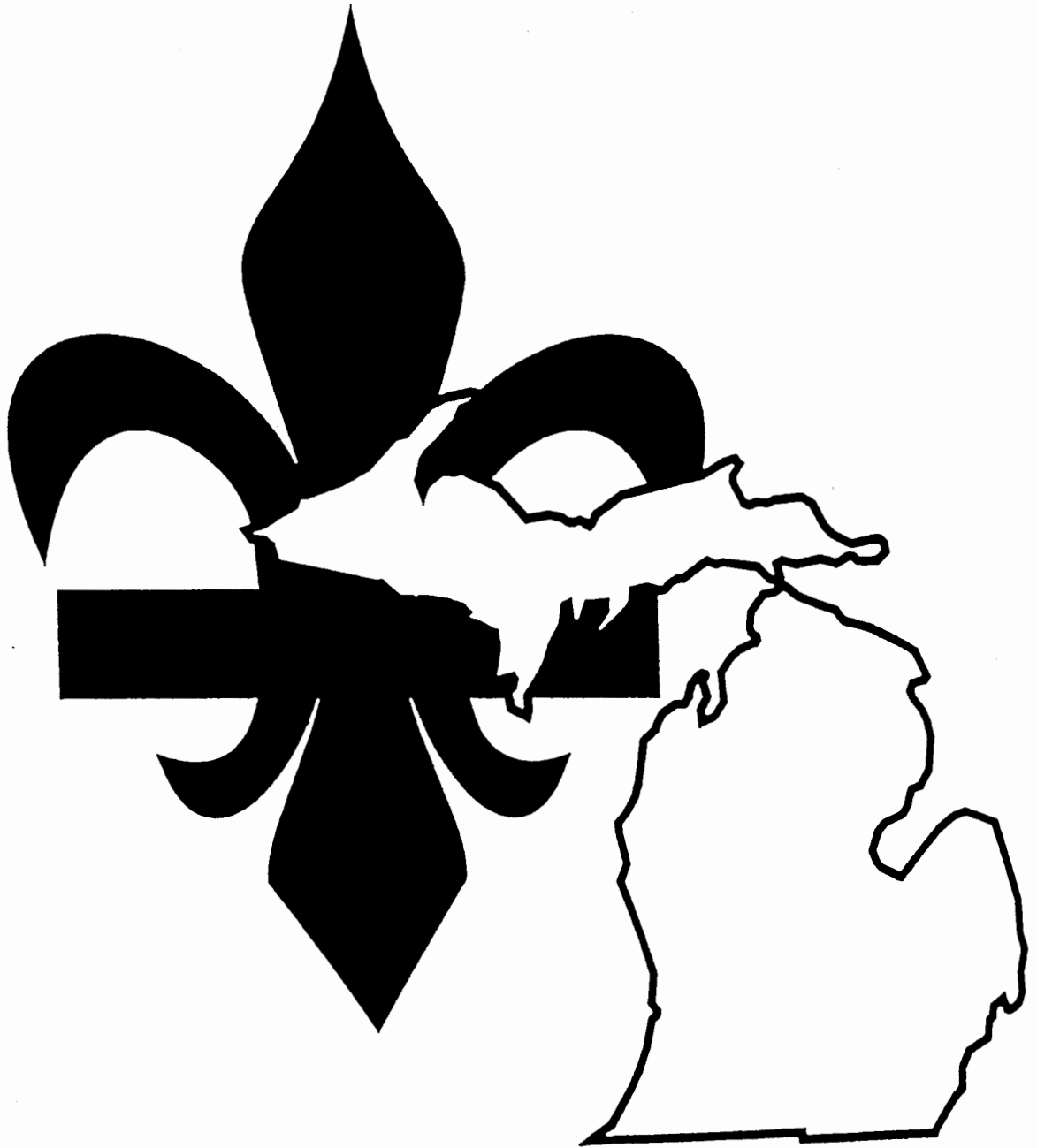


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**Thècle Cornelius Aubry: A Second Look at an
Irish Habitant in New France: Part 1**

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Part 1: Summary of the Case

Thirty-seven years ago I wrote an article about **Thècle Cornelius Aubry**, an Irish settler in seventeenth century New France.¹ I was a young man and just learning the ways of genealogy when I wrote that article. I stand by most of what I wrote and have incorporated some of it here, but I missed important information about Thècle, neglected to consult the original documents, and I speculated perhaps a little too freely about his origins in Ireland. Please accept this article as a chance to make some corrections and to update what we know about Thècle.

In part one, I will summarize what we know about New France's first Irish settler, Thècle Cornelius Aubry. In part two, I briefly enumerate the children Thècle had and move on to discuss two competing hypotheses regarding his origins in Ireland. In part three, I will examine the place name and surname evidence as well as the original documents in which his place of origin is mentioned. I conclude by suggesting possible solutions to the problem of identifying the place where Thècle hails from in Ireland.

The Irish in New France

Not all of our habitant ancestors were French. There was always an ethnic mixture in New France. In 1663, for instance, there was in New France an Englishman, a Scot, an Irishman, a Swiss, and two Walloons.² Leafing through Fournier's *Les Européens au Canada des origines à 1765 (Hors France)*, the reader will find many French-Canadian families were founded by Germans, Italians, Englishmen, Spaniards, Portuguese, and other nationalities.³ Some of these foreigners came as settlers, indentured laborers, or soldiers; others were brought to New France as captives taken on raids on neighboring colonies.⁴

Of the 260 immigrants from Celtic lands, namely Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, who came to New France between 1620 and 1765, 65 percent were Irish.⁵ It is difficult to gage what percentage of the population of New France was Irish. However, O'Farrell estimates that out of the 2,500 families in New France at the end of the seventeenth century in almost 100 families both spouses were Irish and about another 30 families either the husband or the wife were from Ireland.⁶

¹ John P. DuLong, "Tec Cornelius Aubry: An Irish Habitant in New France," *Michigan's Habitant Heritage*, 1 (October 1980): 1-6. For reasons that will become clear in the course of this article, you will observe that I now refer to him as Thècle and not Tec. For non-French-Canadians reading this article, the people who lived in New France were proud to be *habitants* and not mere peasants.

² Marcel Trudel, *La Population du Canada en 1663* (Montréal: Fides, 1873), 30.

³ Marcel Fournier, *Les Européens au Canada des origines à 1765 (Hors France)* (Montréal: Les Éditions du Fleuve, 1989). See especially table 2 on p. 45. Unfortunately, Fournier misidentifies Thecle's homeland as England and assumes he was a captive from New England, 87. In fact, he believed most of the seventeenth century Irish in New France were captives from New England, 66. I am dubious of this assertion; I suspect most came from Ireland to France and then to New France.

⁴ Marcel Fournier, *De la Nouvelle-Angleterre à la Nouvelle-France: L'Histoire des captifs anglo-américains au Canada entre 1675 et 1760* (Montréal: Société généalogique canadienne-française, 1992).

⁵ The Scots were 34.2 percent and the Welsh were only .8 percent. Fournier, *Les Européens au Canada*, 45.

⁶ John O'Farrell, "Irish Families in Ancient Quebec Records," *The Journal of the American Irish Historical Society* 28 (1929-1930): 157-172, 160. This author is given to making extravagant claims about the Irish in New France. For instance, he asserts that many of the Irishmen had come to New France as soldiers serving in a previously unidentified

Among these Irish settlers in New France was Thècle Cornelius Aubry. He is generally recognized as possibly the first Irishman to settle in Canada.⁷ Despite being honored as Canada's first Irishman, there is much confusion about Thècle starting with his name.

What is in a Name?

As is often the case with immigrants speaking a foreign language—in this case Gaelic—Thècle's name and his parents' names are mangled in French. This is unfortunate for anyone trying to trace Thècle because his name appears in so many different forms that it can be confusing. A search of the *Programme de recherche en démographie historique* (PRDH) database shows how Thècle's name appeared in the parish register and censuses, arranged in chronological order:

1667	Thecle Cornelieux (Census)
1670	Tec Aubrenam
1671	Tecele Cornelius
1673	Tecele Aubry
1675	Tecele Aubry
1675	Tecele Corneluis
1676	Tecele Aubry
1677	Técele Cornelius
1679	Tecele Aubri
1679	Tecele Aubry
1681	Jacques Thecle Aubry (Census)
1681	Tecque Obry
1681	Tecque Obry
1683	Cornelius Tecele
1687	Técele Cornelius ⁸

After his death in 1687, his name appears as follows in the records of his children:

1696	Thecle Aubri
1700	Thecle Aubry
1701	Thecle Aubry
1708	Pierre Aubry ⁹

The Parchemin database of notarial records also mentions Thècle:

1661	Thècle Cornelius
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Irish Brigade; this is complete nonsense. There were Irish Regiments that served the King of France in Europe and India but not in New France. Mark G. McLaughlin, *The Wild Geese: The Irish Brigades of France and Spain* (London: Osprey Publishing, Men-at-Arms series, 1980), 5-23.

⁷ McCord Museum, "Being Irish O'Quebec," http://www.mccord-museum.qc.ca/pdf/exhibits/Texte_Irish_EN.pdf (accessed 29 March 2014), 7-9.

⁸ Bertrand Desjardins, and Hubert Charbonneau, "A Repertory of Vital Events, 1621-1799, Québec and French Canada," subscription database, Université de Montréal, PRDH: Le Programme de Recherche en démographie historique (The Research Program in Historical Demography), <http://www.genealogie.umontreal.ca> (accessed 24 Dec, 2001). PRDH does not use accent marks for names. Whenever possible, the original records were consulted to verify the names.

⁹ Curiously, PRDH uses Thecle Aubry Corneille to identify him even though this pattern never appears in the records they indexed.

1670 Thècle Aubrenane
1683 Thècle Aubry
1689 Thècle Aubry¹⁰

Lastly, the records of the Sovereign Council of New France mention his name as follows:

1670 Corneille Thècle (Tecele)
1689 Corneille Thècle (Tecele)
1691 Corneille Thècle (Tecele)
1691 Corneille Thècle (Tecele)
1691 Corneille Thècle (Tecele)¹¹

Thècle was probably illiterate, but he did struggle at least once to crudely sign his name at the baptism of his daughter Marie-Catherine Aubry in 1673:

At the baptism of his son Étienne Aubry, he once again used the flourish of a circle with a dot in it as well as the letter T and what looks like the start of the letter A. However, he did not attempt to write his name on any other surviving documents or leave his flourish.

As you can see, the French scribes had a difficult time with his name, but most of the records called him Thècle Aubry or rather Tecele Aubry as it was more often spelled. Only once during his life was he called Jacques and once after his death called Pierre. In only one of the records I have consulted is he called Tec: his parish marriage record. These were clearly mistakes. The name he is most often found in published works is Tec Cornelius Aubry or Aubrenan, but this pattern is not found in the original records. It appears that we have Tanguay and Massicotte to thank for spreading this pattern.¹²

Thècle is a name of Greek origin meaning “glory of god.”¹³ Unable or unwilling to use his Irish name, the French assigned him a rather archaic Greek-based name that probably sounded to their ears like his Irish name which was most likely *Tadhg* or the Anglicized Teague.¹⁴ As for Cornelius, this is a Latin-based

¹⁰ Archiv-History, Banque Parchemin, période 1635-1779 (complet), search conducted by Denis Beauregard for John P. DuLong, 11 February 2002, results in the author’s possession. This database of notarial records is available only at a few libraries and archives in Canada.

