Familles Levasseur et Carmel | Levasseur and Carmel families

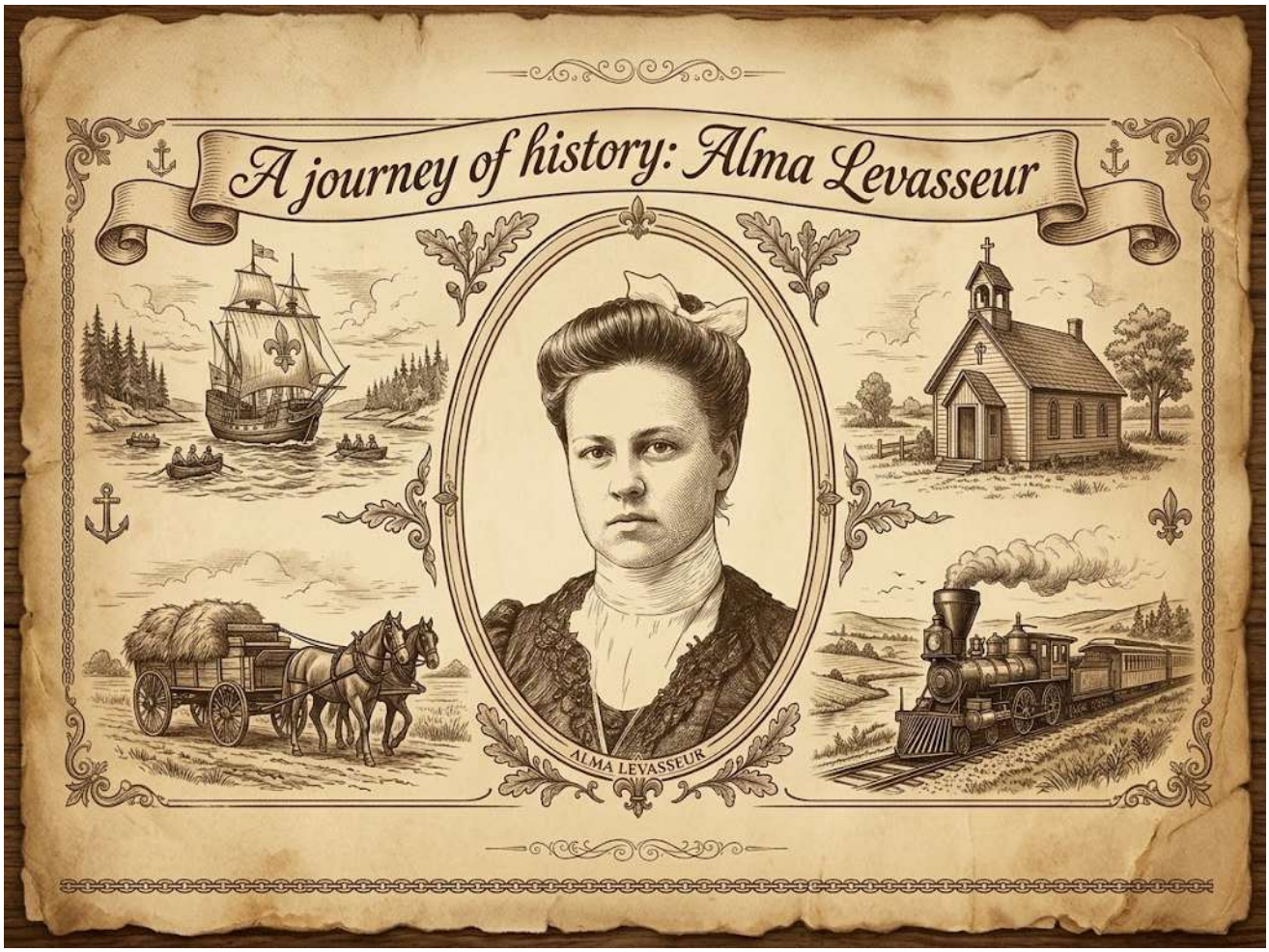
Noms apparentés | Related surnames

Vassaur · Vasseur · Vasser · Vassar · Levesseur · Borgia

levasseur.org · webmaster@levasseur.org

A journey of history: from the first arrival to Alma Levasseur

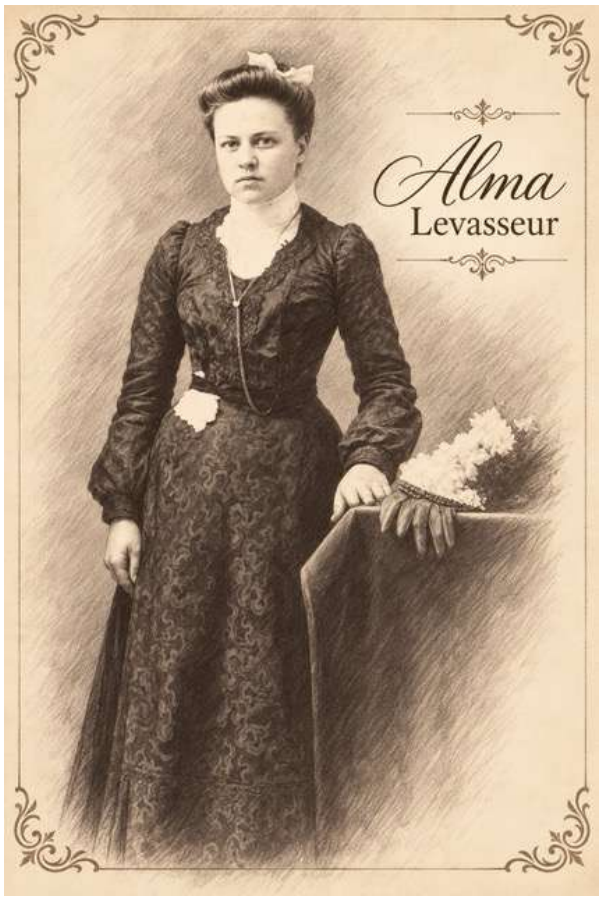
(According to a text by Mrs. Solange Tardif)



Different links to click on to enjoy our wide range of services.

© 2026 S. Tardif - All rights reserved

The Mystery of an Angel Whose Silence Spoke Volumes



My grandmother Alma Levasseur was my starting point and the spark for my interest in genealogy. I never really knew her. She died at the age of 83, when I was still very young: eight decades stand between us. The few surviving photographs reveal a small woman who rarely smiled and whose back grew increasingly bent with time. Her shoulders stooped as though the burden carried in her heart had become too heavy to bear.

here were few photographs of our ancestors around the house, and I had seldom wondered about her. My first truly conscious encounter with her memory came through my father, Raymond. On the eve of a daunting heart operation, filled with anxiety, he was doing a life review with the loved ones gathered in his hospital room. Overcome with emotion, he spoke of his mother: “My mother was an angel.” We understood then that the certainty of finding shelter beneath her wings again was his consolation as he faced the possibility of death. Sadly, I waited too long before trying to get to know her. It was only after Raymond’s death in 2007—the last surviving child of Alma who could have helped me discover who she was—that I’ve started doing research.

