

# Levasseur & Carmel families



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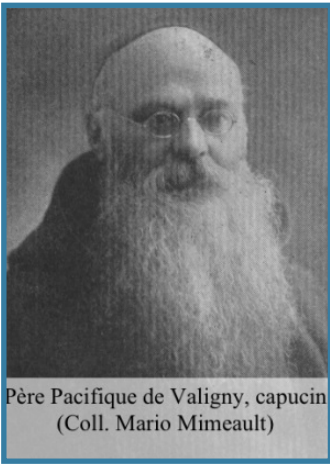
## The Levasseur in Matane

By: Alex Levasseur (662)

### A bit of history

We know that long before Jacques Cartier there were many expeditions across the Atlantic; the purpose of these expeditions was cod fishing and fur trading. In 1543, Jacques Cartier observes the mouth of the Matane river and describes it in a very flattering fashion. Samuel de Champlain would do likewise several years later:

*« This place is very pretty & plentiful fishing for cod and trout can be enjoyed here; with the proper nets we could load our ships at the right time & season.<sup>i</sup> »*



Père Pacifique de Valigny, capucin  
(Coll. Mario Mimeault)

But it is certain that the first inhabitants of Matane were the Micmacs. The name Matane (Mtctan), means «a beaver pond » in the Micmac language. It is the reverend father Pacifique who notes this in his book: *Études historiques et géographiques* <sup>ii</sup>. his interpretation of the meaning of the word Matane is however disputed.

The first missionaries visit Matane as early as 1647-1648, and in particular father Gabriel Druillettes, jesuit.

## The first settlers of Matane

The Territory of Matane and surrounding region was conceded as a Domain (or fief) to the lord Mathieu d'Amours de Chaufour by the intendant Jean Talon on Novembre 8, 1672. Four such lords would come in succession.

Nicolas Denys, known as Sir Denis de Riverain, established a permanent fishery around the Matane river in 1688, with the endorsement of his Lord. He would build up a settlement with dwellings.

*According to « l'Histoire naturelle » by Nicolas Denys, published in 1672, «most of the fishermen on the lower St Lawrence river and gulf shores were Normands from Honfleur, Dieppe and other harbours in Normandie; a few came from Boulogne, Calais, St-Malo and other places in Bretagne. The Basques were the most skillful. (...) it was quite busy everywhere along the shores from June to December. » <sup>iii</sup>*

As early as May 29, 1812 Mgr Joseph-Octave Plessis, Bishop of Québec, makes his first pastoral visit to Matane. He writes:

*«However the people were quickly gathered (for mass), the population being limited to ten or twelve families. » <sup>iv</sup>*

We will have to wait until about 1850 to see the first Levasseur settle in Matane and vicinity.



Source: Bibliothèque de  
l'Assemblée Nationale



## The first Levasseur arrive

All the Levasseur of Matane and region seem to be descendants of the ancestors Laurent Levasseur and Marie Marchand. My research has not revealed any who would belong to one or the other of the ancestors Pierre or Jean Levasseur.



*Matane in 1867 - Source: Société d'histoire et de généalogie de Matane*

Two of Laurent's sons, Pierre and Louis, will secure the descendance of the Levasseur lineage in the Matane region.

*There were five Levasseur pioneers who settled in the region of Matane: three in St-Ulric around 1858 – 1868 (Étienne, Clément and Jérémie) and two in Matane (Damase et Louis-Joseph)<sup>v</sup>.*

### 1. Damase Levasseur

Damase Levasseur, son of Benjamin and Félicité Marquis settle down in 1850. He will marry three times. A son from his second marriage (with Madeleine Dubé in 1881) Damase Levasseur Jr will also get married in Matane and will have twelve children, all baptized in Matane, of which six would die young. We then lose all tracks of this family.

