

The Name of DeRose: Translations of French family names into English

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RÉSUMÉ: *Un nom de famille peut présenter des difficultés pour les immigrants, face à une nouvelle langue et une autre culture. Une résolution possible est la traduction et les Québécois arrivés au Vermont (USA) dans les années 1830 et 1840 ont parfois essayé une version anglaise de leur nom—ou plusieurs versions—parce qu'il n'est pas toujours évident qu'une traduction puisse servir. Ainsi Joseph Delorme risque Joseph Ellem et Joseph Dielm avant de redevenir Joseph Delorme. Cette étude trace les francophones, à travers les registres civils et ecclésiastiques, dans leurs efforts de trouver une solution vivable de la question d'un équivalent anglais.*

ABSTRACT: *The family name can present problems for immigrants confronting a new language and culture. One possible solution is seen in a translation, and the Québécois who came to the state of Vermont in the 1830s and 1840s sometimes tried an English version of their name. Indeed they tried not only one but several versions, as it was not always obvious that a translation will work. Thus Joseph Delorme tried Joseph Ellem and Joseph Dielm before giving up and staying Joseph Delorme. This study traces francophones, through civil and church records, in their effort to find a livable solution to the problem of an English equivalent.*

Problems

As French-speaking Canadians began to settle (for a short, a long or an intermittent term) in New England in the nineteenth century, one of the many problems they faced was selecting a version of the family name suitable in an English-speaking environment. One of the possible solutions to this problem was translation; and, in discussions of choices in translation, formulae of the sort "*Leblanc becomes White*" are often

found. To people familiar with both French and English, this is so obvious as to give no pause, but perhaps it ought. And for several reasons.

The first is of a linguistic order. It may be helpful shorthand to use the verb "becomes": but, in the context of historical linguistics, the term generally indicates an unconscious evolution, over a long time, resulting in the disappearance of the original phonetic form, and its total replacement by the new model. Thus, Latin *canem* becomes, between the first century and the twelfth, *chien* in the region of the Ile de France.

In cases of the *Leblanc/White* type, no such obliteration of the original form took place. *Leblanc* continues as a choice for members of the family, and indeed one finds instances of names continuing their parallel careers as people move back and forth between English and French contexts. *Le Patriote Canadien*,¹ in its issue of October 9, 1839, registers the death of a *M. Lebrun* "connu sous le nom de Brown, Canadien établi ici [i. e., Burlington] depuis un grand nombre d'années." One would know him by either name depending upon one's background. (It is interesting to note additionally, however, that *Brown* is sometimes found for *Breault/Brow*.)

Further, it is important to stress that, unlike evolutionary language change which is by its nature unconscious, the name change involves a conscious decision by somebody, and in response to some specific occasion. In the most frequent and difficult of situations, dealing with "officials", it will be the French-speaking person who makes the decision. (And sometimes people try different versions on different occasions, or abandon the translation altogether, because it doesn't "work.")

One hesitates also because *White* is obvious as an alternative to *Leblanc*, only in part because of a shared meaning. Just as importantly, it is instantly acceptable in English, because it fits into the new, i. e., English, system of family names. But how would the new arrival gain his or her knowledge of that system? *White* is not the only possible translation of the syllables *leblanc*: "the white" or "the white man" or "blank" might seem to someone worth a try. And I have some reason to think that such experiments were made.

Purposes and Proofs

My study of Franco-Québec names in nineteenth-century civil and church registers in Burlington, Vermont, with the aim of publishing a dictionary of variants, has concentrated on the years 1830–1870. In the

early part of this period Burlington held the only Catholic Church between Montréal and Boston, and the first *French* church in New England, St. Joseph's, was established in 1850. So, nearly every French Catholic in Vermont made an appearance in these documents. And this period is where the difficulties are greatest.

Some of the people whose moment is recorded in one document do not reappear; so, in those instances, particularly where only English language records exist, they cannot be identified with certainty. But a good many others stayed long enough to be recorded in more than one ceremony, and many of course became permanently established, and several generations can be followed.