¹¹ Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ), Pistard, <http://pistard.banq.qc.ca> (accessed 19 March 2014). This is a database of documents with abstracts held at the BANQ.

¹² Cyprien Tanguay, *Dictionnaire généalogique des familles canadiennes*, 7 vols. (Reprint ed., Montréal : Éditions Élysée, 1975), vol. 1, 15, vol. 2, 67. E. Z. Massicotte, “Les Colons de Montréal,” *Proceedings and transactions of the Royal Society of Canada / Délibérations et mémoires de la Société royale du Canada*, series 3, 7, section 1 (1913) : 3-65, 38.

¹³ “Thècle,” <http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thècle> (accessed 18 March 2014). It is a combination of Greek words *theos* meaning god and *kleos* for glory, fame, or reputation.

¹⁴ Teague is Anglicized form of the Gaelic *Tadhg* which is further Anglicized as Timothy in modern-day Ireland. The name means poet in Gaelic. Other possible variants are Teige, Tighe, Thaddeus, Theodore, Therodosius, Tian, Toby, and Thady. Coghlan, *Irish Christian Names*, 114-115. Fragrance O’Boyle, *The Complete Guide to the Meaning and History of Irish Baby Names* (UK: IBN Publishing, 2008), 136.

name.¹⁵ It is used as the Anglicized form for Connor, a practice the French also appear to have adopted.¹⁶ In French, Cornelius is sometimes spelled Cornélius or Corneille.

According to his parish marriage record, Thècle's parents were Connehair Aubrenam and Honoré Jeannehour. In his marriage contract he only names his father as Connehour Aubrenaue. In Gaelic, their names would be *Conchúir Ó Braonáin* and *Onóra Ní Chonchúir*, that is, in English, Connor O'Brennan and Honora O'Connor.¹⁷ Put all of this together and Thècle's real name in Gaelic would be *Tadhg mac Conchúir Uí Braonáin*. Or in English Teague McConnor O'Brennan.

Thècle's Life in Ireland and New France

Thècle would have been born sometime between 1632 and 1638 in Ireland.¹⁸ He probably came to New France around 1660.¹⁹

We will probably never know with certainty why Thècle left Ireland, but the turbulence of early seventeenth-century Ireland may have been an important factor. In 1641, when Thècle would have been a boy, the Irish Catholics formed a confederation and rebelled against the English. This was a bloody revolt with many Protestants murdered at the beginning. Distracted by the ongoing English Civil War, the rebellion ran its course until King Charles I by the Grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, etc., was executed and Oliver Cromwell—the Puritan Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland—directed his attention to Ireland. From August 1649 until May 1650 he campaigned through Ireland suppressing the rebellion and was particularly harsh on Catholics.²⁰

Cromwell left a trail of blood and destruction behind him that is still remembered in Ireland today. The most hideous atrocity was the siege of Drogheda, 2-11 September 1649, which resulted in the massacre of about 4,000 men, women, and children. Some of the men captured at Drogheda were shipped to Barbados.

In February 1650, Cromwell campaigned in Munster between counties Kerry and Kilkenny and in March he attacked the city of Kilkenny.²¹ According to the historian Wheeler:

Much of the Irish population was starving by 1650. The English policy of free-fire zones, coupled with raids carried out by both sides to deny food and shelter to the enemy, left much of the Irish population homeless and helpless. Such a population was a perfect target

¹⁵ "Cornelius," <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornelius> (accessed 20 April 2014). It comes from the word *cornu* meaning horn. The meaning of Connor or *Concobhar* in Gaelic is hound lover. O'Boyle, *Irish Baby Names*, 40.

¹⁶ Ronan Coghlan, *Irish Christian Names: An A-Z of First Names* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1979), 34.

¹⁷ I am indebted to Alan Mac an Baird for providing the Gaelic names of Thècle and his parents. Letter from Alan Man an Baird, Ordnance Survey Office, Phoenix Park, Dublin, Ireland, to John P. DuLong, 1 October 1979.

¹⁸ He testified in 1661 that his age was about 24. O. Lapalice, "Figures des temps héroïques," *Bulletin des recherches historiques*, 37, no.7 (July 1931): 441. His age is given as 29 in the 1667 Census, 45 in the 1681 census, and as 55 at his death in 1687. PRDH census records, certificate nos. 96734, and 97502; burial record, certificate no. 11745. There is a Jacques Aubry in Québec listed on the 1666 census, but his age is not given and it is unclear if this is Thècle. PRDH census records, certificate no. 95870. The figures of 25 years for 1663 reported by Louis Aubry is an estimate made by Trudel; there was no census in 1663. Trudel, *La Population du Canada en 1663*, 294. At his death in 1687 his age is given as 55.

¹⁹ Marcel Trudel, *Catalogue des immigrants 1632-1662* (Montréal: Éditions Hurtubise HMH, Ltd., 1983), 430 and 440.

²⁰ For background information about Ireland during Cromwell's campaign see James Scott Wheeler, *Cromwell in Ireland* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan Ltd., 1999).

²¹ Wheeler, *Cromwell in Ireland*, 116-139.

for infectious disease. The bubonic plague that hit Ireland in 1649 found a weakened population. The plague raged for at least three years.²²

When the Irish eventually surrendered at Galway in May 1652, many of the men were permitted to embark for the continent of Europe. It is estimated that some 34,000 left to join the Irish regiments that served in France or Spain.²³ Sir William Petty calculated that out of a population of around one and a half million, over 600,000 had disappeared—about 40 percent—during this troubled time.²⁴ Meanwhile, the further settlement of the English and Scots in Ireland made the country a very dangerous and oppressive place for the Irish to live. We have no evidence that Thècle, or his father, were among any of the soldiers who went to the continent. Nevertheless, it is very likely that the events in Ireland during Cromwell's invasion may have had some impact on Thècle's decision to become an emigrant. By 1652, he would have been a teenager or a young adult.

According to a "respectable tradition" from an unnamed source, the O'Brennans may have immigrated to Bretagne, France, with several other Irish families to be free to live in the Catholic faith.²⁵ Bretagne may very well have been on Thècle's path to New France. It would have made sense for his family to migrate there since the Bretons are also a Celtic people, and they share many traditions and customs with their Irish cousins. Also, Bretagne was one of the French provinces that sent many settlers to New France in the 1650s.

With any decision to immigrate there are push and pull factors. Cromwell would be the push; the pull would be the lure of land and economic opportunities in New France. This colony even with all its dangers from the Iroquois, the rigors of its winters, and its wilderness surroundings would have been attractive to a young man escaping from Cromwell's Ireland. There were opportunities in fishing and the fur trade, and farm land could be acquired through the hard work of clearing the forest. Certainly, for Thècle, New France would be a vast improvement over being a hunted and harassed Irishman in Puritan-controlled Ireland. His decision to come to New France, for whatever reason and along whatever path, resulted in the establishment of an Irish family which became assimilated into colonial life. He now has many descendants carrying the surname Aubry in Canada and the United States who assume they are French Canadian, but their roots extend back to Ireland.

Soon after his arrival in New France Thècle experienced an unwelcome adventure. In the winter of 1661, probably on 25 February, Thècle was captured by the Iroquois.²⁶ On that same day, twelve other Montréal settlers were captured.²⁷ Many French settlers were attacked and killed by the Iroquois and some were taken captive and tortured. The fate of the captives was varied, and they could be killed, adopted, escaped, or exchanged. Thècle was held in an Onondaga village. The Onondaga were one of the five tribes of the Iroquois Confederacy. Père Simon Le Moyne, a Jesuit, was sent on an embassy to negotiate the return of

²² Wheeler, *Cromwell in Ireland*, 225.

²³ Giovanni Costigan, *A History of Modern Ireland* (New York: Pegasus, 1970): 76-77. Wheeler, *Cromwell in Ireland*, 83-88.

²⁴ Wheeler, *Cromwell in Ireland*, 223 and 225-227 for detailed numbers on population loss and casualties. It is important to understand that both Protestants and Catholics suffered during this time.

²⁵ "La famille Aubrenan ou Aubry," *Le Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, 40, no. 11 (November 1934): 641-644, 642.

²⁶ Yvon Sicotte, "Les Premiers Montréalais," "Les Immigrants," <http://lespremiersmontrealais.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/7-3-1-les-immigrants.pdf>, (accessed 23 March 2014), 12.

²⁷ Archange Godbout, "Urbain Tessier dit Lavigne," *Mémoires de la Société généalogique canadienne française*, 7, no. 2 (January-April 1960) : 6-21, 13.

captives. Due to his efforts, Thècle was one of nine men freed by 9 October 1661.²⁸ Père Le Moyne's negotiations to free the last nine hostages were not successful until 31 August 1662.²⁹

While in captivity, Thècle was presumed dead, and his goods were inventoried by the notary Bénigne Basset des Lauriers on 5 May 1661. The goods of the captives Jean Baudouin and Michel Paroissien (or Parisien) were also inventoried on the same day because they too were presumed dead. Eventually, all three would return to the colony.³⁰ Thècle owned no real estate, and the inventory just consists of clothing and personal items. The most common adjective used on the inventory is *méchant*, meaning nasty or poor quality. The value of his property only came to 54 *livres*. He had been employed by Jean Gervaise who owed 70 *livres* to Thècle's estate for seven months of service. And he had debts of 61 *livres*, so his estate cleared only 63 *livres*. Clearly, Thècle was not a wealthy man.³¹

On 12 October 1661, before the notary Basset, Michel Paroissien, Marien Janot, and Tècle Cornélius, all recently released from captivity, declared that Urbain Tessier *dit* Lavigne, a fellow prisoner of the Iroquois, had informed them that Pierre Cauvin (Chauvin) *dit* Le Grand Pierre, yet another captive, fearing that he would be killed or permanently enslaved by the Iroquois, wanted to have his property back in Montréal donated to the Catholic Church. Fortunately for Chauvin he would return to Montréal by 1665 where he eventually died in 1699 at an advanced age.³² Tessier would not be freed until 31 August 1662.³³

On 23 November 1662, "*Cornelius Tècle, Irlandais, serviteur domestique de la sainte Vierge*" promised to clear four *arpents* of land on the domain of the *Seigneurs* of Montréal, that is, the religious Society of Notre-Dame. This was the result of an ordinance promulgated by Maisonneuve de Chomedey, Governor of Montréal, dated 4 November 1662 to have each man clear four *arpents*. It appears Thècle was employed as a domestic servant at that time by a religious order.³⁴

²⁸ Godbout, "Urbain Tessier *dit* Lavigne," 15.

²⁹ Godbout, "Urbain Tessier *dit* Lavigne," 16, gives the year as 1661. Léon pouliot, "LE MOYNE, SIMON," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 1 (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003), accessed May 1, 2014, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/le_moyne_simon_1E.html.

³⁰ Marcel Trudel, *Montréal: La formation d'une société, 1642-1663* (Montréal: Fides, 1976), 158, n. 28, 288, 291, and 294.

