

“But I read it...”

**Who Is the Father of the Charlotte Leduc dite Souigny  
Baptized at Michilimackinac in 1758  
and Married at L'Assomption (Windsor) in 1771 to  
Joseph Mainville / Miville dit Deschênes / Duchêne?**

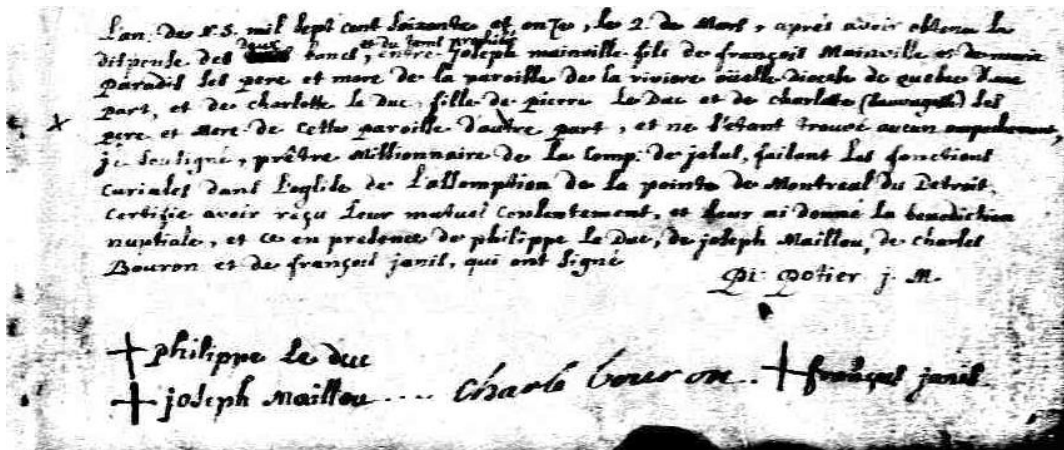
(Fill in the blank: \_\_\_\_\_)

A. in Tanguay; B. in Jetté; C. in Denissen, D. on PRDH; E. on the Internet;

F. in more than one of the above; G. in a source not named above

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In March of 2009, FCHSM member Cliff Venier spoke to me at the Detroit Public Library, Main Branch, during a genealogy fair held there. He asked me what I knew about the **Charlotte Leduc dite Souigny** who was baptized in 1758 at Michilimackinac (now Mackinaw City, Michigan). He wanted to know whether I would copy the original record and translate it for him. He told me there was controversy about the identity of this Charlotte's father. As he later e-mailed me, “Many are descended from Charlotte and **Joseph Miville dit Deschênes**, and most believe her father is Pierre Leduc *père*.” This Pierre *père* (the father), however, is called this because he fathered a son, *fils*, also named Pierre Leduc. Cliff had located Charlotte's marriage at L'Assomption (Windsor) 2 March 1771.<sup>1</sup> She is identified as daughter of Pierre *Le Duc* & Charlotte, a female Indian, *sauvagesse*. Based on some other records he had, Cliff believed Charlotte is the daughter of the younger Pierre not the elder. Here is *Charlotte Le Duc*'s marriage record:



In the year of Our Lord seventeen hundred and seventy-one, the 2 of March, after having obtained the dispensation of two banns [and for the prohibited time, above the line (during Lent)], between **Joseph mainville** son of *françois Mainville* and of *marie paradis* his father and mother of the parish of *riviere ouëlle* diocese of *quebec* as one party, and of **charlotte Le Duc**, daughter of **pierre Le Duc** and of **charlotte (Sauvagesse/ female Indian)** her father and mother of this parish, as the other party, and having found no impediments, I undersigned priest missionary of the comp[any] of Jesus, serving the curial functions of pastor in the church of *L'assomption de la pointe de Montreal du Detroit*,

<sup>1</sup> Ancestry.ca, Early U.S. French Catholic Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1695-1954 > D > Détroit, L'Assomption de Sandwich de Windsor > 1767-1783 Image 9 of 62, 2 March 1771. The bride was only 15, if she was a two-year-old at her baptism.

certify having received their mutual consent, and have given them the marital benediction, and this in presence of *philippe Le duc*, of *joseph maillou*, of *Charles Bouron* and of *françois janis*, who have signed

[signed] *pi potier j.M*  
+ [a cross] *philippe le duc*  
+ [a cross] *joseph maillou.....charle bouron* + [a cross] *françois janis*