The original purpose of my study was linguistic in nature, with a view to establishing an orderly set of correspondences between the French name and whatever variety of Englishing it was subjected to. But reality was not so orderly. In order to come to some certainty concerning what the name originally was, I adopted at least in part the genealogist's method of finding, not individuals, but couples. This in the hope that enough of the patterns of the four names combined would survive to make an identification possible, and to be able to offer convincing proof or probability of identification.

It will not be appropriate to assert a correspondance through translation between *Greenwood* and *Boisvert*, for example, without proof that someone of the name *Boisvert* actually used *Greenwood* at some time. The fact that there is a *Greenwood* in place at the desired time goes nowhere in proving that there was a *Boisvert* behind it; the name *Greenwood* exists independently in English. The fact that there are *Greenwoods* and *Boisvert* in the same place at the same time equally *proves* nothing; it tantalizes, nothing more. But if *Thomas Greenwood* and *Adalia Siviny* stand as godparents in 1841 in St. Mary's Irish Catholic Church (#112), and *Thomas Boisvert* and *Adèle Sevigny* are recorded in French as godparents also in 1841 (first list, #4), during a time when a French-speaking priest was briefly in town, then this correspondence seems surely beyond coincidence.²

In this particular instance, the identical first name and the semantic equivalent of the last name of the man, together with the phonological near-equivalence in the woman's name, underlie my certainty that this individual used both last names. Burlington had little more than 4000 people in 1841; the Catholic community was a minority, and the French portion roughly a third of that (as near as can be judged from baptismal

registers), so the likelihood of these names representing two couples seems small.³

This may appear obvious, but no study purporting to offer population statistics concerning the numbers of Franco-Americans in any given area at any given time can claim validity without offering such proofs as these. Names that have been translated offer real difficulties to the cultural demographer, who, for example, might wish to know who was being targeted by the ever-recurring nativist or Americanist movements of the epoch, and how many people were enough to excite the exclusionary feelings. In many cities, the Irish were victims; in others, Catholics of any national origin, and Burlington offers a good microcosm in which to study trends of a wider North American context.⁴

In insisting on virtual proof of identity, in specific times and places, we can establish patterns in the practice of name-translating. Do people who arrive early in the process of immigration, or who settle in areas where they find few compatriots, or who settle further from Québec than Burlington, show a higher rate of translation, and a more permanent acceptance of translation than is found in Vermont? This would address real problems in the study of newcomers' embrace of their adopted land, as against the emotional ties linking them to their old world, ties very strongly symbolized by the family name.

In trying to see a pattern of assimilation, which is another kind of "translation," it would also be useful to look at names that are not translated. In the records of St. Joseph's (French) parish, there are people named *Bachand dit Vertefeuille*. While the name *Greenleaf* exists in English, and is as easily found and more easily pronounced than *Greenwood*, I have yet to find an English language document that has this name in this period. *Bashaw* is the most common version, and is found that way in the *Burlington City Directory (1865-1870)*, the *Annual Reports of the City of Burlington (1860-1870)*, the city registers, and even in the *Revised Roster of the Vermont Veterans of the War of Rebellion (1861-1865)*. This family clearly preferred a distorted version of the sounds of their name *Bachand* to the alien sounds of a translation of *Vertefeuille*. Questions of cultural and personal identity figure in every transaction of this type, in every (frequent) decision about what name is yours. (Or what names: one imagines that every family has only one, but a last name such as *Dauphiné dit St. Jean Baptiste* offers many interesting possibilities.)

Perpetrator

In every transaction, someone has to be, at least partially, bilingual, and that is the person who will make the translation. In a great many instances, we cannot be sure who originated the record, or what might have been the state of that person's knowledge of French. But in Burlington, the first Catholic Church, St. Mary's on the Hill, founded in 1830, was ministered to almost exclusively until 1853 by Father Jeremiah O'Callaghan, a native of Ireland. On November 5, 1841, his bishop in Boston wrote to Bishop Bourget in Montréal urging him to send a French-speaking priest "for those good Canadians."⁵ So, in this instance, we know that the translations were done by the members of the French community.