³¹ For a transcription of this inventory see Yvon Sicotte, "Les Premiers Montréalais," Documents d'archives, greffé Basset, <http://lespremiersmontrealais.com/intro-base-de-donnees/documents-darchives>, download 4greffe_basset.zip, extract Basset 1661.05.05,203.pdf (accessed 23 March 2014). The inventory does not list the debt of 61 *livres*, but it is mentioned in Trudel, *Montréal*, 170, n. 56, and 291. Confusingly, the inventory mentioned that Gervaise provided the sum of 131 *livres* to settle the estate which exceed the total of 124 *livres* for the value of the estate and Thècle's wages. In addition, the last total recorded on the inventory is for 131 *livres*, one *sol*, and six *deniers*.

³² René Jetté, *Dictionnaire généalogique des familles du Québec des origines à 1730*, in collaboration with the Programme de recherche en démographie historique, (Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1983), 241-242. Michel Langlois, *Montréal 1653 La Grande Recrue* (Sillery: Septentrion, 2003), 96-98.

³³ Godbout, "Urbain Tessier *dit* Lavigne," 16, has the year 1661, but this is a misprint. It should be 1662.

³⁴ Yvon Sicotte, "Les Premiers Montréalais," Documents d'archives, Archives du Séminaire de Saint-Sulpice de Montréal (ASSSM), <http://lespremiersmontrealais.com/intro-base-de-donnees/documents-darchives>, download assm.zip, extract ASSSM 6537, III,19.pdf (accessed 23 March 2014), 12. See Yvon Sicotte, "Les Premiers Montréalais," Documents d'archives, Ordonnances concernant Montréal (OM), <http://lespremiersmontrealais.com/intro-base-de-donnees/documents-darchives>, download 27om.zip, extract OM 1662.11.04.pdf (accessed 23 March 2014) for the ordinance. The Seminary of St-Sulpice did not take over the *seigneurie* of Montréal from the Society of Notre-Dame until 9 March 1663 so Thècle was probably employed by the Society of Notre-Dame. See Marie-Claire Daveluy, "CHOMEDEY DE MAISONNEUVE, PAUL DE," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 1 (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003), accessed May 3, 2014, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/chomedey_de_maisonneuve_paul_de_1E.html.

Due to the continuing threat from the Iroquois, on 27 January 1663, Maisonneuve established the Militia of the Holy Family to defend the settlement. The militia consisted of 20 squadrons. Thècle Cornélius is found listed in the seventh squadron of the militia.³⁵ He served in this squadron with Pierre Raguideau *dit* St-Germain, Antoine Baudet, Pierre Desautels *dit* Lapointe, Jean Baudouin, Honoré Langlois *dit* Lachapelle, and Jean Deniau.

On 10 August 1667, three entrepreneurs, a Québec merchant named Dugast, Thierry Delestre *dit* Le Vallon or de Vallon, and Jean Péré, agreed to supply trade merchandise for a voyage to the land of the Ottawa. Thècle Cornélius Aubry, Mathurin Normandin *dit* Beausoleil, and Robert Cachelièvre or Cachelièvre agreed to make this journey and were joined by another voyageur named —?— Lapointe. When they arrived in the wilderness they agreed on 31 January 1668 to merge their interests and work with five other voyageurs employed by Jeanne Évard, the widow of Christophe Crevier. It is believed that this fur trade expedition made it all the way to Lake Superior. If this is indeed the case, then Thècle was the first Irishman to reach Lake Superior.

Unfortunately, six of these companions died during the journey and only Thècle, Normandin, and Cachelièvre survived to return to Montréal. A dispute arose over the division of the profits from this expedition. The surviving voyageurs felt that since they continued to trade after the death of their associates, that they deserved the shares of the dead voyageurs. However, the *Compagnie des Indes Occidentales* claimed the shares of deceased voyageurs, arguing that they were the senior traders. This dispute was submitted to the Sovereign Council. On 12 September 1670, the Sovereign Council decided to divide the 273 beaver robes with 156 divided by the three surviving voyageurs, each receiving 52 robes, and the remaining 117 robes were divided between Évard who received 3/6^{ths}, Michel Pelletier *sieur* de La Parade, received 2/6^{ths}, and Delestre *dit* Le Vallon received the final 1/6th. The Sovereign Council invited the *Compagnie des Indes Occidentales* to make a plea for 3/6^{ths} of the robes, but they apparently did not pursue this claim (presumably to be taken out of the shares given to the surviving voyageurs).³⁶

Flush with relative wealth from his fur trade adventure, Thècle was ready to find a wife. He was living in Montréal, but rushed to Québec City to greet the newly arrived *filles du roi* in hopes of finding a wife. Thècle quickly courted **Jeanne Chartier**, the daughter of the late Pierre Chartier and the late Marie Gaudon of St-Honoré in Paris. She was born between 1636 and 1640.³⁷ They had a marriage contract drawn up by Romain Becquet on 6 September 1670 and were wed on the 10th.

To be continued.

³⁵ Yvon Sicotte, "Les Premiers Montréalais," Documents d'archives, Ordonnances concernant Montréal (OM), <http://lespremiersmontrealais.com/intro-base-de-donnees/documents-darchives>, download 27om.zip, extract OM 1663.01.27.pdf (accessed 23 March 2014), 3. E. Z. Massicotte, "Les Colons de Montréal de 1642 à 1667," *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Canada*, 3rd series, vol. 7, section 1, 39.

³⁶ BANQ, Pistard, "Arrêt à la requête de Corneille Teclé, Mathurin Normandin et Robert Cachelièvre, au sujet d'un traité de commerce fait entre eux et six autres associés décédés, qui sont allés traiter au pays des Outaouais—12 12 septembre 1670," http://pistard.banq.qc.ca/unite_chercheurs/description_fonds?p_anqid=20140320092802464&p_centre=03Q&p_classe=TP&p_fonds=1&p_numunide=811218 (accessed 1 June 2015). Michel Pelletier (Peltier) *dit* Laprade probably financially backed some of the deceased traders.

³⁷ She was 45 on the 1681 census. Her burial record states she was 55 years old in 1695.

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Cornelius Aubry: A Second Look at an Irish Habitant in New France – Part 2

Continued from April 2017, pp. 49-55

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Part 2: Thècle's Children and Competing Origins Hypotheses

THÈCLE CORNELIUS AUBRY and **JEANNE CHARTIER** were the parents of the following children:

- i. MADELINE THÉRÈSE AUBRY, b. Île Ste-Thérèse, bapt. 8 August 1671, Montréal,¹ d. 19 and bur. 20 July 1748, Montréal,² m. (1) 14 November 1696, Varennes, JEAN CAPEL *DIT* DESJARDINS, son of Nicolas Capel and Marie Bonhomme,³ m. (2) 24 November 1700, Montréal, OLIVIER LAISNÉ, son of Jacques Laine and Françoise Guedel.⁴ Has descendants from both of her marriages.
- ii. MARIE CATHERINE AUBRY, b. Île Ste-Thérèse, bapt. 20 August 1673, Montréal,⁵ d. Pointe-aux-Trembles, bur. 22 March 1688, Montréal.⁶
- iii. JEAN CORNELIUS AUBRY, b. Lachenaie, bapt. 23 January 1675, Montréal,⁷ d. before the 1681 census.⁸
- iv. JEAN BAPTISTE AUBRY, bapt. 26 May 1676 Pointe-aux-Trembles,⁹ d. before the 1681 census.¹⁰
- v. FRANÇOIS AUBRY, b. Lachenaie, bapt. 31 October 1677, Pointe-aux-Trembles,¹¹ d. 28 January 1752, bur. January 1752, St-Laurent,¹² m. 23 September 1708, Montréal, MARIE-JEANNE BOUTEILLER *DIT* TÊTU, the daughter of Jean Bouteiller and Marie Morin.¹³ He was a captain of the militia. All the Aubrys of North American who descend from Thècle and carry the Aubry surname descend from François.
- vi. GENEVIÈVE AUBRY, b. 11 October 1679, Lachenaie, bapt. 22 October 1679, Pointe-aux-Trembles,¹⁴ bur. 5 November 1679, Pointe-aux-Trembles.¹⁵
- vii. ÉTIENNE AUBRY, b. 6 February 1681, Lachenaie, bapt. 9 February 1681, Repentigny, d. and bur. 28 February 1681, Repentigny.¹⁶

Thècle died on Île Ste-Thérèse and was buried on 24 November 1687 at Pointe-aux-Trembles at the age of 55.¹⁷ His wife, Jeanne Chartier, was buried on 30 October 1695 at Montréal.¹⁸

¹ Québec, registres paroissiaux catholiques, Baptêmes, mariages, sépultures, 1621-1979, index and images, *FamilySearch*, hereinafter Québec Parish Registers, <https://familysearch.org> (accessed 22 May 2014), Montréal, Notre-Dame, 1642-1694, image 258.

² Québec Parish Registers, <https://familysearch.org>, Montréal, Notre-Dame, 1734-1754, image 420.

³ Québec Parish Registers, <https://familysearch.org>, Varennes, Sainte-Anne-de-Varennes, 1693-1789, image 42.

⁴ Québec Parish Registers, <https://familysearch.org>, Montréal, Notre-Dame, 1700-1712, image 54.

⁵ Québec Parish Registers, <https://familysearch.org>, Montréal, Notre-Dame, 1642-1694, image 278.

⁶ Québec Parish Registers, <https://familysearch.org>, Montréal, Notre-Dame, 1642-1694, image 461.

⁷ Québec Parish Registers, <https://familysearch.org>, Montréal, Notre-Dame, 1642-1694, image 297.

⁸ PRDH, 1681 census, certificate no. 97502.

⁹ Québec Parish Registers, <https://familysearch.org>, Pointe-aux-Trembles, L'Enfant-Jésus-de-la-Pointe-aux-Trembles, 1674-1754, image 20.

¹⁰ PRDH, 1681 census, certificate no. 97502.

¹¹ Québec Parish Registers, <https://familysearch.org>, Pointe-aux-Trembles, L'Enfant-Jésus-de-la-Pointe-aux-Trembles, 1674-1754, image 25.

¹² Québec Parish Registers, <https://familysearch.org>, Saint-Laurent, Saint-Laurent, 1748-1795, image 51.

¹³ Québec Parish Registers, <https://familysearch.org>, Montréal, Notre-Dame, 1700-1712, images 1182 and 1183.

¹⁴ Québec Parish Registers, <https://familysearch.org>, Pointe-aux-Trembles, L'Enfant-Jésus-de-la-Pointe-aux-Trembles, 1674-1754, image 36.

¹⁵ Drouin, GenealogyQuebec.com, Pointe-aux-Trembles, <https://www.genealogiequebec.com> Pointe-aux-Trembles, L'Enfant-Jésus-de-la-Pointe-aux-Trembles, image 1128e0009.jpg.

¹⁶ Québec Parish Registers, <https://familysearch.org> Repentigny > La Purification-de-Repentigny, 1679-1766, image 19.

Thècle must have dabbled on and off with the fur trade because after his death, his widow Jeanne Chartier, won a decision on 4 April 1689 before the Sovereign Council of New France that forced Michel Pelletier *dit* LaPrade, to pay a third of 13 beaver robes that he owed to her late husband. She endeavored to get the other two thirds paid to the heirs of the late Thierry De Lestre.¹⁹

This is all that the records of New France reveal about the life of Thècle. Although several original records, which will be detailed below, mention his place of origin in Ireland, when I wrote my 1980 article, I did not have access to these records and instead relied on published works like Tanguay's genealogical dictionary which indicated that he was from the parish "*de St-Patrice (Diasonyöen, Irlande)*."²⁰ The failure to consult original records did not stop me from trying to prematurely detect his exact birthplace in Ireland.

