

CHABANEL AND HONARE, ENHAK

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Abstract

The circumstances of the death of Noël Chabanel, and the resulting portrayal of Louis Honare, enhak, are examined.

Les circonstances de la mort de Noël Chabanel et la description résultante de Louis Honare, enhak sont ici examinées.

Figures

Figure 1: Area map (Adapted from "The Petun Country", a map by Father Jones). 6a

Figure 2: Representations of the Death of Noël Chabanel. 10a

Introduction

That traditional factions among the Petuns and Hurons resisted the French religious presence in their country in the 17th century is not a popular theme with Canadian historians. Examples of it in the historic literature are usually dismissed by simply glorifying the missionaries as martyrs, heroes and "dazzling figures of apostles", and vilifying the native people as inhuman savages, infidels, apostates, renegades, traitors, "hordes of barbarians" (e.g. Brumath 1906:1). The existence of any mitigating circumstances is rarely admitted or even considered.

On the credibility of sources

Donald B. Smith (1974) has demonstrated that the portrayal of the native peoples in the French language literature varied at different times and with the motivation and influence of individual writers. For the New France period a generally pro-Jesuit and negative attitude towards the native peoples became the established literary convention in the nineteenth-century (Smith 1974:40). A resurgence of the same attitude by secondary and tertiary writers in the present century was associated with movements for the beatification of the Jesuit martyrs in 1925 (Fraser 1925:14-15; Quebec 1925:86), and the later development of the Martyrs' Shrine near Midland. A few examples of these, as found readily available in a public library, will be mentioned to illustrate this attitude in the case of Louis Honare, enhak and his role in the death of Noël Chabanel. No author was found who had fairly woven between both European and native points of view to create a balanced interpretation of Honare, enhak's motivation and circumstances.

Smith pointed out that the Jesuits, as scholars, saw much that was admirable among the Hurons, and up to 1636 recorded many of their positive attributes, but at the same time, as priests, they saw vice-ridden "savages" in Satan's grip, pagans to be Christianized. This latter portrayal became the dominant and exclusive one when the annual Jesuit Relation reports developed into the means of attracting moral and financial support in France for the missions in Huronia. "Justification of the mission, together with the native refusal of Christianity, held in check Jesuit appreciation of the Indians' charity and communal

life" (Smith 1974:4-8), both in the field and certainly in print.

It is not proposed that the accounts of Father Noël Chabanel's death were influenced by any consideration of the Princesse de Condé in France, who was the source of financial support of the Jesuit "Mission of the Apostles" to the Petun (Garrad 1996). At a time when the missionaries faced possible death from both supposed friends and foes alike, they would have been generous indeed if they had tried to espouse or even understand the native behaviour and antagonism to them from the native point of view. It could be argued that by this lack of understanding the French themselves helped to cause the death of Father Noël Chabanel, but the prevailing agenda ensured, and continues to ensure, that the entire blame was placed on Louis Honare,enhak, who has been ceaselessly vilified through the ages.

None of the readily accessible sources examined viewed Noël Chabanel's death as a legally sanctioned execution for the capital offense of witchcraft in accordance with native law, nor does any contemporary or later account of the actions of Louis Honare,enhak incorporate the slightest gesture towards the recognition of the circumstances of his time, that he had any element of good intention for his people, and was acting in obedience to the decrees of the Chiefs in Council. He was not, in native terms, a "renegade" as claimed (Parkman 1886:409; Fraser 1925:11). His usual portrayal as nearly naked (Figure 2) caricatures him as a *sauvage*, a "wild man .. hairy, naked, club-wielding child of nature who existed half-way between humanity and animality" (Berkhofer 1988:524), with "hardly any human feeling" (Pagden 1982:164), living in a manner "closer to that of wild animals than to that of man", not tamed, solitary, uncivilized, ferocious, demented, without religion, law or civility (Dickason 1984:63-64).

Although no contemporary description survives of how Honare,enhak was clothed in December 1649, all four known artists' conceptions portray him as naked or nearly so (Figure 2). This symbolically implies that he belonged at best to an inferior order of humanity, without social order; was bestial, worshipped the Devil, and had a complete absence of a sense of morality (Dickason 1984:50-52). This is completely unjust.

In resisting the French presence Honare,enhak and his colleagues "acted as any other (people) collectively would have done. They fought for their religion, family and their country" (Smith 1974:46).

The anti-French Resistance Movement

The difficulties that the native Hurons and Petuns endured arising from the presence of the French in Canada and the missionaries in their own country have been outlined by Bruce G. Trigger (1968, 1987). Both sides failed to understand the other. The conduct and practices of the missionaries were certain to result in accusations of witchcraft against them, an offence for which Huron law permitted execution without trial (Trigger 1968:128). The Jesuits recorded several examples of the executions of witches, from which it appears there was a ritual process, usually with a designated and publicly known executioner, a confrontation, and execution by a hatchet blow to the head, and the implied or explicit sanction of the concerned chiefs and Elders.