Their command of English, in every aspect, will vary widely from person to person, and over a period of time with the same person, as will the sense of appropriateness of a name. Since this essay began with the example of *Leblanc*, let us return to it now. There is no absolute certainty that the man in the entry reproduced below was a *Leblanc* at the start of his life, but several features in the documentation suggest this solution. Marriages seem to stay within the French-speaking community as a general pattern. And in early nineteenth-century Vermont, where the men bear decidedly Old Testament first names, when they are not named *Consider* or *Remember*, the name *Alexander* (of Greek origin: such was a decided fad in French families of the period) is unusual. Thirdly, the child's name is most decidedly French. So, while proof positive lacks, there is good probability from this entry alone, and it is buttressed by evidence from another source.

Number 14 of the year 1831 from the manuscript baptismal registry of St. Mary's preserved in the episcopal archives, Burlington: "Onasime, born to Alexander White and Mary Bierjion; godparents: John Bailierguson and Angela White." (The mother's name and the godfather's are usually written *Baillargeon* in French; in English, many, many ways.) If this is *Leblanc*, the *White* is unsurprising and very standard fare.

The couple were married in 1822, as found in the *Burlington Register of Births, Marriages and Deaths*,⁶ where this marriage is recorded twice. In Volume I: "Alexander DeWhite and Mary Barleargen" (Index #20); and in Volume II: "Alexander Dwight and Mary Ballargeon" (page 36).

Now, it sometimes does happen that a name is analyzed mistakenly, and an agglutination to the second element of the final consonant of the first occurs: *Lareine Harpin* as *Lora Narpin* (St. Joseph's Baptismal Register, 1851, #122) is one example among many. This most often occurs with last names starting with vowels. But it is very rare to find a whole syllable duplicated: *Hubert Foisy* represented as *Hubert Berfosy* (St. Joseph's Baptismal Register, 1856, #183) is the only instance I can cite. While this process could account for the *DeWhite* or *Dwight* after a first name ending in *-der*, or *-dre*, it is rather a step in the process of translation: Alexander (I presume) translated both the article and the adjective of his name: *TheWhite*. This process involves his very likely difficulty with the sound [ø] or [θ], the further complication that English names do not include articles as a rule, and the likelihood that the person responsible for transcribing the name was familiar with the name *Dwight* and believed he was hearing that, and another scribe thought that *DeWhite* was the best representation of the sounds he thought he heard.

The difficulty with [θ] accounts also for the *Jeté/Trow* pair: *Jeté* is translated mentally as "throw" and pronounced "Trow," very conveniently, as it happens, since the name pre-exists in English, and may even be known to the scribe. It might be useful at this point to remark that this name, like a great many others, does not have one sole and permanent English "version": some people with this name did not try to translate it, but the English-speaking scribe would not have known how to spell it in French, and so "Stay" became a fairly common version.

It is important to emphasize that translation is a *process* that has nothing automatic about it. The *Leblanc/DeWhite* example gives us an opening into the process itself, in that it is in a sense a "failed" translation. The process produced two versions that do not shock the English pattern, in any formal way, but failed to please their author: *White* seems to have been the one he wanted. It is a very common name and may have satisfied a need for a real English name, and perhaps the need for the name to bear, or to bare, an essential *meaning*. The same process seems to have been responsible for producing *Joseph Deplond*⁸ for *Joseph LaPlante*; as well as *Francis Derosé* (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1832, #168) for *François Larose*, who is honoured in the title of this paper.

