Rush to judgment?
Part 1 [2020 Version]
Marie Lepage & Étienne Veron Grandmenil: An example of misinterpreted evidence

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Note from the author: When this three-part article was originally published, availability of and the ability to add images was not as possible as it has since become. As a result, I have written this revised edition in 2020 with more images than appeared in the original and a few additional remarks. The three articles are combined into one file.

“Le Page, Marie Therese, daughter of Marie Le Page, widow of the late Bausseron and of sieur Grandmenil, commis du Magazin. Born July 24, 1709. This is the first record of an illegitimate child. It is not profitable to trace the descent of this unfortunate.”

Clarence M. Burton in “Cadillac’s Village”

When I first read the above passage, I was shocked to see once again the virulence with which the nineteenth century viewed illegitimacy. Burton writes off this innocent child simply because he disapproves of the behavior of her biological parents, primarily the behavior of her mother. As a protest to Burton’s censure, I decided that it was time to find out more about Marie LePage and, especially, about what became of her daughter, Marie-Thérèse.

Checking the name Lepage in Burton’s directory, I saw that he identifies Marie Le Page as one granted property at Détroit in 1707:

59 Marie Le Page, March 20, 1707, at 3 livres 12 sols rent and 10 livres for other rights. This is the only record of a conveyance to a woman in the early Detroit. Madam Le Page had a husband living at this time, but subsequent events, as well as this conveyance, lead me to think that he had separated from her—probably with just cause. Her name and a little of her history appears in the directory below.2

The directory—appearing “below” with “a little of her history” showing the “just cause” (as presumed by Burton) and the “subsequent events,”—includes the item given at the beginning of this article: Marie-Thérèse’s birth on 24 July 1709 on the eighth anniversary of the founding of Détroit, said birth occurring more than two years after the conveyance of property.

Burton’s editorial comment is characteristic of what I consider despicable late-nineteenth-century Victorian attitudes toward illegitimacy. Because the child was born of parents not married to each other, she is not worthy of any further attention. Burton does not even indicate that Marie-Thérèse was baptized the day after her birth and given the last name of Marie Lepage’s first husband, at least by the compiler of the transcript of the register available on Family History Library microfilm #1026602. My translation:

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1 Clarence M. Burton, “Cadillac’s Village or Detroit Under Cadillac,” with List of Property Owners and A History of the Settlement 1701 To 1710, Compiled by C. M. Burton, Detroit: 1896, p. 29. Words within parentheses are as in the original. My additions appear in brackets.
Today the 25th of July 1709 was baptized by me the undersigned missionary priest Marie Therese daughter of Marie Le Page widow of deceased Beausseron, and of Sr Grandmesnil Commandant [sic] 

[the original record reads Commis, clerk]

du Magasin du Roy, born yesterday at night about the eleventh hour. [the original has an inked-out section here]
godfather was Henry Bellisle,
Surgeon, the godmother Therese David
wife of Sr Desrochers who signed
along with me on the same day and year as above.

[signed] Henry Bellisle
Cherubin Deniau
Therese David      ptre [priest] Mr RI [Missionare Recollet]

An image of the actual page in the original register shows no such last name given for the child.4

3 Pp. 48-49, Registers of Ste. Anne de Détroit, from the third book of Baptisms of the French, certified, as recorded on p. 36, 9 November 1707 by Cherubin Deniau and Lamothe Cadillac. FHL microfilm #1026602, a transcription of the original, my translation. Sr Desrochers is Jacob Marsac, sieur de Lhommetrou (“dit Desrochers” according to the entry at Détroit), married Thérèse David, widow of Massé Martin, 12 June 1706 Montréal. René Jetté, Dictionnaire généalogique des familles du Québec des origines à 1730, Les Presses de l’Université de Montréal: Montréal, 1983, p. 774, hereafter Jetté, and photocopy FHL Microfilm. Born 1664, Thérèse David (Claude & Suzanne DeNoyon) married Massé Martin about 1678 at Bécancour and had at least three adult Martin children in 1706. (Jetté, p. 779) Massé Martin was deceased by 1694. Thérèse David’s father, Claude David, is brother to Guillaume David, Marie Lepage’s grandfather, so she is cousin to Marie (Jetté, p. 312). By Jacob Marsac, Thérèse David had three children, the last two born at Détroit in 1706 and 1707 when she was 42-43 years old. (Jetté, pp. 774-75) She died 24 September 1727 Ste. Anne de Détroit. Programme de recherche en démographie historique de l’Université de Montréal online: http://www.genealogie.umontreal.ca (hereafter PRDH).

4 Photocopy of original entry for 25 juillet 1709, Register of Ste. Anne de Détroit. The entries by Constantin delHalle for 1704-1706 do have side annotations with last names given to each child baptized but not those by Dominique Delamarche in 1706 and Cherubin Deniau in 1709. Did the transcriber of the data for the version microfilmed by FHL adopt this practice, even though the original does not have annotations in this section of the register? The FHL film includes a title page endorsed by Cyprien Tanguay at Ottawa 4 August 1881, stating that the transcript was compiled by a Mr. H. Prudhomme. It was deposited in the Archives 4 August 1881, signed Douglas Brymner, Archivist. This same page is titled “Premier Livre de Baptemes & Enterrements du Fort PontChartrain du Detroit 1703,” signed J. Bte forestier. Another puzzlement! Be forewarned that the FHL transcription and the transcription available through the Drouin microfilms both have multiple errors in reading. Going to the original source is the better choice. [Note: the above image is from the Early U. S. Catholic records of the original register available at Ancestry.ca under Autres Registres. These images were not yet accessible on the web when the article was written in 2001.]
Unlike Burton, the Catholic Church of New France did not discriminate against children born out of wedlock. It welcomed them into the fold, not attributing to them any presumed sins of their parents. At times, as in this case in the transcribed version, such a child was given the name of a known husband, especially when it was possible the husband could have been the father, so this may be why the transcriber of the FHL Ste. Anne de Detroit record decided to give the widow’s deceased husband’s name to the child in the margin. Years after writing this article, I was able to view another transcription of the Ste. Anne records, what I call the Drouin transcription, because it is available now in the Drouin Collection digital images on Ancestry.ca. This is how that transcriber recorded the baptism:

Here the mother’s birth last name, Lepage, is given to the baby, although this does not appear in the original record. Caveat emptor! Transcriptions must always be treated with caution.

According to the original 25 July 1709 baptism entry (and Burton’s own note), Marie Lepage was then a widow, veuve. No death record exists for her husband. Burton nevertheless implies that her husband “separated” from her because of infidelity on her part at some unspecified time, possibly before March of 1707, when she was granted property, or between March of 1707 and July of 1709. Yet an entry in the
Registers of Ste. Anne de Détroit for 7 November 1707 (the same day as the conseil de guerre / court-martial “jugement” of Berthelamy Pichon) states:


It would appear Marie Lepage’s husband was still alive in November of 1707, eight months after the conveyance of property to Marie. In fact, Cadillac had granted him a large parcel of land outside the fort in March of 1707. Burton lists 31 “farm” grants made by Cadillac, one of them to:

Bosseron, Francois. (Tanguay spells the name Beauceron.) Farmer [sic].6 He was the husband of Marie Le Page (which name see.)7

The entry for the property Marie Lepage received reads, in the version in the Michigan Pioneer Collection:

59. [Sites within the fort] Of the 20th of March 1707. To Marie Le Page a site of twenty-four feet in St. Antoine street and 22 wide, adjoining one side on St. Louis street and, the other, on the Square and us [Lamothe Cadillac], at three livres twelve sols, and 10# for other rights; sold to Joseph Seneval [sic]8 p. 378.

This appears to be building #59 on Burton’s “creation” of a map of Detroit in 1708.9

Yet, in a document “Given at Quebec this 4th of November 1721,” and entitled “Cadillac Again Petitions to Be Put in Possession of Detroit,” Governor General Vaudreuil’s annotation reads:

In this stretch of land to the northeast of the fort [are, in 1720-21,] . . . four [original] concessions granted by M. de La Mothe to the (persons) named Delorme, Desrochers, M. Aubin and the widow Beausseron” but all “the houses [are] within the fort.10

Vaudreuil then adds “There are no Frenchmen [still occupying conceded land in 1720-1721] except the four named above, each of whom has two arpents frontage [by 20 arpents deep].”11 An arpent was about 191.83 English feet. Cadillac had granted farmland outside the fort to 31 individuals, including François

5 FHL #1026602
6 The original word is habitant and is another example of a Burton mistranslation. A habitant in 17th and 18th century New France was a permanent settler who was no longer bound by a contract he had signed either before or when he arrived, nor was he a soldier. He may or may not have been a farmer. See Marcel Trudel, perhaps the foremost authority on the early history of Canada, in La Population du Canada en 1666 (1995) In presenting his reconstitution of the census of 1666, Trudel reproduced the term used to describe the profession ("fonction" or "état") of a colonist as it was actually written on the document. As for the term habitant, he explains: “It is the characteristic / status, without agricultural connotations, of one who has established himself as capable of being or becoming self-employed (who enjoys the privilege of engaging in trade, which is not allowed the person under contract or the immigrant.)” My translation. Burton translates the French habitant as farmer.
7 “Cadillac’s Village,” p. 20.
10 MPHC, 33: 679.
11 MPHC, 33: 680. The fort had been changed considerably by the time Tonty became Commandant.
Bosseron, but the owners of these original concessions had abandoned them, “except the four named above.” Each of these four concessions outside the fort was considerably larger (almost 400 English feet) in frontage than the “twenty-four feet in St. Antoine street and 22 wide” (cited above) granted to Marie Lepage. Thus, there were two properties associated with the couple originally, one in the village and one outside. By 1721, the one in the village no longer belonged to Marie Lepage, having been sold to Joseph Senecal, yet she is apparently the owner-of-record for the larger one outside of the fort that had been granted originally to her husband and inherited by her. Burton, in “Cadillac’s Village,” does not specify the details of the farmland Marie Lepage’s husband received, although these details do appear in the Cadillac Papers.

The list of contracts given by Lamothe Cadillac was joined to the letter written by Vaudreuil and Bégon to the Minister in France on 4 November 1721. (Note the date.) According to this list, Bosseron received property #14, measuring two arpents in frontage by twenty in depth, between François Fafard and Jean-Baptiste Gouriau.12 The list was, apparently, drawn up during Cadillac’s petition to regain control over his possessions at Détroit, both personal and real property, after his return to France from Louisiane. Étienne Veron Grandmesnil, as Cadillac’s agent, was personally involved in these transactions, but not, as will be seen, the Grandmesnil Burton cites in his Village directory entry:

Veron, Etienne, de Grandmeuil [sic]. Appointed attorney in fact for Cadillac, July 26, 1709. His name has been mentioned above. He was born in 1649, married Marie Moral, dit Montendre, and died at Three Rivers [sic] May 18, 1721. He lived several years at Detroit, and was a man of considerable importance, having charge of the public storehouse and acting as amanuensis for Cadillac.13

In addition to being factually inaccurate, Burton’s directory entry for “sieur Grandmeuil” displays distinctly Victorian attitudes. The child Thérèse is “unfortunate,” but Burton praises the man identified in the register as the father of the child and reports that he was appointed to an important position just two days after the birth. Burton reminds the reader that the name “has been mentioned above” but does not refer to Veron as father of a child born out-of-wedlock, nor does he give a date for Veron’s marriage. This would have made it all too obvious that, if this Veron indeed fathered Thérèse, he was a 60-year-old adulterer, who had relations with a “widow” 35 years younger than he. Instead, Burton describes him as “a man of considerable importance” and an “amanuensis for Cadillac.” Burton rewards Veron de Grandmesnil with a high-class word derived from Latin, thus giving him an aura of prestige, even though an amanuensis is simply a scribe, “one employed to take dictation or to copy manuscript.”14

In an article several years later, Burton seems mainly interested in the social ramifications of the illegitimate birth:

In the meantime there occurred one of those social catastrophes that, it seems, even our early colonists were not exempt from. There lived in Detroit a widow, Marie LePage, and this Grandmesnil (whose name was Etienne Veron de Grandmesnil) was accused by the priest of being the father of Marie Therese LePage, a daughter of the widow. Grandmesnil found it convenient to leave Detroit before the entry of the baptism of this

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12 NAC, Microfilm #F413, AC C 11E, Vol. 15: ff. 3-15v.
13 “Cadillac’s Village,” p. 35.