By asking descendants who had known her, I gathered accounts that all echoed one another. They described an exceptionally quiet woman: deeply religious, kind, hardworking, reserved nature, and an excellent cook. The words “she was an angel” came spontaneously from several people. Some could not even remember hearing her speak. Her family history remained unknown; many believed she had been an only child or adopted.

How does one come to know and understand the presence of an “angel” in one’s own family line? How can someone pass through the major stages of life in such silence, as though words were unnecessary or burdensome? I found it fascinating that those close to her had developed such deep affection for her without anyone finding her silence surprising or questioning it. The missing story of Grandmother Alma eventually began to trouble me like a missing piece of a puzzle, leaving a shadow at the heart of our family identity.

What follows is the current state of our research, tracing the thread from the first Levasseur settler in New France to Grandmother Alma.

© 2026 S. Tardif - All rights reserved

Putting Down Roots in New France (1663–1703)

From Normandy to the Shores of the Côte de Lauzon

The journey begins in 1663. **Laurent Levasseur** (1st generation), then a young teenager, decided to leave his family and his native Normandy—more precisely, Bois-Guillaume—and sail to New France. He appears in the colony's first census, in 1666. At the time, he was working for Guillemette Hébert in Québec City, the daughter of the first French-Canadian settler, Louis Hébert, and the widow of Guillaume Couillard. Her house stood in what is now the inner courtyard of the Séminaire de Québec. There, Laurent learned to work the land and to fish for eels in the river, an activity that was widespread at the time.

