

[Editor's note: In *L'Ancêtre*, numéro 276, volume 33, pp. 37 – 45 there was an article by Mme Micheline de Haître Ford: *Concernant Antoine Dehaître en Nouvelle-France*. At approximately the same time, research was also being done by FCHSM member Loraine DiCerbo, regarding the descendants of Louis de Gonzague Deshêtres here in Michigan and Assumption (now Windsor), as well as in Québec. Loraine has very carefully documented each of the steps of her research. Mme de Haître Ford, on page 39 of her article, indicated that Louis (the same Louis who had fathered three children by Louise Beaulieu) had married in Détroit in 1760 Marie Josèphe de Tonty, daughter of the former commandant of the fort, making this her third marriage. Mme de Haître Ford used as her source the FHL film #1026601, Item 2, which is a transcription. This film is not the actual parish register from Ste. Anne de Detroit. The film for the actual register is available at the Burton Historical Collection in the Detroit Public Library, as well as in the Bentley Library in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Because of this statement regarding the marriage of Louis Deshêtres and Marie Josèphe de Tonty, FCHSM member, Suzanne Sommerville, wrote to the editor of *L'Ancêtre* and to the specific attention of Mme de Haître Ford. She enclosed in her letter her own research on this particular subject. Suzanne's response and the response of Mme de Haître Ford were recently printed in *L'Ancêtre*, numéro 277, volume 33, pp. 155-157.

We believe the following article, originally written by Suzanne months before the recent item in *L'Ancêtre*, adequately justifies her statement that it was the daughter, Thérèse Damours de Louvières, not the mother, Marie Josèphe de Tonty, who married Louis Deshêtres, brother of the Louis de Gonzague Deshêtres who did go to Montréal where he married Françoise Fortier. This couple, Louis de Gonzague Deshêtres and Françoise Fortier, then became the ancestors of Mme de Haître Ford.]

**The True Wife of Louis Deshêtres in 1760 Detroit:
Thérèse Damours de Louvières, daughter of Marie Josèphe de Tonty**

Suzanne Boivin Sommerville, FCHSM member (s.sommerville@sbcglobal.net)

Alphonse de Tonty, second in command under **Antoine de Lamothe Cadillac**, traveled with the convoy of 1701 to found a French settlement at *Le Détroit du Lac Érié*. His wife, **Marie Anne Picoté de Belestre**, accompanied Madame Cadillac, **Marie Thérèse Guyon**, to newly-established Fort Pontchartrain in the fall of the same year. Madame de Tonty returned to the mother colony in 1703 and died there in 1714. Alphonse de Tonty, with his second wife, **Marie Anne Lamarque**, later served as commandant at Fort Pontchartrain from 1717 until his death there in 1727. His tenure, however, was not the last evidence of the de Tonty and the Picoté de Belestre families' presence at the fort. Their story remains to be told in greater detail. The published record has neglected them and has also misidentified members of the families. This article corrects one misidentification and clarifies a long-standing confusion concerning the two sons of **Antoine Deshêtres** and **Charlotte Chevalier**, both of whom were given the first name **Louis**.

The de Tonty's youngest daughter, **Marie Josèphe de Tonty**, was born 26 May 1713 and baptized the next day in Montréal.¹ Marie Josephe's first marriage, 26 April 1745 at Montréal, was with **Louis Damours de Louvières**, widower of Marie Geneviève de Catalogne and son of Charles Damours de Louvières and Marie Anne Thibodeau. They had seven children. Twelve years later, Marie Josèphe's husband having died 21 January 1755, she married **Pierre Tremblay**, son of Pierre Tremblay and Marie Madeleine Simard Lombrette,² on 18 April 1757 at Châteauguay. Note: **This is a correction to Denissen**, who has Marie Josèphe de Tonty marrying Pierre Tremblay the elder.³ PRDH assigns the marriage to the younger Pierre and indicates that the groom in 1757 Châteauguay is celibate (unmarried), identified as the son of Pierre Tremblay, not of Michel Tremblay, Pierre Tremblay *père*'s father. The

¹ PRDH Individual #122846. This record includes links to the marriages, details about the de Tonty family and the Damours children. See also *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. 2, for Alphonse de Tonty.