In examining ways in which we can see a process unfolding, let us consider the couple known to us in the French records as *Joseph Delorme (dit Lemais)* and *Louise Petit (or Jean-Petit)* (as for instance in

St. Joseph's Baptismal Register, 1852, #334). In their first appearance in Saint Mary's records, they are *Joseph Delor* and *Luisa Petti* (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1836, #116), and no effort seems to have been made to translate; I do not believe they were searching for the English *Petty*, but that Father O'Callaghan wrote the sounds of *Petit* as he heard them. But a few years later one of these old-country names won't do, and they appear as *Joseph Ellem* and *Louisa Lettis* (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1839, #219). Now, *Elm* can be a difficult word to pronounce, and it is often heard as two syllables in New England. As for her name: are we dealing here with a mere slip of the pen, or was someone pronouncing *Little* very badly? Whatever the case here, in 1841 she arrived at the translation that (I am presuming) she was aiming for: *Louisa Little* (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1841, #65). But something happened to Joseph's name, in that same record. As we saw with *Dwight* above, he was probably pronouncing it with an article, so we have *Joseph Dielm* (The elm). In 1845, her name stayed consistent, while he tried the article-less version again: *Joseph Elem* and *Louisa Little* (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1845, #87). In subsequent years (and before the founding of St. Joseph's French Parish), hers remained stable, while he can be seen to be retaking his French name: "Joseph Derlin and Louisa Little" (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1847, #220); "Joseph Delorm and Louisa Little" (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1849, #292).

Now finding a workable English version of the name is a process, involving stages and conscious choices. I have so far assumed that Joseph is trying different modes, before deciding that he'll use his original name; "elm" is too short, it doesn't work well in English. But we might also want to consider the factor of "unhelpful helpfulness." It would be very hard to develop a theory or offer proven instances from the documentation. But I have had personal experiences where people have been introduced to me in French, and if I don't hear the name well, and ask for it to be repeated, the people will tell me the English for it. They want to be helpful, of course, and the result is always a few seconds of perfect perplexity. If the good father did not catch enough sounds the first time round to make a good note, and if he asked for a repetition, the result might not have been intended to be a "name" in the strict sense, but rather a clue to meaning. And the same process might have produced the hybrid *Lettis* by the priest's having caught a portion of *Little/Petit*. If this last is indeed a clue to that practice, then some of the more opaque entries may have their origin thus explained.

One of them that may have come about in this semi-voluntary way concerns the name *Destroismaisons dit Picard*. The couple Antoine Trahan and Angelique Des Trois Maisons is known from Father Petithomme's baptismal record (St. Joseph's Baptismal Register, 1834, #34)⁹ as well as the marriage register, where it is recorded that the marriage was "renewed."¹⁰ And the record of the baptism of Mary, born to *Antony Strong* and *Angelic Pickard* (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1832, #176) clearly reflected that same couple, and at once solved another problem. An earlier appearance by Antony Strong had suggested an origin in *Lefort/Fort*, but there, the wife's name was so peculiar that one could merely trace the letters, and hope to make sense at some later date. The best transcription using the Roman alphabet would be: "Angelie Frotiehouse" (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1831, #136).

It's transparent now: *Strong* represents a hearing of *Trahan*, and *Frotiehouse* is intended to translate *Destroismaisons*. One would not anticipate an effort to translate the **preposition**! But there is that learner's logic which says every piece of a phrase needs a counterpart in the new language, and certainly there is pride in knowing all those English words for the French ones. (As for *Trahan*, it also appears, as *Throng* and *Gragham*, inter alia.)

But, after this clearly unsatisfactory attempt at translation, a solution to the name problem was found by abandoning the *Destroismaisons* part of the name almost entirely, and using the *Picard* part, in its manifestations as *Pickard*, *Picker*, *Pecor*, etc. One of the ironies in this particular name is that, if anyone decided to translate the word into English, it would be indistinguishable in its standard spelling from the French.

Perplexities

In 1834 the marriage of Olivier Ricard and Emilie Ledoux was renewed (*Mariages de St-Joseph*, 1834, #3 400) they had been married by the Unitarian minister two years earlier, and their names were recorded as *Oliver Ricar* and *Emily Ladoo or Fresh* (First Unitarian Universalist Church, January 4, 1832). There are a couple of other marriages showing this translation in the same document, though it rarely appears elsewhere locally. When a child of theirs was baptized in 1833, their names appear as *Oliver Richard* and *Emilia Freach* (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1833, #153).

