La population des forts français d'Amérique (XVIIIe siècle) Tome III Détroit - A Review

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Société généalogique canadienne-française (SGCF) published *La population des forts français d'Amérique (XVIIIe siècle) Tome III Détroit* in October 2014. While this is an ambitious undertaking, Tome III has a number of problems and deficiencies that should be considered prior to a purchase or use.

The historical introduction is incorrect, incomplete, confusing, and lacks sources.

The compilers relied on a faulty transcription of Ste. Anne du Détroit's Records and may have done the same for Assumption.

The compilers failed to cite the microfilms or other sources used to compile Tome III.

While the compilers state that they have included the records for the Native Americans from the Mission of the Assumption among the Huron of Detroit, these records are not part of the book even though they were published by Robert Toupin in *Les Écrits de Pierre Potier* (Ottawa: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1996).

While SGCF appears to have included the baptisms of French Canadians performed at the Mission of the Assumption among the Huron of Detroit starting in 1760 (we have not checked to see if all the baptisms have been included), they have not included the 17 baptisms of French Canadians performed from 1754 to 1756. Toupin includes transcriptions of these records on pages 1007 – 1009.

Equally important, they have not included all the 15 marriages of French Canadians that occurred from 1764 to 1767; two marriages, have not been included: 1) Jean Baptiste Goilette / Oillette [Ouellet] and Susanne Patene / Patel on 7 January 1765 and 2) Jean Baptiste Ro [Rault] and Marie Jeanne Prudhomme on 24 June 1765. Toupin transcribed the missing marriages on pages 1024 – 1025.

Unlike Tomes I and II published by Marthe Faribault Beauregard,[1] Tome III does not have an index. This prevents users from checking marriage information for daughters unless the reader knows in advance whom the daughter married, or they review all of the marriages.

Tome III does not contain a list of abbreviations used in the transcriptions, leading users to potentially misinterpret the transcription.

The introductory material does not explain how names were transcribed and standardized. While the compilers appear to have attempted to standardize surnames, they are not consistent in the standardization. The compilers appear to have attempted to transcribe given names as they were written in the faulty transcription cited above, rather than on the original records, leading to misunderstandings especially in the case of the Native Americans.

Tome III does not include an identification table for Native American Tribes or Nations; this oversight means that many readers may not know the modern term used by the Tribe or Nation.

The compilers are inconsistent in the material transcribed from section to section and for individual records. In some cases, the compilers have associated the wrong priest or missionary with the sacramental act.

[1] *La population des forts français d'Amérique* (XVIIIe siècle), (Tome 1: Montréal: Éditions Bergeron. 1982, Tome 2: 1984).

Baptisms include the names of the infant baptized; the date of the baptism and birth or age if it appears in the records; his or her parents; the godparents; and the names of the individuals who signed the register.

Marriages include the groom and bride; their ages if included in the records; the names of their parents and their parish if it appears in the records; and the names of the witnesses as they appear in the records used. They do not, however, include the names of the individuals who signed the register.

Burials include the date of death if it appears in the records; the date of the burial; the person's age; the name of the person's parents or spouse; and the names of the witnesses. Notes regarding the burial are included for some burials. This information may include the place where the person was buried or notes regarding the cause of death, but the coverage is inconsistent.

The compilers sometimes added information about the people named in a record that does not appear in the record itself, and some of these additional details are not accurate.

Alternative Sources for the Information Found in Tome III

Primary Records: the original records / registers from Ste. Anne du Détroit and most of the original records / registers for L'Assomption-de-la-Pointe-de-Montréal-du-Detroit (Assumption) are available online through a subscription to Ancestry or a subscription to the Drouin Institute's Québec Records.[2] Both subscriptions also include transcriptions to these records. Family Search[3] also has original records and transcriptions of the Assumption records.

Secondary Sources

Marriages:
Sharon A. Kelley, editor, *Marriage Records Ste. Anne Church Detroit 1701 - 1850* (Detroit: The Detroit Society for Genealogical Research, 2001). The names have been transcribed exactly as they appear in Ste. Anne's parish register. The marriages are listed in chronological order, in alphabetical order by groom, and by bride. The index includes the spouses and their parents.

Germaine Chiasson, Sharon Maitre, Juliette St. Pierre, Charlene Boudreau, Monique Pelland, and Marie Cousineau, *Mariages Paroisse l'Assomption de Windsor, Ontario 1700 - 1985 (*Ottawa: Société-Franco-Ontarienne d'Histoire et de Généalogie, 1988). SFOHG standardizes the names in their *répertoire*. Although the two-volume set does not include an index, they have included a list of the brides and their spouses. Baptismal information and ages are included if they appear in the original record.