Two Competing Origins Hypothesis

Knowing that Thècle was an O'Brennan is important, but unfortunately not very helpful in identifying his origins in Ireland because there were several distinct O'Brennan septs.²¹ In Gaelic the surname is *Ó Braonán* and is derived from *braon* meaning sorrow. According to MacLysaght, the late Chief Herald of Ireland, he distinguished between four separate and unrelated septs that carry the name O'Brennan in counties Kilkenny, Galway, Westmeath, and Kerry:

¹⁷ Ancestry.com. Quebec, Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1621-1967, <http://www.ancestry.com> Pointe-aux-Trembles, St-Enfant-Jésus-de-la-Pointe-aux-Trembles, 1674-1700, image 116.

¹⁸ Québec Parish Registers, <https://familysearch.org>, Montréal, Notre-Dame, 1695-1710, image 30.

¹⁹ BANQ, Pistard, "Main-levée accordée à Michel Pelletier sieur de LaPrade d'une saisie faite entre les mains des Ecclésiastiques du Séminaire de Montréal, à la requête de Jeanne Chartier, veuve de Thècle-Cornelius Aubry dit Thècle, vivant habitant de l'île Sainte-Thérèse et qu'ils rendront au dit sieur de LaPrade par provision, dix robes de castor ou la valeur de celles-ci—4 avril 1689," http://pistard.banq.qc.ca/unite_chercheurs/description_fonds?p_anqid=20140320092802464&p_centre=03Q&p_classe=TP&p_fonds=1&p_numunide=819087; "Défaut à Jeanne Chartier veuve Thècle-Cornelius Aubry dit Thècle, habitant de l'île Sainte-Thérèse, contre Charles Catignon, garde magasin du Roi—8 janvier 1691," http://pistard.banq.qc.ca/unite_chercheurs/description_fonds?p_anqid=20140320092802464&p_centre=03Q&p_classe=TP&p_fonds=1&p_numunide=819613; "Délai accordé jusqu'à lundi prochain à Charles Catignon, garde magasin du Roi, dans la cause de Jeanne Chartier, veuve de Thècle-Cornelius Aubry dit Thècle, vivant habitant de l'île Sainte-Thérèse—15 janvier 1691," http://pistard.banq.qc.ca/unite_chercheurs/description_fonds?p_anqid=20140320092802464&p_centre=03Q&p_classe=TP&p_fonds=1&p_numunide=821561; "Délai de six semaines à Charles Catignon, garde magasin du Roi, dans la cause l'opposant à Jeanne Chartier, veuve de Thècle-Cornelius Aubry dit Thècle, habitant de l'île Sainte-Thérèse, pour faire venir ses cohéritiers—22 janvier 1691," http://pistard.banq.qc.ca/unite_chercheurs/description_fonds?p_anqid=20140320092802464&p_centre=03Q&p_classe=TP&p_fonds=1&p_numunide=819627 (accessed 1 June 2015).

²⁰ L'Abbé Cyprien Tanguay, *Dictionnaire généalogique des familles canadiennes* (Montréal: Eusèbe Sénécal, 1871-1890, 1:15) -7 Volumes).

²¹ MacLysaght suggested that the word sept be used when discussing Irish clans to differentiate these family groups from the more structured Scottish clans. According to him: "It can perhaps best be explained by saying that it is a collective term describing a group of persons who, or whose immediate and known ancestors, bore a common surname and inhabited the same locality. *Edward MacLysaght, Irish Families: Their Names, Arms and Origins* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1972), 12. In Scotland a sept is a branch of a clan or another family that followed a particular clan. English and Anglo-Irish writers used the term in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to identify extended Irish ruling families. It may be derived from the Gaelic *sliocht*, meaning descendants. Conolly, *The Oxford Companion to Irish History* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998), 95 and 506.

1. The largest concentration of O'Brennans is found in County Kilkenny, in the northern part of the county known as *Ui Duach* anciently and as present-day Idough.
2. The O'Brennans of *Siol Armchadha* dwelt in the Barony of Longford in the southeast corner of County Galway.
3. In County Westmeath lived the O'Brennans of Crevagh.
4. The O'Brennans of Dunkerron lived in County Kerry.

In addition to the “real” O'Brennans there are two other families confused with them. *MacBranáin*, Anglicized as MacBrannan, were located in Counties Roscommon, Sligo, and Mayo. Lastly, the name *Ó Branáin* in Counties Derry and Fermanagh have mistakenly been given the surname Brennan.²²

Thècle undoubtedly was a member of one of these Brennan septs, but which one? There are currently two competing hypotheses regarding Thècle's origins. I will differentiate them as the County Kerry hypothesis and the County Kilkenny hypothesis. While I have had a hand in the former, the latter is the idea of Louis Aubry.

County Kerry Hypothesis:

The County Kerry hypothesis uses onomastic and location evidence to place Thècle's origins on the Kenmare peninsula. It is the result of a query I placed with the Ordnance Survey Office in Ireland back in 1979. This is the government department that handles maps and geographic data in Ireland. I provided information about Thècle and asked where his birthplace would be located in Ireland.²³

Alan Mac an Bhaird, of the Irish Ordnance Office, was kind enough to respond with a scholarly letter that offered the following suggestions regarding Thècle's place of origin:

The combination of an Ó Braonáin father and an Ó Conchúir mother points clearly—but not exclusively—to Kerry, particularly to south or central Kerry.

In the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Kerry south of the river Main was known in English as Desmond's country and in Irish as Deasumhain [pronounced Deasúin {dja 'suinj}] (classical spelling Deasmhumhain). If 'Diasony' represents Irish Deasumhain, then it is not a 'ville' but a much larger area.

“La paroisse de St-Patrice” presents a further problem. There are 5 parishes of St. Patrick in Ireland—all of them situated in cities (Dublin, Limerick, Waterford, Wexford, Kilkenny) and all of them ruled out by the supporting context here. The only suggestion that occurs to me is that M. de Bernières, thinking in terms of 17th century France that ‘la paroisse de St-Patrice’ was interchangeable with “l'église de St-Patrice”, put down the former in the place of the latter.

²² MacLysaght, *Irish Families*, 46-47. Thomas A. Brennan, *A History of the Brennans of Idough, County Kilkenny* (Eastchester, NY: Brennan, 1975), 1-2.

²³ Unfortunately, I do not have a copy of the letter I sent to the Ordnance Survey Office, but I must have shared with them a copy of “La famille Aubrenan ou Aubry,” as the response I received from Alan Mac an Bhaird quotes from this article. In this article Thècle's birthplace is recorded as “...de la paroisse de St-Patrice de la ville Diasony, hovilleau en Irlande...,” p 643. Mac an Bhaird focused on Diasony, perhaps because I focused on it in my letter to him or he may have believed that hovilleau was an archaic French term. It is not, I checked “Dictionnaires d'autrefois: French dictionaries of the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries,” <http://artfl-project.uchicago.edu/content/dictionnaires-dautrefois> (accessed 17 March 2014). M. de Bernières was the priest who performed Thècle's wedding.

An “église de St-Patrice” would represent an Irish Cill Phádraig or Teampall Phádraig. There is, in fact, a townland called Kilpatrick (Irish: Cill Phádraig) in the parish of Kenmare just to the east of the town of Kenmare which is within ‘Desmond’s County.’ whether it corresponds or not to de Bernière’s ‘paroisse de St-Patrice,’ however, remains to be proved.”²⁴

While Mac an Bhaird makes it clear in his letter that he is speculating and his ideas have to be tested, I unfortunately in 1980 presented his hunches more as a fact than a suggestion. Still these ideas are worth considering.

The Province of Munster (*Mumha*, *Mumhan*, or *Mumhain*) was divided into four regions: *Tuamhain* Anglicized as Thormond for North Munster associated with the O’Briens, *Deasumhain* Anglicized as Desmond for South Munster held by the Fitzgeralds, *Urumhain* Anglicized as Ormond for East Munster the domain of the Butlers, and the less used *Iarmumhan* for West Munster the land of the O’Connors of Kerry.²⁵ So Desmond does not refer exclusively to the Fitzgerald Earldom of Desmond, but rather to all of South Munster.

The O’Brennans of Kerry had been chiefs of Dunkerron, near Kenmare in South Munster. They were followers of the O’Sullivan Mor sept. The O’Sullivan’s estates were confiscated in the seventeenth century and many of them went to the Continent. Perhaps some of the O’Brennans followed their leaders to France.²⁶

County Kilkenny Hypothesis:

Starting in 1994, Louis Aubry corresponded with me regarding his research on the origins of Thècle which he believes point to County Kilkenny. He graciously shared drafts of some of his articles with me, and I have followed his work with interest.²⁷ He basically argues that the largest concentration of O’Brennans in Ireland is in County Kilkenny and this is most likely Thècle’s homeland.

After reviewing the County Kerry hypothesis, Aubry writes:

However, I came to a different conclusion. With my copies of the seventeenth century documents in hand, I started looking for a name in Ireland that was similar to Diasony, Diasony, Diasonyoen, Diasonyden. In the Irish section of The National Archives of Canada in Ottawa, I came across several volumes that had similar names in their D section. The one that

²⁴ Letter from Alan Man an Bhaird, Ordnance Survey Office, Phoenix Park, Dublin, Ireland, to John P. DuLong, 1 October 1979. His clarifying notes in square and squiggly brackets.

²⁵ “Flag of Munster,” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_of_Munster (20 April 2014). For information on the O’Connor Kerry and their location in West Munster, see Michael O’Clery, Owen Connellan, and Philip MacDermott, *The Annals of Ireland: Translated from the Original Irish of the Four Masters* (Kansas City, MO: Irish Genealogical Foundation, 2003), 177-178.

²⁶ Patrick Kelly, *Irish Family Names* (Chicago: O’Connor and Kelly, 1939; reprint ed., Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1976), 7 and 109.

²⁷ Letters and emails from Louis Aubry, Roekland, ON, to John P. DuLong, 27 November 1994, 17 March 1995, 27 November 1995, 1 October 1999, 30 October 1999 includes a draft of an article, 5 July 2001, and 4 August 2008. Louis Aubry, “Tec Cornelius Aubrenan: The First Irish-Born Immigrant to Canada,” *Anglo-Celtic Roots* 90, no. 4 (Winter 2003): 100-104. A version of this paper is available at <http://www.bytown.net/brennan.pdf> (accessed 17 March 2014). His nephew Jack Aubry, a journalist, even travelled to Ireland in 2001 in search of more information, but found nothing to substantiate his uncle’s hypothesis. Jack Aubry, “Diving Into the Gene pool: (Part one): A Citizen reporter’s ancestral search ends with a revelation in a Kilkenny graveyard.” *The Ottawa Citizen*, Section: The Citizen’s Weekly, Sunday, 1 July 2001 and Monday, 20 October 2003. A French version of his paper can be found at Pierre Lagacé’s blog, Nos ancêtres, “Une anecdote vraie,” <http://sadb.wordpress.com/2012/01/04/unc-anecdote-vraie> (accessed 17 March 2014).

struck me as most likely was Dysart and I extracted the following from *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*:

“Dysert”, a parish, in the barony of Fassadining, county of Kilkenny, and province of Leinster, 2 ¼ miles (S.) from Casltecomer, on the road to Kilkenny; containing 2501 inhabitants. This parish is situated on the river Dinin; and comprises 2606 statute acres.