This is fairly evident, but one does not always have the luxury of a chronological and explicating order. In this instance, I saw St. Joseph

and St. Mary records long before seeing the Unitarian ones, and had wondered how one got from *Ledoux* to *Freach*, partly because I don't know how *Freach* was intended to be pronounced. To rhyme with peach? Now that the intermediate step is available, we understand the creation of this particular version: the priest expected to hear a French word, not expecting it to have any meaning for him, so he could not "hear" the English. Further, he knew that in French, the sound [ʃ] is represented with *ch*. It is still puzzling what the vowels *ea* are meant to reproduce.

But we are not always going to be able to find or identify an intermediate stage. For example, *Beausoleil* and *Peterson* were the same family (Both names are used in the document recording the marriage of Louis Eugene *Peterson* [*Beausoleil*].) (*Mariages de St-Joseph*, 1921, #3177); but not until the genealogist Véronique Gassette explained that she had seen the name *Prettysun* in a newspaper obituary could the connection be seen. And someday a document will appear explaining why a woman known to most records as *Elizabeth Phaneuf* or *Fannuff*, or other variants thereof, is called *Eliza Orange* (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1838, #150; the godfather there is called Peter Orange).

The translation "fresh" for *Ledoux* had a short life in Vermont, but another effort has been more successful: "Michael Sweet married Mary Smith of Williston" (St. Mary's Marriage Register, June 6, 1846), and soon "Michel Ledoux and Marie Josephine Smith were parents" (St. Joseph's Baptismal Register, 1851, #155). And there are many families with the name *Sweet* in today's telephone books.

In a recent article in *Onomastica Canadiana* (1991), Lapierre systematically examines the published lists of variants of names, and offers a very useful typology. But when he talks about translation, he asserts that *Viens* is usually given as *Cummings*, and not as the more direct *Come*. However, in the earliest years of St. Mary's, Father O'Callaghan records the baptism of John *Cumm*, son of John *Cumm* and Venerant Peppin (the woman is Vénérançe Pepin, 1831, #34); and the godparents were John Pappin and Jane *Vion*. Often both the French and the English versions appear among the parents and the godparents; and this characteristic can be very valuable for identification.

Father O'Callaghan also performed the marriage rites for Lewis Christian and Rosailia *Cumm* on September 19, 1840, in Burlington; Louis Chretien and Rosalie *Viens* are registered as parents in 1841 in the first brief baptismal registry of that year.¹¹

But the same person may give several versions, translations or not, well-heard or not. Charles Racicot and Alzine[?] *Viens* were recorded as Charles Rasco and Louisa *Cummins* when they were married (St. Mary's Marriage Register, June 17, 1844, in Shelburne, Vermont). And four children are recorded in the baptismal register of St. Mary's, with the following couples: "Charles Rosco and Eliza *Cummin*, parents; Charles Resis and Azime Bein, parents; Joseph Peppin and Magdalen *Vian*, godparents; Charles Rosco and Olizim *Cummings*, parents; Charles Risco and Lassier *Come*, parents" (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1845, #73; 1846, #79; 1847, #496; 1849, #641). One child was born a little later, and baptized at St. Joseph's: "Charles Lescaut and Alzina *Vien*, parents" (St. Joseph's Baptismal Register, 1858, #111).

In a similar fashion, one finds *Rossberry* and *Roseberry* for *Laframboise*, and two (or two enlistments of one man?) Civil War veterans named Joseph H. and Hubert J. *Wideawake*,¹² which I assume conceals a *Léveillé*, partly because the first name *Hubert* is rare in English.

