

THE
BAPTISMAL REGISTER
OF
FORT DUQUESNE,

(From June, 1754, to Dec., 1756.)

The spirit which animated the early French emigrants to this country, was one of zeal, exploration and traffic, rather than of colonization. Whether they were missionaries, spurred on by the love of souls, or explorers, incited by ambition, or traders, urged on by cupidity, they were ever penetrating more and more deeply into the western wilds. In their early incursions into the far west, they were obliged, owing to the presence of the dreaded Iroquois, who dwelt south of Lake Ontario, to make a circuitous route.

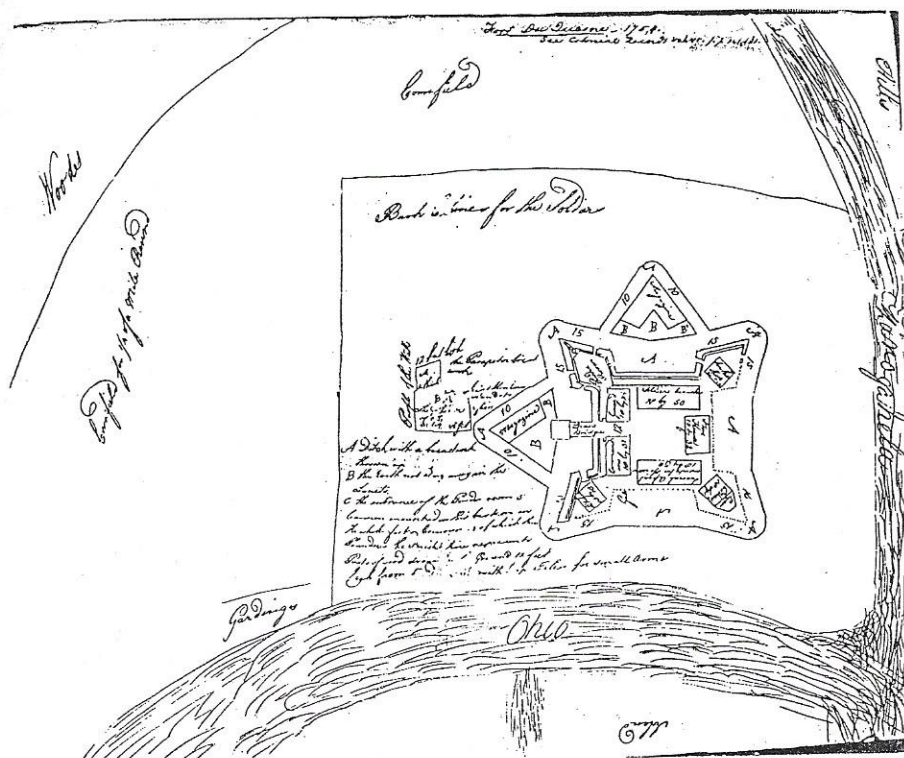
At first they were accustomed to ascend the St. Lawrence river to the mouth of the Ottawa, continuing up that stream, reaching the upper lakes by means of Lake Nipissing, French river and Georgian bay. Subsequently, when Fort Frontenac, or Cataraqui, was built at the eastern extremity of Lake Ontario, they were enabled to change their course, and, following the St. Lawrence to its source in that lake, pass, by means of the small lakes, rivers and bays that intervene, to the southern extremity of Georgian bay. Still later they went by lake Ontario, Erie, and Huron; and finally by the Allegheny and Ohio rivers.

As early as the winter of 1669-70, or in the spring of the latter year, Robert Chavelier de la Salle penetrated to the upper waters of the Allegheny river, and descending that stream and the Ohio river as far as the falls, where the city of Louisville Kentucky now stands, returned. He left only the merest reference to this trip in his writings.

With the discovery of the mouth of the Mississippi by La Salle in April, 1682, another motive was added to those of zeal, ambition and traffic. By means of the Mississippi river, they could facilitate commerce during the long season when the St. Lawrence was blocked with ice. The English naturally regarded the action of the French with an unfriendly eye, but it was perhaps more keenly felt by the Indian traders, whose code of laws was dictated by their power alone. The English explorers had been into the valley of the Ohio as early as 1654 but without effecting any permanent results. The first person to descend the Allegheny and Ohio rivers to take possession of this country for France was Celeron de Blainville. He came in command of 215 French and Canadian soldiers and 55 Indians to counteract the designs of the English. The principal officers under him were Contrecoeur, who afterwards built Fort Duquesne, Coulon de Villiers and Joncaire-Chabert. This group placed leaden plates at what is now Warren, Pa. at Conewango creek, at the confluence of the Ohio and Chautauqua, near the river Ohio, and continued depositing their leaden plates at various places to the mouth of the Miami river (in Ohio).

