

LIVES OF QUIET DESPERATION

THE ANCESTRY OF A LOUISIANA FRENCHMAN

(FAMILY EDITION - Expanded and Revised - 2020)



Gary M. Lavergne



LAND GRANTS of the Southwest Opelousas District

Compiled by SYDNEY C. TAYLOR and CAL A. REYNOLDS

This map indicates original French concessions and Spanish land grants in a portion of the Opelousas District (1763-1803) which now comprises the southwest quadrant of St. Landry Parish and small portions of Assiata and Evangeline parishes. Titles based on Occupancy and Cultivation, Recede, and Order of Survey are not included. Published by the Atakapas Historical Association in cooperation with the Center For Louisiana Studies.

Copyright 1962 Atakapas Historical Association

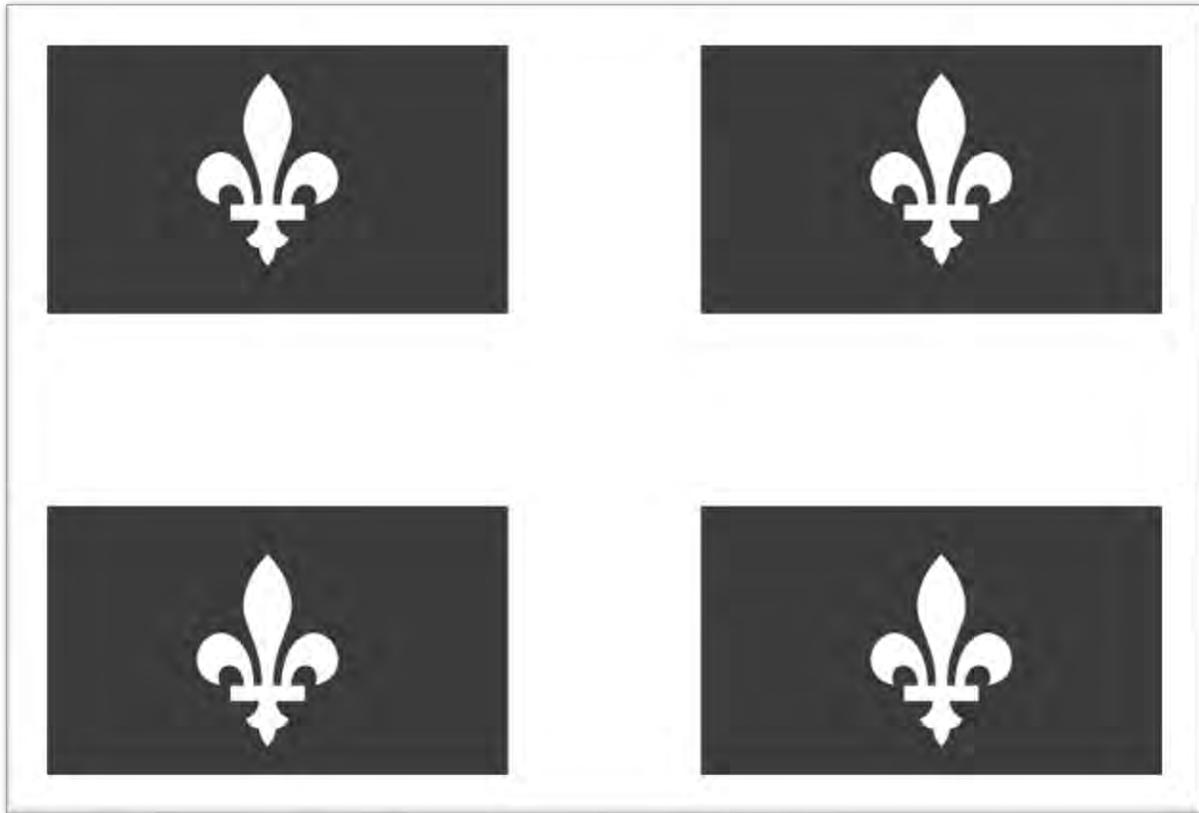
Also by Gary M. Lavergne

A Sniper in the Tower: The Charles Whitman Murders

The Bad Boy From Rosebud: The Murderous Life of Kenneth Allen McDuff

Worse Than Death: The Dallas Nightclub Murders and the Texas Multiple Murder Law

Before Brown: Heman Marion Sweat, Thurgood Marshall and the Long Road to Justice



Flag of Québec

(Fleurdelisé)

Once a symbol of the French monarchy in North America, the *fleur-de-lys* now denotes the French presence on the continent. It has been carved or painted on furniture and objects created by humble artisans and sculpted into the stone of churches and public buildings, including Québec's Parliament Building. On January 21, 1948, the *Fleurdelisé* was chosen to symbolize the French presence on the flag of Québec.

(<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/fleur-de-lys>)

Lives of Quiet Desperation

The Ancestry of a Louisiana Frenchman

Gary M. Lavergne

Privately Published by the Author
Cedar Park, Texas



GARY M. LAVERGNE
AUTHOR AND EDUCATOR

© 2020 by Gary M. Lavergne
All rights reserved, including the right of reproduction in whole or in part in any form.

Edition 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

This book is privately published for the enjoyment and edification of the
Lavergne and related families and is not for sale or resale.

For information about permission to reproduce selections from this book write to:

Gary M. Lavergne
P.O. Box 934
Cedar Park, Texas 78630-0934

garylavergne@yahoo.com

For



Nolan Dale Lavergne, my father
(1928-1979)

and

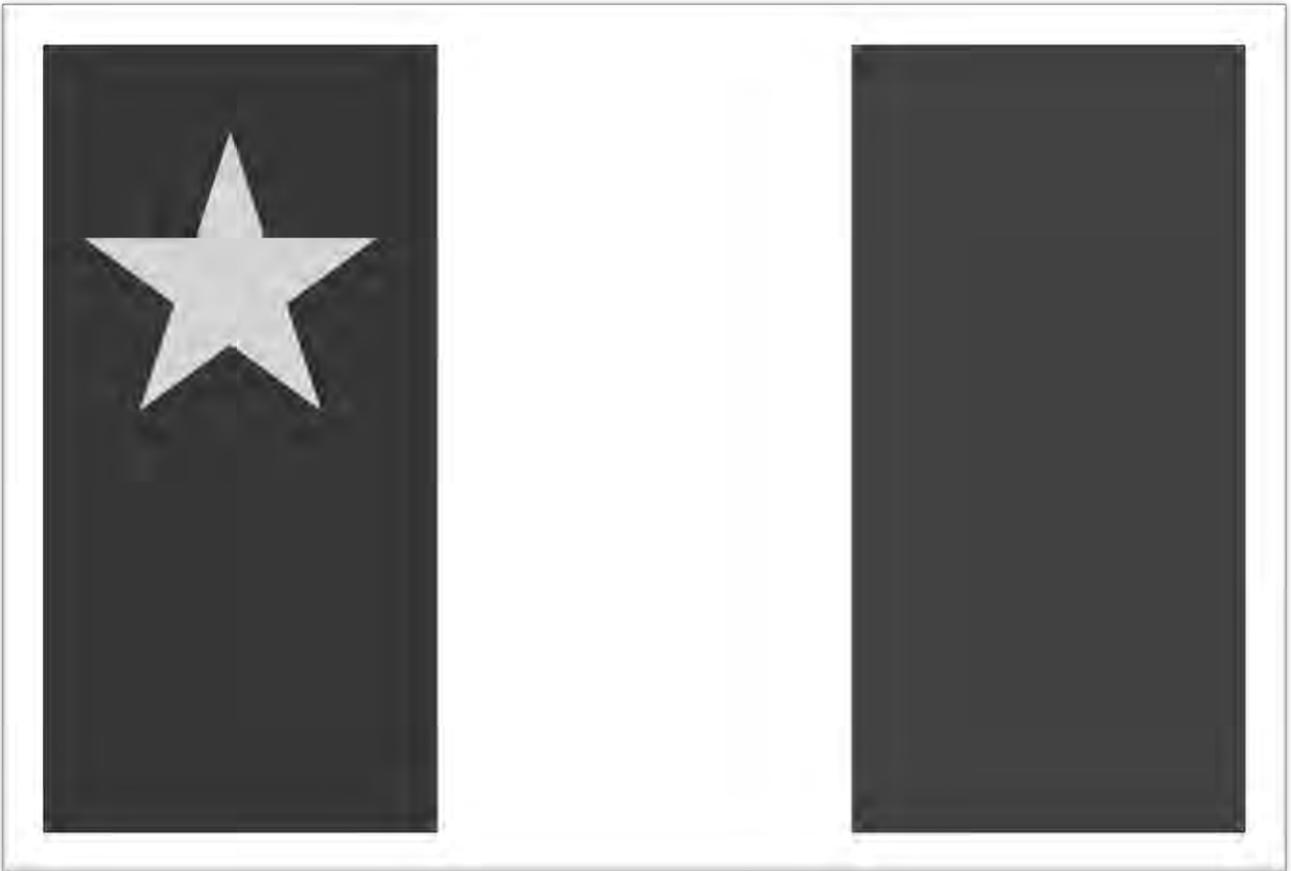
Helen Barbara "Miss Bobbie" Richard Lavergne, my mother
(1931-1990)

and

Joseph Kenneth Lavergne, my brother
(1953-2020)

who passed away while I was preparing this book.





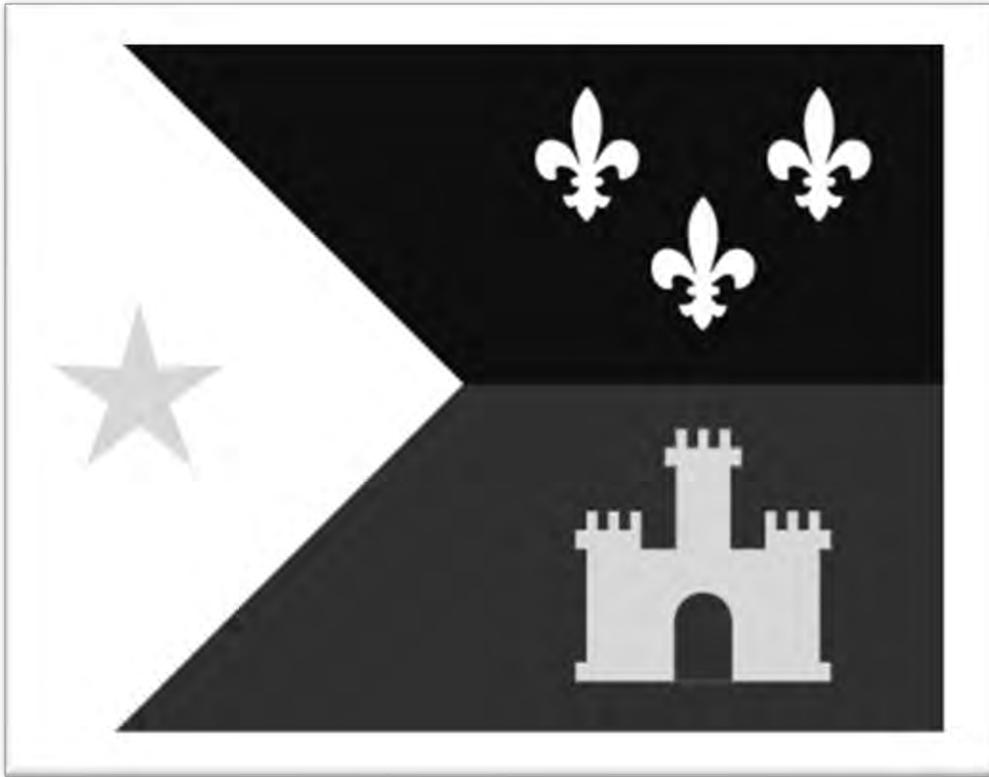
The Acadie Flag

The Acadian flag, also called the “starred tricolour,” consists of three vertical stripes of blue, white and red, with the star of the Virgin Mary in the blue stripe. In 1884, during the second National Convention of the Acadians in Miscouche, Prince Edward Island, the flag was chosen as one of the Acadian symbols. Today, the star and the colours of the flag can be found in the logos of a number of associations and groups linked to Acadians or their language.

(<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/the-acadian-flag>)

“The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation, and go to the grave with the song still in them.”

Henry David Thoreau, in *Walden*



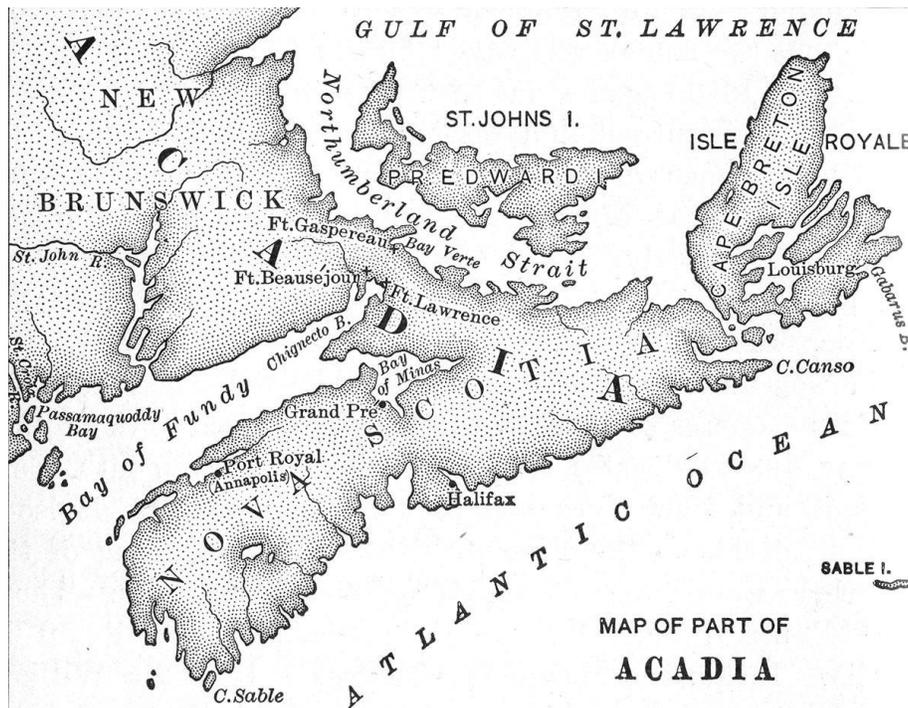
Flag of Acadiana

Commissioned by *France-Amérique de la Louisiane Acadienne* in 1965, Dr. Thomas Arceneaux of The University of Southwestern Louisiana (present-day University of Louisiana-Lafayette) designed a flag to honor the 200th anniversary of the arrival of Acadians in Louisiana. There are three symbols: the gold castle on the red field represents the Spanish kingdom, who allowed and even assisted the Acadians in settling their new homeland. The silver fleur-de-lis on the blue field represents French heritage. The gold star on the white background represents the Virgin Mary, patron saint of the Acadians. The Louisiana legislature made this flag the official flag of the Acadiana area in 1974.

(<http://www.acadian-cajun.com/acflag.htm>)

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	13
Preface to Genealogy	15
The Genealogy of Gary M. Lavergne	17
The Civil War and Reconstruction: Amnesty for Eugene Lavergne	23
Louisiana's French Amalgam	36
Scholastique Picou Breaux: Founder of Breaux Bridge, Louisiana	73
Expanding New France: The Lavergnes Move to Quebec, New Orleans and Opelousas	80
Our Connection to the Historic Daniel Boone	93
Quebec City and the Emergence of Louis Lavergne of Limousin, France	115
<i>Le Grand Dérangement</i> : Acadians Settle Louisiana	121
The Richards of <i>Ile St. Jean</i>	139
Settlements and Settlers: Some Acadian Pioneers	145
Put Your Heart to the Wind: The Lavergne Family and the Flu Epidemic of 1918	147
Growing Up Cajun	164
Preface to Pedigree	169
The Pedigree of Gary M. Lavergne	170
Index to Direct Ancestors	329
About the Author	370





Mézières-sur-Issoire Department of Haute-Vienne (near Bellac), France

Contemporary Google map and image of the French ancestral location of the Laverignes of Quebec, New Orleans, and St. Landry, Louisiana.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

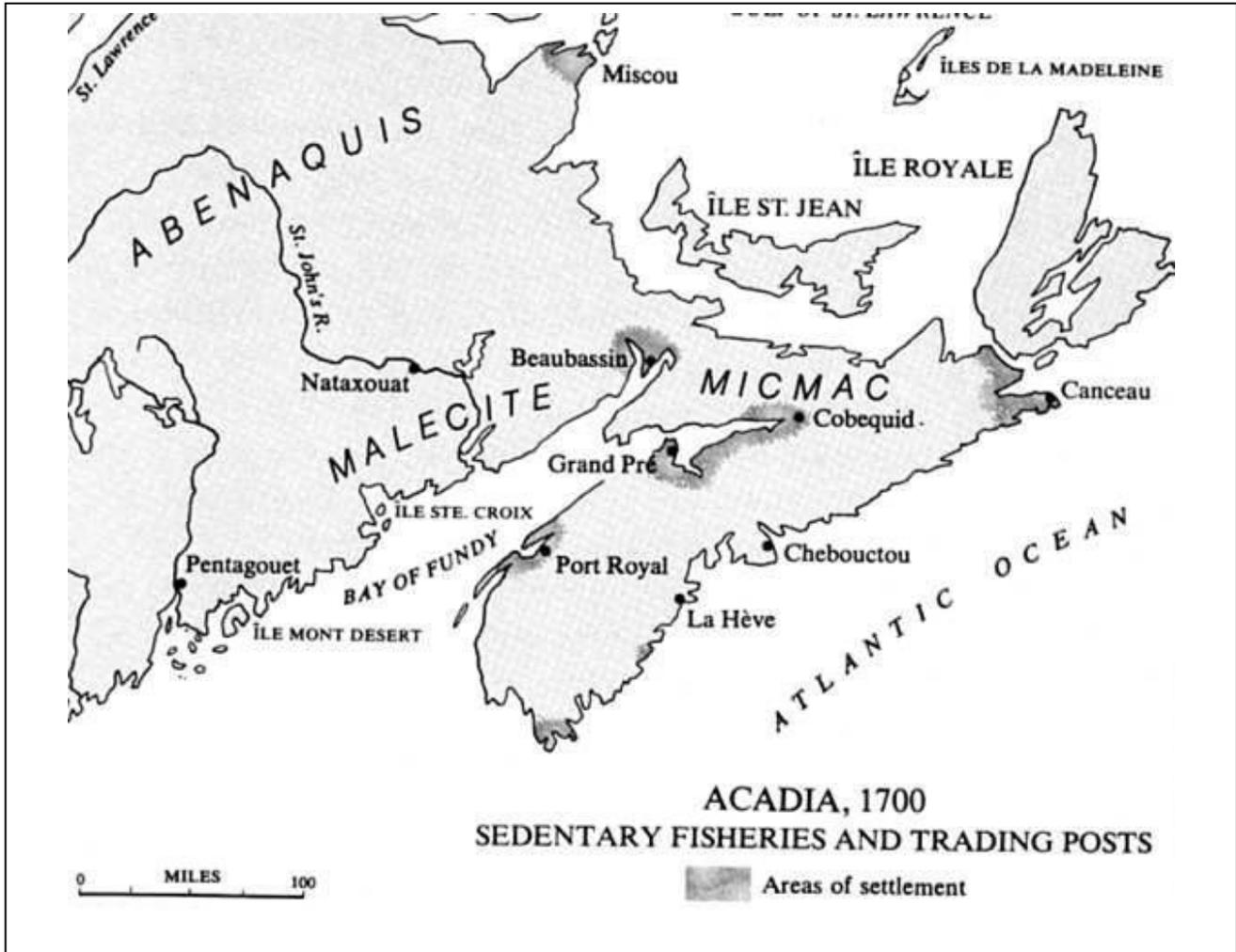
First and foremost is my wife and girlfriend Laura Gwen. On numerous occasions over the past 44 years she became a widow to my near-obsessive hobbies and writing projects. She patiently listened to my endless renditions of a "Breux here, a Bourgeois here" etc. Additionally, her very real talents as a grammarian and writer have made my career as a writer possible. And frankly, for the first edition of this work her pre-computer typing skills saved this project from eternal limbo in filing cabinets. More importantly, in addition to her own substantial career, she made it possible for me to earn my Masters and Educational Specialists degrees, and to run off to Rutgers and Harvard Universities for post-graduate studies. In a supreme act of sacrifice, she trusted in my decision to move our family to Texas in 1989. This trust resulted in whatever professional success and wealth we enjoy today. Our children, Charlie, Mark, Amy, and Anna were good kids who grew to become wonderful adults, who married other wonderful adults named Terri, Jesse, and Gabriel. When they were kids they made it possible for me to work at home, and to take on a project such as this.

My brothers, Richard "Black", and Kenneth "Keno" Lavergne never shared my love of history; for that they are forgiven. They were part of a family worth writing about, and for the love they did share, a lifetime's worth, I will always consider myself most fortunate. This is, quite literally, their genealogy, too. Keno died on May 10, 2020 as I was proofing the final draft of this work. My heart is broken that he did not get to see this, but copies are on their way to Georgia to those who loved him.

Two of my four grandparents lived long enough to witness part of this project. Mrs. Aline Olivier Lavergne (MaMom) and Mrs. Lilia Comeaux Richard (Gran) were especially helpful in providing enough information to "connect" oral history with published genealogical sources. The older pictures used in this work were given to me by "MaMom" shortly before her death in 1977. My father's sisters, Mrs. Pauline Lavergne Koop of Lake Charles, Mrs. Dorothy Lavergne Granger of Mamou, and Mrs. Aurelia Lavergne Saucier of Church Point, Louisiana, were instrumental in providing me information on some of the photographs contained herewith. My uncle, Paul Lavergne of Chalmette, Louisiana, was a valuable source. My dear cousin, friend, and fellow Texan, Archie Lavergne of Pasadena, gave me some of the documents copied here. More importantly, Archie never tired of our many long hours of talk; he came closest to sharing the passion I had for this project. (Whiskey and good food helped, of course.) He also provided me with naked truths about the past—and as an historian I deeply appreciated that. Since the publication of the first edition, all of those mentioned in this paragraph have passed on.

The bulk of this material is taken from Father Donald Hebert's *Southwest Louisiana Records*, a breath-taking 42 volume set including church and civil records of 13 civil parishes from 1756-1917. Without Father Hebert's foresight to preserve those archives, this and many other genealogies would never have been possible. The staffs of the Acadia Parish Public Libraries in Church Point and Crowley, Louisiana were patient and kind enough to allow me to bring many reference works home for much of my work. Staff of the Genealogy Section of the Jefferson Caffery Room and the Center for Louisiana Studies of Dupre Library on the campus of the University of Southwestern Louisiana (now the University of Louisiana-Lafayette) were helpful with the location of rare books, obscure volumes, and microfilms. Many years ago, Linda Boudreaux and Joanne Young at the rectory of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Church Point helped to fill many "gaps" between what I knew and what I needed to "connect dots." To the members of *la Pointe de la Eglise Genealogical Society* and their publication of inscriptions on tombstones in graveyards in and around Church Point, I owe gratitude.

Finally, for anyone who remembers discussing this project with me, or helping me in any way, my sincere hope is that you will accept my warmest thanks. If you are not mentioned here it is a mistake of the head, and not the heart.



Preface to the Genealogy

Every human life is an historical achievement; few people realize that; it was not until this project was underway in early 1977 that I discovered this truth. This work is about generations of individual historical achievements.

Sometimes the genesis of a project is forgotten over time, but that is not the case here. A singular joy of my life was my relationship with my father, Nolan Dale Lavergne. We often sat together on the front steps of his house on the Lawtell Highway in Church Point, Louisiana. Those steps served as our porch. I remember being with him as he talked, smoked cigarettes and drank beer. It was a most unlikely place to impart homespun wisdom. I remember toiling with him at his gas station and accompanying him as he delivered butane to the remotest of areas in central and southwest Louisiana. He often spoke of the hardships of his childhood. He also spoke of his father, a man whom I did not know. And yet, Nolan Lavergne did not know much about his own family history before his parents. He could not recall, for example, the names of his grandparents before I began this project. There was a missing piece of his own self; there was something tragic about someone who had to be told the names of his grandparents just before his own death in 1979.

And so began my journey from the simple objective of finding out who my great grandfather Lavergne was into this quite substantial genealogy. What is so frustrating about this work is that I know, in my heart, that even after a 14-year odyssey (from 1977-1991), and of this even more substantial current revision (2020), after all of my searching and researching there is so much more to know. Surely, there is a way to discover *why* and *how* Louis Lavergne of France braved the Atlantic in the 1660s to help build Quebec in New France (Canada). (If it is out there I was unable to uncover it.) I found myself living the lives of many of my ancestors. How was it possible to raise 15 or more children, or to lose three or four children in infancy only to keep having more. What was it like to arrive in a strange land called Louisiane from Acadie (Nova Scotia), St. Malo, Dunkirk? What kind of life did Marie Anne Simon of Quebec lead? What must she have been feeling when, in 1675, at the age of 14, she married a 28-year-old Louis Lavergne, a man exactly twice her age? What was it like for her to bid farewell forever to at least one of her six children as they left Quebec for Louisiana in the 1720s? She died and was buried in Quebec in 1743, shortly before her 83rd birthday.

Many of the lives briefly chronicled here were lives of quiet desperation and failure. Surely, the Quebecois and the Acadians, once they settled in Louisiana, must have wondered what they were thinking. After having lived for decades in frigid Canadian climates, they endured insufferably hot and humid summers and clouds of mosquitoes along the Gulf of Mexico coast of Louisiana. On the other hand, some led lives of excitement and discovery, befitting accomplished pioneers. Pierre Tomelin was a carpenter from Dunkerque, France, who weather boarded the original St. Louis Cathedral on St. Ann Street in New Orleans—and got sued for it! Firmin Breaux built a bridge across Bayou Teche. His widow, named Scholastique Melanie Picou, in a desperate act of economic survival, subdivided their land and sold lots--the site is now the city of Breaux Bridge--the "Crawfish Capital of the World!" Jean Baptiste David was Sheriff of "Imperial St. Landry Parish, the Mother of Parishes," when he died by carriage accident in 1855. Robert Viez de la Mothe of Quebec, New France, was a "*premier sergent d'une compagnie du regiment des gardes*," and yes, Nolan Lavergne was elected without opposition the Chief of Police of Church Point as was his grandfather-in-law Louis Richard.



The vast majority of those listed in this volume, however, were simple country farmers. They lived, married, parented, and died. While their lives were simple and seemingly uneventful, it is sobering to realize that had any one of the persons listed as a head of household or their spouse had died as a child, I would not be writing these words. Had Louis Lavergne died *en route* to New France, or been captured by dreaded English or Spanish Pirates, or been visited by unwelcomed Native Americans, many thousands of French-Canadians and Americans would not be alive today—they would never have been born. The beauty of personal history is that every living person has a family tree, and many different people share various branches of the same tree. Everyone reading this will almost assuredly identify with some part of this work. As an historian by training, I found it my duty to make sure I knew all there was to know about my family so that my children and grandchildren would never face the tragedy of not knowing the names of their grandparents. We each have 64 great-great-great-great grandparents, and 1024 great times 8 grandparents. Each of these lives had a story waiting to be discovered; each contributed to the fact that we are here. That is why every human life is an historical achievement.

Since the publication of the first edition of this work, advances in technology have made available unimaginable databases and applications for searching and discovering ancestors. The first edition was largely limited to Rev. Donald Hebert's gigantic multi-volume *Southwest Louisiana Records (SLR)*. It focused on the records of the Catholic churches of what is called "Acadiana" in Louisiana. These churches literally predated civil parishes and provided a reliable archive through French, Spanish, Confederate, and American rule. I was able to supplement the *SLR* with collections from the Genealogy Room of the Dupre Library on the campus of the University of Louisiana-Lafayette but, even then, my first edition was largely limited to French Catholics in Louisiana. That was alright; that is pretty much who I am, a Louisiana Frenchman. Back then, I did it all using hundreds of index cards.

Today, the Internet has thousands of ancestry sites with BILLIONS of searchable names and families. The problem is, like the Web itself, it is all hopelessly chaotic. Contributors to these sites have varying degrees of competence and far too many are downright lazy. (Some did not seem to notice that some of their female ancestors had children over a period of over 35 years.) Moreover, genealogy is inherently an exercise in personal passion, and that is not a condition conducive to discovering the truth.

I tried to control my passion; I tried not to be lazy; and I am confident this is a competent contribution. But I am nothing if not self-aware: the content of this book is the result of thousands of my best judgments and it is foolish to believe there are no mistakes in the hundreds of pages that follow. Those mistakes are mine alone.

Gary M. Lavergne
Cedar Park, Texas
16 May 2020

THE GENEALOGY OF GARY M. LAVERGNE

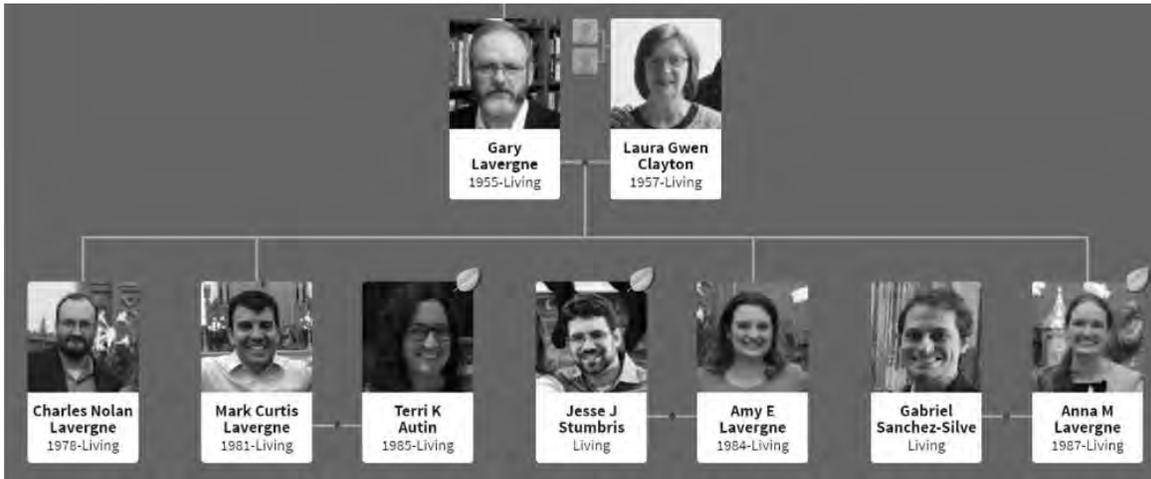
THE FAMILY OF GARY MITCHELL **LAVERGNE** (NOLAN DALE AND HELEN BARBARA “MISS BOBBIE” **RICHARD**) AND LAURA GWEN **CLAYTON** (CURTIS WOODFORD AND EUGENIA **COMEAX**)

m. 4 September 1976 in Church Point, Louisiana

1. Charles Nolan –
 - b. 3 January 1978 in Crowley, LA
 - d.
2. Mark Curtis –
 - b. 10 August 1981 in Crowley, LA
 - m. 25 September 2010 Terri Autin in Austin, TX
 - d.
3. Amy Elizabeth –
 - b. 16 May 1984 in Church Point, LA
 - m. 9 February 2013 Jesse J. Stumbris in Austin, TX
 - d.
4. Anna Michelle –
 - b. 15 February 1987 in Opelousas, LA
 - m. 18 June 2016 Gabriel Sanchez-Silveira in Houston, TX
 - d.



Gary M. Lavergne and Laura Gwen Clayton, 2015



THE FAMILY OF NOLAN DALE **LAVERGNE** (JEAN CLARVILLE AND ALINE **OLIVIER**) AND HELEN BARBARA **RICHARD** (JOSEPH DARBIS AND LILLIA **COMEAX**)

m. 24 June 1951 in Church Point, LA

1. Richard Dale "Black" –
 - b. 17 January 1952
 - m. 18 November 1978 Shelley Vicknair (divorced)
 - m. 13 July 1996 Yvette Servat in Rayne, LA
 - d.



2. Joseph Kenneth "Keno" –
 - b. 16 January 1953
 - m. 6 January 1973 Sharlene Lavergne in Church Point, LA
 - d. 10 May 2020 at home in Covington, Georgia



Gary, Kenneth, and Richard Lavergne

3. Gary Mitchell –
 - b. 28 October 1955 in Church Point, LA
 - m. 4 September 1976 Laura Gwen Clayton in Church Point, LA
 - d.

THE FAMILY OF JEAN CLARVILLE **LAVERGNE** (EUGENE AND MARIE HERMINE **BOURGEOIS**) AND ALINE **OLIVIER** (OSCAR AND AURELIA **THIBODEAUX**)

m. 18 September 1909 (USL Archives)

1. Pauline –
 - b. 7 August 1910
 - m. 12 July 1944 Ervin Koop of Michigan
 - d. 17 August 2004 (Findagrave.com)
2. Ben –
 - b. 13 January 1913 (Tombstone)
 - m. Yolande Latiolias
 - d. 15 December 1973 (Tombstone)
3. Joseph –
 - b. 25 March 1914 (CPch v7 p33)
 - m.
 - d. 21 October 1918 during a flu epidemic at age 4 (LA State death Index, 1819-1964)
4. Alton (Elton) –
 - b. 25 September 1916 (CPch v7 p147)
 - m.
 - d. 19 October 1918 during a flu epidemic at age 2 (LA State death Index, 1819-1964)



- 5. Louis –
 - b. 20 May 1918 (Tombstone)
 - m. Billie Jo Richie (divorced)
 - d. 20 March 1963 (Tombstone)

- 6. Nadice –
 - b. circa 1920
 - m.
 - d. 23 August 1939 (LA State death Index, 1819-1964)

- 7. Paul –
 - b. 23 December 1922
 - m. October 1946 Dottie Warren of New Orleans
 - d. 14 July 1982 buried in Chalmette, Louisiana

- 8. Jean Willis "Coon" –
 - b. 15 February 1924 (Tombstone)
 - m.
 - d. 25 June 1974 (Tombstone)

- 9. Dorothy –
 - b. 28 May 1926
 - m. 8 September 1946 Ernest Granger
 - d. 15 January 1999 (Tombstone)



Nolan Dale Lavergne
circa 1938

- 10. Nolan Dale –
 - b. 3 May 1928
 - m. 24 June 1951 Helen Barbara Richard (Certificate of Marriage)
 - d. 22 August 1979 (Certificate of Death)

- 11. Aurelia "Tee Ya" –
 - b. 7 September 1930
 - m. 17 July 1947 Vionel Saucier
 - d. 9 January 1999 (Tombstone)

1930 United States Federal Census												
Louisiana - St Landry - Police Jury Ward 6 - District 0035												
PLACE OF BIRTH	NAME	RELATION	BIRTH DATA	POSTING RESIDENCE	EDUCATION	PLACE OF BIRTH			MARRIAGE	MARRIAGE	MARRIAGE	
						FRANCE	GERMANY	OTHER				
	Jean Clarville Lavergne	Head	1888	18	8	France	France	France				
	Aline Olivier	Wife	1888	18	8	France	France	France				
	Nolan Dale	Son	1928	2	8	France	France	France				
	Dorothy	Daughter	1926	4	8	France	France	France				
	Paul	Son	1922	7	8	France	France	France				
	Jean Willis	Son	1924	6	8	France	France	France				
	Aurelia	Daughter	1930	0	8	France	France	France				

Household of Jean Clarville Lavergne and Aline Olivier, 1930 U.S. Census

THE FAMILY OF JOSEPH DARBIS **RICHARD** (LOUIS AND DORALIZE **DAVID**) AND LILLIA **COMEAX** (PIERRE FOSTAN AND MARIE DENISE **LEBLEU**)

m. 10 December 1923 (CPch v 4 p54)

1. Joycelyn –

b. 4 November 1925 (Tombstone)
m. Alfred "Frenchie" Godeaux
d. 27 February 1984 (Tombstone)

2. James Ray –

b. 19 October 1926 (Cemetery Listings, p 115)
m. Dewilda Higginbotham
d. 6 August 1987 (Cemetery Listings, p 115)

3. Betty Jo –

b. 7 July 1929 (Tombstone)
m. 26 April 1953 Lawrence Doucet
d. 9 June 2018 (Tombstone)



4. Helen Barbara –

b. 6 June 1931 (Certificate of Baptism)
m. 24 June 1951 Nolan Dale Lavergne (Certificate of Marriage)
d. 23 February 1990 (Certificate of Death)

5. Jeanette –

b. 4 November 1932 (Tombstone)
m. 6 November 1949 Joseph B. "Jeb" Benoit
d. June 4, 2012 (Findagrave.com)

6. Sylvia –

b. 7 June 1936
m. 14 July 1957 Raymond Prejean
d.