## 2. Étienne Levasseur

Étienne Levasseur, son of Joseph and Luce Lepage, came to settle with his nine children in St-Ulric in 1858. They will have four more children. Of their five sons who would raise a family, only Étienne Jr. (married to Félicité Martin) will have a weak descendance, mainly from Augustin, who married Maria Roy-Lauzon. Up until 1937, Augustin Levasseur and Maria lived in Kedgwick, New Brunswick, with their sixteen children. In the fall of 1937, this «little» family comes to settle in Matane. Thanks to these new arrivals, the municipality of Matane just makes it to the number of residents needed to request and obtain it's « city » status!



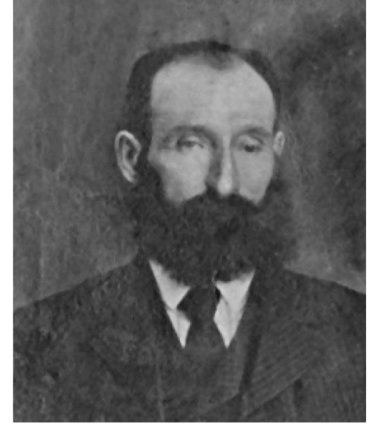
*Augustin Levasseur and his wife Maria Roy (Photo : La Voix Gaspésienne – January 2008)*

## 3. Clément Levasseur

Clément Levasseur, married Élise (Élisabeth) Gagné in 1868. All fourteen children were baptized in St-Ulric between 1868 and 1893. Five of their sons would produce a strong descendance here, as four would settle in the region : André in St-Ulric at first, and later in St-Léandre, as his brother François-Xavier. Évariste also settles in St-Léandre while Adolphe makes his home in Matane.

#### 4. Jérémie Levasseur

Jérémie Levasseur, brother of Damase, marries Mathilde Lévesque en 1845. They settle in St-Ulric in 1862 with nine children. The eldest child, Alexandre, is then sixteen years old. He will marry Émilie Pelletier and have eight living children, of whom five are born in St-Ulric and three in St-Léandre. Another one of Jérémie and Mathilde's sons, Jérémie Jr, gets married in St-Ulric to Philomène Gagné : sixteen children will come of this union. Their grandchildren will also settle down in the area. And finally, Alfred, the youngest, will marry Eugénie Beaulieu in St-Ulric where their ten children will be baptized. But Eugénie dies while giving birth to her eleventh child. The family will then disperse itself. Only one son, Thomas, will continue the family lineage in St-Léandre.



*Jérémie Jr - Alexandre's brother*

#### 5. Louis-Joseph Levasseur

Louis-Joseph Levasseur, originally from Bic, marries Aglaé Paradis in Matane in 1872. They will have fourteen children, of which eight will survive. Many of their children will settle in Matane.

#### Some outstanding personalities: Alexandre Levasseur



Alexandre Levasseur was born in St-André de Kamouraska. At the age of 16, in 1862, he migrates to St-Ulric; he gets married to Marie Émilie Pelletier in 1871 in St-Patrice de Rivière-du-Loup. Their first five children are born in St-Ulric between 1872 and 1878. In 1879, Alexandre buys a piece of land on country road VI in St-Ulric, which will become St-Léandre a few years later. The last three children were born there between 1879 and 1887. Furthermore, the Alexandre and Emilie couple will adopt a 10 year old orphan, Thomas, son of Alfred Levasseur and Eugénie Beaulieu and therefore a nephew of Alexandre's. In the book History of St-Léandre, one can read: *« Alexandre was the most outstanding personality of his era »*. Another document tells us:

*« He was a proud and impressive man. Impressive for his knowledge : he could read and write fluently. Also impressive for his authority, he had the upper hand on whomever wanted to be impressed.*

## **A hardworking and enterprising man.<sup>iv</sup> »**

In December 1900, he is named coordinator for the catholic services of St-Léandre, attached to St-Ulric. The first religious services (mass) are celebrated at his house. It is also around 1900 that the first post office is opened, and again, in Alexandre's house. From 1904 to 1907 as the crier he would read out public letters and notices in the stoop of the chapel, every Sunday after mass. In 1907, the post office is built in the village and Alexandre would be the postmaster.