According to the *Gazetteer of the British Isles*, “the Dinin River is an affluent of River Nore, in the County of Kilkenny, 4 miles above Kilkenny, 15 miles long.” Now if one repeats DYSART-ON-THE-DINEN often, it sounds like DIASONYDEN, a variant of what the French Romain Becquet and Henri Bernières wrote.²⁸

I find several problems with the County Kilkenny hypothesis. First, it does not take into account the parish of St. Patrick that Thècle mentioned. Secondly, it does not demonstrate how an O'Brennan groom would have met and wed an O'Connor bride. Thirdly, if one was to play the game of sounding out locations that sound like Diasonyden, then we are probably going to end up with a handful of possible locations. There are 19 places named Dysert, Dysart, or a variation, meaning hermitage, in Ireland including one in County Kerry. How many of them combined with nearby geographic features would sound like Diasonyden? Lastly, Dysart in Gaelic is *An Diseart* with the ending T clearly pronounced, while Dinin is *An Deighnin* and sounds like the English word dining.²⁹ A Gaelic speaker uttering these words—*An Diseart ar an Deighnin*—would not sound anything like Diasony to a French listener.

I welcome my readers to listen to the Gaelic pronunciation of *An Diseart ar an Deighnin* and compare it to *Deasumhain* (or the classical spelling *Deasmhumhain*) and judge which sounds more similar to *Diasony* or *Diasonny* in French. This simple test can be done using language pronunciation websites.³⁰

Lastly, Louis Aubry mentions Connor mac Firr O'Brenan who flourished ca. 1635 and held lands in Idough near Kilkenny city.³¹ He does not identify this man as being Thècle's father, but presents this information as a clue that should be pursued. Given that there may have been several Connor O'Brennans living in Ireland in the early seventeenth century, but who were never recorded in any surviving document, this detail is hardly conclusive.

While the reader may find both hypotheses intriguing, it would be premature to accept either of them as true. They must be tested against the available evidence. However, there is little by way of genealogical evidence available for common Irish Catholics in the seventeenth century. In part three I will take a closer look at place names in Ireland referring to St. Patrick and investigate the distribution of the O'Brennan and O'Connor surnames. I will then fully review what Thècle actually told officials was his place of origin. Lastly, I will suggest two ways forward for possibly resolving the issue of his origins.

To be continued.

²⁸ Aubry, “Tec Cornelius Aubrenan,” 6-7. He sites in this section *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* (London: Samuel Lewis, 1837) and *Gazetteer of the British Isles* (Edinburgh: John Bartholomew & Son, Ltd., 1900).

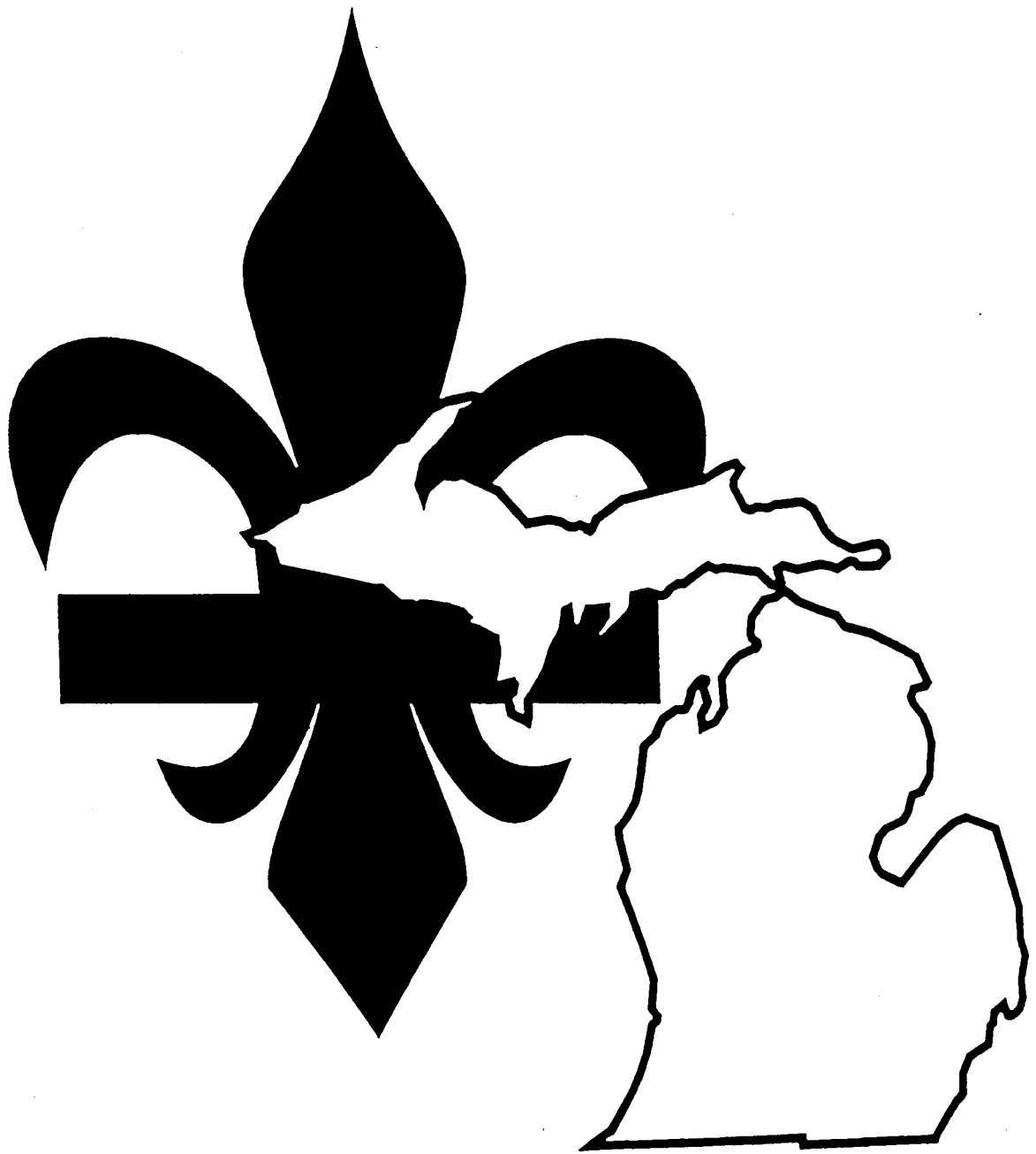
²⁹ For the Gaelic pronunciation of place names, please see Bunchar Logainmneacha na hÉireann, Placenames Database of Ireland, <http://www.logainm.ie> (accessed 20 April 2014), search for Dysert and Dinin River. The *an* is just Gaelic for the or a.

³⁰ Trinity College Dublin, Phonetics and Speech Laboratory, “Welcome to abair.ie – The Irish Language Synthesiser,” <http://www.abair.tcd.ie> (accessed 24 April 2014) for the Gaelic pronunciation. Acapela Group, “Acapela group - Voice synthesis - Text to Speech | voice solutions,” <http://www.acapela-group.fr/index.php> (accessed 24 April 2014) for the French pronunciation.

³¹ Aubry, “Tec Cornelius Aubrenan: The First Irish-born Immigrant in Canada,” 4.

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**Thècle Cornelius Aubry: A Second Look at an
Irish Habitant in New France – Part 3**

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Part 3: The Original Documents

In part one, what is known about Thècle Cornelius Aubry is reviewed and two competing hypotheses—my County Kerry hypothesis and Louis Aubry's County Kilkenny hypothesis—regarding his place of origins in Ireland and the possible O'Brennan sept he could belong to were discussed in part two. In part three, I will investigate Irish place names and surname evidence to try and locate Thècle's origins. And, more importantly, I will examine more closely the original documents in which Thècle mentioned his place of origins, something I neglected to do in the past. Lastly, I close with two proposed methods to solve the problem of Thècle's Irish origins.

There are two immediate ways we can test these competing hypothesis that Thècle was from either County Kerry or County Kilkenny. First, we can look for place names in Ireland that mention St. Patrick since he indicated he was from the parish of St. Patrick. Secondly, we can examine where in Ireland we are likely to find an O'Brennan marrying an O'Connor.

St. Patrick Place Names in Ireland

Mac an Bhaird was indeed right that there are only five parishes in Ireland named after St. Patrick, which is odd given his importance in bringing Christianity to Ireland.¹ They are all in the major cities of Dublin, Kilkenny, Limerick, Waterford, and Wexford, any of which would probably have been easily identified if Thècle reported being from one of them. Moreover, the Gaelic names for these towns, as shown below, do not resemble anything Thècle reported as his place of origin. So, as Mac an Bhaird suggests, Thècle probably did not mean to identify a parish called St. Patrick, but rather a place name incorporating the saint's name.

English Name	Gaelic Name
Dublin	<i>Baile Átha Cliath</i>
Kilkenny	<i>Cill Chainnigh</i>
Limerick	<i>Luimneach</i>
Waterford	<i>Port Láirge</i>
Wexford	<i>Loch Garman</i>

Using the data available at the Irish Ancestors website, which in turn is based on Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, we learn that there are 94 places in Ireland that contain the name Patrick.² Focusing in on just Counties Kerry and Kilkenny, we find the following places:

¹ Census of Ireland. *General Alphabetical Index to the Townlands and Towns, Parishes, and Baronies of Ireland* (Dublin: Alexander Thom, 1861), 951.

² The Irish Times, Irish Ancestors, Placenames, searched for *patrick*, <https://www.irishtimes.com/ancestor/placenames> (accessed 10 April 2014). Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland: With Historical and Statistical Descriptions ... with an Appendix Describing the Electoral Boundaries of the Several Boroughs, As Defined by the Act of the 2d & 3d of William IV* (London: S. Lewis & Co., 1837).

County	Place	Meaning
Kerry	Kilpatrick	Kil or Kill meaning churchyard or graveyard
Kilkenny	Ballypatrick	Bally can mean a pass or a homestead
Kilkenny	Crosspatrick	Cross probably being a wayside cross
Kilkenny	Rathpatrick	Rath is an earthen ring-fort
Kilkenny	Rathpatrick	(two adjacent places in the same county)

There are 22 places called Kilpatrick and four called Templepatrick in Ireland, but none of them in County Kilkenny.

Given the prevalence of O'Brennans in County Kilkenny, it would be convenient if the other place name information Thècle provided indicated that he was referring to St. Patrick in the town of Kilkenny. But that identification is unlikely given the other information he provided. While Kilpatrick, the church of St. Patrick, in County Kerry stands out as the more logical replacement for a parish of St. Patrick, we must keep in mind the many other locations in Ireland that contain the name Patrick. Whatever the solution is to this location problem, it must incorporate the name Patrick as part of the location. The County Kilkenny hypothesis fails to account for St. Patrick while the County Kerry hypothesis does offer an explanation.