7. Sandra –

b. 3 August 1940
m. 2 August 1958 Houston Fontenot
d.



Helen Barbara "Bobbie" Richard Lavergne
circa 1951

THE FAMILY OF EUGENE **LAVERGNE** (BAPTISTE URSIN AND AZELIE **STEEL**) AND MARIE HERMINE **BOURGEOIS** (LUCIEN ORTER AND MARIE AZELIA **PREJEAN**)

m. 5 September 1865 (Opch vD #165)

1. Joseph Homer –
 - b. 22 July 1866 (Opch v6 p236)
 - m. 4 October 1887 Orilia Olivier (CPch v4 p121)
 - d.
2. Eugene Joseph –
 - b. 12 October 1868 (CPch v1 p124)
 - m.
 - d. 19 December 1885 "at 17" (Opch v2 p422)
3. Marie Azeline –
 - b. 22 January 1871 (Opch v6 p308)
 - m. 19 October 1893 Joseph Anslem (Opch v3 p126)
 - d. 21 July 1950 (Ancestry.com)
4. Marie Elizabeth –
 - b. 22 July 1873 (Opch v6 p337)
 - m. 2 April 1893 Theodore Boone (Opch v3 p124)
 - d. April 3, 1947 (Findagrave.com)
5. Joseph Albert –
 - b. 25 September 1875 (Opch v6 p364)
 - m.
 - d. 14 May 1878 "at 2 yrs at Plaquemine" (Opch v2 p345)
6. Lucien –
 - b. 5 December 1877 (Opch v6 p385)
 - m. 10 December 1896 Eve Pitre (Opch v3 p184)
 - d.
7. Joseph –
 - b. 3 May 1880 (Opch v6 p410)
 - m.
 - d.



Marie Hermine Bourgeois Lavergne and Jean Clarville Lavergne, circa 1897

- 8. Joseph Edmund –
 - b. 9 October 1882 (Opch v6 p439) m.
 - d. 14 November 1936 (Findagrave.com)

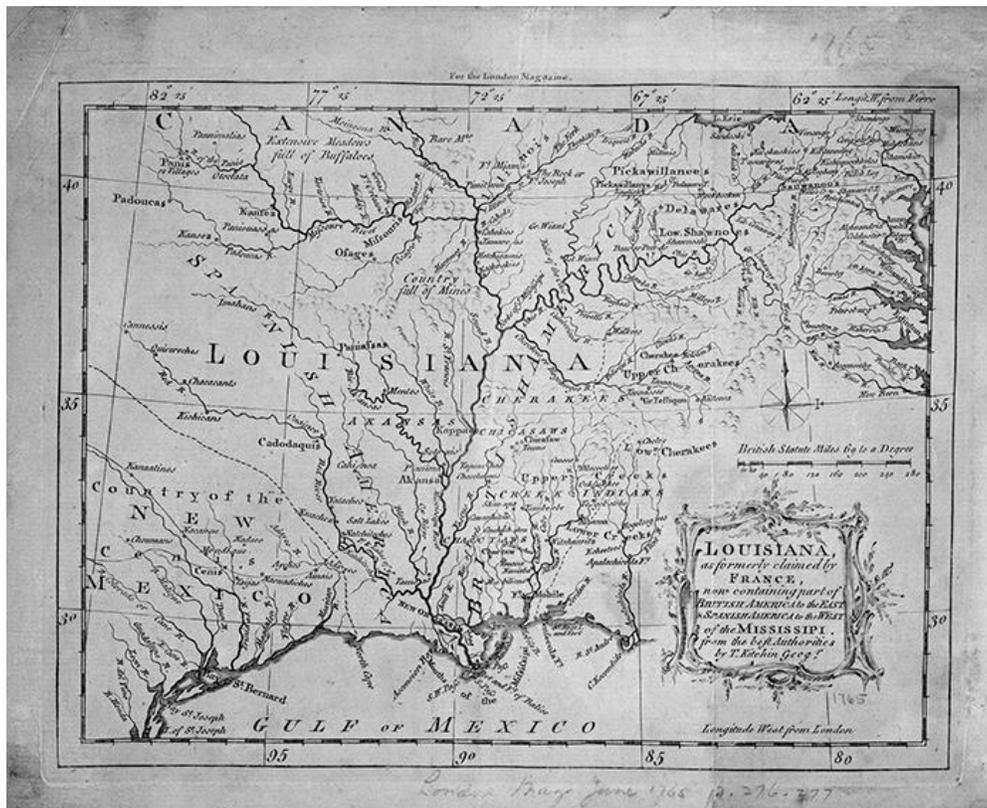
- 9. Marie Atolise –
 - b. 1 September 1883 (CPch v4 p153)
 - m.
 - d.

- 10. Felix –
 - b. 8 April 1885 (Opch v7 p25)
 - m. 18 November 1903 Emma Benoit (CPch v5 p126)
 - d. 1 August 1956 (Ancestry.com)

- 11. Jean Clarville –
 - b. 9 June 1889 (Opch v7 p135)
 - m. 18 September 1909 Aline Olivier (USL Archives)
 - d. 17 September 1958 (Tombstone)



Jean Clarville Lavergne
circa 1909



THE CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION

Amnesty for Eugene Lavergne

The Civil War was an American nightmare. The single Battle of Gettysburg in Pennsylvania killed more Americans than some of America's wars. For many, Reconstruction, or the rebuilding of the American infrastructure, was even more traumatic than the war itself. It reached all parts of the South, even those remote areas barely scarred by military clashes. Action in the Opelousas area, for example, was pretty much limited to the Battles of Buzzard's Prairie, near the Chretien Plantation, on 15 October 1863; Opelousas, on 21 October 1863; and Bayou Borbeaux, on 3 November 1863, in a rural area between present day Church Point and Sunset, Louisiana. The clash of the forces of Union General Nathaniel Banks and small, but effective bands of mounted Texas and Louisiana guerillas made life extremely uncomfortable for the residents of the area. While the battles were little more than large skirmishes, at least when compared to Antietam and Gettysburg, the presence of Union forces brought fear and even terror. Federal and Confederate troops needed supplies and were determined to get it from area stores and farms. As Union forces approached Opelousas an exhausted Confederate rider in tattered clothes, in much the same tradition as the Revolutionary Patriot Paul Revere, dashed through the streets of Opelousas shouting the ominous message: "*Les Federaux sont sur le Carencro!*" ("The Yankees are on the Carencro [River]").

David C. Edmonds, author of *Yankee Autumn in Acadiana*, points out that few places suffered more from invasion, occupation, and confiscation than Opelousas. Colonel Thomas E. Chickering of the 41st Massachusetts Infantry and General Nathaniel Bank's military governor, spent almost two months in Opelousas area "collecting the valuable products of the country." Every house, farm and store in Imperial St. Landry Parish (St. Landry, Acadia and Evangeline Parishes) from Plaquemine Brulee (Church Point) to Barre's Landing (Port Barre) had been "virtually denuded by Chickering's efficient foraging teams." Foreigners, Confederates, free men of color, Acadians and other Frenchmen saw their valuables taken, including cotton, sugar, fodder, corn, livestock, implements, wagons, slaves and anything else of value. The wanton confiscation and senseless destruction of valuable property inflicted upon civilians by undisciplined Union soldiers motivated the area's young men and their families to attempt behaviors and display signs of neutrality. It was all for naught; the jayhawking and marauding continued unabated.

Unlike the Civil War itself, the war in Louisiana was relatively quick and decisive. Once Admiral David Farragut captured New Orleans, Confederate Louisiana was no more. For the Union Army (and the Confederates) the subsequent "Battles of the Bayou Country" were more attempts to determine the future of Texas than a defense of the Bayou State. By living in between Texas and New Orleans, Cajuns and other French Louisianans were caught in the middle: geo-politics brought the Civil War to Acadiana. As we shall see, geo-politics, unfortunately, has always determined the fate of the Louisiana French.

The Lavergnes were never wealthy owners of vast tracts of land, and not likely to ever have owned more than a few slaves. They were simple tenant farmers and never part of the opulence of the Antebellum South. Eugene Lavergne had witnessed the Civil War as an adolescent, and as a 19-year-old he volunteered into Confederate service as a private in Company D of Weatherly's 15th Sharpshooters Battalion. According to the Website *Acadians in Gray*, "This battalion was organized about July, 1864, probably at Pineville, from men of Miles' Louisiana Legion on parole west of the Mississippi River and from new recruits. The battalion was assigned to General Allen Thomas' brigade at Pineville and did

guard duty there during most of its service. Some of the men appear to have served as pickets along the upper Atchafalaya River early in 1865. Thomas' brigade moved across Red River to Bayou Cotile in April, 1865, and soon marched to Natchitoches. On May 19, the brigade was disbanded at Mansfield in anticipation of the surrender of the Trans-Mississippi Department."¹

U.S., Headstone Applications for Military Veterans, 1925-1963 for Eugene Lavergne
1925-1941 > La Tour, Eugene Victor - Lehman, John A

cba

WAR DEPARTMENT
O. Q. M. G. Form No. 698
Approved Aug. 15, 1918
Revised May 18, 1931

APPLICATION FOR HEADSTONE
(PLEASE MAKE OUT AND RETURN IN DUPLICATE)

Enlistment Dates _____
Discharge Dates June 19th. 1865 *15 (Weatherly's)* **ORIGINAL**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Name <u>Lavergne, Eugene</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rank <u>Pvt.</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Company <u>D</u>	U. S. Regiment, State Organization, <u>Sharpshooters</u> Date of Death <u>Dec. 6, 1891.</u>
Name of Cemetery <u>"Catholic Graveyard"</u>		Located in or near City <u>Opelousas</u> State <u>La.</u>	
		If World War Veteran Division _____ State _____ Emblem _____	

To be shipped to Joseph Anslem at Opelousas, La. St. Landry Parish
(Name of consignee) (Give R. R. station, county, and State)

Whose post-office address is Opelousas, Louisiana.

DO NOT WRITE HERE

To A. G. O. JUL 16 1935
COLUMBUS, MISS. AUG 14 1935
Ordered _____
B/L 1141660
Shipped 10-24-35

This application is for the UNMARKED grave of a veteran. It is understood the stone will be furnished and delivered at the railroad station or steamboat landing above indicated, at Government expense, freight prepaid. I hereby agree to promptly accept the headstone at destination, remove it and properly place same at decedent's grave at my expense. NO FEE SHOULD BE PAID IN CONNECTION WITH THIS APPLICATION.

Applicant, _____
Address Opelousas, La. Date July 12, 1935.

3-2654



Eugene Lavergne - Original Tombstone Plaque



Present day Tombstone

¹ See: <http://www.acadiansingray.com/15th%20Bn.%20S.S.%20Inf.htm>

Three years earlier, in July of 1862, Congress passed an act providing for the confiscation of the property of disloyal persons. It allowed sixty days for these persons to return to their proper loyalty to the United States. Normally, this was done through a "Loyalty Oath." In September, General Benjamin Butler, the commanding Union officer in New Orleans ordered all persons who refused to take the loyalty oath to be registered as enemies and to provide a list of their property. About 4,000 people registered as enemies, but more than 61,000 swore a loyalty oath. By war's end in 1865 many young men, including Eugene Lavergne, were appearing in courthouses to receive amnesty and to solemnly swear to:

1. faithfully defend the Constitution of the United States;
2. support the Union of States; and
3. support the Proclamations and laws passed by Congress during the war.

Union officials were interested in having the men of the area renounce the institution of slavery, and more specifically, to accept Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which freed slaves in Confederate-held lands as of 1 January 1863.

On 19 August 1865, less than three months after his battalion had been disbanded, and about two weeks before his marriage to Marie Hermine Bourgeois, Eugene Lavergne appeared before L.V. Chachere, a St. Landry Parish clerk, and swore a loyalty oath. He might have done so in order to secure a marriage license, or to protect whatever property he did own, or just to get the whole messy affair over with.



Eugene Lavergne Amnesty Oath, August 19th, 1865
St. Landry Parish, Louisiana

Text reads: "I do solemnly swear or affirm, in the presence of Almighty God, that I will henceforth faithfully defend the Constitution of the United States, and the Union of States thereunder, and that I will in like manner abide by and faithfully support all laws and Proclamations which have been made during the existing rebellion with reference to the emancipation of slaves. **SO HELP ME GOD.**"

FAMILY OF OSCAR **OLIVIER** (NOEL AND EURANIE **BOONE**) AND AURELIA **THIBODEAUX** (SYLVESTRE AND AZELINE **BIHM**)

m. 7 December 1882 (Opch vE #290)

1. Louis Willie –

b. 29 August 1884 (Opch v7 p12)

m. Louise Daigle

d. 20 February 1954 (Cemetery Listings, p107)

2. Ben –

b. 15 January 1886 (Opch v7 p59)

m.

d.

3. Aline –

b. 26 May 1891 (Opch v7 p201)

m. 18 September 1909 Jean Clarville Lavergne (USL Archives)

d. 3 November 1977 (newspaper obituary)

4. Octavie –

b. 18 June 1887 (Opch v7 p92)

m. Poulan Latiolias

d.

5. May A.

b. 1901 (Ancestry.com)

m.

d.

6. Rufus H.

b. 1904 (Ancestry.com)

m.

d.

7. Ethel M.

b. 1906 (Ancestry.com)

m.

d.



THE FAMILY OF LOUIS **RICHARD** (JOSEPH ALCIDE AND EDMONIA **SAVOIE**) AND DORALIZE **DAVID**
(OCTAVE AND MARY EMELIE **McCLELLAN**)

m. 7 December 1898 (OPch v3 p223)

1. Joseph Darbis –

- b. 1 September 1901 (CPch v5 p194)
- m. 10 December Lillia Comeaux (CPch v4 p54)
- d. 1 August 1951 (Tombstone)

2. Alric –

- b. 24 April 1903 (Cemetery Listings, p111)
- m. Agatha Daigle
- d. 28 September 1984 (Cemetery Listings, p111)

3. Milton –

- b.
- m. Frances Smith
- d. 28 February 1977 (Findagrave.com)

4. Irby –

- b. 8 January 1913 (Findagrave.com)
- m. Frankie Gondron
- d. 4 July 1976 (Findagrave.com)

5. Mansel –

- b. 1908 (Findagrave.com)
- m. Catherine
- d. 1968 (Findagrave.com)

6. Ruby –

- b. 1905 (Findagrave.com)
- m. Cleve Daigle
- d. 1992 (Findagrave.com)

7. Mary Enid –

- b. 18 September 1899 (Opch v7 p456)
- m. George Daigle
- d. 12 November 1968 (Cemetery Listings, p35)



Joseph Darbis Richard
Circa 1910

THE FAMILY OF PIERRE FOSTAN **COMEAX** (ONESIME AND JULIE **DOUCET**) AND MARIE DENISE **LEBLUE** (JULIEN AND MARIE LAURE **BELLARD**)

m. 29 August 1881 (CPch v4 p68)

1. Lillia –

b. 8 December 1905 (Cemetery Listings, p116)
m. 10 December Joseph Darbis Richard (CPch)
d. 7 July 1986 (Cemetery Listings, p116)

2. Marie Laure –

b. 9 June 1882 (CPch v4 p136)
m. Martin Lejeune
m. Emile Trahan
d.

3. Theoluce –

b. 2 December 1885 (CPch v4 p190)
m. Oza Thibodeaux
d. 15 August 1958 (Cemetery Listings, p29)

4. Orenna "Tina" –

b. 1 March 1884 (CPch v4 p164)
m. Adolphe Casodebat
d.

5. Palmire –

b. 1 February 1892 (CPch v5 p24)
m.
d.

6. Arteluce –

b. 20 December 1887 (CPch v4 p118)
m. Lula Thibodeaux
d.

7. Isidore –

b. 9 May 1902 (CPch v5 p222)
m. Beatrice LeDoux
d. November 27, 1991 (Findagrave.com)



Lilia Comeaux Richard
First Communion, circa 1912

8. Theophile –
b. 19 December 1893 (CPch v5 p57)
m. Emmy Thibodeaux
d. 1950 (Cemetery Listings)

9. Naomie –
b.
m. Martin Leger
d.

10. Elmire –
b. 25 December 1895 (CPch v5 p88)
m. Olide Leger
d.

11. Isabelle "Belle" –
b. 16 October 1899 (CPch v5 p169)
m. Luke Casodebat
d. circa 1975 (Personal recollection)

12. Alicia –
b. 30 January 1898 (CPch v4 p266)
m. Danille Lejeune
d. 31 July 1967 (Findagrave.com)



Lilia Comeaux Richard
July, 1983

THE FAMILY OF BAPTISTE URSIN **LAVERGNE** (URSIN AND AZELINE **PREJEAN**) AND AZELIE **STEEL**
(CHRISTOPHE AND ANASTASIE **LEGER**)

m. 14 December 1840 (GCch v1 p1)

1. Nathaniel –
b. 26 July 1842 (Opch v4 p203)
m. 24 December 1861 Marie Lavergne (Opch vD #58)
d. 10 January 1915 (Findagrave.com)

2. Marie Louise –
b. 13 March 1844 (GCch v1 p220)
m.
d.

3. Marie Scholastic –
b. 10 August 1845 (Opch v4 p257)
m.
d.

4. Eugene –
 - b. 19 October 1846 (Opch v4 p294; Plaque from tombstone in the author's possession)
 - m. 5 September 1865 Marie Hermine Bourgeois (Opch vD #165)
 - d. 7 December 1892 (Opch v3 p35; Tombstone plaque; Succ d 9 January 1899: Opel Ct Hse Succ #5554)

5. Marie Celeste –
 - b. 27 March 1848
 - m.
 - d.

6. Ursin –
 - b. 4 May 1851 (Opch v4 p374)
 - m.
 - d.

7. Henry –
 - b. 9 September 1856 (Opch v6 p35)
 - m.
 - d.

8. Sylvanie –
 - b. 5 October 1860 (Opch v6 p128)
 - m.
 - d.

9. Adolphe –
 - b. 15 October 1862 (Opch v6 p185)
 - m.
 - d.

10. Aristile –
 - b.
 - m. 13 September 1875 Pressile Cortes (Opch vE #212)
 - d.

THE FAMILY OF LUCIEN ORTER **BOURGEOIS** (SIMON AND MARCELITE **JUDICE**) AND MARIE AZELIA **PREJEAN** (MAXIMILIN AND MARIE PHILONIE **THIBODEAUX**)

m. 14 April 1842 (Lafch v3 p106)

1. Aurore –

- b. 31 January 1843 (GCch v1 p207)
- m. 10 April 1860 Alexandre Le Gerie (Opch vC2 #230)
- d.

2. Simon –

- b. 25 December 1844 (GCch v1 p231)
- m. 5 April 1866 Onezia Benoit (CPch v1 p30)
- d.

3. Marie Hermine –

- b. 25 December 1846 (GCch v1 p256)
- m. 5 September 1865 Eugene Lavergne (Opch vD #165)
- d. 6 September 1930 (Public notice of death)

4. Omer –

- b. 29 November 1848 (GCch v1 p293)
- m. 21 July 1868 Constance Prejean (Opch vE #17)
- d.

5. Ermiza –

- b. 5 February 1851 (GCch v2 p11)
- m. 20 September 1869 Issac Jock Cary (Opch vE #57)
- d.

6. Felonise –

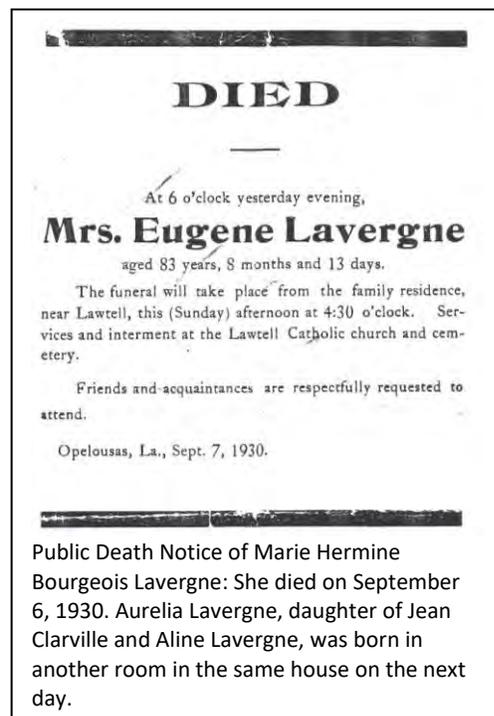
- b. 6 January 1853 (GCch v2 p72)
- m.
- d. 13 October 1855 "at 2 1/2 yrs" (GCch v1 p107)

7. Lucien Orter –

- b. 30 August 1854
- m. 23 September 1875 Alida Olivier (Opch vE #214)
- d.

8. Hortense –

- b.
- m.
- d. 16 March 1857 "at 8 mos" (GCch v1 p113)

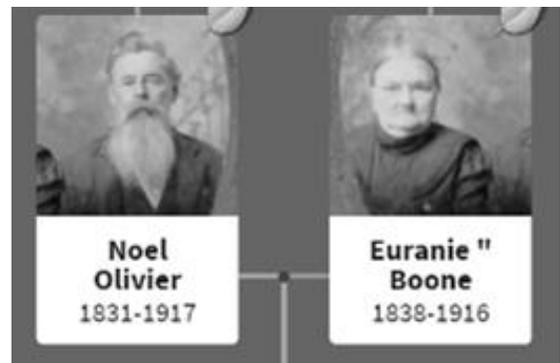


9. Seraphin –
 b. 15 January 1858 (Lafch v6 #37)
 m.
 d. 9 April 1862 "at 4 yrs at Bois Malett"
10. Clementine –
 b. 23 June 1860 (Opch v6 p120)
 m.
 d.
11. Paul Desthe –
 b. 13 July 1862 (Opch v6 p166)
 m. 11 April 1882 Olivia Olivier (Opch vE #287)
 d.
12. Clarvi –
 b. 18 February 1864 (Opch v6 p201)
 m.
 d.

FAMILY OF NOEL OLIVIER (NOEL AND ELOISE DAIGLE) AND EURANIE BOONE (DANIEL AND EURASIE BOUDREAU)

m. 21 December 1852 (Opch v2 p292)

1. Joseph –
 b. 7 March 1854 (CPch v1 p18)
 m. 6 January 1876 Cerina Boudreau (Opch #218)
 d.
2. Marie Alicia –
 b. 30 November 1855 (CPch v1 p27)
 m. 10 February 1870 Louis Bellard (Opch vE #105)
 d.
3. Marie Alida –
 b. 4 January 1859 (CPch v1 p44)
 m. 23 September 1875 Lucius Bourgeois (Opch vE #218)
 d.
4. Oscar –
 b. 25 February 1861 (Opch v6 p136)
 m. 7 December 1882 Aurelia Thibodeaux (Opch vE #290)
 d. 8 February 1892 "at 31 yrs" (CPch v1 p78)



- 5. Olivia –
 - b. 2 May 1866 (Opch v6 p230)
 - m. 11 April 1882 Paul Bourgeois (Opch vE #287)
 - d.

- 6. Victoria –
 - b. 16 March 1863 (CPch v1 p65)
 - m. 15 December 1880 Alcee Thibodeaux (Opch vE #269)
 - d.

- 7. Pierre Onar –
 - b. 21 April 1872 (Opch v6 p324)
 - m. 28 January 1892 Coralie Gauthier (Cpch v4 p187)
 - d.

- 8. Marie Mathilde –
 - b. 19 December 1874 (Opch v6 p355)
 - m.
 - d.

- 9. Noel –
 - b. 25 December 1882 (Opch v6 p443)
 - m. 25 November 1903 Azena Lavergne (CPch v5 p128)
 - d.

- 10. Orilia –
 - b.
 - m. 4 October 1887 Homer Lavergne (CPch v4 p121)
 - d.

Street	House No.	Dwell No.	Famly No.	Name	Race	Sex	Age	Birth Month	Relationship	Single	Married	Widow/D	Married	Occupation
				unnamed	w	f			daughter					
	145	153		Oliver Noel	w	m	48		son	1				Farming
				Mannie	w	f	40		wife	1				Keep house
				Alicia	w	f	23		daughter	1				Cotton & farm
				Victoria	w	f	17		daughter	1				Cotton & farm
				Olivia	w	f	14		daughter	1				Cotton & farm
				Orilia	w	f	10		daughter					
				Honore	w	m	8		son					
				Mathilde	w	f	5		daughter					

Household of Noel Olivier and Euranie "Mannie" Boone, 1880 U.S. Census

THE FAMILY OF SYLVESTRE **THIBODEAUX** (SYLVESTRE AND CELESTE **DOUCET**) AND AZELINE **BIHM**
(MICHEL AND AZELINA **LAVERGNE**)

m. 18 December 1856 (Opch vC-2 #93)

1. Aurelia –

- b. 20 November 1861 (Opch)
- m. 7 December 1882 Oscar Olivier (Opch vE #290)
- d. 9 September 1926 (LA State Death Index, 1819-1964)

2. Anais –

- bt. 11 September 1858 "at 3 mos." (Opch v6 p76)
- m.
- d.

3. Louis –

- b.
- m. 5 July 1878 Ophelia Guidry (Opch v2 p507)
- d.

4. Alcuis Sylvestre –

- b. 5 March 1860 (Opch v6 p109)
- m. 15 December 1880 Victoria Olivier (Opch vE #269)
- d.

5. Michel –

- b. 9 March 1863 (Opch v6 p183)
- m. 10 December 1884 Civilia Bourque (Opch vF #6)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF JOSEPH ALCIDE **RICHARD** (JEAN DUC LISSE AND AZELINE VICTOR **RICHARD**) AND
EDMONIA **SAVOIE** (DON LOUIS AND AGLAE **CASTILLE**)

m.

1. Jean Ducius –

- b. 17 September 1876 (GCch v3 p111)
- m.
- d. 18 October 1886 "at 10 yrs" (Opch v2 p436)

2. Louis "Papa Louis"

- b. 16 December 1877 (GCch v3 p124)
- m. 7 December 1898 Doralize David "MamaDora" (OPch v3 p223)
- d. 11 April 1968 (Tombstone)

3. Marie Lita –
 - b. 10 September 1879 (Opch v6 p402)
 - m.
 - d.

4. Marie Lilia –
 - b. 13 March 1881 (GCch v3 p156)
 - m.
 - d.

5. Joseph Dudley –
 - b. 12 May 1888 (Opch v7 p103)
 - m. Emma Lusk
 - d.29 October 1960 (Findagrave.com)

6. Baby Boy –
 - d. 7 June 1896 "at age 2 days" (Opch v3 p86)

7. Marie Helena –
 - b. 9 December 1889 (Opch v7 p149)
 - m.
 - d.

8. Remi –
 - b. 4 January 1892 (Opch v7 p207)
 - m.
 - d.

9. Laita –
 - b. 28 December 1882 (Opch v6 p444)
 - m.
 - d.

10. Marie Alba –
 - b. 18 December 1884 (Opch v7 p17)
 - m.
 - d.

11. Celima –
 - b. 5 November 1886 (Opch v7 p63)
 - m. Daniel Collins
 - d.28 February 1963 (Findagrave.com)



Grave of Joseph Alcide Richard and Edmonia Savoie in the St. Landry Catholic Cemetery, Opelousas, LA.

**Louis Richard
Rites Saturday**

CHURCH POINT, La. — Funeral services will be conducted at 10:00 a.m. Saturday in Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Church Point for Louis Richard, 90, of Church Point, who died at 10:50 p.m. Thursday in the Opelousas General Hospital.

Burial will be in the church cemetery with Guidry Funeral Home of Church Point in charge of arrangements.

Survivors include his wife, Mrs. Elleno Richard; three sons, Alric Richard of Church Point, Milton Richard of Sunset, and Irby Richard of Lafayette; two daughters, Mrs. Mary R. Daigle of Crowley and Mrs. Cleve Daigle of Church Point; a sister, Mrs. Kay Spring of Sour Lake, Tex.; 25 grandchildren; 65 great-grandchildren; and three great-great-grandchildren.

1880 United States Federal Census for Alcide Rickard

Louisiana > St Landry > 1st Ward > 039

Street	House No.	Dwell No.	Family No.	Name	Race	Sex	Age	Birth Month	Relationship	Single	Married	Widow/D	Married C	Occupation	Mo	Ur
				Adèle	W	F	19		wife	1				Colon in farm		
	2301			Rickard Alcide	W	M	31		ha farm		1			Farming		
				Edmonia	W	F	23		wife	1				Supp house		
				Iniquiere	W	M	5		son							
				Louis	W	M	2		son							
				Olta	W	F	1 1/2		step daughter							

Household of Joseph Alcide Richard and Edmonia Savoie, 1880 U.S. Census

LOUISIANA'S FRENCH AMALGAM

Louisiana's French heritage has been the subject of much prose and poetry. Since Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's epic (and hugely successful) poem *Evangeline* romanticized the Acadian Odyssey, numerous novels, works of historical fiction, histories, documentaries and motion pictures of the 20th Century tended to melt all French cultures into a generic "Cajun" culture. Louisiana is arguably the most ethnically diverse of the fifty states. In addition to rich African and Caribbean cultures, pockets of Asian, German, Irish, Czech, Anglo-Saxon, Indian, Spanish and Italian communities can be easily identified. The general tendency of writers is to add French to the above list of influences, equate French with Cajun, and presume it to be dominant. As Glenn Conrad writes in *Attakapas Gazette*: "No matter the interpretation placed on the content and status of the South Louisiana lifestyle, there seems to be an iron-clad rule that the piece must end by quoting a South Louisiana 'Cajun' saying, *laissez les bons temps rouler*." Louisiana's historical French heritage is multi-faceted; to homogenize it is to ignore a unique intra-ethnic diversity.

The Center for Louisiana Studies of the University of Southwestern Louisiana (now the University of Louisiana-Lafayette) is engaged in ongoing research on identifying the cultural contributions of *several* groups of French-speakers who settled Louisiana in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Hopefully, their noble work will do much to analyze the various cultures of the Louisiana French.

In another article in the *Attakapas Gazette* entitled "How Acadian is Acadiana?" (Winter, 1986), Conrad identified four distinct groups of French-speakers to arrive and settle in Louisiana between 1700-1900. The first group were soldiers, administrators, entrepreneurs, and adventurers who settled between the founding of the colony in 1699 and the surrender of it to Spain in 1766. Louis Lavergne from Quebec, who married Elizabeth Tomelin in New Orleans in 1725, and her father, Pierre Tomelin, would be good examples of this category. Historically, *Sieur de Bienville*, the founder of the city of New Orleans and the "Father of Louisiana" would be a member of this class of Frenchmen. Many of these Frenchmen were

not interested in farming or settling as much as engaging in business, commerce or getting wealthy through investment and speculation. Many, like Pierre Tomelin, came to Louisiana directly from France. Others, like Louis Lavergne made their way to New Orleans from Canada via the Mississippi River. In South Louisiana such family names as Delahoussaye, Fontenot, Boutte, Soileau, Patin, Bonin, Lavergne and many others pre-date the arrival of the Acadians and as such are not Cajuns themselves. These families and their descendants who remained in Louisiana after cession to Spain were generally referred to as Creoles. Today, the term Creole has additional and varied meanings. Successive generations of Creoles were given over to a lifestyle generated by a plantation or mercantile economy.

The second group of French immigrants to Louisiana were exiled Acadians from what was "Acadie" and is today called Nova Scotia. For approximately five generations, French peoples lived and worked in the frigid climate of the Canadian maritime provinces. The Acadians were forcibly ejected from their homes shortly before, during, and shortly after the Seven Years War (1756-1763) between France and Great Britain. This forced migration has been called "*Le Grand Dérangement*." The term "Cajun" originated circa the Civil War and was used as a pejorative term until it was gleefully adopted by the Acadians themselves. Genevieve Massignon's *Le Parles français d'Acadie* is a helpful source in identifying Acadian surnames, as is the 1714 census of Acadie. Acadian names found in this genealogy include: Aucoin, Brasseaux, David, Guidry, Pitre, Benoit, Breaux, Doucet, Hebert, Poirier, Bergeron, Broussard, Dugas, Lalande, Prejean, Bernard, Chaisson, Duhon, Landry, Richard, Blanchard, Comeaux, Dupuis, Leblanc, Savoie, Boudreaux, Cormier, Foret, Leger, Simon, Bourgeois, Daigre, Fournier, Lejeune, Sonnier, Bourque, Daigle, Girouard, Martin, Thibodeaux, and Trahan.² Cajuns tended to be more rustic, engaging in farming, fishing, and cattle raising—skills they brought with them from Acadie.

The third group of Franco settlers to enter Louisiana were refugees from slave insurrections on the West Indian island of Hispanola. From 1793 and on into the 1830s, thousands of refugees poured into New Orleans from Santo Domingo and spread across Louisiana. This group of French speakers were so similar in culture to the original French settlers, or Creoles, that they were quickly assimilated into that element of French-American society. In South Louisiana some of the family names of this group would include Domengeaux, Pecot, Sigur, and Sorel.

The final wave of French immigrants to Louisiana came over in waves during the nineteenth century after various upheavals in France. The Napoleonic Wars of the early 1800s and the era of the Franco-Prussian War saw the movement of thousands of French families from Europe to America, and Louisiana in particular. Some family names from this group are Bloch, Faul, Petitin, Monie, Coussan, and Croucet. These nineteenth century immigrants eventually settled into a lifestyle of small business operations in tiny urban centers of South Louisiana.

As Glenn Conrad suggests, recent popular literature has done more than any of many other factors to blur the distinctive cultural characteristics of Louisiana's French-speaking groups and their descendants. Most of my family and friends in Louisiana are completely unaware of the French groups described

² *Le Grand Dérangement* brought about the relocation of the Acadians in such far-off places as French Louisiana, Santo Domingo, and France. Once there, Cajuns bitterly resisted attempts by other Frenchmen to take advantage of their plight, exploit their labor, and make them a peasant class. Social friction between Acadians and New Orleans Creoles resulted in westward migration and a new kind of insularity for the Cajuns and their culture during the 18th and 19th centuries. But paradoxically, for generations during the 20th Century, some Cajuns cooperated in the near suppression of their own culture by *not* encouraging and even punishing their children when they spoke French in public or in school. My parents, for example, spoke French to each other when they *didn't* want my brothers and me to know what they were saying. To this day I speak very little French.

above. The media blitz that followed the "Cajun Craze" of the 1980s was compounded by the French Louisianians themselves and several would-be historians. Very often, articles, monographs, and books about "famous Cajuns" contain references to persons who are not Cajun at all. Many Laverignes do not know that they are not Cajun but are of Creole descent. It does not matter because, like most Louisianians of my generation, they do not know the difference anyway and twenty-first century Louisianians are much like me, an amalgam of all of Louisiana's French, plus much, much more.

THE FAMILY OF OCTAVE **DAVID** (JEAN BAPTISTE AND MARGUERITE ELMIRE **BREAUX**) AND MARY ENID **McCLELLAN**

m. 8 December 1873

1. Doralize –

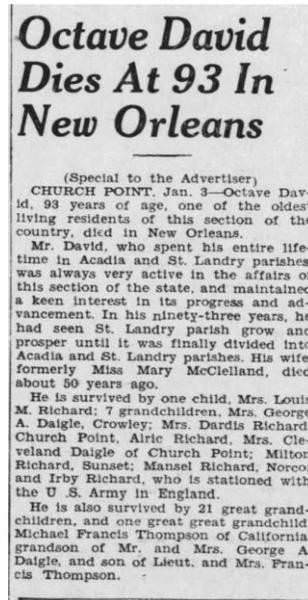
- b. 30 April 1879 (CPch v4 p111)
- m. 7 December 1898 Louis Richard (Opch v3 p223)
- d. 19 February 1945 (Tombstone)

2. Elizabeth Lydia –

- b. 8 January 1883 (CPch v4 p153)
- m.
- d.

3. Arthur –

- b.
- m. 7 February 1893 Mathilda Richard
- d.



THE FAMILY OF ONESIME **COMEAX** (ONESIME AND ELOISE **DOUCET**) AND JULIE **DOUCET**

m. 10 September 1849 (OpCtHse: Marriage #690)

1. Joseph –

- b. 11 May 1851 (CPch v1 p1)
- m. 24 November 1873 Azelie Leger (CPch v4 p26)
- d.

2. Onesime –

- b. 3 March 1853 (CPch v1 p11)
- m.
- d.

3. Julien –
b. 3 March 1858 (CPch v1 p38)
m. 8 February 1875 Albane Brassuer (CPch v4 p85)
m. 19 January 1880 Victorine Menard (Rayne ch v1 p203)
d.