Burials:
Gail Moreau-DesHarnais, *People Buried from Ste. Anne's Church – Parts I to VII* (*Michigan's Habitant Heritage*, Vol. 31, #2 (April 2010) to Vol. 32, #4 (October 2011). Names have been transcribed exactly as they appear in the original records. Information about the deceased from the parish register has been translated into English. Many entries are annotated with information not included in the register such as the deceased's baptismal or marriage date. All entries are in chronological order.

Gail Moreau-DesHarnais, *Burials from L'Assomption-de-la-Pointe-de-Montréal-du-Detroit – Parts I to IV (Michigan's Habitant Heritage*, Vol. 33, #1 (January 2012) to Vol. 33, #4 (October 2012). Names have

[2] https://www.genealogiequebec.com/en/
[3] www.familysearch.org. Select Canada, then: Ontario, Roman Catholic Church Records, 1760-1923, Essex, Windsor, Assumption.

been transcribed exactly as they appear in the original records. Information about the deceased from the parish register has been translated into English. Many entries are annotated with information not included in the register such as the deceased's baptismal or marriage date. All entries are in chronological order.

Gail Moreau-DesHarnais' burial record articles are available to FCHSM members starting with the April 2010 – Oct 2012 issue of *Michigan's Habitant Heritage*.

Juliette St-Pierre, Monique Pelland, Marie Couisineau, and Charlene Boudreau, *Sépultures Paroisse l'Assomption de Windsor, Ontario 1700 - 1985* (Ottawa: Société Franco-Ontarienne d'Histoire et de Généalogie, unknown publication date). All entries appear in alphabetical order. Names have been standardized, but alternative spellings are often given. In addition to the name of the deceased, entries may include the names of one or both parents or a spouse, the age of the deceased and the death or burial date. Some burials appearing in the original records are missing from the *répertoire*.

The Huron Mission and the Early French-Canadian Baptismal and Marriage Records:
Robert Toupin, *Les Écrits de Pierre Potier* (Ottawa: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1996).

Genealogical Dictionaries and other Secondary Sources:
Suzanne Boivin Sommerville, *French-Canadian Genealogy – Sources and Resources*. [No longer on the FCHSM website.]

René Jetté, *Dictionnaire généalogique des familles du Québec des origines à 1730* (Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal: 1983). Jetté's dictionary covers families to 1730, including those in Detroit. Scanned copies of Jetté are available with a subscription to Drouin Institute's *Québec Records*.

PRDH *Programme de recherche en démographie historique de l'Université de Montréal online*: http://www.genealogie.umontreal.ca (*PRDH*). While *PRDH's* coverage of families in the *pays d'en haut* is not complete, many marriages and burials that took place in Ste. Anne du Détroit or L'Assomption-de-la-Pointe-de-Montréal-du-Detroit are included in a Family or Couple view.

Christian Denissen, *Genealogy of the French Families of the Detroit River Region 1701 - 1936* (Detroit: Detroit Society for Genealogical Research, 2nd edition, 1987). While there are mistakes in Denissen, it is a usable reference if the following problems are kept in mind and if the researcher consults the original records available from Ancestry, the Drouin Institute, or Family Search's digitized parish record. Denissen anglicized all first names. The French spellings should have been used through at least 1850. The ancestry shown in Denissen for some families prior to their arrival in the Detroit River area may not be correct. The errors arose because the editors of the volume relied on Tanguay's dictionary (see below). If the baptismal or marriage dates and locations shown in Denissen are not precise, Tanguay may have assumed details, such as the individual's parents. You should consult one of the other sources listed above to verify that part of the line. In addition to the errors already discussed, Denissen may have entered the baptismal date for the individual's birth date. You should also refer to Suzanne Boivin Sommerville's discussion of Denissen and Tanguay in the article cited above.

Cyprien Tanguay, *Dictionnaire Généalogique* (Montréal: Eusèbe Senécal & Fils, Imprimeurs-Éditeurs, late 19th century). Tanguay compiled his dictionary in the late 19th century when digital and microfilm copies of parish records were not available. In certain cases, he made assumptions regarding the parents of couples / families covered in the dictionary. Books correcting Tanguay have been published. Despite these shortcomings, Tanguay borrowed the original records from Ste Anne's and Assumption to compile his dictionary; therefore, many families from the Detroit River Region are covered.