In 1912, the municipality of St-Léandre draws up its constitution and Alexandre would be its first secretary until 1918. It is noteworthy that Louis, son of Alexandre, will be a municipal councillor in 1926 and 1927 and that Louis' son, Émilio, will also become the secretary of the St-Léandre municipality from 1930 to 1936.

A descendant, Édith Levasseur-Desrosiers, wrote in the memoirs of her grandfather Alexandre:

*« Mass was celebrated in Alex' house before there was a chapel. He worked very hard for the church and for the creation of schools. Alex and his son Louis dug out the foundations for the first church. The windows, the doors and the pews were all built at Louis' place, in his workshop on country road VI. Alexandre would say to his son Louis : « You will be able to give your daughters an education, we will have schools » and three of Louis' daughters would become school teachers in St-Léandre. Alex was quite a religious man and in the latter part of his life, everyday he would go to church where he would sing. When the Angelus rang, he would stop his work and pray. The church bells rang at the final minutes of his life and he died while reciting the Angelus prayer. »*

Alexandre's wife, Émilie Pelletier, died in 1909. Alex would then leave for the United States. He will marry Euphémie Sirois in 1911 in Fall River, Massachusetts. At the time he worked as a passport controller for Canadians migrating to the United States. After the wedding he returned with his new wife to St-Léandre, to become the secretary of the municipality.

Of his eight children, four of Alexandre's sons would continue the family lineage: Louis, nine children, of which six living (St-Léandre then Matane); Léonide with five children, one of whom would remain a bachelor (St-Ulric); Isidore nine children (St-Ulric and St-Luc de Matane) and Hypolite also with nine children (St-Léandre). On the daughters' side: Gracieuse married Herménégilde Coulombe (St-Léandre). Marie-Louise and Marie-Rose would become nuns. Élise dies at the age of four.



## Some outstanding personalities: Louis-Joseph Levasseur <sup>vii</sup>

Louis-Joseph is baptized in Bic in 1850 under the sole name of Joseph. It is also under this name that in 1872 he marries Aglaé Paradis, a young girl of seventeen from Kamouraska. The wedding would take place in Matane. Where Joseph's additional first name of Louis comes from is a mystery! Their fourteen children are all baptized in Matane between 1873 and 1899. Six would die at birth.

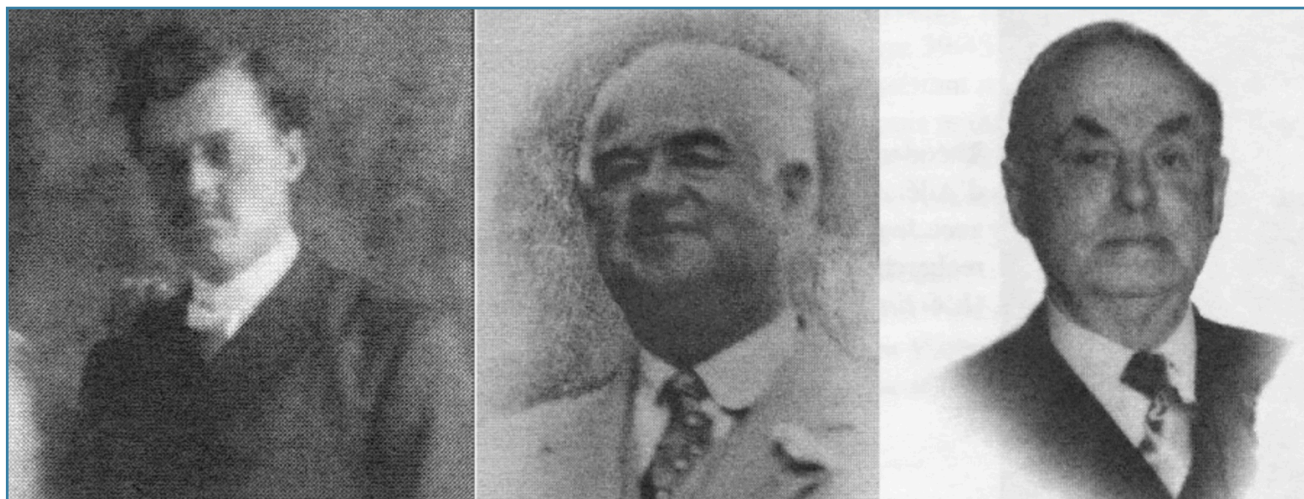
The Levasseur children got an advanced education. Each of the girls received a \$35,000 piano as a wedding gift.