4. Pierre Fostan –
b. 15 February 1860 (CPch v1 p51)
m. 29 August 1881 Marie Denise LeBleu (CPch v4 p68)
d. 7 April 1926 (Tombstone)

5. Marie Eugenie –
b. 3 April 1862 (CPch v1 p61)
m. 13 January 1979 Paul Edgard Guidry (CPch v4 p52)
d.

THE FAMILY OF JULIEN **LEBLUE (JEAN BAPTISTE AND MARGUERITE **LEJEUNE**) AND MARIE LAURE **BELLARD** (PIERRE AND DENISE **BOUSSASSA**)**

m. 4 February 1850 (OpCtHse Marriage #727)

Note: The dates of birth given for these children are probably dates of baptism.

1. Azelie –
b. 1 January 1851 (CPch v1 p2)
m. 20 May 1867 Jean Jeanie (CPch v1 p42)
d.
2. Pierre –
b. 11 January 1851 (CPch v1 p6)
m. 28 October 1872 Emerite Mott (CPch v4 p23)
d.
3. Marie Laure –
b. 6 September 1853 (CPch v1 p12)
m.
d. 24 November 1878 "at 24" (CPch v1 p28)
4. Julia –
b. 11 February 1855 (CPch v1 p23)
m.
d.

5. Philiminia –
 - b. 26 January 1856 (CPch v1 p44)
 - m. 25 November 1885 Formoise Leger (CPch v4 p230)
 - d.

6. Francois –
 - b. 15 March 1856 (GCcp v2 p131)
 - m. 23 December 1878 Ovina Lejeune (CPch v4 p51)
 - d.

7. Jules –
 - b. 19 August 1857 (CPch v1 p37)
 - m. 9 May 1881 Marie Emelie Jaguenot (CPch v4 p67)
 - d.

8. Nicholas "Colin" –
 - b. 30 July 1861 (CPch v1 p60)
 - m.
 - d.

9. Eugene –
 - b. 26 May 1863 (CPch v1 p66)
 - m. 16 February 1886 Maria Olivia Bourque (CPch v4 p102)
 - d. 2 February 1933 (Cemetery Listings, p82)

10. Marie Denise –
 - b. 15 June 1864 (Tombstone)
 - m. 29 August 1881 Pierre Fostan Comeaux (Cpch v4 p68)
 - d. 28 June 1921 (Tombstone)

11. Dosithe –
 - b. 17 June 1864 (CPch v1 p74)
 - m.
 - d.

12. Julia –
 - b.
 - m. 11 October 1874 Siphroyen Lejeune (CPch v4 p31)
 - d.

THE FAMILY OF URSIN **LAVERGNE** (LOUIS AND MARIE ANNE **LACASE**) AND AZELINE **PREJEAN** (DOMINIQUE AND MARIE **SAVOIE**)

m. 26 September 1816 (Opch v1 p288)

1. Marie –

b. circa July 1817 (Opch v1 p161)

d. 29 August 1817 "at one month" (Opch v1 p161)

2. Joseph –

b.

d. 14 April 1818 apparently in infancy (Opch v1 p168)

3. Baptiste Ursin –

b. 2 May 1819 (GCch v1 p1)

m. 14 December 1840 Azelie Steel (Opch v2 p196)

d.

4. Marie –

b. 25 December 1820 (GCch v1 p7)

d. 10 January 1821 "at the age of 5 weeks" (Opch v1 p187)

5. Marie Azeline –

b. 14 June 1822 (GCch v1 p25)

m. 30 September 1839 Michel Bihm "age 22" (Opch v2 p183)

d.

6. Baby Boy –

b. circa 18 February 1827

d. 19 February 1827 "at 1 day"

7. Marie Aurelia –

b. 28 September 1828 (GCch v1 p69)

m. 19 March 1844 James Bihm (Opch vA #216)

m. 22 July 1852 Francois Jourbert Opch vA #15)

d.

1820 United States Federal Census for Ursin Lavergne

Louisiana > St Landry > Not Stated

<i>Benny Miller</i>							
<i>Ursin Lavergne</i>	1				1		
<i>George Miller</i>	1				1		1
<i>Augustine Bourgeois</i>	1	1			1	1	3
<i>Christopher Cox</i>		1	1	2		1	

THE FAMILY OF CHRISTOPHER **STEEL** (NATHANIEL AND ELIZABETH **HAYS**) AND ANASTASIE **LEGER** (PAUL AND CONSTANCE **POITIER**)

m. 2 January 1821 (GCch v1 p5)

1. Azelie –

b.

m. 14 December 1840 Baptiste Ursin Lavergne (Opch v2 p196)

d.

2. Apoline –

b. 9 January 1824 (GCch v1 p35)

m.

d.

3. Elizabeth –

b. 21 December 1825 (GCch v1 p47)

m.

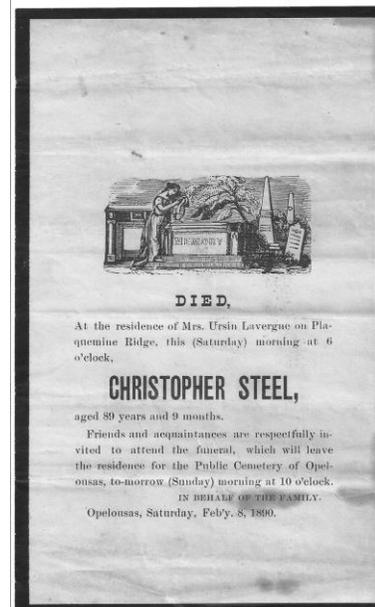
d.

4. Nathaniel –

b. 10 August 1828 (Opch v3 p47)

m.

d.



THE FAMILY OF SIMON **BOURGEOIS** (JOSEPH AND MARIE MADELINE **GIROUARD**) AND MARCELITE **JUDICE** (MICHEL AND MARIE JEANNE **CROISET**)

m.

1. Lucien Orter –

b.

m. 14 April 1842 Marie Azeline Prejean (Lafch v3 p106)

d. 12 July 1863 "at 43" (Opch v2 p167)

2. Hortance –

b.

m. Lazar Arceneaux (Lafch v2 p255)

d.

THE FAMILY OF MAXIMILIN **PREJEAN** (DOMINIQUE AND MARIE **SAVOIE**) AND MARIE PHILONIE **THIBODEAUX** (PAUL AND MARY LOUISE **CORMIER**)

m. 25 November 1822 (GCch v1 p23)

1. Marie Azelia –

b. 13 December 1823 (GCch v1 p34)

m. 14 April 1842 Lucien Orter Bourgeois (Lafch v3 p106)

d.

2. Joseph Laurent –

b. 8 August 1825 (GCch v1 p144)

m. 7 December 1843 Euphrasie Arceneaux "age 17" (Lafch v3 p153)

d.

3. Paul Dupreville –

b. 11 August 1827 (GCch v1 p66)

m. 22 January 1850 Marie Evlina Neran (Lafch v4 p32)

d.

4. Celeste –

bt. 9 January 1830 "at age 9 mos" (Lafch v3 p123)

m.

d.

5. Ursin Theonille –

b. 26 November 1831 (GCch v1 p100)

m. 20 November 1854 Denise Leger (GCch v3 p54)

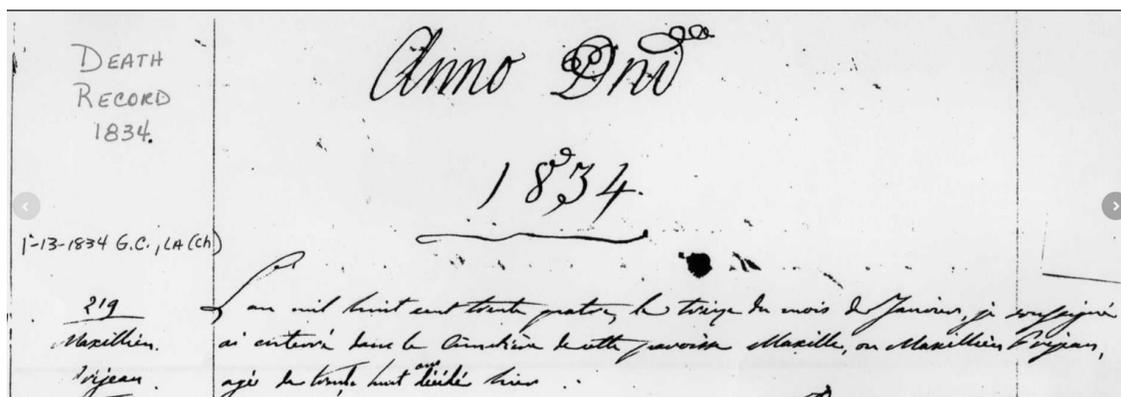
d.

6. Clairville –

b. 24 November 1833 (GCch v1 p122)

m. 7 February 1855 Anastasie Richard (GCch v3 p58)

d.



Death Record of Maximilin Prejean, dated 13 January 1834 (GCch, v1 p33)

THE FAMILY OF NOEL **OLIVIER** (PIERRE and MARIE M. **LOUPE**) AND ELOUISE **DAIGLE** (JEAN EUGENE and MARIE ANNE MODESTE **DUPLECHIN**)

m. 27 Apr 1830 (Opel. Ch., v. 1, p. 555)

1. Noel –

- b.
- m. 21 December 1852 Euranie Boone (Opch v2 p292)
- d. Succ d 13 November 1872 (Opct hse: succ #3605)

2. Laurent –

- b. 23 February 1837 (Opch v4 p43)
- m. 23 November 1858 Marie Therese Daigle (CPch v1 p17)
- m. 21 February 1880 Elizabeth Breaux (CPch v3 p79)
- d. 13 October 1883

3. Maria Hermina –

- b. 23 July 1859 (CPch v1 p47)
- m. 16 May 1878 Joseph Collaghan (CPch v4 p48)
- d.

4. Zephirin -- b. 8 April 1839

- m.
- d.

5. Eugene –

- b. 15 March 1842 (GCch v1 p192)
- m.
- d.

6. Pierre –

- b. 8 April 1844 (GCch v1 p228)
- m.
- d.

7. Emerite –

- b. 6 May 1846 (GCch v1 p245)
- m. 12 February 1866 Louis Carrier (CPch v1 p30)
- d.

8. Marie Eve –

- b. 24 May 1849 (Opch v4 p347)
- m.
- d.

9. Mathilde –

- b. 14 March 1852 (CPch v1 p6)
- m. 3 February 1870 Hebrard Daigle (CPch v4 p1)
- d.

10. Hermogene –

- b. 4 September 1854 (CPch v1 p20)
- m.
- d.

11. Onesime –

- b.
- m. 20 November 1855 Estelle Thibodeaux (GCch v1 p209)
- d.

1850 United States Federal Census for Noel Olivier									
Louisiana > St Landry > Not Stated									
Family No.	Name	Age	Sex	Race	Real Estate	Birthplace	Married	Attended School	Condition
1192	Noel Olivier	52	M		600	4		1	
	Hiloise d	37	F			4		1	
	Noel Jr	16	M			4			
	Onesime	14	M			4			
	Marie Ant d	12	F			4			
	Hubert d	7	M			4			
	Eugene d	5	M			4		1	
	Scotin d	5	M			4			
	Marie d	3	F			4			
	Marie Lou d	1	F			4			

Household of Noel Olivier and Louise Daigle, 1850 U.S. Census

THE FAMILY OF DANIEL **BOONE** (DANIEL AND ANNE **BOUDREAU**) AND EURASIE **BOUDREAU** (ANTOINE AND MARIE **SAVOIE**)

m. 21 January 1833 (GCch v1 p89)

1. Laurent –

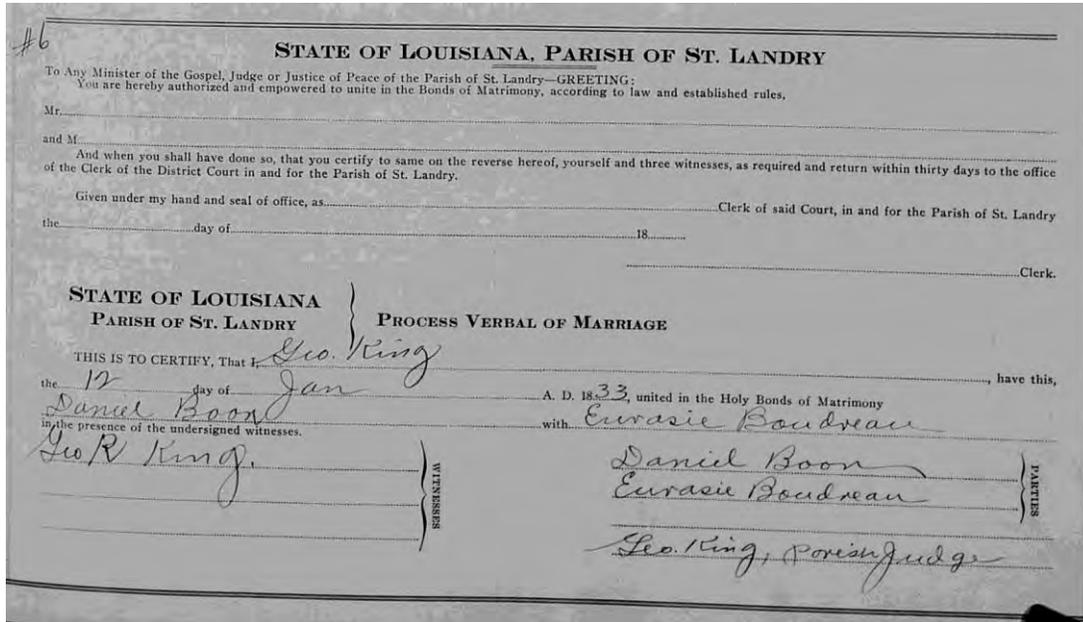
- b. 27 December 1833 (GCch v1 p115)
- m.
- d.

2. Euranie –

- b. 21 July 1838 (GCch v1 p147)
- m. 21 December 1852 Noel Olivier (Opch v2 p292)
- d.

- 3. Jean Daniel –
 - b. 15 September 1840 (Opch p152)
 - m. 10 January 1861 Elina Reo (Opch vD #5)
 - d.

- 4. Constance –
 - b. 25 January 1843 (GCch v1 p211)
 - d. 31 December 1844 "at 2 yrs" (GCch v1 p66)



"Civil Marriage Certificate of Daniel Boone and Eurasie Boudreaux, St. Landry Parish, 12 January 1833."

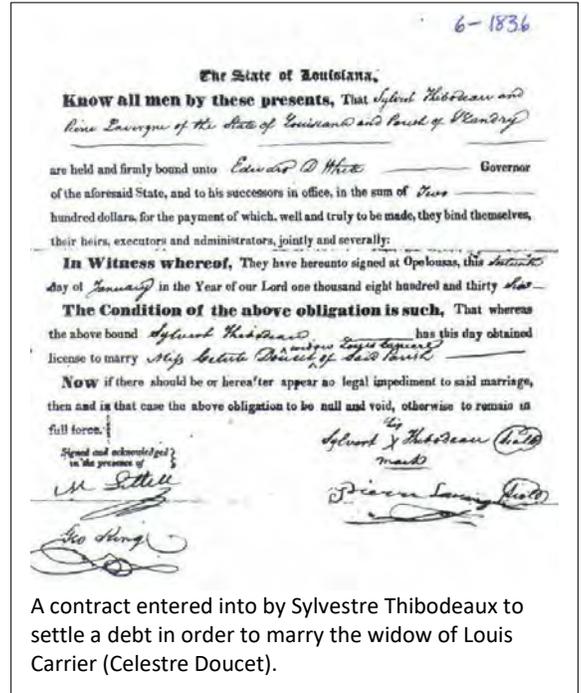
THE FAMILY OF SYLVESTRE THIBODEAUX (CYRILL AND ADELAIDE CHAISSON) AND CELESTRE DOUCET (PIERRE AND MARIE MAGDELAN COMEAUX)

- m. 18 January 1836 (Opch v2 p36)

Note: Celestre Doucet was the widow of Louis Carrier.

- 1. Estelle –
 - b.
 - m. 20 November 1855 Onesime Olivier (GCch v1 p143)
 - d.

- 2. Sylvestre –
 - b. 4 September 1837 (GCch v1 p143)
 - m. 18 December 1856 Azeline Bihm (Opch vC-2 #93)
 - d.
- 3. Theodule –
 - b. 22 June 1838 (GCch v1 p148)
 - m. 10 June 1857 Philomine Latiolias (GCch v3 p91)
 - d.
- 4. Emile –
 - b. 5 November 1839 (GCch v1 p170)
 - m. 29 January 1866 Leocadie Daigle (CPch v1 p28)
 - d.
- 5. Caroline –
 - b. 17 August 1843 (GCch v1 p223)
 - m.
 - d.



THE FAMILY OF MICHEL **BIHM** (MICHEL AND JEANNE **YOUNG**) AND AZELINA **LAVERGNE** (URSIN AND AZELINE **PREJEAN**)

- m. 30 September 1839 (Opch v2 p183)
- 1. Azeline –
 - b.
 - m. 18 December 1856 Sylvestre Thibodeaux (Opch vC-2 #93)
 - m. 24 November 1864 Lastie Pitre (Opch vD #172)
 - d.
- 2. Joseph –
 - b. 27 November 1844 (Opch v4 p265)
 - m.
 - d.
- 3. Charles Nelson –
 - b. 9 April 1846 (Opch v4 p267)
 - m.
 - d.
- 4. Jean Wilson –
 - b. 28 August 1848 (Opch v4 p321)
 - m. 9 May 1871 Ermina Bordelon (Opch v2 p408)
 - d.

5. Ophelia –

- b. 6 February 1852 (Opch v4 p386)
- m.
- d.

6. Jelson –

- b. 7 May 1854 (Opch v4 p419)
- m. 11 February 1873 Louisiana Fisher (Opch vE #198)
- d.

7. Jacob –

- b. 28 June 1857 (Opch v6 p49) m. 27 November 1877 Celina Joubert (Opch vE #241)
- m. 10 November 1879 Cecile Arceneaux "of Lafayette" (Opch v2 p519)
- d.

8. Louis –

- b.
- m. 30 December 1879 Lydia McClellan (Opch vE #260)
- d.

9. Oscar –

- b. 28 March 1862 (Opch v6 p160)
- m.
- d.

10. Eugenie –

- b. 24 November 1864 (Opch v6 p215)
- m.
- d.

Dwelling-house— order of valuation.		Family numbered in order of valuation.		DESCRIPTION.			VALUE OF ESTATE OWNED.		Place of Birth, Naming the State, Territory, or Country.		Married within the year.		Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
884	884	Michel Bihm	41	m	Farmer		4600	7600	St Landry					
		Azelina Lavergne	37	f					St Landry			1		
		Azelina Bihm	21	f					St Landry			1		
		John W. Bihm	12	m					St Landry			1		
		Elson Bihm	6	m					St Landry					
		Jacob Bihm	5	m					St Landry					
		Louis M. Bihm	4	m					St Landry					
		William W. Madcan	23	m	Farmer		1600	2600	St Landry				1	
		Quinn C. Madcan	2	f					St Landry					
		Alfred C. Madcan	4	m					St Landry					

Household of Michel Bihm and Azelina Lavergne, 1860 U.S. Census.

THE FAMILY OF JEAN DUCLISSE RICHARD (JEAN FABIEN AND EUGENIE SAVOIE) AND AZELINE VICTOR RICHARD (JOSEPH VICTOR AND MARIE RICHARD)

m. 30 May 1837 (Opch v2 p118)

1. Eugenie Selima –

b. 13 December 1838 (Opch v4 p105)

m.

d.

2. Joseph –

b.

m. 27 May 1849

d.

3. Joseph Alcide –

b. 1849 (Find a Grave)

m. 11 November 1875 Marie Edmonia Savoie (GCch v4 p52)

d. 1934 (Find a Grave)

THE FAMILY OF DON LOUIS **SAVOIE** (LOUIS AND CELESIE **BOUDREAUX**) AND AGLAE **CASTILLE** (JEAN BAPTISTE AND AZELIE **STELLY**)

m. 19 July 1847 (GCch V1 P173)

1. Marie Edmonia –

b. 4 November 1857 (GCch v2 p165)

m. 11 November 1875 Joseph Alcide Richard (GCch v4 p51)

d. 1937 (Findagrave.com)

2. Estelle –

b.

m. 5 September 1872 Philogene Richard (GCch v4 p31)

d.

3. Henri –

b. 3 April 1871 (GCch v3 p45)

m.

d.

4. Adolphe –

b. 8 June 1869 (GCch v3 p25)

m.

d.

5. Jean Baptiste Aymar –

b. 24 December 1848 (GCch v1 p290)

m. 14 September 1870 Leocade Richard (GCch v4 p16)

d.

6. Francoise Alissa –

b. 29 May 1850 (GCch v1 p329)

m. 6 February 1866 Albert Guidry (GCch v3 p216)

d.

7. Marie Adele –

b. 12 January 1867 (GCch v2 p301)

m. 12 September 1882 Laita Frankbois (GCch v4 p84)

d.

8. Francois Evariste –

b. 13 November 1862 (GCch v2 p241)

m.

d.

9. Marcellus –

- b. 29 November 1859 (GCch v2 p194)
- m. 2 November 1882 Sidonia Franchebois (Opch v2 p548)
- d.

10. Oscar –

- b.
- m. 15 February 1876 Marie Darby (GCch v4 p53)
- d.

11. Albert –

- b.
- m. 8 December 1885 Frances Burleigh (GCch v4 p98)
- d.

1860 United States Federal Census for Don Louis Savoie
Louisiana > St Landry > Opelousas

Age	Name	Sex	Occupation	Value	Value	Value	Value
21	1548 1548 Don Louis Savoie	33 m	Planter	2400	6000	500	1
25	Aglae Castille	30 f				500	1
26	Emare Savoie	11 m				500	1
27	Alicia Savoie	7 f				500	1
28	Oscar Savoie	7 m				500	1
29	Estelle Savoie	5 f				500	1
30	Emena Savoie	3 f				500	1
31	Marcellus Savoie	1 m				500	1

Household of Don Louis Savoie and Aglae Castille, 1860 U.S. Census.

THE FAMILY OF JEAN BAPTISTE **DAVID** (JEAN BAPTISTE AND SCHOLASTIQUE **SAVOIE**) AND MARGUERITE ELMIRE **BREAUX** (AGRICOLE AND SCHOLASTIQUE **PICOU**)

m. 26 April 1832 (SMch v7 #203)

Note: Jean Baptiste David was the Sheriff of St. Landry Parish at the time of his death in 1855.

1. Marie Elodie

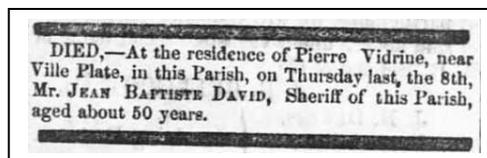
- b. 31 July 1834 (Opch v3 p296)
- m.
- d.

2. Scholastique Odille

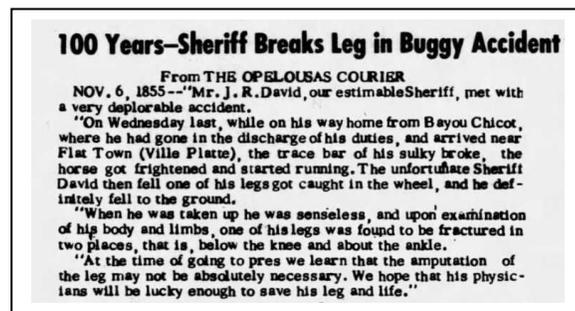
- b. 1 October 1836 (Opch v4 p23)
- m.
- d.

SAD ACCIDENT. — Last Wednesday, near Ville Platte, as Mr. Sheriff David was returning from Bayou Chieft in a sulk, the horse became frightened and unmanageable, throwing Mr. D. to the ground with such violence as to almost literally crush one of his ankles. Mr. D., we understand, now lies in a very critical condition, and it was feared that amputation would be necessary.

3. Marguerite Doralise
 b. 20 April 1838 (GCch v1 p148)
 m. 10 January 1854 Eugene Richard (Opch vB #38)
 d.



4. Jules
 b. 16 March 1840 (Opch v4 p148)
 m. 8 April 1869 Marie Laperle Breaux (GCch v4 p2)
 d.



5. Celima
 b. 16 May 1842 (GCch v1 p204)
 m. 12 January 1860 John McCormick (Opch v3 p315)
 d.

6. Lucius
 b. 16 July 1844 (Opch v4 p243)
 m. 29 July 1869 Agnes Barousse (CPch v1 p59)
 d.

7. Omer
 b. 2 October 1848 (GCch p290)
 m. 28 September 1871 Marie Azelie Guidry (CPch v3 p12)
 d. 30 March 1922 (David Family)

8. Octave
 b. 28 October 1850 (CPch v1 p1)³
 m. 8 December 1873 Mary Enid McClellan
 d. 3 January 1944 (*Lafayette Daily Advertiser*, 3 January 1944)

9. Evelina
 b. 27 January 1854 (Opch v4 p417)
 m. 30 December 1869 Theodule Richard (CPch v1 p9)
 d.

THE FAMILY OF ONESIME **COMEAX** (MICHEL AND LOUISE **LATIOLIAS**) AND ELOUISE **DOUCET** (JOSEPH AND CELESTE **BELLARD**)

m. 5 September 1823 (Opch v1 p415)

1. Elisa Magdeline
 b. 9 April 1825 (SMch v7 #1647)
 m. 10 September 1839 Antoine Labbe "age 21" (Opch v2 p183)
 d.

³ This was the first entry for then new church parish named Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in Church Point, Louisiana.

2. Onesime
b. 10 May 1827 (Opch v3 p9)
m. 10 September 1849 Julie Doucet
d.

3. Celeste
b. 5 March 1828 (Opch v3 p59)
m.
d.

4. Joseph
b. 7 May 1830 (Opch v3 p138)
d. 27 July 1831 "at one year" (Opch v2 p23)

5. Marie
b. 19 April 1832 (Opch v3 p226)
m.
d.

THE FAMILY OF JEAN BAPTISTE **LEBLEU** (BARTHOLOMEU AND JOSETTE **LAMIRANDA**) AND MARGUARITE **LEJEUNE** (BLAISE AND ADELAIDE **QUINTERO**)

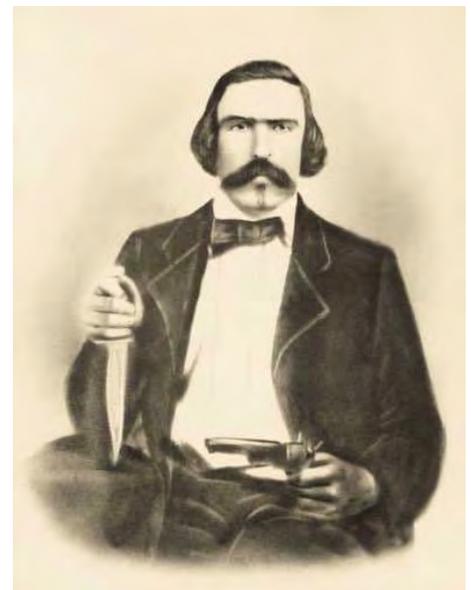
m. 18 May 1813 (Opch v1 p239)

1. Celestine
b. 14 July 1814 (Opch v2 p35)
m. 30 September 1828 Jean Eugene Daigle (Opch v1 p524)
m. 14 April 1833 Alexander Daigle (Opch v2 p35)
d.

2. Jean Baptiste
b. 11 December 1816 (Opch v2 p117)
m. 19 April 1836 Olive Carrier "age 15" (Opch v2 p92)
d.

3. Emerante
b. 10 June 1820 (Opch v2 p203)
m. 7 April 1837 Joseph Guidry (Op ct hse Marr #38)
d.

4. Onesime
b. 2 June 1825 (Opch v2 p329)
m.
d.



This is posted on Ancestry.com as a portrait of Jean Baptiste LeBlue (1790-1837)

5. Juliene

b. 20 October 1827 (Opch v3 p16)

m. 18 May 1843 in a civil ceremony to Caroline Matte (Op ct hse marr #46). Later married in the Grand Coteau Church on 5 October 1846 (GCch v1 p168).

m. 4 February 1850 Marie Laure Bellard

d.

6. Leon

b. 25 July 1830 (Opch v3 p126)

m.

d.

7. Unibonne

b. 18 September 1833 (Opch v3 p256)

m.

d.

THE FAMILY OF PIERRE **BELLARD** (ANTONIO AND MARIA **FOREST**) AND DENISE **BOUSSASSA** (CHARLES AND MADELINE **LALANDE**)

m. 3 November 1831 (Opch v2 p19)

1. Pierre

b. 8 August 1823 (Opch v3 p196)

m. 22 January 1866 Felicia Matte (CPch v1 p28)

d.

2. Clementine

b. 19 January 1826 (Opch v3 p189)

m.

d.

3. Marie Laure

b. 21 October 1827 (Opch v3 p185)

m. 4 February 1850 Julien LeBleu

d.

4. Josephine

b. October 1828 (Opch v3 p197)

m. 4 May 1847 Celestin Matte (GCch v1 p170)

d.

5. Antoine

- b. 30 May 1832 (Opch v3 p247)
- m. 20 April 1857 Louisa Matt They were married earlier by Judge Elkins on 22 November 1853 (CPch v1 p12).
- m. 30 October 1866 Marie Felix Pelloquin (CPch v1 p35)
- d.

6. Charles

- b. 22 December 1833 (Opch v3 p309)
- m. 18 May 1861 Caroline LeBleu (CPch v1 p17)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF LOUIS **LAVERGNE** (LOUIS AND ELIZABETH "ISABELLE" **TOMELIN**) AND MARIE ANNE **LACASE** (SANTIAGO AND MARIA **BULONNE**)

m. 1767 (U.S. and International Marriage Records, 1560-1900 in Ancestry.com)

Story of Louis Lavergne (1743-1814)

Posted 11 Oct 2019 by John W. Ancelet, Jr. (with minor edits by Gary M. Lavergne)

<http://www.acadiansingray.com/Appendices-ATLAL-LAVERGNE.htm#LAVERGNE> and posted in Ancestry.com.

Descendants of Louis LAVERGNE (1743-1814)

Louis, son of Louis Lavergne, *fils* and Élisabeth Thomelain of Pascagoula and New Orleans, married Marie-Anne Lacase, daughter of Jacques Lacase of Mobile, at New Orleans in c1770. They moved upriver to St.-Jean-Baptiste des Allemands on the Upper German Coast, present-day St. John the Baptist Parish, where Louis purchased a 3x40-arpent tract of land from Jean-Pierre Cuvillier in 1783. During the late 1780s, Louis and his family left the crowded Mississippi valley, crossed the Atchafalaya Basin, and settled in the Bellevue area of the Opelousas District, south of Opelousas Post. Many of the settlers in the Opelousas country were Alibamonts like Louis's wife Marie-Anne, or Canadian French like Louis himself, or French Creoles from New Orleans or the river settlements. However, by the mid-1790s, a substantial number of Acadians also lived in the area, having come to Opelousas as early as 1765. (Louis' daughter Marie-Eugène, born along the Mississippi in October 1778, was the first member of the family to marry an Acadian; in May 1796 she wed Philippe, son of Pierre Richard, at Opelousas; she died near Grand Coteau, St. Landry Parish, in June 1844, age 66.) Louis died "from a very long infirmity or weakness" at his home at Bellevue, St. Landry Parish, in February 1814; he was 71 years old. Louis and Marie-Anne had eight sons, the first four born on the river, the other four at Opelousas. All of them married, one of them twice, and all but two of them had sons of their own. Most of them married Acadians. During the antebellum period, Louis' sons and grandsons either remained in St. Landry Parish, at Bellevue and Grand Coteau, or moved a little farther west, to the Church Point area, then in St. Landry but now in Acadia Parish. After the War Between the States, some of Louis III's descendants left the family's center in St. Landry Parish and drifted farther and farther west across the open prairies, where many Laverignes can be found today.

1. Ursin

- b. 11 November 1795 (Opch v1 p168)
- m. 26 September 1816 Azeline Prejean (Opch v1 p288)
- d. 6 October 1842 (Opch v2 p31)

2. Pierre
 - b. 11 November 1794 (Opch v1 p196)
 - m. 13 February 1816 Marie Zeline Thibodeaux (Opch v1 p280)
 - m. 29 May 1837 Adomicile Duplechin (Opch v2 p117)
 - d. 20 December 1867 (GCch v1 p168)

3. Jean Baptiste "of Grand Coteau"
 - b. abt 1783
 - m. 11 February 1820 Celeste Knott (GCch v1 p4)
 - d. 24 October 1742 (New Iberia Church)

4. Joseph
 - b.
 - m. 29 September 1812 Augustine Richard (Opch v1 p229)
 - d. 11 May 1864 "at 82" (Opch v2 p182)

5. Marie Eugenie
 - b. 7 October 1778 (NOch p36 #172)
 - m. 23 May 1796 Phelipe Richard (Opch v1 p64)
 - d. 24 June 1844 (GCch)

6. Celestin
 - b. 17 December 1775 (Ancestry.com)
 - m. Louise Henry (SMch)
 - d. Succ d 17 May 1847 (Op ct hse: succ #1298)

7. Eugene
 - b. 1 October 1790 (Opch v1 p189)
 - m. 30 July 1832 Cecile Langlois (Opch v2 p29)
 - d.

8. Urbin
 - bt. 10 November 1797 (Opch v1 p189)
 - m. 18 July 1821 Elouise Thibodeaux (Opch v1 p381)
 - d. 14 March 1843 (OpCtHse)

9. Louis
 - b. abt 20 April 1772 (NOch)
 - m. 12 January 1802 Susanna Bourg (OPch v1 p102)
 - d.

ANCESTOR'S SERVICE

"SECTION 1. Any man shall be eligible to membership in this Society who, being at the age of eighteen years or over, and a citizen of good repute in the community, is the lineal descendant of an ancestor who was at all times unflinching in his loyalty to, and rendered active service in, the cause of American Independence, either as an officer, soldier, seaman, marine, militiaman or minute man, in the armed forces of the Continental Congress or of any one of the several Colonies or States, or as a signer of the Declaration of Independence; or as a member of a Committee of Safety or Correspondence; or as a member of any Continental, Provincial, or Colonial Congress or Legislature; or as a recognized patriot who performed actual service by overt acts of resistance to the authority of Great Britain."—*Constitution of National Society, S.A.R., Article III.*

Membership is based upon one original claim; when the applicant derives eligibility by descent from more than one Revolutionary ancestor, and it is desired to file additional claims, separate applications on special forms provided for the purpose, should be made in each case and filed with the original.

State fully such documentary or traditional authority as you found the following record upon, and also the residence of ancestors, with dates of birth and death, if known.

By order of the Board of Trustees, May 3, 1911, the recipient of a certificate granted on this application agrees to surrender his certificate upon failure to pay his membership dues, unless his membership shall cease by reason of death or actual disability, to be determined by the Society of which he is a member.

My ancestor's services in assisting in the establishment of American Independence during the War of the Revolution were as follows:

In the S.A.R. microfilm "Spanish Records", which consists of data assembled by C. Robert Churchill, President, Louisiana Society S.A.R., on the page following page 107, which incidentally is not numbered, we find "Infantry Regiments of Louisiana -- Book of Life and Customs and Services 1782 -- Commissioned officers, First Sergeants and Cadets -- Authenticated Records of Services Against the English 1779-1781." Page 121 indicates this is Militia for New Orleans, men stationed at Poste de Opelousas, being used in various capacities -- Page 122 shows the men to be under Captain Jean-Baptist Bienvenu and on page 126 we find Luiz Lavergne as a Fuselier (infantryman) 3rd Company. On page 109 we also find Louis Lavergne.

This proof was accepted by the National Society D.A.R. in granting membership and National No. 481246 to Mrs. Sarah Louise Werlein, 2206 Bissonet Street, Houston, Texas on April 15, 1961. Mrs. Werlein was a daughter of Eugene Gordy Richard who was a brother of my (2) Edith Frances Richard.

Do not encroach on this margin, which is needed for binding.

This is an application for membership to the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. It is based on the service of Louis Lavergne (1743-1814) as an Fuselier (infantryman) of the "3rd Company" of a New Orleans Militia stationed at the Poste de Opelousas. This qualifies his descendants for membership into the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Sons of the American Revolution.

THE FAMILY OF DOMINIQUE **PREJEAN** (ARMAND AND MARIE **THERIOT**) AND MARIE **SAVOIE** (FRANCOIS AND MARIE **MARTIN**)

m. 25 October 1793 (SMch v4 #90)

Note: Census records in Seville, Spain confirm that this married couple owned 6 arpents of land in the District of Attakapas (Carencro). Dated 16 May 1803. Dominique Prejean was from LaFourche; Marie Savoie was from Acadia.