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child, July 24 [sic], 1709, and went to Montreal, where he was appointed the confidential attorney of Cadillac by letter of Attorney, dated July 26, 1709.15

The Village directory entry for Marie Le Page, in contrast, bristles with Burton’s indignation at her:

It is with the name of Marie Lepage that the first great social scandal of Detroit is connected. The pages of St. Anne’s record with glaring plainness the false step of this unfortunate woman. It is impossible to tell, now, the penance that she performed in atonement for her wrong-doing. The church record, possibly, operated to deter others from following in her path. Whether the man lost prestige or not is unknown, but we do know that he left Detroit about the time this affair became public, and returned to Montreal, where he was appointed the trusted agent and attorney for Cadillac, and retained that position as long as Cadillac remained at Detroit.16

Marie Lepage is, like her daughter, “unfortunate”; Burton expects her to do “penance . . . in atonement for her wrong-doing.” In contrast, “the man” may have “lost prestige.”17

I do not agree with Burton that “It is not profitable to trace the descent of this unfortunate.” In fact, if Burton had done so he might have learned that Étienne Veron, senior, husband of Marie-Therese Moral, was not the father of Thérèse. Étienne Veron,18 his son, it appears, fathered the child, and Veron, junior, was not married at the time. Instead of a tale of “social” consequences and a wife’s sinful betrayal of her husband, it seems what occurred here was sexual relations between two single people, Veron about 29 and Lepage about 24. And, as will be presented later, Étienne Veron, the son, and his family appear to have taken responsibility for the child to some extent.

Marie Lepage was truly previously married to François Bosseron / Beauceron (Laurent & Anne Dumaine) on 12 June 1706 Montréal19 and filed a marriage contract the previous day, 11 June 1706.20 This couple was part of the large group that arrived in Détroit in the summer of 1706.21

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15 In “Fort Pontchartrain du Detroit—1701 to 1710—under Cadillac,” MPHS, Vol. XXIX, 1901, pp. 240-317, p. 275, footnote 74. I see no indication on the original that the priest “accused” Grandmenil of anything, unless this is what has been obliterated (and I rather doubt that!). See the next footnote.
16 “Cadillac’s Village,” p. 29. Burton’s phrase “glaring plainness” confused me at first because I saw no such thing in the version of the record on the FHL microfilm, not even the word illegitimate. A photocopy of the actual entry reveals a half of a line of text blotted out. When was this section obliterated? Did it occur on the day-of-record or after Burton had seen the “glaring plainness” of the entry? Or is it simply an error in writing by the priest that was inked over?
17 I have to wonder how many women had access to the church registers so that they would be deterred “from following in her path.”
18 In fairness to Burton, he did not have access to the indexes that are currently available. The record as it appears on PRDH Online:


19 Document 47929, PRDH Online and photocopy. Jacques Lepage, father of the bride, and five others witnessed the marriage.
20 Le Parchemin, 11 Juin 1706 (Mtl), Lepailleur de LaFerté, M. (1701-1732): Contrat de mariage entre François Beausseron, soldat de la compagnie de Longueuil, fils de Laurent Beausseron et de Anne Demain, de la paroisse de St Pierre du Castet, diocèse de Basac en Gascogne; et Marie Lepage (22 ans), fille de Jacques Lepage et de

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Two days before the wedding contract, on 9 June 1706, Marie Lepage was present in Montréal as a witness at the marriage contract of Bonaventure Compain and Catherine Badaillac, who would also journey to Fort Pontchartrain. Although Marie Lepage did not sign her own marriage contract, her marriage record, or any of the events she witnessed at Fort Pontchartrain, she did clearly sign as witness on the contract of her friend, Catherine.\(^{22}\)

François Beausseron was present as witness for Bonaventure Compain, although he did not sign.

In her marriage contract Marie Lepage is identified as being from “Manathe” (Manhattan, New York) in the English colonies. The contract was signed in the home of her parents “au Quartier de bonsecours”\(^{23}\) in Montréal. Françoise Dumouchelle, Marie’s friend, who had been hired as a servant of the Cadillac family to go to Détroit in 1703, was present. Françoise Dumouchelle\(^{24}\) married, also in 1706, on 30 August, Jacques Croquelois dit La Violette, Soldat de La Compagnie de M. Delongueil, although it does not appear that she returned to Détroit.\(^{25}\)

According to PRDH at the time of writing this article, one child of the Beauceiron marriage survived, Jean-Baptiste, who wed Marie Louise Roy 25 February 1754 at St-Vincent-de-Paul\(^{26}\). Jetté does not record this child, and I do not accept it.

Marie Lepage apparently left Fort Pontchartrain within a few years of Thérèse’s birth. Her sister, Jeanne-Marguerite Lepage, married Simon GILBERT dit Sanspeur or Sanscrainte (without fear), at Montréal 28 February 1713.\(^{27}\) She consistently used the name Marguerite. The church record does not record Marie’s

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Madeleine David, de la ville de Manathe en la Nouvelle Flandre. Doc #: 17060611PA018671. Archiv-Histo Online and photocopy ANQ.

21 FHL Microfilm #1026602; Marie Lepage “femme du nomme Beausseron,” was at Détroit by at least late 1706 when she was godmother for Étienne, son of Anchez8(?) and a “hurone sa mere,” baptized 26 November 1706 with, as godfather, Jean Legros [Jean-Baptiste Gros or Legros dit Laviolette (Antoine & Jacqueline Aubry), an interpreter of the Iroquois language, engagé Ouest 26-05-1702 to 27-12-1718, m Marie Bouet (Alexis & Françoise Bouet) 24-11-1700 Lachine (Jetté, p. 531)]. See MHH, October 2000.

22 ANQ [now BAnQ] Montréal, 9 April 1706, Notary Lepailleur. My thanks to Gail Moreau for noticing this signature. Marie also wrote her mark, a cross, on 5 July 1707, when she was godmother to Marie Angélique, daughter of Étienne Boutron and Angélique Proteau. François Legantier, Sieur de Lavallée Rané was godfather. Photocopy of original.

23 ANQ Montréal, 11 June 1706, Notary Lepailleur, photocopy.

24 FHL Microfilm #1026602: Geneviève Lefèverière (Charron dite Laferrière) and François Bienvenue dit Delisle’s son Joseph was baptized on 5 March 1704 [usually reported in error as 5 May, but the third entry in the original first register of St. Anne] with Pierre Tichenet as godfather and Françoise Dumouchelle as godmother. Photocopy of original.

25 PRDH Online and FHL #0375842, Registres de N.-D. Mtl (1713-1737)

26 PRDH Online and photocopy FHL #1018205. The side bar identifies the act as the marriage of “Pierre” Bosseron and Marie Roix, but the text calls him “j.b. Bosseron, fils de pierre bosseron et de marguerite lepage”. [I am not convinced this link to Marie Lepage is accurate and have told PRDH.]

27 Document 48096, PRDH Online. Simon Gilbert dit Sanspeur declared not being able to sign; occupation : soldat de la compagnie de Bleinvile; origin : paroisse de Levac, évêché d’Angouleme. Marguerite was 19 and also said she could not sign. Like her sister, she was born in the English colonies, about 1692, and baptized 24 August 1700 (Jetté, p. 715). Marcel Fournier in De la Nouvelle-Angletterre à la Nouvelle-France (1992) gives her birthplace as
presence, but the marriage contract does (26 February 1713, LePailleur, photocopy). She was in Montréal the following year, also, because PRDH assigns her two illegitimate children who were baptized at Montréal, the first on 04 July 1714, Jean-Baptiste LEPAGE by an unknown father; and on 04 September 1715, another boy, Pierre RENAULT, son of Pierre Renault dit Saint Jean, *soldat de la compagnie de Bleinvillle*. A Pierre Renault was present at Marie Lepage’s sister’s wedding in 1713. A notarial document written 2 September 1714, before Adhémar dit Saint-Martin, J.-B., at Montréal is a “Quittance de Marie Lepage, veuve de Bausseron, à Simon Jolibert.” Jolibert is Gilbert, her brother-in-law. She had loaned him six hundred livres du pais (money of New France) the previous autumn, and he had repaid her. Three years later, on 17 August 1717, Marie was godmother to her sister Marguerite’s son Francois Gilbert at Montréal. She is identified as widow of deceased François Bosseron.

**According to PRDH online, Marie-Marguerite Lepage (Jacques & Madeleine David) married again, to Joseph Vaudry (Jacques & Jeanne Renaud Arnaud) sometime before 12 December 1718, the date of their child’s death at Détroit. No record of the marriage survives, but records for Ste. Anne de Détroit are missing in this period. Jetté shows a daughter, Marguerite, born in May 1718 [sic] and buried at Détroit 12 December 1718 [sic] at seven months, and four more children—all of whom were born at Détroit.**

The family was thus in Détroit by 1718. *(But see footnote 33.)* The Vaudry / Lepage couple lived at Détroit at the time of the survey of property taken in 1720, and Simon Gilbert, “Sergent dela garnison”

either New York or Amboy (today Perth), New Jersey (p. 160). The GILBERT children and their baptism dates, according to PRDH, were:

b 1713-01-24 Montréal d 1713-02-04 Montréal JEAN
b 1714-02-21 Montréal JEAN SIMON
b 1715-07-20 Montréal JEAN BAPTISTE married 1746-05-03 Fort de Chartres MARIE
b 1717-08-17 Montréal FRANCOIS

and ANGELIQUE, who married 1746-07-25 Ste. Anne de Détroit PIERRE FRANCOIS MICHEL RACINE BEAUCHENE (PRDH Online). Jetté also lists a François-Marie 1726 at Détroit; a Catherine 1729 at Détroit; and gives the baptism date for Angélique as 05 June 1730 at Détroit, p. 497.

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28 PRDH Online and FHL #0375842, Registres de N.-D. Mtl (1713-1737). The notation on the document identifies the child as Pierre Roy [sic] not Pierre Renault as given on PRDH. Godparents were Julien Delierre (Delière or Deslières dit Bonvouloir in Jetté) & Catherine Laplante “femme de Bonaventure compain dit Lesperance.” Catherine “Laplante” is Catherine Badaillac (Louis Badaillac dit Laplante & Catherine Lalore) from Sorel in Bonaventure Compain dit Lesperance 6 October 1706 Montréal. Marie Lepage witnessed their marriage contract. Two Compain children were born at Détroit, 1707 and 1710. Compain had an illegitimate child, Marie-Anne, at Détroit “mère inconnu” 23 June 1715 before his first wife’s death and burial at Montréal 13 September 1715. He remarried 27 October 1715 Montréal Catherine Poupard. (According to Jetté: 266, but this attribution is an error. See my “Marie-Anne Magnan dite Lespérance, called Hope: A Cautionary “Tale,” *MHH*, Vol. 25, #1, Jan 2005. The child is identified as *fille naturelle de lesperance*, and the father is more likely Antoine Magnan dit Lespérance.)

