

PIERRE DUCÔTÉ – LOUISIANA PROGENITOR

Did both *père* and *fils* come to La Louisiane?

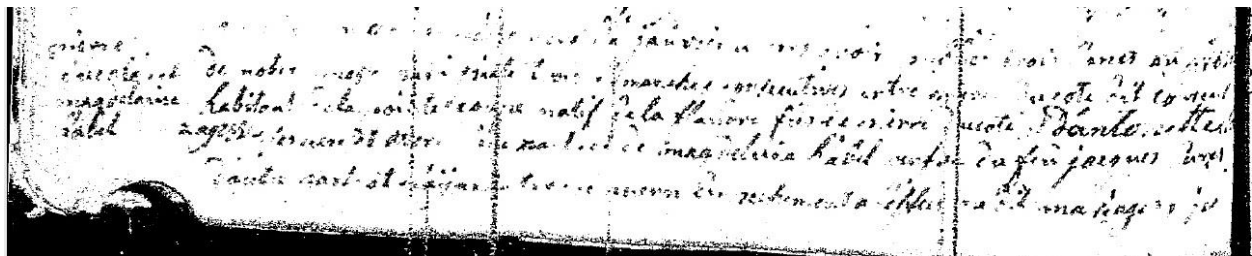
Cathy (Lemoine) Sturgell - 2020

For years, I was of the belief that Louisiana progenitor Pierre Ducôté had migrated to La Louisiane and married twice – once to a *sauvagesse* named Antoinette and, secondly, in 1749, to Marie Magdeleine Cable/Gabel (baptized in 1713 as Anna Magdalena Gabel). However, as additional information was discovered about Pierre's life, it seemed to cast doubt that the Pierre who married Antoinette was the same one who married Cable/Gabel. Instead, some of the data seemed to point to the possibility that the Pierre who married Cable/Gabel was actually the second generation of this family in the new world and that he was the son of the Pierre Ducôte and his Indian wife, Antoinette. So which was true?

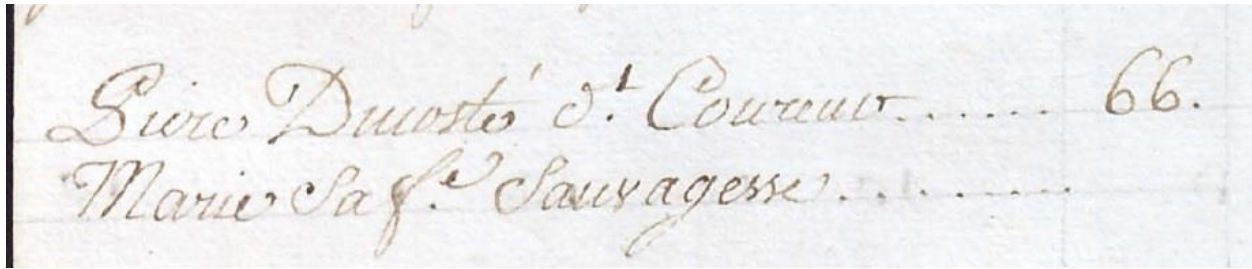
INDICATIONS THAT BOTH PIERRE AND HIS FATHER WERE IN LOUISIANA?

There were two primary pieces of source information which, *when taken together*, led to the suspicion that Pierre, husband of Cable/Gabel, was Pierre, *fils* (the son), and that Pierre, *père* (the father), was also in Louisiana at the same time.

The first was the 1749 marriage record of Pierre to Cabel/Gabel. Although faded, the marriage record, recorded on 23 January 1749 at Saint Charles Borromeo on the German Coast (now the area of Destrehan in Saint-Charles Parish, Louisiana), stated that Pierre (the groom) was a "*habitant de la pointe coupee natif de la Flandre fils de pierre ducote et d'antonette sauvagesse, ses père et mère*" (...resident of Pointe Coupée, native of Flandre, son of Pierre Ducôté and Antoinette, *sauvagesse*, his father and mother...). The actual record is divided between two pages of the sacramental register but below is the first half which contains the phrase mentioned above :



The second source for this theory was the 1745 census of Pointe Coupée.



In this census, *Piere Ducosté dit Coureur*, age 66, was living with his sauvagesse wife, Marie. It is likely that Marie was Antoinette (the professed mother of Pierre, *fil*s, as per his marriage record) and this suspicion is confirmed by a 1 December 1747 Pointe Coupée burial record for Antoinette [**Source:** page 65 of Volume 1b of the *Diocese of Baton Rouge, Catholic Church Records* book series] in which she was described as an Indian woman and wife of Pierre Ducôte.

"Antoinette [omitted], Indian woman, wife of Pierre Ducote, a hunter, bur. 1 Dec. 1747"; (PCP-1, 84)
also (PCP-2, 34)

In addition, a third document was identified which definitely seemed to imply that Pierre Ducôte *père* and *fil*s were both in Louisiana simultaneously. This unsigned document is a 1762 baptismal record of a slave by the name of Marie Joseph. In the synopsis of the document provided on page 282 of Volume 1b of the *Diocese of Baton Rouge, Catholic Church Records* book series, the sponsor or *parrain* (Godfather) was identified in the record as *Pierre du Cote Jr.* (*fil*s).

"Marie Joseph, slave of **Pierre DuCote** (Genevieve, slave of **Pierre DuCote**) bn. 4 Dec. 1762 bt. 8 Dec. 1762, spo. **Pierre du Cote Jr.** and Marie Anne Deruit (PCP-3, 127A)"

This seemed to distinguish Pierre Jr. (*fil*s) from the owner of the slave - *Pierre DuCote* - presumably *père*. It appears very doubtful that "Pierre Jr." could possibly have been a reference to the son of the same name born to Pierre and Marie Magdeleine Cable/Kabel in 1753 since that child would have only been nine years of age at the time of this baptism. Therefore, this lends credence to the suspicion that Ducôte *père* and *fil*s were both in Louisiana.

At this point, it would have been easy to simply accept the newfound premise that father and son had both traveled to Louisiana. However, the mere fact that Pierre was, supposedly, born in Flandres (France) would seem indicate that he was not the product of an Indian (*sauvagesse*) mother. In addition, some of the other source data in these and other documents - particularly the ages of Pierre *fil*s and, presumably, his father - didn't seem realistic and, as a result, continued to cast nagging doubt over this theory. The only option, therefore, was to trace Pierre and, possibly, his father from the time of their arrival in La Louisiane. The results are below.

