,¹ who has given much attention to our compatriot. Moreover it is not only in Canada that an interest is felt in him; in 1881 a citizen of the United States, Mr. C. W. Butterfield, of Madison, Wisconsin, wrote a book² in memory of the explorer who first showed the way to the vast territory that to-day constitutes the States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin, of him whom he calls "the gallant Norman," "the indomitable explorer," "the courageous Frenchman." Perhaps my fellow-citizens will find some interest in reading the following pages which I in my turn devote to Nicolet in order to make him known to them,—pages that sum up what I have learned from the publications to which I have just made reference and from the information that has been kindly furnished me by their authors.

Jean Nicolet may have been twenty years old when he arrived in Canada in 1618. Canadian historians place his birth at about 1598, at Cherbourg. Positive proof of this last assertion is wanting; at least I have not been able as yet to obtain from Canada any information authorizing the fixing of his birthplace indisputably, but there is a strong presumption that he was from Cherbourg or its vicinity. According to his marriage contract drawn up at Quebec in 1637,³ he was the son of Thomas Nicolet, mail-carrier [*messager ordinaire*] between Cherbourg and Paris, and Margaret Delamer, two family names still very common in Cherbourg and vicinity,⁴ and names that are found very often in the oldest titles preserved. Nothing surprising then if a Nicolet born in this district should have been mail-carrier between Cherbourg and Paris, and if one of his children,

¹ At the present time president of the French section of the Royal Society of Canada.—H. J.

² *History of the Discovery of the Northwest by John Nicolet in 1634, with a Sketch of his Life*, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1881.—H. J.

³ See note at close of this article.—H. J.

⁴ The Nicollets of Cherbourg and vicinity wrote their name ordinarily with two l's; in the *Relations of Canada* we find without distinction "Nicollet" and "Nicolet" for the name of the explorer. It is the latter spelling that has prevailed in Canada and consequently I have adopted it.—H. J.