² PRDH #150257 Birth : 1736-10-09 Baptism : 1736-10-11 Petite-Rivière-St-François

³ Rev. Fr. Christian Denissen, *Genealogy of the French Families of the Detroit River Region, 1701-1936*, Detroit Society for Genealogical Research, 1987 revision, p. 1179.

record has no indication the groom was a widower.⁴ Four of the younger Pierre Tremblay's siblings married at Sainte-Anne de Detroit,⁵ and Pierre and Marie Josèphe relocated there, dwelling in Grosse Pointe by 1760.

PRDH and other secondary sources, such as the **transcription**, a handwritten copy, found on Family History Library microfilm #1026602, have been assigning Marie Josèphe de Tonty a third marriage. They allege that on 18 February 1760 at Sainte-Anne de Détroit, she married one of the two Louis Deshêtres, sons of Antoine Deshêtres and Charlotte Chevalier, not always identifying which one. PRDH may have used either the FHL or the Drouin **transcriptions** of the original Sainte-Anne de Detroit record, as it may not have had access to a microfilm of the original records until quite recently.

I questioned the transcribed version on the FHL microfilm the first time I saw it a few years ago because it claims that Marie Josèphe de Tonty, allegedly the new bride of Louis Deshêtres, is the widow of Damours Louvières AND the spouse of Tremblay. I asked myself: How can a woman be, simultaneously, a widow, a spouse, and a new bride? As a follow up to my contribution to Loraine DiCerbo's April 2006 *Michigan's Habitant Heritage (MHH)* article on the Deshêtres family, I verified my suspicion that this third marriage was transcribed inaccurately.

To resolve my doubts about the 1760 marriage record as found on the FHL transcription and also on PRDH, I asked Gail Moreau-DesHarnais, editor of *MHH*, to make a photocopy of the record from the microfilm of the original registers of Sainte-Anne de Detroit,⁶ and I found the key to the problem. It seems good Father Simple Bocquet had a moment of distraction between beginning the marriage entry on the bottom of one page, where he wrote "demoiselle Marie" and continuing on the top of the next page, where he neglected to enter the bride's name in the text of the record, instead writing "joseph tonty veuve de Sieur d'amour louvier epouse de Pierre tremblay habitants de la pointe aux renards, ses pere et mere en

⁴ PRDH #317099 Châteauguay 1757-04-18

⁵ PRDH Individu # 122846 PIERRE TREMBLAY

Pierre Tremblay's father: PIERRE TREMBLAY

Father : MICHEL TREMBLAY

Mother : GENEVIEVE BOUCHARD

Marriage: 1734-01-25 Les Éboulements

Pierre Tremblay's mother: MARIE MADELEINE SIMARD LOMBRETTE

Father : FRANCOIS SIMARD LOMBRETTE

Mother : URSULE PARE

Their Children [Pierre Tremblay the younger's siblings] married before 1800 :

Sex Date of marriage First name of the child

Place of marriage Name of the spouse

f 1751-01-07 MARIE THERESE

STE-ANNE-DE-DÉTROIT [Couple] JOSEPH SEGUIN LADEROUTE

m 1757-04-18 PIERRE

CHÂTEAUGUAY [Couple] **MARIE JOSEPHE DETONTY DEPALUDY**

m 1767-01-12 LOUIS MICHEL

STE-ANNE-DE-DÉTROIT [Couple] CECILE YOU [YAX]