Raoul married in Matane in 1910 with Marie-Louise Lévesque and had thirteen children. Hector married twice and had ten children. Émile also got married in Matane in 1907 and had ten children with Alida Lévesque.

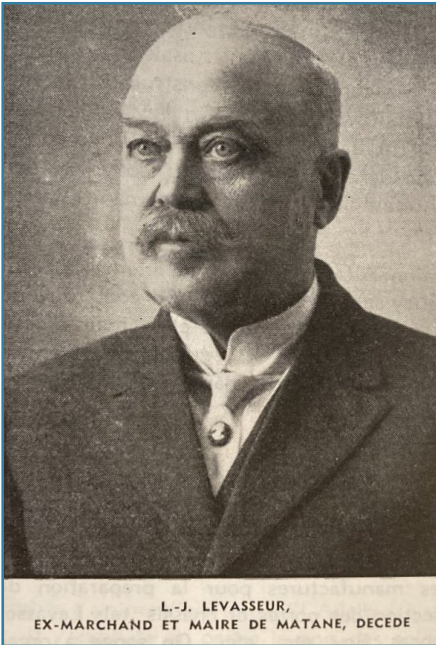
Louis-Joseph's brother, Alexis Levasseur, married Séraphine Lepage in Rimouski in 1871. Around 1876 he would rejoin his brother in Matane. Six of their children were baptized in Matane, between 1876 and 1886. Having become widowed in 1888, he will remarry in Matane in 1889 with Apolline Ouellet and they will have one daughter together. His three daughters from the first marriage all get married: two in Fall River Massachusetts and the other one in Rimouski. Past this point we lose all traces of this family.



Circa 1880 - collection Georgy Bouffard - Société d'histoire et de généalogie de Matane



*Louis-Joseph's three sons: Émile, Raoul and Hector<sup>viii</sup>*



Let's get back to Louis-Joseph. He started off as a clerk for the [Price Brothers Company](#), whose sawmill was the economic driver of Matane. Then at the age of 22 he opens a general store. He picked the best location possible: directly in front of the bridge across the Matane river. While growing this business he also contributed to the social, economic and political life of Matane. In 1889, already a father of six children, Louis-Joseph is elected mayor of Matane for a first two-year term. Then he would return for a second term in 1896. Municipal politics would continue to be of interest to him as he will become mayor once again between 1907 and 1910.

In those days the businessmen of Matane dreamt of connecting their city to the railroad. They created a company called « *Matane to Gaspé Railroad Company* ». Louis-Joseph will become director of this company in 1904-1905. Their efforts pay off as a train arrives at the Matane station in 1910. Another one of Louis-Joseph's accomplishments was to start the Matane Chamber of Commerce in 1913. He was the founding president and he would lead this organization till his death in 1928. When he passes away, Louis-Joseph leaves a « poisoned » inheritance to his three sons: the general store was in debt for \$22,000. His son Raoul, liquidates the store.