29Archiv-Histo, Online, Doc #: 17140902PA011947, and photocopy, ANQ.

30 PRDH Online, document 44835.

31 PRDH Online. Joseph Vaudry was baptized 15 November 1687 at St-François-du-Lac, the first entry in the surviving register, and the family is said to be from Riviere-du-Loup. FHL Microfilm.

32 Jetté, p. 1115. Marie-Madeleine born 11, baptized 12 November 1720; Joseph born 03, baptized 04 November 1722; Jacques born 31 Dec 1724, baptized 01 January 1725; and Jean-Baptiste born and baptized 25 April 1726.

33See footnote 10 above. Also, I thank Gail Moreau, Editor, for bringing to my attention an entry in the Ste. Anne registers: 1719 - November the baptism of the seven-month-old child, Marguerite Bosseronne, legitimate daughter of Joseph Vaudry and Marie Lepage. The godmother was Marguerite Lepage. Jetté has a May birth and 12 Dec 1718 burial of a Marguerite, the daughter of Joseph Vaudry and Marie Lepage. Something does not fit. Is there another unaccounted-for child? Or is this another transcription error? {Author’s note: Having since seen the original registry at the Chancery of Detroit, I can verify that the date is 1719.} Did Marie give this daughter the last name of her first husband to insure inheritance rights? According to PRDH Online, Marie Lepage’s Vaudry children who married before 1800 were Marie Madeleine, married 3 January 1757 at Fort Vincennes to Pierre Perhuis Lalime; and Jean Baptiste, married 28 August 1756 at Fort Vincennes to Agnes Richard Lafleur.

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is listed as one of the “habitants du fort” granted a property by Alphonse de Tonty of “deux pieds de front sur 20 de profondeur” on “rue Montreal” next to Paul Guillet.34

With these events documented, it is obvious that Burton also erred in the following two entries in his Village directory:

Vaudry, Joseph. Came Aug. 19, 1710. He was born in 1687, and married Marguerite Lepage, widow of Simon Gilbert. Etienne, Jacques and Joseph [Vaudry] were brothers and sons of Jacques Vaudry and Jeanne Renault.35

Simon, Gilbert, or Simon Sanspeur, dit Gilbert, sergeant in the troops. His wife was Marguerite La Page. She died July 20, 1730, at Detroit.36

I cannot resist digressing at this point to go back one generation because the parents of the Lepage sisters present the basis for some interesting speculations (and I stress these are speculations). The father of Marie and Marguerite Lepage, Jacques Lepage,37 in about 1670, left Canada for New England,38 where he married, about 1683, Madeleine David, first cousin of Thérèse David, the godmother of the “unfortunate” Thérèse.

Madeleine David was born 15 February 1666 at Sorel; and her cousin, Thérèse David, daughter of Claude David, Guillaume’s brother, and Suzanne Denoyon, 4 September 1664 at Trois-Rivières. Madeleine David’s father, Guillaume,39 married about 1656 at Trois-Rivières to Marie Armand, of unknown origin, and by 1674 (or after 1676)40 had moved on to “Nouvelle-Hollande” or modern-day New York, from

34 “Les Habitants du detroit 1721.” NAC, Microfilm #F413, AC C11\(^\text{e}\), Vol. 15: ff. 186-88. It is probable that the Marguerite Lepage serving as godmother in 1719 is wife of Simon Gilbert and sister of Marie Lepage, and that the Gilbert family was thus in Détroit by 1719.


This is an interesting document as it is a contract between two women. Marie Hubert, widow of Jacques-Charles Decouagne, merchant of Montréal, loaned Marguerite Lepage 1747 livres 7 sols du pais (1310 livres 10 sols 3 deniers in money of France) for good merchandise to trade and for her equipment on her voyage to join her husband at Détroit. Photocopy, ANQ {Now BAnQ}.

35 “Cadillac’s Village,” p. 35. Nevertheless, in his entry for “Le Page, Marie” on p. 29, Burton says she “married Joseph Vaudry, for they are called legal husband and wife in 1720.” Underlining mine.

36 “Cadillac’s Village,” p. 34.

37 Jetté, p. 715. He was from Tours, Touraine, France and was confirmed 10 Feb 1669 at Québec. Fournier “presumes” that Jacques Lepage arrived in 1665 with the Carignan regiment, p. 159.

38 Fournier, p. 159.

39 For Guillaume David, PRDH says to see “The Origins of the Montross and David Families of Tarrytown, The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record, 122-4 et 123-1. [I had not yet consulted it when this article was written.] “At Trois-Rivières in 1658, Marie Armand, Mme. David, asked to be excused from giving verbal testimony, ‘inasmuch as she has difficulty speaking French.’” Peter N. Moogk, La Nouvelle France, East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2000, p. 147, citing NAC, MG 8, D1 (Archives judiciaires de Trois-Rivières, feuillets séparés), 28: 8 May 1658. [Author’s note: I have now seen this record and several others.]

40 Langlois, p. 42. Guillaume David worked for a time for Nicolas Juchereau de Saint-Denis.

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which he returned to France. In 1711 he may have been an inhabitant of La Rochelle, France.\(^{41}\) Both David families were contemporaries of the Couc, Fafard, and Ménard families I have written about.\(^{42}\) The Lepage family remained in New England in the present-day New York or New Jersey area until 1699 or 1700, when they returned to establish themselves in Montréal. Three of their then four children: Jacques, Jeanne-Marguerite,\(^{43}\) and Susanne (who had been baptized at the French Protestant Church of New York 17 October 1697),\(^{44}\) were supplied the rites of baptism as Roman Catholics at Montréal in 1700, although Marie’s baptism, wherever it took place, seems not to have survived.\(^{45}\)

It is extremely intriguing (considering that Cadillac was accused of doing business with the English)\(^{46}\) that the only woman granted land at Fort Pontchartrain was born in colonial English territory and lived there until she was about 14. Her parents and her grandfather’s, Guillaume David’s, family lived among the English. Cadillac boasted that he knew the English colonies well, noting that he had been at Boston and even claiming that he had traveled into the interior of the continent at some time between 1685-1692.\(^{47}\) Is it possible he met the Lepage and/or David families in his travels?

But it is Étienne Veron Grandmesnil fils, the younger, the (alleged) father of Marie Lepage’s daughter Thérèse, who will be my next focus. When Thérèse later appears in the records, she is using the last names of her acknowledged father, Veron and Grandmesnil, and not the last name of her mother’s first husband or her mother’s maiden name. For now, I will assure you that Thérèse did survive, and that, at age 38, she married on 22 April 1748 at Trois-Rivières, PIERRE BABY,\(^{48}\) son of JACQUES BABIE and Madeleine Verron Grandmeny, the “unfortunate” Thérèse’s paternal aunt and sister of Thérèse’s father, Étienne Verron Grandmesnil the younger. (Yes, she appears to be a first cousin of her husband!)

Suzanne Boivin Sommerville—26 October 2000

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*Archives Nationales du Québec* [ANQ] {Now BAnQ}


http://www.cdnq.org/cnq/origines/origines.html

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\(^{41}\) Jetté, p. 312.

\(^{42}\) On 29 December 1657, Pierre Couc filed charges against Guillaume and Claude David and Barthélemy Bertaut for assault and the injuries he sustained. Langlois, p. 41, citing Baillage de Trois-Rivières. Marie-Anne David, sister to Madeleine, the wife of Jacques Lepage, was confirmed in the same year, possibly on the same day and place, as Isabelle Couc, in 1678 at Sorel. Their names appear on the list of 15 individuals confirmed in 1678 at Sorel “et autres lieus circonvoisins” (and neighboring regions). Registers of Sorel, LDS Film #1294705.

\(^{43}\) Baptized at age 8 as Jeanne-Marguerite, Montréal 1700-08-24, document 210997, PRDH Online.

\(^{44}\) Fournier, p. 161.

\(^{45}\) Jetté. Jacques Lepage, the father, died in 1706 at Montréal, age 50; Susanne in 1708; and son Jacques died at Montréal in 1713. Madeleine David remarried in 1711 to Jean Poussard dit Bonappéit and was buried 3 February 1715 at Montréal. Did Marie Lepage return to live with her mother after leaving Détroit?

\(^{46}\) On 6 July 1709 Pontchartrain wrote to Cadillac, “You must know that the beaver pelts which came to Detroit last year [1708] have all been sold to the English.” AC, B 30, ff. 162-168, quoted in Jean Delanglez, “Cadillac, Propriétaire at Detroit,” p. 254.

\(^{47}\) Because of his knowledge of the area, Cadillac accompanied the cartographer Franquelin to map the coast of New England in 1692.

\(^{48}\) PRDH, document 181015 - Trois-Rivières, names spelled as on PRDH certificate.


National Archives of Canada. Ottawa, Ontario. [NAC]


Registers of Nôtre-Dame-de-Montréal. Salt Lake City: Family History Library. Microfilm #0375842, Registres de N.-D. Mtl (1713-1737)

Registers of Ste. Anne de Détroit. Salt Lake City: Family History Library. Microfilm #1026602. And photocopies of pages of the original register.

Rush to judgment?  
Part 2 [2020 Version]  
Étienne Veron de Grandmesnil, Father and Son  
An example of misinterpreted evidence

Suzanne Boivin Sommerville (s.sommerville@sbcglobal.net)

For his information on Étienne Veron de Grandmesnil,49 Clarence M. Burton most probably did not consult J.-Edmond Roy, although Roy, like Burton, apparently confuses the two Grandmesnils. (Unfortunately, Burton does not always cite sources with any precision.) Roy, a contemporary of Burton, wrote Histoire du notariat au Canada depuis la fondation de la colonie jusqu’à nos jours,50 (History of the notariat in Canada from the foundation of the colony until today [1899]). Roy has this to say about Étienne Veron de Grandmesnil:

A notary from Trois-Rivières . . . [Étienne Veron de Grandmesnil] belonged to a family originally from the town of Livaro in Normandy and his father was at Trois-Rivières in 1686. [sic]51 It is there that the notary was born 31 October 1649.52

Verron [sic] de Grandmenil served first as secretary of Lamothe de Cadillac when he founded Détroit [sic]. We have in front of us a series of documents written in his handwriting while he was under the command [sous les ordres] of the celebrated explorer. In 1706, we find him at Trois-Rivières where he is practicing as notaire royal . . . The documents [étude] of Grandmesnil deposited at Trois-Rivières cover [the years of] 1706-1720. Another set of his papers is at Québec and cover three years from 1707 to 1710. These are almost all documents concerning the business affairs of Lamothe Cadillac with his creditors after he [Cadillac] left Détroit [1711] to go govern Louisiane.53

Included in the set covering 1707 to 1710 is the “Jugement rendu par le Conseil de guerre Contre Bertellemey pichon soldat de la Comp[agnie] de Cortemanche [sic] de la garnison du fort pontchartrain,” signed by Grandmesnil on 7 November 1707,54 the first surviving “Council of War,” court-martial, at

49 Grandmesnil is the spelling on the signatures I have seen, although it is also recorded as Grandmenil, Grandmeny, and other variations. Véron is Veron [the accurate spelling], and Verron. [The spelling Grandmeny seems to indicate the /s/ was not pronounced in Grandmesnil.]