f 1758-01-09 MARIE GENEVIEVE

STE-ANNE-DE-DÉTROIT [Couple] CAJETAN SEGUIN LADEROUTE

f 1766-02-10 AGNES

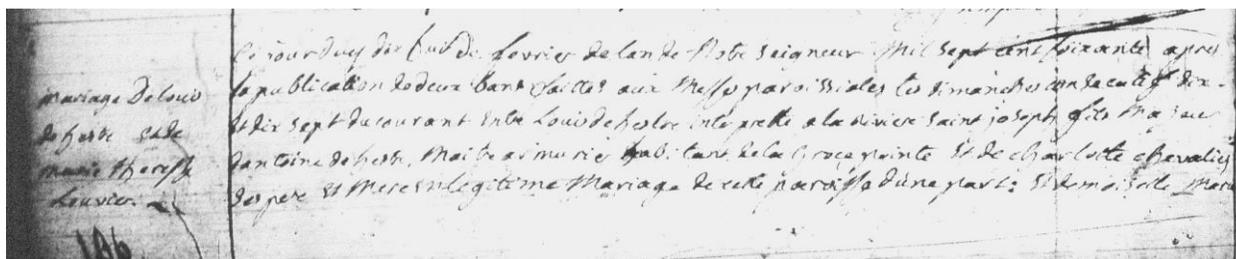
STE-ANNE-DE-DÉTROIT [Couple] JEAN BAPTISTE DUPRAC

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⁶ Burton Historical Collection [BHC], Detroit Public Library, Sainte-Anne de Detroit, microfilm #1252, reel #1. {The original registers are now also available at Ancestry.ca in the Drouin Collection of Early U. S. French Catholic Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1695-1954.}

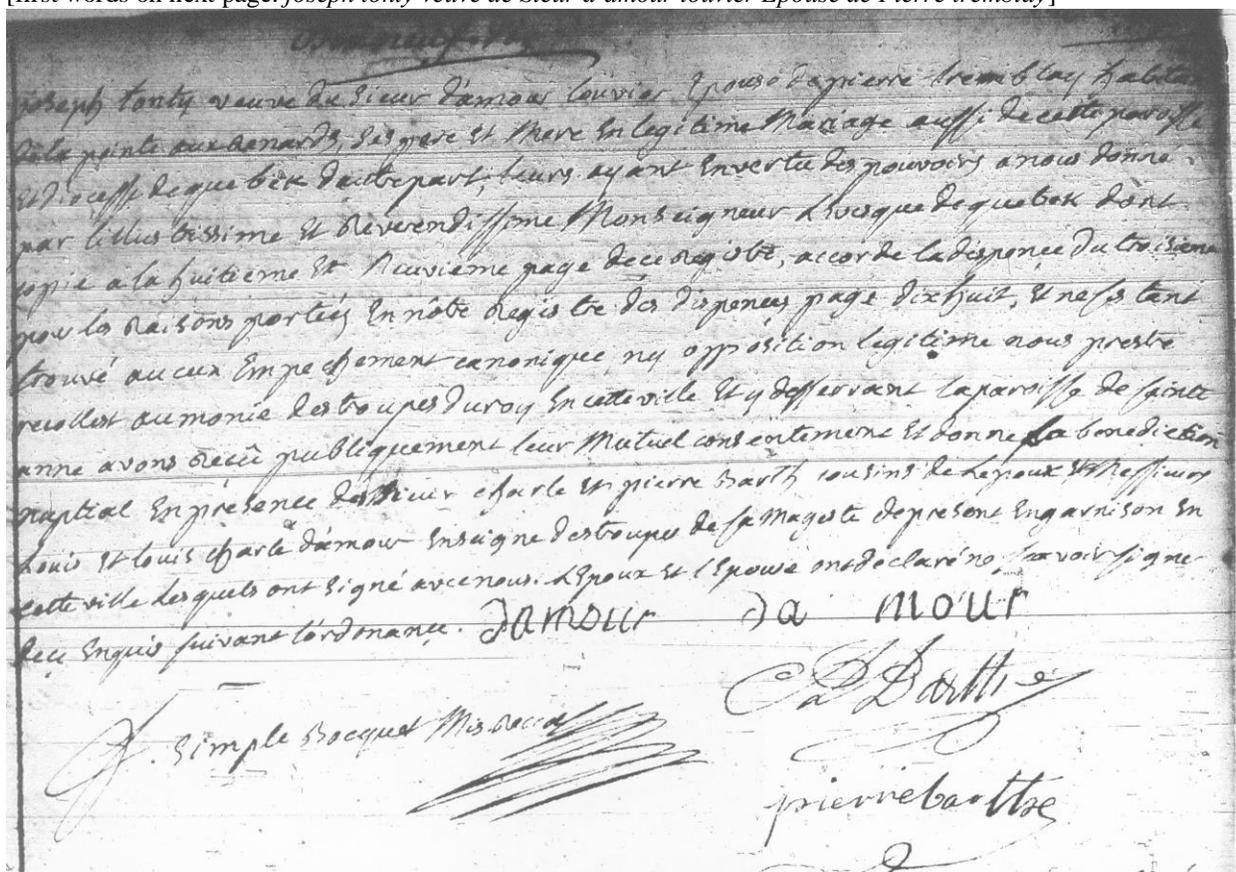
legitime mariage.” The bride of Louis Deshêtres was actually **Thérèse Damours de Louvière**, Marie Josèphe de Tonty’s daughter (born 2 September 1746,⁷ thus not yet fourteen years old in February of 1760).