A common research quest in French-Canadian genealogy is the desire to trace a family to Native American ancestry, so I was eager to see what I could discover for Cliff because I know this Leduc family well. **Pierre Leduc fils**, son of **Pierre Leduc dit Souigny & Françoise Massé**, was baptized 31 March 1732 at Montréal.<sup>2</sup> Pierre the son also used the *dit* name Souigny. He would have been 26 in 1758. His mother, Françoise Massé, 26-year-old daughter of deceased Michel Massé & Marguerite *Lafleur* (Marguerite Couc *dite* Lafleur),<sup>3</sup> married Pierre Leduc, 27, son of deceased Jean Leduc & Marguerite Desroches of Côte St. Pierre, 28 May 1731 at Nôtre-Dame de Montréal. Françoise Massé died 19 October, buried 20, 1733, Montréal, but her son survived. He is mentioned in the inventory of the community property held by Pierre *père* and his first wife to establish what Pierre Leduc *fils* was entitled to receive from his deceased mother's estate. The inventory was taken 30 May 1744 after Pierre *père*'s marriage to Marie Françoise Bouchard *dite* Vallée on 3 February 1744 at Montréal. His second wife signed the document written by the notary Simonet (I have a photocopy) on which Pierre *fils* is said to be 12 years old. Then, after Pierre *père*'s second wife's death, he married Agathe Amiot Villeneuve, widow of François de Boisguilbert and daughter of Daniel Joseph Amiot Villeneuve & Domitille Langlade,<sup>4</sup> on 21 May 1758 at Michilimakinac, just months before Charlotte's October 1758 baptism at the same place. As Cliff Venier explained it to me, naming Pierre Leduc *père* as Charlotte's father appears to have been based on a lack of awareness of the existence of Pierre *fils*, the limitations of Tanguay and Jetté (whose records end in 1730), and an incorrect interpretation of the English translation of Charlotte's baptismal record.<sup>5</sup> Here is how it appears in the Wisconsin Historical Collections publication (Vol. xix), which I have copied from the Drouin file at Ancestry.ca:

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<sup>2</sup> Pierre Leduc's grandmother, his father Jean Leduc's mother, was named *Marie Soulinier*, and this is most likely the source for Pierre Leduc's *dit* name. The words *Soulinier* and *Souigny* (and other spellings) are pronounced the same in French. The mother of Pierre Leduc *dit* Souigny's first wife, **Françoise Massé**, is **Marguerite Couc dite Lafleur**, daughter of **Pierre Couc dit Lafleur de Cognac** and **Marie Mitéouamegoukoué**, an Algonquin, who married 16 April 1657 in Trois Rivières. Thus, Françoise Massé's descendants have Native American ancestry, as do Charlotte's descendants; but Pierre Leduc *père*, husband of the granddaughter of an Algonquin, does not, except an alliance by marriage. I have researched the Couc family extensively and have photocopies of the records I cite. All dates mentioned, unless otherwise cited, are documented in my "All Sources Are Not Created Equal: The Couc Montour Family of New France and the English Colonies." See the FCHSM website for a description of the CD of this work that is available for purchase. [www.habitantheritage.org](http://www.habitantheritage.org)

<sup>3</sup> Marguerite Couc *dite* Lafleur had married, first, Jean Fafard. She and her Fafard children were definitely at Fort Pontchartrain in its early years; her Massé daughters may also have been there but do not appear in the surviving records.

<sup>4</sup> See my "But I read it..." *MHH*, Vol. 32, #1, January 2011, 47, for documentation of the **one** and **only** wife of Daniel Joseph Amiot Villeneuve, Domitille, who is also identified with other names.

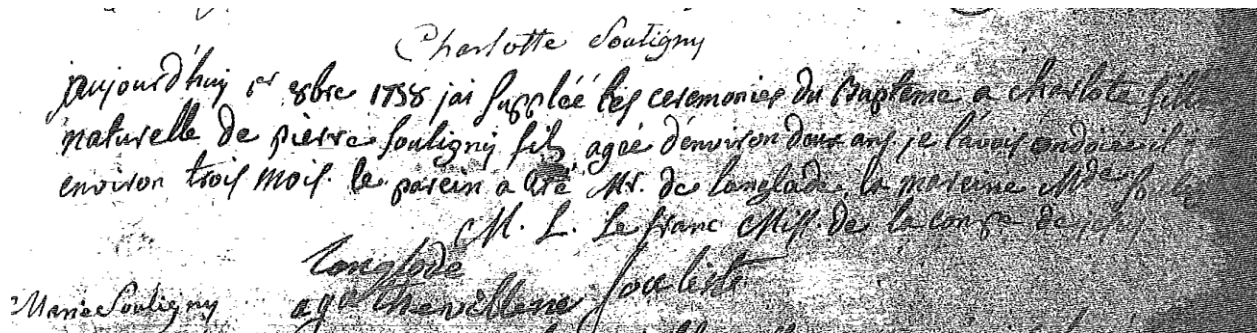
<sup>5</sup> Ancestry.ca Early U.S. French Catholic Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1695-1954 M > Makinac, Ste-Anne; Copie Wisconsin Historical > 1695-1821 > Image 30 of 85.

October 1, 1758, I supplied the ceremonies of baptism to Charlotte, natural daughter of pierre Souligni, the younger, about two years old. I had baptized her privately about three months previously. The godfather was M<sup>r</sup> de Langlade; and the godmother M<sup>de</sup> Souligni.