THE FOOTPRINT OF PIERRE DUCÔTE

I, initially, decided to pull all records relative to Pierre Ducôté dit Coureur with the hope that the story of father and son in Louisiana would easily be proven or disproved. However, that was not the case. I then decided to begin looking at the signatures on a number of documents signed by Ducôté with the assumption that the signatures would distinguish père from fils.

Pierre Ducôte – either father or son – was often identified by the ‘dit’ name Le Coureur, Couvreur, or some variation of that name. It was likely a reference to his occupation as a voyageur or messenger of some type. The earliest record found which seems to be related to Pierre is a ship list on which a *Pierre Couvreur*, his wife, and child appeared on the roster. The roster, "*List of Company Officials and Workers for the Concession of Marquis Dancenis Embarked on the Seine Bound for Louisiana from Lorient*", was dated 11 August 1720. He was identified as a "Miner, Wife & 1 child". [Source: Volume I, Page 107 of Conrad's "First Families of Louisiana"] The reference to ‘Marquis Dancenis’ is actually a reference to the Marquis d'Asfeld (Marshal of France and Director General of Fortifications, the Compté de Belle Isle, and, Lieutenant-General of the King's Armies). D'Asfeld and Monseigneur LeBlanc, French Minister of State, were given a land grant referred to as the Yazoo (Yazoux, Yasous) Concession. This concession served as a fort and agricultural community that existed on the “loess bluffs on the south side of the Yazoo River a few miles above the confluence of the Yazoo and the Mississippi” in what is now Warren County, Mississippi. [Source: Jack D. Elliott, Jr., "European Colonization in Mississippi"; Chapter 6; <http://trails.mdah.ms.gov/stateplan/CHAPTER6.pdf>] The fort, usually referred to as Fort St. Pierre (possibly Fort St. Claude) was the northernmost outpost of French Louisiana.

[Note: Although the name of Pierre’s ship was not mentioned in Conrad’s “First Families of Louisiana”, I believe that Pierre, his wife, and child immigrated on a ship named *La Seine*. An apparent second copy of the ship list referred to by Conrad which is only dated with the year of 1720 appears in a multi-ship list entitled “*General list of all passengers for Louisiana since the 4th January 1720 up to/including the 24 January 1721, done at Lorient the (same) day*”. The name *Pierre Couvreur*, a miner, appears on this list as does an indication that his wife and child were with him.]

Noms et surnoms	Lieu de Naissance	Mettier	Année	Sexe
Honoré Andronny		terrapien	1	3
Pierre Labarelle		13	1	1
Pierre Greffet		couvreur		
Martin Meunier		seigneur de Long		
Martin Joseph Paré		braqueur	1	
Pierre Couvreur		Mineur	1	1
Pierre Polchies		faiseur de cercles		
Jacques Bocho		terrapien		
Total 237 Papayer				

By 1720, there were approximately 390 French settlers in the area. [Source: <https://oldcourthouse.org/warren-county-statehood/st-pierre-fort/>] Jack Elliott indicated in his report that the fort was probably established for the purpose of trading peltries with the Indians. According to Elliott, the Yazoo site began declining almost immediately after it was established. After a visit there in December 1721, Jesuit Priest Pierre-François Xavier de Charlevoix noted that the location was not considered to be healthy and that the "reddish waters of the Yazoo inflicted those who drank from them with the bloody flux". By 1722, only about 30 arpents were in cultivation and the soil was not conducive to successful cultivation of crops. The air was also described as being unhealthy and there were hostile Indians in the area. By 1723, the workers of the concession as well as a sizable percentage of the soldiers from the garrison were moved to Natchez. A priest visiting the settlement in about June 1727 noticed that most of the inhabitants had left the concession and the only ones remaining consisted of an "officer with the title of Commandant, a dozen soldiers, and three or four planters".

Jeanne Pezet, widow of Andre George, recorded at New Orleans, July 9, 1730, 'because the registers of the said post were burned by the savages'. (SLC, M1, 216)"

Unfortunately, because this was not the original copy of the marriage record, signatures of the original witnesses to the 1727 were not found in the 1730 recorded copy of the marriage.

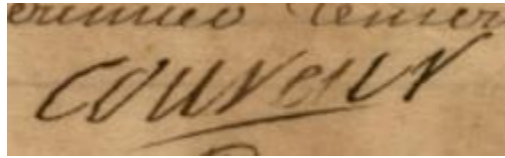
Although it's not clear when Ducôté left Yazoo Post, it's likely that he did so prior to December 1729. On 11/12 December 1729, about two weeks after the massacre at Fort Rosalie in Natchez by the Natchez Indians, a similar attack took place at Yazoo Post. The results were catastrophic; all of the settlers except for nine women and children were killed. Therefore, it's likely that Pierre had left the Yazoo settlement prior to this attack or, unbeknownst to historians, had managed to escape the savagery of 11/12th of December.

The next reference to Pierre Ducôte can be found in the 1731 census entitled 'Farms and Concessions along the Mississippi River' in which he was enumerated with a 'femme' (presumed to be his wife). He was identified as 'Le Coureur'. They were documented in the section of the census described in Glenn R. Conrad's book entitled *First Families of Louisiana* (Volume II) as "Crossing to the west side of the Mississippi at Pointe Coupée and descending toward New Orleans". There were no children in the household, the couple had no farm animals, and they were only one of two households in this section of the census without slaves. Pierre did own a rifle, however. Pierre was one of the very few who were not identified as either an 'engagé' or 'ouvrier' (worker).