The following excerpts of the marriage of **Louis Deshêtres** and **Marie Thérèse Louviers** appear at the bottom of page 106 and at the top of page 107 from the actual parish register of Ste. Anne de Detroit:



[last words: *et demoiselle Marie*]

[first words on next page: *joseph tonty veuve de Sieur d'amour louvier Epouse de Pierre tremblay*]



The bride’s name does, however, appear in the margin of the record, a detail evidently ignored by the transcriber(s). As further evidence, Thérèse Damours Louvières and Louis Deshêtres *en legitime mariage*

⁷ PRDH #148831.

had a child, *Thérèse*, who died shortly after her birth in 1762 at Detroit, and the mother of this child is very definitely recorded as Thérèse Louvier Damour [*sic*] and not Josèphe de Tonty.⁸

In addition, Loraine DiCerbo has located a marriage contract dated 3 May 1767 and written in St. Louis, modern-day St. Louis, Missouri.⁹ This contract records Madame de Tonty, widow Louvière (*Dame detonty veuve Louvière*) giving her daughter Charlotte Damour Louvière¹⁰ to Jean Baptiste Gamache in marriage. No mention is made of Pierre Tremblay. The contract was written at Louis Deshêtres's home, where "the future bride is lodged." Charlotte's mother signed it **Tonty Tranblay** [*sic*]. Also in attendance was Louis Deshêtres, the bride's *beaufrère*, *à cause de Thérèse Damour*, **the bride's brother-in-law because of (his marriage to) Thérèse Damour**. I have reported these details to Bertrand Desjardins, and PRDH will eventually correct its data.¹¹ [See 2012 addition at the end of the article.]

Tanguay, by the way, got it right in the nineteenth century. Ironically, he also certified the transcription that appears on the FHL microfilm, but in his published text he lists **Marie-Thérèse Damours** as the 1760 bride of a Louis Deshêtres. He also records a "union" (with no date given) between Louis de Gonzague *dit* Pigeon and Marie-Louise Beaulieu, citing the 1774 excommunication at Détroit. Denissen, who had access to the original Sainte-Anne registers long before they were microfilmed, also correctly names **Mary Teresa** (*sic*, Marie Thérèse) Damours, as the 1760 bride of **Aloysius** (*sic*, Louis) Deshêtres *dit* Pigeon (*sic*), not Mary Joseph (*sic*, Marie Josèphe de) Tonty. Denissen altered all first names, transforming them into "English" versions! Thus, he gave the "husband" of "Mary Teresa" the first name of Aloysius (*sic*) but, unfortunately, added the *dit* name of Pigeon to this "Aloysius". It is actually the younger Louis Deshêtres, Louis de Gonzague, who used this *dit* name, as demonstrated in the excommunication document of 1774. Louis Deshêtres, whom we now know to be the elder brother, had died in St. Louis, modern-day Missouri, before 1774 [the year of the excommunication], as Loraine DiCerbo has proven.