51 Jean Veron, sieur de Grandmesnil, m Marguerite Hayet 1646, was killed by the Iroquois 19 August 1652 (Jesuit Journals), so the date must be a misprint, if not an error. Marguerite Hayet was half-sister to Pierre Radisson, Élisabeth Radisson m Claude Jutras, and Françoise Radisson m Claude Volant (parents of Étienne Volant dit Radisson). Marguerite Hayet remarried 1653 to Édouard Chouart dit or sieur DesGroseilliers, the explorer and coureur de bois associated with Radisson. He went over to the English 1665-1674. [Dictionary of Canadian Biography] DCB I: 228-234] Radisson (Pierre-Esprit Radisson) who m 1st a Kirke, daughter of Sir John of the Hudson Bay Company, in 1665 or 1675 in London; m 2nd Marguerite-Charlotte Godet, 1685 St. Martin in the Fields, London. With Chouart he helped found the Hudson Bay Company. [Read in the French translation, DBC II 559-563] Jetté: 1120, 254 & 960.

52 Roy: 193.

53 Roy: 193. My translation. I use the word Louisiane, as did Roy, to distinguish it from modern-day Louisiana. Cadillac served near modern-day Mobile, Alabama.

54 Notaire [sic] Grandmesnil, photocopy, as identified at Archives nationales du Québec, # 4 880. I have compared the signature on this one with the signature on one I am sure Grandmesnil the elder wrote. The signatures are different. [Author’s note 2010: I have the full set 1707 to 1710 photocopied for me by the archives. It includes the “Jugement…”]
Détroit. Later in his book, Roy says: “In 1706 [sic] appears a marriage contract written by Paul Guillet, who identifies himself as secretary of Lamothe-Cadillac, commandant at Fort Pontchartrain du Détroit. From 1707 to 1710 it is a future [sic] notary of Trois-Rivières, Etienne Veron de Grandmesnil, who becomes the secretary of Lamothe Cadillac and who writes his acts.”

Something does not fit here. How can Étienne Veron de Grandmesnil be a “future notary of Trois-Rivières” if he is, in fact, already a notary there by 1706? **Were the 1707-1710 documents now at Québec written by Veron de Grandmesnil the younger?**

After 24 March 1700 at Québec and before 1 December 1704, the name Étienne Veron Grandmesnil does not appear on any record I could find in the PRDH data base. In the absence of any other documentary evidence, either or both—father and son—could have been at Détroit between July of 1701 and fall of 1704. On 1 December 1704, an Étienne Veron Grandmesnil served as godfather at Trois-Rivières for Étienne Audoyer, son of Martin Audoyer and Marie Esenard. The signature “Grandmesnil [with paraph]” on the register matches that of the 1707 “Jugement” at Fort Pontchartrain.

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55 Roy: 369
56 PRDH: #61820
57 PRDH
58 FHL #1298969 and the 1707 “Jugement rendu par le Conseil de guerre Contre Bertelemy pichon soldat de la Comp[agnie] de Cortemanche [sic] de la garnison du fort pontchartrain,” Notaire [sic] Grandmesnil, photocopy Archives Nationales du Québec, (ANQ). Signed by Jacques Lucas and by La Mothe Cadillac, Derané, d’Ailleboust D’Argenteuil, Guignolet, Francoeur, and Grandmesnil [paraph] Secrétaire, with Lafleur and Brindamour also present and indicating they could not sign. A paraphe is a fancy squiggle or design that sometimes takes the place of a signature.
Étienne Véniard Sieur de Bourgmont and Grandmesnil had been commissioned on 28 September 1705 by the Company of the Colony to take an inventory of the holdings at Fort Pontchartrain to establish the basis on which Cadillac, about to assume full control, would repay the Company for their initial investment.\(^5\) I have not yet seen any trace of this inventory. The next day, on 29 September 1705, Florent de La Cetièere drew up a hiring contract between “Étienne Veron de Grandmesnil and Antoine Laumet, dit de Lamothe Cadillac.”\(^6\) He signed the contract “Grandmesnil [paraph] fils” and “Lamothe Cadillac also signed.

Grandmesnil apparently went to Fort Pontchartrain late that fall, as he is mentioned as being present and signing with Bourgmont for expenses paid to the Miami, who were attacked by the Ottawa the following June of 1706.\(^6\) Did he travel with Bourgmont, who was appointed the same day to command at Détroit in Cadillac’s continued absence?

On 22 October 1707, Grandmesnil signed a marriage contract at what PRDH calls an undetermined location in Québec. The parties involved were Jacques Langlois, bourgeois, residence: Fort Pontchartrain, son of Germain Langlois, residence: Beauraup, & Jeanne Chalifou; and Marie-Renée Dussaut (TOUPIN dit DuSault in Jetté),\(^6\) residence: “Pointe-aux-Cluaux, pres de Québec,” daughter of Jean-Baptiste Dussaut, seigneur, & Marie-Madeleine Mezeray.\(^6\) Burton published this document, which states it was “Done and entered into at fort Pontchartrain du detroit the twenty second day of October one thousand seven hundred and seven and seven.” The signature of Grandmesnil\(^6\) is the same, as shown above, as that of several

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5. Photocopy of Contract between Lamothe Cadillac and the Compagnie de la Colonie, Notary Chambalon, 28 September 1705, AN, FC, série C\(^{11}\)A, Vol. 23, f. 89v. Bourgmont and Grandmesnil were to take an inventory of the fort in the presence of Tonty and Constantin dellHalle, Missionaire, including all the “merchandise, fixtures, houses, stores, lands cleared, and generally everything which is at Détroit. In the inventories they will [indicate (?) word runs into the margin] the merchandise which has not been spoiled or damaged.” Translation mine. This is the version annotated by Cadillac. Tonty left soon after Bourgmont arrived, and dellHalle died during the Ottawa attack in June. Was the inventory ever taken?

6. NAC, ArchiviaNet, MG 8 - A 23, Transcript: Volume 110, 4 pages. Source: RC 70620 {Digital image of the original acquired.}

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59. “He [Lamothe Cadillac] has sent to Sr Raudot, the son, a mémoire of the expenses made at Détroit for the defense [in 1706] of this post in the amount of 905 livres 19 sols, which is signed only by the Sr de Bourmont [sic] and a [man] named Grandmenil, Commis of the said Sr delaMothe, and not at all itemized.” The Raudots, father and son, did not believe the expense justified as the Miami were attacked by the Ottawa and did not need any “presents” or encouragement “to defend their lives and those of their women and children.” NAC microfilm F-26 of AC C\(^{11}\)A, Vol. 26, f.16-17. Joint letter signed by Vaudreuil and the Raudots, father and son, November 1707. See also pages 296-97 of the Cadillac Papers for another list of “Amounts expended for the King’s Service by Cadillac. Endorsed—29\(^{th}\) Sept. 1706” at Fort Pontchartrain and signed by “Grandmesnil”.

60. Jetté: 1084 Jean Toupin dit DuSault’s seigneury was Pointe-aux-Écureuils (or Bélair).

61. PRDH: #95080 Lieu indéterminé (au Québec) 1707-10-22. Four of the Langlois children were baptized at Détroit between 1709 and 1715. The family appears to be in Montréal by 1719. Jetté: 648

62. MPHS, Vol. 34: 233-34. Also signing were Marie Thereze Guyon de la Mothe, Jacques Langlois, Madeleine La Mothe, Dufiguier, and La Mothe Cadillac. Joseph Parant, although present, said he was unable to sign as did Marie René Dussaut.
days later 7 November at the “trial” of Bertellemy Pichon *dit* Larose, when he identified himself as *Secretaire*. 

On 11 February 1708 appeared before notary Pottier (Pothier) at Saint-François-du-Lac, Pierre Babie *sieur* Dupéron, *maieur* [adult], son of deceased Jacques Babie, while alive a merchant resident at Champlain, and deceased Jeanne Dandonneau; and Marguerite Hertel, widow of deceased *sieur* Jean Crevier, while alive *seigneur* of the *seigneurie* of Saint-François, acting for and in the name of *Demoiselle* Marie-Anne Crevier, her daughter, and with her consent, to record a marriage contract. Among the friends and family present at the marriage contract were “le *sieur* Étienne Veron de Grandmesnil, Marie Moral son épouse [his wife], … [and] Véronique et Thérèse Veron Grandmesnil.” Pierre Babie married Marie-Anne Crevier at Trois-Rivières on 13 February 1708, two days after the contract. This is definitely the elder Veron, with his wife and two daughters. It seems highly unlikely that he could have traveled from Détroit after either 22 October 1707 or 7 November 1707 to be at Saint-François-du-Lac on 11 February 1708 in the dead of winter.

Two months later, on 14 April 1708, a Grandmesnil signed a contract at Fort Pontchartrain recording the “Sale of the house of Pierre Pichet, *dit* St Onge to Ls. Fs. Vienneau.” On a copy of the original, the signature is identical to the 7 November 1707 document at Fort Pontchartrain. Henry Belisle was witness and signed, as did Lamothe Cadillac.

The Ste. Anne Register entry for 25 September 1708 records this summarized information:

Baptism of Joseph and Étienne, twins, sons of François Fafard *dit* Delorme and his wife Magdeleine Jobin. Joseph was baptized by the mid-wife because of the fear he might die. Godparents: Joseph Parant and Thérèse David, femme du Sr Desrochers. [Allegedly, Thérèse declared she could not sign, even though she had signed in previous records and did sign!] Étienne’s godparents: *Étienne Veron dit de Grandmesny, Commis du magasin du Roy [clerk in the King’s storehouse]*, and Madeleine Fafart, all residents at the fort.

Thérèse David [future godmother of Marie Lepage’s baby, Thérèse], Magdeleine Delorme, and *Grandmesnil* signed.

In 1709, the year in which Marie Lepage’s Thérèse would be born, Veron the elder’s daughter, Marie-Madeleine, married, on 4 February 1709, *Jacques Babie*, resident of Champlain, brother to the above...
Pierre Babie.⁷⁰ (I will return to this couple in Part 3.) Marie-Madeleine is said to be formerly of the parish of Trois-Rivières. Veron, senior, is mentioned as father of Madeleine, but the only individuals marked “present” on the PRDH “certificate” are the bride, groom, and officiating priest. An examination of the microfilm of the record, however, shows the signature of “Veron Grandmesnil”:

as well as those of “J Babie” and “marie madeleine veron”.⁷¹ Étienne Veron, Sieur de Grandmesnil, “Notaire Royal en cette Ville” and husband of Thérèse Moral, are identified as the parents of the bride.⁷² The signature is distinctive and different from his son’s on the documents recorded at Détroit. There was, also, a marriage contract on the same day, and Veron the elder may have been present for it.⁷³ This is another example of the elder Grandmesnil’s signature provided by the editor of MHH in 2001 (at a time when digital images were not as easily available as they now are):

Marie Lepage’s daughter Thérèse, born 24 July 1709, would have been conceived probably in October of 1708. In order to father the child, Veron Grandmesnil the elder would have had to travel up to Détroit sometime prior to October. In order to be at Trois-Rivières early in 1709, Veron the elder would again have had to leave Détroit by October or November of 1708 because of the difficulty—perhaps the impossibility—of traveling down to the parent colony in the winter months. If he did indeed accomplish this trip, he could not have easily known so early that Marie Lepage was pregnant.