The Intersection of O'Connors and O'Brennans

About the time Thècle appears in New France, there was a partial census of Ireland collected around 1659.³ Interestingly, the distribution of O'Brennan and O'Connor surnames mid-seventeenth century is similar to that found in the mid-nineteenth century.⁴

The 1659 census shows that O'Brennans are indeed more frequent in County Kilkenny compared to County Kerry (42.9 percent vs. 0.9 percent), which supports the Kilkenny hypothesis, but the opposite is true for the far more numerous O'Connors in County Kerry compared to County Kilkenny (10.5 percent vs. 2.6 percent), which would lend support to the Kerry hypothesis. Unfortunately, the data does not confirm or deny either hypothesis. It is possible that an O'Brennan groom would find an O'Connor bride in both Counties Kilkenny and Kerry. Also, it is important to realize that there are several other possible

³ Data derived from Séamus Pender, ed., with new introduction by William J. Smyth, *A Census of Ireland, circa 1659, with Essential Materials from the Poll Money Ordinances, 1660-1661* (Dublin: Irish Manuscript Commission, 2002), passim. Sir William Petty requested this information be collected to accompany his survey of Ireland. The 1659 census is by no means a thorough census. For instance, the scribe who worked on Counties Cork (not the city) and Kerry was somewhat slack in recording, xxi. And there are no returns for Counties Cavan, Tyrone, Galway, Mayo, and Wicklow and partial returns for Counties Cork, Tipperary, and Meath as well as scattered parishes missing from some of the counties that were included, xxiv. Lastly, the data on principal Irish surnames in a barony is deficient as the total number of names recorded is apparently always significantly less than the number of Irish living in the barony. Despite its shortcomings, this census is a valuable tool that provides a glimpse into the distribution of Irish families in the middle of the seventeenth century.

⁴ Using data for households in the Primary Valuation property survey of 1847-1864 it is possible to get an idea of the distribution of an Irish surname across counties. The Irish Times, "Irish Ancestors," <http://www.irishtimes.com/ancestor/surname/index.cfm>, Brennan and Connor searches (accessed 22 March 2014). Includes Brennan, Brannan, Brannen, Brannon, Brenan, and Brennon and Connor, Connair, Connare, Conner, Conners, Connors, Conor, O'Conner, O'Connors, and O'Conor. Although this is over a century after Thècle left Ireland and there was much population migration within Ireland, the concentration of surnames in particular counties still reflect in many cases the earlier distribution of these families found in the 1659 census. The Primary Valuations shows that O'Brennans are more frequent in County Kilkenny compared to County Kerry (16.8 percent vs. 3.5 percent) it is also the case that there are far more O'Connors in County Kerry compared to County Kilkenny (20.8 percent vs. 1.2 percent).

counties in which an O'Brennan would wed an O'Connor, namely, Queen's (Laois), Roscommon, Sligo, Kildare, Westmeath, Tipperary, Donegal, and King's (Offaly) counties.

Census of Ireland, ca. 1659

County	Number of O'Brennans	Percent	Rank	County	Number of O'Connors	Percent	Rank
Kilkenny	185	42.9%	1	Corke	245	22.1%	1
Queenes	70	16.2%	2	Limericke	163	14.7%	2
Roscommon	37	8.6%	3	Clare	131	11.8%	3
Slegoe (Sligo)	29	6.7%	4	Kerry	116	10.5%	4
Killdare	23	5.3%	5	Roscommon	73	6.6%	5
Catherlagh (Carlow)	22	5.1%	6	Wexford	47	4.2%	6
Westmeath	22	5.1%	7	Dublin	45	4.1%	7
Tipperary	21	4.9%	8	Killdare	45	4.1%	8
Kerry	11	2.6%	9	Tipperary	40	3.6%	9
Donegall	7	1.6%	10	Slegoe (Sligo)	35	3.2%	10
Kings	4	0.9%	11	Queenes	33	3.0%	11
Antrim	0	0.0%	12	Kings	31	2.8%	12
Clare	0	0.0%	13	Waterford	16	1.4%	13
Corke	0	0.0%	14	Corke City	15	1.4%	14
Corke City	0	0.0%	15	Westmeath	14	1.3%	15
Dublin	0	0.0%	16	Longford	11	1.0%	16
Dublin City	0	0.0%	17	Kilkenny	10	0.9%	17
Limericke	0	0.0%	18	Donegall	9	0.8%	18
Limericke City	0	0.0%	19	Limericke City	9	0.8%	19
Londonderry	0	0.0%	20	Antrim	8	0.7%	20
Longford	0	0.0%	21	Dublin City	8	0.7%	21
Waterford	0	0.0%	22	Londonderry Catherlagh (Carlow)	6	0.5%	22
Wexford	0	0.0%	23		0	0.0%	23
Total	431	100.0%		Total	1110	100.0%	

The issue with both hypotheses is the lack of genealogical data to test them. In general, there are very few records of genealogical value for Irish Catholics in seventeenth century Ireland that were kept or survived. Unfortunately, these analyses of place name and surname evidence while interesting does not solve the problem of locating Thècle's birthplace and sept. There remains too much variation. The surnames O'Brennan and O'Connor are too widely distributed across Ireland to draw any conclusive inferences. And there are several places in both counties Kerry and Kilkenny that contain Patrick in their names. Lastly—and more importantly—both of the hypotheses failed to take into account what Thècle was actually saying when he reported his place of origin.

County	Number of O'Brennans	Percent	Rank	County	Number of O'Connors	Percent	Rank
Kilkenny	185	42.9%	1	Corke	245	22.1%	1
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Slegoe (Sligo)	29	6.7%	4	Kerry	116	10.5%	4
Kildare	23	5.3%	5	Roscommon	73	6.6%	5
Catherlagh (Carlow)	22	5.1%	6	Wexford	47	4.2%	6
Westmeath	22	5.1%	7	Dublin	45	4.1%	7
Tipperary	21	4.9%	8	Kildare	45	4.1%	8
Kerry	11	2.6%	9	Tipperary	40	3.6%	9
Donegall	7	1.6%	10	Slegoe (Sligo)	35	3.2%	10
Kings	4	0.9%	11	Queenes	33	3.0%	11
Antrim	0	0.0%	12	Kings	31	2.8%	12
Clare	0	0.0%	13	Waterford	16	1.4%	13
Corke	0	0.0%	14	Corke City	15	1.4%	14
Corke City	0	0.0%	15	Westmeath	14	1.3%	15
Dublin	0	0.0%	16	Longford	11	1.0%	16
Dublin City	0	0.0%	17	Kilkenny	10	0.9%	17
Limericke	0	0.0%	18	Donegall	9	0.8%	18
Limericke City	0	0.0%	19	Limericke City	9	0.8%	19
Londonderry	0	0.0%	20	Antrim	8	0.7%	20
Longford	0	0.0%	21	Dublin City	8	0.7%	21
Waterford	0	0.0%	22	Londonderry	6	0.5%	22
Wexford	0	0.0%	23	Catherlagh (Carlow)	0	0.0%	23
Total	431	100.0%		Total	1110	100.0%	

Original Documents Mentioning Thècle's Irish Origin

There are only four known documents in which Thècle's origin are mentioned: (1) his witness testimony in 1661, (2) his marriage contract (3) the copy of his marriage contract registered with the *Prévôté de Québec*, and (4) the record of his marriage in the parish register, the latter three from 1670. Let us examine them thoroughly, something I failed to do in 1980 and that, I suspect, Louis Aubry also did not study closely.

The first document is Thècle's testimony regarding fellow Iroquois captives from 12 October 1661. My efforts to acquire a copy of the original record has failed, so we must rely on a printed transcription of the record from 1931:

*Et Le Mesme jour et an que dessus après midy. Ce st Pareillement présenté au greffé cy dessus Tecele Cornelius de présent en ce lieu, Natif D'Irlande environ vingt Lieues de la Ville Dedmery, aagé de Vingt quatre ans ou enuiron. Lequel de sa pure et libre volonté a dit et Déclaré questant Prisonnier avec plusieurs françois de ce lieu et auls. au Village des Sauuages anontaguaironnons L'hiver de la présente année. Il auroit ouy dire, à l'vn desd. françois cy dessus destenus prisonniers, qu'Il Croit estre Urbain Tessier dit la Vigne que le Nommé Pierre Cauuin dit le grand pierre, qui auoit esté Conjointement pris avec led. Tessier. Luy auroit dit que Led. Grand Pierre Donnoit son Bien à L'Eglise en cas qu'Il vint faute de sa personne, soit par Mort ou par destention Desclauage desd. Sauuages, Ce qu'Il certiffie estre véritable, Lequel a déclaré ne scauoir escrire ne signer de ce Enquis suiuant Lordonnance, Signé à la minute Basset Nore. avec paraphe.
Basset Nore⁵*

And the same day and year [12 October 1661] mentioned above in the afternoon. Similarly this is presented to the above Registry [of Villemarie, Isle of Montréal, land of New France.]. Present Tecele Cornelius of this place, native of Ireland around twenty leagues from the town of Edmery, aged twenty-four years or thereabouts. With pure and free will said and declared he was a prisoner with several Frenchmen of this place and taken to the Indian town of the anontaguaironnons [Onontagués / Onondagas] the winter of this year. He reports that he was with one of the above French prisoners who he believed to be Urbain Tessier *dit* la Vigne and that the named Pierre Cauuin [Chauvin] *dit* le Grand Pierre had been taken in conjunction with said Tessier. He told him that the said Grand Pierre gave his goods to the Church in the case his death or detention in slavery among the Indians. This is what he certifies to be true, to which he declares he does not know how to write nor sign as required by the ordinance, the original signed by Notary Basset with flourish.
Basset Notary

⁵ O. Lapalice, "Figures des temps héroïques," *Bulletin des recherches historiques* 37, no.7 (July 1931): 433-445. This record is transcribed on 441-442. The original apparently comes from page 9 of the Register and Deliberations of Notre-Dame, otherwise known as the *Registres des délibérations de la fabrique de la Paroisse de Notre-Dame de Ville-Marie*. Unfortunately, my effort to acquire an original copy has failed. The following institutions report that the document is not in their collections: Email from Guillaume Lesage [glesage@basiliquenddm.org], *Fabrique de la paroisse Notre-Dame de Montréal*, to John P. DuLong, Subject: *Registres des délibérations de la fabrique de la Paroisse de Notre-Dame de Ville-Marie*, 27 March 2014. Email from Hélène Chartrand [Helene.Chartrand@banq.qc.ca], *Centre d'archives de Montréal, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec*, to John P. DuLong, Subject: RE: 2014-00676 - John P. DuLong - TR: *Registres des délibérations de la fabrique de la Paroisse de Notre-Dame de Ville-Marie*, 12 April 2014. Email from Gilles Lafontaine [glafontaine1@ville.montreal.qc.ca], *Direction du greffé, Ville de Montréal*, to John P. DuLong, Subject: *Fabrique Notre-Dame de Montréal*, 25 April 2014. Email from Stéphane Comeau [SComeau@diocesemontreal.org], *Archives, Église catholique de Montréal*, to John P. DuLong, Subject: RE: *Registres des délibérations de la fabrique de la Paroisse de Notre-Dame de Ville-Marie*, 29 April 2014. Email from David Émond, [demond@ucss.ca], *Univers culturel de Saint-Sulpice, Département des archives*, to John P. DuLong, Subject: *Registres des délibérations de la fabrique de la Paroisse de Notre-Dame de Ville-Marie*, 20 May 2014. For this translation and the following ones, punctuation, grammar, and spelling are corrected and simplified for the ease of the reader. The notary was Bénigne Basset *dit* Deslauriers.