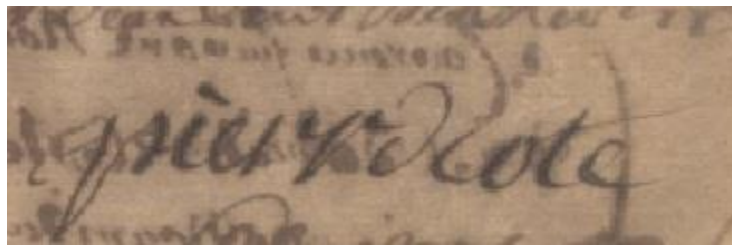
habitations de Concessionnaires	Noms	femmes de filles ou Mariés	Infans	Engagés ou Ouvriers
081	Le Coureur	82.	39	58
Lafayette	Lafayette			
Le Gras	Le Gras			
Dupont	Dupont			
Maclos	Maclos			
Ruignan	Ruignan			
Gautier	Gautier			
Bouchon	Bouchon			
Le Coureur	Le Coureur			
Blainville	Blainville			

1731 Census

On 2 January 1736, 'Coureur' entered into a contract for supplies with 'Monsieur Salmon, commissaire de la Marine, ordonnateur pour le Roy'. Other than the name 'Coureur' on the document, there are no other bits of identifying information in this document which would positively tie this to Pierre Ducôte. Here is the signature found on the document. Assuming that this is Ducôte's signature, it is the only one I found in which he signed as Coureur.

A close-up photograph of a handwritten signature in cursive script. The signature is written in dark ink on aged, slightly textured paper. The word 'COUREUR' is clearly legible, with a long, sweeping flourish extending from the end of the word.

Between October and November 1737, three documents were recorded related to the death of Antoine Bourgade, a colonist at Pointe Coupée, who was assassinated near Baton Rouge and had no heirs. On 3 October 1737, a summons was issued by Judge Salmon, intendant-commissary, to be delivered by Mr. Mahieu to Mr. Coureur, demanding that Coureur deliver all furniture, cattle, clothes, and *an Indian woman* - all believed to be in the possession of Coureur - belonging to Antoine Bourgade. The summons stated that, if Coureur failed to deliver the possessions of Bourgade, he would be required to pay the value of such articles as appraised. Eighteen days later, three people certified that Coureur had neither the cattle, clothes, nor the effects of Antoine (Bourgade) Beauregard in his possession. The only effects of Beauregard that Coureur admitted to having were two old shirts, a worn-out pair of breeches, *an Indian woman*, a crock containing about four pitchers of oil and forty pounds of tobacco. On 2 November 1737, Ducôte filed a petition of remonstrance to recover expenses. (A remonstrance is "*a petition to a court, or deliberative or legislative body, in which those who have signed it request that something which it is in contemplation to perform shall not be done*".) His signature appeared in the November document.

A close-up photograph of a handwritten signature in cursive script. The signature is written in dark ink on aged, slightly textured paper. The name 'Pierre Ducôte' is clearly legible, with a long, sweeping flourish extending from the end of the word.

Two days later, on 4 November 1737, Pierre purchased a negro slave, property of the Company of the Indies, from Louis Blan for the sum of 1800 livres.

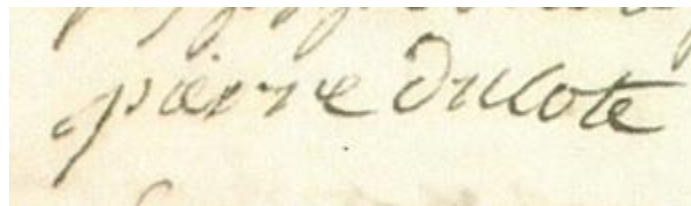


The next mention of 'Le Coureur' was found on documents dated 19 January and 4 February 1741 in which a decision of the Louisiana Superior Council was rendered in the case of *Louis Feugere and Procurator General vs. Joseph Herbert and Le Coureur*, defendants, in which both were convicted of ill treatment. It was recommended that Herbert pay 300 livres in restitution to Feugere as well as 100 livres for repair of the church at Pointe Coupée while Le Coureur was fined 50 livres for the same repair. Unfortunately, the documents did not contain any signatures of Herbert and/or Le Coureur or any further identifying information for Le Coureur.

On 4 May 1745, 'Pierre Ducote and his wife, Toinette' were named as godparents at the baptism of Marie Toinette Deruit, daughter of Alexandre Druit and Marie Bourceilier which took place at Pointe Coupée. The synopsis was found in Volume 1b, Page 58 of *Diocese of Baton Rouge, Catholic Church Records* book series.

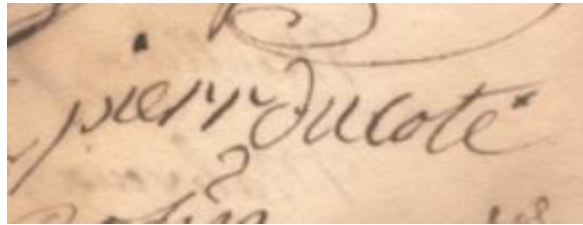
"Marie Toinette Deruit (Alexandre Druit, native of St. Hypolite Parish, France, and Marie Bourceilier) bn. not given, bt. 4 May 1745, spo. Pierre Ducote and his wife, Toinette"; (PCP-1, 57) also (PCP-2, 39)

Pierre's signature on this baptismal record is significant because it confirms that Ducôté's signature as written belongs to the Ducôté who was married to Antoinette, the Indian wife. When compared to the two signatures from 1737 shown above, it is my opinion that they were written by the same person.

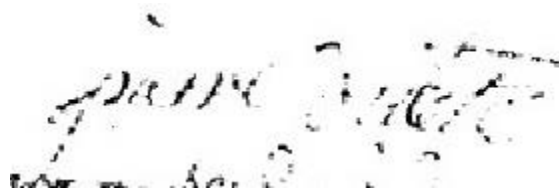


Also, the Pierre Ducôté who signed the Deruit baptismal record was the same Pierre Ducôté who was enumerated in the 1745 Pointe Coupée census with his wife Marie, sauvagesse (shown on page 2). Marie and Antoinette are very likely to be one-in-the-same based on the fact that a burial record for Antoinette was found in 1747 at Pointe Coupée. Pierre was identified as 66 years of age in this census which would place his birth at approximately 1679. It is important to note that there is no mention of a Pierre Ducôté, fils, in the Pointe Coupée census.

On 12 February 1748, Pierre attended a family meeting for the orphaned Patin minors – the children of Antoine Patin and Gasparde Emonette. Once again, the signature leaves no doubt that this was signed by Pierre, spouse of Antoinette.

A close-up photograph of a handwritten signature in cursive script. The signature is written in dark ink on aged, slightly textured paper. The name 'Pierre Ducôte' is clearly legible, with a large, ornate initial 'P'.