His son was at Fort Pontchartrain on 25 September 1708, when the baptisms, mentioned above, of Joseph and Étienne, twins, sons of François Fafard dit Delorme and his wife Magdeleine Jobin, were entered in the registers of Ste. Anne du Détroit. The son was there also on 9 January 1709 when Louis Normand dit Labrière bought the property of Jean Bart dit Belleville on rue St. François next to Blaise Surgère. The act is signed Louis Normand, Alexis LeMoine, Paul Guillet, Lamothe Cadillac, and Grandmesnil, Secrétaire.⁷⁴ On 4 February 1709, Jacques Babie married Madeleine Veron de Grandmesnil, and her father, identified as a notary, signed the record.

Based on the signatures and other references, Veron de Grandmesnil the younger was at Fort Pontchartrain from early 1706 to summer of 1709. Volume 34 of the Michigan Pioneer Collection he recorded a sale of property by the Delpés to Joseph Crevier, ANQ photocopy. Veron the elder was in Trois-Rivières in 1709.

⁷⁰ The illegitimate Thérèse Veron would marry, on 22 April 1748 at Trois-Rivières, Pierre “Baby,” son of this Jacques Babie and Madeleine Veron Grandmeny. See Part 3 of “Rush to Judgment?”

⁷¹ FHL microfilm #1298969, Registers of Trois-Rivières, 1634 to 4 Feb. 1749. 1709-02-04, Québec/T/Trois-Rivières/Trois-Rivières (2020: Immaculée-Conception, cathédrale l’Assomption)/1700/1709/© Drouin Institute, d1p_1142c0286.jpg

⁷² FHL #1298969

⁷³ Jetté: 37. (ct 4 February 1709 Pothier)

⁷⁴ Photocopy, ANQ
translated and published six of his documents from 15 April 1708 to 4 September 1708 and nine from 1 January 1709 to 12 September 1709, all signed by Grandmesnil. Burton snidely suggests that Grandmesnil “found it convenient to leave Détroit before the entry of the baptism of this child” to go to “Montréal, where he was appointed the confidential attorney of Cadillac by letter of Attorney, dated July 26, 1709.”

It is true that Grandmesnil fils did leave Détroit after a 21 June 1709 sale of property document, as Burton writes; but, although Burton was aware of the 26 July 1709 document, he evidently did not read it and thus did not know that Grandmesnil the younger apparently did not depart from Fort Pontchartrain du Lake Érié until after 26 July 1709, two days after the birth. On that day Antoine Lamothe Cadillac wrote a procuration (power of attorney) there naming Grandmesnil as his agent for all business matters. The document, signed by Lamothe Cadillac, was delivered to the notary Adhémar by Grandmesnil, who, Adhémar writes, had just arrived in Ville Marie (Montréal) on 6 September 1709. He went on to Québec City where a 12 September 1709 document published by Burton was “done and executed at Quebec, in the office of the said notary [Chambalon]”, and states, “personally appeared . . . Estienne Verron de Grandmesnil, junior,” who was acting for Lamothe Cadillac. Grandmesnil fils had time to travel from Fort Pontchartrain to, first, Montréal, and then Québec City. Grandmesnil was also present in Québec on 26 November 1709 when the debt from the 12 September 1709 document was paid.

Whether he left Détroit because of the birth of Marie-Thérèse or simply to fulfill Cadillac’s legal needs must remain unknown, despite Burton’s suggestive comment. It is indisputable, however, that Grandmesnil the elder was in Trois-Rivières on 24 July 1709, the day of his alleged granddaughter Thérèse’s birth, because he notarized payment of a debt owed to Joseph Hertel on that day.

Although the name Étienne Veron Grandmesnil shows up several times in the PRDH data base between 1709 and 1712, it is in a 1712 document that it can be ascertained that Étienne Veron the younger is most probably the one present in Montréal at the 10 March 1712 baptism of Étienne Corbin, son of Andre Corbin, maître taillandier, and Marie Charlotte Reinville. Serving as godfather is Étienne Véron de Grandmeny,” the priest’s spelling, no marital status given, occupation: MARCHAND, merchant. At the 1709 marriage of his daughter, Étienne the elder was said to be NOTAIRES ROYAL (royal notary). The signature “Grandmesnil” on the Montréal register matches the Détroit signatures. The godmother for the Corbin child is Marie Catherine Picart, celibate (unmarried). It is this Marie-Catherine that Étienne the younger married in the following year.

75 In “Fort Pontchartrain du Detroit—1701 to 1710—under Cadillac,” MPHS, Vol. XXIX, 1901, pp. 240-317, p. 275, footnote 74. Unfortunately, Burton does not name the “attorney” who wrote the document. Cadillac himself wrote it and had Grandmesnil take it to Adhémar at Montréal to be placed in his notarial papers.
76 Adhémar, document 8275, photocopy ANQ.
78 Notation dated 24 July 1709 attached to “Contrat de vente parmi le Sieur hertel fils au Sieur de Bourgeoil, 27 Mars 1708;” signed by Notary veron Grandmesnil, ANQ Trois-Rivières, photocopy.
79 For example, Étienne Veron, marchand (merchant), was witness for the baptism of Catherine-Genevieve Viger. This is surely the younger Grandmesnil. PRDH: #43827 Montréal 1711-09-17
80 PRDH: #43889 Montréal
At Notre-Dame de Montréal on 28 May 1713, Étienne Veron de Grandmeny declared being able to sign; his occupation was merchant and his residence Trois-Rivières. Étienne was said to be celibate, or unmarried. He was 32 years of age. Marie Catherine Lepicart declared being able to sign; her residence was Québec City, and she was 22, the daughter of deceased Jean Lepicart, marchand bourgeois, residence Québec City; and Marie-Anne Fortin, a widow. Grandmesnil’s signature again matches those recorded at Détroit in 1707, 1708, and 1709. There is no doubt Grandmesnil the younger was the secretary recording the transactions at Détroit translated in Volume 34 of the Cadillac Papers.

In fact, the signature of Grandmesnil the younger is so distinctive that it caught my attention as I was scrolling through the microfilm of the Notre-Dame-de-Montréal registers. There, in the entry for 31 December 1713, I saw that he attended the church wedding of François Lefebvre Duplessy Faber, Lieutenant dans Les Troupes de ce Pays, Ecuyer, and Catherine-Geneviève Pelletier. He signed the register, although his name is not mentioned in the text of the record and, as a result, does not appear in the extract published by PRDH. The bride was daughter of Jean-François-Xavier Pelletier, deceased, and Geneviève Letendre, who became the wife of Étienne Volant de Radisson. Radisson and his wife were also at Détroit in the founding years, along with, most likely, Catherine-Geneviève Pelletier, daughter of Geneviève Letendre’s first marriage, who was years later to become the wife of François Lefebvre Duplessy Faber.

As for Burton’s speculation about whether the father of the “unfortunate” Thérèse “lost prestige,” he did not. Attending his wedding were socially important persons: Ignace Gamelin, occupation: marchand, bourgeois; Pierre Delestage, occupation: marchand; Louis Daillibout de Coulonge, occupation: écuyer; Jean Baptiste Dailliboust de Musseaux, occupation: écuyer.

Those who served as godparents for Étienne’s children were also notables. Godfather for Marie-Anne Veron at Montréal 3 March 1714 was Étienne Volant de Ratisson (Radisson), marchand, bourgeois. Jacques Barbet (Barbel), secrétaire de l’intendant and brother-in-law to Étienne, served as godfather for Marie-Catherine Veron on 11 June 1715 at Québec City. The family had relocated there by then. Radisson and the wife of Barbel, Marie-Anne Lepicart, were godparents for the 24 July 1716 baptism of Étienne Veron. Pierre Rivet, notaire royal, and Louise Dion, widow of Mathieu Damours de Freneuse, écuyer, conseiller au conseil supérieur de Québec, served as godparents for Marie-Véronique de Veron on 2 February 1719. Veron’s wife, Marie-Catherine Lepicard, 28 years of age, died 8 February 1719, apparently as a result of the birth of Marie-Véronique. Present at the burial the next day was Barbel, brother-in-law or stepbrother, secrétaire de M. l’intendant.

81 PRDH: #48101 Montréal 1713-05-28 and photocopy from FHL microfilm #037584. Signing the document, although not mentioned in the text, is Geneviève Letendre widow of François Pelletier and wife of Étienne Volant Radisson. She served as godmother to Marie-Thérèse Lamothe with Bertrand Arnaud as godfather on 2 February 1704, the first act in the surviving register of Ste. Anne du Détroit.
83 PRDH: #44262 Montréal 1714-05-03
84 Barbel himself had scandalized society in 1703 by “profiting from the ‘consternation’ and the ‘loneliness’ of a widow [Marie-Anne Gaultier de Comporté], a minor,” and making her pregnant. Barbel, who had himself recently been widowed, seems to have escaped consequences because he was protected by the new governor, Philippe de Rigaud de Vaudreuil, although the case was brought before the Conseil souverain. André Vachon comments: “To speak the truth, there were other [such cases] in the colony and the scandal was short-lived.” DCB: II, p. 44.
85 PRDH: #63719 Québec 1715-06-11
87 PRDH: #64272 Québec 1719-02-02 Birth : 1719-02-02
88 PRDH: # 71671 Québec 1719-02-09 Death : 1719-02-08

Suzanne Boivin Sommerville, 2020 version for the FCHSM website
No, Mr. Burton, Étienne Veron fils, the presumed father of illegitimate Thérèse, did not lose prestige. Interestingly, though, only one of his children by his wife survived, daughter Marie-Catherine. All of the others died as infants, or in the case of the second child named Étienne, at the age of almost six. 

Étienne Veron Grandmesnil the elder died and was buried 18 May 1721 at Trois-Rivières.

Veron Grandmesnil the younger is called merchant or bourgeois until the marriage of his daughter, Catherine Veron de Grandmenil, to Joseph Fleury Deschambault, écuyer, resident of Montreal, at Québec City 19 January 1738, when Veron is called: receveur en ce pays de son altesse, Monseigneur Le Comte de Toulouse, Amiral de France. (Receiver in this country for his highness, Monseigneur Le Comte de Toulouse, Admiral of France.)

Marie-Catherine’s daughter, Marie-Claire Fleury Dechambault, married 1 August 1765, after the Conquest, Jean Fraser, Écuyer, “capitaine des troupes de sa majeste britannique, l'un des juges de sa cour en plaidoyer commun de la province de québec, juge particulier dans le district de montréal pour les actes d'administration; origin: comte d'inverness [sic] en ecosse.” (Captain of his majesty’s British troops, one of the judges on his court of common pleas of the province of Québec, judge in the district of Montréal for administrative acts; origin: County of Inverness in Scotland.)

Roland-J. Auger, an important French-Canadian genealogist, in his entry about the younger “Véron de Grandmesnil, Étienne” in the Dictionary of Canadian Biography, says only that he was clerk in the king’s warehouse at Trois-Rivières and merchant, but he also comments: “Because few documents remain concerning Veron’s activities as a merchant, it is difficult to state exactly what his business was.” It appears now that his business was Cadillac’s business, at least in part. After his father’s death in 1721, according to Auger, who also seems to have confused the two Étiennes, Étienne the younger:

took in hand the interests of Lamothe Cadillac [Laumet*], whose secretary Étienne Véron the elder had been for several years [sic].