I agree with Loraine DiCerbo that Louis de Gonzague Deshêtres, who used the *dit* name of Pigeon and who was excommunicated along with "Louise Beaulieu" in 1774, is NOT the same Louis Deshêtres of the 1760 marriage to Thérèse Damours.¹² As Loraine has explained, two Louis Deshêtres, sons of Antoine and Charlotte Chevalier, were baptized at St. Joseph des Miamis (called des Illinois in some sources, but actually at modern-day Niles, Michigan). Neither the compiler of the FHL transcription of the Sainte-Anne de Détroit Church registers at the end of the nineteenth century (a Mr. Prud'homme, according to the citation at the beginning of the microfilmed version), nor Tanguay, nor Denissen, however, appear to have had access in any way to the registers of Saint-Joseph des Miamis, where the two Louis Deshêtres brothers were baptized. Tanguay and Denissen do not give precise baptism dates for these two individuals.

The first Louis was named for his godfather, **Louis Coulon de Villiers**.¹³ This Louis Deshêtres was born and baptized 26 January 1731, son of *antoine Deshestres*, who is said to have been "born in New

⁸ Sainte-Anne de Detroit, #1252, *Thérèse*, baptism 7 March 1762, born that morning, godparents Louis Tremblay & Catherine Gagnon; death 8, burial 9. The parents, *louis dehestre and Thérèse Louvier Damour, ses pere et mere en legitime mariage*, resided at Grosse Pointe.

⁹ Photocopy from The Missouri State Historical Society, French-Spanish Archives, 1763-1841, Reel 15, Folder #2013.

¹⁰ Charlotte Damours Louvières was born 24 February 1752, PRDH #24457.

¹¹ Personal e-mail from Bertrand Desjardins, 29 March 2006.

¹² See Loraine DiCerbo's April and October 2006 *MHH* articles. A recent article in *L'Ancêtre*, the journal of the Société de généalogie de Québec, perpetuates the confusion concerning the two Louis Deshêtres sons. See #276, vol. 33, Autumn 2006. I have written to the editor of the journal. [See editor's note at the beginning of this article.]

¹³ Louis Coulon de Villiers, twenty-three years later, would preserve twenty-two-year-old George Washington's life at Great Meadows. George Washington and his men had ambushed and assassinated Louis Coulon de Villiers's

England and at present an inhabitant and blacksmith at this post and of **Charlotte Chevalier**, married to each other before a representative of the Church”: *né en la Nouvelle angleterre et de present habitant et forgeron en ce poste et de Charlotte Chevalier maries ensemble en face d'eglise*. Godmother was *Marie Rheaume femme d'augustin Larchevesque*. Both godparents signed with Father Mesaiger. The second Louis, Louis de Gonzague, was born 13 August 1736 and given lay baptism (*ondoyement*) on the 15th of the same month in the absence of a missionary by Mr. de Lusignan, commandant of the post (*et baptisé le 15 du meme mois en l'absence du missionnaire par mr de lusignan commandant du poste*). The formal baptismal rites were supplied when Father Dujaunay was at the post on 21 June 1738, with *de lusignan* as godfather and *Charlotte Robert jeanne femme de francois menard* as godmother. The father signed as *antoine de haitre*. The godparents also signed with Father Dujaunay. See Loraine DiCerbo's previous article in *MHH*, October 2006. The mother of the two *Louis*, Charlotte Chevalier, signed elsewhere in the register when she served as godmother.¹⁴

Going to the original records, whenever possible, even those with flawed entries, can resolve well-meaning but inaccurate interpretations of the original records and bring to light the facts of our ancestors' lives.