1. Azeline

b.

m. 26 September 1816 Ursin Lavergne (Opch v1 p288)

d. 21 January 1832 (GCch v1 p30)

2. Maxilmilin

b. 11 January 1797 (SMch v4 #828)

m. 10 July 1816 Marie Tarzelle Breaux (SMch v5 #414)

m. 25 November 1822 Marie Philonie Thibodeaux (GCch v1 p23)

d. 13 January 1834 (GCch v1 p33)

3. Achille

b. 22 July 1811 (SMch v6 #1218)

m. 11 April 1831 Eliza Boudreau (GCch v1 p79)

d.

4. Marie Euphrasine

b. 4 October 1813 (SMch v6 #1727)

m. 9 July 1832 Jean Achille Melanson "of Lafayette" (GCch v1 p86)

d.

5. Gerard

bt. 30 December 1806 "at 15 mos." (Opch v1 p405)

m. 5 November 1827 Scholastique Leger (GCch v1 p56)

d.

6. Marie Adelaide

b. 26 April 1809 (SMch v7 #300)

m. 4 November 1827 Jean Murphy Broussard "of Lafayette" (GCch v1 p56)

d.

7. Marie Celestine

b. 23 June 1803 (SMch v6 #48)

m. 5 November 1821 Joseph Stelly (GCch v1 p15)

d.

8. Marie Cidalise
 - b. 12 April 1807 (SMch v7 #141)
 - m. 22 January 1827 David O. Carthurs (GCch v1 p48)
 - d.
9. Marie Louise
 - bt. 9 July 1795 "at 8 mos." (SMch v4 #723)
 - m. 27 July 1815 David Meche (Opch v1 p268)
 - d. 5 July 1821 "at 26" (GCch v1 p7)
10. Aurelien or Orien
 - b. 25 January 1801 (SMch v5 # 379)
 - m. 24 April 1820 Anne Leger (GCch v1 p5)
 - d.
11. Marie Juliana
 - b. 8 December 1798 (SMch v5 # 132)
 - m.
 - d.

THE FAMILY OF NATHANIEL **STEEL** AND ELIZABETH **HAYS**

m.

Note: The family was probably much larger. This family originated in Pennsylvania (probably Woodbury Township) and Nathaniel Steel is listed as a Chairmaker in 1821.

1. Christophe
 - b. circa May 1800
 - m. 2 January 1821 Anastasie Leger "age 25" (GCch v1 p5)
 - d. 8 February 1890 (Public Notice of Death)

THE FAMILY OF PAUL **LEGER** (FRANCOIS AND MAGDELINE **COMMEAU**) AND CONSTANCE **POITIER** (PIERRE AND ANNE MARIE **BERNARD**)

m. 28 July 1789 (SMch v4 #32)

Note: Different sources indicate Paul Leger being from New York and from the Diocese of Baltimore. Constance Poitier was from Havre de Grace, Normandie, France.

1. Anastasie
 - bt. 9 July 1795 "at 4 yrs." (SMch v 4 #724)
 - m. 2 January 1821 Christophe Steel (GCch v1 p5)
 - d.

2. Alexander

b. 8 January 1799 (SMch v5 #143)

m.

d. 28 October 1818 "at 20" (Opch v1 p173)

3. Anne (Manette)

bt. 9 July 1795 "at 2 1/2 mos." (SMch v4 #725)

m. 24 April 1820 Orien Prejean (GCch v1 p5)

d.

4. Appoline Lucy

bt. 3 August 1803 "at 2 1/2 yrs" (SMch v6 #51)

m.

d. 30 August 1818 "at 17" (Opch) v1 p172)

5. Eugenie

bt. 14 June 1795 "at 14 mos." (SMch) v4 #685)

m. 31 December 1822 Joseph Waible (Opch v1 p409)

d.

6. Hypolite Paul

b. 10 January 1803 (SMch v6 #115)

m. 20 November 1821 Marcellitte Libert "age 17" of St. Martinsville (GCch v1 p16)

d.

7. Julienne

b. 3 April 1807 (SMch v7 #192)

m. 10 February 1824 Villeneuve Bordelon (Opch v1 p418)

d.

8. Magdeline

b. 6 January 1796 (SMch v4 #834)

m. 6 September 1814 Antoine Ritter (Opch v1 p257)

d. 22 November 1818 "at 23" (Opch v1 p174)

9. Marie

b.

m. 12 May 1812 David Akerson (Opch v1 p223)

d.

FAMILY OF PAUL **THIBODEAUX** (PAUL AND ROSALIE **GUILBAUT**) AND MARY LOUISE **CORMIER**

m.

1. Marie Philonie

bt. 24 May 1795 "at 2 mos." (SMch v4 #672)
m. 25 November 1822 Maxilmin Prejean (GCch v1 p23)
d.

2. Clemence

b. 13 November 1809 (SMch v7 #303)
m. 10 October 1836 Ermogene Breaux (Lafch v2 p233)
d.

3. Celeste

b. 30 August 1801 (SMch v5 #463)
m. 24 September 1821 Jean Lesin Prejean of Atakapas
(GCch v1 p13)
d. 18 January 1829 "at 26" (Lafch v2 p16)

4. Delphine

b.
m. 31 August 1829 Onesine Richard (Lafch v1 #134)
d.

5. Elisie

b.
m. 18 August 1818 Hubert Janis (Opch v1 p 324-A)
d.

6. Joseph

b. 20 November 1799 (SMch v5 #232)
m. 6 December 1825 Marie Celonise Savoie (Lafch v1 #30)
d.

7. Marguerite

b. 11 September 1805 (SMch v7 #52)
m. 27 July 1829 Jean Louis Leber (Lafch v1 #130)
d.

8. Louis

b. circa August 1797 (SMch v4 #144)
d. 21 April 1798 "at 9 mos." (SMch v4 #144)

9. Louise

b. 7 February 1788 (SMch v4 #326)
m.
d.



Grave of Paul Hypolite Thibodeaux (1765-1816) in St. Martin Catholic Church, St. Martinville, LA. (Findagrave.com)

10. Marie

b. 4 August 1787 (SMch v4 #318)

d. 2 November 1807 "at 20" (SMch v4 #483)

FAMILY OF DANIEL **BOONE** (JONATHAN AND MARIE **CARTHUR**) AND ANNE **BOUDREAUX** (AUGUSTIN AND JUDITH **MARTIN**)

m. 23 November 1801 (Opch v1 p100)

1. Daniel

b. 15 December 1803 (SMch v6 #125)

m. 21 January 1833 Eurasie Boudreau (GCch v1 p89)

d. 23 October 1843 "at 39 yrs." (GCch v1 p63)

2. Augustin

bt. 2 June 1805 "at 2 mos." (Opch v1 p. 356)

m. 14 September 1824 Marie Gartie (Opch v1 p426)

d.

3. Marie

bt. 10 October 1802 "at 5 mos." (Opch v1 p292) d. 28 January 1804 "at 2 yrs." (Opch v1 p69)

m.

d.

THE FAMILY OF ANTOINE **BOUDREAUX** (JOSEPH AND MARIE MADELINE **SEMAIRE**) AND MARIE **SAVOIE** (FRANCOIS AND LUCIE **POTIER**)

m. 12 September 1812 (Opch v1 p227)

1. Eurasie

b. 1 February 1816 (SMch v6 #2023)

m. 21 January 1833 Daniel Boone (GCch v1 p89)

m. 20 August 1849 Edward Prejean (GCch v3 p5)

d.

2. Francois Gerasin

b. 8 March 1827 (GCch v1 p58)

m. 30 April 1855 Marie Amelie LaVoit (Lafch v3 p60)

d.

3. Adelaide
 - b. 2 April 1834 (GCch v1 p115)
 - m. 1 September 1851 Maxilmilin Cormier (GCch v3 p17)
 - d.
4. Aladin
 - b. 17 February 1825 (GCch v1 p39)
 - m. 20 July 1853 Marie Olivia Olivier (GCch v2 #59)
 - d.
5. Amelie
 - b. 10 August 1836 (GCch v1 p131)
 - m. 20 January 1852 Zephirin Thibodeaux (GCch v2 #44)
 - d.
6. Eloise
 - b. 28 February 1832 (GCch v1 p97)
 - m. 16 July 1850 Valsien Benoit (GCch v3 p10)
 - d.
7. Placide
 - bt. 26 January 1823 "at 3 mos." (GCch v1 p27)
 - m. 29 April 1844 Marie Rose Babineaux (GCch v1 p151)
 - d.
8. Child
 - b. circa 20 August 1817 (Opch v1 p161)
 - d. 28 August 1817 "at 8 days" (Opch v1 p161)
9. Adelle
 - bt. 6 February 1814 "at 5 mos." (Opch v2 p23)
 - m. 15 February 1830 Raphael Meche (GCch v1 p75)
 - d.
10. Joseph Arvilien
 - b. 14 September 1818 (SMch v7 #606)
 - m. 11 December 1876 Delphine Savoie (Arnch v2 p84)
 - d.
11. Louis Heterville
 - b. 18 August 1820 (GCch v1 p5)
 - m.
 - d.

12. Lucie Aurore
b. 28 May 1829 (GCch v1 p75)
m.
d.

THE FAMILY OF CYRILLE **THIBODEAUX** (PIERRE AND FRANCOISE **SONNIER**) AND ADELAIDE **CHAISSON**
(BASIL AND MONICA **COMOUT**)

- m. 15 June 1790 (Opch v1 p30)

Note: Cyrille Thibodeaux was from Acadia and Adelaide Chaisson was from Poitou, France. She was later to be a resident of Bellvue.

1. Sylvestre
bt. 20 November 1802 "at 7 yrs." (Opch v1 p297)
m. 3 November 1831 Scholastique Pariseau "age 30" (Opch v2 p19)
m. 18 January 1836 Celestre Doucet "age 36" (Opch v2 p86)
d. 20 January 1846 "at 50" (Opch v2 p. 46)
2. Suzette
bt. 20 November 1802 "at 4 yrs." (Opch v1 p297)
m. 16 November 1819 Pierre Pariseau (Opch v1 p348)
m. 17 April 1833 Jean Blanchard "age 26" (Opch v2 p36)
d.
3. Elouise
bt. 25 October 1796 (Opch v1 p162)
m. 10 January 1818 Alexander D'Egle (Opch v1 p309)
d.
4. Cyril
b. 7 December 1794 (Opch v1 p125)
m. 17 June 1817 Susanne Pariseau (Opch v1 p304)
d.
5. Placide
bt. 29 October 1804 at 10 days (Opch v1 p342)
m. 3 March 1830 Marie Caroline Bernard (Lafch v2 p17)
d.
6. Sileste
b.
m. 28 April 1812 Pierre Severin Richard (Opch v1 p222)
d.

7. Anna

b. 5 February 1791 (Opch v1 p. 125)

m.

d.

8. Leufroy

bt. 29 October 1804 "at 2 yrs." (Opch v1 p342)

m.

d.

THE FAMILY OF PIERRE **DOUCET** (MICHAEL AND MARGUERITE **MARTIN**) AND MARIE MAGDELLAN **COMEAX** (MICHEL **COMEAX** AND MARIE MAGDELLAN **GIROR**)

m. 5 August 1782 (SMct.hse: Oa-3-9)

1. Celestre

b. 7 March 1801 (Opch v1 p246)

m. 2 January 1815 Louis Carrier (Opch v1 p263)

m. 18 January 1836 Sylvestre Thibodeaux (Opch v2 p86)

d. 13 November 1847 "at Grand Prarie" (Opch v2 p50)

2. Elog

b.

m. 19 February 1811 Modeste Carrier (Opch v1 p211)

d.

3. Jean Pierre

bt. 1 November 1783 "at 4 mos." (SMch v2 #127)

m. 11 January 1802 Marie Louis La Casse (Opch v1 p101)

m. 2 February 1813 Francoise Martin (SMch v5 #282)

m. 19 May 1818 Mary Eloise Duplechain (Opch v1 p317)

d. 13 June 1823 "at 40" (SMch v4 #1568)

4. Jacques

b. 6 April 1796 (Opch v1 p169)

m.

d.

5. Joseph

b. 27 May 1792 (Opch v1 p119)

m.

d.

6. Marie

- b.
- m. 27 June 1803 Etienne Daigle (Opch v1 p121)
- d.

7. Pelagie

- bt. 6 June 1790 (Opch v1 p98)
- m. 19 June 1803 Joseph Daigle (Opch v1 p133)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF MICHEL **BIHM** (JACOB AND MARIE **RITTER**) AND JEANNE [Lejeune] **YOUNG** (JOSEPH AND PATSY PERRINE **HAYES**)

m.

1. Michel

- b. 3 January 1818 (Opch v2 p122)
- m. 30 September 1839 Azeline Lavergne (Opch v2 p183)
- d. 25 September 1881 "at 64 at Plaquemine" (Opch v2 p379)

2. James

- b. 4 January 1821 (Opch v2 p215)
- m. 19 March 1844 Marie Aurelia Lavergne (Opch VA #216)
- d.

3. Evelina

- b.
- m. 14 May 1829 Jean Baptiste Lejeune (Opch v1 p539)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF JEAN FABIEN **RICHARD** (FABIEN AND FRANCOISE **THIBODEAUX**) AND EUGENIE **SAVOIE** (PIERRE AND LOUISE **BOURQUE**)

m. 15 October 1816 (Opch v1 p292)

1. Jean Duclisse

- b. 20 July 1817 (OPch v2 p110)
- m. 30 May 1837 Azeline Victor Richard "at 30" (Opch v2 p118)
- d. Succ d 6 October 1851 (Opct Hse: Succ #1596)

2. Marie Alzina

- b. 19 July 1831 (Opch v3 p226)
- m. 9 August 1849 Pierre Emile Arceneaux (Opch vA #87)
- d.

3. Celestine
b.
m. 29 December 1841 Don Louis Richard (Opch v2 p215)
d.

4. Eugenie
b. 10 March 1822 (Opch v2 p245)
m.
d.

5. Evariste
b. 28 March 1828 (Opch v3 p28)
m.
d.

6. Louise
b. 5 October 1819 (Opch v2 p188)
m.
d.

THE FAMILY OF JOSEPH VICTOR **RICHARD** (VICTOR AND MAGDELINE **BRASSEUS**) AND MARIE **RICHARD**
(LOUIS AND MARIE **DUGAS**)

m. 28 April 1812 (Opch v1 p222)

1. Azeline Victor
b. 11 July 1813 (Opch v2 p25)
m. 30 May 1837 Jean Duclisse Richard "at 20" (Opch v2 p118)
d.

2. Alexandre Victor
b. 26 September 1824 (Opch v2 p316)
m. 22 August 1844 Celima Boutte (Opch vA #218)
m. 2 December 1874 Emelie Chachere (Eunice v1 p40)
d.

3. Theodule Victor
b. 19 November 1835 (Opch v4 p21)
m. 21 June 1859 Amelie Peck (Lafch v4 p172)
d.

4. Sosthene Victor
b. 1 September 1828 (Opch v3 p54)
m. 14 April 1852 Marie Emelie Richard (GCch v3 p27)
d.

5. Irona Victor
 - b. 7 July 1822 (Opch v2 p245)
 - m. 26 November 1844 John Andrus (Opch vA #217)
 - d.

6. Julie
 - b. 12 August 1826 (Opch v2 p259)
 - m. 19 December 1844 Theogene Hebert (Opch vA #219)
 - d.

7. Louis Victor
 - b.
 - m. 10 April 1845 Isoline Dugut "age 16" (Lafch v3 p187)
 - d.

8. Adeline
 - b. 1 January 1818 (Opch v2 p141)
 - m. 19 June 1834 Placido Hebert (Opch v2 p57)
 - d.

9. Amelia
 - b. 26 August 1819 (Opch v2 p193)
 - m. 12 October 1937 David Arkeson "age 25" (Opch v2 p127)
 - d.

10. Celestine
 - b. 31 July 1814 (Opch v2 p47)
 - m. 25 June 1833 Hypolite David "age 28" (Opch v2 p43)
 - d.

11. Marie Zelima
 - b. 25 January 1831 (Opch v3 p171)
 - m.
 - d.

12. Victor
 - b. 9 December 1832 (Opch v3 p250)
 - m.
 - d.

13. Joseph
 - b. 11 March 1816 (Opch v2 p79)
 - m.
 - d.

THE FAMILY OF LOUIS **SAVOIE** (FRANCOIS AND APPOLINE LUCIE **POITIER**) AND CELESIE **BOUDREAU**
(AUGUSTINE AND FRANCOISE **RITTER**)

m. 15 November 1827 (GCch v1 p47)

1. Don Louis

- b. 21 December 1827 (Ancestry.com)
- m. 19 July 1847 Aglae Castille (GCch v1 p173)
- d. 19 June 1872 (Ancestry.com)

THE FAMILY OF JEAN BAPTISTE **CASTILLE** (JEAN BAPTISTE AND JULIE **STELLY**) AND AZELIE **STELLY** (JEAN
BAPTISTE AND CATHERINE **MARKS**)

m. 22 May 1827 (GCch v1 p53)

1. Aglae

- b. 29 April 1830 (GCch v1 p83)
- m. 19 July 1847 Don Louis Savoie (GCch v1 p173)
- d.

2. Arthur

- b. 7 October 1851 (GCch v2 p27)
- m. 1 October 1873 Olivia Guidry (GCch v4 p38)
- d.

3. Corine

- b.
- m. 28 January 1873 Joseph Stelly (GCch v4 p34)
- d.

4. Azelie

- b. 6 June 1832 (GCch v1 p100)
- m. L. Renault (On 2nd marriage certificate)
- m. 16 February 1871 Stanislaus Bellard "of St. Maurice" (GCch v4 p22)
- d.

5. Elodie

- b. 13 January 1846 (GCch v1 p242)
- m. 18 November 1869 Augustin Dugal (GCch v4 p8)
- d.

6. Leonard

- b. 2 November 1847 (GCch v1 p269)
- m. 9 September 1869 Josephine Stelly (Arnch v2 p17)
- d.

7. Emelie
 - b. 6 July 1844 (GCch v1 p223)
 - m. 8 February 1866 Ernest Cahanin (GCch v3 p217)
 - d.

8. Lauron
 - b.
 - m. 5 June 1866 Joseph Babin (GCch v3 p220)
 - d.

9. Azelia
 - b.
 - m. 14 February 1865 Claude Francois Seraphim "of the Department of Daubs, France" (GCch v3 p193)
 - d.

10. Louis Dumas
 - b. 18 January 1836 (GCch v1 p126)
 - m. 31 July 1860 Marie Therese Stelly (GCch v3 p139)
 - d.

11. Marie Therese
 - b. 17 November 1839 (GCch v1 p170)
 - m. 10 April 1856 Evariste Castille (GCch v3 p76)
 - d.

12. Catharin Laure
 - b. 25 December 1841 (GCch v1 p192)
 - d. 5 August 1847 "at 5 1/2 yrs" (GCch v1 p73)

13. Jean Elphege
 - b. 1 January 1834 (GCch v1 p113)
 - m.
 - d.

14. Julie
 - b. 25 December 1841 (GCch v1 p192) Note: must be twin to #12 or the dates reflect baptisms.
 - m.
 - d.

15. Adolph
 - b. 14 June 1828 (GCch v1 p68)
 - m.
 - d.

THE FAMILY OF JEAN BAPTISTE **DAVID** [BAPTISTE AND MARIE **KIDER (RITTER)**] AND SCHOLASTIQUE **SAVOIE** (PIERRE AND LISETTE LOUISE **BOURG**)

m. 29 May 1798 (Opch v1 p81)

Note: Jean Baptiste David, according to some records, was and Acadian exile from Maryland. He also served as the treasurer of Opelousas church.

1. Jean Baptiste

b. 31 May 1806 (Opch v1 p419)

m. 26 April 1832 Marguerite Elmire Breaux (SMch v7 #203)

d. 9 November 1855 (Ancestry.com)

2. Azelie

b. 15 May 1816 (Opch v2 p83)

m. 11 January 1834 Paul Dupre "age 25" (Opch v2 p54)

d. October 1836

3. Guilbert

b. 1 April 1799 (Opch v2 p175)

m. 28 April 1839 Caroline Taylor (Opch v2 p175)

d.

4. Hypolite

b. 6 March 1803 (Opch v1 p321)

m. 25 June 1833 Celestine Richard "age 18" (Opch v2 p43)

d. 1886 (David Family)

5. Arvillien

b. 15 February 1813 (Opch v1 p584)

m. 18 June 1834 Elisa Guidry (SMch v7 #290)

d.

6. Caroline

b. 27 December 1800 (Opch v1 p246)

m. 28 December 1819 Laurent Dupre (Opch v1 p351)

d.

7. Emerante

bt. 10 December 1805 "at 8 mos." (Opch v1 p365)

m. 25 January 1825 Julien Lille Chachere (Opch v1 p432)

d.

8. Emeline

b. 15 June 1809 (Opch v1 p487)

m. 31 January 1826 Jean Foux (Opch v1 p456)

d.

THE FAMILY OF AGRICOLE **BREAUX** (FIRMIN AND MARGUERITE **BRAU**) AND SCHOLASTIQUE MELANIE **PICOU** (NICHOLAS AND MADELINE SCHOLASTIQUE **BOURGEOIS**)

m. 1 July 1813 (SMch v5 #298)

Note: Scholastique Picou would later marry Jean Francois Domengeau (SMct Hse: Mass VB p41). She died March 10, 1846 "at 50." (SMch v5 p157)

1. Marguerite Elmire

- b. 20 February 1816 (SMch v7 #32)
- m. 26 April 1832 Jean Baptiste David (SMch v7 #203)
- d. 10 September 1868 "at 49 at Bellevue"

2. Calise

- b.
- m. 13 April 1841 Alexander Hebert (SMch v8 #176)
- d.

3. Arthemise

- b. 11 February 1820 (SMch v7 #1054)
- m. 18 November 1841 Nicholas Hebert (SMch v8 #193)
- d. 12 April 1845 "at 22" (SMch v1 p149)

4. Scholastique Azelia

- b. 9 August 1827 (SMch v7 #2128)
- m. 16 May 1843 Alexandre Guidre (GCch v1 p145)
- d.

5. Erasia

- b. 5 November 1825 (SMch v7 #1705)
- m. 6 March or April 1842 Alexis Guidry (SMch v8 #203)
- d.

6. Emelie

- b. 11 May 1822 (SMch v7 #1249)
- d. 29 September 1829 "at 7" (SMch v4 #1997)

7. Jean Emile

- b. 11 April 1814 (SMch v6 #1630)
- m.
- d.

8. Marie Asoline

- b. 26 December 1823 (SMch v7 #1432)
- d. 5 February 1825 "at 14 mos." (SMch v4 #1687)

Firmin & Agricole Breaux's Bridges

"In 1799, Firmin Breaux built a footbridge across the beautiful Bayou Teche to help ease the passage for his family and neighbors. The bridge was a suspension foot bridge, made of rope and small planks, stabilized by being tied to small pilings located at each end of the bridge, as well as to a pair of huge live oak trees on both sides of the bayou. When traveling directions were given, folks would say, "go to Breaux's bridge...." which was eventually adopted as the city of Breaux Bridge's name.

In 1818, Firmin's son, Agricole built the first vehicular bridge, allowing the passage of wagons and increased commerce in the area as well as initiating Breaux Bridge as the only city on Bayou Teche to evolve from both sides simultaneously.

The town received its official founding in 1829 when Scholastique Picou Breaux, a strong and a determined French speaking Acadian woman (along with Agricole's 33 year old widow), drew up plans for the city and began developing her property by selling lots to other Acadian settlers.

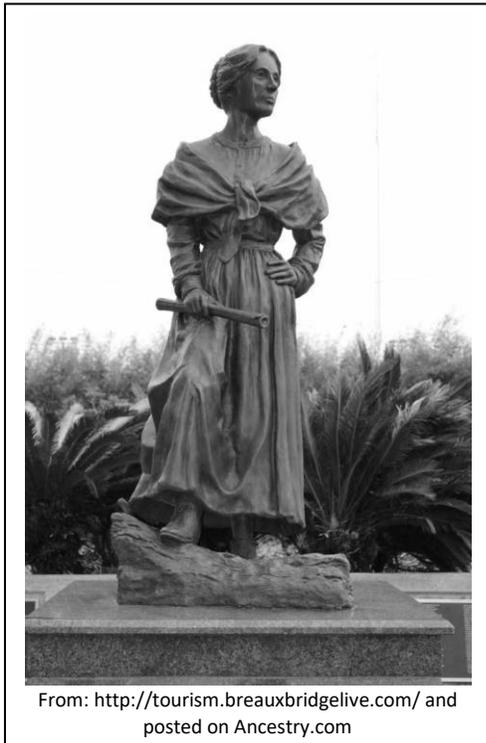
Settlers persevered through hardships associated with The Great Flood of 1927. The Great Depression, and numerous epidemics. The growth of the town's population eventually necessitated the establishment of a church parish in 1847, and in 1859 Breaux Bridge was officially incorporated.

More information may be found about this legend in Breaux Bridge's *Parc de Pont des Pont Breaux* on the 20 foot monument dedicated in March 1996."

Information taken from a Breaux Bridge, Louisiana travel brochure posted on Ancestry.com.

9. Marie Calixte
b. 12 June 1818 (SMch v7 #539)
m.
d.

Scholastique Picou Breaux Founder of Breaux Bridge, Louisiana



“Scholastique Picou Breaux founded our wonderful city when she was just 33 years old. A determined Acadian woman, Scholastique drew up *Plan de la Ville Du Pont des Breaux*, the plan for the Village of Breaux Bridge, a plan which included land for a school and a church, a diagram of streets, and a detailed map of the area, including her late husband's bridge. She then proceeded to sell lots, resulting in Breaux Bridge's founding date of August 5, 1829.

Scholastique was born Scholastique Melanie Picou on July 25, 1796. She married young, had five children, then at the age of 32 became a widow. It is assumed that financial troubles motivated her to begin developing the Village of Breaux Bridge, for once she had a plan, she could then sell lots. After founding Breaux Bridge, Scholastique remarried and became the mother of two more children.

Erecting the statue of Scholastique that embellishes *City Parc* was a labor of love and an example of community spirit. A multigenerational and multiracial group of women from all walks of life came together to form The Women of Breaux Bridge, a group whose sole purpose was to honor Scholastique as the founder of our city. They solicited

donors at \$100 per donor. In exchange for the donation, the name of a woman was placed on the bronze plaque located Scholastique Picou Breaux on the wall behind the statue. Some women contributed to have their names on the wall, but other contributors listed female ancestors, daughters, wives, sisters, aunts, granddaughters, and maids. After over three hundred donors came forth, the Women of Breaux Bridge commissioned Celia Guilbeau Soper with sculpting a life-size bronze statue of Scholastique.

Our bronze Scholastique stands surveying her beloved community, with worn boots perched upon a log and the plan she developed grasped in her hand.

An editorial by Bob Hamm in The Daily Advertiser suggested that Scholastique was a symbol of life in Louisiana after the expulsion of the Acadians from Nova Scotia. An excerpt from the editorial reads:

"Longfellow's Evangeline will always be a symbol of the heartbreak and suffering that was part of the Acadian expulsion from Nova Scotia. Now, however, we have been given an Acadian heroine whose life symbolizes, not the pain and suffering, but the incredible fortitude and resilience of the Acadians. Scholastique Breaux possessed qualities with which the poet did not endow Evangeline. In this remarkable woman were those characteristics of the Acadians that allowed them not only to endure the hardships of the brutal expulsion, but also to prevail in a strange and often hostile land.

The story of Scholastique Breaux speaks of the unflagging determination and indomitable courage of the Acadians. . . Scholastique symbolizes the Acadians of Louisiana. . ."

THE FAMILY OF MICHEL **COMEUX** (MICHEL AND MARIE **GIROUARD**) AND LOUISE **LATIOLIAS** (LOUIS AND JULIENNE **BAR**)

m. 3 December 1800 (Opch v1 p92)

1. Onesime

bt. 13 November 1808 (Opch v1 p236) Note: "He was made legitimate by the marriage of his parents." (Opelousas Post)

m. 5 August 1823 Elouise Doucet (Opch v1 p415)

d.

2. Magdelan

b. 5 February 1808 (SMch v7 #200)

m. 24 July 1827 Cyprien Fontenot (Opch v1 p490)

d.

3. child

d. 14 February 1801 (Opch v1 p50)

4. child

b. circa 30 June 1802 (Opch v1 p56)

d. 6 July 1802 (Opch v1 p56)

5. Marie Louise

bt. 25 December 1803 "at 6 mos." (Opch v1 p324)

m.

d.

THE FAMILY OF JOSEPH **DOUCET** (JOSEPH AND ANNE **THIBODEAUX**) AND CELESTE **BELLARD** (ANTOINE AND MARIE **TRAHAN**)

m. 14 May 1805 (Opch v1 p139)

1. Elouise

b. 26 February 1806 (Opch v1 p503)
m. 5 August 1823 Onesime Comeaux (Opch v1 p415)
d. 1837 (Ancestry.com)

2. Julien

b. circa 1816
m. 30 April 1839 Josephine Fontenot (GCch v1 p126)
d. 22 October 1886 "at 70 at Plaisance" (Opch v2 p58)

3. Maximilien

b. 22 February 1813 (Opch v2 p35)
m. 8 July 1834 Marie Anne Marcantel (Opch v2 p58)
d.

4. Jean

b. 11 March 1815 (Opch v2 p86)
m.
d.

5. Joseph

b. 26 September 1809 (Opch v1 p503)
m. 19 August 1828 Carmelite Richard (Opch v1 p521)
d.

6. Joachine

bt. 3 August 1814 (Opch v2 p35)
m.
d.

7. Julia

b. 6 October 1821 "at 4 yrs" (GCch v1 p17)
m.
d.

8. child

b. circa March 1807 (Opch v1 p91)
d. 21 August 1807 (Opch v1 p91)

THE FAMILY OF BARTHOLOMEU **LEBLEU** (LOUIS AND MARIE **GENTILS**) AND JOSETTE **LAMIRANDE**
(HYPOLITE CHAUVIN DE **LAFRENIERE**)

m. never

Note: Bartholomeu LeBleu's will states that he and Josette LaMirande were never married. The will was dated 21 February 1817 (LSAR: Opel: 1817). Josette LaMirande died in 1807 (Opch v1 p94).

1. Jean Baptiste

- bt. 18 July 1790 (Opch v1 p99)
- m. 18 May 1813 Marguarite Lejeune (Opch v1 p239)
- d. 20 October 1837 (GCch v1 p45)

2. Arsene

- bt. 30 October 1789 (Opch v1 p94)
- m. 20 April 1824 Eliza Milhomme (Op ct hse Marr #16)
- d.

3. Martin

- b. 5 October 1793 (Opch v1 p116)
- m. 9 October 1820 Eloise Rion (Opch v1 p360)
- d.

4. Catherine

- b. 12 January 1786 (Opch v1 p266)
- m. 9 August 1802 Carles Sallier (Opch v1 p108)
- d.

5. Hypolite

- b.
- m. 20 August 1800 Sebastien Benoit "of Calcasieu River" (Opch v1 p90)
- d.

6. Ozita

- b. 24 March 1792 (Opch v1 p116)
- m.
- d.

THE FAMILY OF BLAISE **LEJEUNE** (BLAISE AND MARIE **BREAUX**) AND ADELAIDE **QUINTERO** (MANUEL AND MARIE **GRANGER**)

m. 1 May 1792 (Opch v1 p40)

Note: Blaise Lejeune was from Pointe Coupee.

1. Marguarite

bt. 28 May 1798 (Opch v1 p200)

m. 18 May 1813 Jean Baptiste LeBleu (Opch v1 p239)

d. 1847 in Opelousas

2. child

d. 8 March 1811 (Opch v1 p115)

3. Celestine

b.

m. 6 May 1817 Guillame Barwick (Opch v1 p302)

d.

4. Etienne

bt. 11 May 1814 (Opch v2 p28)

m. d. 6 August 1816 "at 3 1/2 yrs." (Opch v1 p154)

d.

5. Hyacinthe

b. 19 November 1808 (Opch v1 p471)

m. 21 November 1821 Nathaniel West (Opch v1 p387)

d.

6. Jean

bt. 31 July 1795 (Opch v1 p135)

m. 23 August 1813 Marie Louise LaCase (Opch v1 p246)

d.

7. Joseph

b. 18 September 1793 (Opch v1 p200)

m. 20 February 1820 Emilia Boussasa (Op v1 p280)

d.

8. Michel

bt. 1 November 1804 "at 2 yrs."

m.

d.

9. Ursin

bt. 6 April 1806 "at 8 mos."

m.

d.

THE FAMILY OF ANTONIO **BELLARD** (ANTONIO AND MARIA FRANCISCA **GALLARND**) AND MARIA **FOREST**
(SANTIAGO AND MARGUARITA **COMO**)

m. 24 October 1797 (Opch v1 p75)

1. Pierre

bt. 29 June 1799 (Opch v1 p215)

m. 3 November 1831 Denise Bousassa (Opch v2 p19)

d. succ d 31 June 1847 (Op cte hse Succ #1310)

THE FAMILY OF LOUIS **LAVERGNE** (LOUIS AND MARIE ANNE **SIMON**) AND ELIZABETH "ISABELLE"
TOMELIN (PIERRE AND MARGUERITE **COUSSENOTE**)

m. 4 July 1725 (Deville, *New Orleans French*, p61)

Story of Louis Lavergne

Posted 11 Oct 2019 by John W. Ancelet, Jr.

<http://www.acadiansingray.com/Appendices-ATLAL-LAVERGNE.htm#LAVERGNE>

"Most of the **Lavergnes** of South Louisiana are descendants of French-Canadian Louis, *fils*, son of Louis **Lavergne**, *père* and Marie **Simon** of Québec. Louis, *fils*'s, described by the recording priest as 'resident on the Pascagoula River' and perhaps a *coureur de bois*, married Élisabeth, daughter of Pierre **Thomelain** or **Thommelin**, at New Orleans in July 1725. They were counted later that year at Pascagoula, present-day Mississippi, then a part of French Louisiana, but they returned to New Orleans by Christmas Day 1729, when their daughter Françoise was baptized at St. Louis Church. In 1731, the couple were living at Cannes Brûlé, present-day Kenner, Jefferson Parish. Their daughters married into the **Bar**, **Clermont**, **Ingimbert**, and **Leborne** families. Louis, *fils* died probably at New Orleans in April 1750 (two years later, Élisabeth remarried to Jean **Barré** of Lyon, France, at New Orleans). Louis, *fils* left Élisabeth with two minor sons, *Louis* III, born in c1743, and *Jean-Baptiste*, born at St.-Charles des Allemands on the Lower German Coast in July 1745. It was Louis III who moved to the western prairies and created a large family there."

Author's Note: Louis Lavergne was born in Quebec. He moved to the Louisiana Territory around 1720 and resided along the Pascagoula River in what is now the state of Mississippi. Elizabeth Tomelin was a resident of Mobile at the time of her marriage to Louis Lavergne. Conrad's *First Families of Louisiana* indicates that this couple continued to live in Pascagoula (see *First Families of Louisiana -- request for slaves*). Elizabeth later married Jean Barre, a native of Lyons, on September 18, 1752. "There being two minor sons of the deceased Lavergne, Jean Barth obligates himself to pay them six hundred pounds on their attaining full age." There is also a record of a sale of times, plus slaves, which amount is settled on the three sons-in-law of the widow Lavergne. Received at Superior Council on August 7, 1762.

1. Louis

- b.
- m. Marie Anne LaCase
- d.

2. Elizabeth

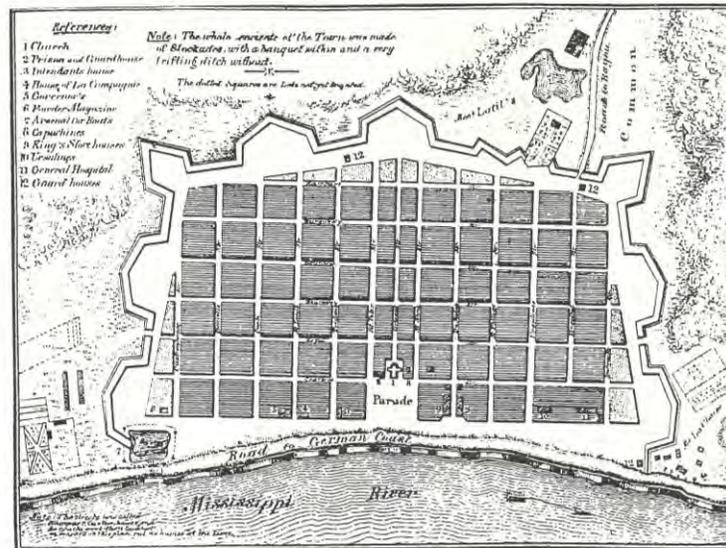
- b. 19 September 1731 (NOch v1 p13)
- m.
- d.