As mentioned earlier in this document, Pierre *fils* married Marie Magdeleine Cable on 23 January 1749 on the German Coast. Although the document is difficult to read, it appears that this signature belonged to the groom.

A photograph of a handwritten signature, which appears to be the same as the one in the previous image. It is written in cursive on aged paper, with the name 'Pierre Ducôte' being the primary focus.

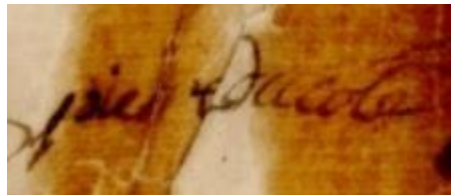
This is the first confirmed signature of Pierre, spouse of Cable. Close examination appears to show that it, too, was made by the same person who married Antoinette, sauvagesse.

Interestingly, Pierre Ducôte and his new wife, Marie Magdeleine, are not listed on a 8 February 1749 census entitled "*State of the existing inhabitants of the German Coast with remarks (indicating) those who have left their homes*" although the step-father of Cable, André Schantz, is listed on the document (the document only contains the names of the men in the area). This document is dated sixteen days after the marriage of Ducôte and Cable at the German Coast. (**Source:** Loudoun Papers; Pierre de Rigaud, marquis de Vaudreuil papers, 1740-1753; Census of the German Coast; Record Number b1590425, mssLO Boxes 1-8, LO 165; Huntington Library; Obtained from David Peavy 2016.)

On 25 June 1751, "Pierre du Coté, known as Coureur", age 63, was called upon to testify in the case of Jean François Allain vs. Pierre Germain although he claimed to have no knowledge of the facts. Based on his age, we must assume that this Pierre was the one married to sauvagesse Antoinette. Although he was listed as age 66 in 1745 and 63 in the 1751 document, it would be impossible for the 'Pierre' in this 1751 document to be the son of Pierre (who was the husband of Antoinette) because of they are too close in age. If the age in each of these documents was

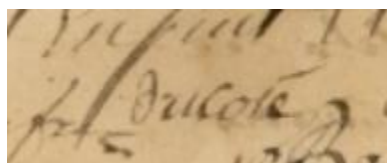
correct (and the 1745 census was referring to *père* and this 1751 document was referring to *fil*s), Pierre *père* would have been 72 in 1751 and Pierre *fil*s would have been 63 years of age as the document states – indicating that father and son were born only nine years apart

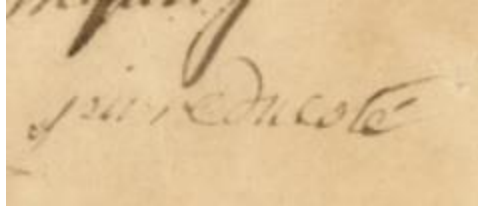
On 1 February 1752, an exchange of property took place at Pointe Coupée between Pierre Ricard and Pierre Ducôté, 'surnamed Courene'. In this exchange, Ricard transferred to Ducôté *"four acres of land having an ordinary depth, with no reservations, which land is bounded on one side by that of Étienne David, and on the other by that of Ricard, for which said four acres, Ducôté transfers to Ricard one arpents and twenty-six fathoms front of land, by ordinary depth, with the reservation that Ducôté shall be allowed to remove therefrom all the boards on the buildings, which are not attached to said buildings by nails or otherwise, and with the further reservation he shall be also permitted to remove the furniture from the house which is on said land. It is stipulated that the bricks in the oven and chimney on said land are to remain undisturbed but that Ricard is to furnish Ducôté with the same quantity of bricks as are found in said oven & chimney"*. [Source: "Louisiana Colonial Documents Digitization Project," Louisiana State Museum, Louisiana Colonial Docs (<http://www.lacolonialdocs.org/> : Internet May 2019), Document, "Notarial Acts, Exchange (Act of)," 1752-02-01-01; Ricard , Ducote , Benoit , Carriere , Sarrazin; <http://www.lacolonialdocs.org/document/8380>]



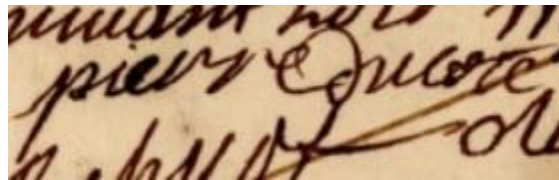
Once again, the signature on this document appears to have been made by the same person who made the 1737, 1745, 1748, and 1749 signatures. The only signature that might be questionable is the 1736 signature which will be discussed later in this document.

The next mention of Pierre can be found on a group of related documents dated 4 August 1755 in which Marie Avignon petitioned for the inventory of the effects of her deceased husband, Pierre Baron, planter at Pointe Coupée, and in which she petitioned to assemble a family meeting to elect a tutor for herself. In this document, Pierre's signature appeared twice and the signatures are the same as the others mentioned in the previous paragraphs:

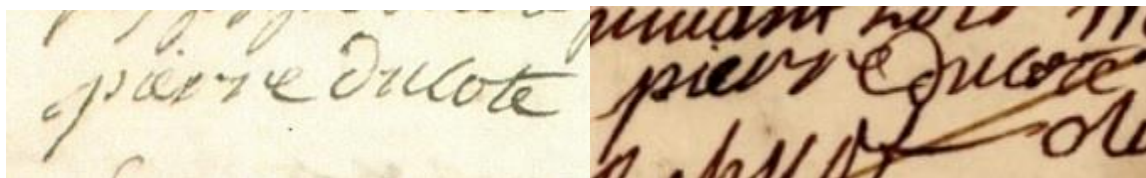




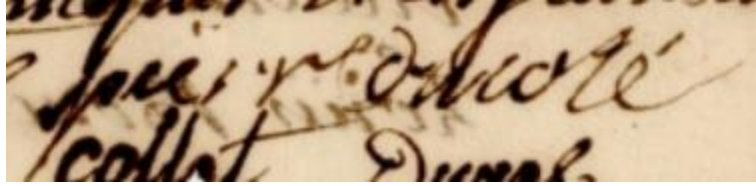
The next mention of Pierre Ducôté is in a document dated 7 February 1758 at Pointe Coupée. This document is another very significant one, however, because it's the marriage contract of Guillaume Guerin dit St. Aubin (Aubert) to Marianne Olivo, daughter of Pierre Olivo and Anna (Marie) Magdelena Gabel. Anna (Marie) Magdelena Gabel (her baptismal name), often referred to as Marie Magdeleine Cable, was the wife of Pierre Ducôté *fil*s and the mother of his two known children, Marie Magdeleine Ducôté and Pierre Ducôté. Cable's first marriage had been to Pierre Olivo in 1726. In this document, Pierre is identified as the step-father of Marianne Olivo and he signed the document.