A complete history of the French occupation in and around Fort Pitt and western Pennsylvania is contained in the preface to the work from which this article is taken, Rev. A.A. Lambing, A.M. The Baptismal Register of Fort Duquesne from June 1754 to Dec., 1756 1885; & especially in in Donald H. Kent's The French Invasion of Western Pennsylvania 1753 (1954, 1981) Pa.Hist.& Mus. Comm. Harrisburg.

The French took possession of Ensign Ward's small Fort George which he had erected for Virginia (where Fort Pitt later stood) on the 16th of April in 1754. They immediately set about constructing Fort Duquesne. It was designed by M. le Chevalier de Mercier, a captain of the artillery. The fort was named in honor of the Marquis de Duquesne de Menneville, who succeeded the Marquis de Jonquiere as Governor-General of Canada in the summer of 1752. This new fort was located at the extreme end of the neck of land between the two rivers. It was probably completed in June of 1754.



From Robert Stobo's 1754 letter-map in the Darlington Memorial Library, Pittsburgh

General extract from the interments, marriages (none were recorded), and baptisms which took place during the campaign of the Beautiful River (Ohio), flourished and signed, Marin,* the original of which is preserved in Fort Duquesne at the Beautiful River, under the title of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin.

*From this expression it appears that while the original registers were kept at the different posts, authenticated copies of them were sent in parts from time to time to the seat of government to be deposited in the archives.

1753, 11th of July died in said detachment, John Baptist Texier of the Parish of Montreal, husband of Charlotte Cabassier, widow of the late La Souche. His remains were interred in the cemetery at Fort Presqu' Isle.
/S/ Fr. Gabriel Anheuser.

1753 last day of July died in said detachment John Francis Aubert of the parish of St. Charles of Sedan, in the diocese of Rheims, a soldier of the company of Dumas. Interred at Presqu' Isle.
/S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R. & Fr. Gabriel Anheuser, P.R.

1753, 20th of August died in said detachment, St. George a soldier of the company of Fouville, incorporated into the detachment of Mr. La Ronde. His remains were interred in that part of the camp of French creek set apart as cemetery.
/S/ Fr. Gabriel Anheuser, P.R. Chaplain.

1753, 6th of Sept. died Stephen La Franchisse, a corporal in the company of Fouville, incorporated into that of Mr. La Ronde. His remains were interred at French Creek on same day. /S/ Fr. Gabriel Anheuser, P.R.

1753, 16th of Sept. died at the fort of French Creek, Jerome Auge, an inhabitant of the Point au Tremble in the province of Quebec. He was interred at Beautiful River. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1753, 29th Oct. at half past four in the evening died in the fort of French Creek, under the title of St. Peter, Monsieur Peter Paul, Esquire, Sieur de Marin, Chevalier (Knight) of the royal military order of St. Louis, Captain of Infantry and Commander in Chief of the army of the Beautiful River, aged 63 years. His remains were interred at the same fort. There was present at his interment Monsieur Repentigny, commander of the above mentioned army, and captain of infantry; Messieurs du Muys, lieutenant of infantry; Benois, lieutenant of infantry; de Simblin, major at the above mentioned fort; and Laforce, guard of the magazine, who signed with us. (all signed, including Fr. Denys Baron, P.R. Chaplain.

1754, 9th of Febr. died in the fort of French Creek under the title of St. Peter, Louis Rivare, unmarried, a member of the parish of St. Charles on the Chambly river, aged about 25. His remains were interred at French Creek. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1754, 11th of March died in fort of French creek under the title of St. Peter, William Thybeault, unmarried, a member of the parish of St. Thomas, called Quail Point below Quebec, aged about 28 years. His remains were interred at French Creek. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1754, 20th of June died in Fort Duquesne on the Beautiful River, Toussaint, (All Saints) Boyer styled Bientourne, unmarried, an inhabitant of St. Peter's on the prairie de la Magdeleine, aged 22 years or thereabouts. His remains were interred in the place set apart for the cemetery of the said fort. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1754, 15th of July died in Fort Duquesne, De Jardin, an inhabitant of St. Rose of Lima on the Isle of Jesus, aged about 23 years. His remains were buried at the fort. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1754, 3rd of Aug., died in Fort Duquesne, Joseph Delisle, unmarried, inhabitant of Longueville, aged about 26 years. His remains were interred in the fort cemetery. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1754, 6th of August died at Fort Duquesne, under the title of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, a man named Ambrose Boivin, married, an inhabitant of the bay of St. Paul below Quebec. His remains were interred in the fort cemetery. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

We, Captain of Infantry, Commander-in-Chief of the detachment of the Beautiful River, of the forts of Presqu' Isle, French creek, and Duquesne, certify that the above extracts conform to the original made at Fort Duquesne on the tenth of August, 1754. /Approved/ Contrecoeur.