3. Françoise

- b. 25 December 1729 (Conrad, p127)
- m.
- d.

4. Marie Louise

- b. 1733 in New Orleans
- m.
- d. 24 August 1822 (Opch)



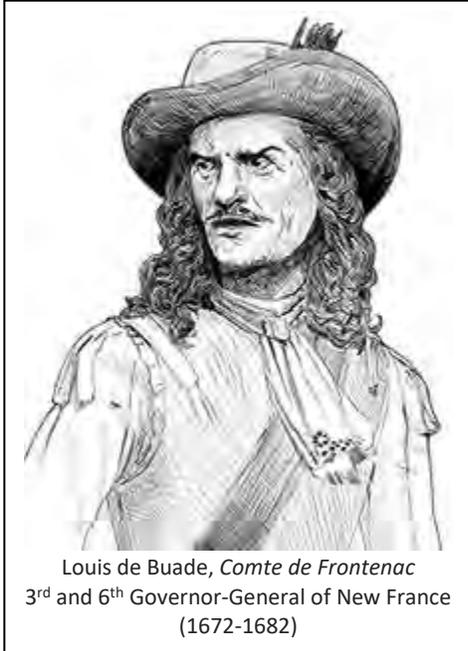
New Orleans, about 1770

The above is a plat of New Orleans at about the time Louis Lavergne and Marie Anne Lacase relocated their family in the Opelousas Post area. Pierre Tomelin lived on Chartres Street, or the street which runs directly in front of the church. Pierre Tomelin was a carpenter and the person who weatherboarded the original St. Louis Cathedral. That church was located on St. Ann Street, which is that street to the right of the Parade grounds. The present location of the St. Louis Cathedral is where the cross is placed on the plat. The Parade grounds was later called the Place d'Armes, and was later renamed Jackson Square after the Battle of New Orleans was fought in 1815. The entire area has alternately been called the Vieux Carre' (Old City) and the French Quarter.

(Taken from Edwin Adams Davis' *Louisiana: The Pelican State*)

EXPANDING NEW FRANCE

The Laverignes Move to Quebec, New Orleans, and Opelousas



Louis de Buade, *Comte de Frontenac*
3rd and 6th Governor-General of New France
(1672-1682)

Shortly after the French founded Quebec in 1608, their explorers and fur traders pushed westward along the Great Lakes area. The chief activity of the French was the fur trade conducted by the *coureurs de bois* or the "runners of the woods." The Governor of New France, Louis de Buade, *Comte de Frontenac* (1620-1698), showed a preference for fur trading activities over the establishment of farming communities. Thus, the development of New France was merely an attempt to expand the scope of the lucrative fur trade and extend French dominance in the New World. Pierre Esprit Radisson first heard of a great river which ran southward toward the Gulf of Mexico and within a few years the French had explored the upper portions of that "great river."

The Jesuits were among the first Europeans to explore the Great Lakes area during their missionary work among the North American Indians. It is a testament to their influence that the first reference to "Mississippi" is found in the diary of Father Claude Jean Allouez (1622-89). He and another priest

set out to explore the great river but they never found it. Another testament to Jesuit influence was that New France's Governor, *Comte de Frontenac*, arrived in Canada with secret orders to curb the influence of the Jesuits. It was Frontenac who asked Louis Joliet (1646-1700), a fur trapper and experienced boatman, and Father Jacques Marquette (1637-75), a Jesuit, to explore the Mississippi River. Frontenac hoped that the expedition would show that the Mississippi River was an artery from the Great Lakes to the Pacific Ocean. If it emptied into the Pacific, an immensely valuable water route to the Orient would have been discovered, greatly enhancing the value of Canada and other French-dominated areas of the New World.

It was in October 1672, almost ten years after the arrival of Louis Lavergne, that Joliet and his party left Quebec to meet Marquette. By May 1673, Joliet, Marquette and five others set out in two canoes. The Indians told the party bizarre stories of the river and its environs in an attempt to discourage further explorations. It was on 17 June 1673 that the party first saw the Mississippi near the confluence of the Wisconsin River. They canoed the Mississippi to present-day Memphis, Tennessee, at the mouth of the Arkansas River. At that location, in July 1673, the party concluded that the Mississippi drained into the Gulf of Mexico, not the Pacific Ocean. Fears of hostile Spaniards and Indians further south convinced the party to head back to Canada. In September of 1673, they arrived in present-day Green Bay, Wisconsin, where they spent the winter. In the Spring of 1674, Joliet returned to Quebec and reported to Frontenac that the lower Mississippi Valley had better soil for farming and a much milder and better climate. Marquette never had the opportunity to report to Frontenac; he died on 19 May 1675 on his way to Canada.

It was during this exciting exploratory period that Louis Lavergne, having arrived in the New World in the latter half of the 1660s, met and married Marie Anne Simon, the fourteen-year-old daughter of Hubert Simon. Their marriage on 26 May 1675 was held during a period of uncertainty and unrest for the struggling village of Quebec. Indeed, New France lingered on the verge of absolute disaster. As a master stone mason by trade, Louis Lavergne's services were certainly essential, both for reasons of military defense and civilian housing. The settlement was small enough so that it seems certain that Louis would have known, or at least have been familiar with the characters involved in the location of and subsequent exploration of the Mississippi River. Louis and Marie Anne Simon set up house in 1675 and raised a family in Quebec until 1687, when Louis died at the age of 40. He left behind a 27-year-old widow with six small children: Marie Anne, age 10; Pierre, age 8; Louis, age 6; Phillippe, age 4; Marie Angelique, age 2; and Marie Louise, age 1. (Marie Anne Simon Lavergne died in 1743 at the age of 83.)

As a resident of Quebec City, Louis Lavergne would most likely have been familiar with a fellow resident named Rene Robert Cavalier, *Sieur de La Salle*. La Salle arrived in New France in 1667, right about the same time as Louis Lavergne, and the settlement's population was about 800 at that time. In 1673 Governor Frontenac sent La Salle to France to report to French Finance Minister Colbert on the status of New France. (See "Quebec City: The Emergence of Louis Lavergne"). He returned to Canada two years later (1675) with a grant of nobility only to return to France (1677) with a request of the King for ships and settlers for the lower Mississippi River Valley. To make his case before the King, La Salle told of rich mines and the prospect of mass conversions of Indians to Christianity—both sheer fabrications. By 14 July 1678, La Salle left France and reached Quebec two months later.



A 19th-century engraving of
Robert Rene Cavalier,
Sieur de La Salle

La Salle made plans to explore the lower Mississippi. His ambitions were plain enough: he wanted to get rich. The drive to explore the lower Mississippi was intensified by a book written by Joliet about his and Marquette's excursion. After reading the book, La Salle entertained dreams of a French empire along the Mississippi. He and Governor Frontenac were very good friends insofar as they shared many of the same selfish and opportunistic ambitions. It was with Frontenac's support that La Salle embarked on his famous trip to the mouth of the Mississippi River.

Before embarking, La Salle enlisted the aid of another explorer of note named Henri de Tonti. Tonti was an Italian whose right hand had been nearly severed by an exploding grenade during a battle against the Spanish. Instead of waiting for medical assistance, he cut off his own hand, which was later replaced by an iron limb. He was commonly referred to as *Bras-de-fer*, or "Iron Hand." La Salle and Tonti started down the Mississippi River in early 1682 with fifty-four Frenchmen and Indians, including thirteen Indian women and children. Unlike Joliet and Marquette, who suspected that the Indians of the lower Mississippi Valley would be more hostile, La Salle found that they were friendlier. On 6 April 1682, the party reached the "Head of Passes" or the northern tip of the Mississippi Delta in present-day Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana. Once there they split into three groups: one headed by Tonti, another by a Dautray, and the third by La Salle himself who descended the river via what is called today the Southwest Pass. On 9 April 1682, La Salle saw the Gulf of Mexico and "took possession" of the country by erecting a large wooden cross. On it was inscribed: "Louis the Great, King of France and Navarre, reigns, April 9, 1682." He claimed all lands drained by the Mississippi River for France. (This was one of

the largest land claims in the history of the world, as the Mississippi drains most of the North American continent). Additionally, he named the area "*Louisiane*," meaning "the land of Louis."



Joseph-Antoine le Fèbvre,
Sieur de La Barre,
Governor-General of New France
(1682-1685)

Upon returning to New France, La Salle was to learn that his friend, Governor Frontenac, had been replaced by a bitter enemy, Joseph-Antoine le Fèbvre, *Sieur de La Barre*. La Barre accused La Salle of wanting to be King and seized several forts along the upper Mississippi that had been under La Salle's control. La Salle then returned to France (1683) and appealed directly to the King for the return of the forts and for a chance to colonize the lower Mississippi Valley. La Salle maintained the fiction of peaceful colonization and the necessity of offsetting the expansion of New Spain by embellishing his falsehoods. He claimed to know of Spanish silver mines and proposed an elaborate scheme of establishing a fort about 170 miles upstream from the mouth of the river. La Salle asked for 200 men and a year of supplies; he got somewhat more. The King wrote to La Barre and ordered the return of the forts to La Salle. La Salle got four ships and 300 colonists to attempt to colonize the lower Mississippi. They departed in 1684.

Almost from the beginning, the voyage was a disaster. The commander of the ships, Commander Taneguy le Gallois de Beaujeu, was suspicious of La Salle and from the start their relations were strained, at best. The attempt to reach the Mississippi via the Gulf of Mexico failed as the ships missed the mouth of the river and sailed instead westward to Matagorda Bay in Texas. There La Salle established a settlement called Fort St. Louis (on a bluff overlooking Garcitas Creek in present-day Victoria County, Texas. It is the earliest European settlement on the entire Gulf coast between Pensacola, Florida, and Tampico, Mexico). After months of hardships the realization that he had led many innocent people to an agonizingly slow extinction resulted in LaSalle's murder at the hands of his own men. The Spaniards later found out about La Salle's settlements and destroyed them. And so, for the time, both France and Spain lay claim to Louisiana, which would belong to whomever would settle there first.

After the death of La Salle, France seemed to forget about Louisiana, but there were leaders from both Canada and France who continued to call for the immediate settlement of the lower Mississippi River Valley. The French decision to finally move on settling Louisiana came about more as a perceived need to offset the influence of the Spanish and British in the New World than a recognition of the inherent value of Louisiana as a territorial possession. Secret agents in the employ of King Louis XIV discovered that the British were planning to establish a settlement in Louisiana. Louis Phélypeaux, known as the *Comte de Pontchartrain*, an important government official in France, realized that he had to take immediate action. After a series of conferences with French and Canadian leaders, two possible methods of settling Louisiana were considered:

1. colonists could either be sent down the Mississippi River from the Great Lakes region under the leadership of a man like Tonti who knew the country, or
2. they could be sent by ship directly from France.



Pierre Le Moyne, *Sieur d'Iberville*
Founder of the French colony of *La Louisiane*
of New France. Near present day Mobile,
Alabama. He was born in Montreal of French
colonist parents.

French officials made a concerted effort to appoint an experienced naval commander with leadership qualities to head the expedition. After considering many Frenchmen and Canadians they chose Pierre Le Moyne, *Sieur d'Iberville*.

Iberville was destined to become the "Founder of Louisiana." He seemed to be the ideal choice to begin the colonization of the lower Mississippi River valley. Born and reared in Canada, Iberville had an active childhood. He joined the French Navy while still a teenager and was later to become a fleet commander, winning stunning victories over the British in Hudson Bay and off the coast of New Foundland. The combination of his Canadian roots, naval background, and experience with the British made his selection obvious—and ideal.

Upon arriving at Mobile Bay, Iberville's ships anchored off Ship Island. The next day, 13 February 1699, Iberville and his younger brother, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, *Sieur d'Bienville*,

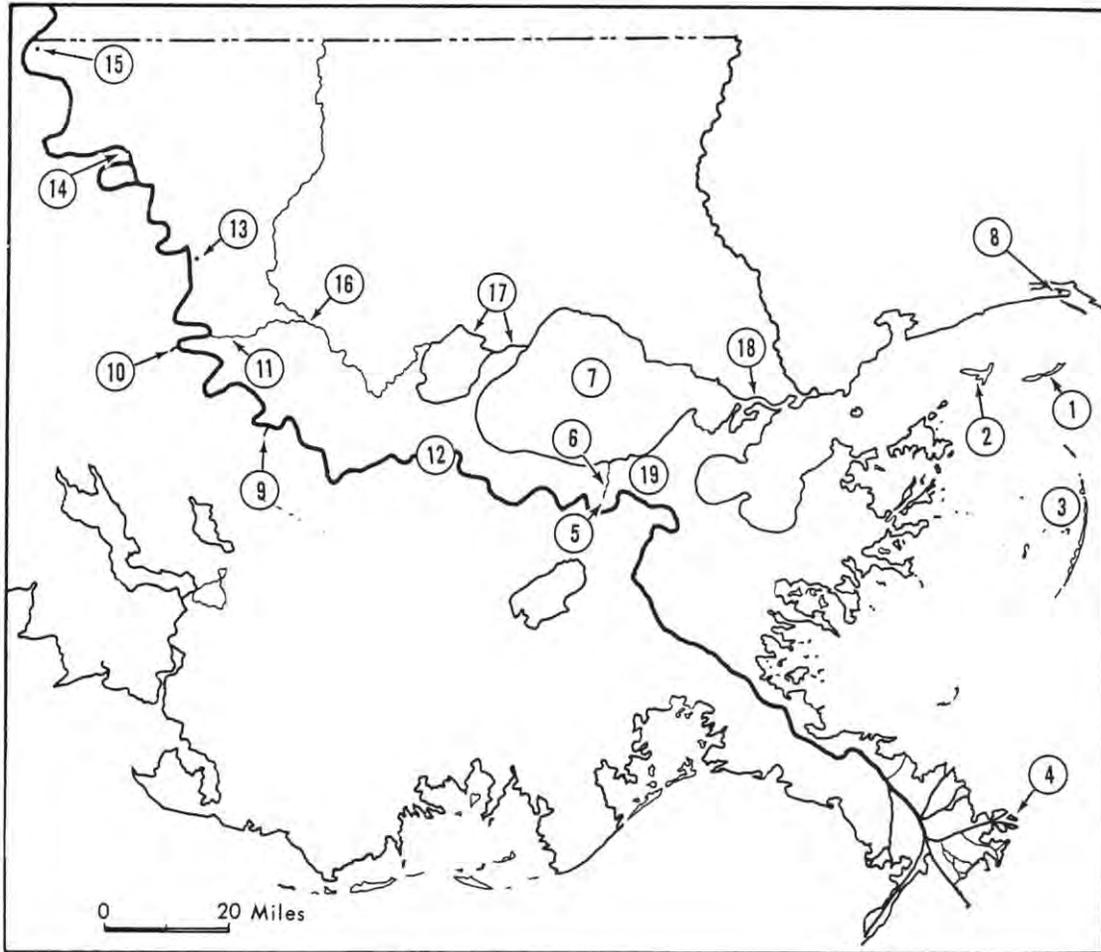
rowed to the mainland and visited the Biloxi Indians. Shortly afterwards, Iberville, Bienville, and about fifty other men set off in two large boats and two canoes in search of what La Salle was unable to find, the mouth of the Mississippi River. The low, marshy, irregular coast along with unfavorable winds and thick fog and storms made progress northward almost insufferably slow. Late one afternoon the party rounded a small cape; the wind drove them toward a series of jutting crags of land surrounding calmer waters. On 2 March 1699, Iberville wrote:

"As I neared the rocks, I perceived that there was a river. I passed between two of the rocks in twelve feet of water, the sea very heavy. ...I found the water sweet and with a very great current."

The "rocks" were really mud-covered logs. The river was the Mississippi. The party started up the river the very next day. On the fourth day Iberville reached a village of Bayougoula Indians who offered to guide them up the river. He was certain he was on the Mississippi when the Bayougoulas presented him with a fourteen-year-old letter Tonti had written to La Salle helping in establishing a colony. (Remember: La Salle had missed the mouth of the river and was to meet his demise with his settlement at Matagorda Bay in Texas).

Iberville was to continue his historic journey by traveling northward past a village of the Mongoulacha Indians, passing the site of the present-day capital of Louisiana. He saw a red pole with the heads of fish and bear attached to it; he called the site "*Baton Rouge*" or "red stick." After being entertained by the Indians, the Iberville Party started back for Ship Island. Iberville and Bienville parted at Bayou Manchac. Iberville returned via Bayou Manchac, the Amite River, and Lakes Maurepas, Ponchartrain, and Borgne; Bienville continued down the Mississippi to its mouth then turned northward toward Ship and Cat Islands. The two brothers arrived at Cat Island within a few hours of one another. (See map below.)

EXPANDING NEW FRANCE



Map Iberville's Ascent of the Mississippi, 1699. (1) Ship Island; (2) Cat Island; (3) Chandeleur Islands; (4) Mudlumps; (5) Portage to Bayou St. John; (6) Bayou St. John; (7) Lake Pontchartrain; (8) Biloxi; (9) Bayou Lafourche; (10) Bayou Plaquemine; (11) Bayou Manchac; (12) Mississippi River; (13) Baton Rouge; (14) Pointe Coupee; (15) Houma village; (16) Junction of Manchac with the Amite River; (17) Lake Maurepas and Pass Manchac; (18) The Rigolets; (19) Isle of Orleans

(Taken from Fred Kniffen's Louisiana and Its People)

By 1 May 1699, Iberville and his men had completed the construction of a small fort on the eastern side of Biloxi Bay. They called the settlement Fort Maurepas, after the Prime Minister of France. The fort was garrisoned by about seventy men with six months provisions. On 4 May 1699, Iberville set sail for France to get new colonists and additional supplies. By rediscovering the mouth of the Mississippi *from* the Gulf of Mexico, and setting up Fort Maurepas, Iberville sowed the seed that was to become French Louisiana.

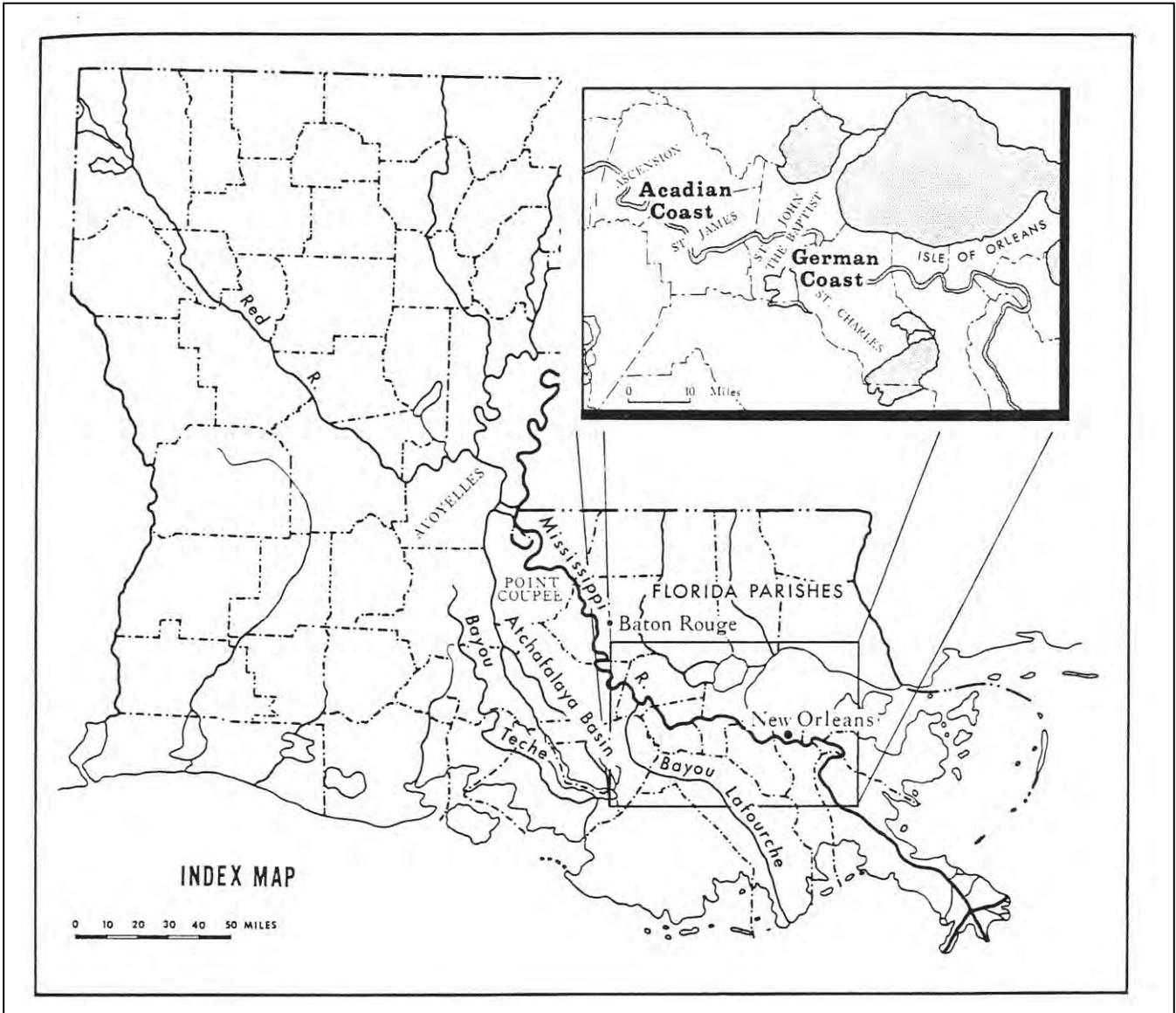
The early years of the Louisiana colonies were exceedingly difficult for the settlers for a number of reasons. First, many of the Canadians were *coureurs de bois* who often refused to engage in agricultural drudgery. Secondly, most of the colonists from France preferred to explore the region in a vain search for La Salle's "gold and silver mines." The absence of women for marrying and home-building also led to some discontentment. The fact that no crops were grown during the first year meant that the original cache of supplies brought over from France was being rapidly depleted. In 1702, Iberville moved most of the settlers to Dauphin Island and shortly afterwards built another settlement on the west side of Mobile Bay. Iberville was to write to the French government that there was a need for "honest tillers of the earth" not more explorers and fortune seekers. Unlike many other French leaders, Iberville saw the need to establish agriculture as the colony's chief means of livelihood. His service to Louisiana was interrupted by yet another war with England, which required his services as a naval commander. Iberville later died of yellow fever in Cuba in 1706.

Louisiana was to grow slowly and painfully under French rule. Louis Lavergne (1681-1750), the son of Louis Lavergne (1647-1687) of Quebec, immigrated to Louisiana in the early 1720s. He first lived in Pascagoula and later married Elizabeth Tommelin on 4 July 1725 in New Orleans. Her father, Pierre Tommelin, was a carpenter who lived in New Orleans on Chartres Street with a new wife and several slaves.

Since Louis Lavergne was a resident of Louisiana before his marriage to Elizabeth Tommelin, he witnessed the establishment of the Louisiana colony. First, Louis married Elizabeth at the age of 44. Perhaps marriage at that late age suggests that he lived for a period of time in areas not inhabited by European or Canadian women, much as the first Louisiana pioneers did. Secondly, he is referred to in Conrad's *Louisiana's First Families* and in Deville's *New Orleans French* as an inhabitant of Pascagoula River. Unlike their parents, Louis Lavergne and Elizabeth Tommelin appear to be farmers with land claims. Many of the farms along the Gulf Coast in the area now known as the Gold Coast of Mississippi and Alabama predated the founding of New Orleans. In October 1726 Louis requested Negro slaves from "The Company." That company was The Company of the West, a business venture of the Royal Bank of France founded under the Director-Generalship of John Law, the son of a wealthy Scottish Merchant. The fate of Louis and Elizabeth Tommelin's request for slaves is not known, but the fate of the Company is. By the time of the Lavergne request the Company was bankrupt. John Law's speculation is often referred to as one of the first business "bubbles" to burst in the New World. Apparently, the couple moved to New Orleans, and later upriver along the Mississippi near what is Kenner and Destrehan in Jefferson and St. Charles Parishes, Louisiana. They were the parents of at least three children, one of whom was yet another Louis Lavergne (1743-1814), who was to leave the Gulf Coast area for the Opelousas Post in the prairies of southwest Louisiana.

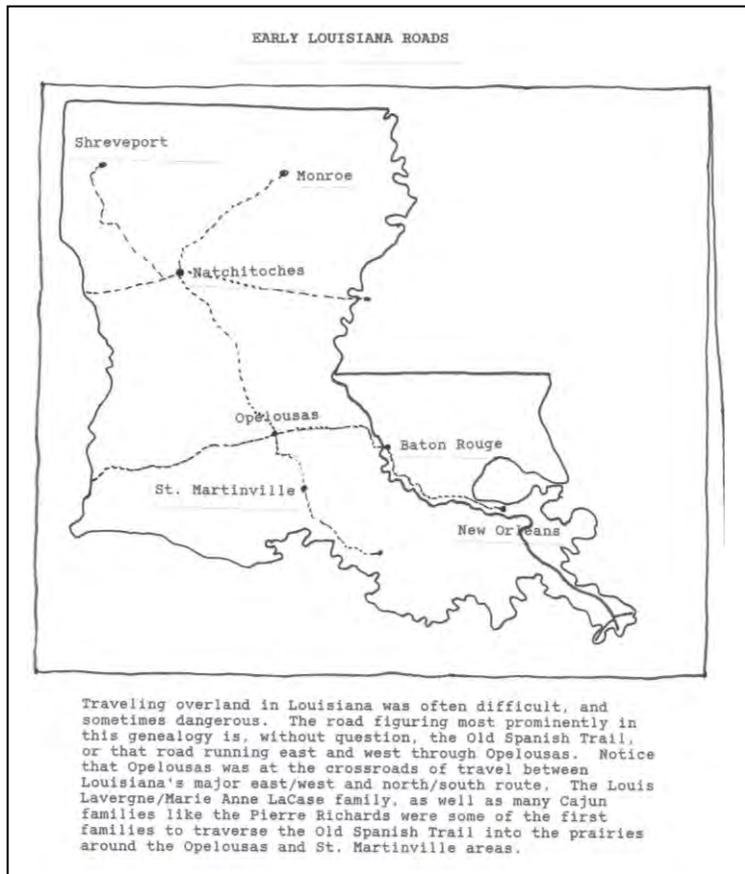
The third Louis Lavergne (1743-1814) was only seven when his father died in St. Charles Parish, Louisiana. The exact date of his birth in 1743 is not known. He was at least 11 years older than his bride, Marie Anne Lacase, when they married circa 1767. The first written documentation of their union is the baptismal record of their child, Marie Eugenie, who was born on 7 October 1778. The ecclesiastical event is part of the St. Louis Church archives in New Orleans, establishing the presence of the Lavernes

in the New Orleans area in 1778. After a short settlement along the “German Coast” (St. John the Baptist and St. Charles Parishes) of the Mississippi River north of New Orleans, the next primary document to establish the location of the Lavergne family is the baptismal record of another infant, Eugene, who was born on 1 October 1790 and christened in Opelousas. And so, it is certain that Louis Lavergne moved from the New Orleans/St. Charles Parish area, where he married Marie Lacase, to the German Coast, and then to the Opelousas area around 1778-1780.



The migration of the Lavergnes from the Paskagoula River and New Orleans to the Opelousas Post was probably prompted by events between the time of the Seven Years War (French and Indian War) from 1756-63, and the American Revolution from 1776-83. Shortly after the Seven Years War the Mobile area had been ceded to the British. On that occasion several of the Creole families of the area migrated to a developing outpost at Attakapas (the St. Martin and Lafayette Parish area), but the Lavergnes were not one of them. Attakapas and Opelousas were treeless prairies that could be settled easily. Spanish Governor Philippe Aubry encouraged migration to the area to exploit the rich grasslands conducive to

ranching. Aubry was to write that "since the cession of Mobile, we are entirely without cattle." The need to supply New Orleans with meat hastened the westward migration of Creole and Acadian families to Acadiana. Louis Lavergne undoubtedly had economic opportunity on his mind while along the German Coast in the late 1770s. One of his contemporaries, Pierre Richard, certainly had cattle on his mind when he made a similar move to the Opelousas District. (More on this later.)



Another explanation for Louis' movement to Acadiana is the American Revolution itself. Louisiana's Spanish Governor Bernardo de Galvez actively supported the American cause against the British even before Spain formally declared war against England in May of 1779. There is no question that Louis Lavergne was a Louisiana subject who provided patriotic support. (He is listed as such by the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution—see the documentation above). Military confrontations between the Spaniards and French against the British along the Mississippi and along the Gulf Coast, where Louis was reared, made life uncomfortably dangerous there. Louis and Marie LaCase were married by that time and had at least one, more probably two infants to care for. It may be that the young family decided to head for the prairies of the Attakapas and Opelousas districts to take advantage of the ease of setting up a

homestead, the demand for meat in the New Orleans market, and to avoid the ravages of yet another war with the British.

The arrival of Louis Lavergne and Marie Anne LaCase to the Opelousas area began a history of astonishing procreation. (More of this below in the personal essay "Put Your Heart To The Wind") Almost all Laverignes of Louisiana will trace their lineage to this single, incredible couple. Some Laverignes, but relatively few, would leave the Opelousas area during the next two hundred years.



THE FAMILY OF SANTIAGO [JEAN AND MARIE ANNE **FOURAT**] **LACASE** (JEAN AND MARIE ANNE **FOURCHET**) AND MARIA **BULONNE** (JEAN BAPTISTE dit **La Violette** AND MARGUERITE **PRAUX**)

m. 1747 in Mobile (Ancestry.com)

1. Marie Anne

- b. 1754 in Mobile (Ancestry.com)
- m. Louis Lavergne (Opch)
- d. 21 June 1803 "at 50" (Opch v1 p63)

THE FAMILY OF ARMAND **PREJEAN** (JOSEPH C. AND MARIE LOUISE **COMEAX**) AND MARIE **THERIOT** (ABRAHAM AND MARGUERITE **PITRE**)

m.

1. Dominique

- b. 20 October 1774 (BRDA: D-V1774)
- m. 25 October 1793 Marie Savoie (SMch v4 #90)
- m. 14 July 1795 Agricole Hebert (SMch v4 #116)
- d. 6 February 1846 (GCch v1 p68)

3. Isidore

- b. bt. 9 January 1780 "at 15 mos." (Opch v1 p32)
- m.
- d.

THE FAMILY OF FRANCOIS **SAVOIE** AND MARIE **MARTIN** (AMBROISE AND MAGDALEINE **COMAUD**)

m. 22 April 1769 (StM CT Hse. OA-1-6)

Note: Francois Savoie was first married to Anna Thibodeaux. Their family is also found in this volume.

1. Marie

- b.
- m. 25 October 1793 Dominique Prejean (SMch v4 #90)
- d.

2. Marguerite

- b. circa 1774
- m. 11 November 1800 Guillame Kilkrize (Opch v1 p91)
- d. 24 May 1838 "at 64" (GCch v1 p47)

3. Hypolite

b. circa 1778

m. 8 January 1800 Marie Victorie Guilbaut (SMch v4 #188)

d. 20 February 1814 "at 36" (SMch v4 #881)

4. Celestre

b. 14 August 1777 (SMch v1 p55)

m. Agricole LeBlanc (SMch)

d.

5. Joseph "of St. James"

b.

m. 18 October 1796 Manon Marie Cormier (SMch v4 #134)

m. 14 May 1810 Henrette Blanchard, the widow of Jean Baptiste Breaux (SMch v5 #176)

m. 22 June 1824 Françoise Martin, the widow of Jean Pierre Doucet (SMch v6 #360)

d.

THE FAMILY OF FRANCOIS **LEGER** AND MAGDELINE **COMMEAU**

m. circa 1739

1. Paul

b.

m. 28 July 1789 Constance Poitier (SMch v4 #32)

d. September 1822

THE FAMILY OF PIERRE **POITIER** (ANTOINE AND MARIE **DOUCET**) AND ANNE MARIE **BERNARD** (LOUIS AND MARIE **PINET** dit Boucher)

m. 30 April 1764 (in La Havre, France)

Note: Different sources have Pierre Poitier coming from Harve de Grace, Normandie and Poitier, France. He died on 26 October 1786 "at 48" (SMch v3 #144).

1. Constance

b.

m. 28 July 1789 Paul Leger (SMch v4 #32)

d.

2. Lucie

- b. 4 November 1772 (Havre de Grace, France)
- m. 4 September 1792 Francois Savoie (Opch v1 p41)
- d. 12 February 1822 (Opelousas)

3. Charles "of Nantes"

- b.
- m. 22 March 1793 Marie Magdeline Ducrest "of Pointe Coupee" (SMch v4 #73)
- d. 26 August 1827 "at 60" (SMch v4 #1863)

4. Pierre "of Nantes"

- b.
- m. 6 July 1800 Marie Mouton (SMch v4 #205)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF PAUL THIBODEAUX (PAUL AND MARGUERITE TRAHAN) AND ROSALIE GUILBAUT (JOSEPH CHARLES AND MARIE MAGDELINE MICHEL)

m. 1764 IN St. Martinville, LA

Note: The succession of Rosalie Guilbaut was dated 29 July 1816. (SM ct hse #240)

1. Paul Hypolite

- b. 26 August 1765 (SMch 1756-1802 p2)
- m. Mary Louise Cormier
- d. 25 June 1816 "at 50" (SMch v4 #1054)

2. Elisse

- b.
- m. 9 August 1814 Marie Thibodeaux (SMch v5 #237)
- d. 11 March 1826 "at 56" (SMch v4 #1756)

3. Joseph

- b. 4 January 1778 (SMch v1 p62)
- m. 11 September 1798 Pelagie Brusard (SMch v4 #161)
- d. 18 August 1811 "at 30" (SMch v4 #1703)

4. Seraphie

- b. 15 October 1770 (SMch v1 p19)
- m. 20 November 1792 Louis Trahan (SMch v4 #63)
- m. 8 August 1814 Jean Broussard "of Acadie" (SMch v5 #346)
- d.

5. Anna

- b. 30 April 1780 "at 6 wks" (Opch v1 p34)
- m.
- d.

6. Andre (Rene)

- b. 26 August 1765 (SMch v1 p10)
- d. 7 September 1765 (SMch v1 p10)

7. Elizabeth

- b. 4 September 1775 (SMch v1 p48)
- m. Cosme Brasseux (Opch)
- d.

8. Marie Rosa

- b. 27 April 1784 (SMch v3 #125)
- m. 8 January 1799 Joseph Broussard (SMch v4 #167)
- d.

9. Vital

- b. 9 October 1772 (SMch v1 p34)
- m.
- d.

THE FAMILY OF JONATHAN **BOONE** (SQUIRE AND SARAH **MORGAN**) AND MARIE **CARTHER** (JAMES **CARTER**)

Note: Jonathan Boone and Marie Carther [Carter] were both from North Carolina. He is the older brother of the famous pioneer and pathfinder, Daniel Boone, of historical significance.

1. Daniel

- b.
- m. 27 July 1800 Marie Rose Benoit, the widow of Marin Prejean (SM ct hse: OA-4 1/2-11)
- m. 23 November 1801 Anne Boudreaux (Opch v1 p100)
- d.

U.S., Quaker Meeting Records, 1681-1935 for Jonathan Boone

Pennsylvania > Berks > Easter Monthly Meeting > Genealogy of Berks

of George & Mary (Maxgridge)				
Squire Boone	11.25.1696	1.2.1765		Marshall 20.2
Sarah	4.7.1724		1815	
Israel	3.9.1726			
Samuel	3.20.1728	come	1816	
Jonathan	10.6.1730		1808	
Elyzabeth	12.5.1732	2.25.1825		
Daniel	8.22.1734	9.21.1820		
Mary	9.3.1736		1819	
George	11.2.1739	11.14.1820		
Edward	9.19.1740		1780	seen by Indians
Squire of	10.5.1744	8	1815	
Hannah	8.24.1746		1828	Kentucky



Our Connection to the Historic Daniel Boone

Gary M. Lavergne/Laura C. Lavergne resided in Church Point, Louisiana, until 1989 when they moved to Round Rock, Texas. They are presently living in Cedar Park, Texas.

Nolan D. Lavergne/Helen B. Richard resided in Opelousas, New Iberia, Lafayette, Lake Charles, and Church Point, Louisiana. They are buried in Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Cemetery II between Church Point and Lawtell, Louisiana. He had various jobs during his adult life. He is noted for his work as a policeman and for his tenure as Marshall of the Town of Church Point. She managed the school lunch program for Our Mother of Peace Catholic School in Church Point.