With the single exception of Chabanel, the Jesuits were spared execution for witchcraft only because the Hurons, both traditional and Christianized alike, had become dependent on the fur trade and could not afford to rupture the trading alliance with the French, whose officials at Quebec threatened to cut off the trade if the Jesuits were killed. The leaders in the native society worked to restrain their people and contain their malice toward the priests generally at a level that permitted the trade with the French to continue (Trigger 1968:128-130). Even those who were active in trying to drive the missionaries out of Huronia were constrained by the importance of the trade to the larger community, and initially acted covertly to preserve the trade from harm.

At first, life in Huronia for the missionaries was simply made as uncomfortable as possible in the hope that the Jesuits would leave voluntarily (Trigger 1968:128; 1987:5927). However, thefts of their property, damage to their icons, and threats and mistreatment of their persons failed to have the intended effect. Any opportunity of making the death of the missionaries appear to be the work of outsiders so that the real perpetrators would not be blamed was seized. When Fathers Brébeuf and Chaumonot visited the Neutrals in 1640-1 the Hurons offered the Neutrals presents to kill them (JR21:211-3; Trigger 1968:130; Trigger 1987:689-695). Curiously, when Brébeuf was killed nine years later, with Lalement, it was nominally at the hands of invading Iroquois, but the principal of his torturers was actually a Huron (JR34:27-29), possibly with other "Apostates" (JR39:253).

At some point a structured resistance movement developed and matured enough to make and enforce political and military decisions, and to attempt to make the presence of the French in the Huron country a public issue by killing one of them (Trigger 1987:744, 746). But earlier, while still acting covertly, the evolving resistance movement may have killed one of their own. Although the mysterious killing of the Huron Joseph Chihwatenha in August 1640 was blamed on the Iroquois, it may actually have been an action of the resistance movement for his perceived treason in being an ardent supporter of the Jesuits (JR20:79, 95; JR21:161-3; Steckley 1981 3:10-14; Trigger 1987:598-9).

Secrecy and concealment were abandoned in 1648 when an overt coup was attempted. Six Chiefs from three villages appointed executioners and authorised the death of any Frenchman they should meet. This resulted in the killing of the *donné* Jacques Douart in April. The Chiefs then issued a public proclamation identifying themselves, and calling for the banishment from Huronia of both the French and Christian Hurons (JR33:229-249; Trigger 1968:138). They openly defended their actions in the ensuing general council. Although the pro-alliance faction held the day, and the French were paid ritual compensation, the existence of an antagonistic (anti-trade ? pro-Iroquois ?) traditional faction could no longer be denied. The French now knew they had as much reason to fear the Huron as the Iroquois.

Although politically motivated, the specific manner of Douart's death indicates it was a ritual execution. Because the French garrison at Ste. Marie was only "a short distance" away, an arrow shot from anonymous ambush would surely have been the safest mode of attack, and fill the needs of simple revenge killing. Instead, all the essential characteristics of the ordained execution of a witch and traitor were present, the decree of the Chiefs, the designated and publicly known executioner (in this instance two brothers), necessarily a confrontation, and death by a blow from a hatchet.

The mandate of the two brother executioners, to kill the first "Frenchman whom they might meet alone" (JR33:231), so well describes the later actions of Louis Honare,enhak that one wonders if he had a role in this event. It strengthens the suggestion that the subsequent death of Father Noël Chabanel was also an overt act of the resistance faction, in the person of Louis Honare,enhak.

Events of 1649

In March an Iroquois army aided by Hurons appeared in Huronia, destroyed two towns and ritually executed Fathers Jean de Brébeuf and Gabriel Lalemant in accordance with the protocol for prisoners. The Jesuits decided to move their headquarters from the mainland to the Island of St. Joseph (Christian Island) for safety. They themselves burned their principal establishment of Ste. Marie on removing to the island (JR34:139-149, 203, 211; JR35:25-27).

Left on the mainland, but geographically remote from these events, were four Jesuit priests residing among the Petun two days journey west of Huronia. The social and military systems of the Petun were still intact. With no Frenchmen left in the Huronia mainland to attack, the core of Huron resistance activists may have moved to the Petun. A Council was held in December at the principal Petun village,

Ekarenniondi. This was attended by "the most eminent" of the "infidel Captains". These possibly included the six previously noted, because the familiar call for an uprising against the French was renewed, "stirring up the natives and inciting them to take revenge". The Jesuits recorded that the result of the Council was that "the firebrands of the sedition noisily declared that they must kill the first Frenchman they should meet" (JR35:165). This, and the lack of any subsequent co-ordinated large-scale uprising, may imply that the Chiefs failed to agree on a unified concerted course of action, and instead authorised a mandate for individual action against any Frenchman. It is not unlikely that they added the words "whom they might meet alone" as they had before. Certainly, when the two Jesuits who lived in the village returned to it together a few days later, they were harassed, insulted and threatened as usual, but did not receive any actual hurt (JR35:167). For Father Chabanel, alone, later, it would be a different matter.