In 1669, the King of France issued an edict providing for fines on unmarried men in the colony who showed no inclination to marry. Whether this served as an incentive or not, Laurent Levasseur married **Marie Marchand** on April 30, 1670, at Notre-Dame Church in Québec City, built in 1664. Marie had only recently arrived with her family from the Île de Ré.

The couple settled on the Côte de Lauzon, along the St. Lawrence River, facing almost across from Québec City. A few months before his wedding, Laurent had signed a three-year farm lease with Henri Breault de Pomainville for a property that included a house, fishing grounds, and fruit trees. The land would later become the property of Laurent and his descendants. In 1675, he enlarged the farm by purchasing a parcel from Guillaume Couillard, paying for it in "moose hides."

Historical Landmark:

> *"This land, owned by a Levasseur until 1925, is located in Saint-David-de-Lauberivière. The house at No. 698, rue Commerciale, remains the most precise landmark for a descendant wishing to visit." (Excerpt from the book Nos ancêtres no 3)*

Establishing Roots in Kamouraska (1703–1860)

A Century and a Half on Pioneer Farmland

Laurent Levasseur and Marie Marchand had 14 children, all born in Lauzon. Two of them, **Pierre Levasseur** (2nd generation) and his sister Claire-Françoise, chose to settle in the Kamouraska region. Pierre married **Marie-Élisabeth Michaud** in Rivière-Ouelle in 1703.

From the 2nd to the 6th generation, our Levasseur line was born and flourished in the Kamouraska area for more than 150 years, until 1859–1860. The family was among the region's pioneers.

The « Berceau de Kamouraska »:

Pierre, Claire-Françoise, and several of their descendants are buried in the Berceau de Kamouraska cemetery, three kilometres east of the present-day village. Today, a small chapel marks the site where the first two churches, the presbyteries, and the cemetery once stood. In 1999, the

© 2026 S. Tardif - All rights reserved

Association des Levasseur d'Amérique installed a commemorative plaque there to honour the pioneering couple, Pierre Levasseur and Élisabeth Michaud.

The Move to the Eastern Townships (1860–1877)

The Search for New Land

Adolphe-Delphis Levasseur (6th generation), born on October 30, 1813, in Kamouraska, married **Archange Gagné** on August 29, 1842, in Saint-André-de-Kamouraska. The couple had 13 children between 1843 and 1866.

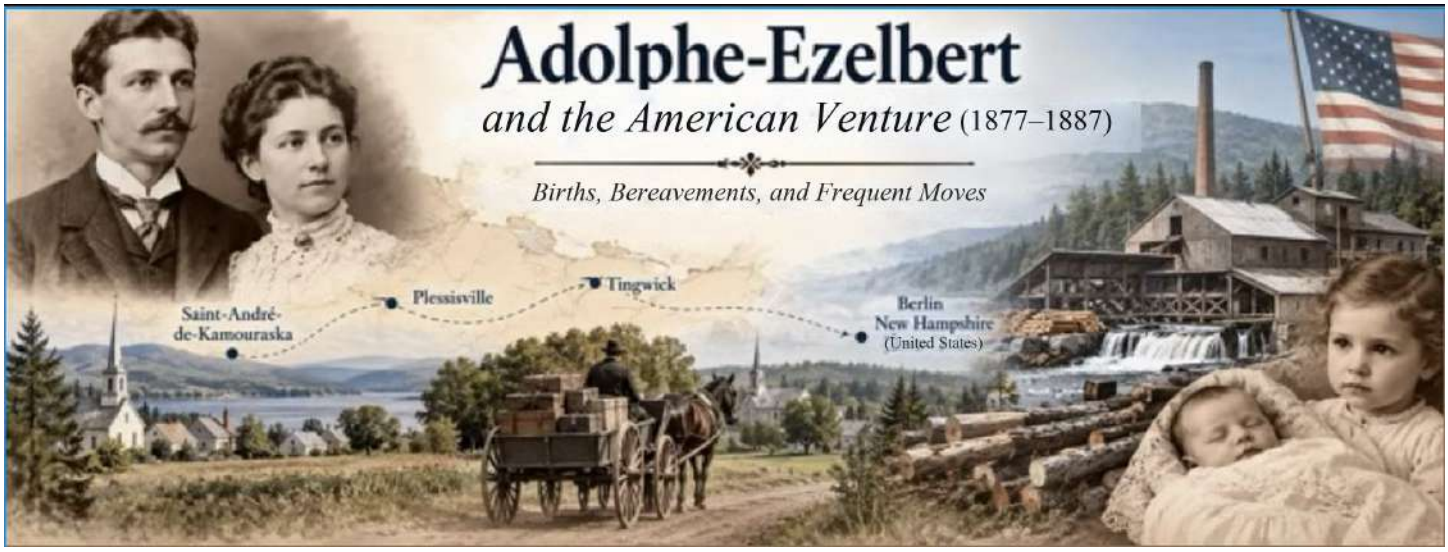
Around 1860, the entire family left their home region. Their departure was part of a broader demographic movement: between 1784 and 1844, Québec's population had risen by approximately 400%, while the area of fertile land available had increased by only 275%. This shortage of farmland prompted many families to settle new regions.