The numerous surviving signatures of Grandmesnil the younger signing as Cadillac’s secrétaire should now refute this assertion. Auger continues:

In 1730 Véron the younger, who had become Cadillac’s attorney, had an ordinance issued by Gilles Hocquart concerning the collection of the former governor of

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89 Marie-Catherine Grandmesnil also had a distinctive signature. Because of this I was able to learn that she served as godmother for the 18 January 1729 baptism of Marie-Madeleine Chevalier, daughter of Nicolas-René Chevalier & Marie-Madeleine Leblanc. Godfather was Marie-Catherine’s future husband. FHL microfilm #1289908. This Nicolas-René Chevalier served as godfather for the Nicolas-René baptized 13 January 1726 at Montréal, "né de père et mère inconnus," the same Nicolas-René hired out, on 23 Feb 1728 (before Adhémar dit Saint-Martin, J.-B., Mr), to the Hôpital général de Montréal by Marie-Anne Germaneau, who acknowledged she was his mother. The child was supposed to remain there until he was 20. Marie-Anne Germaneau / Montour was said to be "Anglaise de nation fille de deffunt Jean baptiste Montour et Elisabeth Coucgnac de la ville dorange en la nouvelle angleterre" on her marriage contract with Jean Montary (29 Jan 1730 Dubreuill, photocopy, ANQ-Québec) and, at her marriage, a resident of Québec, daughter of the [man] named La Motte and Isabelle Montour (photocopy of N.-D. Québec Register). See my “Madame Montour and the Detroit Connection,” MHH, October 1999.

90 See Jetté
91 PRDH
92 PRDH: #164865 Québec 1738-01-19 and photocopy from FHL microfilm #1289908
93 PRDH: #339278 Lieu indéterminé (au Québec)1765-08-01 Notaire Mezieres
Louisiana’s assets. This was probably the last time that Véron intervened on Cadillac’s behalf, since the latter died that same year.95

According to J.-Edmond Roy and documents available through the National Archives of Canada, Veron the younger’s labors did not end in 1730:

Véron de Grandmesnil, once Lamothe-Cadillac left [in 1711], went to establish himself at Québec. It was he who, for more than thirty years, occupied himself in managing the property that Lamothe-Cadillac had left in Canada … .

This is definitely Étienne the younger, as the elder died in 1721 at Trois-Rivières. Roy adds:

On 23 May 1730, Grandmesnil succeeded finally in obtaining an ordonnance from the intendant about the property that his commandant still possessed at Détroit. But justice was apparently no more expeditious at that time than it is today, because eleven years after this ordonnance, Grandmesnil still worked at the liquidation begun in 1711. It took him a full thirty years to reach an end to the courts and the recalcitrant debtors of his old master.96

Étienne Veron Grandmenil, said to be 63 years old, died at Québec 22 April 174397 and was buried the next day.

Suzanne Boivin Sommerville, 2020 Version

95 Auger: 643
97 PRDH #167539 Québec 1743-04-23 Death: 1743-04-22.
• Author’s note: Brian Leigh Dunnigan’s *Frontier Metropolis*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2001, includes a 1731 map of Detroit that records the names of the then proprietors of farmland. Eight plots east of the fort area (about 16 *arpents*?) is the first surviving concession from the days of Cadillac’s concessions: “Fafard DeLorme”. Next to him to the east is “Vaudry pour avoir épousé la veuve de francois bosseron par titre du Sr Delamothe en datte du 10 mars 1707.” This is clearly Joseph Vaudry, husband of Marie Lepage, again identified as her second husband, although no marriage record survives; he received Marie Lepage’s first husband’s concession by virtue of his marriage to her. The next is an unidentified plot, originally that of Jean-Baptiste Gouriou *dit* Guignolet, followed by those of Le Sr Marsac Derochers; La jeunesse; Deniau (?); Deslauriers; “presentement La veuve Lajeunesse”; **Blank space** including *Rivière à Parent* [later called Bloody Run after 1763]; and, finally, “Sanspeur Sergent”. Sanspeur is Simon Gilbert *dit* Sanspeur, husband of Marguerite Lepage. Gilbert had been granted land by Tonty. The Lepage sisters and their husbands were thus still holders of property in 1731.

Source for manuscript image: Library and Archives Canada, MIKAN no. 3076148, Plan relatif à des concessions de terres à Détroit.

**Rush to judgment?**

**Part 3 [2020 Version]**

Thérèse “Bosseron” Veron de Grandmesnil

An example of misinterpreted evidence

Suzanne Boivin Sommerville (s.sommerville@sbcglobal.net)

And where was the “unfortunate” Thérèse during the years that Veron the younger served Cadillac, his “master”? Children rarely make an appearance in the documents.
The “Census of Detroit de Pontchartrain in the year 1710,” as published in the MPH C Cadillac Papers, does not show Marie Lepage as an inhabitant, but other women are not listed either, except as “wives” who are present or who are absent. Those who are there

are all lodged in houses built of stakes [sic] set upright, and earth, all thatched with grass [sic]; the commandant’s is like the others, since the King and the company have given up bearing its cost. There are only two built of logs, one upon another, the chapel, where the missionary lives, and the warehouse of the Company. Outside the fort, at a distance of a half of a gun shot [sic], there is a miserable barn and a house, which serves as a stable.

Yet Marie Lepage has definitely returned before 1720, for she is listed as one of the four owners of original concessions who had not abandoned them. It seems impossible to tell whether Thérèse was with her mother at Détroit after Marie Lepage’s marriage to Joseph Vaudry. Thérèse would have been eleven in 1720.

Although the “Therese Veron” in Beauport in 1729 is most likely the right one, the first document I have actually read recording the name of Thérèse as an adult is the 26 January 1733 baptism at Québec City of Joseph-Louis de Gonzague Sauvage, son of Pierre-Charles Sauvage (dit Chevalier in Jetté) and Anne Badeau (Fabien & Marie-Anne Corbin). Godparents were: Joseph Barbel and Therese Verron

98 Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, Vol. 33, 1904, pp. 492-495. “Des Rochers,” the husband of Thérèse David, his wife; and Jacques Langlois and his wife are among those listed. [I have read the original document.]

99 The phrase is pièce sur pièce and is characteristic of buildings then.

100 “Census”: MPH C, 33: 494. Burton gives as source only volume number and page, without identifying the author or census taker. I count 38 persons in 1710. See also “Les Habitants du detroit 1721,” NAC, Microfilm #F-413, AC C11E, Vol. 15: ff. 186-88. I count only 34 men, not all of whom have their wives or children with them. [See Gail Moreau-DesHarnais’s corrected transcription of this census, www.habitantheritage.org.]

101 In “Given at Quebec this 4th of November, 1721,” entitled “Cadillac Again Petitions to Be Put in Possession of Detroit,” Governor General Vaudreuil’s annotation reads: “In this stretch of land to the northeast of the fort [are, in 1720-21.] . . . four [original] concessions granted by M. de La Mothe to the (persons) named Delorme, Desrochers, M. Aubin and the widow Beausseron,” but all “the houses [are] within the fort.” MPH C, Vol. 33: p. 679. Vaudreuil then adds “There are no Frenchmen [still occupying conceded land in 1721] except the four named above, each of whom has two arpents frontage [by 20 arpents deep].” p. 680. See also MPH C 33: pp 695-702, extracts from the memorial and reply, referenced as Vol. 9, p. 1812, on 702: “Last year [1720] he [Alphonse Tonty] made all the settlers bring him their concession contracts, which they did; and he has kept most of them. . . . All this ill treatment has compelled the petitioners to withdraw, some to the Miamis & some to Montreal, until His Majesty shall give other orders concerning it.”

102 PRDH. #159673 Québec 1733-01-26 Birth: 1733-01-25. Barbel also signed. Thérèse appears to have served as godmother for THERERE MASSEE, dau. of JEAN MASSEE & MARIE MORIN, at a baptism 17 September 1729 at Beauport, signing as THERERE VERON: Residence: Québec, but FHL microfilm #1018074 is a transcription and not the original, so I cannot compare signatures. The godfather was ANDRÉ CORBIN, occupation: artisan, residence: Québec. This appears to be either the son of ANDRÉ CORBIN and MARIE CHARLOTTE RAINVILLE (Birth:1709-05-02 Montréal, the same year as Thérèse. First marriage: 1731-07-16 Trois-Rivières with LOUISE PETIT YAMASKA Father: PIERRE PETIT YAMASKA Mother: MARGUERITE VERON GRANDMENIL. Second marriage: 1748-08-03 Trois-Rivières with VERONIQUE BABY Father : JACQUES BABY Mother: MARIE MADELEINE VERON GRANDMENIL), or his father, also an ANDRÉ, who was “maitre taillandier” in 1709 at his son’s birth and a “forgeron” who lived with his wife on rue de la Montagne in 1744. Once again, there are firm links to the Grandménil family. Also, DAVID CORBIN, brother to André the elder, was hired to go to Fort Pontchartrain 28 April 1705 (Chambalon). Thanks to Gail Moreau for a copy of this contract. Again, at Beauport, Thérèse later served in 1735 as a godmother with the name Theres Degrandmenil, but this is a civil record and a transcription on the microfilm. See footnote 12.

103 Marie-Anne Corbin is sister to David and André Corbin. Jetté: 269.
Grammeny. A photocopy of the document reveals that the priest wrote “Therese” and crossed it out; then he continued with “Damoiselle Therese Verron Grammeny”. Something or someone may have impressed upon him the need to give her this honorific title. She herself signed “tharesse verront”. It seems she had received some instruction, even if only enough to be able to sign her name.

Joseph Barbel, the godfather, appears to be the son of Jacques and Marie-Anne Picard, sister-in-law to Thérèse’s acknowledged father through his marriage to Marie-Catherine Lepicart (Picard and Lepicard in Jetté). Like Thérèse, Joseph was born in 1709. Both would then have been twenty-four years old in 1733. Joseph’s father had served as secretary to Intendant Michel Bégon in 1714-1715. Did Thérèse live with the Barbels? Marie-Anne Picard’s half-sister, Étienne’s wife, died in February of 1719, when Thérèse would have been nine years old, the same year that Marie Lepage, with her second husband, Joseph Vaudry, can be documented in Détroit.