It is a reasonable assumption that Honare,enhak attended the Council because he publicly stated that he would comply with the Chiefs' decree and kill a Jesuit (JR40:37). His Christian name Louis confirms that he had been baptized, and he himself stated that he and his family had embraced Christianity and then rejected it when misfortune followed (JR40:255n2). He is derided in all the cited literature as an apostate, as if this was a crime. It took courage to reject the benefits which accompanied Christianity, such as access to firearms, a higher price for furs, more favorable gifts, and preferential treatment in Council. In 1648 it was estimated that half of the Hurons in the fur fleet were or would become Christian, but only 15% of the remaining population (Dickason 1992:123, 133, 134). It was not at all unusual for baptized families to abandon Christianity when the mortality became widespread (Trigger 1987:591).

Noël Chabanel

On December 5, a "very few days after" the Council of "Infidel captains", a third priest arrived at the village of *Ekarenniondi*. This was Father Noël Chabanel, from the village of *Etharita* to the south, passing through on his way to the new Jesuit headquarters on Christian Island. *Ekarenniondi* was not conveniently on his route so his deviation to go there was intentional. This could have been for several reasons. *Ekarenniondi* was the principal village both of the Petun confederacy and of both missions to them. He had previously resided there himself, and undoubtedly knew Petun people there, as well as the resident French priests. To these he brought the report that he was recalled to headquarters, and that Father Garnier was left alone at *Etharita*.

Early on December 7, Chabanel set off from *Ekarenniondi* along the trail leading easterly toward where the Nottawasaga River could be forded. He was accompanied by "seven or eight Christian Hurons" who, if not actual delegates to the Council, could not have been unaware of its resolutions, and probably included Honare,enhak himself (Marquis 1916:84).

Chabanel was never seen again. His subsequent fate was the subject of misinformation fed to the Jesuits so the true facts may never be known. They eventually accepted the story that while Chabanel's party was encamped for the night, presumably near the Nottawasaga River fording place, waiting for daylight, the sounds were heard of an approaching Iroquois army, which had that day sacked the village of *Etharita*. Upon hearing this, all his native companions fled, the Father following them until exhausted. In the morning he resumed his path to the river. There, a Huron (later identified as Honare,enhak, more properly a Petun, as he was a resident of *Ekarenniondi*), supposedly passing in his canoe, conveyed him across. To "render his flight more easy, the Father had disburdened himself of his hat, and of a bag that contained his writings; also of a blanket, which our Missionaries use as robe and cloak ...". Presuming Chabanel was dead, they speculated whether "he was murdered by that Huron, - once a Christian, but since an Apostate, - the last to see him, and who, to enjoy the possessions of the father, would have killed him, and thrown his body into the River" (JR35:147-151).

Soon, the Jesuits understood that this was not a simple opportune robbery, but the outcome of the Council recently concluded at the village of *Ekarenniondi*, called by the French 'St. Matthew'. They confirmed that "the Huron upon whom fell the suspicion of (the) murder was of the village of St. Matthew; and that a trustworthy person told us that he had heard, from the man's own lips, his boast that he was the murderer; that he had rid the world of that common carrion of a Frenchman, and had thrown his body into the river, after braining him at his feet" (JR35:169). Evidently, after killing Chabanel, Honare,enhak had returned to *Ekarenniondi* to report to the resistance Chiefs, with enough of Chabanel's possessions to prove the deed was done (JR40:37). Thus was achieved the second overt political assassination of a Frenchman in compliance with the decree of the traditional Chiefs. No more were possible. Father Garnier was killed by the Iroquois when they attacked *Etharita*. The last two Jesuits remaining on the mainland were safe for the winter while together at *Ekarenniondi*. Excepting only these two, the entire French establishment was within a stone-walled fort, Ste. Marie II, on Christian Island, to which they were recalled, and from there returned to Quebec.

The statement of a third party that Honare,enhak boasted that he was the murderer and had thrown Chabanel's body into the river, after braining him at his feet (JR35:169) is the only information available, yet has entered the history books as certain truth. While it probably is substantially true, there are no means of verification. Honare,enhak is vilified in every other respect, but is given total credibility as the sole witness to the deed. His story has fuelled imaginative but questionable responses, especially artistic ones.