The Second Register has been arranged and signed by us, Captain of Infantry, Commander in Chief of the detachment of the Beautiful River, of the forts of Presqu' Isle, French creek, and Duquesne which will serve to register the mortuary extracts, baptisms, and interments which will take place at the said Fort Duquesne, under the title of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, for the remainder of the year 1754. /S/ Contrecoeur.

1754, 6th of Sept. died at Fort Duquesne a man named John Beau, an inhabitant of the Chambly river, Seignior of Contrecoeur, aged 20 years or thereabouts. His remains were interred in the cemetery of the same fort. /S/ Fr. Deny Baron, P.R.

1754, 12th of Sept. died at Fort Duquesne, Henry Marin, servant of Mr. Droulison, aged 15 years or thereabout. His remains were interred at the Fort. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1754, 15th of Sept. died at Fort Duquesne a man named Joseph Brochus, of the Parish of St. Michael, below Quebec, aged 23 years or thereabouts. He was buried at the fort. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1754, 16th of Sept. died at Fort Duquesne, Francis de L'Orme, being master carpenter at Fort Duquesne, a native of the parish of the Sault au Recollet, aged 30 years or thereabouts. His remains were interred in the cemetery at the fort. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1754, 13th of Oct. died at Fort Duquesne, Alexander Marquis of the parish of Camouraskas, below Quebec, aged 25 years or thereabout. His remains were interred at the fort. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1754, 3rd of Nov. was baptised with the customary ceremonies, Denise, a Loup (Mohegan) Indian, aged 12 years or thereabouts, who ardently desired baptism, which said chaplain at Fort Duquesne administered to her. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1754, 5th of Nov. died near Fort Duquesne, Denise, a Loup (Mohegan) Indian, aged 12 years or thereabouts, who had been baptised two days before. Her remains were interred at Fort Duquesne. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

The following Register was made on the 1st day of January 1755.
/S/ Contrecoeur.

1755, 3rd of Jan. died Peter Langevin, unmarried, an inhabitant of the parish of the Immaculate Conception, called the Point Olivier on the Chambly. His remains were interred at Fort Duquesne where he died. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1755, 15th of Jan. in Fort Duquesne, died Peter Texier, unmarried, an inhabitant of the parish of St. Anne in the Seigniorie of Gatineaux, in the government of Three Rivers, aged about 27 years. Buried in the cemetery of the fort. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1755, 14th of Feb. at Fort Duquesne, died Francis Trudel, unmarried, an inhabitant of the parish of St. Francis of Sales, called Point aux Trembles in the Province of Quebec. His remains were interred in the cemetery of the fort. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1755, 2nd of March was baptised, Mary Jane Vermet, aged 19 months or thereabout, born at Newville Speancalluianci, dau of John Vermet, a Frenchman, formerly an inhabitant of Newville Speancalluianci, who was killed by the Shawanees while coming to join the Catholics of these parts; and Jane Vollenbork/Bolingbroke?, an English woman; the father and mother being natives of North Carolina. The god-father was Monsieur Peter Claude de Contrecoeur, Esquire, Sieur de Beaudray, Captain of Infantry, Commander in chief of the forts of Duquesne, Presqu' Isle, and French creek; the god-mother was Mary Joseph Chainier, wife of the Sieur Norment, merchant/trader at the Beautiful River, who have signed conjointly with us.

/S/ Contrecoeur, Mary Joseph Chanier, Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

[from the translators notes, this child was of the household of Mr. de Contrecoeur]