The family first spent some time in Plessisville, (where their 11th child was born in November 1861), then continued on her way to Tingwick, where she settled down and made her home. Their last two children were born there in 1865 and 1866. Adolphe-Delphis and Archange Gagné, Alma's grandparents, died and were buried in Tingwick in 1892 and 1902, respectively. Although their records appear in the parish register, their graves can no longer be found in the present cemetery, which was subsequently relocated.

Adolphe-Ezelbert and the American Venture (1877–1887)

Births, Bereavements, and Frequent Moves

Our 7th-generation ancestor, Adolphe-Ezelbert Levasseur, Alma's father, was the sixth child of Adolphe-Delphis and Archange Gagné. Born on January 31, 1852, in Saint-André-de-Kamouraska, he was 10 when his family left and spent most of his teenage years in Tingwick.



© 2026 S. Tardif - All rights reserved

On October 9, 1877, he married **Léa Bérubé** in Plessisville. Their marriage record mentions a "dispensation for the third degree of consanguinity," since their respective mothers, **Archange Gagné** and **Émérentienne Gagné**, were first cousins. The couple settled in Tingwick, where their first daughter, Marie-Octavie, was born on April 27, 1879.

The following year, the family emigrated to the United States for the first time, settling in Berlin, New Hampshire, where Adolphe-Ezelbert found work in a sawmill, as recorded in the June 1880 census. During this stay, Léa was expecting their second child: **Alma Levasseur**, my grandmother, who was born in New Hampshire on November 14, 1880.

Date / Period	Notable Event for Adolphe-Ezelbert's Family
Nov 14, 1880	Birth of **Alma Levasseur** in Berlin, New Hampshire (USA).
Early 1881	Momentary return of the family to Tingwick (confirmed by the April census).
Between 1881 and 1883	Return to Berlin (New Hampshire): start of the second stay. Birth of Joseph-Arthur on October 13, 1883.
Feb 24, 1885	First tragedy: death of the young Joseph-Arthur (aged 1) from meningitis in Berlin, N.H.
Jan 2, 1886	Birth of Joseph-Édouard in Berlin (NH).
Autumn 1887	Definitive return of the family to Tingwick. Birth of Marie-Louise-Claire on October 16.

The Tragedy of Autumn 1887

Barely a month after giving birth, on November 16, 1887, Léa Bérubé died at the age of 29, probably from complications of childbirth. Eleven days earlier, she had drawn up her will. The document bears witness to her profound exhaustion: the notary had come directly to their home—an unusual occurrence at the time—and although Léa knew how to write, she could only make a cross in place of a signature, saying that she was too weak.

A notarial deed dated that autumn of 1887 identifies the family land in Tingwick as lots Nos. 679 and 680, covering an area of 76 and one-fifth acres.

In Alma's Footsteps:

According to information provided by the municipality of Tingwick, the property lies on the 6e Rang, opposite civic address 2039. Although none of the original buildings remain, it is deeply moving to look upon the same landscape on which young Alma once gazed as she dreamed, reflected, and undoubtedly shed many tears.

© 2026 S. Tardif - All rights reserved

Alma Levasseur: A Childhood Taken Away (1888–1903)