Sorting misinformation from probability, the circumstances of Noël Chabanel's death include the Chiefs' decree, a designated and publicly known executioner, an inferred confrontation, and execution by a hatchet blow to the head, the characteristics of the ritual execution of a traitor and a witch, applied to a political assassination. It seems probable that the story of the abandonment of Chabanel by his escort was legitimate, because the enemy had indeed destroyed *Etharita*, and was retiring somewhere with their prisoners. What surely is misinformation, as least likely, is the supposed involvement of a canoe. This would imply that Honare,enhak was ahead of the party, yet knew their plans and that Chabanel would be alone, and had carried or paddled a canoe all the way to the Nottawasaga River, in December, to paddle it up and down it at dawn in anticipation of Chabanel's arrival, all with the intention of committing on the far bank the deed which he could as easily commit on the near side. Instead, it seems more likely that Honare,enhak was one of the escorting party (Marquis 1916:83-4).

Noël Chabanel's body was never found, certainly not "discovered tomahawked to death by a prowling Indian" (O'Brien 1951). The possibility that his body had been thrown into the river was raised by the Jesuits themselves before they even knew for certain that Chabanel was dead (JR35:147-151). It formed the subject of the first artistic representation of the event as early as 1657, in the inset of Bressani's map (Bressani 1657). The four known later illustrations purport to show the actual moment of Chabanel's death. In all of them Chabanel is fully clothed, but Honare,enhak is nearly naked (Fig. 2). The symbolism inherent in these contrasting portrayals is intensely meaningful. Clothing denotes civilisation. Near-nakedness denotes barbarity, bestiality, Devil-worship, and a complete absence of a sense of morality (Berkhofer 1988:524; Dickason 1984:50-52; Pagden 1982:164).

The Research of Father Arthur Edward Jones, S.J.

The earliest attempts to relate the Jesuitical historical record to the geographic terrain of the Petun homeland were those of Father A. E. Jones in 1902 and 1903 (Jones 1903:106-117,131-5; 1909:214-261). While on both occasions he was unsuccessful in any of his research objectives, he both times considered the possible route of Father Chabanel.

In 1902, Father Jones explained the convergence of the two trails, the one used by Chabanel and the one followed by the Iroquois, both of which he illustrated on a map, "The Petun Country" (Figure 1). At the time, he particularly rejected that either trail was near the shore, and argued for "a more inland route .. Journeying by the (shore) they would be more in view and would have less chance of escape" (Jones 1903:113, 115).

In 1903, after driving on the sands of Wasaga Beach, he reversed his opinion, and wrote: "Near this spot, but precisely where it is impossible to say, Father Noël Chabanel, on December 8, 1649, met with his death at the hands of an apostate Huron, who, having sated his hatred for Christianity on his defenceless victim, threw the lifeless body into the stream .. Bleak was then the stretch of coast, unsteady his steps through the broken ice floes washed high upon the shore, while his tattered garb was stiff with frozen spray .. the lurking savage, springing from his ambush, was to fell him mercilessly as he reached the outlet of the unfordable stream .. The blow fell unawares, dealt with Indian ferocity and the vindictiveness of the apostate. There was no time for torture .. A scalp, perhaps torn hastily (sic) from the unconscious form, and the poor missionary outfit were all the spoils. The body was cast into the stream and then the assassin fled."

Father Jones then added a condition: "Needless to say that this is not precisely history .. No-one familiar with the events preceding and following the death of Chabanel could withstand the impulse of filling in the details which were lacking". In his master work "8endake Ehen", which contains this account favouring a shore-side trail, he included a reprint of the 1902 research rejecting it in favour of trails inland. Thus, in the same volume, Father Jones gave two contradictory interpretations (Jones 1909:214-261, especially 237, 250-2).

As Father Jones stated, his proposals did not arise from any research, not even an inspection of the river, but were more akin to musings, from yielding to "the impulse of filling in the details which were lacking". Some later enthusiastic historians did not find it necessary to question how accurately those musings might be, even though Father Jones both rejected and favoured a shore-side route. It was easier simply to accept Father Jones' musings as fact as if arising from credible research. It is no tribute to scholarship that Father Jones' musings have not been challenged.

In 1909, Father Jones reprinted his map "The Petun Country" exactly as drawn in 1902 (Jones 1903:113, 1909:234-5)(Figure 1), with no amendment to reflect his new opinion as to Chabanel's route. With nine decades of hindsight, the map stands up fairly well in principle but not in detail. Jones has both *Etharita* (A) and *Ekarenniondi* (F) in the wrong places, but neither had been identified at the time. It follows that the proposed routes of both Chabanel's party (F, G, H, I) and the Iroquois (A, B, C, D) cannot be wholly correct, certainly not so at their beginnings (F and A). Nor can H and I of Chabanel's route be in the correct places. Jones has drawn them on the highest point of land, where the Nottawasaga River cuts through the highest, steepest and most unstable sand banks remaining from the former "Big Bertha" dune, now much removed but even yet where the river is most inaccessible. He then directs Chabanel towards the river's mouth (L), implying his acceptance of the necessity of a canoe to make the crossing of the "unfordable stream" (Jones 1903:116, 1909:239). In 1902 this was simply a compound error. By 1909, however, a map was available showing the location of the ford across the river and the trails to it (Hunter 1907, Garrad 1997), demonstrating that it was not an unfordable stream.