Some of the first generation of *Courtemanche* tried to retain their name, with varying success. I believe that the following five couples, recorded at baptisms at St. Mary's, represent the family:

- 1) John *Shortslave* and Frances Randel, parents (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1832, #195).
- 2) Joseph *Cuttimore* and Noster Larron, parents; Frank *Cuttiman*, godfather (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1838, #2).
Joseph *Cuttemash* and Paula Laron, parents (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1845, #397).
- 3) Denis *Courtimage* and Mary Henry, parents (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1839, #226).
Denis *Cootimon* and Mary Arien, parents (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1840, #132).
Denis *Shortsleeve* and Mary Henry, parents (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1846, #365).
- 4) John Lavine and Margaret *Muttamosh*, parents (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1839, #111).
John Lavigne and Margaret *Cuttimas*, parents (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1842, #219).
- 5) Peter Bruit and Monica *Cootimas*, parents (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1843, #107).

Does the version *Muttamosh* suggest that the English cannot hear enough of the sounds to reproduce the name satisfactorily? Could sheer frustration and disgust be factors in the decision to translate? *Shortsleeve* doesn't always "work" perfectly, but it's not hard to recognize under *Shortslave*. The second generation seems to have opted largely for *Shortsleeve*, but some individuals still retained *Courtemanche*.¹³

Peter Pork

Then there are those "translated" names taken by one generation or individual, and utterly abandoned subsequently. An individual called *Peter Pork* appears in the manuscript census record for 1830. One can not be sure that this person's name conceals a French name, but the fact that he lived just across the Winooski river from Burlington, in that section of Colchester that would later become the independent town of Winooski, and was already home to the French community, and the fact that the name was not obviously Irish or English, suggested retaining it on a list of possibilities. The mystery was solved by the Baptismal Register of St. Joseph's Church. The missionary priest, Amable Petithomme, in Burlington from the spring of 1834 to the autumn of 1835, was the only priest in our records to invite the godparents to sign the register, and to indicate, "qui ont déclaré ne pas savoir signer" or "qui ont signé avec nous."

On the 21st of December, 1834, he baptized the infant Guillaume Baillargeon, and the godparents were Pierre *Allard* and Ester Bourgard (i. e., Esther D'Avignon dit Beauregard); "ils ont signé avec nous: Peter *Pork* Esther Deveno." Peter Pork's son was *Peter Allard, Jr.*

Personal preferences

In that list of 34000 names that makes up the *Revised Roster of Vermont Veterans of the War of the Rebellion 1861-1865*, there are a number of soldiers who bear names that seem to be translations; for example, there were people named *Papillon* in Montpelier. So a soldier named *Butterfly* from this state suggests that translation has occurred. And of course, many of the soldiers fought under their French names. But in that vast list there is only one soldier given with both a French and an English name: Joseph *Young (Lajeunesse)*, of Burlington, who served in the Third Light Artillery.

Of course English-looking names can come from sources other than translation; we also have, in the French language baptismal register of St. Joseph's church, the following interesting pairs, in 1864 and 1866:

“Jean *Young* and Celine Decelles, parents” (St. Joseph’s Baptismal Register, 1864, #169); Jean-Baptiste *Dion* and Celina Decelles, parents” (St. Joseph’s Baptismal Register, 1866, #64).

Oddities

Names that can only be recovered if someone translates them

An example of this situation is that of a certain Peter *Lasoir*, who, with the aid of Amelia Labonte, became a father in 1841 (St. Mary’s Baptismal Register, 1841, #389). There are a great many names where it is hard to determine which letters of their inscription can be counted on as accurate; and, for many who do not reliably reappear, having died or gone to Ohio, I doubt we can ever find them. But, thanks again to Amelia Bonte (a frequent alteration in this period; O’Callaghan often left off the article), who presented Peter *Joy* with an infant (St. Mary’s Baptismal Register, 1845, #344), I believe the problem resolves itself: *Lajoie*.

Or does it? If Father O’Callaghan had developed the habit of omitting the article, might this be his version of *Lajoie* itself, and not a translation at all? We cannot always be sure that translation has taken place.

