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Robert de la Berge

The first Laberge in North America (1638-1712)

Robert de la Berge is the original Laberge ancestor in North America. Most people with the surname Laberge or Labarge can trace their family roots back to him.

Robert de la Berge was born on May 24, 1638 in Colombières, Normandy, France in what is now the department of Calvados. Robert was the son of Jacques de la Berge and Marie Poitevin who were married on May 8, 1636 in Colombières. Marie Poitevin was the widow of Jacques Touchet and had a son, Thomas, from that marriage.

Thomas Touchet, a carpenter by trade, had spent the years from 1650 to 1653 in New France. When he returned to New France in 1658, he took his half-brother Robert with him. Robert went to New France as a laborer, under a 3-year contract to work for a man named Massé Gravel in Château-Richer. Under the terms of the contract, Robert received a cash advance, an annual salary, and a guaranteed return trip to France. Robert arrived in New France aboard the ship Taureau on August 6, 1658.

In 1661, Robert completed his 3-year obligation to Massé Gravel, but instead of returning to France, he received a concession of land in Château-Richer. In the October of 1662, after a year of hard work, Robert sold the land to Charles Pouliot. Robert was apparently discouraged and intended to return to France. During the winter, Robert must have changed his mind. On February 4, 1663 Robert received a concession of

land in the parish of Sainte-Famille.

Robert Laberge married Francoise Gausse dit Le Borgne, widow of Nicolas Durand, on May 28, 1663 in Château-Richer. Robert sold his property in Sainte-Famille and took up residence on the Durand farm in Château-Richer.

In the years that followed, Robert became a respected citizen. He participated in the election of the first 3 church wardens of L'Ange Gardien. Robert was one of the early industrialists in the area. Sometime before 1674, Robert installed furnaces which were used for the manufacturing of lime.

Robert and Francoise had six children: Geneviève (b. 22 April 1664), Francoise (died a few days after birth on 6 February 1666), Catherine (bap. 15 September 1667), Francois (b. 12 June 1669), Nicolas (bap. 29 February 1672), and Guillaume (b. 30 April 1674).

Robert Laberge lived to the age of 74 and was buried in Château-Richer on April 12, 1712.

Virtually all Laberges and LaBarges in North America are descended from Robert de la Berge.

Did you know...?

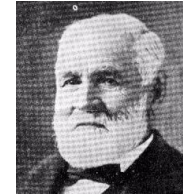
The name Laberge means one who lives on a bank on the edge of a river or a canal. The name has taken on several variations, with the most common being: Laberge, Labarge, and Leberge. Additionally, the various versions of the name are often spelled with a capitalized B.

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Joseph Marie LaBarge

Famous Riverboat Captain (1815-1899)



Joseph LaBarge of St. Louis, Missouri, was one of the most famous of the Mississippi river boat captains. He made his living transporting people and goods up and down the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. According to an 1898 newspaper article, Captain LaBarge was the man who taught Mark Twain about the Mississippi River.

Joseph LaBarge, Sr.

Fur Trapper & Guide (1787-1860)

The father of famed riverboat captain, Joseph LaBarge, Joseph Marie LaBarge Sr. was born at Assomption, Quebec, on July 4, 1787. In about 1808, he emigrated to St. Louis in a birch-bark canoe, travelling through various waterways to reach the Mississippi River.

He is probably best known for his exploits as a fur trapper in the far west. Several geographical landmarks such as LaBarge (or Battle) Creek and the city of LaBarge, both in Wyoming, were named in his honor. These took their name from a battle with Indians in which LaBarge took part. Details of this event have been lost

Michel Laberge

Yukon Explorer
(1836 - 1909)

Michel Laberge, born in Chateauguay, Quebec, was the first French-Canadian to explore the Yukon in 1866. Laberge worked at one time for the Russians and in 1867 he did some surveying for Western Union who wanted to build an overland telegraph to Europe. He later engaged in the fur trade in the Yukon under the name of the Pioneer American Fur Company. His contribution to geography is commemorated by Lake Laberge in the Yukon Territory, which was named after him in 1870. The lake, also known as Lake Leberge in some early documentation, was the setting for Robert W. Service's famous poem, *The Cremation of Sam McGee*.

Jean-Baptiste Laberge

Patriot
(1804 - 1883)

Jean-Baptiste Laberge, a carpenter from Ste-Martine, Quebec, took part in the Rebellion of 1838 in Beauharnois. For his part in the uprising, Jean-Baptiste Laberge was imprisoned in Montreal on November 16th, 1838 and received the death sentence on January 26, 1839. The sentence was changed to deportation and he was exiled to Australia, arriving in February of 1840. Laberge was later pardoned in the spring of 1844. Regarded as a local hero, a monument was erected over his grave in Ste. Martine, Quebec.

Charles Henri Laberge

Dairy Producer
(1884-1956)

Born in Bogart, Ontario on October 13, 1884, Charles Henri Laberge attended rural schools and completed his formal education at the Ontario Business College in Belleville. In 1904 he started work with the William Davies Company in Toronto and later formed a partnership with Joseph Moynour Ltd. in 1914. By 1922, this was organized into the Moynour Co-operative Creamery which by 1925 had a butter production of three million pounds. During these years, he developed a creamy type of cheese called Chateau Cheese and the Chateau Cheese Company was incorporated in 1926. In 1927 he introduced homogenized milk through the Laurentian Dairy and in 1928 he added Meadow Milk Products Ltd., a powdered milk unit, to take care of surplus fresh milk and buttermilk from the Moynour Co-operative Creamery. In 1929, he sold the milk, cheese, butter, and powdered milk plants to Borden Dairy for \$3 million. Charles Henri Laberge died on April 23, 1956.

Compliments of
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Visit the
Laberge-LaBarge Genealogy Page
<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~laberge/>

Noted Bearers of the Laberge-LaBarge Surnames



Robert de la Berge (1638-1712)

Laberge-LaBarge Family Reunion
Keeseville, New York