At the same time as stating the river was "unfordable", Jones, by placing site 'D' on the other side of it, not only implied that a ford existed, but also that it was used, in the dark of night, by the entire Iroquois army, burdened with captives and booty, tired from battle, in a strange and enemy land. Father Jones places this ford on the map a little upstream of the Big Bertha dune. By coincidence, given that the map is not precisely accurate, this is fairly close to where the actual ford is, where Chabanel probably camped, presumably because daylight was necessary for the crossing. Chabanel left the camp in the

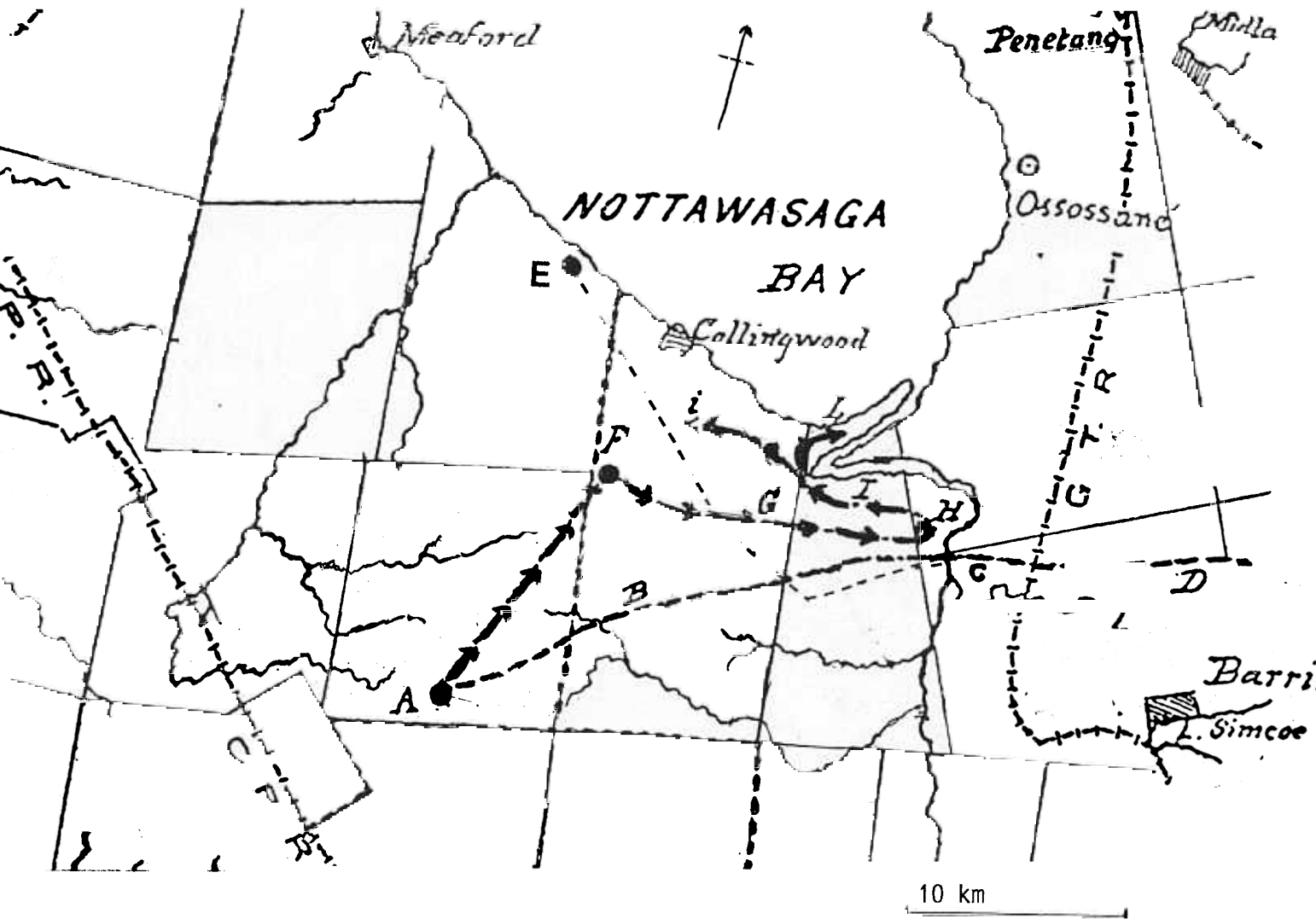


Figure 1. Area Map

(Adapted from "The Petun Country", a map by Father Jones (1903:113, 1909:234-5))