M. L. LEFRANC, Miss. of the society of Jesus

LANGLADE; AGATHE VILLENE[UV]E] SOULINE

The Wisconsin Historical Collections transcription and English translation identifies the father of Charlotte as "pierre Souligni, the younger," not *fils*, the son, and not even "junior," a son with the same name as the father. It did not take me long to confirm the original French word by viewing a Family History Library microfilm I have on permanent loan at the Roseville Family History Center:



[My translation]

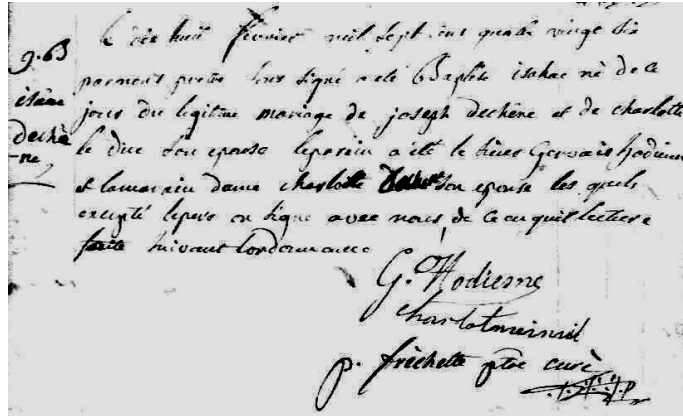
Today 1<sup>st</sup> October 1758 I supplied the ceremonies of Baptism for *charlote* natural daughter [*fille naturelle*] of **pierre Souligny fils** [son] about two years old. I had given her emergency baptism [*ondoyée*] about three months ago. the godfather was *M<sup>r</sup>. de langlade*, the godmother *M<sup>de</sup>* [Madame] *Souligny*

[signed] *M. L Lefranc Miss. de la comp. de jesus*  
*langlade*  
*agathevillenv Souline*<sup>6</sup>

Madame Souligny, the godmother, is Agathe Villeneuve, the recently-married third wife of Pierre Leduc *dit* Souligny the elder, father of Pierre Leduc *dit* Souligny the younger. Because both father and son were in Michilimackinac at about the same time, it was important to distinguish one from the other. The father of Charlotte is definitely Pierre Leduc *dit* Souligny the younger and his wife, Françoise Massé. Charlotte's descendants thus have Native American ancestry through both her mother and her father's great-grandmother, *Marie Mitéouamegoukoué*, an Algonquin. (See footnote 2.)

Joseph Miville *dit* Deschênes and Charlotte Leduc *dite* Souligny had several children baptized at L'Assomption. Cliff Venier descends from their son **Isaac Miville dit Deschênes**:

<sup>6</sup> Image from Family History Library microfilm #0865224, "Ancien registre. . . de Michillimakinac 1695-1821". Marie Souligny inserted on the next line in a different handwriting is for the next entry, a child of a *panis* dwelling at Mr. Souligny's.



18 February seventeen hundred and eighty-six  
by us undersigned priest was baptized *isaac* born this  
day of the legitimate marriage of *Joseph de chene* [sic] and of *Charlotte  
Leduc* his wife the godfather was *Sieur Gervais Hodiesne*  
and the godmother *dame Charlotte Duchêne* [Miville / Mainville dit Duchêne] his wife who  
except for the father signed with us, when asked, a reading  
made according to the law

[signed] *G. Hosiesne*  
*charlotmeinvil*  
*p. frechette ptre cure*  
[paraphe]<sup>7</sup>

**Cliff Venier's ancestors:**

**Pierre Couc dit La Fleur de Cognac + Marie Mitéouamegoukoué, Algonquin, m. 16 April 1657 Trois Rivières**

└─ **Marguerite Couc dite Lafleur + Michel Massé, m. before 1705-12-31 Pays d'en haut**

└─ **Françoise Massé + Pierre LeDuc dit Souigny, m. 28 May 1731 Montréal**

└─ **Pierre LeDuc dit Souigny + Charlotte, an Indian, ca. 1756 Michilimackinac**

└─ **Charlotte LeDuc + Joseph Miville dit Deschênes, m. 2 Mar 1771 L'Assomption**

└─ **Isaac Miville dit Deschênes + Thérèse Renaud, m. 27 Oct 1812 Assumption**

└─ **Elénore Miville + Charles LaBelle, m. 31 May 1852 Essex, ON, Canada**

└─ **Sarah LaBelle + Narcis Bourbeau, m. circa 1870**

└─ **Alvina Burbo + Louis Joseph Vigneux, m. 25 Jun 1894 Wayne Co, MI**

└─ **Clifford Lawrence Venier + Augusta Coulman, m. 3 Apr 1937 Wayne Co, MI**

└─ **Clifford George Venier + Lynn Corrine Finell, m. 28 Aug 1965 Benton, OR**

See Cliff Venier's website (<http://cliffvenier.com/ui54-0.htm>) for additional information or e-mail him at [cliff.venier@gmail.com](mailto:cliff.venier@gmail.com)

<sup>7</sup> Early U.S. French Catholic Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1695-1954 > D > Détroit, L'Assomption de Sandwich de Windsor > 1781-1808. Image 46 of 323, 28 February 1786. A *paraphe* is a fancy design added to a signature to distinguish it from other signatures.