In 1735 and in 1739, Thérèse again served as godmother. In the census of Québec in 1744, she appears with the family of deceased Pierre Joly:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>M.S. Pr.</th>
<th>Sex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>MARIEANNE AUBUCHON</td>
<td>048</td>
<td>v p f</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>JOLY SPOUSE OF 01</td>
<td>m d m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>JOSEPH JOLY SON OF 01</td>
<td>027</td>
<td>c p m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>JOSEPH PIERRE JOLY SON OF 01</td>
<td>013</td>
<td>c p m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>CATHERINE JOLY DAUGHTER OF 01</td>
<td>015</td>
<td>c p f</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>LOUISE JOLY DAUGHTER OF 01</td>
<td>012</td>
<td>c p f</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>THERÈSE GRANDMENIL</td>
<td>032</td>
<td>p f</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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104 FHL microfilm #1289908 N.-D. Qué. Photocopy.
105 Jetté: 46
106 Bégon was known for entertaining “the colony’s fashionable society—Monseignat described Bégon as the most lavish of the six intendants of New France he had known. . .”. Zoltvany, DCB III: 60.
107 Vachon, DBC II: 45. He was chief scribe [greffier en chef] of the Conseil superieur in 1721-1722, notaire royale, and held other important positions.
108 Ste. Anne du Detroit registers (photocopy of original): 1719 November the baptism of seven-month-old child (thus born in May), Marguerite Bosserrone, legitimate daughter of Joseph Vaudry and Marie Lepage. The godmother was Marguerite Lepage, Marie’s sister.
110 PRDH: #187108 Québec 1744-00-00.
Suzanne Boivin Sommerville, 2020 version for the FCHSM website

While the census assigns two non-family individuals occupations as servants, it does not do so for Thérèse. In the version published by RAPQ, Thérèse is said to be “pensionnaire” (boarder, lodger).\(^{111}\) Whether her lodging was being paid by someone else or was the result of service she performed for the family seems impossible to ascertain. Two years before the 1744 census, Thérèse’s father knew the Joly family at least well enough to attend the 3 November 1742 wedding at Québec City of Madeleine Joly, daughter of Pierre Joly & Marie-Anne Aubuchon, to Jean-Baptiste Lussac of Paroisse de St-Project, Diocese de Bordeaux.\(^{112}\) Five years after her acknowledged father’s death\(^ {113}\) and four years after the 1744 census at Québec, Thérèse married at Trois-Rivières. This is the PRDH “certificate” version of the church record\(^ {114}\) at Trois-Rivières:


112 PRDH: #165085 Québec 1742-11-03 and photocopy. Grandmesnil signed the record.


114 PRDH: #181015 Trois-Rivières 1748-04-22 and photocopy. This is the anniversary of her acknowledged (or alleged) father’s death on 22 April 1743. Images from FamilySearch, Quebec, Catholic Parish Registers, 1621-1979, Trois-Rivières, Immaculée Conception, Baptêmes, mariages, sépultures 1634-1749, Image 672 (the dispensation inserted into the register) and 673 (the marriage) of 684.
Pierre Baby and Therese grandmeni signed, as did francoise veron veuve vieuxpont and others not mentioned on the PRDH “certificate”: hertel de Rouville, andre de rouville, Corbin, De Rouville hertel, marguerite vieuxpont, monique babi corbin, janete babi, and the priest Augustin Quintal

Here is the PRDH “certificate” of the marriage contract drawn up by notary Pillard five days earlier:

277128 Lieu indéterminé (au Québec) 1748-04-17
Rank Name Age M.S. Pr. Sex
01 PIERRE BABY Residence : TROIS-RIVIERES --- c p m
02 THERESE VERON DE GRANDMESNIL Residence : TROIS-RIVIERES --- p f
03 JACQUES BABY FATHER OF 01 Residence : TROIS-RIVIERES --- d m
04 MADELEINE VERON DE GRANDMESNIL MOTHER OF 01 Residence : TROIS-RIVIERES --- f
05 RENE OVIDE HERTEL DE ROUVILLE Residence : TROIS-RIVIERES --- p m
06 LOUIS PILLARD Occupation : NOTAIRE --- p m

• LA MARIEE EST ”ASSISTEE DE RENE-OVIDE DE ROUVILLE”.
[The bride is “assisted by René-Ovide de Rouville”]

René-Ovide Hertel, who is said to “assist the bride” at the contract, is cousin to Étienne Veron, who declared himself as such when he was present at René-Ovide’s marriage, as recorded in the registers at Québec 11 October 1741. See footnote.) In 1741, René-Ovide was 21 and his bride, Louise-Catherine André, 29 years old.

115 PRDH: #277128 Lieu indéterminé (au Québec) 1748-04-17. The contract was written at the “hostel” (either the home or offices) of “Lieutenant General” René-Ovide Hertel at Trois-Rivières.
116 Father of the groom is deceased Jean-Baptiste Hertel de Rouville, écuyer, chevalier de St-Louis, capitaine d’une compagnie entretenue pour le service du Roi à l’Île Royale, where René-Ovide was born, and his mother Marie-Anne Baudouin (Beaudoin in Jetté). PRDH: #165029 Québec 1741-10-11 A notation on the document presents an interesting story: “The act is not in its [chronological] place in the register, M. Plante having refused to register the marriage celebrated 21 May 1741 at St-Roch chapel by Brother Valantin, Recollet, the mother of the husband having opposed it [the marriage]. An arrêt of the conseil supérieur declared the marriage null and abusive. Afterwards, M. Plante obtained the written consent of the groom’s mother, a dispensation in good and due form, and an ordonnance (ruling) by the bishop to enter the marriage act in the register; after which the marriage couple were interrogated separately about their marital intentions, to which they replied that they had married with a free and
On 17 April 1748, five days before the Church ceremony, the witnesses present for Thérèse at the marriage contract (not recorded on the extract from PRDH) were Dame Louise-Catherine André, present and identified as wife of René-Ovide Hertel, also present, advisor to Thérèse for the contract; Dame Françoise Grandmesnil, “veuve de feu Sr Godefroy de Vieuxpont,” widow of deceased Sieur Godefroy de Vieuxpont (and sister of Étienne the younger); Delle (Damoiselle) Marguerite de Vieuxpont, “sa fille, tante et cousine de la dite future Espouse,”118 her daughter, aunt and cousin of the said future bride. Clearly, this document shows that the family of Véron de Grandmesnil acknowledged and supported Thérèse, who signed the contract Thereze grandmeni. All others present also signed.119 Thérèse’s douaire préfix (dower’s portion) was two thousand livres, a significant sum for the time.

Inserted into the register of Immaculée Conception des Trois-Rivières on the same page as the marriage record is a dispensation document granting a marriage license without the proclamation of three banns.120

I could easily translate the first part of the document, written in Latin, but the remaining part puzzled me.

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117 See DBC, Vol. III: 14, for an account of her life, which reads like a New France version of Scarlett O’Hara!


119 Other signatures on the contract are: Pierre Baby; hertel DeRouville; L. Corbin; madeleine grammeni; André de Rouville (André Corbin); monique babi corbin; janete baby; francoisse veron veuve vieuxpont; marguerite godfroy devieuxpont; Leproust, notaire Royal; and Pillard, Notaire Royal.

120 Dated 6 April 1748 at Québec and signed by Henri-Marie Du Breil de Pont Briand, Bishop of Québec, and Boucault, his secretary. FHL film #1298969. [Also available on FamilySearch]
If Thérèse is truly the daughter of Étienne Véron Grandmesnil, fils, as declared on her baptismal record at Fort Pontchartrain, then she and Pierre Baby are first cousins, a fact that seemed to be recognized by the “aunt” and “cousin” attending the ceremonies. I therefore expected to see some mention of consanguinity between the contracting parties. I asked several persons knowledgeable in both Classical and Church Latin to look at the document, and each of them was equally somewhat puzzled about the language in the second part. One translation, which did not attempt to deal with the very last sentences, reads:

If you will have established that [Petrum Bâby et Mariam Theresiam, (with “grandmeny” added above the line) ], your free parishioners, are unfettered to contract marriage between them, we give you licence to celebrate the marriage between them without proclamation of banns; and regarding the aforementioned proclamation of three banns, let the dispensation only be done with the parents' consent [word in fold and unreadable] nowhere out of the jurisdiction of the requested region; and you shall be aware of no impediment, from civil or canon law, from having been kept in servitude at another time.

Another translator wrote, in part:

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121 My thanks to Karl Hagen, Anne Cowley, and Ila Mae Lancendorf. I also examined other examples of dispensations for consanguinity to compare wording. This dispensation contains none of the phrasing I saw in the others.
In addition to the non-declaration of the aforementioned banns, let it be decreed likewise that a dispensation be issued for the consenting parties legally requesting it, allowing no other dispensations. We know of no impediment, civil or canonical, all other laws being obeyed, church rites being observed, in which circumstances we freely agree that for the present no dispensation be granted except the one formerly described. (described above).

And a third, considering only the last portion:

You will come to know of no impediment, either civil or canonical, whether a servant or one who had servants\(^{122}\), in the rites of the church which are observed by law and by its sound book. We desire however that the present dispensation consist of none or possibly just one of the previously spoken conditions.

All three translators agree, though, that no dispensation is granted for a blood relationship. The church entry mentions only the dispensation of three banns. [Author’s note 2010: See another translation after the bibliography. I obtained it after this article was published. It clearly states that, if the family has no knowledge of any impediments, the marriage may be contracted.]

Dilemma. The sole record found establishing Thérèse’s father’s name is, apparently, the 25 July 1709 baptism record:

![Baptism Record Image]

which has half of a line blotted out on the original. The 1881 transcription of this event, available on the FHL microfilm, includes the annotation in the margin giving Thérèse the last name of “Beausseron,” Marie Lepage’s deceased husband. This side notation is, obviously, not on the original.\(^{123}\) When Tanguay, who certified the version of the FHL microfilm, recorded the event in his Dictionnaire Généalogique, he showed no first name for “Beausseron” and no marriage date for his union with Marie Lepage but listed Thérèse as their “posthume” child (born after Beausseron’s death), baptized 25 July 1709 “au Détroit.”\(^{124}\) In his entry for Étienne Véron Grandmesnil the younger, he lists a Thérèse, with no baptism date, as child of Grandmesnil and of his wife, Marie-Catherine Lepicard, and includes the date of

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\(^{122}\) The previous version translated this phrase as “all other laws being obeyed”, which I accept as most accurate in this context. The phrase is “servatio alias servandis”. [Note: A Roman Catholic priest later confirmed this definition for me. See notes added after the bibliography.]

\(^{123}\) See MHH, January 2001.

\(^{124}\) L’Abbé C. Tanguay, Dictionnaire Généalogique des Familles Canadiennes, Éditions Élysée, 1975 reprint in seven volumes, originally published 1871-1890, Vol. I, p. 35. It is an established fact that Tanguay suppressed or omitted the illegitimate births he found.
Thérèse’s marriage to Pierre Baby. Yet no parents for Thérèse are recorded on either this marriage record or the contract.

So... Having established that Grandmesnil the elder was most definitely not the father of Thérèse, that Grandmesnil the younger could have been the father and also acknowledged paternity, I am left with these questions: Is it possible that the true biological father of Thérèse is someone else altogether? Is it possible, and here I am in speculative territory, that an elaborate fiction was woven, including the “aunt” and “cousin” titles, to cover for yet a third party? How could anyone involved in such a cover-up have anticipated a future marriage to a “cousin”? I find it difficult to believe that the Church would have knowingly allowed the marriage of first cousins without a dispensation. The complications René-Ovide Hertel, Thérèse’s advisor, experienced in obtaining a dispensation and rehabilitation for his marriage argue against such laxity.

Despite the apparent certitudes and, most especially, despite the moral judgments advanced in the past, the truth may never be known.

We do know, though, that Thérèse gave birth to two sons: Pierre-Ovide, 3 April 1749, and Jean-Étienne, 26 September 1750, both baptized at Trois-Rivières, and that the first son was buried 9 October 1750 at Pointe-du-Lac. It is possible that Thérèse named Jean-Étienne Baby after her acknowledged father, who had died in 1743. The name Étienne could not have been given solely by and in honor of the godfather, as was custom in New France, for the godfather’s name was Jean-Baptiste Joutra. The godmother was Louise “Grandmini,” sister of Étienne Véron fils (thus “aunt” to the child), widow of Vieuxpont. Forty-one years after Thérèse’s birth at Fort Pontchartrain, someone in the Véron family was still concerning herself with the destiny of Burton’s “unfortunate” Thérèse and her descendant.

She served as godmother several times after her marriage, the most interesting record being for 19 October 1765, when she was 56. It is the baptism of Antoine Soulard (Beaudry dit Desbuttes dit Soulard), on which she is identified as “Tharese Veron” and which she signed “Therresse gr baby”, seemingly beginning to sign “grandmesnil” and then finishing with her husband’s last name. The British influence, which records married women by their married names only, was apparently making an impact.