- A** site of village of *Etharita* as proposed by Jones
- A-B-C-D** route of Iroquois as proposed by Jones
- F** site of village of *Ekarenniondi* as proposed by Jones
- F-G-H-I-i-L** route of Chabanel as proposed by Jones
- E** actual site of village of *Ekarenniondi* (per Garrad)
- More probable route of Chabanel from *Ekarenniondi*

dark to follow his companions, but at daylight resumed the journey alone towards where the river was to be crossed (JR35:149). It was necessary for Chabanel to cross the river before turning north to Christian Island. The Iroquois army did not have to cross at this point. The trail they were on continued past the ford along the near river bank easterly to Huronia, optionally ultimately to New York. On Hunter's map it is marked "Trail (Tobacco Nation to Huron)" (Hunter 1907:29; Garrad 1997:11).

Later Research

Research along the Nottawasaga River in 1992 resulted in a number of conclusions being reached. The fording place was found, almost opposite the Old Portage landing. During the work, local archaeologist and historian Philip Cooke, who guided the team, discoursed on the former importance of the Big Bertha sand-dune (now extensively removed) in separating the northern trail route near the shore, which ran to the river nearer its mouth, from the southerly inland route, which ran to the ford. The northern trail to the lower reaches of the river would have been the route used after the river froze in late December, and crossing on the ice became possible (Garrad 1997:6-7). This is probably where Champlain crossed in January 1616. On December 8, 1649, it would have been almost certainly necessary to ford the river. Snow had already covered the ground, making the trail "most difficult", but the earth was not yet frozen, as on that day the Jesuits were still able to dig a grave for Father Garnier (JR 35:117, 147; JR40:19).

The dunes were well known to the Jesuits. They even appear on Father Bressani's 1657 map (Garrad 1997:2, 9). Given the substantial bulk of the Big Bertha dune, and the difficulty and undesirability of crossing it, the east-bound traveller would have to decide on the route of his approach to the river long before reaching the dune, so as to pass either north or south of it. For Chabanel, approaching the fording place from the west, the southern access was achieved simply by following the course of Lamont Creek to the river bank, and then following it upstream. To reach Lamont Creek from *Ekarenniondi*, archaeologically the Plater-Martin BdHb-1 site at Craigeith (Garrad 1998), the Nipissing beach ridge was followed. The total distance by this route from the village to the ford is about 18 miles, as stated by the Jesuits ("six long leagues" JR35:147; "18 or 20 miles" JR40:35). Several trails converged before the ford. The men with Chabanel returned to the Petun country, but not by the trail they had used from *Ekarenniondi*, because they did not go there. Nor did they follow the trail used by the Iroquois, whom their purpose was to avoid, but "toward the very place from which the enemy had come out, though a little to one side of it" (JR35:149).

On the river bank above the ford a sufficient number of seemingly random Indian artifacts have been found that two formal archaeological sites (BcHa-24, BcHa-25) have been registered. These artifacts presumably accumulated from generations of people camping overnight to await sufficient morning light to cross. Here, then, on the near bank, was the probable camping place, and perhaps the death place, of Father Noël Chabanel. There was no canoe, this was misinformation perhaps intended to send any searchers to the wrong place. However attractive the image may be of the body thrown into the water, an inspection of the site creates doubt that this occurred. To the river from the camping place on the flat land above is a fairly steep, winding, slippery, forested path. It would require considerable effort to carry, or even drag, an inert body from one to the other. It would have been much easier to simply leave it where it fell. Given the absence of verifiable information other alternatives are possible. If Honare,enhak was pretending to accompany Chabanel while choosing his moment, this could have been anywhere, at the bottom of the path as well as above it, at the water's edge, or even part way across the river.

Ludovicus (Louis, Lewis) Honare,enhak

The name of Louis Honare,enhak was not identified in the contemporary accounts of Chabanel's death, and occurs only once, in an affidavit added in 1652 to a Latin manuscript by Father Ragueneau, concerning the death of Father Noël Chabanel (Jones 1909:252-3). Father Ragueneau seems to have written 'Ludovicus Honarc,ennhax'. The text of this affidavit is reproduced by Jones (1909:253,plate) and Saintonge (1958:186) in Father Ragueneau's handwriting, and by the Archivist for Quebec in print (Quebec 1925:86). All later writers have accepted that the 'c' following the 'r' was intended to be an 'e' (the Quebec Archivist reproduces an 'ae'). The most popular rendering, beginning in 1852 with Father Félix Martin's footnote to his French translation of Bressani's 1653 "Breve Relatione d'alevne missioni de' PP. della Compagnia di Giesù nella Nuoua Francia", (which does not give the name, see JR40), is Honareenhax (Bressani 1852:276; JR40:255n2; JR72:297; O'Brien 1953:287; Raymond 1946:127; Rochemonteix 1896:ll:102; Wynne 1925:217;). Other versions, all equally valid, include Honareennhak and Honare,ennhax (Jones 1909:395,479), Honareannhak (Devine 1916:23, 1923:23), Hanoraeemhax (Quebec 1925:86), Honareennax and Honorennak (Saintonge 1958:179, 182), Honarreennha (McGivern n.d.:31; Pouliot 1966:185) and Honareenhac (Trigger 1987:778, 895).