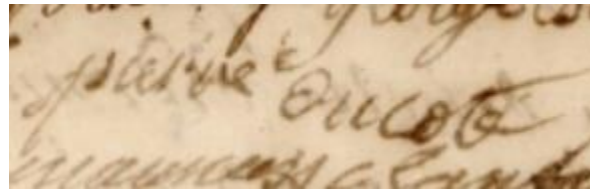
This Guerin dit St. Aubin / Olivo marriage contract provides significant proof that the signature of the Pierre Ducôté who married Antoinette, sauvagesse, is the same as the signature of Pierre Ducôté who married Marie Magdeleine Cable. Here is the 4 May 1745 Deruit baptismal document (left) compared to the 7 Feb 1758 Guérine dit St. Aubin/Olivo document (right):



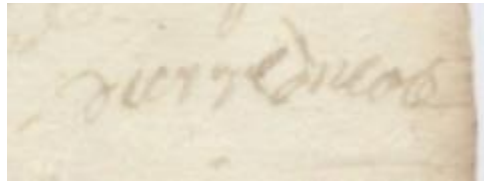
There are several other documents from 1758 and 1762 which contain the signature of Pierre Ducôté although the documents do not provide other identifying info such as his spouse. Here are the signatures:



8 March 1758 (Land exchange for Widow Charlotte Aufroy)



16 June 1758 (To elect tutor from children of widower, François Croizet)



17 April 1762 (Inventory of effects of the late François Bonaventure)

In 1766, Pierre Ducôté, age 75, was enumerated in the 1766 Spanish Census at Pointe Coupée. Living with him was his 50-year-old wife (unnamed although presumed to be Cable) and 11-year-old son (Pierre). [Source: Papeles Procedentes de Cuba, Legajo 189a]

1750	1750	1750	1750	1750	1750
Chief de famille	age	son	age	fille	age
Maure Dumont	80	2	18. 11.		
Dubertan	51				
Basson et sa femme	40. 30.	1	13.	1	9.
Maure et sa femme	50. 45.				
Decour et sa femme	25. 15.				
Amoureux et sa femme	28. 20.	1.	1.		
Goyet et sa femme	48. 25.	2.	15. 10.	3.	5. 4. 2.
Missonnier	28.				
Durand et sa femme	48. 36.				
Arare	35.				
Peuron et sa femme	24. 24.			2	4. 1.
Ducot et sa femme	75. 50.	1.	11.		
Carmouchet et sa femme	24. 15.				
Bounoire	28				
Duverge	24				

This census record which identified Pierre fils as 75 years of age would place his year of birth at approximately 1691. As mentioned earlier in this document the 1745 census of Pointe Coupée which showed Pierre, presumed to be Pierre père, would place the year of birth of the father as 1679 – only 12 years before the birth of the son – obviously not realistic.

When the new governor Alejandro O'Reilly took possession of the Louisiana colony for Spain on 18 August 1769, he immediately issued an order to the various posts to administer an oath of fidelity and allegiance to the inhabitants. The oath taken at Pointe Coupée was as follows:

“Under the Government of Don Alexander O'Reilly, Commander of Benfayen, of the Order of Alcantara, Lieutenant General and Inspector General of the armies of His Catholic Majesty Captain General of the Province of Louisiana.

We, the undersigned, and all others from Pointe Coupee and False River, now assembled by order of the King in presence of M. Duplessis Knight of the Royal and Military Order of St. Louis, Captain, commanding for the King at the said post and of M. Alain, captain of Militia.

We give full power to MM. Allain, George Baron and other notables of this establishment to take in our name, and in the usual form, the oath of allegiance to His Catholic Majesty.

We promise from this time and swear fidelity, zeal and obedience to His Catholic Majesty, recognizing that we are his subjects and as such held to conform to all that may be ordered and prescribed on the part of His said Majesty.

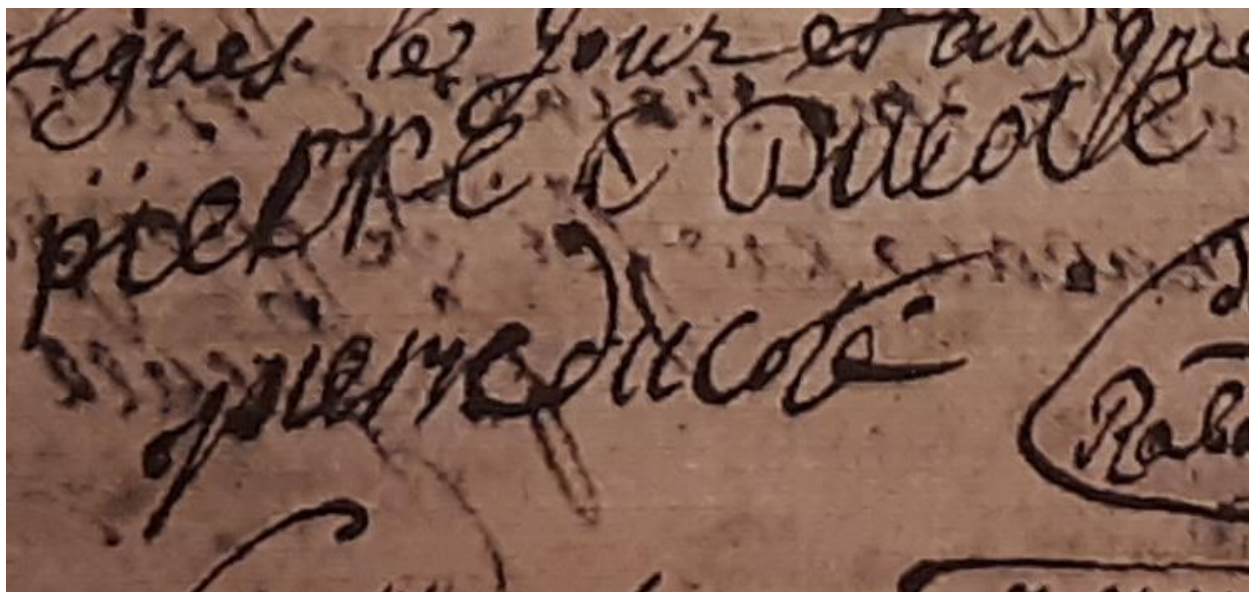
By so doing we hope to become worthy of his favor and august protecton which we have been fortunate enough not to forfeit.

