



Levasseur and Carmel families

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Toponymy: Rue Marie-Louise Levasseur

Marie-Louise-Levasseur Street, located in Bécancour in the Centre-du-Québec region, lies in an area where streets are named in honor of local industrial figures. It commemorates Marie-Louise Levasseur (1811–1892), a prominent businesswoman originally from Trois-Rivières who later settled in Bécancour. We invite you to consult this document (https://levasseur.org/capsules/20260601_1.pdf), which contains copies of excerpts from official records. This information takes precedence over the dates mentioned in the present texts.



✨ Marie-Louise Levasseur (1811–1892) ✨

A pioneer of entrepreneurship in Bécancour



Marie-Louise Levasseur was born in 1811 in Trois-Rivières, in a Lower Canada undergoing significant economic transformation. Coming from a background in which trade and the exploitation of natural resources were becoming increasingly important, she entered early on into a context favorable to the development of industrial activities. She later settled in Bécancour, where she would leave a lasting mark on the region's economic history.

In 1830, she married Antoine Mayrand (1810–1877), a native of Deschambault-Grondines. This union brought together two families deeply rooted in the region and active in local business circles. Together, they developed enterprises that were central to the 19th-century regional economy, particularly in the fields of timber and resource processing.

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Over the years, Marie-Louise Levasseur distinguished herself as an accomplished businesswoman. She notably owned a flour mill, two sawmills, and a toll bridge—key infrastructures for the development and economic vitality of Bécancour and its surroundings. These facilities played an important role in forestry and wood processing, which were dominant industries in the region at the time.

In the 1860s, her businesses employed approximately 150 workers, a considerable number for the period. This workforce reflects both the scale of her operations and her influence on the local economy. Through her initiatives, she helped shape the industrial development of Bécancour, promoting both employment and the circulation of goods.

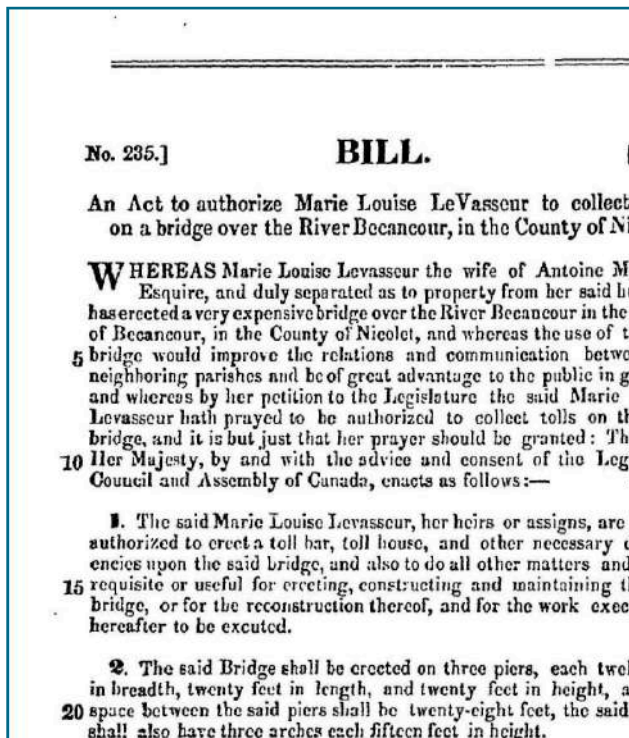
The toll bridge she operated was a strategic component of the regional transportation network. It facilitated trade and the movement of people while generating additional revenue. This diversification of activities demonstrates remarkable entrepreneurial vision, particularly at a time when women rarely held leading roles in the business world.

At a time when major economic responsibilities were almost exclusively entrusted to men, Marie-Louise Levasseur stands out as an exceptional figure. Her ability to manage large-scale enterprises, oversee a substantial workforce, and actively contribute to regional development makes her a pioneer of female entrepreneurship in Quebec.

She remained active in her business ventures for many years, contributing to the economic growth of her community. Marie-Louise Levasseur passed away in 1892 in Bécancour, leaving behind a lasting legacy. Today, her name lives on, notably through a street in Bécancour, in a sector where roads are named in honor of prominent industrial figures of the region. This recognition reflects the importance of her contributions and her place in the collective memory.



The Bill "Marie-Louise Levasseur" and the Bécancour toll bridge (1863)



https://levasseur.org/capsules/20260601_2.pdf

This document is an official bill adopted in 1863 in the Province of Canada, before Confederation in 1867. It serves as important evidence of the economic and entrepreneurial role of Marie-Louise Levasseur.

Entitled "An Act to authorize Marie Louise LeVasseur to collect tolls on a bridge over the River Becancour...", the law authorized Marie-Louise Levasseur to collect tolls on a bridge she had built at her own expense over the Bécancour River, in Nicolet County.

The document states that she was the wife of Antoine Mayrand and that she was legally separated as to property, allowing her to manage her own assets independently. The government recognized that the bridge improved transportation and communication, facilitated trade, and benefited both the public and

neighboring parishes.

At the time, a private individual could not impose tolls without official authorization. Marie-Louise Levasseur therefore petitioned Parliament to obtain the legal right to operate the bridge, install a toll gate, and collect toll fees. Her request was approved.

This law granted her the right to maintain and rebuild the bridge, establish toll rates according to vehicles and animals, and use neighboring lands to develop access roads.