Names that are translated and badly heard

Translation is a process, and so is detecting translation. A certain “Basil *Harsh*” appears as a godfather in St. Mary’s Baptismal Register in 1846, #133. The problem facing the researcher investigating translation was: Is there a name that has a meaning like “harsh” and could produce that form? It seemed unlikely, and the problem would only be solved by another tactic.

The godmother in that instance was Leonora Tatro; so when Elleonora Tetro and Basilius *Dufresne* appear as godparents in Mount Carmel in Charlotte, Vermont, February 17, 1872,¹⁴ the solution is transparent. Basil translated his name in the standard way for the time and place, so *Dufresne* was intended to be *Ash*; and the priest (O’Callaghan) mentally “corrects” to *Arsh*; and, knowing that the French cannot produce an aitch, he then further “corrects” to give the proper spelling: *Harsh*.

Another such name, with perhaps the added disadvantage of being badly seen, is Joseph *Vital-Pignan*, of whom one finds the following mentions:

i) His marriage, which took place in a Protestant ceremony in 1832:

Joseph *Painter* m. Catharine Guiot (First Unitarian Universalist Church, Marriages, January 10, 1832)

Joseph *Paintee* /*Paintree* m. Catherine Guiot /Guist
(Names in Burlington Register, Volume I, 1832, p. 34; ms vs., Burlington Register, index).

This marriage was renewed in 1834 in a Catholic ceremony, but the name here is confused with Arpin: "Joseph *Arpin* (*Vitale-Harpin*) m. Catherine Goyet-Lafontaine" (*Mariages de St-Joseph*, 1834, #54).

ii) Their children and his godchildren, from 1833 to 1839

Joseph *Printer* and Catherine Galliot, parents (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1833, #72)

Joseph *Painter* and Catherine Robert, godparents (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1833, #80; Catherine Robert was Joseph's mother-in-law)

Joseph *Vitain* and Josephine Mayotte, godparents (St. Joseph's Baptismal Register, 1834, #92)

Joseph *Vitard* and Catherine Giot, parents (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1837, #136)

Joseph *Vital* and Catherine Giot, parents (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1839, #155).

Joseph Vital-Pignan seems to have tried a translation of *Pignan* which he thought of as connected with the verb "peindre," and he translated it as *Painter*, and then to have abandoned the effort in favour of the *Vital* part of his name.

The need for meaning is inherent in the idea of translation, and is exemplified in the uses of the name *Lefe(b)vre*. In Burlington, there were *Lefevre dit Descoteaux*, who are to be found using the name *Hill*. And there are *Lefevre dit Boulanger*, who are to be found as *Baker*. But the name *Lefevre* itself presents a problem, because the word *fevre* had by the nineteenth century become semantically opaque. Had this not been so, many *Smiths* (or *Smeese*, or other efforts) would have appeared among the French-speaking population of Burlington. But people tried anyway; the phonetic similarity to the word *fève* encouraged the translation *Bean*. This word was not always heard accurately, so when Jean-Baptiste *Lefevre* married Marie Beauregard in 1847, they were recorded as John *Bing* and Mary Burgor (St. Mary's Marriage Register, January 10, 1847). In 1848, John *Benn* and Mary Burgor became the parents of Julia (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1848, #50). In 1850,

Milesse was born to John *Beane* and Mary Burgor (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1850, #431). Saline Mary was born in 1855 to John *Beein* and Mary Baugaur (St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1855, #211). I assume that John was among the *Lefevre dit Faber* clan, as in 1858 a child was born to Baptiste *Favert* and Marie Beauregard (St. Joseph's Baptismal Register, 1858, #20), and in 1864 Baptiste *Fabert* and Marie Beauregard again were blessed (St. Joseph's Baptismal Register, 1864, #61). I am assuming that this variant was not created on the spot as a Latin translation of *Lefevre*, but that it was part of the family heritage. Their son, Daniel, was married under the name *Lefevre-Faber* (*Mariages de St-Joseph*, 1877, #2403).

This couple was buried in Mount Calvary cemetery in Burlington, which is attached to Saint Joseph's French parish. And their tombstone reads: "John *Bean* 1826–1911; his wife, Mary Burgor 1825–1906."

