



Our Levasseur ancestors : Jean Levasseur dit Lavigne

by: Joceline Levasseur

Jean was the son of Noël Levasseur, master carpenter, and of Geneviève Gaugé, of the Saint-Leu-et-Saint-Gilles Parish in Paris. According to the Census data of 1666, Jean was born around 1622 ¹, possibly in Paris.

He was married in Paris before the notaries Le Cat and Le Semelier, on Monday, April 23, 1645, with Marguerite Richard the daughter of master cutter engraver Nicolas Richard and Jeanne Bonnet ². Jean and Marguerite had eleven children.

A desire for adventure and a better life are probably the factors that prompted them to venture across the Atlantic with their first child Louis and to settle in New France, specifically in Québec. They arrived some time in 1651.

Jean Levasseur's name in the Colony is first listed in the civil registries of the Notre-Dame Parish of Québec on July 22, 1652 for the christening of his daughter Anne. The godparents were the Governor of New France, Jean de Lauzon, and his spouse, Anne Després. ³

Marguerite Richard, his spouse, owned various possessions in Paris. On August 18, 1658, Jean was given a power of attorney by his wife and went to France. This notarized document enabled Marguerite to inherit her share of her deceased father's estate. He owned a home on Guérin Boisseau Street in Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs, Paris. The home was recognizable by a sign representing the image of Sainte-Anne and Sainte-Barbe. After having spent the winter in France, Jean returns to the country the following year. On October 18, 1659, his wife Marguerite Richard ratifies the transactions he undertook with Françoise Gogé, the widow of Nicolas Richard. In the fall of 1660, Jean returns to France with a power of attorney, similar to the first one he had, to sell two more homes that were part of his father in law's estate.⁴

For a master carpenter there was a lot of work in the young colony. Jean's talents contributed significantly to satisfy the needs of a population growing from day to day. "On August 13, 1654, he contracted with the Notre-Dame de Québec Parish. The churchwardens entrusted him with the church's upkeep at a salary of 30 sols per day"⁵. He also carried out many real-estate transactions that are noted in multiple notarized deeds that may be consulted in the Archives nationales de Québec. Being very close to the government of New France he was given many interesting carpentry contracts. Also, Jean Levasseur is one of the founders of the Sainte-Anne Brotherhood, a group of carpenters who had a particular devotion for this patron saint.

In addition to his work as a carpenter, Jean was bailiff of the Sovereign Council of New France, a task attributed to him on April 22, 1664. Later in 1681, he became bailiff for the "Prévôté" of Québec. ⁶

According to Sergine Desjardins, in her historical novel Marie Major, Jean Levasseur dit Lavigne and his wife Marguerite Richard greeted many Filles du roi (Daughters of the King) in their large home on Saint-Louis Street between 1665 and 1673. Many among them, namely Marie Major, were married in their home according to a notarized marriage contract.⁷

After a very active life in the young colony, Jean Levasseur dit Lavigne passed away in Québec on August 31, 1686 and was buried there the next day.

His wife, Marguerite Richard, died much later on April 23, 1708 in L'Ancienne-Lorette at the age of 78.

Jean Levasseur's male descendance is ensured by his son Noël who is the father of Noël Levasseur, the master sculptor. Also his son Charles may have contributed to the exploration voyages of Robert Cavelier de La Salle and of Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville. He was given the title of Major in the army.⁸ The direct descendants of Jean are only a few families. The descendants on the female side are much more important.

Jean Levasseur was Pierre Levasseur dit Lespérance's brother. Pierre was married to Jeanne Chaverlange. His sister was Jeanne Levasseur, spouse of Christophe Drolet.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Jean Levasseur', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Signature of Jean Levasseur⁹

1. PRDH. Programme de recherche en démographie historique.
2. La Fédération québécoise des sociétés de généalogie et la Fédération française de généalogie, Fichier Origine, [www.fichierorigine.com].
3. PRDH. Programme de recherche en démographie historique.
4. Michel LANGLOIS, *Dictionnaire biographique des ancêtres québécois (1608-1700)*, Sillery, La Maison des ancêtres québécois, 2000, tome 3, p. 283.
5. *Ibid*, p. 283.
6. J.-F.-Adrien LEVASSEUR, *Pierre Levasseur dit Lespérance et la première génération en Nouvelle France*, Longueuil, J.-A. Levasseur, 1989, p. 6.
7. Sergine DESJARDINS, *Marie Major*, Laval, Guy Saint-Jean, 2002, p. 460.
8. Archange GODBOUT, Fonds Godbout (4M00-4610), BAnQ-Q.
9. Michel LANGLOIS, *Dictionnaire biographique des ancêtres québécois (1608-1700)*, Sillery, La Maison des ancêtres québécois, 2000, tome 3, p. 327.

LEVASSEUR ASSOCIATION



The Association, Levasseur d'Amérique Inc. is a non-profit organization, founded in 1988, in accordance to a federal charter. Its goals are:

- To join together and unite a large number of Levasseur and other descendants who have adopted the patronymic Borgia, Carmel, Carmell, Vasseur, Vassor, Vasser.
- To promote, develop and diffuse historical genealogical knowledge about the Levasseur families with Internet, an electronic Newsletter published three times per year also the publication of genealogical dictionaries.
- To maintain and update, on an ongoing basis, the genealogical data base available to members at all times on the Internet.
- To make available to members a family photo album and the Newsletters that the Association has published since 1988.
- To honor the memory of our forefathers and their descendants by way of monuments, plaques or symbolic gestures that commemorate historic events that are chronicle the Levasseur family.
- To gather all documents related to the Levasseur family for the purpose of constructing archives that will constitute the heritage of our Association and that will provide a source of information for historians and genealogists.

We would appreciate if you could send us family related documents that would add to our data base of archives and also enable us to continue the publication of the Levasseur Newsletter three times per year. The participation of the Levasseurs and members of their families is essential to allow us to pursue our mission. Send us your photos and texts for the next publication of the Newsletter. You can download them very easily with this new tool and by providing a brief description of the photo or text that is being sent. Following receipt of your documents, a copy of all information to be published in the Newsletter will be sent to you for approval prior to final publication.

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Web site: www.levasseur.org - webmaster@levasseur.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/associationlevasseur>

Other Levasseur Association Web sites:

irma.levasseur.org
militaires.levasseur.org
carmel.levasseur.org
borgia.levasseur.org

Twitter: https://twitter.com/Fam_Levasseur