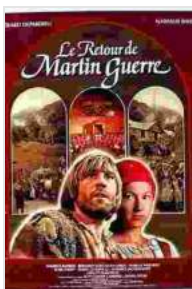


# The Astonishing True Story of the Man Who Vanished and Returned as Someone Else

In 1556, a young Frenchman named Martin Guerre left his village to fight in the Italian Wars. He was gone for eight years, and when he returned, he was a changed man. His wife, Bertrande, didn't recognize him at first, but eventually she came to believe that he was her husband.

But was he? As the years passed, Bertrande began to have doubts. Martin's behavior was strange, and he didn't seem to remember anything about his life before the war. Bertrande eventually went to the authorities, and Martin was arrested and put on trial.



## The Return of Martin Guerre by Natalie Zemon Davis

★ ★ ★ ★ ☆ 4.5 out of 5  
Language : English  
File size : 2201 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Print length : 162 pages



The trial of Martin Guerre was one of the most sensational cases in French history. It captivated the public's imagination, and it has been the subject of numerous books, plays, and films. The case is still studied by historians today, and it continues to raise questions about the nature of identity and the power of suggestion.

In his book *The Return of Martin Guerre*, historian Natalie Zemon Davis tells the story of the trial and its aftermath. Davis argues that the case was not simply a matter of mistaken identity. She believes that Martin Guerre was an impostor, a man who had deliberately taken on the identity of the real Martin Guerre.

Davis's theory is based on a number of factors. First, she notes that the real Martin Guerre was a poor peasant, while the impostor was a wealthy merchant. Second, the impostor had a number of physical characteristics that were different from the real Martin Guerre's, such as a different shaped nose and a different color of eyes.

Third, the impostor did not know anything about Martin Guerre's life before the war. He could not remember the names of Martin Guerre's family and friends, and he did not know anything about the village where Martin Guerre had grown up.

Davis believes that the impostor was a man named Arnaud du Tilh. Du Tilh was a soldier who had served with Martin Guerre in the Italian Wars. He had deserted the army and had been living in hiding for several years. When he heard that Martin Guerre had been killed in battle, he decided to impersonate him.

Du Tilh's plan was successful at first. He was able to convince Bertrande and the other villagers that he was Martin Guerre. He even managed to get Bertrande to give him all of Martin Guerre's property.

But Du Tilh's imposture eventually began to unravel. Bertrande began to have doubts about his identity, and she eventually went to the authorities.

Du Tilh was arrested and put on trial. He was found guilty of impersonating Martin Guerre and was sentenced to death.

The case of Martin Guerre is a fascinating story of mistaken identity and deception. It is a story that has captivated the public's imagination for centuries, and it continues to raise questions about the nature of identity and the power of suggestion.

### **The Real Martin Guerre**

The real Martin Guerre was born in the village of Artigat, France, in 1528. He was the son of a poor peasant farmer. Martin Guerre was a quiet and shy boy, and he was not very well-educated.

In 1548, Martin Guerre married Bertrande de Rols. Bertrande was the daughter of a wealthy landowner, and she was much more sophisticated than Martin. The couple had two children, a son and a daughter.

In 1556, Martin Guerre left his village to fight in the Italian Wars. He was gone for eight years, and during that time, he saw a lot of combat. He was wounded several times, and he was even captured by the enemy at one point.

In 1560, Martin Guerre was released from captivity and he made his way back to France. He arrived in Artigat in the spring of 1561, and he was greeted with joy by his wife and children.

But Martin Guerre was not the same man who had left Artigat eight years earlier. He was more confident and assertive, and he had a worldly air

about him. He also seemed to have forgotten a lot about his life before the war.

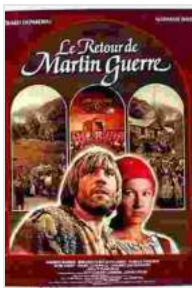
Bertrande was initially happy to have her husband back, but she soon began to have doubts about his identity. Martin's behavior was strange, and he didn't seem to remember anything about his life before the war.

Bertrande eventually went to the authorities, and Martin was arrested and put on trial.

## The Trial of Martin Guerre

The trial of Martin Guerre was one of the most sensational cases in French history. It was held in the town of Rieux, and it lasted for several months. The trial was presided over by Judge Jean de Coras, who was one of the most respected judges in France.

The prosecution presented a number of witnesses who testified that the defendant was not Martin Guerre. These witnesses included Bertrande de Rols, Martin



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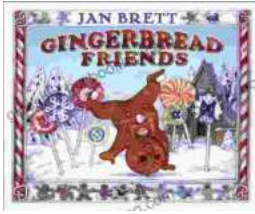
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