This document is particularly remarkable because, in the 19th century, very few women managed major infrastructure projects or obtained parliamentary legislation in their own name. It demonstrates that Marie-Louise Levasseur possessed significant financial resources, held recognized influence, and actively participated in regional economic development as a businesswoman and entrepreneur.

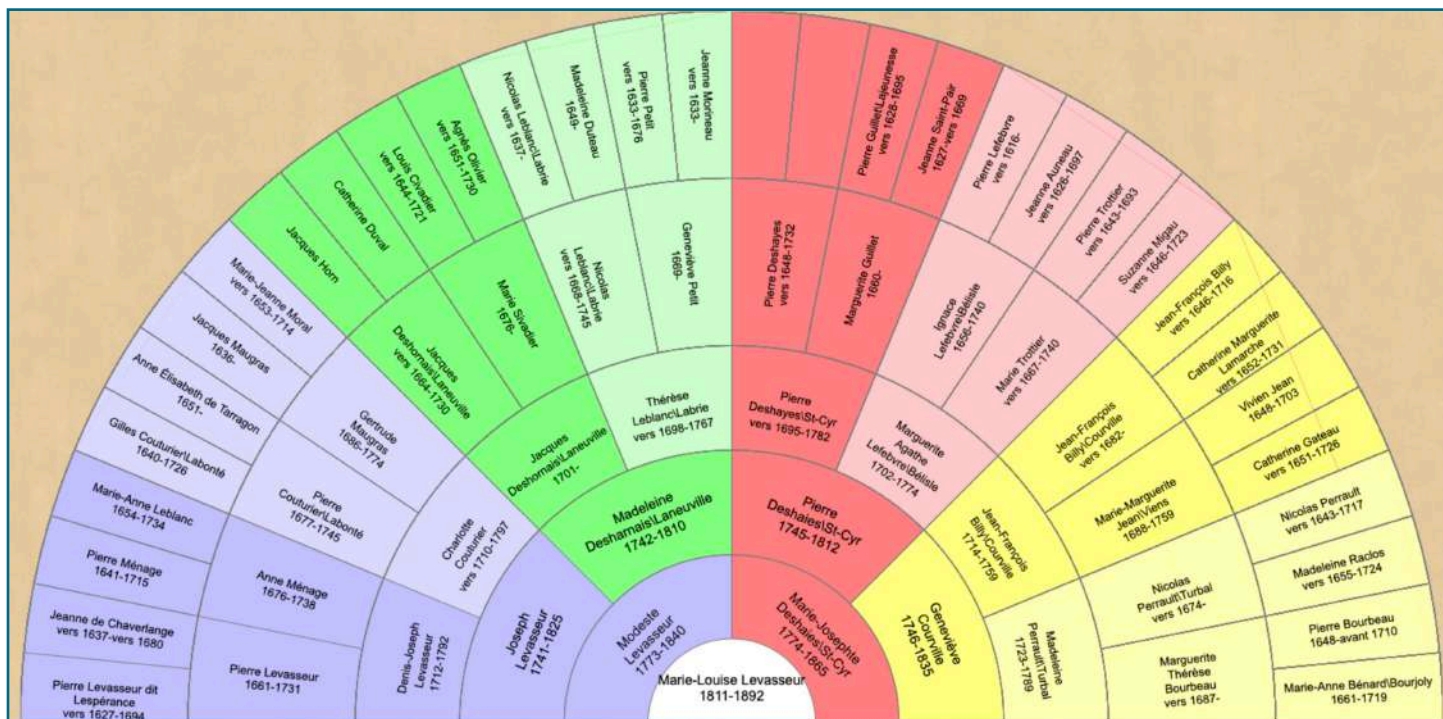
✨ Marie-Louise Levasseur (1811–1892) ✨

Biography and genealogy

Marie-Louise Levasseur was born on March 29, 1811, in Trois-Rivières, Quebec. She was the eleventh child of Modeste Levasseur (born November 9, 1773) and Marie-Josèphe Deshaies, known as St-Cyr (born October 5, 1774).

She grew up in a large family that included five brothers—Modeste (born August 14, 1797), Jean-Baptiste (born March 31, 1804), Charles (born October 25, 1812), Moïse (born April 6, 1816), and Olivier (born January 4, 1821)—as well as nine sisters: Marie-Josèphe (born June 10, 1796), Marguerite (born September 5, 1798), Angèle (born November 20, 1799), Julie (born March 26, 1801), another Marie-Louise (born January 13, 1803), Lucie (born October 15, 1805), Judith (born July 6, 1807), Marie-Faine Françoise (born January 30, 1809), and Archange (born July 29, 1814). At the age of 28, on January 26, 1840, she lost her father, Modeste Levasseur. She was 54 years old when her mother, Marie-Josèphe Deshaies, passed away on June 8, 1865.

On July 20, 1830, at the age of 19, she married Antoine Mayrand (born circa 1809) in Bécancour, in the Nicolet region. He was about 21 years old at the time. From this union were born eleven children: Marie, Pierre, Adélaïde, Alice, Louis, Séraphine (born circa 1833), Marie-Agnès (born December 27, 1837), Clarisse (born January 2, 1839), David (born circa 1844), Céline (born circa 1847), and Léonia (born in 1849). Marie-Louise Levasseur passed away on May 14, 1892, in Bécancour at the age of 81. She was buried there on May 16, 1892. Her husband, Antoine Mayrand, had died on November 22, 1877, some 14 years before her.



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