A Succession of Losses and the Separation of the Siblings

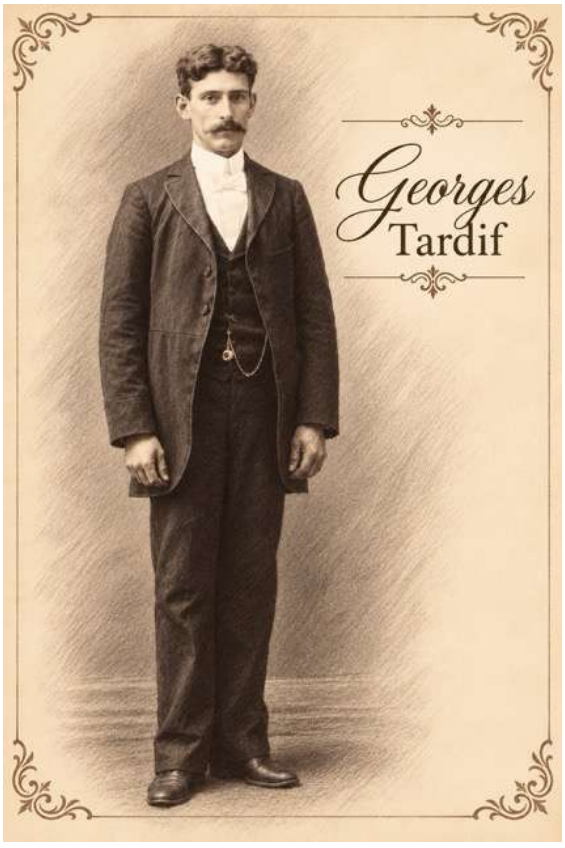
In the autumn of 1887, life was difficult for Alma, aged seven, and her siblings: two periods of emigration to the United States, the loss of a young brother, and their mother's death. Their father was left alone with four children under eight, including an infant.

On May 13, 1889, Adolphe-Ezelbert remarried in Tingwick, to Victoria Michaud. Three daughters were born of this second marriage: Marie-Laura (1890), Anna (1891), and Amanda-Exilia (1893). But misfortune struck the household again in 1893:

- Little Marie-Laura died on April 21, 1893, at the age of two.
- Their father, Adolphe-Ezelbert, died suddenly in December 1893, aged only 41. Alma was **only twelve years old and had been left orphaned by both parents mother and father**.

The family was then divided in two:

1. **The stepmother and her daughters**: Victoria Michaud emigrated to Maine in 1894. Records place her in Biddeford before she settled permanently in Lewiston with her daughters.
2. **The orphaned children of the first marriage**—Alma, Joseph-Édouard, and Marie-Louise-Claire—were taken in by their maternal aunt, Apolline Bérubé, and her husband, Napoléon Lambert. The 1901 census in Plessisville lists the household: Napoléon, 56, a farmer; Apolline, 55, a seamstress; Alma, 20, an apprentice seamstress; Joseph-Édouard, 15, a student; and Marie-Louise-Claire, 13.



Alma's older sister, Marie-Octavie, had married Napoléon Ledoux in Biddeford in 1897. Her life ended tragically: she died of typhoid fever on February 19, 1899, at the age of 19, only a month after giving birth to her first child, who would also die soon afterwards, in 1900.

The Legacy of a Woman of Few Words

On February 17, 1903, **Alma Levasseur** (8th generation) married **Georges Tardif** in Plessisville. The young couple settled on a farm on the tenth rural road of the same municipality.

Their first daughter, Anita, was born in December 1904

© 2026 S. Tardif - All rights reserved

but died a few days later. Despite this further ordeal, the couple would have eight more children, including **Raymond**, my father, their second-youngest.

Epilogue

When we consider the course of Grandmother Alma's life, her silence and reserve take on an entirely different meaning. From childhood, she experienced instability, repeated uprootings between Québec and New Hampshire, and a succession of devastating losses—her mother, her father, her siblings, and then her first child. She learned to carry her sorrow in silence.

That silence, which those close to her understood as piety or angelic gentleness, may have been the only protection she had found against the weight of a poignant life story. Alma spoke little, but her kindness and resilience remained etched in the memories of those who loved her.





© 2026 S. Tardif - All rights reserved



The children of Georges Tardif and Alma Levasseur. Front row, from left to right: Rita Tardif, Georges Tardif, Sister Antoinette Tardif, Alma Levasseur, and Cécile Tardif. Back row, from left to right: Ernest Tardif, Alice Tardif, Calixte Tardif, Rose Marie Tardif, and Raymond Tardif.



Note: Artificial intelligence tools were used to assist in drafting this text and to enhance the resolution of historical photographs, under the authors' supervision and review.
This family narrative was transmitted to us by an external source. The Association of Levasseur of America publishes it for historical and genealogical purposes, without systematically verifying all the dates and information presented. For any research or further verification, we invite readers to consult either the author or our genealogical database: https://www.levasseur.org/tng/.

© 2026 S. Tardif - All rights reserved