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126 I have read that a dispensation for such a close degree of consanguinity required a dispensation from the Pope. Unfortunately, I did not record my source.
128 A parcel of land at Trois-Rivières given to Isabelle Couc by her parents at her marriage contract (Photocopy, ANQ Adhémard 26 April 1684) was next to that of a Godefroy Vieuxpont, probably the father of Jean-Baptiste m Jeanne dite Louise Véron and Jacques m Louise-Françoise Véron. Brother Pierre Godefroy, sieur de Roquetaillede, served as godfather on 1 April 1720, baptism of Pierre, Panis de nation, twelve years old., with Mlle Therese de Tonty as godmother. (FHL #1026602, Reg. Ste. Anne, 149) He married 5 August 1724 at Détroit to Marie-Catherine Jean dit Vien, widow of Jacques Sauvage. They had no known children (Jetté). Marie Lepage was in Détroit in that year. A son by Joseph Vaudry, Jacques, was born 31 Dec 1724, baptized 01 January 1725. (Jetté and Reg. Ste. Anne.)
129 FHL #1298975, Register of Trois-Rivières. Jean “Soulard” & Thérèse Corbin, the parents of baby Antoine, m 1763-03-10 at Trois-Rivières. Jean’s parents: Rene Beaudry Desbuttes Lamarche Soulard (son of Guillaume Beaudry dit Desbuttes m Jeanne Soulard in 1682 at Québec) & Marie Charlotte Lepelle Desmarais. Thérèse Corbin’s parents: André Corbin & Louise Petit Yamaska. (PRDH)
Thérèse died 12 May 1786 and was buried at Trois-Rivières 15 May.\textsuperscript{130} The PRDH “certificate”:

\begin{verbatim}
38290 Trois-Rivières 1786-05-15 Death : 1786-05-12
Rank Name M.S. Pr. Sex
01 THERESE VERON --- m d f
02 PIERRE BABY SPOUSE OF 01 --- v v m
\end{verbatim}

The parish record of her burial identifies her as “Thérèse Veron, épouse de Sr Pierre Baby” and states that she received all the sacraments before her death. A side-bar says, “Sepulture Mde. Baby (née Veron)”\textsuperscript{131}

Daughter, friend, wife and mother, she had survived from her birth in 1709 at sparsely-populated French Fort Pontchartrain, through the seemingly-unknowable events of her childhood and the turbulent years leading to the British Conquest of New France, the Québec Act in 1774, and even the American Revolution. Was she at Trois-Rivières when the city capitulated to the American Colonies’ General Montgomery on 9 November 1775? If her son Jean-Étienne survived childhood, he would have been 25 in that year. On 8 February, the city was occupied by the American troops. Benedict Arnold passed through on 15 April and had dinner there. The Americans were not victorious in their attack on Québec; it remained British with an overwhelmingly French-speaking population. In 1784, two years before her death, the population of the District of Trois-Rivières was 12,618 out of a total population of 113,012, not counting about 10,000 British Loyalists who were beginning to settle in the Province of Québec.\textsuperscript{132} What were Thérèse’s thoughts and feelings during these years? The Treaty of Paris was signed 9 November 1782, ending the Revolutionary War, but the place of her birth—Detroit—remained under British control from 29 November 1760, after the Conquest, until 1796, when Detroit became part of the United States, almost 87 years after Thérèse’s birth. At her death she was not quite 77 years of age. Although the events of her life may not be as well-documented as the historical events between 1709 and 1786—three-quarters of a century—who can deny her importance to those who knew and loved her? And who can truly judge, at this distance, the act that gave her life? Yet to Burton, it was “not profitable” to trace the descent of this “unfortunate”.

I can forgive Burton for his factual inaccuracies, but I will not excuse his heartless attitude toward Marie Lepage and her daughter. Paraphrasing the ghost of Hamlet’s father, I say: “Leave them all to Heaven.”

Suzanne Boivin Sommerville
20 February 2001
2020 Version

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Cadillac’s Village Or Detroit Under Cadillac, with List of Property Owners and A History of the Settlement 1701 To 1710.  Compiled by C. M. Burton.  Detroit: 1896

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\textsuperscript{130} PRDH #382290 Trois-Rivières 1786-05-15 Death: 1786-05-12.  It appears her husband died not long after, but there is no firm identification of him as her husband on PRDH #529824 St-François-du-Lac 1787-12-28.  The record reveals that this Pierre, however, was called \textit{sieur} and buried inside the church, so it is likely to be the right Pierre.  I was unable to trace the surviving son with any precision.

\textsuperscript{131} Photocopy, FHL #1298975.  Witnesses: “M[essieurs] Badeaux Bellefeuille, modeste Pratt, Jos. Laframboise, et autres,” and others.

\textsuperscript{132} Le Boréal Express, p. 318.

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Archives Nationales du Québec [ANQ] {Now Library and Archives Canada}


University of Toronto Press. 1966 (1979 reprint).

University of Toronto Press. 1974.


Jetté, René. Dictionnaire généalogique des familles du Québec.


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PRDH: Programme de recherche en démographie historique (Program of research in historical demography). Gaëtan Morin Éditeur. http://www.genealogie.umontreal.ca {Now PRDH-IGD}

Registers of Notre-Dame-de-Montréal. Salt Lake City: Family History Library.
Microfilm #037584 (1713-1737). {Now available on FamilySearch online}

Registers of Notre-Dame-de-Québec. Salt Lake City: Family History Library.
Microfilm #1289908 (1727-1738) and #1289909 (1738-1748) {Now available on FamilySearch online}

Microfilm #1026602 and selected photocopies of original register.

Registers of Immaculée Conception des Trois-Rivières. Salt Lake City: Family History Library.
Microfilms #1298969 and #1298975 {Now available on FamilySearch online}
Suzanne Boivin Sommerville, 2020 version for the FCHSM website


Received after article was published:
Message text written by INTERNET: Owenttagart@aol.com [an alias for Father John Sullivan]

>Henricus Maria DuBreil De Pont Briand, miseratione divina et Sancta Sedis Apostolica gratia Episcopus Quebecensis, Regi ab omnibus consiliis

Dilrecto nostro fratre Augustino Quintal, recollecto, Ecclesiae parochialis vulgo des Trois Rivière pastori, salutem et benedictionem:

Si tibi considerit Petrum Raby et Mariam Theresiam Grandmeny parochianos tuos liberos esse ac solutos ad matrimonium inter se contrahendum, licentiam tibi damus matrimonium inter eos celebrandi absque bannorum proclamatione, super qua trium bannorum proclamatione praedictos dispensationem damus

Dummodo id fiat de consensu parientium utriusque partis a jure requisitorum et non alia, nullumque noveris impedimentum civile aut canonice, servatis alia servandis, et ritibus Ecclesiae observatis, que en justibus salvo volumus autem ne praesens dispensatio nulla sit si vel una ex praedictis conditionibus sit.

Datum Quebecis in nostro palatio episcopali sub signo sigilloque nostris et Secretarii nostri subscriptione die sexta aprilis anno Salutis millesimo septuagésimo octavio.

+ h. m. episcopus quebecensis

De mandato illustissimi ac Reverendissimi D. P. Episcopi Quebecensis

Rouault, Cans. Secr.

Henri Marie DuBreil de Pontbriand, par la miséricorde divine et la grace du Saint Siège Apostolique, Evêque de Québec, Gouverneur de tous les conseils

A notre bien cher frère Augustin Quintal, Récollet, pasteur le l'Eglise paroissiale appelée en langue vulgaire «des Trois Rivières», salutations et bénédictions:

Si tu considères que Pierre Raby [sic, Baby] et Marie-Thérèse Grandmeny, tes paroissiens, sont libres, et résolus à contracter le mariage ensemble, nous te donnons permission de célébrer le mariage entre eux sans proclamation de bans, et à ce propos, nous donnons dispense de la proclamation des susdits bans. Pour autant que cela se fasse avec le consentement des parents requis par la loi, et non autrement, que tu ne découvres aucun empêchement civil ou canonique, que les autres [règlements] soient suivies, que les coutumes et les lois de l'Eglise soient observées, que nous, en justice, voulons saufgarder, la présente dispense étant nulle si même une seule des conditions susdites soit absente. Donné à Québec, en notre palais épiscopal, sous notre paraphe et notre seing, et la souscription de notre Secrétaire, le six avril de l'année du Salut mil sept cent quarante huit.

+H. M. Evêque de Québec

Par mandat du très illustre et très révérend D. P. Evêque de Québec

Rouault, Chancelier, Secrétaire

Henry Mary DuBreil de Pontbriand, by the mercy of God and the grace of the Holy and Apostolic See, Bishop of Quebec, Governor of all counsels

To our beloved brother, Augustine Quintal, pastor of the parish church known in the vernacular as "of Three Rivers", greetings and blessings:

If you consider that Pierre Raby [sic, Baby] and Marie-Therese Grandmeny, your parishioners, are free and intent upon contracting marriage together, we grant you permission to celebrate their marriage without proclamation of bans, and for this reason, we grant dispensation from the proclamation of the aforesaid bans. Inasmuch as this be done with the consent of family members required by law, and not otherwise, that you discover no civil or canonical impediment, that all other requirements be met, that the customs and laws of the Church be observed, which we intend to safeguard in justice; this present dispensation shall be null and void if even one of the aforementioned conditions is not met. Given in Quebec, at our episcopal palace, under our signature and seal, and the signature of our Secretary, this sixth day of April in the year of Salvation, one thousand seven hundred forty eight.
+H.M. Bishop of Quebec
By mandate of the most illustrious and most reverend D.P., Bishop of Quebec
Rouault, Chancellor, Secretary <

>John L. Sullivan< [alias Father Owen Taggert]

Fr John L Sullivan [Owen Taggart = nom de plume]

St Joseph Rectory

82 Howard Street

Springfield, MA 01105

[Emphasis mine]

Additional details not included in article:
I had a chance to follow up on the ancestry of the baby, Antoine Soulard (Beaudry *dit* Desbuttes *dit* Soulard), for whom Thérèse served as godmother in 1765 with André Corbin. There are some interesting connections and a link to descendants in Detroit and Essex County, Ontario.

Parents of Antoine are Jean Soulard (Beaudry *dit* Desbuttes *dit* Soulard) and Thérèse Corbin. Grandparents are René Beaudry and Marie Charlotte Lepelle Desmarais. [That's already stated]

René Beaudry is the last child of Guillaume Beaudry *dit* Desbuttes and Jeanne Soulard (b 16 Nov 1707 Trois-Rivières, thus a contemporary of Thérèse).

René's older brother, Jean *dit* DESBUTTES, *dit* St.-Martin (b 3 July 1684 at Trois-Rivières & m 8 Oct 1721 Québec to Marie-Louise Doyon) was a gunsmith or armorer like his brothers Claude-Charles, Urbain, and René. He traveled to Detroit, received land there in 1735, and was buried there 20 Nov 1755.

The Desbuttes in Detroit and Essex County descend from him (DBC III, 36-37, which also cites Telesphore St-Pierre)

An uncle of Jean and René is the Jacques Beaudry *dit* Lamarche who acquired Cadillac's property and who negotiated with Grandmesnil after 1723 in connection with it. Jacques Beaudry died sometime after 1738 in France, where he was resident in 1724. He was involved in 1738 in the estate of Charon, the founder of the institution where Nicolas René, Marie-Anne Germaneau / Montour's son, was placed in 1728. This same Charon's version of the plan to found Detroit was accepted in place of Cadillac's, and Grandmesnil also settled financial accounts between Charon and Cadillac. I have citations for each of these statements.

What a tangled web of inter-related persons! Telling this story in a novel would not meet the suspension of disbelief requirement of historical fiction; yet my conclusions are based on documented facts.