Linguist John Steckley agrees that Ragueneau appears to have written a 'c', but confirms that an 'e' better conforms with Wyandot language usage (personal communication). Drawing on his knowledge of Jesuit orthography, he has suggested the most correct rendering would be Honare,enhak, possibly meaning "they arrived at his rivermouth (?)" (Steckley 1998:9). This spelling is used throughout this paper.

The full text of Ragueneau's affidavit has not been previously published in English but only in the original Latin (Jones 1909:252-3; Saintonge 1958:186). Excerpts have been published both in French and English. A translation of the full text, by John Steckley, follows:

"I, the writer below, the Superior of the Society of Jesus to the Canadian Mission, swear to have myself written the things above concerning the death of Father Noël Chabanel in the year 1650 (NOTE: error for 1649); at which time I was the Superior of the Huron Mission.

From that time when these things were written, it has been ascertained by us through certain testimonies that Father Noël Chabanel had been killed by that Huron Christian Apostate

[marginal added note:] and his name was Ludovicus Honarc,ennhax, whose mother was very pious, by name Genonefa, who from that time immediately changed toward the evil one, having hidden her wicked son from punishment

[text resumes], which we had suspected. He himself admitted this and added that this crime of killing the Father was his own, upon hatred of the faith; since he saw that all bad things, and all adverse things, happened to himself and to his parents from the time at which they had embraced the Christian faith.

I might claim they felt God for this crime, for no-one remains unpunished from the very large family. They had fled far away among those peoples whom we used to call the Neutral Nation, all utterly destroyed by Iroquois enemies; some burned by flames; others killed by iron (weapons); the rest, boys and girls, led away into wretched slavery.

I solemnly affirm that I myself have accepted that this is so, from suitable evidence. Dated at Quebec, December 15, 1652. Paul Ragueneau".

Secondary and Later Writers

As a footnote to his 1852 translation into French of Father Bressani's 1653 Italian, Father Félix Martin reproduced part of Ragueneau's affidavit (Bressani 1852:276). This was copied in 1896 in Paris (Rochemonteix 1896:102n1). The footnote was translated into English in 1898 as an explanatory note to the Thwaites edition of the Jesuit Relations (JR40:255n2). Part of this was in turn printed in an article

in the *Toronto Star* (1927) in connection with an unusual silver lidded spoon-shaped box found by children on the bank of the Nottawasaga river. In the article, Father E. J. Devine speculated that the article had been Chabanel's, and marked his death spot. Father Frédéric Saintonge continued the speculation (Saintonge 1958:207). However, in the early 1960s the present writer met one of the children, the late Miss Kathleen McRae, of Stayner, who recalled finding the object on the far side of the river and considerably downstream of the fording place on the site of the British Nottawasaga Depot. There seems no possibility that it could have been Chabanel's.

In 1857 John Gilmary Shea was possibly the first writer of modern times to revive the image of Chabanel's body "flung into the stream" (1857:194)

The Rev. T. J. Campbell's work is typical of the host of secondary source writers who followed after Father Jones and simply and uncritically repeated his musings as fact, allowing that Chabanel reached the "great bend" in the Nottawasaga river, that the river was unfordable, that he crossed by canoe. Uniquely, he describes Honare,enhak as "Chabanel's boatman" (Campbell 1910:370-2).

Father Edward J. Devine followed in 1916 and again later. All his relevant works carry an illustration of the supposed death of Chabanel. Honare,enhak, looming over the pleading and fully clothed priest, is naked, but for a loincloth, even barefooted (1916:front cover; 1923:84; 1925:138). Father Devine was also fond of the theme of divine retribution, in which God avenged his heroic servant Chabanel, and Honare,enhak, in his "crime and devilry", had no redeeming features (Devine 1923:23-4). The 1916 publication seems influenced by the work of Father Jones, which was published in 1909. The timing of the 1923 publication suggests it was intended to support the current movement for the beatification of the Jesuit martyrs, the first step towards canonization (Fraser 1925:14).

This was quickly followed by "Les Bienheureux Martyrs de la Compagnie de Jésus au Canada". The author portrays Honare,enhak in the usual negative terms, and borrows Father Devine's illustration of Father Chabanel's supposed death scene (Rouvier 1925:310-311). The contrast between the two figures presents a clear if subliminal message that a civilized (clothed) man is being attacked by a non-human (naked) savage.