1755, 5th of May, died at Fort Duquesne Michael Boucher, unmarried inhabitant of the parish of St. Nicholas, near Quebec. His body was interred in the fort cemetery. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1755, 5th of July was killed and scalped a man named Peter Simard, unmarried, an inhabitant of the parish of Petit Riviere below Quebec, who was aged 23 years, or thereabout. His body was interred in the cemetery of Fort Duquesne. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1755, 9th of July was killed in the battle fought with the English same day, a man named Limoge, unmarried, an inhabitant of the Thousand Islands, parish of St. Louis, who was aged 26 whose remains were interred on the field of battle by Mr. Le Borgne, a cadet a L'Eguillette, as he made known to us. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1755, 9th of July died at Fort Duquesne a man named John Baptist Talion, unmarried an inhabitant of the Thosand Islands parish of St. Louis, having been wounded the same day in the battle fought with the English. He was interred at the fort on the 10th of the month. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1755, 9th of July was killed in the battle fought with the English same day, Mr. Dericherville, Esquire, Sieur de Carqueville, Lt. in the forces of the detachment of the marine. His remains interred on the 12th in the cemetery at Fort Duquesne. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1755, 10th of July died at Fort Duquesne, Mr. John Baptist La Perade, Esq., Sieur de Parieux, Ensign in the troops of the Isle Royale, having been wounded on the 9th of the present month in the battle fought with the English. His remains were interred at the fort. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1755, 9th of July, was killed in the battle fought with the English the same day, Mr. Lienard Daniel, Esquire, Sieur de Beaujeu, Captain of Infantry, Commander of Fort Duquesne, and of the army, who was aged about 45 years. His remains were interred on the 12th of the same month at the fort. /S/ Denys Baron, P.R.

1755, 27th of July was interred in the cemetery of Fort Duquesne, the remains of Charles, Esquire, Sieur de Sonnonville, cadet L'Eguillette. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1755, 29th of July died at Fort Duquesne, John Baptist Dupuis, unmarried, an inhabitant of the prairie of the Magdelene, having been wounded on the 9th of the aforementioned month in the battle fought with the English. His remains were interred in the cemetery of the same fort. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

[note: surname also spelled Dupris]

1755, 30th of July died at Fort Duquesne, Mr. Joseph Hartel, Esquire, Sieur de St. Teresa, a cadet in the forces of the marine, aged 22 years or thereabouts. His remains were interred at Fort Duquesne. /S/ Fr. Luke Collet, P.R. & Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1755, 18th of Sept. was baptised John Daniel Norment, born the same day, the son of John Gasper Norment and of Mary Joseph Chainier, his father and mother being united in lawful wedlock. His god father was Monsieur John Daniel, Esquire, Sieur Dumas, Capt. of Infantry, Commander in Chief of the forts of Presqu'Isle, French creek, and Duquesne at Beautiful River, his god mother was Teresa Norment (who could not sign her name). /S/ Dumas & Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1755, 24th of Sept. died at Fort Duquesne, John Daniel Norment, the son of Gasper Norment and of Mary Joseph Chainier. His remains were interred in the cemetery of the fort. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

The next Register is signed by Dumas and he attests that it is for the said fort Duquesne the 22nd of April 1756.

1756, 20th of April died at Fort Duquesne Teresa Norment aged 14 years. Her body was interred in the cemetery of the fort. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1756, 27th of April died at Fort Duquesne an Ottawa Indian named Coroco from the mission of Michilmackinac whose remains were interred in the cemetery of the fort. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R., Chaplain.

1756, 15th day of May was baptised by us, Ellen Candon aged two months the dau of John Candon and of Sarah Choisy, the father and mother being united in lawful wedlock, both being Irish Catholics, who were captured by the Shawnees in coming here to join the Catholics. The god father was Monsieur John Baptist Garault, keeper of the magazines of the King at Fort Duquesne; the god mother Mary Joseph Chanier the wife of Sieur Norment, merchant at the Beautiful River. /S/ Mary Joseph Chanier Norment, Garaud, John Candon, Fr. Denys Baron, P.R., chaplain.

1756, 28th of May was baptised by us, Denise Louisa, of English parentage, aged 3 days. The mother having been taken by the Loup (Mohegan) Indians, and afterwards given up to M. Dumas commander of Fort Duquesne. Her god father was Monsieur Joachim de la Noue, Esquire, Sieur de Robusel, ensign of foot in the troops of the detachment of the marine; the god mother Felicitas St. Mary. /S/ LaNoue, Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1756, 3rd of June died in Fort Duquesne, John B. Masion, unmarried, an inhabitant of the parish of Assumption, aged 23 years or thereabout. His remains were interred at the fort. /S/ Fr. Denys Baton, P.R.