Jean Clarville Lavergne/Aline Olivier resided as tenant farmers in rural St. Landry Parish near the hamlet of Lawtell, Louisiana. After retiring, they resided in Opelousas in a small house on Gerard St. Both are buried in St. Bridget's Cemetery in Lawtell, Louisiana.

Oscar Olivier/Aurelia Thibodeaux resided in rural St. Landry Parish, Louisiana.

Noel Olivier/ Euranie Boone resided in rural St. Landry Parish, Louisiana.

Daniel Boone/Eurasie Boudreau resided in rural St. Landry Parish, Louisiana.

Daniel Boone/Anne Boudreau resided in rural St. Landry Parish, Louisiana. This Daniel Boone was the first of his line to move to present day Louisiana. His marriage certificate, written in Spanish, reads in part: "Daniel Boone, native of Carolina, North America, son of John, widower of Marie Rose Benoit, his first wife, who renounced the Anglican religion, married Anne Boudreau, daughter of Augustine Boudreau and Judith Martin."

Jonathan Boone/Marie Carther (Carter) resided in Berks County, Pennsylvania until about 1750; moved to Rowan County, North Carolina, near a fork created at the Yadkin River by Bear Creek and Hunting Creek where they owned a dam and a mill. They moved to Squire Boone's Station in Kentucky in 1783. After a few years they settled along the Green River in Kentucky and still later at the Big Falls of the Wabash River near Mount Carmel, Wabash County, Illinois. Jonathan Boone died there in 1808. *He is the brother of the famous pioneer and pathfinder, Daniel Boone.*



Squire Boone/Sarah Morgan (see illustration above) Resided in Berks County, Pennsylvania, and in Rowan and Davie Counties, North Carolina. He was born in England and was brought to America by his father. He is buried at the Joppa Cemetery, near Salisbury, North Carolina, next to his wife Sarah Morgan. *Squire and Sarah Boone are the parents of Daniel Boone, the famous pioneer and pathfinder.* Squire Boone's move from Pennsylvania to North Carolina was occasioned by a dispute with Quaker Elders of Exeter over the marriage of his son, Israel, to a woman who was not a Quaker, i.e., he married "out" of the church. Squire refused to apologize for the marriage or condemn his son so he sent Israel and Jonathan to the upper Yadkin River in North Carolina for the purpose of relocating the entire family. Once there they apparently converted to the Anglican Church. *Squire and Sarah are the parents of the famous Daniel Boone of historical significance.*

THE FAMILY OF AUGUSTIN REMI **BOUDREAU**X (PIERRE AND MARIE ANNE **HEBERT**) AND JUDITH **MARTIN**

m.

Note: Both were from Acadia. Opelousas church records only indicate that the father of Augustin Boudreaux was named Pierre (Opch v1 p270).

1. Anne

- b. 5 May 1786 (SMch v3 #124)
- m. 23 November 1801 Daniel Boone (Opch v1 p100)
- d.

2. Augustin

- b. circa 1771
- m. 8 August 1805 Francoise Ritter (Opch v1 p 146)
- d. 16 April 1842 "at 71" (Opch v2 p29)

3. Benjamin

- b. 5 April 1783 (Opch v1 p120)
- m. 17 February 1817 Irene La Case (Opch v1 p301)
- d.

4. Eliza

- b.
- m. 9 April 1830 Archille Prejean (Op ct hse Marr #22)
- d.

5. Augustina

- b. 15 April 1782 (SMch v2 #57)
- m.
- d.

6. Jean

- b. 30 May 1784 "at 2 mos." (SMch v2 #169)
- m. 22 September 1806 Marguerite Karauter (SMch v5 #74)
- d.

7. Marguerite

- b. 12 February 1793 (Opch v1 p124)
- m.
- d.

8. Pierre

- b. 25 January 1779 (SMch v2 #56)
- m.
- d.

THE FAMILY OF JOSEPH **BOUDREAUX** (mother BRIGITTE **PART**) AND MARIE MAGDELINE **SEMAIRE**
(GERMAIN AND MARIE G. **TRAHAN**)

m.

1. Antoine

- b. 28 February 1786 (SMch v3 #160)
- m. 18 August 1812 Marie Savoie (Opch v1 p227)
- d. 14 February 1836 "at 51" (GCch v1 p41)

2. Joseph

- b.
- m. 21 October 1816 Felice Broussard (SMch v6 #6)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF FRANCOIS **SAVOIE** (FRANCOIS AND **ANNA THIBODEAUX**) AND LUCIE **POTIER** (PIERRE
AND ANNE MARIE **BERNARD**)

m. 4 September 1792 (Opch v1 p41)

Note: Francois Savoie was from St. James on the Mississippi. Lucie Potier was from Harve de Grace.

1. Marie

- b.
- m. 12 September 1812 Antoine Boudreaux (Opch v1 p227)
- d.

2. Louis
 - b. 3 September 1804 (SMch v7 #48)
 - m. 15 January 1827 Celestie Boudreaux (GCch v1 p47)
 - m. 30 April 1832 Clementine Bara (SMch v7 #205)
 - d. 11 July 1869 (St. Martinville)

3. Marie Eloise
 - b. 27 November 1794 (Opch v1 p127)
 - m.
 - d.

4. Madeline
 - b. 3 July 1811 (SMch v6 #1215)
 - m. 10 July 1835 Francois Jean Baptiste Marks (GCch v1 p107)
 - d. 21 April 1839 "at 28" (GCch v1 p50)

5. Marguerite
 - b. 14 March 1799 (SMch v5 #144)
 - m. 20 May 1833 Isaac Kennison, the widower of Jule Marks (GCch v1 p92)
 - d. 17 November 1838 "at 37" (GCch v1 p49)

6. Celeste
 - b. 8 January 1803 (SMch v6 #59)
 - m. 19 November 1821 David Andrus "age 22" (GCch v1 p16)
 - d.

7. Francois
 - b. 14 March 1797 (Opch v1 p195)
 - m. 15 October 1816 Louise Emerante Morin (Opch v1 p292)
 - d.

8. Hypolite
 - bt. 19 April 1801 (Opch v1 p245)
 - m. 22 May 1821 Eugenie Rose (GCch v1 p9)
 - d.

9. Louise [Appoline Aloise]
 - b. 14 March 1807 (SMch v6 #1159)
 - m. 22 February 1830 Hypolite Meche (GCch v1 p76)
 - d. 3 August 1838 "at 20" (GCch v1 p47)

10. Alexandre
 - b. 27 April 1810 (SMch v6 #1160)
 - m.
 - d.

THE FAMILY OF PIERRE **THIBODEAUX** AND FRANCOISE **SONNIER** (ETIENNE AND JEANNE **COMEAU**)

m.

Note: Pierre Thibodeaux was from Acadia. Francoise Sonnier died in 1811 (Opch v1 p117).

1. Francoise

- b. 1762 (StMartinvilleCh v1 p67)
- m. 10 January 1779 Fabien Richard (SMch v1 p67)
- d. 4 February 1812 "at 50" (Opch v1 p122)

2. Cyrille "Pierre Cyrille"

- b. 20 January 1772 (Pointe Coupee, LA)
- m. 15 June 1790 Adelaide Chaisson (Opch v1 p30)
- d. 16 April 1842 "at 71 yrs." (Opch v2 p29)

3. Charles "of Lafayette"

- b.
- m. 2 October 1827 Magdeline Constantin "of Lafayette" (Opch v2 p29)
- d.

4. Ana Marie

- b.
- m. Gang Bourg (also called Angel Bourg)
- m. 20 July 1789 Basil Chaisson (SAR: Opcthse: 1789)
- d. 5 April 1803 "at 43" (Opch v1 p61)

5. Pierre

- b. 29 August 1776 (Opch v1 p7)
- m. 9 January 1798 Marguerite Richard (Opch v1 p78)
- d.

6. Susanne

- b.
- m. Joseph Bourg
- d.

THE FAMILY OF CHARLES BASILE **CHIASSON** (BASIL AND CATHERINE **BOURGEOIS**) AND MONICA **COMOUT** (HONORE AND MARGUERITE SOPHIE **POIRIER**)

m.

Note: Basile Chiasson was from Poitou, France.

1. Adelaide "lived in Bellvue"

b. 1774

m. 15 June 1790 Cyrille Thibodeaux (Opch v1 p30)

d. 4 August 1816

2. Charles Albert

b.

m. 7 September 1802 Magdalen Bourssa (Opch v1 p109)

d.

THE FAMILY OF CHARLES BASIL **CHAISSON** (BASIL AND CATHERINE **BOURGEOIS**) AND ANNA MARIE **THIBODEAUX** (PIERRE AND FRANCOISE **SONNIER**)

m. 21 July 1789 (Opch v1 p25)

Note: This was Basil Chaisson's second marriage. More information on Anna Marie Thibodeaux and her genealogy is in this volume.

1. Basile

bt. 29 October 1804 "at 4 yrs" (Opch v1 p341)

m.

d.

2. Celeste

bt. 29 October 1804 "at 5 yrs" (Opch v1 p341)

m.

d.

3. Julie

b. 5 September 1793 (Opch v1 p162)

m.

d.

4. Louis

bt. 25 October 1796 (Opch v1 p161)

m.

d.

5. Marie Eugenie
 - b. 16 June 1789 (Opch v1 p161)
 - m.
 - d.

6. Pierre
 - b. 13 September 1792 (Opch v1 p62)
 - m.
 - d.

THE FAMILY OF MICHEL LAURENT **DOUCET** (father LAURENT **DOUCET**) AND MARGUERITE **MARTIN**

m.

Note: Michel Doucet was from Miramichy, Acadia.

1. Pierre
 - b.
 - m. 5 August 1782 Marie Magdellan Comeaux (SMct hse: OA 3-9)
 - d.

2. Joseph
 - b. 17 December 1749 (in Port Royal, Acadie)
 - m. Anne Thibodeaux
 - d. 25 December 1803 (in St. Landry)

THE FAMILY OF MICHEL **COMEAX** (JEAN AND MADELEINE **AMIRAU**LT) AND MARIE MAGDELLAN **GIROR** (MICHEL AND MARIE **THIBODEAUX**)

m.

Note: Marie Magdellan Giror was from Acadia.

1. Marie Magdellan
 - b.
 - m. 5 August 1782 Pierre Doucet "of Mirmichy, Acadia" (SMch & Opch)
 - d.

2. Michel
 - b. 14 September 1772 (SMch)
 - m. 3 December 1800 Louise Latiolias (Opch v1 p92)
 - d. 27 May 1808 (Fausse Point, St. Martin, LA)

3. Marie Louise

- b.
- m. 7 August 1790 Simon Bellard (Opch Slave Register v6 p16)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF FABIEN **RICHARD** (PIERRE AND MARGUERITE **DUGAS**) AND FRANCOISE **THIBODEAUX**
(PIERRE AND FRANCOISE **SONNIER**)

m. 10 January 1779 (SMch v1 p123)

1. Jean Fabien

- b. 14 May 1782 (Opch v1 p133)
- m. 15 October 1816 Eugenie Savoie (Opch v1 p292)
- d. 12 December 1859 "at 65 at Bellvue" (Opch v2 p112)

2. Augustine

- b.
- m. 29 September 1812 Joseph Lavergne (Opch v1 p229)
- d.

3. Cyrille

- b. 20 February 1788 (Opch v1 p87)
- m. 31 February [sic] 1820 Marie Zeline Prejean "at age 21" (GCch v1 p3)
- d.

4. Euphemie

- b. 17 September 1803 (Opch v1 p321)
- m. 1826 Francois Hypolite Chetely (Opch v1 p471) "he is from La Fourche"
- d.

5. Joseph

- bt. 1 April 1792 (Opch v1 p104)
- m. 11 February 1828 Eugenie Gaspard (Opch v1 p508)
- d.

6. Pierre Placide

- bt. 14 July 1782 "at 2 mos" (Opch v1 p27)
- m. 23 May 1815 Anastasia Hebert (Opch v1 p269)
- d.

7. child

- b. circa 1801
- d. "May--July" 1802 "at 6 mos" (Opch v1 p56)

8. child

b. circa 1799

d. 30 April 1799 (Opch v1 p41)

9. Angelique

b. 14 April 1786 (Opch v1 p64)

m. 5 February 1805 Noel Vasseur (Opch v1 p138)

d.

10. Francois

bt. 25 October ---- (Opch ch p163)

m.

d.

11. Francoise

bt. 6 April 1780 "at 2 mos."

m. 6 September 1803 Etienne Brant "of Bordeau" (Opch v1 p126)

d. 21 September 1809 (Opch v1 p103)

12. Justine

bt. 29 June 1798 (Opch v1 p202)

m.

d.

THE FAMILY OF PIERRE **SAVOIE** (PAUL AND JUDITH **MICHEL**) AND LOUISE **BOURQUE**

m.

1. Eugenie

b.

m. Antoine Dupre (Opch v1 p292)

m. 15 October 1816 Jean Fabien Richard (Opch v1 p292)

d.

2. Scholastique

b.

m. 29 May 1798 Jean Baptiste David (Opch v1 p41)

d.

THE FAMILY OF VICTOR **RICHARD** (ALEXANDRE AND MARIE MADELEINE **THIBODEAUX**) AND MAGDELINE **BRASSEUS**

m.

Note: Victor Richard died on 7 September 1808 "at 60" (Opch v1 p97).

1. Joseph Victor

- b. 6 January 1785 (Opch v1 p50)
- m. 28 April 1812 Marie Richard (Opch v1 p222)
- d. 7 July 1847 (Opch v2 p49)

2. Jean Baptiste

- b. 26 September 1775 (Opch v1 p7)
- m. 1 February 1803 Anne Vasseur (Opch v1 p117)
- d.

3. Marie Anne

- b.
- m. 15 August 1839 Stephen Young "age 22" (Opch v2 p182)
- d.

4. Olive

- b. 11 December 1815 (Opch v2 p71)
- d. 11 March 1818 (Opch v1 p167)

5. Magdeline

- b. m. 25 July 1793 Anaclet Cormier (Opch v1 p46)
- m. 25 August 1814 Ursin Bijot "of Atakapas" (Opch v1 p257)
- d.

6. Alexandre

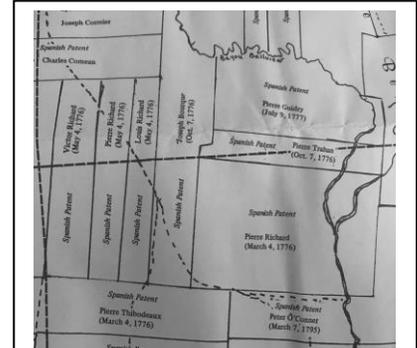
- b. 19 January 1797 (Opch v1 p67)
- m.
- d.

7. Julie

- b.
- m. 17 October 1809 Vital Estillette (Opch v1 p191)
- d.

8. Louis

- bt. 30 August 1789 (Opch v1 p93)
- d. 23 August 1794 (Opch v1 p23)



Map of Spanish Land Grants (grants circa 1776. See Victor Richard near the upper left corner. Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Louisiana-Lafayette)

9. Margaret

- bt. 23 May 1790 "at 5 wks." (Opch v1 p35)
- m. 9 January 1798 Pierre Thibodeaux
- d.

THE FAMILY OF LOUIS **RICHARD** (PIERRE AND MARGARET **DUGAS**) AND MARIE **DUGAS** (PIERRE AND MARGUERITE **DAIGLE**)

m.

1. Marie

- b. 23 July 1791 (Opch v1 p115)
- m. 28 April 1812 Joseph Richard (Opch v1 p222)
- d. 27 October 1859 "at 68 at Bellveu" (Opch v2 p109)

2. Anastasie

- b. 15 March 1802 (Opch v1 p358)
- m. 9 November 1819 Francois Dupre (Opch v1 p348)
- d.

3. Cleonise

- bt. 28 April 1812 (Opch v1 p558)
- m.
- d.

4. Jean

- bt. 4 August 1799 (Opch v1 p216)
- m. 21 June 1825 Marie Guidry (Lafch v1 #16)
- d.

5. Joseph

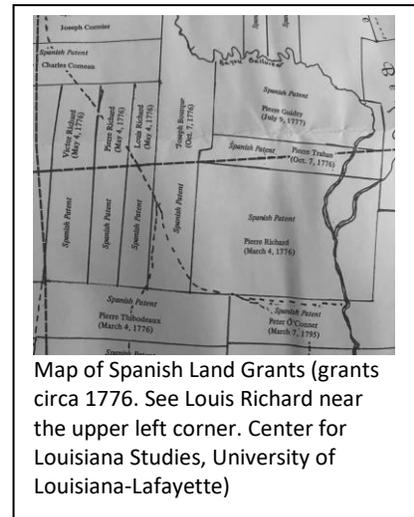
- b. 17 April 1797 (Opch v1 p216)
- m. 6 July 1819 Eugenie Richard (Opch v1 p341)
- d.

6. Louis

- b.
- m. 19 July 1814 Julie Babineaux (SMch v5 #344)
- m. 8 June 1829 Marie Emilienne Pek "of Lafayette" (Lafch v1 #123)
- d.

7. Pierre Severin

- b. 11 February 1792 (Opch v1 p115)
- m. 28 April 1812 Silesie Thibodeaux (Opch v1 p222)
- d.



8. Celeste

bt. 29 November 1795 (Opch v1 p142)
m. Julien Landry
d.

9. Denis

b. 19 January 1804 (Opch v1 p358)
m.
d.

10. Paul

b. 9 May 1806 (Opch v1 p391)
m.
d.

11. Louise

b. circa 16 February 1789 (Opch v1 p10)
d. 26 February 1789 (Opch v1 p10)

THE FAMILY OF AUGUSTIN **BOUDREAUX** (AUGUSTIN AND JUDITH **MARTIN**) AND FRANCOISE **RITTER**
(MICHEL AND LOUISE **STELLY**)

m. 20 August 1805 (Opch v1 p146)

1. Celesie

b. 30 September 1809 (Opch v1 p505)
m. 15 November 1827 Louis Savoie (GCch v1 p47)
d. 5 March 1829 "at age 20" (GCch v1 p21)

2. Elisa

b.
m. 11 April 1831 Achille Prejean (GCch v1 p79)
m. 20 December 1849 Louis Caruthers (GCch v1 p186)
m. 31 December 1862 Joseph B. Richard (GCch v3 p175)
d.

3. Onezime

b. 25 March 1824
m. 27 October 1845 Josephine Castille (OpCtHse: Donations v2 p54)
d.

4. Augustin

bt. 20 October 1811 "at 8 mos." (Opch v1 p543)
m. 6 February 1832 Sarah Burleigh (GCch v1 p84)
d.

5. Evariste
 - b. 3 September 1813 (Opch v2 p29)
 - m. 6 April 1835 Arsene Boudreaux (GCch v1 p104)
 - d. 12 August 1839 "at 26" (GCch v1 p50)

6. Francoise
 - b. 22 April 1820 (GCch v1 p58)
 - m. 27 April 1835 Andeol Stelly (GCch v1 p105)
 - d.

7. Marie Modeste
 - b. 8 April 1818 (Opch v2 p156)
 - m. 25 August 1834 Napoleon Robin (GCch v1 p97)
 - d.

8. Adelaide
 - b. 17 January 1808 (Opch v1 p444)
 - m. 19 November 1827 James Burleigh (GCch v1 p57)
 - d.

9. Joseph
 - bt. 17 November 1822 (GCch v1 p26)
 - m.
 - d.

10. Louise
 - b. 28 July 1816 (Opch v2 p90)
 - m.
 - d.

11. Treville
 - b. 9 June 1826 (GCch v1 p60)
 - m.
 - d.

THE FAMILY OF JEAN BAPTISTE **CASTILLE** (JOSEPH AND DARTEA **LANDRY**) AND JULIE **STELLY** (FRANCOIS AND THERESE **BERTHELOT**)

m. 11 July 1797 (Opch v1 p74)

1. Jean Baptiste
 - bt. 17 March 1798 (Opch v1 p209)
 - m. 22 May 1827 Azelie Stelly (GCch v1 p53)
 - d. 16 January 1867 (GCch v1 p163)

2. Joseph B.

- b. 1 November 1802 (Opch v1 p298)
- m. 14 April 1857 Therese Robin "the widow of Louis Stelly" (Opct hse Marr #1582 & GCch v3 p88)
- d.

3. Alexandre

- bt. 15 March 1801 (Opch v1 p241)
- m. 5 February 1827 Josephine Stelly (GCch v1 p50)
- m. 19 March 1841 Emelie Robin "age 17" (GCch v1 p34)
- d.

4. Emelie

- b.
- m. 14 July 1831 Jean Portalis Castille "of S.M." (GCch v1 p81)
- d.

5. Marie Therese

- b. 27 November 1806 (Opch v1 p431)
- m. 30 January 1827 Jean Estorage (GCch v1 p49)
- m. 6 December 1837 P. LaBiche "of Cahars, dept. du Lot, France" (Opct hse: Donations v2 p13 & Opch v2 p130)
- d.

6. Carmelite

- b. 30 April 1805 (Opch v1 p355)
- m. 28 May 1821 Jean Guilbeau (GCch v1 p10)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF JEAN BAPTISTE STELLY (JEAN BAPTISTE AND MAGDELINE RITTER) AND CATHERINE MARKS (BALTHASAI AND CATHERINE MILLER)

m. 21 October 1806 (Opch v1 p163)

1. Azelie

- b. 17 November 1802 (Opch v1 p580)
- m. 22 May 1827 Jean Baptiste Castille (GCch v1 p53)
- d. 23 May 1895 (Opch)

2. Jerome

- b. 7 May 1817 (Opch v2 p114)
- m. 22 June 1864 Azelie Quibodeaux (GCch v3 p188)
- m. 31 January 1887 Constance Robin (Opch v2 p106)
- d.

3. Antoine "of Opelousas"

- b. 23 September 1819 (GCch v1 p2)
- m. 25 February 1840 Eulalie Chautex (GCch v1 p129)
- m. 20 December 1842 Marguerite Celigne Bergeron (SMch v8 #221)
- d.

4. Caliste

- b. 30 July 1821 (GCch v1 p18)
- m. 23 April 1844 Azelia Frosard (GCch v1 p151)
- d.

5. Francois

- b. 5 January 1815 (Opch v2 p45)
- m. 26 August 1833 Azelie Forest (GCch v1 p94)
- d.

6. Eugene

- b. 15 August 1823 (GCch v1 p31)
- m.
- d.

7. Julien

- bt. 10 September 1807 "at 1 mos." (Opch v1 p424)
- d. 8 February 1815 "at 8 yrs." (Opch v1 p143)

8. Julienne

- bt. 18 June 1809 "at 3 mos." (Opch v1 p470)
- d. 4 January 1815 "at 5 yrs." (Opch v1 p143)

9. Lise

- b. 3 January 1811 (Opch v1 p520)
- m. 5 February 1828 Jean Louis Robin (GCch v1 p60)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF BAPTISTE **DAVID** (JEAN BAPTISTE AND MARGUERITE **LA PIERRE**) AND MARIE [**KIDER**]
RITTER

m.

1. Jean Baptiste

- b. 8 August 1775 (St. Vincent de Paul, Laval, Quebec, Canada)
- m. 29 May 1798 Scholastique Savoie (Opch v1 p81)
- d. Succ. dated August 1823 (Opct hse: Succ #313)

THE FAMILY OF FIRMIN **BREAUX** (ALEXIS AND MARGUERITE BARRIAULT **BRIOT**) AND MARGUERITE **BRAU**
(JEAN BAPTISTE and MARIE ROSE **LANDRY**)

m.

Note: Firmin Breaux was originally from Acadia. He died 2 October 1808 at the age of 60 (SMch v4 #534). The city of Breaux Bridge, Louisiana is named for him; he built the first log bridge across Bayou Teche in that area sometime around 1766.

1. Agricole

- b. 11 March 1789 (SMch v3 #171)
- m. 1 June 1813 Scholastique Picou (SMch v5 #298)
- d. Succ. dated 2 November 1833 (SMcths Succ#745)

2. Scholastique

- b. 28 August 1782 (SMch v2 #92)
- m. 19 November 1799 Cyrille Thibodeaux (SMch v4 #185)
- m. 30 March 1834 Francois Arceneaux (Lafch v2 p154)
- d.

3. Adelaide

- b. 26 February 1790 (SMch v4 #424)
- m. 21 April 1812 Silvestre Broussard (SMch v5 #257)
- d. 1 November 1819 "at 28 yrs." (SMch v4 #1299)

4. Donat

- b.
- m. 9 January 1793 Anastasia Guillebaut (SMch v4 #70)
- d. 13 October 1814 "at age 49" (SMch v4 #926)

5. Pierre

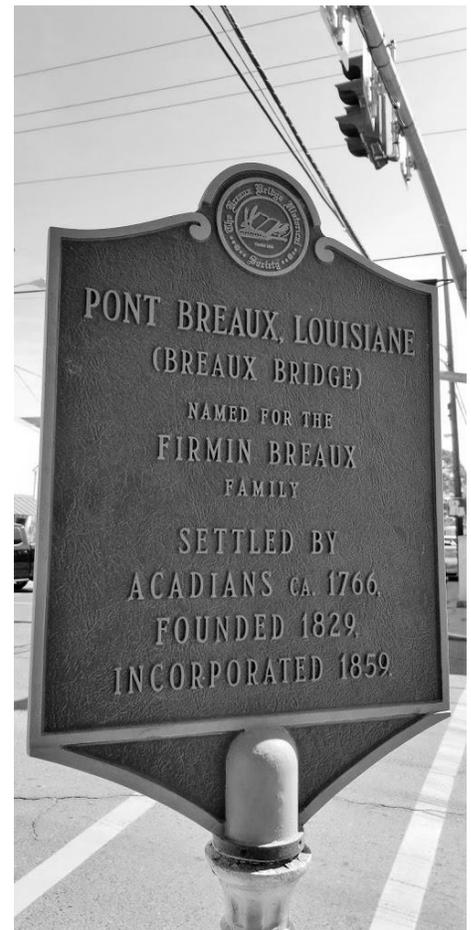
- b.
- m. 10 January 1793 Batilda Broussard (SMch v4 #71)
- d.

6. Francois

- b.
- m. 9 May 1793 Celeste Duga (SMch v4 #81)
- m. 19 June 1820 Esther Martin (SMct hse OA-33-4223)
- d.

7. Baptiste

- bt. 25 July 1779 "at 6 mos." (Opch v1 p31)
- m. 19 August 1800 Marie Magdeline Giror (SMch v4 #208)
- d.



8. Joseph

- b. 25 February 1787 (SMch v3 #169)
- m. 15 December 1807 Marcelete Carmouche (SMch v5 #104)
- d.

9. Marie Magdeline

- b. 22 September 1789 (SMch v4 #384)
- m. 15 June 1785 Jean Guidry (SMch v3 #66)
- d.

10. Isabel

- b.
- m. 19 November 1799 Jean Louis Bonin (SMch v4 #184)
- d.

11. Felicite

- bt. 5 May 1776 (SMch v1 p44)
- m. 7 January 1793 Athanes Hebert (SMch v4 #65)
- d.

12. Modeste

- b. 25 April 1784 (SMch v3 #70)
- m. 1 February 1802 Benjamin Bonin (SMch v4 #243)
- d.

13. Child

- d. 28 May 1784 "at 1 day" (SMch v2 #165)

THE FAMILY OF LOUIS **LATIOLIAS** (RAYMOND GUILAUME COQUELIN AND SUZANNE **JAHOT**) AND JULIENNE **BAR** (MARIE LOUISE **LAVERGNE**)

m.

Note: Louis Latiolias was from Atakapas. Julienne Bar died in 1816 (SMch v4 #1071) and her succession is dated 25 April 1831 (Opcthse #557).

1. Louise

- bt. 26 October 1779 (Opch v1 p20)
- m. Michel Comeaux (Opch & SMch)
- d. 5 March 1869 (CPch)

2. Lufroy

- b. 6 November 1788 (Opch v1 p93)
- m. 13 February 1811 Josephine Daigle (Opch v1 p210)
- d.

3. Marie Josephe

- b. 27 July 1795 "at 5 1/2 yrs." (SMch v4 #730)
- m. 29 August 1814 Pierre Nezat (SMch v5 #348)
- d.

4. Constance

- b.
- m. 7 September 1795 Antoine Fontenot (Opch v1 p57)
- d.

5. Joseph "of Capitulas"

- b.
- m. 27 July 1795 Clemence Francoise Nezat (SMch v4 #117)
- d.

6. Leon

- b. 17 January 1788 (Opch v1 p93)
- m. 26 June 1810 Victorie Robichot (SMch v5 #130)
- d.

7. Modeste

- b.
- m. 15 September 1795 Solange LaCase (Opch v1 p58)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF JOSEPH **DOUCET** (MICHEL LAURENT AND MARGUERITE **MARTIN**) AND ANNE **THIBODEAUX**

m.

1. Joseph

- b.
- m. 14 May 1805 Celeste Bellard (Opch v1 p139)
- d.

2. Anselon

- b.
- m. 27 November 1802 Marie Angela Lejeune (Opch v1 p114)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF ANTOINE **BELLARD** (LOUIS AMABLE **BALARD** dit Latour AND MARGUERITE **BRULE**) AND MARIE **TRAHAN** (father HONORE **TRAHAN**)

m. 6 August 1789 (LSU Archives: Opel #2)

Note: Antoine Bellard was an Acadian exile from Maryland.

1. Celeste

- b. 16 June 1777 (Opch v1 p15)
- m. 14 May 1805 Joseph Doucet (Opch v1 p139)
- d. 1845 (Opelousas)

2. Simon

- b.
- m. 7 August 1790 Elisa (Marie Louise) Comot (Opch Slave Register v1 p16)
- d.

3. Michel

- b.
- m. 17 February 1806 Catherine Janis (Opch v1 p156)
- m. 11 October 1824 Francoise Gallien (Opch v1 p429)
- d.

4. Antoine

- bt. 3 September 1780 "at 3 mos." (Opch v1 p37)
- m. 9 November 1802 Marie Aucoin (Opch v1 p112)
- d.

5. Ester

- bt. 24 June 1779 (Opch v1 p17)
- m. 28 June 1796 Joseph Matte (Opch v1 p66)
- d.

6. Louis

- b. 24 August 1782 (Opch v1 p59)
- m. Celesie Carrier
- d.

7. Modeste

- b.
- m. 6 January 1789 Michel Ledoux (Opch v1 p23)
- d.

8. Pelagie

- b.
- m. 8 October 1792 Pierre Pariseau (Opch v1 p42)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF BLAISE **LEJEUNE** AND MARIE JOSEPHE **BREAUX** (mother MARGUERITE **GAUTREUX**)

m.

Note: Marie Breaux was from Acadia. She died on 9 July 1818 "at age 73." (Opch v1 p171)

1. Blaise

- b.
- m. Theotiste Janis (Opch v1 p40)
- m. 1 May 1792 Adelaide Quintero (Opch v1 p40)
- d.

2. Celestine

- b. 11 January 1783 (Opch v1 p57)
- m. 25 July 1800 Charles Trahan (Opch v1 p89)
- d. 2 November 1816 "at 32" (Opch v1 p155)

3. Hilaire

- bt. 28 July 1782 "at 3 mos." (Opch v1 p27)
- d. 16 May 1786 "at 4 yrs." (Opch OA: Folio p25 #1)

4. Jean Baptiste

- b. 15 December 1777 (Opch v1 p16)
- m. 9 January 1809 Emelie Bock (Opch v1 p181)
- d.

5. Joseph

- bt. 2 July 1780 "at 5 mos." (Opch v1 p36)
- m. 21 November 1796 Genevieve Janis (Opch v1 p70)
- m. 13 August 1805 Euphrosine Carrier (Opch v1 p144)
- d.

6. Marie Angela

- b. 13 August 1786 (Opch v1 p62)
- m. 27 November 1802 Anselm Doucet (Opch v1 p114)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF MANUEL **QUINTERO** (ANTOINE AND ANNE **DELACROIX**) AND MARIE **GRANGER**
(PIERRE AND EUPHROSINE **GAUTREUX**)

m.

Note: Manuel Quintero was from Pointe Coupee and is listed as a Distiller.

1. Adelaide

- b. 6 October 1772 (Donaldsonville, LA)
- m. 1 May 1792 Blaise Lejeune (Opch v1 p40)
- d.

2. Marie

- b.
- m. 3 August 1791 Charles LeBlanc (Opch v1 p35)
- d.

3. Marie Clothilde

- b.
- m. 7 February 1797 Charles Bourasas (Opch v1 p73)
- d.

4. Marie Constance

- b.
- m. 21 August 1796 Enrique Jansonne (Opch v1 p67)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF ANTONIO **BELLARD** (LOUIS AMABLE **BALARD** dit Latour AND MARGUERITE **BRULE**) AND
MARIA FRANCISCA **GALLARND**

m.

Note: Antonio Bellard and Maria Francisca Gallarnd were from Picardie. Antonio Bellard died on 12 February 1805 "at 63." (Opch v1 p77)

1. Antonio

- b. "in Picardie"
- m. 24 October 1797 Maria Forest "of San Malo, France, Veive d'Ocorn" (Opch v1 p75)
- d. 1847 (Opelousas)

QUEBEC CITY AND THE EMERGENCE OF LOUIS LAVERGNE OF LIMOUSIN, FRANCE

The Age of Exploration and the struggle to colonize the North American continent produced three major imperialist nations: Spain, Great Britain, and France. It was the French ambition to become a world power that brought Louis Lavergne of Mézières-sur-Issoire, Department of Haute-Vienne, France to New France (Canada) in the middle of the 17th Century.

Spain had interests in the New World, but those interests were centered in Central and South America and were fueled by the discovery and exploitation of gold and silver. Great Britain's interest came from a need to relieve the over-population of its island country and centered on agricultural and shipping pursuits. This approach was a much more stable and safe existence requiring permanent residents and quickly establishing supporting institutions—like families, communities, schools, and churches. France's interest first centered on the fur trade, bringing frequent internal clashes between farmers determined to clear land, and fur trappers interested in preserving the wilderness. What all three imperialist powers shared was a deep suspicion of one another. The moves and decisions of each of the powers was always strategic: an attempt to subvert the emerging influence of the others.

Quebec City's history is inextricably tied to its strategic position on a bluff high above a narrowing of the St. Lawrence River. The founder of New France, Samuel de Champlain was the first to realize its value as a military fortress. Champlain was New France and without him it is doubtful that French Canada would exist today. He was the first to see that the chief obstacle to colonization was not the climate, but disinformation spread by French fur trading interests, who monopolized trade, made a lot of money, and did not wish to see the wilderness settled. Much of Canadian History is a chronicle of internal struggles between trappers and agrarian homesteaders.



Cardinal Armand Jean du Plessis,
Duke of Richelieu (1585-1642)

One of world history's great practitioners of power politics in international relations was Cardinal Armand Jean du Plessis, Duke of Richelieu (1585-1642), a sincere but not an ardent Catholic. He was an efficient, ambitious, even brilliant administrator. *Raison d'etat* (Reason of State) motivated his policies. He lived in splendor, usually accompanied by his private choir and corps of musicians because he believed such a retinue befitted the chief minister of a great and splendid kingdom. He was largely responsible for building *la grande nation* of Louis XIV. It was Richelieu who sent many Jesuits to the New World for the public purpose of spreading the faith, but they were also spreading French influence. In addition to sending Jesuits, he formed the Company of New France to make France a world economic power. The Company's objectives were simple enough:

1. New France was to be self-sufficient in agriculture;
2. natural resources were to be discovered and exploited; and
3. Catholic missionary activities were to be fostered.

settlement of Quebec (later to become Quebec City). Fishing was not feasible in Quebec; its value was military. Early defense systems included a walled fortress that earned Quebec the name "Gibraltar of North America."

When Louis Lavergne entered Quebec City sometime during the latter half of the 1660s and before his marriage to Marie Anne Simon on 26 May 1675, he entered an area fraught with danger. He lived among a people dangerously divided and reduced to petty bickering. It was as if they were unaware of the other dangers that surrounded them. The French alliance with the Algonquins and Hurons made bitter enemies of the Mohawk and Iroquis tribes. Political struggles between the Jesuits and colonial leaders were concurrent with economic struggles between agrarians and *coureurs de bois*. Champlain's governorship was consumed by wars with the British and their Indian allies, and as a result, life for the newly implanted Canadians was extremely hard. By 1650, there were approximately 500 settlers in Canada. Most of those settlers were engaged in agricultural pursuits in small cultivated areas. For much of that period Canada was on the brink of disaster. What was accomplished in North America in the name of France was pretty much the efforts of the Catholic Church or independent commercial enterprise, and the success of either depended upon a delicate and unreliable alliance with select Indian tribes against other Indian tribes and the British. Those efforts should have been directed by the government: England was much better at that than the French.