The author of "Saint Noël Chabanel, Martyr du Canada" in 1946 continued the same theme, and declared as unreasonable that Chabanel would abandon his cloak and his hat in the cold of the winter, as was reported to the Jesuits. Having made the point that a reasonable human would require clothing in the cold of the winter, he then illustrates Honare,enhak, in the act of killing Chabanel, as naked, except for a loincloth, even barefooted. The inference is clear, Honare,enhak is not possessed of reason (Raymond 1946:frontispiece, 126-7). His artist takes even more liberties than did Devine's. He incorporates the river and a convenient low river bank.

The author of "Martyre dans l'ombre" in 1958 described Honare,enhak as a Judas and a renegade, who fomented in his heart a criminal desire for sacrilege, but, interestingly, identifies him as a participant in the Council at St. Matthew. He repeats the question if a reasonable man would abandon his cloak and hat in the cold of the winter. He, too, provides an illustration of the supposed death scene of Chabanel, in which the Father is about to enter the canoe. Behind is a wide river or lake with rolling topography, which bear no resemblance to the Nottawasaga, even though Saintonge visited the river during his researches. Honare,enhak is portrayed bare from the waist up (Saintonge 1958:179, 183, 184, 198, 207).

The development of the Martyrs' Shrine near Midland led to more publications repeating the same theme. To the Rev. Joseph Fallon it was a simple matter of "Huron Treachery" against the "Heroic Apostolate" (1948:32-34; 1966:89-90). He provided an illustration of (presumably) Honare,enhak throwing Chabanel's body into the water. Chabanel is endowed with the halo of sainthood, but

Honare,enhak is naked but for a loincloth and a Siouan feathered headdress, surely a most impractical accoutrement to wear in a forest. The river is conveniently close to the level land (Fallon 1948:34), which is not at all accurate. The same illustration was used by Elmer O'Brien (1951).

Lawrence Voisin (1951:48) has Honare,enhak follow Chabanel to the river with "hatred in that Indian's eyes, the diabolic hatred of one who has turned against the Faith". Sitter eulogises Chabanel but by contrast is wholly negative toward the natives and by inference Honare,enhak. Their language is "guttural grunts", they have "suspicious ways and ungrateful manners, .. filth and utter disregard of it, the ridicule of their sneering faces.." (Sitter 1949). A host of secondary and tertiary writers continue and enlarge on these partisan themes. J. Herbert Cranston makes the claim that Honare,enhak "had been adopted by the Iroquois" (1960:35). Father James S. McGivern offers no new information but repeats the usual text accompanied by the illustration used by Father Devine (McGivern n.d.,:30-31).

A comparable circumstance

Anthropologist Frank Speck studied the death of Father Isaac Jogues at the hands of the Mohawk in 1646 within the total context of Iroquois culture. His conclusions are entirely applicable to the death of Chabanel. This was arranged by the traditional Huron-Petun faction "as a protective expedient, undertaken in accordance with their traditional legal procedures, to rid themselves of a malignant sorcerer". The formal manner of Chabanel's killing (and also Douart's) "is evidence that he was not murdered but executed, in a spirit not unfamiliar to European civil and clerical courts of the time" (cited in Smith 1974:91-3).

Conclusion

No historian has been generous enough to portray Honare,enhak as an heroic resistance fighter whose intention in executing a condemned criminal in obedience to his Chiefs, acting entirely legitimately within prevailing aboriginal law, was to strike a noble blow for the freedom of his people. Nor is it pointed out that compared to the actions of the Huron apostate who viciously tortured and mutilated Brébeuf in derision of baptism (JR34:27-33; JR39:253), his despatch of Chabanel was as humane as possible. Instead, he has been relentlessly reviled to an extent which obscures the presence of any mitigating motivation, to emphasise by contrast the qualifications of Noël Chabanel as a martyr and saint. As one writer concluded, it was Honare,enhak's "apostacy that placed the crown on the head of Father Chabanel" (Campbell 1910:372). In fact, both men were victims of the same circumstances.

The greater tragedy is that the assassination of Noël Chabanel was not the political statement Honare,enhak and the Chiefs might have hoped. It had no effect on the events of the day, which were controlled by other forces. The resistance Chiefs were too few, too late, and never gained majority support, even among other traditional people and the apostates. Their goal, the removal of all Frenchmen from Huronia, was achieved, not by their actions, but by the invading Iroquois, at the terrible cost of the destruction of their own society and dispersal of the survivors.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following authorities were consulted during the preparation of this Bulletin: Philip Cooke, Jamie Hunter, Donald Smith, John L. Steckley, Bruce G. Trigger. They may not share my interpretations and conclusions, for which I alone am responsible, but they helped me anyway, and I thank them all.



Figure 2. The Death of Noël Chabanel

as illustrated by (top left) Devine 1916, 1923, 1925; McGivern n.d.; Rouvier 1925;
(top right) Raymond 1946; (below left) Fallon 1948; O'Brien 1951;
(below right) Saintonge 1958.

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