Postscript: From PRDH, accessed 24 April 2012:

Individual

54009

LOUIS DEGONZAGUE **DESHETRES** Status(es) : Immigrant

Father : ANTOINE **DESHETRES**

Mother : MARIE CHARLOTTE **CHEVALIER CHESNE**

Family

Birth : 1736-08-13 **Poste de la riviere st-joseph des illinois (miamis)**

Death : 1809-05-10

Burial : [1809-05-12](#) St-Léon-le-Grand (Maskinongé)

brother, Joseph Coulon de Jumonville, and some of the men with Jumonville, who had been sent on a peaceful mission to tell the American colonists to remain on their side of the mountains in modern-day Pennsylvania near what is now Pittsburgh. Nevertheless, Louis spared Washington's life, thereby allowing Washington the chance to achieve his destiny. See the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography on the Web* for biographies of both of these Coulon brothers.

¹⁴ Mission de la Rivière St. Joseph (Niles, MI), FHL microfilm #1294977, item 1. This 1731 entry is the only source that gives an origin of New England for Antoine, despite what is reported by some writers or data bases. It should be noted that the identification *Nouvelle Angleterre* was not limited to what would now be considered the New England States but included any of the American colonies, such as New York or Pennsylvania. At this time, no documented information is available about Antoine's origins or ancestry. See Thursday, 10 August 2006, *Detroit Free Press* for Susan Ager's article, "18th Century Treasures in the Mud," about the recent archeological discoveries concerning Fort St. Joseph des Miamis, modern-day Niles, Michigan, available for purchase at the *Detroit Free Press* web site: <http://www.freep.com/> Godmother Marie Madeleine Réaume's second marriage was to Louis *Chevallier*. (This Louis consistently signed his last name with two /l/s.) They lived at Fort St. Joseph until they were removed by the British in 1780. Their story is another one that has not been fully told.

First marriage : 1776-06-17 Montréal

with

MARIE FRANCOISE FORTIER

Father : FRANCOIS **FORTIER**

Mother : MARIE SUZANNE **JARRY HENRICHON HENRY**

Family

Second marriage : 1796-06-28 St-Laurent

with

MARIE JOSEPHE PROULX CLEMENT

Father : JEAN FRANCOIS BAPTISTE **PROULX CLEMENT**

Mother : MARIE GENEVIEVE **AUGER BARON**

Family

- BAPTISÉ LE 21-06-1738. IL AVAIT ÉTÉ ONDOYÉ LE 15-08-1736 EN L'ABSENCE DU MISSIONNAIRE. SOURCE: MARTHE FARIBAUT-BEAUREGARD, LA POPULATION DES FORTS D'AMÉRIQUE, TOME I

[Baptized 21 June 1738. He had been given emergency baptism on 15 August 1736 in the absence of a missionary. Source; Marthe Faribault-Beauregard, *La Population des Forts d'Amérique*, Tome I]

- IL S'EST MARIÉ "À LA GAUMINE" AVEC LOUISE THERESE BERTRAND À L'ASSOMPTION DE DÉTROI, GESTE POUR LEQUEL IL A ÉTÉ EXCOMMUNIÉ. SOURCE: COMMUNICATION PERSONNELLE DE MME SUZANNE SOMMERVILLE

[He married "à la Gaumine" with Louise Thérèse Bertrand at L'Assomption de Détroit, an act for which he was excommunicated. Source: Personal communication from Mrs. Suzanne Sommerville]

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Family

36248 [Couple]

of **LOUIS DESHETRES**

Father : ANTOINE **DESHETRES**

Mother : MARIE CHARLOTTE **CHEVALIER**

CHESNE

Family

and **MARIE THERESE DAMOUR**

DELOUVIERE

Father : LOUIS **DAMOUR DELOUVIERE**

Mother : MARIE JOSEPHE **DETONTY**

DEPALUDY

Family

Marriage: 1760-02-08 [*sic*, 18] Ste-Anne-de-Détroit

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