The crucial thing Thècle tells the notary Basset is that he is from a location near the town called Edmery. The word *ville* in French is somewhat imprecise and can refer to a small town or a large city. A French *lieue* is the equivalent of an English league, the distance a person can walk in an hour, which is about three miles, but it was not a well-fixed measure and could range from 2.018 to 3.052 miles.⁶ So Edmery would be somewhere between 40.36 and 61.04 miles from Thècle's hometown. I have been unable to identify a town or village called Edmery or Dedmery in Ireland.⁷

The second document is the marriage contract between Thècle and Jeanne Chartier dated 6 September 1670:

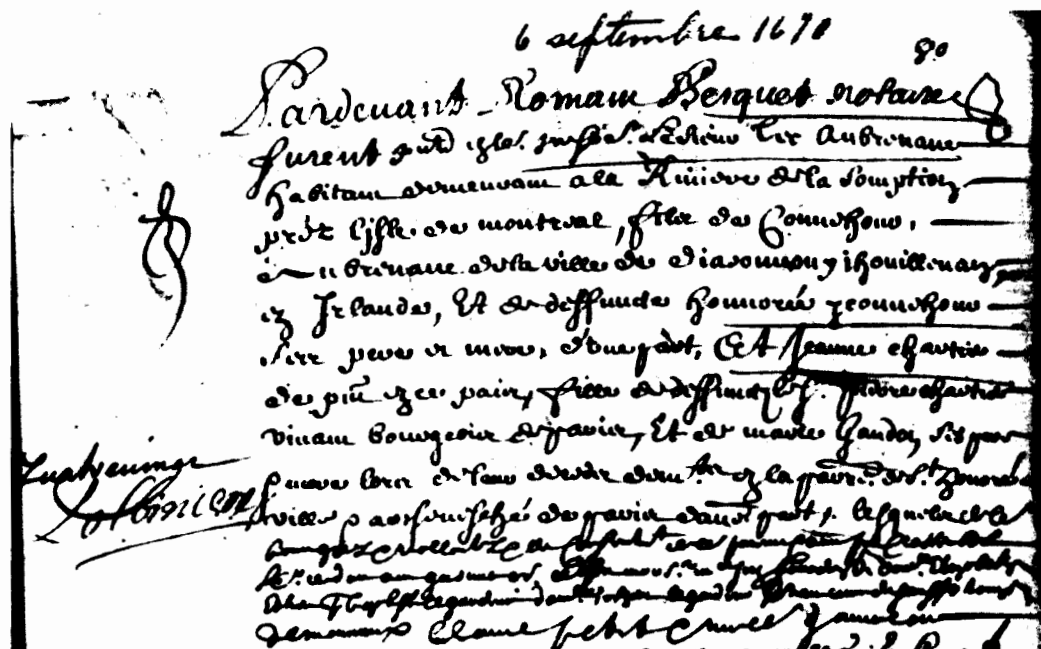


Figure 1 Portion of Marriage Contract between Tec Aubrenane and Jeanne Chartier, 6 September 1670

The marriage contract between Thècle and Jeanne Chartier, dated 6 September 1670 was drafted by the notary Romain Becquet. A copy of the opening lines will be found in Figure 1 and I would direct your attention to the sixth line that mentions Thècle's Irish place of origin.

Pardevant Romain Becquet notaire furent présents en leur personne le sieur Tec Aubrenane habitant demeurant a la riviere de la Somption prez lisle de Montreal, fils de Connehour, Aubrenane de la ville de diasonnony ihouillenan en Irlande, et de deffuncte Honnorée Yconnehour ses pere et mere, d une part, et Jeanne Chartier de présente en ce pais, fille de deffunctz le sieur Pierre Chartier vivant bourgeois de Paris, et de Marie Gaudon, ses pere et mere lors de leurs deceds demeurants en la paroisse de Saint-Honoré ville et archevesché de Paris d'autre part, lesquels de leurs bons grez et vollontez et du consentement de leurs parens et amys pour ce assemblez savoir de dame Anne Gasnier veuve de feu monsieur messire Jean Bourdon demoiselle

⁶ Wikipedia contributors, "Units of measurement in France before the French Revolution," Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia,

http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Units_of_measurement_in_France_before_the_French_Revolution&oldid=595076227 (accessed 24 April 2014), offers several values for a *lieue* including 2.018 miles used before 1674. Library and Archives of Canada Blog, "An Arpent, a Toise, a Perche, a League... Understanding Old French Measurements," <http://thediscoverblog.com/2014/04/24/an-arpent-a-toise-a-perche-a-league-understanding-old-french-measurements> (accessed 24 April 2014) gives the value of 3.052 miles to a *lieue*.

⁷ From the other testimonies in this article, it is clear the notary meant *d'Edmery*, that is, of Edmery, and not Dedmery, but I have hunted for both spellings in vain.

6 septembre 1670

80

Parduant Roman Berquet notaire

jurent sur glo. imp. Lédieu Cur Aubriane

habitant demeurant ala Riviere de la Somptioy

pres l'isle de montreal, fille de Goumhou,

en Aubriane de la ville de Diarououy ihouillmay,

iz Irlande, Et de deffunde Goumou z Goumhou

leur pere et mere, Et de deffunde Et Jeanne chavrie

de pie z ce pair, fille de deffunde z. Pierre chavrie

vinant Bourgeois de yavie, Et de Marie Gaudoy, sis par

sa mere lors de leur deffunde de la par. de St. Zouere

vice z aousuise de yavie de deffunde z. lesguier de la

Bourgeois de deffunde de deffunde z. de deffunde z. de deffunde z.

de deffunde z. de deffunde z. de deffunde z. de deffunde z.

de deffunde z. de deffunde z. de deffunde z. de deffunde z.

Large decorative flourish on the left margin.

Large handwritten signature or name on the left margin.

Elizabeth Estienne Jean Baptiste Legardeur demoiselle Catherine Legardeur et Marie Anne Desaussay Louise De Mousseaux Claude Petit et Nicolas Gauvreau ont fait les accords et promesses de mariage qui en suivent...⁸

Before the notary Romain Becquet were present in their person the Sieur Tec Aubrenane inhabitant residing on the river Assomption near the island of Montréal, son of Connehour Aubrenane of the village diasonnony ihouillenan in Ireland, and the deceased Honnorée Yconnehour his father and mother, on the one part, and Jeanne Chartier present in this country, daughter of the deceased Sieur Pierre Chartier while living bourgeois of Paris, and Marie Gaudon her father and mother who before their death resided in the parish of Saint-Honoré and archdiocese of Paris on the other part, with their good will and agreement and the consent of their relatives and friends here assembled for this purpose, namely [savoir] dame Anne Gasnier widow of the late monsieur Jean Bourdon, damsel Elizabeth Estienne, Jean Baptiste Legardeur, damsel Catherine Legardeur, and Marie Anne Desaussay, Louise De Mousseaux, Claude Petit, and Nicolas Gauvreau have made the agreements and promises of marriage that follow....

The key phrase is "... de la ville de diasonnony ihouillenan en Irlande" Please note that it is unclear if *diasonnony ihouillenan* is supposed to be one or two words as the space between them in the text is narrower compared to that between other words.

The third document is from the records of the *Prévôté de Québec*:

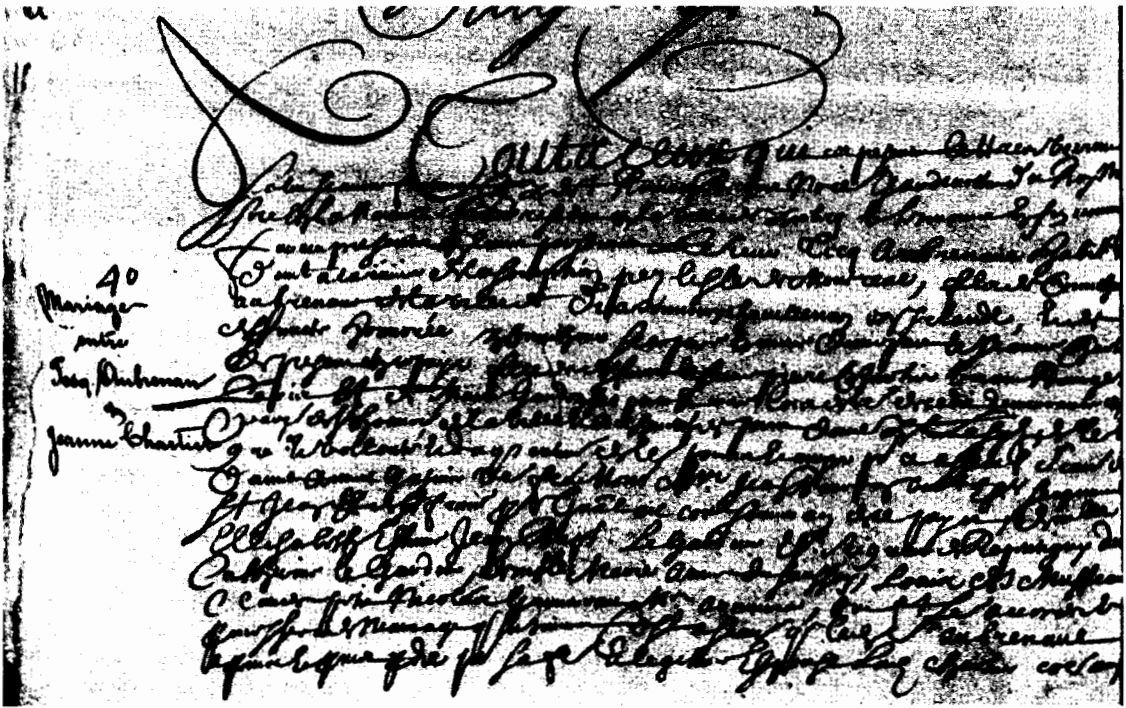


Figure 2 Copy of the Marriage Contract between Tec Aubrenane and Jeanne Chartier, 6 September 1670, Registered with the *Prévôté de Québec*

Some notarial records were insinuated, that is, registered, with the Sovereign Council or the *Prévôté de Québec*. Thècle and Jeanne had their marriage contract registered on 17 October 1670.⁹ The important

⁸ Archives nationales du Québec, Romain Becquet notarial records, marriage contract of Tec Aubrenane and Jeanne Chartier, 6 September 1670, Québec City, f. 80r. Photocopy in the author's possession.
⁹ Pièce provenant des registres des insinuations de la Prévôté de Québec, vol. 1 (Anciennement registres 1, 2 et 3) (1er mars 1667 - 25 septembre 1696), folios 88v-89. BANQ, Pistard, "Mariage entre le sieur Tecq ... Aubrenaue ...

data point here is that once again his place of origin is indicated to be “la ville de diasonnouyihouillenan en Irlande....” Note that it is clearly one word in this text.

The fourth document mentioning Thècle’s place of origin is his parish marriage record. His wedding was performed just four days after signing the marriage contract. Figure 3 shows the entire entry, and the place of origin is found on the sixth line.

Unfortunately, the Notre-Dame de Québec parish register entry for Thècle’s marriage appears to be a copy and not the original. All the surrounding entries for several pages are neatly spaced and written in the same hand with no signatures of witnesses: all clues that these are copied entries. In addition, the civil archives copy does not exist.¹⁰ So we do not have the second civil copy to compare to the original parish copy, and the latter is apparently not original. Therefore, I would give more weight to the place names in the marriage contract, which does appear to be original and contemporary.

