

Baptism for Samuel de Champlain Found!

Samuel de Champlain's birth and baptism dates have always been a mystery. It has been assumed that he was born in Brouage, France in either 1567 or 1570. However, this year, 2012, Jean-Marie Germe, a genealogist from Poitou, discovered the baptism record of the founder of Quebec. The document was found in the online archive of the pastoral register of the former Calvinist Temple of Saint-Yon at La Rochelle, France.

Samuel de Champlain was believed to be born in Brouage, Saintonge. Samuel de Champlain, according to his marriage record (late 1610), the son of the late Anthoine de Champlain, a captain in the Navy, and Marguerite Le Roy. It must be known that Samuel's father has often signed documents as Chappelain and that surnames varies regularly at that time. The family owned houses in Brouage and La Rochelle which would explain the old belief.

The historical document states that Samuel, baptized August 13, 1574 at Temple Saint-Yon, La Rochelle, son of Antoine and Marguerite Chapeleau Le Roy, married around 1562 (La Rochelle, Saint-Yon).

Jean-Marie Germe says: "Actually, I had accumulated all the clues over the past twenty years. This includes following the trail of Champlain's uncle, the famous corsair William Allaine. He owned a house in La Rochelle, another in Brouage. His son died, he made his heir Samuel. It seems that Samuel's parents lived in the house of Quatre Vents, Place des Petits-Bancs in La Rochelle, "explains Jean-Marie Germ. As of the Brouage house, the one everyone knows, it would become property of Champlain in 1601".

Putting his hand on the baptismal certificate of Samuel de Champlain, French genealogist Jean-Marie Germ confirms what many historians have whispered for years: the explorer was born into a Protestant family. "We suspected, but could not prove it," says historian and genealogist Quebec Marcel Fournier, who works with Dr. Germ.

"We now understand why Champlain never spoke of his childhood. How could he say to Quebec in 1608: I was born a Protestant? There were the Jesuits and Recollects near him, that's why he hid his identity because he was protesting, "said Fournier, adding that the name "Samuel", inspired by the Bible, is common among Protestants. Several historical figures like King Henry IV were also converted to Catholicism at that time, he adds.

"Because of all the religious wars, Champlain wanted to be a little out of it and do his job in government", said Jean-Marie Germe in a telephone interview from France. It is by accident that he found in the register pastoral from the Saint-Yon, in the city of La Rochelle, the famous document dated August 13, 1574.

If genealogists and historians have initially assumed that this meant that Samuel de Champlain was born in this town, they discovered by deepening their research over the last two days; "We consider for now that the birth probably occurred in Brouage and baptism in La Rochelle," says Jean-Marie Germ.

Thus, the city's founder was born in the summer of 1574 and his parents have traveled a few weeks later, the 55 km path leading to the ownership of La Rochelle. They have their child baptized in the temple of the city as there was no such place of Protestant worship in Brouage. "For Protestants, it may take several days to weeks between the birth of a child and his baptism," says Marcel Fournier.

He also argues that three documents support this thesis, including the writings of the explorer *Champlain's Works* titles, dating from 1632, where he says Brouage. The will of his uncle Guillaume Allene, written in Spain in 1601 and a deed dated December 23, 1573 the father of Samuel de Champlain, Antoine Chaplain.

As for the difference between the names "Champlain", " Chappelain " and "Chapeleau" as it appears on the baptismal certificate, both history buffs argue that it is just a spelling variant. "It will not be necessary, for the moment at least, to correct the information recorded on the monuments and commemorative plaques," says Fournier.

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Imagine the state of New York [and Vermont and Quebec] have to rename Lake Champlain, "Chapeleau Lake", not to mention the street signs that every town and village in Quebec has the name of the founder .