At Pointe Coupee Sept. 10, 1769."

[Source: Louisiana Historical Quarterly, Vol. 4, No. 2, April 1921, *The Oath of Allegiance to Spain*, Edited by Henry Dart]

Two Ducôté's signed the Spanish oath: *Pierre Ducote* and *Pieer Ducote*. The two signatures appeared on the oath document one right after the other and were followed by the signature of Joseph Carmane – most likely Joseph Carmouche, husband of Marie Magdeleine Ducôté, daughter of Pierre and Marie Magdeleine Cable. Sadly, efforts to obtain a copy of this document were unsuccessful; it was not found in the Legajo of the Papeles Procedentes de Cuba in which it was inventoried. Although I strongly believe that the second Ducôté signature likely belonged to the sixteen-year-old son of Ducôté and Cable (the Pierre who would eventually marry Henriette Josèphe Rabalais), I had hoped to obtain this document as one additional piece of evidence in this quest.

There was one final document that I felt was important to include in this research because it contained the signature of Pierre Ducôté and he's identified in it as 'the father': the 16 February 1773 marriage record of Pierre Ducôté and Henriette Josèphe Rabalais at Pointe Coupée. This document makes it clear that the Pierre Ducôte who signed the marriage record was the father of the groom (and, therefore, husband of Cable). Here are the signatures of the two Ducôté men in this document. I believe that the groom's signature is on top of the signature of his father (Pierre, spouse of Cable).



I've also included a full copy below of the 1773 marriage record for Ducôté and Rabalais. Here is the transcription:

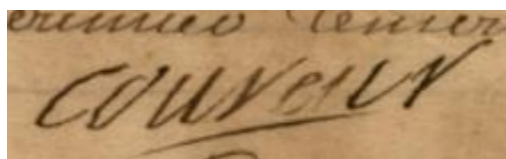
"The year 1773, 16th of February, after having published three banns of marriage during the parochial mass, the 1st on the 31th of January, fourth Sunday after the Epiphany, the second was the 7th of February, Sunday of the Septuagesima, and the third the 14th of the same month, Sunday of the Sexagesima, between Pierre Ducôté, native of this parish, son of Pierre Ducôté and of Magdelene Cable, his father and mother of one part, and between Henriette Rabalais, also native of this parish, daughter of Joseph Rabalais and of deceased Anne Barbe Booph, his father and mother of the other part, and not having found any impediment of the said marriage, I, the undersigned Capuchin priest, Priest of Pointe Coupée, having received their mutual consent, performed the nuptial blessing in the presence of undersigned witnesses on the day and year above."

L'an mil sept cent soixante et seize le quinze fevrier
 mariage apres avoir public trois bans de mariage pendant la
 messe paroissiale le premier le trentieme et le quatrieme
 de la semaine apres l'epiphanie le second le sept
 fevrier dimanche de la septuagesime et le troisieme le
 quatorze du meme mois dimanche de la sexagesime
 entre Pierre Du Cote natif de Cette paroisse fils de
 Pierre Ducote et de e. Madeleine Cable ses pere et
 mere d'une part, et entre Henriette Rabalais aussi
 native de Cette paroisse fille de Joseph Rabalais
 et de Jeanne Anne Berbe Dooch ses pere et mere
 d'autre part, et n'ayant point trouvé d'empechement
 au dit mariage, le soussigne pretre Capucin
 en leur leur consentement mutuel et leur en don
 la benediction nuptiale en presence des temoins sou
 signes le jour et au que dessus. f. J. J. J. J. J. J.
 pretre Ducote
 Henriette
 Rabalais
 Joseph Rabalais
 J. H. Duro
 J. J. J. J. J. J.

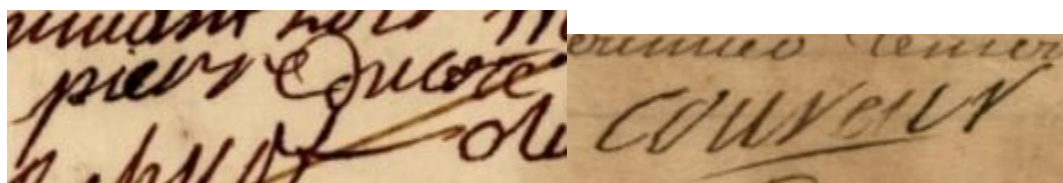
Based on succession records, it appears that Pierre, husband of Cable, likely died in the October-November 1775 timeframe at Pointe Coupée. One of the documents presented at the time of succession was his marriage contract with Cable – proving that the succession was for Pierre fils. [Source: Winston De Ville (Indexed by Houston Tracy Jr.), "Pointe Coupée Documents, 1762-1803: A Calendar of Civil Records for the Province of Louisiana" (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Claitor's Publishing Division, 2010), Pages 28-29.] Although these records may have provided valuable insight into the Ducôte père and fils mystery, these records no longer appear to exist.

ANALYSIS OF PRESENTED MATERIAL AND CONCLUSION

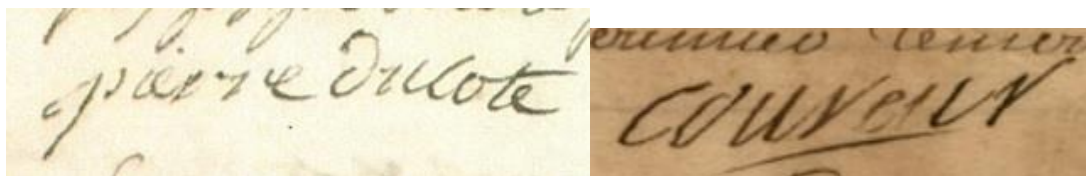
Although I am definitely not a handwriting expert, I believe that it's highly likely that the signatures presented in this document, possibly with one exception, were made by one individual. I've asked a few others also to review the signatures and their opinion was basically consistent with mine. The only signature that I believe might cause some doubt is the 2 January 1736 signature that was provided on page 6. Several of those who reviewed this signature believe that it was made by someone other than the person who made the other signatures. For the sake of analysis, I will present a few possible consistencies in this signature and the others:



In addition to the fact that this signature is signed as *Coureur* rather than *Pierre Ducôte*, it also appears to be written more slanted than the others. Essentially, the Coureur signature is, for the most part, printed while the other signatures are written in script. However, close comparison of the 1736 signature (letter by letter) with the three signatures below show, in my opinion, some similarities. At first glance, for instance, the two 'r' letters in Pierre might not appear to be the same as the two separate occurrences of the same letter in the name Coureur. However, the slight difference could be due to the fact that the two 'r' letters in the name Pierre were consecutive and were joined to a letter following them as opposed to the Coureur signature in which none of the letters were physically joined.