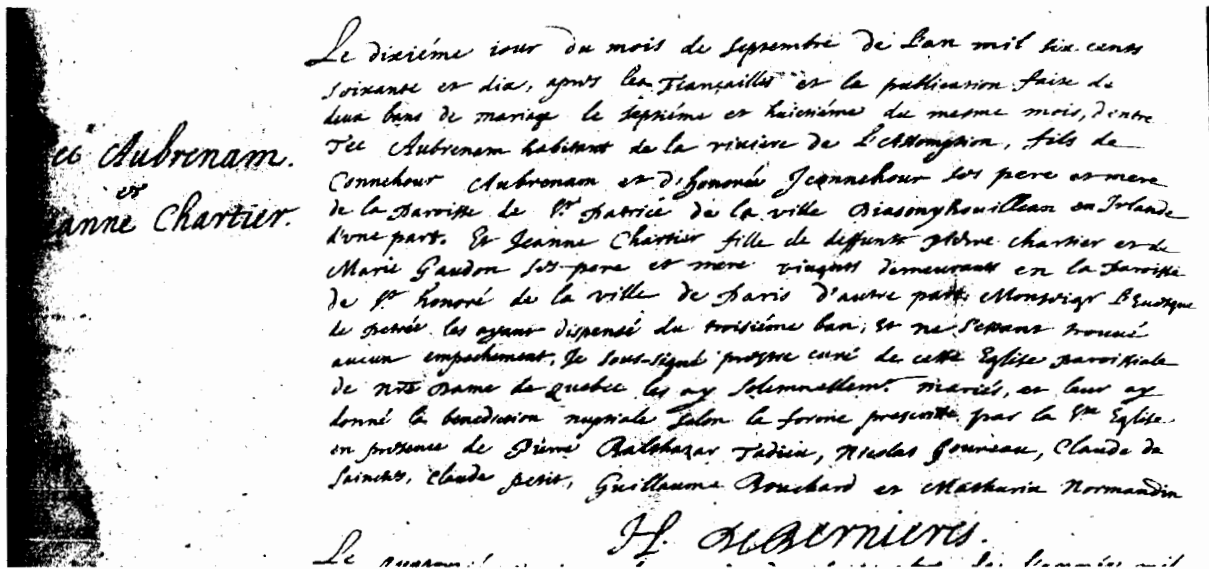


Figure 3 Notre-Dame de Québec Parish Register Marriage Record of Tec Aubrenam and Jeanne Chartier, 10 September 1670

Le dixième jour du mois de septembre de l’an mil six cent soixante et dix, après les fiançailles et la publication faite de deux bans de mariage le septième et huitième du mesme mois, d’entre Tec Aubrenam habitant de la rivière de l’Assomption, fils de Connehour Aubrenam et d’Honoré Jeannehour ses père et mère de la paroisse de St-Patrice de la ville Diasonyhouillean in Irlande d’une part. Et Jeanne Chartier fille de deffunct Pierre Chartier et de Marie Gandon ses père et mère vivant demeurants en la paroisse de St-Honoré de la ville de Paris d’autre part. Monseig^r l’Evesque de Petrée les ayant dispensé du troisième ban, et ne s’estant trouvé aucun empeschement, Je soussigné prestre curé de cette Eglise paroissiale de Notre-Dame de Québec les ay solennellenment mariés et leur ay donné la bédiction nuptiale selon la forme prescrite par la Ste. Eglise en présence de Pierre Balthazar Tadiou, Nicolas Gouvreau, Claude de Saintes, Claude Petit, Guillaume Bouchard et Mathurin Normandin.

et Jeanne Chartier ... Document insinué le 17 octobre 1670.” http://pistard.banq.qc.ca/unite_rechercheurs_description_fonds?p_anqid=20140320092802464&p_centre=03Q&p_classe=CR&p_fonds=301&p_numunide=929554 (accessed 2 June 2015).

¹⁰ The civil copy for Notre-Dame-de-Québec does not start until 17 January 1681. Pauline Bélanger et Yves Landry, *Inventaire des registres paroissiaux catholiques du Québec 1621-1876* (Montréal: Les Presses de l’Université de Montréal, 1990), 226.

Jes Aubrenam.
et
Jeanne Chartier.

Le dixième jour du mois de Septembre de Lan mil six cents
soixante et dix, après les fiançailles et la publication faite de
deux bans de mariage le septième et huitième du même mois, d'entre
Jes Aubrenam habitant de la rue de L'Assomption, fils de
Connehour Aubrenam et d'honorée Connehour ses pere et mere
de la paroisse de St. Pierre de la ville de Monroyhouilleau en Irlande
d'une part. Et Jeanne Chartier fille de defunt Pierre Chartier et de
Marie Gaudon ses pere et mere vivants demeurant en la paroisse
de St. Honoré de la ville de Paris d'autre part. Monsieur l'Evêque
de Québec les ayant dispensé du troisième ban; et ne s'étant trouvé
aucun empêchement, Je sous-signé presme curé de cette Eglise paroissiale
de Nre Dame de Québec les ay solennellement mariés, et leur ay
donné la benediction nuptiale selon la forme prescrite par la S^{te} Eglise
en presence de Pierre Balharaz Tadiu, Nicolas Gouveau, Claude de
Saincts, Claude Petit, Guillaume Pouchard et Mathurin Normandin

J. AUBRENIERS.

H. De Bernières¹¹

The tenth day of September in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy, after the engagement and the publication of two banns of marriage made the seventh and eighth of the same month, between Tec Aubrenam inhabitant on the Assomption river, son of Connehour Aubrenam and Honoré Jeannehour his father and mother of the parish of St-Patrice city of Diasonyhouillean in Ireland on the one part. And Jeanne Chartier daughter of deceased Pierre Chartier and Mary Gandon her father and mother when alive dwelling in the parish of St- Honoré in the city of Paris on the other part. Monseig^r the Bishop of Petraea having dispensed with the third ban and not finding any impediment, I, the undersigned priest pastor of the Parish Church of Notre-Dame of Quebec have solemnly married and given them the nuptial blessing in the form prescribed by the Holy Church in the presence of Pierre Balthazar Tadiou, Nicolas Gouvreau, Saintes Claude, Claude Petit, Guillaume Bouchard and Mathurin Normandin.

H. De Bernières

Here the place name is recorded as "... de la paroisse de St. Patrice de la ville Diasonyhouillean en Irlande..." Note the pen stops briefly between the y and the h, but there is no space the same width as is seen between other words nor is there a comma between Diasony and houillean. Unlike the notarial marriage contract, this record also lists a parish, St-Patrice, that is, St. Patrick. However, as Alan Mac an Bhaird indicated, there are only a few parishes in Ireland named after St. Patrick, and they are in large cities that would be easily identified.

In summary, here then are the four entries where Thècle indicated his place of origin arranged chronologically:

- 12 October 1661, captivity testimony: "*Natif D'Hirlande environ vingt Lieues de la Ville Dedmery ...*" Native of Ireland about forty or sixty leagues from the town of Edmery.
- 6 September 1670, marriage contract: "... de la ville de diasonny ihouillenan en Irlande ..." of the town of Diasonny Ihouillenan in Ireland.
- 10 September 1670, parish marriage record: "... de la paroisse de St. Patrice de la ville Diasonyhouillean en Irlande ..." of the parish of St. Patrick of the town of Diasonyhouillean in Ireland.
- 17 October 1670, marriage contract registered with Prévôté de Québec: "... de la ville de diasonnyihouillenan en Irlande ..." of the town of Diasonnyihouillenan in Ireland.

In all the available records, the Irish place name is not just *Diasony* or *Diasonyöen*. Therefore, both the County Kilkenny and the County Kerry hypothesis are found lacking because they were focused on finding a location called *Diasony* rather than *Diasonnyihouillenan*. And even if the place name was two separate words, we ignored half the clue Thècle has given us. Using the full place name, I have to this date been unable to find such a location in Ireland.

Anyone trying to untangle Thècle's place of origin in Ireland is both blessed and cursed. Blessed because he has given us solid location clues not once, but three times, indicating a parish, a village, and a nearby city. Cursed because Thècle was an illiterate Gaelic speaker explaining where he was from in Ireland to a French scribe trying to record to the best of his ability but mangling the information in the process.

¹¹ Québec Parish Registers, <https://familysearch.org> (accessed 24 May 2014), Québec, Notre-Dame-de-Québec, 1621-1679, image 465.

Can We Make Progress on Thècle's Origins?

Now that I have done several decades of research on my Irish ancestors as well as my wife's Irish Catholic and Protestant Anglo-Irish ancestors, including two research trips to Ireland, I feel confident in saying that it is extremely unlikely that we will ever find any original documents in Ireland relating to Thècle. The truth of the matter is that very little information exists for common Irish Catholics living before 1800. The Catholic Church was suppressed for decades during the seventeenth century by the Penal Laws, and it was nearly impossible for priests on the run to keep parish registers. Although the British relaxed many of the more repressive laws during the eighteenth century, it was not until the Great Liberator, Daniel O'Connell, brought about Catholic Emancipation in 1829 that it becomes possible to even start systematically collecting records and even then it would be spotty for many more decades. Lastly, many of the records of genealogical value were destroyed in the Four Courts fire during the Irish Civil War. As a result of Ireland's turbulent history, there are no rich genealogical sources as we are accustomed to using in the Province of Québec to trace common people. Nevertheless, I believe there are two possible pathways to make progress in solving the problem of Thècle's Irish origin

First, it would be worthwhile to consult with Gaelic scholars who ideally have some knowledge of French. Thècle was very clear where he came from in Ireland; we just have to untangle the message. A clearer understanding of where Diasonnouyihouillenan might be located and a translation of the name would be helpful in then trying to find a St. Patrick named site that falls near it. However, I suspect that even if a Gaelic scholar could offer a possible location for Diasonnouyihouillenan we would still lack original documents to support the identification. Any place name speculation would still have to be verified.

Secondly, and more promisingly, I believe genetic analysis can be used to verify a place and to determine Thècle's O'Brennan sept. He has numerous Aubry male descendants in Canada and the United States. If enough of them would submit DNA samples to construct an accurate profile of the Aubry Y chromosome that follows the surname, then we could compare their pattern to O'Brennans in Ireland. The problem is getting a sample of Irish O'Brennans from the various parts of Ireland to submit DNA kits.

In 2011, the Irish DNA Atlas Project was launched. This is a collaborative research project between the Genealogical Society of Ireland and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.¹² This project collects genetic data from volunteers in Ireland and overseas who can trace all of their eight great-grandparents to the same region of Ireland. They have to submit a DNA sample and a pedigree chart. Moreover, I am confident that many American and Canadian Brennans and O'Brennans have already submitted DNA samples to the various online databases that could be used for comparison.

It is my hope that over time enough Aubrys and O'Brennans will volunteer for this study or other similar studies, to allow us to compare the North American Aubry's to the Irish O'Brennans. It might take several decades before enough Aubrys and O'Brennans participate in the genetic studies, but eventually we might have large enough samples to make a match and hopefully narrow down where Thècle came from in Ireland and to which O'Brennan sept he belongs.

I firmly believe we may still find out what county in Ireland Thècle hailed from and what sept of the O'Brennans he belongs to, but it will probably be done relying on advice from Gaelic scholars and by using genetic data and not records genealogists traditionally use.

¹² Genealogical Society of Ireland, "Irish DNA Atlas Project," <http://www.familyhistory.ie/index.php/en/2012-04-22-23-12-47> (Accessed 17 March 2014).