There are, of course, other ways in which efforts at translation play a role, such as multiple French sources of a single English name, multiple English versions of French, and partial translations; and as Lapiere has shown, so many other things happen to names—all of which will repay further study. But if I have successfully introduced the idea of the fluidity of the process, especially in the first generation, I believe I will have given an idea of the kind of invitation to research that is available in every community where there are "officials" recording names from languages other than their own.

NOTES

1. A French-language newspaper published for the Patriot community after the 1837–38 Rebellion, it was edited by Ludger Duvernay in Burlington, and appeared from August 1839 through February 1840. For more on the "Grande Émigration," and a thorough bibliography, see Beattie 1992.

2. The baptismal and the marriage registers from St. Mary's Church are to be found in the Diocesan Archives, in Burlington. The registers for St. Joseph's Church are in that church in Burlington. I was able to consult a fair copy, made in the late nineteenth century, and comparisons with a photocopy of early records in the Diocesan Archives showed the hand copy to be very reliable.

3. For census data, see Hayward 1990, p. 145.

4. On political life of the period in Vermont, see Brynn 1970. For an excellent review of the movement in the USA, see Anbinder 1992.

5. This letter is in the Archives of the Archbishop of Boston; a true copy is to be found in the Roman Catholic Diocesan Archives, Burlington.

6. The manuscript Volumes I and II are preserved in the Fletcher Free Library, in Burlington. The Index is kept at the Reference Librarian's desk.

7. Haplology is a very frequent occurrence; its reverse very rare. One other example is the version *Alapa* for *Arpin*.

8. Burlington Registers, Vol. I, p. 32 (1829); and the First Unitarian Universalist Church: Carton 1, folder 59: Record of Marriages, Baptisms and Burials, 1822–1863, dated November 29, 1829. This latter manuscript can be consulted in the Vermont Collection of the Wilbur Room, Bailey-Howe Library at the University of Vermont.

9. The Church itself was not founded, properly speaking, until 1850, but there was a missionary priest in residence from the spring of 1834 through the fall of 1835. His records have been preserved.

10. *Mariages de St-Joseph de Burlington Vermont 1834–1930*. 1978. Ed. by Véronique Gassette. Montréal: Editions Bergeron & Fils. This alphabetical listing (by bridegroom with an index by brides) of the marriages has been compared, in samples, with the manuscript in St. Joseph's Rectory, and found to be remarkably accurate.

11. St. Mary's Baptismal Register, 1841, #11. There are two brief lists of baptisms in the year 1841 and they were added to the fair copy of the register in two separate places, before 1834, and again after 1835. *Rosailia* is O'Callaghan's standard enchanting version of *Rosalie*.

12. *Revised Roster of the Vermont Veterans of the War of the Rebellion 1861–1865*. Montpelier: Adjutant General of Vermont. 1894. 11th Regiment, Company C and 1st Cavalry, Company K, respectively.

13. Dauzat's *Dictionnaire étymologique des noms de famille et prénoms de France* (Paris: Larousse, 1951; revised edition, 1978) has the surname's origin in the place name *Courtemanche* in Somme, and gives the etymology *curtis dominica*, the "lord's court." He cites also *Courdemanche* (Eure, Sarthe); *Courdemanges* (Creuse, Marne). He says that a French equivalent of the nickname "Short Sleeves" has not been found. Ernest Nègre's *Toponymie Générale de la France* (Genève: Droz, Volume I, 1990) cites *Courdemanche* (Aisne, as well as Eure), from *Curtis Dominici*, the "lord's domaine." He also cites *Courdemanche* (Sarthe); *Courdimanche* (Val-d'Oise and Essonne), as well as those cited by Dauzat (pp. 377–378).

14. Baptismal register from Our Lady of Mount Carmel (Charlotte, Vermont), now in the Diocesan Archives in Burlington; Feb. 17, 1872.

15. The manuscript calls this a renewal, but leaves blank the space showing when they were united.

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