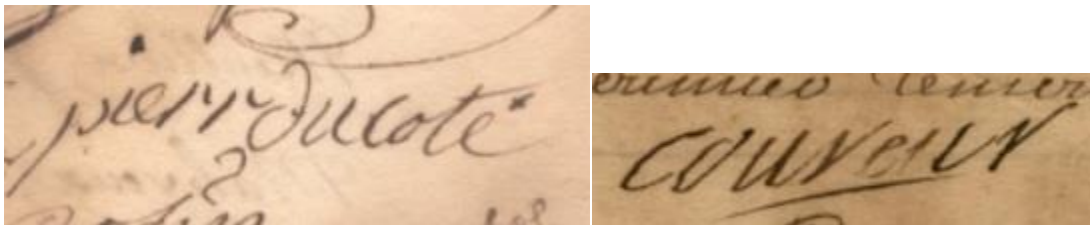
I also believe that a case could be made that the 'c' in the name Coureur is very much like the 'c' in the signature below (1745).



In addition, the 'o' in Coureur is very much like the 'o' in this 8 March 1758 signature.



The letter 'u' is very similar to the 'u' in this 12 March 1748 signature.



Unfortunately, it's impossible to positively validate that this signature was made by Pierre Ducôté, *père* or *fils*, or if it was made by someone else. Therefore, this signature/document will be excluded in the analysis of whether or not Pierre Ducôté *père* and *fils* traveled to Louisiana.

Regardless, the fact that the signatures on documents in which Pierre is identified as the husband of sauvagesse Antoinette, as well as those in which he is identified as the husband of Marie Magdeleine Cable, appear to have been made by the same person seems to prove that there was only one Pierre Ducôté in Louisiana and that this individual married both Antoinette and Marie Magdeleine Cable.

I suspect that the identification of the parents of Pierre on his 1749 marriage record to Cable was probably an error because, as mentioned previously, it is highly improbable that Pierre *père* married an Indian/indigenous woman in late 17th century France as would have been the case if Pierre *fils* was born in Flandre(s), France.

- Could Pierre have simply provided the name of his previous wife to the Priest and the Priest documented it erroneously as his mother?

- Since Pierre possibly spoke with a Dutch/Flemish French dialect as did many others in French Flanders, is it possible that he did not understand the Priest's question or vice versa?
- There were no Indians who were native to France. The only remote possibility that Pierre *père* married an Indian in France would have been if Antoinette had been captured in New France and brought back to France for some reason and Pierre *père* married her there. In my opinion, this is far-fetched and extremely doubtful.
- Assuming that the mother of Pierre *fil*s on the 1749 marriage record is not accurate, it is also possible that his father was not named Pierre either.

Instead, I suspect that Pierre *fil*s began his relationship with Antoinette sometime in the 1730s and it's even possible that she was the woman he was enumerated with in 1731. She possibly had been a slave of Antoine Bourgade and came to live with Pierre sometime before or after Bourgade was murdered. (*Bourgade's death was described in one of the three 1737 documents of the Louisiana Superior Council, specifically one dated 8 October 1737, as an assassination which took place near Baton Rouge. It would be very interesting to know the details of his death and if someone was prosecuted for it. However, I've been unable to find any details of his death including when it took place.*)

In order to determine whether the references to Pierre Ducôte in colonial documents were related to one or two individuals, one must examine the ages assigned on three separate occasions to Pierre Ducôte.

1745 – Age 66

1751 – Age 63

1766 – Age 75

As mentioned on previous pages of this document, these ages simply don't fit the narrative that they were describing a Ducôte father and son. If you do not agree that the 1745 signature (in which Pierre was identified as the husband of Antoinette), the 1749 signature (the signature of Pierre at the time of his marriage to Cable), and the 1758 signature (in which Pierre is described as the step-father of Cable's daughter, Marianne Olivo) were made by one individual and, therefore, believe that both *père* and *fil*s were present in Louisiana at the same time, then you must examine at least one of the ages listed above in the following way:

- If you believe that Pierre *père* was the one married to Antoinette in the 1745 census and was 66 years of age, he would have been approximately 87 years of age in 1766 (if still alive);
- The 1766 census without doubt describes Pierre *fil*s (age 75), his wife Marie Magdeleine Cable, and their son, Pierre (11 years of age; he was actually 13);

- It is not conceivable that Pierre *père* would have been 87 in 1766 and Pierre *fils* would have been 75 years of age in that same year;

I believe that the age of Pierre *fils* was likely enumerated incorrectly in the 1745 census and that he was probably closer to 56 than 66 years old at that time. This age would make the fact that he described himself as being 63 years of age in 1751 appear more accurate. His estimated year of birth was probably c1691 and he was approximately 84 years old at the time of his death in the fall of 1775.

Interestingly, in further support of the theory that there was only one Pierre Ducôté in Louisiana, you might have noticed that no death, burial, or succession record has been found for Pierre Ducôté *père* nor did Ducôté *père* and *fils* appear on any census record at the same time.