Louis Lavergne was probably attracted to adventure or even recruited by the Company of New France to immigrate and help establish the slowly growing Quebec City. He moved to the New World right at the time of the rise of King Louis XIV to absolute power in France. The king's appointment of Jean Colbert as Finance Minister signaled the development of a clearer policy regarding the relationship of Canada and France: Canada was to be used to make France a rich, imperialist empire. The colonies were to develop raw materials and serve as markets for the mother country; the colonies were to become the springboard for further penetration into the North American continent. (The economic policy is called Mercantilism, and it was the same policy that led to the American Revolution against the British from 1776-1783). To build a proper infrastructure to meet those objectives, skilled laborers were needed and there is evidence that Louis Lavergne immigrated as a cobbler or shoemaker. He was later to become a master stone mason. Either way, he was almost certainly recruited for his skills as were many other residents of the Limousin region of France.

After his arrival in Quebec City, the 28-year-old Louis Lavergne met and married Marie Anne Simon, the 14-year-old daughter of Hubert Simon and Marie Viez de la Mothe. Their marriage would last only 12 years; Louis Lavergne died in Quebec in 1687. His death does not appear to have been sudden or the result of an accident. The pastor officiating at his funeral noted that, "...[he] had received the holy sacraments of Confession, Last Holy Communion [Viatique], and Extreme Unction [last rites]." At least one and more probably two of his sons, Louis and Phillippe, floated down the Mississippi River to help settle yet another new territory and city, New Orleans in Louisiana.⁴

⁴ Lavergne family tradition maintains that two brothers "floated" down the Mississippi River by canoe to the New Orleans area. The tradition is supported by documentation in Quebec, insofar as Phillippe Lavergne is recorded as having been born in Quebec on 18 June 1683. There is no record of his having married or dying there, possibly suggesting his departure for Louisiana with his brother Louis. However, unlike Louis, there is no record of his living in Louisiana either. Most family traditions are rooted in fact, but in this case, there is no way to establish this tradition as an historical truth.

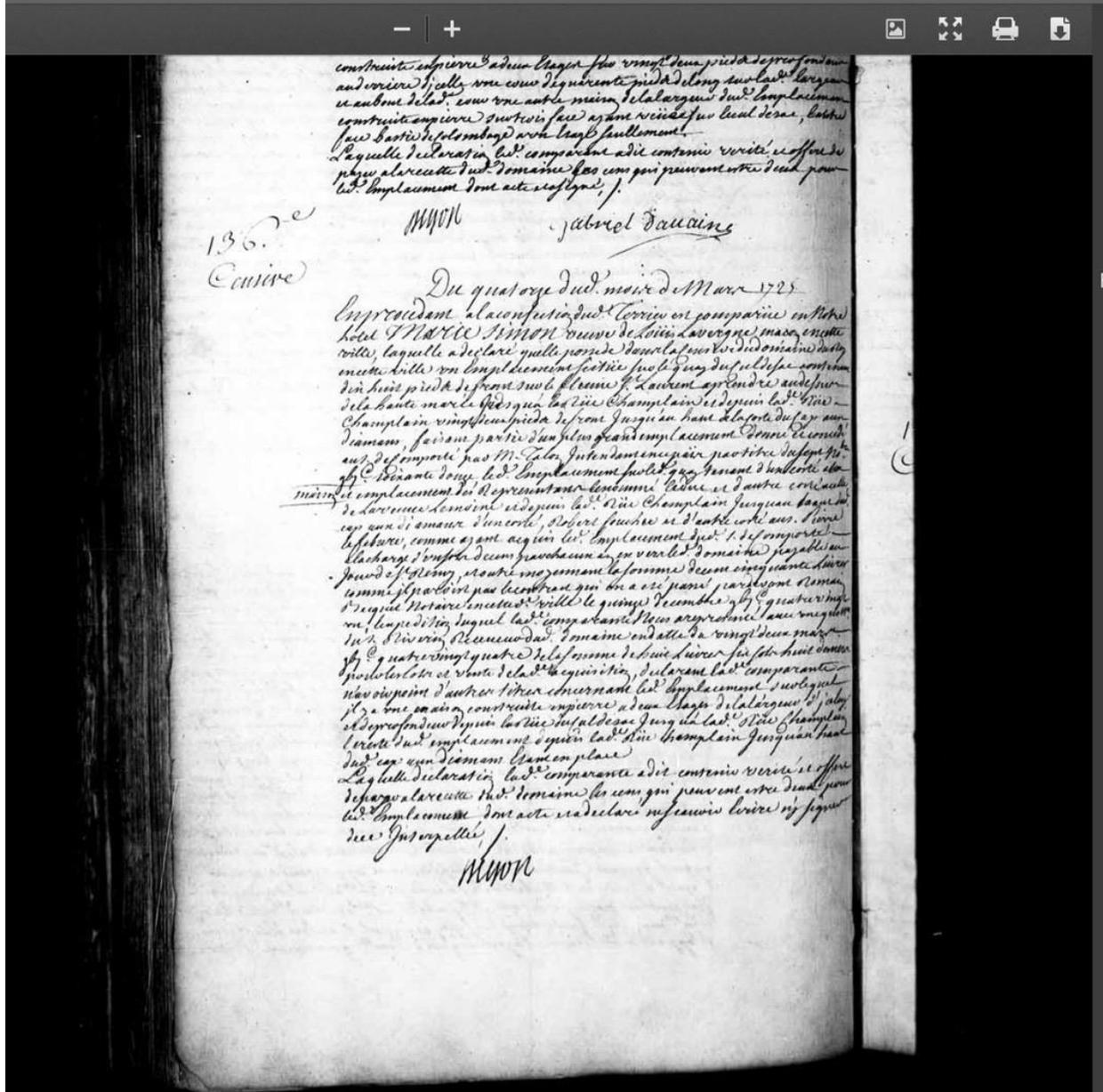
Marie Anne Simon-Succession of 1743

https://www.banq.qc.ca/services/services_reproduction/repro_photo/index.html

X ← Déclaration de Marie Simon, veuve de feu Louis Lavergne, de son vivant maçon...

📄 <http://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/3315285?>

Déclaration de Marie Simon, veuve de feu Louis Lavergne, de son vivant maçon de Québec, quant à un emplacement dans la censive du Domaine du Roi, lequel emplacement étant situé rue sur le Quai du Cul-de-Sac en la Basse-Ville de Québec



Louis Lavergne of Quebec: Burial Information

Louis Lavergne
 Le seiziesme jour du mois d'octobre de l'an mil six cent quatre
 vingt sept a esté inhumé par moy françois Dupré curé de cette
 paroisse au cimetiere Louis Lavergne, apres avoir receu les s. s.
 sacrements de penitence viatique, et extreme unction, et ont assisté
 a son inhumation, Charles Laboussellerie, et J. françois Bisson
 qui ont signé
 Le dix sixiesme octobre mil six cent quatre vingt sept a esté

English Translation: "Louis Lavergne: Sixteenth day of the month of October of the year sixteen hundred eighty seven was buried by me François Dupré pastor of this parish in the cemetery Louis Lavergne, after [he] had received the holy sacraments of Confession, Last Holy Communion [Viaticum], and Extreme Unction [last rites], and present at his burial were Charles Laboussellerie and François Bisson who signed" {No signatures appear on this version}

THE FAMILY OF PIERRE **TOMELIN** (MARIE MARGUERITE **JOLLY**) AND MARGUERITE **COUSSENOTE**

Note from the author: Pierre Tomelin and Marguerite Cousenote were from Dunkerque, France. She probably died there. Pierre Tomelin was one of the contractors for the original St. Louis Cathedral on St. Ann St. in New Orleans. He weather boarded the church and was later a party to a lawsuit before the Supreme Council in a dispute over the church itself. He resided on Chartes St. in New Orleans with his second wife, children, and 5 Negroes.

1. Elizabeth (or Isabelle)
 - b. 4 July 1705 (Dunkerque, Nord, Pas de Calais, France)
 - m. 4 July 1725 Louis Lavergne (Deville's New Orleans French)
 - d. 1782 (Opelousas)

THE FAMILY OF FRANCOIS **SAVOIE** (FRANCOIS XAVIER AND MARIE JOSEPHE **RICHARD**) AND ANNA **THIBODEAUX** (PAUL AND MARGUERITE **TRAHAN**)

m.

Note: Francois Savoie was later married to Marie Martin. Their family can be found elsewhere in this volume. Francois Savoie was from Santiago de Cabonnoce ("St. James") on the Mississippi.

1. Francois
 - b. 1767 (SMch)
 - m. 4 September 1792 Lucie Potier (Opch v1 p41)
 - d. (12 February 1822 (Opelousas)

2. Anne

b.

m. 7 September 1785 Jean Charles Benoit "of Acadia" (SMch v3 #76)

m. 9 November 1818 Jean Baptiste Guidry (SMch v6 #115)

d.

THE FAMILY OF PIERRE **RICHARD** (ALEXANDRE AND MADELINE **THIBODEAUX**) AND MARGUERITE **DUGAS**

m.

Note: Marguerite Dugas was from Acadia.

1. Fabien

b. circa 1752

m. 10 January 1779 Françoise Thibodeaux (SMch v1 p67)

d. 10 April 1812 (Opch v1 p123)

2. François

bt. 20 May 1779 "at 16 mos." (Opch v1 p14)

m. 8 January 1798 Helen Brasseur (Opch v1 p77)

d.

3. Louis

b.

m. Marie V. Dugas (Opch)

d.

4. Marguerite

b.

m. 30 March 1784 Jean Bourg (Opch: OA Folio p52 #1)

d.

5. Olivier

b.

m. 7 February 1802 Theotiste Janis (Opch v1 p104)

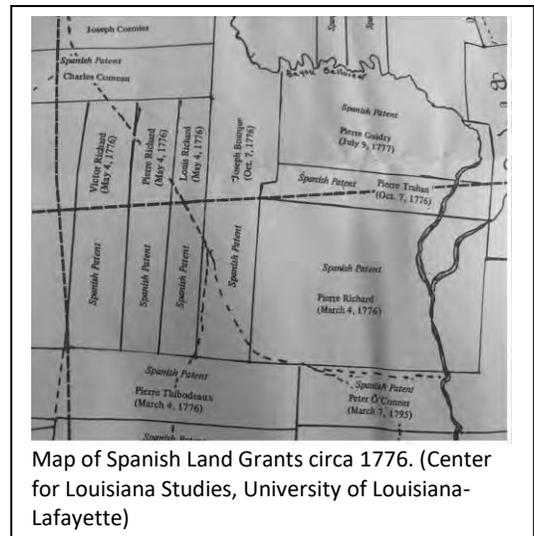
d.

6. Philippe

b.

m. 23 May 1796 Eugénie Lavergne (Opch v1 p64)

d.

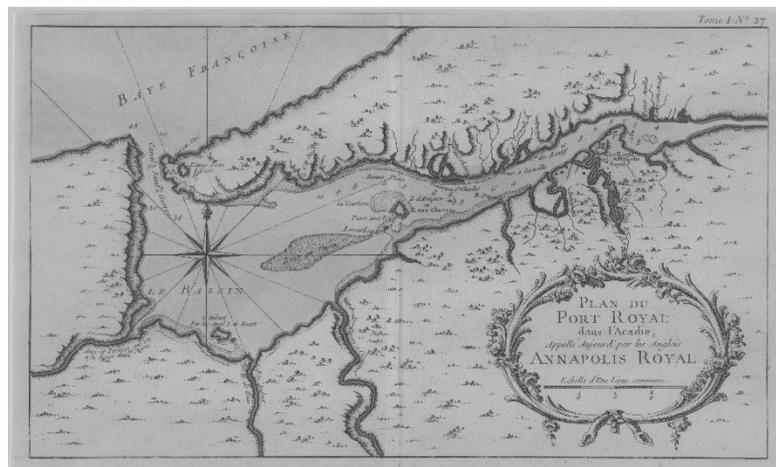


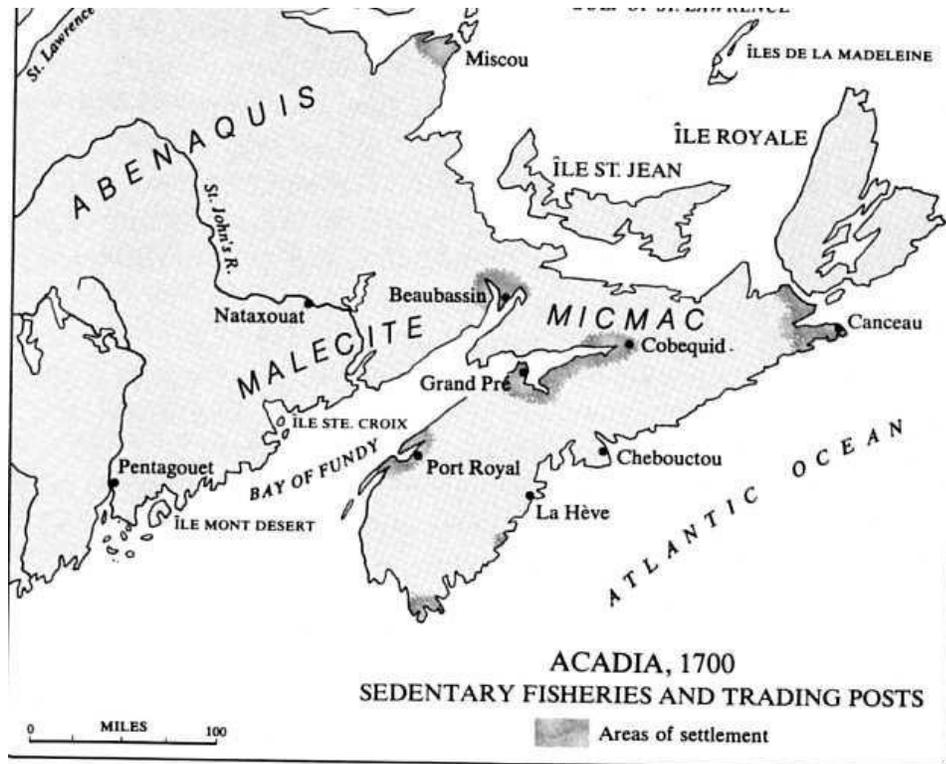
- 7. Pierre
 - b.
 - m. 8 May 1787 Marie Joseph Dugas (Opch v1 p3)
 - d.

Le Grand Dérangement Acadians Settle Louisiana

"Acadia" or "Acadie" was an early term for the maritime provinces of eastern Canada and the northern coastal region of what is now the state of Maine in the United States. It was first established as a proprietary colony by Pierre Duguay, *Sieur de Monts*. One year earlier he had acquired a decade-long monopoly over the region's rich fur and fish assets. Initially, the colonization of the area was a near-disaster. In 1605, in a second attempt to colonize, de Monts transferred the colony to present-day Port Royal, Nova Scotia; it became the first permanent settlement in Acadie. By 1610 the colony consisted of only 25 men, but the foundations of a permanent settlement were laid. Presaging the Louisiana experience, stability came only when crops were harvested and land had been parceled out among the settlers. But as Carl Brasseux documents in his landmark *The Founding of New Acadia*, the French hold on Acadie was still tenuous at best.

The lack of a firm political and financial commitment to colonization characterized the French colonial experience in the New World. In 1613, Port Royal was demolished by an English privateer named Samuel Argall. In 1628 the French in Acadie had become so demoralized that they could not prevent the settling of Scottish Calvinists at Port Royal by Sir William Alexander, who had been granted proprietary rights by the King of England who named the area known in France as "Acadie" as "Nova Scotia." During this period, the French held onto their claims by continuing their fur-trading operations and engaging the New Englanders in mutually beneficial but illegal commerce. The restoration of French domination occurred with the signing of the Treaty of St. Germain-en-Laye in 1632, and through the Company of New France, the French renewed their efforts to securing Acadie as a stronghold. Vulnerable outposts were reinforced, the fur trade was expanded, and most importantly, immigration of families to Acadie was finally encouraged.





In July 1632 three hundred French settlers landed, and after being organized into military units, reoccupied Port Royal. These were the first families of Acadia. Like Quebec, Acadia's strategic importance was geographic: it was mid-way between New England and Canada (Quebec). Acadia suffered greatly from what surely was a French curse: internal dissension and outright warfare among internal economic rivals. In the 1650s, while France was preoccupied with a European war, the British seized Acadia and held it for 16 years; by the late 1660s the French regained control. As the British threat loomed, and Acadia became a battleground among imperialist nations, and through necessity, the Acadians began to close ranks. The insularity from other French influences and the necessity to guard against the ever-present British danger forged a French culture quite different from what was found in New Orleans, Quebec, or Continental France. Numerous attempts by the British to make Acadians loyal subjects were met with obstinacy and derision, not so much because of the loyalty of the Acadians to the French Crown, Quebec, or their Catholic faith, but because of generations of absolute and unrelenting isolation. As Brasseaux states:

The role of geographic isolation in creating, molding, and nurturing early Acadian society cannot be overemphasized. Chronic isolation enhanced the impact of the frontier on the transplanted Frenchmen for it dictated not only the need for economic self-sufficiency, but also for a clannish, self-contained society, able and willing to carve a new life far from other European outposts in North America. Such independence was absolutely essential in the Acadian settlements whose lines of communication with the outside world were often tenuous at best.

Over time the insular Acadians sought to alleviate tensions with the British by professing to be "French Neutrals" asking only that they not be required to fight against other Frenchmen. For a time the British agreed, again, for mutually beneficial commercial reasons. (The neutrality argument would be attempted again by French-speaking Cajuns two hundred years later in Confederate Louisiana during the

American Civil War as Union troops marched through Louisiana in 1863. That attempt was unsuccessful, as well.) This understanding, however, was short-lived as the British, especially the political leaders of Massachusetts, became alarmed at the birthrate of the Acadians. In 1737, the Acadian population stood at approximately 7,500; by 1749, it had zoomed to 18,000, mostly through procreation. The fact that Acadians created (by diking and reclaiming fertile bottoms) and occupied the best lands in Nova Scotia, and were thus preventing English colonists from moving there, exacerbated tensions with British authorities in Nova Scotia, Boston, and London.

Acadians had large, closely-knit families, who after five generations had developed their own culture. God, family, and land were important. No one was very rich—no one was very poor. There was little or no interest in formal educational institutions or literature; no premier educational institutions like Harvard were founded. Acadians produced nothing resembling political parties, and unlike most ethnic groups, no single prominent leader ever emerged amongst the ranks of the people. English authorities never dealt with a single (elected or otherwise) leader. When left alone, Acadian life was calm, gentle, and tolerant. In November 1975, during a lecture on Acadian life, Glenn Conrad of the University of Louisiana-Lafayette claimed that during a 42-year period there was not a single recorded crime in Acadia. Children married young and were provided for by neighbors. In many respects, Acadian life, characterized by an almost complete lack of social classes, resembled an often-sought proletarian utopia.

But ultimately, the Acadians of Louisiana migrated because of a final and epic battle between the forces of British and French Imperialism for domination over the North American continent. It was called the Seven Years War (1756-1763) or the French and Indian War. The result was the British were successful in decisively defeating the French and its coalition of Indian allies. But even before the onset of the war the British feared a revolt in Acadia. They required the Acadians to swear an oath of allegiance to the British Crown, including the promise to bear arms in defense of England. The alternative for the Acadians was to leave the colony. And so began *Le Grand Dérangement*, or the forced diaspora of the Acadians from their home of five generations. They were allowed to take their furniture and money, but during the confusion many families were separated and sent to different destinations. Their land was taken and their homes burned so that they could not return. They were packed on ships and distributed to American colonies from Massachusetts to Georgia. The Acadians deemed most dangerous were sent to the colonies farthest away. Virginia, the home of Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, George Mason, and Patrick Henry, all architects of American Civil Liberties, refused to accept the Acadian refugees because of a prevalent religious prejudice against Catholics. Some others were taken to England and then relocated to France after the war.

The result of the Seven Years War, the Treaty of Paris of 1763, gave the Acadians 18 months to leave the English Colonies. Where were they to go? The Acadians themselves wanted to return to Nova Scotia but the British quickly vetoed that idea; British settlers had already begun to occupy the rich and strategic lands the Acadians had left developed over generations. Incredibly, the French denied them relocation to Louisiana. (The secret Treaty of Fontainebleau giving Louisiana to Spain had not yet been made public.)

Once ejected from Nova Scotia, the Acadians were an unwanted people. An anti-papal movement throughout the American colonies brought derision upon the helpless Acadians; they were summarily despised everywhere they went. In some places, while still on ships, Acadian parents were offered the “opportunity” to surrender their children to American families. Occasionally, a compassionate individual like Henry Callister of Oxford in England petitioned British authorities in behalf of the Acadians, or even

donate substantial sums of money for clothes and other provisions. Unfortunately, this type of individual effort was rare and had little or no overall positive effect.

Unfortunately for the pathetic Acadians, schemers like Louis Elizabeth de la Vergne (no known relation to the author) and "every land shark and swindler" tried unsuccessfully to exploit the exiles. De la Vergne futilely proposed the settlement of 120 Acadian families on his barren, war ravaged estates in the province of Lorraine in France. Again, the Acadians stubbornly clung to their insular heritage, and bitterly resisted all efforts by others to turn them into serfs. Indeed, even after arriving in Louisiana, not the least of their problems were the attempts of other Frenchmen, *i.e.*, the established upper-class New Orleans Creoles, still of a monarchical mentality, to create a peasant class of the Acadians. It resulted in conflict between and among the Louisiana French and even more insularity and suspicion for the Acadians.

By 1764, other Acadians had flooded Santo Domingo only to find slavery, disease, and misery. In 1765, the first group of Acadians arrived in Louisiana at New Orleans. It was the *Spanish* who allowed their relocation along the Mississippi River (north of New Orleans), and in the prairies of the Attakapas District along Bayou Teche (St. Martinville) in April of 1765. In 1766 another flood of Acadians arrived from Santo Domingo and were forced to settle along the Mississippi River, the "Acadian Coast." Spanish Governor Don Antonio de Ulloa's idea was to create a buffer zone of Acadians between the English colonies to the north and New Orleans. He allowed no further settlements in Attakapas. By the 1770s the Opelousas District saw settlements, including many families of the Richard clan. Finally, in 1785, those Acadians who had been sent to England during the war and were relocated in Poitou in France, arrived and were settled along Bayou LaFourche.

Like other French colonial possessions, which focused on get-rich-quick schemes, Louisiana suffered from a lack of investment and infrastructure, a shortage of settlers, and an overall mercantilistic-driven neglect from its mother country. It was not until shortly after the Spanish took administrative control of the Louisiana colony, and the slow transition to an agrarian-based economy, that any significant population increase took place. Families replaced the *coureur des bois* as immigrants. In 1784, Spanish Governor Don Bernardo de Galvez ordered a census of the colony and it showed that from 1766-1784 Louisiana's population had doubled to 27,500; New Orleans had grown to a city of about 5,000. The largest ethnic group among the immigrants was the Acadian exiles. These families were hard-working farmers and fishermen. They came to Louisiana forged by chronic insularity, which also produced independence and a stubborn determination to question and resist authority. As a people, Acadians were very quick to challenge English, French, and Catholic political and moral rule. Anti-clericalism among Acadians is a consistent theme of Acadian colonial history. As Carl Brasseaux documents in *The Founding of New Acadia*, they came to view the Catholic church in much the same light as the colonial government; their view was that civil and religious authority should be limited to essential services without undo disruption of routine activities and without undue financial burden. For pastors or government officials to exert too much leadership beyond those parameters brought about spasms of protest. Consequently, the most harmonious ecclesiastical and civil parishes were those with docile leadership. Brasseaux continues:

For many if not most of the late seventeenth and eighteenth-century Acadians, Catholic missionaries were shadowy figures who provided the settlers minimal contact with the church hierarchy. Forced to fend for themselves, even to the point of conducting paraliturgical services, the immigrants ultimately came to divorce religion from the area's traditionally dominant religious institution. Priests consequently became little more than petty religious administrators, stripped of their cloak

of religious invincibility and vulnerable to personal criticism...It was with this mental framework that the Acadians faced exile... after the Grand Dérangement.

The Quebecois and Acadians were forced to adapt to more than just new political and social surroundings. Indeed, in a matter of a few months (from Quebec in the 1720s), and separately, in a few years (from Acadia from 1755-1765), Louisiana Frenchmen had been relocated from frigid Canadian provinces to an insufferably hot and humid climate closely resembling a tropical rain forest. They built homes in a place where seemingly endless precipitation is outdone only by the dangers of floods and hurricanes. Louisiana rains are legendary. Examples include:

- the greatest precipitation in one year was 106 inches in Amite
- Opelousas holds the record for rainfall in one month at 30 inches
- it once rained 22 inches in one day at the Sabine Refuge
- in a twelve-hour period, it rained 12 inches in Baton Rouge, and
- one full inch of rain once fell in New Orleans in five minutes.

Choosing homesteads were often difficult exercises in anticipating where flood plains began and ended. The tortuous heat and humidity must have tested the vitality and persistence of the Acadians who were more familiar with a frigid, almost Arctic climate.

Le Nouveau Dérangement (The New Dérangement)

There are still vestiges of insularity among Acadian descendants. Traces of the Acadian language, music, food (although heavily influenced by the Spanish and Africans), and accented English can be readily recognized in what is now called "Acadiana." The attitude that government and church were established to provide essential services without undo disruption to routine activities and without undo financial burdens prevail. And yet, the forces of education, industrialization, commerce, and technology brought competing influences and cultures to the "Land of Evangeline." The construction of Interstate Highway 10 in the 1960s made once intensely rural Acadian communities accessible. The highpoint of the oil and gas industries during the 1960s and 1970s and its tangential economic boom created a plethora of skilled positions that few Cajuns could fill. Consequently, there occurred an influx of skilled labor to Southwest Louisiana, bringing with them other influences and traditions. The founding of a major university in Lafayette at the beginning of the 20th Century and the concurrent age of mass communications brought the world to the doorsteps of the descendants of the once decidedly insular Acadians. Concern over the demise of the Cajun culture resulted in the creation, by act of the Louisiana Legislature, of the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL).



By the end of the 20th Century Cajuns faced a new diaspora, of sorts. My personal experience was that (taken to an extreme, of course) there was a basic incompatibility between traditional Cajun values and the realities of modern American life. The explosion of information, knowledge, technology, mass communications, mobility, and competition are an anathema to *laissez le bon temps roulez*. The historic Acadian neglect for education has resulted in a people who know very little of their own history and are too often ill prepared for jobs of the real world of work. The dependence on an oil, natural gas, fishing,

and an agriculturally based economy devastated Louisiana during the 1980s when all of those industries went bust simultaneously. The axiom that a government job, while it paid little, was secure, was no longer true in Louisiana where hundreds of state government jobs and services were eliminated due to a depleted tax base and no political or public support for revenue enhancements. Consequently, many Acadian descendants like me were forced to look elsewhere for meaningful employment and job security.

For much of my life there has been a New Dérangement taking place in Louisiana. I moved to Austin, Texas in 1989 while the 1990 Census was being conducted. As a result of that count, Louisiana was one of only four states of the United States who had fewer Congressional Districts. Evidence of the New Dérangement occurred to me not long after we settled in Austin in the fall of 1989. After receiving a call from another Austinite and former Church Point native, I was told of a meeting of the "CIA," which were initials for "Cajuns in Austin." Thinking that the group consisted of a few close friends, I arrived to find that at times there could be as many as 200 people in attendance. At the time Austin was only a mid-sized city and about 400-500 hundred miles from most Cajun communities. A "CIA-like" group in Dallas or Houston could easily outnumber the populations of many small towns along Louisiana's Old Spanish Trail.

For over thirty years I have had a good life in Texas. For work and pleasure I have been fortunate enough to have traveled the United States and the world. Very often, people notice my accent and ask me where I am from. I always respond, "I live in Texas, but I am from Louisiana."

THE FAMILY OF MICHEL **RITTER** (JEAN LEONHARDT AND CATHERINE **MILHER**) AND MARIE LOUISE **STELLY** (JEAN JORGE AND CHRISTINA **EDELMEYER**)

m.

Note: Michel Ritter was from Germany. Marie Louise Stelly was from "Mississippi River."

1. Françoise

- b. 13 March 1784 (Opch VOA fOLIO P51 #2)
- m. 20 August 1805 Augustin Boudreaux (Opch v1 p146)
- d.

2. Antoine

- b. 11 October 1795 (Opch v1 p236)
- m. 6 September 1814 Marie Madeline Leger (Opch v1 p257)
- m. 30 October 1821 Tharzile Savoy "age 21 of Atakapas" (GCch v1 p14)
- d.

3. Julie

- b. 21 April 1798 (SMch v5 #91)
- m. 16 January 1816 Michel Faret "of Toulon" (Opch v1 p278)
- d.

4. Isabette

b. 17 November 1788 (Opch v1 p89)

m.

d.

5. Marie

bt. 22 June 1783 "at 3 1/2 mos." (Opch OA Folio p42 #2)

m. 1 May 1796 Juan Tellair (Opch v1 p65)

d.

6. Margaret

bt. 22 June 1783 "at 3 1/2 mos." (Opch v1 p43)

m.

d.

7. Marie Magdeline

bt. 21 November 1790 (Opch v1 p100)

m.

d.

8. Marie Therese

bt. 9 December 1781 "at 4 wks." (Opch v1 p29)

m. 6 August 1798 William Jeansonne (Opch v1 p81)

d.

9. Pierre Michel

bt. 5 April 1792 (Opch v1 p104)

d. 28 November 1795 (Opch v1 p27)

THE FAMILY OF JOSEPH **CASTILLE** (father MIGUEL JOSE XARENA **CASTILLO**) AND DARTEA **LANDRY**

m.

Note: Joseph Castille lived in Attakapas, but he was originally from Spain. Dartea Landry was from Acadia.

1. Jean Baptiste

b.

m. 11 July 1797 Julie Stelly (Opch v1 p74)

d.

2. Joseph

b.

m. 29 March 1785 Scholastique Borda "of Atakapas" (SMch v3 #54)

d.

3. Manuel

- b.
- m. 12 May 1800 Felicite Stelly (Opch v1 p88)
- d. 14 November 1809 "at 45" (Opch v1 p105)

4. Marie Magdellan

- b.
- m. 8 February 1794 Joseph Richard (SMch v4 #94)
- m. 27 July 1807 Francois Poitier (SMch v5 #90)
- d.

5. Marie Marta

- b.
- m. 4 February 1781 Germain Trahan (SMcths OA-2-70)
- m. 25 August 1787 Jean Lorenzo Ducrest (SMch v4 #4)
- m. 25 May 1807 August Bijot (SMch v5 #88)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF FRANCOIS **STELLY** (JEAN JORGE AND CHRISTINA **EDELMEYER**) AND THERESE **BERTHELOT**
(JEAN LOUIS URBAIN **BERTHELOT**)

m.

Note: Francois Stelly died January 24, 1806. (Opch v1 p82)

1. Julie

- bt. 24 June 1779 (Opch v1 p17)
- m. 11 July 1797 Jean Baptiste Castille (Opch v1 p74)
- d.

2. Emerantine

- b.
- m. 29 September 1807 Jean Louis Robin (de Monchevean) (Opch v1 p172)
- d. 18 December 1815 "at 23" (Opch v1 p149)

3. Amelie

- bt. 30 October 1791 (Opch v1 p103)
- m. 12 August 1806 Louis Joseph Francois Robin (Opch v1 p159)
- d.

4. Elisa

- bt. 5 July 1795 (Opch v1 p133)
- m.
- d.

5. Felicite

- b. 1 October 1785 (Opch v1 p53)
- m. 12 May 1800 Manuel Castille (Opch v1 p88)
- d.

6. Francois

- bt. 23 July 1783 "at 3 wks." (Opch v1 p44)
- d. 18 July 1806 (Opch v1 p86)

7. Marie Therese

- bt. 4 March 1781 "at 20 days" (Opch v1 p23)
- d. 16 December 1794 "at 15 yrs." (Opch v1 p24)

8. Solange

- b. 30 June 1788 (Opch v1 p82)
- m.
- d.

THE FAMILY OF JEAN BAPTISTE **STELLY** (JEAN JORGE AND CHRISTINA **EDELMEYER**) AND
MAGDELINE **RITTER** (JEAN LEONHARDT AND CATHERINA **MILHER**)

m.

1. Jean Baptiste

- bt. 2 February 1781 "at 1 month" (Opch v1 p23)
- m. 5 January 1799 Sarah Barlaix (Opch v1 p83)
- m. 21 October 1806 Catherine Marks (Opch 1 p163)
- m. 18 April 1825 Eloise Savoy (SMch v6 #378)
- d.

2. Michel

- b. 22 October 1784 (Opch v1 p48)
- m. 30 July 1805 Francoise Josephine Robin (Opch v1 p143)
- d.

3. Joseph

- bt. 5 April 1801 (Opch v1 p244)
- m. 5 November 1821 Marie Celestine Prejean "of Saint Martin" (GCch v1 p15)
- d.

4. Catherine

- b. 24 November 1793 (Opch v1 p115)
- m. 10 April 1809 Elias Steen (Opch v1 p185)
- d.

5. Magdeline

- b. 24 April 1787 (Opch v1 p66)
- m. 23 February 1802 Joseph Savoy (Opch v1 p106)
- d.

6. Marie Jeanne

- bt. 15 May 1796 (Opch v1 p145)
- m. 1 February 1814 Simon Marks (Opch v1 p248)
- d.

7. Euphrosine

- bt. 22 May 1791 (Opch v1 p102)
- m.
- d.

THE FAMILY OF BARTHASAI **MARKS** (BALTHAZAR AND MARIA **GASPARD**) AND CATHERINE **MILLER**
(JACOB AND MARIA **THEIGEN**)

m.

Note: Balthasai Marks was from "the Mississippi River." Catherine Miller was from St. John.

1. Catherine

- b. 15 June 1788 (Opch v1 p82)
- m. 21 October 1806 Jean Baptiste Stelly (Opch v1 p163)
- d.

2. Francois

- b. 25 March 1796 (Opch v1 p180)
- m. 22 December 1822 Magdeline Stelly (GCch v1 p24)
- m. Marie Therese Berthelot (Opchse Succ. #3)
- d.

3. Lise Verette

- b.
- m. 18 October 1808 George Mayer (Opch v1 p180)
- d. 16 June 1811 "at 22" (Opch v1 p117)

4. Simon

- bt. 25 December 1794 (Opch v1 p126)
- m. 1 February 1814 Marie Jeanne Chatelay (Opch v1 p248)
- d.

5. Balthazar

- b. 1 July 1786 (Opch v1 p59)
- d. 7 April 1790 (Opch v1 p13)

6. Euphrosine

- bt. 5 April 1790 (Opch v1 p97)
- d. 14 July 1806 "at 16" (Opch v1 p86)

7. Jean Baptiste

- b.
- m. 30 May 1809 Reine Lalonde (Opch v1 p187)
- d.

8. Marie Magdeline

- b.
- m. 16 September 1788 Jean Baptiste Morin "of Quebec" (Opch v1 p19)
- d.

9. Liberata

- bt. 20 September 1792 (Opch v1 p107)
- m.
- d.

THE FAMILY OF PIERRE BASILE **CHIASSON** AND CATHERINE **BOURGEOIS** (MADELEINE **CORMIER**)

m.

Note: Basile Chaisson was from Poitou, France. Catherine Bourgeois was from Beau Sejour, Acadia.

1. Basil

- b. 1750 (Acadie)
- m. Monica Comout
- m. 21 July 1789 Anne Marie Thibodeaux, "the widow of Angel Bourg" (Opch v1 p25)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF JEAN LEONHARDT **RITTER** (JOHAN JACOB **RITTER**) AND CATHERINA **MILHER**

m.

1. Magdeline

- b.
- m. Jean Baptiste Stelly (Opch)
- d.

2. Michel

b.

m. Marie Louise Stelly

d.

THE FAMILY OF JEAN JORGE **STELLY** (JEAN ESCHSTELLY AND MARGUERITE **GRAINERIN**) AND CHRISTINA **EDELMEYER** (mother ANNE **EDELMEYER**)

m. 9 July 1943 (*Attakapas Gazette*, Fall 1980)

1. Jean Baptiste

b.

m. Magdeline Ritter (Opch)

d. 28 April 1813 "at 60" (Opch v1 p130)

2. Jean George

b.

m. 2 October 1781 Marie Barbe Miller "of Frederick County, Maryland" (LSAR Opel: 1781-163)

d.

3. Marie Anne

b.

m. Andre Mayer (Opch)

d.

4. Marie Louise

b.

m. Michel Ritter (SM & Opch)

m. 28 May 1805 Bathazar Marks (Opch v1 p140)

d.