Location of Louis-Joseph's buildings in 1875 - Source: [Société d'histoire et de généalogie de Matane](#)



After the Second World War, two of Louis-Joseph's grandsons, Lucien and Jean-Paul Levasseur, are chosen to start the Levasseur Ford garage, located in front of the commercial centre « *Les Galeries du Vieux Port* ». They will keep it until 1986.

page 42 LA VOIX GASPÉSIENNE mercredi, 18 octobre 1972



**FORD**  
**MERCURY**

# LEVASSEUR & FRERES INC.



**LUCIEN LEVASSEUR**  
DIRECTEUR GENERAL CO-PROPRIETAIRE.

Le garage Levasseur & Frères Inc. a été fondé le 24 janvier 1946 par MM. Jean-Paul et Lucien Levasseur. La première bâtisse couvrait une surface de 60 pieds par 72; en 1951, on portait cette surface à 105 pieds par 72 et, en 1962, on y apportait des rénovations. On vient de terminer des rénovations presque complètes et le garage couvre maintenant, avec l'agrandissement, une surface de 145 pieds par 72.

Levasseur & Frères Inc. vend les produits Mercury depuis 1946 et il y a ajouté, en 1972, les produits Ford. L'entreprise compte 29 employés.

Depuis la fondation de l'entreprise, les frères Levasseur mènent une vie sociale très active. Ils font partie de plusieurs organismes et corps intermédiaires. À tour de rôle, ils ont dirigé plusieurs de ces mouvements.

Aujourd'hui, la plus grande ambition de la direction est de doter Matane d'une organisation très moderne, efficace et sérieuse. Leur devise qui a toujours été "un bon service" le demeure plus que jamais.



**JEAN-PAUL LEVASSEUR**  
CO-PROPRIETAIRE DIRECTEUR DES CREDITS GASPESIENS.

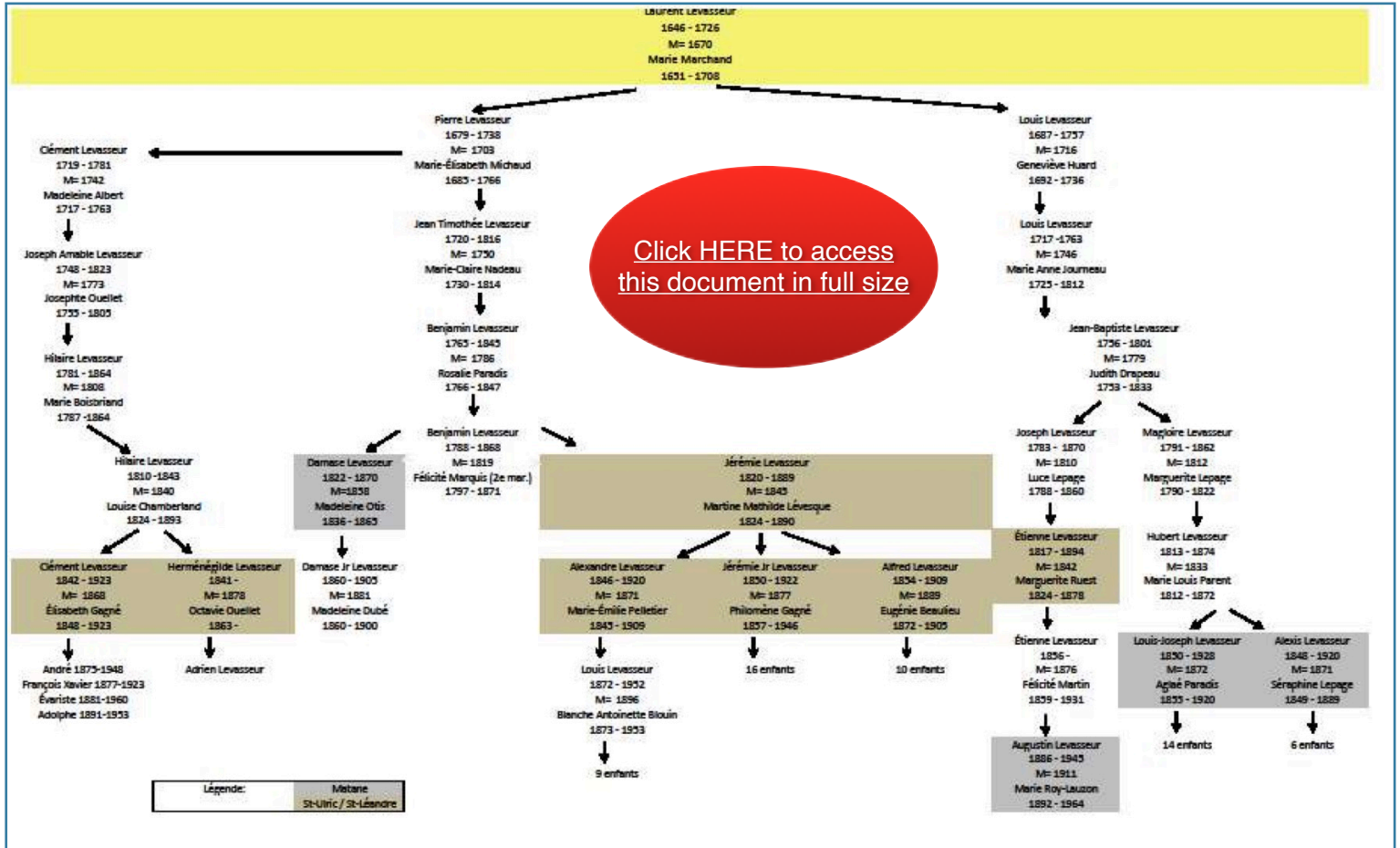
*Source : La Voix Gaspésienne, october 1972*

## Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the "Société d'histoire et de généalogie de Matane" for opening its doors and allowing me to search through its' precious archives. This work was greatly inspired by two publications in the magazine « *Au pays de Matane* » of the SHGM. So many thanks to Guy Desrosiers and Thérèse Comeau for their wonderful research and writing, and thanks as well to Georgy Bouffard. And finally I wish to thank my late aunt Édith Levasseur-Desrosiers and my cousin Nicole who enriched me with their memories and their documents.

In spite of my vigilance, it is quite possible that some mistakes may have slipped into this work so let me apologize for this

Here is the patrilinear chart for the Levasseur of Matane. Please [click on this link](#) to get a full size version:



i <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/17258/17258-h/17258-h.htm>

ii Pacifique de Valigny, de son vrai nom Henri-Louis-Joseph Buisson, né en 1863 à Valigny (hameau de Glénay dans les Deux-Sèvres) et mort en 1943, est un prêtre capucin français, missionnaire auprès des Micmacs de Gaspésie.

iii Histoire de Matane par Mgr Antoine Gagnon. Première édition parue en 1945, et édition revue et augmentée en 1977 – pages 86 - 87

iv idem – pages 104 - 105

v Au pays de Matane, vol 35, no 2 – novembre 2000. Revue de la Société d'histoire et de généalogie de Matane. Deux pionniers Levasseur, texte de Guy Desrosiers et Thérèse Comeau, pages 23 et suivantes.

vi « Les mémoires du vieux Léandre » 1902 – 1952, page 36

vii Au pays de Matane, vol.36, no 1 – mai 2001. Revue de la Société d'histoire et de généalogie de Matane. Louis-Joseph Levasseur (première et deuxième parties) Guy Desrosiers, Thérèse Comeau et Georgy Bouffard. Pages 22 à 34

viii Idem

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Editing and distribution: Jean-Pierre Levasseur

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# LEVASSEUR & CARMEL FAMILIES



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.*

Join our team of volunteers, contact us !!

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Other Levasseur Association Web sites:

[irma.levasseur.org](http://irma.levasseur.org)  
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[carmel.levasseur.org](http://carmel.levasseur.org)  
[borgia.levasseur.org](http://borgia.levasseur.org)

Twitter: [https://twitter.com/Fam\\_Levasseur](https://twitter.com/Fam_Levasseur)