The only remaining item which I believed originally seemed to conclude that both Pierre *père* and *fils* were present in colonial Louisiana is a 1762 document referenced on page 2 of this document representing the baptism of a slave of Pierre Ducôté named *Marie Joseph* and the fact that Pierre Ducôté Jr. (aka: *fils*) was identified as the godfather. The Catholic Church requires that a person must have received the sacrament of Confirmation in the church in order to be named as godparent to another person or child at Baptism; we can only assume that this requirement existed in the mid-18th century. As I stated on page 2, it seemed impossible to believe that the godfather of the child could be a reference to nine-year-old Pierre, son of Pierre and Cable – especially since Confirmation has generally been administered in more recent times between the ages of approximately 12-17. However, research regarding the history of the Catholic sacrament of Confirmation as well as the list of names of those who received the Sacrament of Confirmation at Avoyelles Post on 20 November 1796 by the Most Reverend Senor Don Luis Penalver y Cardenas, Bishop of Louisiana and Floridas, shows that Confirmations were made to very young children as well as infants. For example, Julian/Julien Tassin, son of Nicolas Tassin and Judith Juneau, was little more than 18 months of age when he received that sacrament in 1796. Therefore, I believe we can conclude that it's very likely that the Pierre Ducôté Jr. who was named on the 1762 baptismal record as the godfather of a slave named *Marie Joseph* was very likely a reference to Pierre, son of Pierre and Marie Magdeleine Cable/Kabel, and that the slave owner was Pierre, husband of Cable.

Therefore, I think it's logical to conclude that only one Pierre Ducôté arrived in La Louisiane via the ship La Seine in late 1720 or early 1721 with a wife and child. Both wife and child were likely deceased by 1726 and Pierre was living with someone else by 1731 along the Mississippi River near Pointe Coupée – possibly the sauvagesse Antoinette. He was enumerated with Antoinette in 1745 at Pointe Coupée where she died two years later. In 1749, he married Marie Magdeleine Cable/Gabel on the German Coast but was living in Pointe Coupée by the time their daughter, Marie Magdeleine, was baptized in 1750. He remained in Pointe Coupée for the rest of his life and died there in the fall of 1775.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE DUCODER FAMILY

Although it's often been claimed that the Ducôté and Ducoder family are related in some way, there is no evidence to support this.

There were two families in La Louisiane who used the surname 'Ducoder(e)'. It is unclear whether or not the two Ducoder families were related to each other.

The head of the first was Bertrand Ducoder who married Suzanne de la Croix. Both were deceased by 14 November 1728 per their succession papers recorded in New Orleans. They had two known sons: Pierre Laurent Ducoder who married Jeanne L'Abbe in 1739 in New Orleans and François Ducoder. Pierre signed a quittance to François in 1739 at New Orleans. Little is known about François. I have not been able to establish a connection between this family and the family listed below although it is very possible that a connection does exist. Especially interesting is the fact that two documents dated 1728 and 1730 from the succession of Bertrand Ducoder and Suzanne de la Croix establish that a negro slave was purchased at Yazoo Post on behalf of Bertrand Ducoder on an unspecified date prior to his death. No evidence has been found, however, that Bertrand lived at or visited Yazoo Post at any time.

The head of the second 'Ducoder' family appears to have been François Gaspar Cuvillier dit Champignole/Champigneul. For unknown reasons, he was sometimes referred to with the surname of Ducoder(e). It is possible that he was the 'Sergent' Champigneul who was identified on the 26 June 1720 ship *L'Alexandre*. Interestingly, according to a note on that ship list, those on board appear to have been destined for the LeBlanc Concession - also known as the Yazoo (Yazoux, Yasous) Concession - the same place which I believe was the destination of Pierre Couvreur (Ducôté) as described earlier in this document.

On 1 May 1722, Cuvillier dit Champignole/Champigneul was enumerated as a sergeant at Natchitoches.

He then married Catherine St. Paul although their marriage record has not been located. Catherine was a 'Baleine Bride'; her name (Catherine Paule) appeared on a list entitled "*Names of the girls from Maison de St. Louis of the Salpetriere, who have been remitted to the Sieurs De Lage and Betouzet, Constabulary Guards on 12 June 1720, to be conducted to Painbeuf where they are to embark for Louisiana.*" The ship anchored near Mobile Bay on 8 January 1721. She was from Paris, age 23, according to the ship list which indicated that she was born c1697.

François Gaspar Ducoder and Catherine St. Paul had two known sons:

- Pierre Ducoder (Cuvillier), born about 1727, was living with Pierre Germain (Pierre's godfather) and his wife, Marie Anne Chenal, at the time of the 1745 Pointe Coupée census and was identified as Pierre Cuvillier dit Champignol.

He married Marie Assaye (Assailly) on 26 April 1752 at Pointe Coupée. For reasons unknown, Marie was sometimes referred to by the surname of Mayeux. The children of this couple carried the Cuvillier surname.

(**Source:** "*Diocese of Baton Rouge, Catholic Church Records, Pointe Coupée Records, 1722-1769, Volume Ib*" (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Catholic Diocese of Baton Rouge, 2002), Page122; "Marie Sayeux Mayeux (Louis Sayeux Mayeux and Marie Therese Brette, both decd.) native Notre Dame Parish, Mobile, m. 26 April 1752, Pierre Decoder (François Ducoder and Catherine St. Paul) native of Avoyelles wit. Louis Renaux, "dit" Duval; François Croizet; François Gervais; (PCP-1, 117) also (PCP-2, 75)"

- Jacques Baltazard Cuvillier was 15 years of age in 1745 and was enumerated with his widowed mother, Catherine St. Paul, at Pointe Coupée. He married Marguerite Simon on 19 March 1757 at Pointe Coupée;

(**Source:** "*Diocese of Baton Rouge, Catholic Church Records, Pointe Coupée Records, 1722-1769, Volume Ib*" (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Catholic Diocese of Baton Rouge, 2002), Page 41; "Jacques Cuvillier (Gaspar Cuvillier and Catherine St. Paul, both decd.) m. 19 March 1757, Marguerite Simon (André Simon, decd. of New Orleans, and Marianne Valot) wit. Sarazin; Laurent; Bedot; (PCP-3, 7) also (PCP-1, 174)"

It appears likely that François Gaspar Cuvillier (Ducoder) died within a few years after the birth of the couple's second child although a burial record has not been found. It is believed that he was the *Monsieur du Codère*, commandant of the Yazoo Post, who was killed while visiting the Natchez Post on the 28/29 November 1729 during the Natchez massacre. If this is the case, it's very possible that Pierre Ducôté knew DuCodèr(e) since both had ties to Yazoo Post.

Catherine St. Paul was buried at Pointe Coupée on 13 October 1754.