1756, 20th of June died in Fort Duquesne Alexander Page of the parish of Cape Sante, who was aged 22 years or thereabout. His remains were interred at the fort. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1756, 28th of June died at Fort Duquesne Joseph Durocher, master carpenter of the King at this post, a native of the parish of the Magdelene in Canada who was aged 26 years or thereabout. His remains were interred in the cemetery at the fort. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1756, 9th of July was baptised by us Mary Louisa aged six weeks or thereabouts, the dau of Patrick Flarcy and Frances Langford taken by the Shawnee Indians, her father and mother being united in lawful wedlock, contracted in Pennsylvania (there were Catholic missions at this time at Philadelphia, Lancaster, Conewago (now Adams Co.) and Goshenhoppen (now in Montgomery County) it is believed that these persons were taken prisoner by the Indians in one of their numerous raids on the frontier settlements. Some of the other Catholics mentioned in the Register were likely of the same class), the said mother and father being Irish Catholics. The god father was Louis deQuindre, Esq., Sieur D'Ouville, and the god mother Felicitas St. Mary. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1756, 9th of August was baptised by us at Fort Duquesne, Mary Louisa born the same day the dau of Joseph St. Mary and Louisa Piedalu her mother, the father and mother being united in lawful wedlock. The god father was the Sieur Francis Forque, the surgeon at this post; the god mother Felicitas St. Mary. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1756, 10th of August at Fort Duquesne baptised Catherine who was in a dangerous sickness, the dau of William Smith and Cecilia Bangarnoz, her father and mother. The god father was John Hannigan, an Irishman and a Catholic; the god mother Barbara Conrad, a German and a Catholic, both who declared they could not sign. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1756, 14th of August died at Fort Duquesne, Catharine Smith of English parentage aged 18 months having been baptised the 12th of the present month. Her remains were interred in the fort cemetery. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1756, 18th of August was baptized by us at Fort Duquesne John of English parentage, aged 2½ years, son of John Turner an Englishman, and Mary Neuuton/Newton? an Englishwoman, the father and mother being united in lawful wedlock. The god father was John Hannigan an Irishman and a Catholic, the god mother Sarah Foissy an Irishwoman and a Catholic, both who declared they could not sign. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1756, 28th of August was interred in the cemetery of Fort Duquesne the remains of a Huron Indian of the mission of Detroit, aged about 18 years. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1756, 6th of Sept. was drowned in the Beautiful River a man named John Baptist Matthe of the parish of Cape Sante, called the Holy Family who was aged 20 years or thereabout. His remains were interred in the cemetery at the fort. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1756, 5th of Dec. died at Fort Duquesne a man named Thomas Jiroux of the parish of St. Thomas aged 21 years or thereabouts. His remains were interred in the smallpox cemetery at Fort Duquesne. /S. Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1756, 17th of Dec. was baptised John Baptist Christiquay, Great Chief of the Iroquois, aged 95 years or thereabout, who being dangerously sick, earnestly desired Holy baptism which was administered the same day as above, by us. /S/ Jh. Chavaudraye & Fr. Denys Baron, P.R.

1756, 25th of Dec. was baptised by us Louis of English parentage, aged 18 months or thereabout, the name of the father and mother unknown, whose father is a prisoner among the Loup (Mohegan) Indians, and who being dangerously sick, I administered to him the sacrament of Baptism. The god father was Monsieur Mutigny, Esq., Sieur de Variant, ensign in the infantry of the detachment of the marine; the god mother Mary Joseph Salde, wife of Sieur Roquette. Sergeant in the forces. /S/ by all parties.

1756, 25th Dec. was baptized conditionally by us at Fort Duquesne, Frances of English parentage aged 15 months whose father and mother are unknown, who being prisoners of the Loup (Monegan) Indians and in danger of death (the child) have administered to her the sacrament of Baptism. The god father was Charles Fleur d'Epe; the god mother Frances Lanford and Irishwoman and a Catholic. /S/ by all three.

1756, 27th Dec. was baptized conditionally Frances Mary of English parentage, aged about 3 or thereabout, whose parents names are unknown. The child is in custody of Monsieur de Lignery, commander of Fort Duquesne. The god father was Monsieur Louis, Esq., Sieur Dubuisson, lieutenant in the forces of the detachment of marine; the god mother Susan Magdelene Manseau. /S/ by all.

1756, 2nd of October was baptized Denys, an Ottawa Indian aged 12 years or thereabout who being dangerously sick desired Holy Baptism. /S/ by Fr. Baron.

1756 10th of October died in Fort Duquesne, Denys, an Ottawa Indian, aged 12 years or thereabout having been baptised on the 2nd of the present month. His remains were interred in the cemetery of Fort Duquesne. /S/ Fr. Denys Baron, P.R. chaplain.

We, the undersigned notaries of the Supreme Court of Lower Canada for the District of Montreal, certify that the fifty-seven extracts written herein are to be found in the Registers of the Acts of Baptisms, Marriages, and Interments made at Fort Duquesne during the years 1753, 1754, 1755, and 1756. The said Registers are preserved in the archives of the said court whereof we are the custodians.
Montreal, the 10th of March, 1858.

/S/ Monk, Coffin & Papineau, S.P.C.