5. Francois Pierre

b. 3 December 1748 (Destrehan)

m. Marie Therese Berthelot

d. 24 January 1806 (Opelousas)

THE FAMILY OF SANTIAGO **FORET** AND MARGARITA **COMO** (MARGUERITE **AUCCOIN**)

m.

Note: This couple was from San Malo.

1. Maria

b.

m. 24 October 1797 Antonio Bellard "of Picardy" (Opch v1 p75)

d.

2. Pierre Nicholas

b.

m. 10 October 1795 Marie Francoise Fontenot (Opch v1 p59)

d. 16 February 1814 "at 44" (Opch v1 p139)

THE FAMILY OF BALTHAZAR **MARKS** AND MARIA **GASPARD** (mother AGATHE **LOTINNE**)

m.

Note: Balthazar Marks was from San Juan Bautista.

1. Balthasai

b.

m. Catherine Miller (Opch)

m. 6 February 1798 Marie Jeanne Trahan, "widow of Joseph Boutin" (Opch v1 p19)

m. 28 May 1805 Marie Louise Stelly, "widow of Michel Stelly" (Opch v1 p140)

d.

THE FAMILY OF JACOB **MILLER** (GEORGE NICHOLAS AND ROSALIE **RINGK**) AND MARIA **THEIGEN**

m.

Note: Jacob Miller died 12 December 1807 at the age of 70 (Opch v1 p92). Maria Theigen's succession is dated June 1824.

1. Catherine

b.

m. Balthasai Marks (Opch)

d.

2. Jean (Jacob)

- b.
- m. 31 May 1791 Francoise Mayer (Opch v1 p34)
- m. 15 April 1816 Marie Magdaline Boutin (Opch v1 p282)
- d.

3. Frederick

- b.
- m. Victorie Mayer (Opch)
- d.

4. Isabel

- b.
- m. 7 July 1791 Jacob Broussard (Opch v1 p35)
- d.

5. Marie Barbe

- bt. 25 November 1777 (Opch v1 p5)
- m. Jean Thaison (Opch)
- m. 2 October 1781 Jean George Stelly (LSAR: Op 1781- 163)
- m. 6 October 1795 Joseph Frozard (Opch v1 p59)
- d.

6. Marie Therese

- bt. 16 August 1782 "at 6 mos." (Opch v1 p40)
- m. 4 February 1802 John Fale (Opch v1 p104)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF PIERRE **DUGAS** (ORTERE HORTERE AND JOSEPHINE **ROUSSEAU**) AND MARGUERITE **DAIGLE** (JOSEPH S. AND MAGDELINE **GAUTROT**)

m.

Note: Marguerite Daigle died in 1808 (Opch v1 p95)

1. Marie Victorie

- b.
- m. Louis Richard (Opch)
- d.

2. Anna

- b.
- m. 16 January 1791 Joseph Granger (SMch v4 #49)
- d.

THE FAMILY OF ALEXANDRE **RICHARD** (MARTIN AND MARGUERITE **BOURG**) AND MARIE MADELINE **THIBODEAUX**

m. 1721 in Beaubassin, Acadie

Alexander Richard moved his family from Beaubassin to the Isle St. Jean in 1741.

1. Paul

b. 1726 in Beaubassin
m. 1746 Rene Boudreau
d. 1755

2. Pierre

b. 1730 in Beaubassin
m. 1752 Marguerite Dugas
d. 3 May 1806 (Opch v1 p85)

3. Michel

b. 1732 in Beaubassin
m. Marie Dugas
d. 1823

4. Jean

b. 22 February 1734 in Beaubassin
m.
d. 1813

5. Anne

b. 1735 (Epousera Jos. Gaudet a Cheticamp)
m.
d. 1820

6. Jean

b. 1737 a Beaubassin
m.
d.

7. Catherine

b. 1739 a Beaubassin
m.
d.

8. Joseph

b. 7 January 1741
m. Marie Gaudet
d.

9. Jeanne Rosalie
b. 1743 a Malpeque, ile St. Jean
m.
d. 1809

10. Victor
b. 1747 a Malpeque, ile St. Jean
m.
d. 1808

THE FAMILY OF MARTIN **RICHARD** (MICHEL AND MADELINE **BLANCHARD**) AND MARGUERITE **BOURG**
(FRANCOIS AND MARGUERITE **BOUDROT**)

m. 1689 in Beaubassin, Acadie. All children were born in Beaubassin. He moved his family to Isle St. Jean in the Malpeque area in 1741.

1. Martin
b. 1690
m. 1712 Marie Cormier "a Beaubassin"
d.

2. Alexandra
b. 1694
m. 1721 Madeline Thibodeaux "a Beaubassin"
d.

3. Michel
b. 1697
m. 1722 Madeline Doucet "a Beaubassin"
d.

4. Marie
b. 1698
m.
d.

5. Marguerite
b. 1702
m.
d.

6. Joseph
b. 1708
m. 1732 Marie Josephe Comeaux "a Beaubassin"
m. 1738 Anne Girourd "a Port Royal"
d.

7. Madeline
b. 1710
m.
d.

8. Pierre
b. 1712
m.
d.

9. Francois
b. 1716
m.
d.

THE FAMILY OF MICHEL RICHARD (ANDRE AND MICHELLE PAULIN) AND MADELINE BLANCHARD (JEAN AND RADIGARDE LAMBERT)

Note: Michel Richard would later marry Jeanne Babin (Antoine and Marie Mercier) in 1682. The 11th and 12th children are of this marriage. Michel Richard came to Acadie as a soldier with the expeditions of Emmanuel LeBorgne and *Sieur Guillebaut* in 1652. He was one of very few soldiers who decided to stay in Acadie after his tour of duty. He settled in Port Royal. Madeline Blanchard was born in 1643 and was married at the age of 12. She died in 1683 at the age of 40.

m. 1656 a Port Royal

1. Rene
b. 1657
m. 1680 Madeline Landry "a Port Royal"
d.

2. Pierre
b. 1661
m. 1687 Marguerite Landry "a Grand Pre"
d.

3. Catherine
b. 1663
m.
d.

4. Martin
b. 1665
m. 1689 Marguerite Bourg "a Beaubassin"
d.

5. Alexandre
b. 1668
m. 1690 Elizabeth Petitpas "a Port Royal"
d.

6. Marie Anne
b. 1671
m.
d.

7. Madeline
b. 1671
m.
d.

8. Marie
b. 1674
m.
d.

9. Cecile
b. 1676
m.
d.

10. Marguerite
b. 1679
m.
d.

11. Michel
b. 1684
m.
d.

12. Alexandre
b. 1686
m.
d.

THE RICHARDS OF ILE ST. JEAN

Acadians Move to Louisiana

In 1652, Michel Richard, a native of the province of Saintonge, France,⁵ arrived in Acadie as a soldier with an expedition sponsored by Emmanuel LeBorgne. LeBorgne was a speculator and a very rich merchant in France who had invested heavily in the Acadian business enterprises of Charles de Menou d'Aulnay (1604–1650). D'Aulnay had been involved in what has ingloriously been called the “Acadian Civil War.” It seems that King Louis XIV approved overlapping land grants to an entrepreneur named Charles de Saint-Étienne de la Tour and d'Aulnay. Their business differences were exacerbated by deep personal and religious hatred (de la Tour was Protestant and d'Aulnay was Catholic). The most vicious fighting took place from about 1640-45 and did not end until d'Aulnay successfully expelled la Tour from his claims. La Tour fled to Quebec. The matter got even more complicated in 1650 when d'Aulnay died by accidental drowning and LeBorgne laid formal claim to the estate. To protect his investments, he sent an expedition to Acadia to attempt a trade monopoly and secure debts owed to him. After La Tour married d'Aulnay's widow in 1653, twenty years of fighting, bickering, and LeBorgne's expedition came to naught. Among LeBorgne's and other French soldiers, Michel Richard was remarkable. At the time, nearly all soldiers stationed in Acadia chose to return to France after their tour ended; Michel Richard stayed and settled in Port Royal, a maritime center on the shore of the Bay of Fundy.

Michel Richard was born in the 1630s and was likely in his mid-20s when he married a very young girl named Madeline Blanchard in 1656 in Port Royal. Madeline was the daughter of Jean Blanchard and Radigarde Lambert and was only 12 or 13 years old at the time of her marriage. The Michel Richards were much like other Acadian families—large. They were to raise 10 children. He appears in the Port Royal census reports of 1671 and 1686 and is listed as a “*Laboureur*,” technically a term meaning “ploughman,” but it also applied to the highest rank of the seven recognized ranks of peasants. It was probably an indication of both his status in Acadie and a pre-existing feudal status in France. After Jean Blanchard's death, Michel married Jeanne Babin (Antoine and Marie Mercier) and fathered two more children.

Michel's son, Martin (1665-1748), married Marguerite Bourg (Francois and Marguerite Boudrot) of Beaubassin and fathered 9 children. Martin appears in the census reports of Port Royal for the years 1671, 1678, 1686, and 1693. In August 1695, he is enumerated in Port Royal as having taken an oath of allegiance to the British King, but perhaps he still found Port Royal to be too volatile and so about that time he moved to Beaubassin, a settlement located on the present-day border of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick on the northern shore of the Bay of Fundy. It no longer exists. In 1698 he first appears on a census report for Beaubassin and is counted there again in 1700 and 1714. Martin died on February 6, 1748.

Martin Richard's second son, Alexander, married Madeline Thibodeaux in 1721 and they raised 10 children. He appears in the Beaubassin census reports of 1698, 1700, and 1714. Sometime in the late 1740s, however, the Alexander Richards moved from Beaubassin to Malpeque, on the island of St. Jean (Prince Edward Island). This was likely to avoid English harassment along the coastal villages like Port Royal and Beaubassin. Alexander died in 1747 in or near Malpeque.

⁵ Saintonge was a province along the west central Atlantic coast of France. Today, that area is in the département of Charente-Maritime.

Alexander Richard and Madeline Thibodeaux's second son, Pierre, married Marguerite Dugas in 1752, just a few years before the onset of *Le Grand Dérangement*.

Le Grand Dérangement, or the expulsion of the Acadians from Nova Scotia by the British, must have been an insufferable experience for Pierre Richard and Marguerite Dugas. Their first son, Fabien, was born shortly after 1752, and was most likely the last Richard of this lineage born in Acadia. There is no record of the births of their next six children, suggesting that these events occurred during their refugee status or in remote areas not readily served by the Catholic clerics or civic administrators of the time.

Pierre Richard and his family were not typical of the Acadian deportees of *le Grande Dérangement*. Being residents of Ile St. Jean, they were not as easily located by the British as were residents of Port Royal, Beaubassin, and Grand Pre and were among the last of the Acadians to be deported. He and his family appear to have been held as prisoners of war on St. Georges Island in Halifax harbor as late as August 16, 1763. He was almost certainly one of many Acadians accompanying Joseph Broussard (1702–1765), also known as Beausoleil, when they were all released one year after the end of the Seven Years War. From Acadia, Beausoleil's group sailed to Santo Domingo and immediately saw that the island was completely unhealthy and unacceptable. From Santo Domingo he and about 200 other Acadians arrived in Louisiana on February 27, 1765.

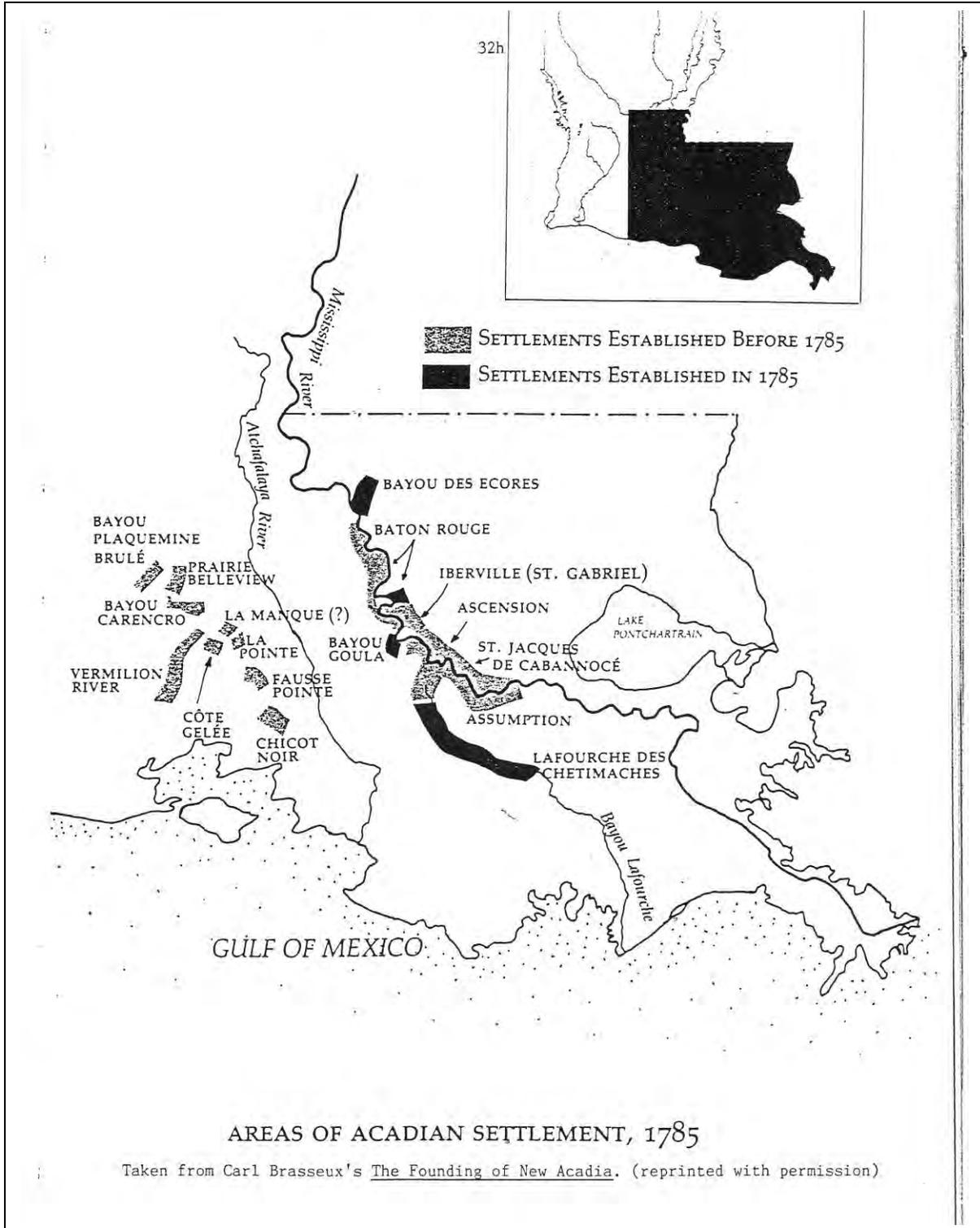
So, while Pierre Richard was among the last to leave Acadia, he was among the first to reach Louisiana. That he arrived with Joseph "Beausoleil" Broussard in 1765 is supported by his being in the Opelousas District in 1766. (He is enumerated in the 1766 Census.) On March 13, 1768, he was one of several Opelousas Acadians to petition Spanish Governor Antonio de Ulloa for government assistance in procuring oxen and plows after having demonstrated success in the cultivation of wheat. Many of the landowners of the area, known then and now as Bellevue, were Richards, including Pierre's brother Victor. They introduced cattle-raising and drives to New Orleans from the Opelousas District. This was in response to a high demand for beef in New Orleans, but it was also an enterprise the Richards likely perfected while still in Acadie. In 1774 the census shows Pierre having 50 cows; by 1788 that number nearly tripled to 140.



Perhaps a lifetime of stress and conflict changes a man and his people, and some traditions die. In Acadie from the 1600s through the end of the Seven Years War in 1763 the Acadians stood firm about not taking a loyalty oath to England and remaining neutral during times of war among the superpowers. On December 16, 1769, three years after settling in the Opelousas District, Pierre (and the other Acadians) swore an Oath of Allegiance to Spain.

Pierre's oldest son, Fabien Richard, married Francoise Thibodeaux (Pierre and Francoise Sonnier) on January 10, 1779. The event was recorded in the archives of the St. Martinville Catholic Church. By that time, the Richards were securely settled in Louisiana. The American Revolution saw another Acadian tradition die: neutrality during war. Fabien is listed as a *fusilier* in the Opelousas militia in 1776, 1777, and 1785. This militia (including a neighbor named Louis Lavergne) participated in the American Revolution as Spanish soldiers.

The tradition of large families continued. Fabien Richard and Francoise Thibodeaux would have 12 children. The tradition of insularity would continue as well; each of those children to marry would marry other Louisiana French.



The Richard experience is a good example of my theme of quiet desperation. Michel Richard arrived in the New World in the 1650s to an area considered strategic and invaluable to both British and the French imperial ambitions. Struggles and wars ensued. One hundred years later, Pierre Richard saw the British win that struggle. He was banished from his home and imprisoned only to be relocated, ultimately, in an area called Bellevue, in between Sunset and Church Point in Louisiana.

The Richard family now flourishes in Louisiana, as well as in other parts of North America. The clan was so large at the time of the Grand Dérangement that it was inevitable for them to have been scattered. North Dakota, for example, has several Richard families. There are Richards in Canada, near Montreal, and still others in France, whose ancestors were deported from Acadie during the Grand Dérangement. My guess is they are, like those before them, very hardy yet simple people.

THE FAMILY OF HUBERT **SIMON** (GUILLAUME AND SCHASTIEN **DOUBLEZ**) AND MARIE **VIEZ DE LA MOTHE** (ROBERT AND KAINTE **POULIN**)

m. 27 November 1659 "in Quebec" (Tanguay)

Note: Hubert Simon was from La Pointe. Marie Viez was the daughter of Robert Viez de la Mothe, "premier sergent d'une compagnie du regiment des gardes" and Xainte Paulin. Information on this family was taken from Tanguay's *Dictionnaire of Canadian Families* p. 549 of Volume I.

1. Marie Anne

b. 29 August 1660
m. 26 May 1675 Louis Lavergne
d. 13 February 1743

2. Pierre

b. 5 March 1662
m. 3 February 1689 Anne Jeanne Hardy, "a la Pointe- aux-Trembles de Quebec"
d. 6 June 1781 "a Ste. Foye"

3. Marie Angelique

b. 3 May 1663 m. Jean Jobin
m. 13 January 1691 Jacques Leberge
d.

4. Guillaume

b. 24 September 1664
m. 17 November 1688 Catherine Drouin "au Chateau Richer"
d. 15 March 1712

5. Jacques

b. 7 March 1666
m.
d.

6. Marie Magdeline
 - b. 29 March 1668 "a Silery"
 - m. Francois Vesina-Agnes
 - d.

7. Agnes
 - b. 20 May 1669
 - m. Jean Baptiste Guay
 - d. 1 September 1752

8. Marie Francoise
 - b. 16 January 1671
 - m. Etienne Godeau
 - m. 8 May 1702 Carles Diel "a Montreal"
 - d.

9. Ignace
 - b. 10 February 1674
 - m.
 - d.

10. Marguerite Francoise
 - b. 19 November 1675
 - m.
 - d.

11. Augustin
 - b. 10 July 1677
 - m.
 - d.

12. Marie Louise
 - b. 10 July 1766
 - m. 30 April 1703 Louis Mercier
 - d.

13. Anne
 - b. 21 March 1679
 - m.
 - d.

14. Charles
 - b. 12 August 1680
 - m.
 - d. 24 Juillet 1719 (Mort aux Iles) *son service celebre*

THE FAMILY OF JEAN BAPTISTE **DAVID** (JEAN AND MARIE ANNE **PREVOST**) AND MARGUERITE **LA PIERRE**
(FRANCOIS AND JEANNE **RIMBAUT**)

m. 15 March 1715

Note: Information on this family was taken from Bona Arsenault's *Historie Genealogie Des Acadians*,
Volume 2 p. 650. The family was from Grand Pre, Acadie.

1. Marie Genevive

b. 1716

m.

d.

2. Jean Baptiste

b. 1717

m. 15 November 1745 Marie Kider [Ritter]

d.

3. Marguerite

b. 1720

m.

d.

4. Madeline

b. 1722

m.

d.

5. Alexandre

b. 1723

m.

d.

6. Ursule

b. 1724

m.

d.

7. Pierre

b. 1726

m.

d.

8. Cecile

b. 1728

m.

d.

SETTLEMENTS AND SETTLERS

SOME ACADIAN PIONEERS

Note: The following is found in Appendix B of Carl Brasseux's *The Founding of New Acadia*. It has been edited to include only those names relevant to this genealogy. Brasseux's body of work is the definitive history of the Acadian people.

WEST OF THE ATCHAFALAYA RIVER

Opelousas District

Bayou Des Cannes: Fabien Richard, Louis Richard

Bayou Mallet: Jean Baptiste David

Bayou Plaquemine Brulee: Michel Comeau

Bayous Blaize Lejeune and Des Cannes: Blaize Lejeune, fils Blaize Lejeune, pere Joseph Lejeune Pierre Trahan

Grand Coteau Area: Augustin Boudreau, Paul Leger, Pierre Richard

North Plaquemine Brulee Area: Michel Comeau

Opelousas: Michel Comeau, Pierre Richard, Victor Richard, Pierre Savoie, Pierre Thibodeau

Praire Bellevue: Augustin Comeau, Fabien Richard, Louis Richard, Victor Richard, Cyrile Thibodeau, Pierre Thibodeau

Praire Des Coteaux: Michel Comeau, Louis Richard

Attakapas District

Bayou Carencro: Augustin Boudreau, Paul Thibodeau

Bayou Tortue: Firmin Breaux, Pierre Dugas

Lafayette Area: Augustin Boudreau

La Manque: Michel Doucet

La Pointe: Paul Thibodeau

EAST OF THE ATCHAFALAYA RIVER

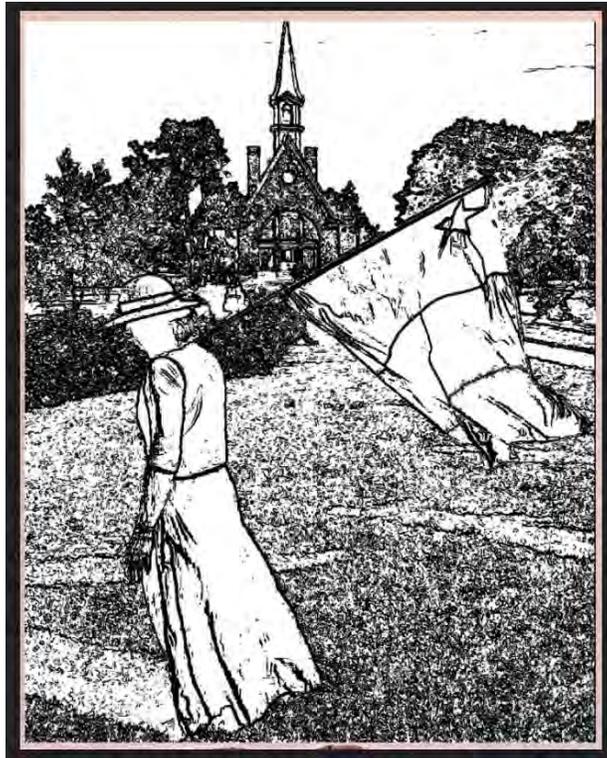
1764 Immigrants from New York: Francois Savoie

Ascension Parish: Armand Prejean

Assumption Parish: Armand Prejean, Lafourche

Des Chetimaches: Francois Savoie

St. Gabriel: Joseph Richard, Marie Richard





GARY M. LAVERGNE
AUTHOR AND EDUCATOR

Put Your Heart to the Wind: The Lavergne Family and the Flu Epidemic of 1918

A Personal Essay by
Gary M. Lavergne

© 2020 Gary M. Lavergne
All Rights Reserved

Introduction

Shortly before his death in July of 2018, my cousin Archie Lavergne of Pasadena, Texas wrote a short memoir of his life. His children enjoyed his stories about growing up in rural St. Landry Parish, Louisiana so much that they asked him to put them in writing so they would not be lost. Archie's essay, *My Life As: Pauline's Son*, is only 18 pages long, but it is a charming story of a family living and dying on farmlands in the heart of Louisiana's Cajun Country. When Archie passed away a couple of years ago, I was honored to deliver the eulogy at his funeral. After introducing myself, I said, "[Archie] was born into, and grew up in, a truly remarkable family of Laverignes in Lawtell, Louisiana. As a matter of fact, Archie and I used to joke about how the Laverignes we came from were *never* stable people."

It is easy to joke about my family; we are comfortable making fun of ourselves because what we say is funny *because* it is true! It helps that many of us are gifted *raconteurs*—we know who we are and we are alright with that.

At this writing, the U.S. is reaching the apex of a Coronavirus pandemic. With time on my hands, I re-read *Pauline's Son* with an appreciation of a more serious side to the Louisiana Laverignes. About 100 years ago, my grandparents experienced the terror of the Spanish Flu Pandemic that swept through their home in the fall of 1918. The terror was worldwide and yet overshadowed by the Great World War.

I chose to tell this tragic and frightening story through a lens focused on my grandmother, Aline Olivier Lavergne. Archie called her "Old Mom," but the rest of us remember her as "MaMom." Like me, my brothers, and my cousins before me, Archie was expected to work at a very young age in the brutally hot farm fields of southwestern Louisiana. He wrote that one day he and MaMom were picking cotton on each side of the same row when he complained about how tired he was and how he wanted to quit for the day. In her informal, colloquial Louisiana French, she replied, "*Décourage-toi pas; mets ton coeur au*

vent.” Translated: “Don’t be discouraged; put your heart to the wind.”⁶ For years I wondered what that quote must have meant.

After investigating the Spanish Flu Pandemic of 1918 and what she went through, I have a better idea.

Aline “MaMom” Olivier Lavergne (1891-1977)

The cousins of mine who lived near her remember that throughout her life MaMom’s hair was long and beautiful. Every morning she brushed those locks on her front porch so that strands would not fall onto her immaculately clean and polished wood floors. Then she expertly twisted, coiled, and pinned her hair into a perfectly tight and beautiful bun that stayed secure until bedtime. As a young woman and into middle age she was strong, stout, and sturdy, the result of decades of relentlessly hard farm work. But her toughness also came from her genes. Her grandmother was a Boone, and the legendary American frontiersman and pathfinder, Daniel Boone, was her great-great-great uncle.⁷ Undoubtedly that toughness was reinforced by growing up without ever knowing her father, Oscar Olivier, who died in 1892 at the age of 31; Aline was only one year old. She lived with her beautiful widowed mother, Aurelia Thibodeaux Olivier, for the rest of her mother’s life. (See Figure 1 below)



Figure 1: Oscar and Aurelia Thibodeaux Olivier, parents of Aline “MaMom” Olivier Lavergne

A family of farmers named Lavergne, including a long, lanky son named John Clarville (sometimes spelled “Clairville”), lived near the Oliviers. John Clarville had French ancestors from Quebec who had helped to settle Louisiana at least 40 years before the expulsion of the Acadians from what is now Nova Scotia. (Explaining to my own family that our Lavergne Family is not technically Cajun is often

⁶ I want to thank Phoebe Beaug Trotter for helping me arrive at the most appropriate translation. More formal translations would include *Ne vous découragez pas; mettez votre coeur au vent* or *Ne soyez pas découragé; mettez votre coeur au vent*.

⁷ The lineage is as follows: Aline Olivier Lavergne of Louisiana > her father Oscar Olivier of Louisiana > his mother Euranie Boone of Louisiana > her father Daniel Boone of Louisiana > his father Daniel Boone was the first to move to Louisiana from North Carolina > and his father Jonathan Boone of Kentucky. Jonathan Boone and the legendary pathfinder Daniel Boone were brothers and the son of Squire Boone of Pennsylvania.

frustrating.) The 1910 U.S. Census (See Figure 2 below) provides the first evidence of Aline and Clarville’s union. The listed head of household was Aurelia Thibodeaux [Olivier], and although Clarville and Aline had been married in September of the previous year, “Clarville” is listed as a “lodger.”

Street	Hous No.	Visite No.	Famil No.	Name	Relation	Sex	Race	Age	Marital St.	Years Mar.	Children
	132	197		Aurelia Thibodeaux	Head	F	W	41	Mar	12	4
				Aline	Daughter	F	W	26	Mar	1	0
				Clarville	Lodger	M	W	18	Mar	6	0

Figure 2: 1910 Census of the United States, Enumerated on April 30, 1910.

“MaMom” as a moniker was an understatement. She delivered 11 healthy babies from 1910 through 1930, which means she was pregnant for 99 (40%) of the 249 months of that 21-year period.⁸

John Clarville Lavergne (1889-1958)

For almost his entire life John Clarville Lavergne was a tenant farmer living within an area no larger than a couple of square miles. His households almost always included three generations. As stated above, he started his married life in 1909 in the home of his mother-in-law, where he continued to reside until her death in September of 1926. Immediately afterwards, Clarville, Aline, and the children moved into the home of his mother, Marie Ermine Bourgeois Lavergne, and she lived with them until she died in 1930.

Everything is relative, and the Lavergnes probably saw their life at that time as normal, but by today’s standards, farm life for Clarville and Aline Lavergne was excruciating drudgery. Men like Clarville started the farming cycle in the spring behind a plow pulled by a mule. First came the cultivation of the soil; then the dirt was molded into rows; then the seeds were planted. When the plants reached a height of about three inches, the rows had to be hoed to control the weeds and the plants had to be spaced to prevent overcrowding. At harvest time everyone, men, women, and children, had to report to the fields. I never lived on those farms, but as a young boy I did work those fields on occasion. Many of my cousins, like Archie, thought picking cotton in August and September was the hardest of the chores. The heat and humidity, combined with the need to wear long sleeves to prevent abrasion of the arms, was difficult to bear. Digging sweet potatoes was the dirtiest of the chores. As Archie remembered, “Picking them up and putting them in crates meant that one had to be constantly bent over. What a back breaker that was.” (Personal note: My least favorite was taking in hay bales. It is what convinced me to go to college.) In such an environment, where there didn’t seem to be a clear line between human beings and farm animals, Archie remembered that a “good year” on a 40-acre farm produced 8-10 bales of cotton and several hundred crates of sweet potatoes to be sold at markets. Everything else, like corn (for animal feed and cornbread), cane syrup, and vegetables from a truck patch, provided for daily household sustenance. Archie estimated the Lavergne family’s disposable *annual* income at less than

⁸ Her children were: Pauline, born August 5, 1910; Ben, January 13, 1913; Joseph, March 25, 1914; Alton, 1916; Louis, May 20, 1918; Nadice, 1920; Paul, December 23, 1922; Jean Willis, February 15, 1924; Dorothy, May 28, 1926; Nolan, May 3, 1928; and Aurelia, September 7, 1930.

\$2,000, one-fourth of which had to be given to the owner of the tenant farm.⁹ My guess is that it was probably less than that.



Figure 3: Clarville and Aline Lavergne on their farm outside of Lawtell, Louisiana.

My father, Nolan Lavergne, who was the youngest son of Clarville and Aline, once told me that our ancestors who settled in St. Landry Parish “floated” down the Mississippi River from Canada. Family lore was that two Lavergne brothers “came down” from Quebec. I have never been able to establish the “two brothers” part, but to my surprise, the first Lavergnes of the New World were adventurers pushing frontiers.

It seems incongruent, but Clarville Lavergne was a direct descendant of some remarkable men of adventure. The first Lavergne to immigrate to the New World was named Louis, who crossed the Atlantic in his early 20s and settled in Quebec in the latter half of the 1660s. (For reasons that will soon be obvious, I will call him “Louis of Quebec.”) He was probably from the French village of Mézières-sur-Issoire, Department of Haute-Vienne, France, near Bellac, which is near Limoges on the western edge of France’s Massif Central. He immigrated as a cobbler or a shoemaker, and as early as 1672, Quebec Notarial Acts show his entering into a contract to make 500 pairs of shoes. But soon, he discovered that stone masonry was a much more lucrative profession. In a short time, he became the most successful of the few available masons to construct the growing city of Quebec. By 1681 he was successful enough to have made his own home in what was, and still is, the fashionable “upper town.” He was one of the most prolific builders in Quebec until his untimely death in 1687. Louis Lavergne of Quebec is believed to be the first Lavergne in the New World.¹⁰ His immigration to Quebec only 30 years after the death of its founder, Samuel de Champlain, and his role in the construction of the city (some of his buildings may

⁹ Archie Lavergne, *My Life As: Pauline’s Son*, an unpublished memoir, undated. In the author’s possession.

¹⁰ In the 1660s, someone named Jean Sauviot perpetuated the name of “Lavergne” after adopting it as his nickname. Louis Lavergne of Quebec was the first known resident with the actual surname of Lavergne. My information on Louis of Quebec is taken from two essays that were shared with me by a distant cousin from Canada named Louis-Philippe Provencher Lavergne. The essays are entitled: *Triumvirat maçonnique limousine à Québec* and *Lavergne: polémique autour d’un patronyme*. Cousin Louis-Philippe Lavergne added, *Déjà paru dans Mémoires de la société généalogique canadienne-française (MSGF)*, vol. 63, n° 2, 2012, p. 7-25. This information is supplemented by Cyprien Tanguay, *Dictionnaire généalogique des familles canadiennes: depuis la fondation de la colonie jusqu’à nos jours*, Montréal, E. Sénécal, 1889, and reprinted 1967 by Baltimore Genealogical Publishing Company, 1967), page 355.

still be standing today) easily qualified him as an adventurer. Louis of Quebec had a son, also named Louis; I will call him “Louis of New Orleans.”

Sometime around 1720, Louis of New Orleans left Quebec and, as my Dad said, “floated down” the Mississippi River to settle an area along the Gulf Coast near what is today Pascagoula, Mississippi. In 1725, in the original St. Louis Cathedral, he married Elizabeth Thomelin of a pioneer family from Mobile.¹¹ By 1729 they were living in New Orleans and by 1731 moved upriver on the east bank somewhere near Kenner or Destrehan, where he died in 1750. Louis of New Orleans was a resident of *La Nouvelle-Orleans* within 5-7 years of its founding in 1718 by Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, *Sieur de Bienville*. He and Elizabeth are listed in Glen Conrad’s *Louisiana’s First Families*. Like his father, Louis of New Orleans was an adventurer. Louis Lavergne of New Orleans had a son named Louis; I will call him Louis of Opelousas.

Louis of Opelousas probably did not remember much about his father Louis of New Orleans. The younger was only seven years old in 1750 when his father died. But like his father, he married a girl from Mobile; her name was Marie-Anne Lacase. They left what would become the New Orleans metropolitan area to settle further upriver in what is today St. John the Baptist Parish. But as that area along the Mississippi, often called the “German Coast,” crowded with claims and land grants, the couple moved westward during the late 1780s to a more open area called the Opelousas District. It is from there successive generations of Lavernes spread throughout French Louisiana, later known as Acadiana, to the hamlets of Plaquemine Point, Bellevue, Grand Coteau, Mallett, and later in newer localities like Lawtell, Church Point, Eunice and a host of other enclaves and small towns. The openness and the lack of a single administrative center of the Opelousas District did not lend itself to the easy identification of a single-site “founding” as in Quebec or New Orleans, but it is reasonable to argue that Louis Lavergne of Opelousas was an adventurer, like his father and grandfather. He was the patriarch of one of the first families of the area.

When Louis Lavergne of Opelousas settled his family in the area now known as Imperial St. Landry Parish (“Imperial” because it would later be divided into three parishes: St. Landry, Acadia, and Evangeline), adventure ended and was replaced by more than 200 years of geographic immobility. Once in St. Landry, successive heads of the Lavergne households were an unbroken string of poor farmers. The first few owned land through Spanish land grants and American homesteads; those that followed were tenants working for landowners and a percentage of their seasonal harvests. Perhaps because of their immobility and the realities of the agrarian life, children were valuable sources of labor. These generations were testaments to procreation: in my direct lineage the five generations from Louis Lavergne of Opelousas to John Clarville Lavergne of Plaquemine Point produced at least 48 children for a rounded average of 10 children per generation. For the children and adults alike, life in Imperial St. Landry was crowded, hot, dirty, brutally hard—and often, unhealthy.

¹¹ Winston De Ville, *The New Orleans French, 1720-1733*, Baltimore: Clearfield Company, page 61.



Figure 4: John Clarville Lavergne about the time of his marriage in 1909.

The Spanish Flu

The highly contagious malady that came to be known as the “Spanish Flu” during the second decade of the 20th Century did not originate in Spain. It emerged during the height of World War I, and during a time of rigid government wartime censorship across both Allied and Central Powers countries, the press of neutral Spain freely reported on the spread of a baffling strain of influenza. The rest of the world translated those Spanish dispatches and unfairly named the new illness the “Spanish Flu.” The first announcements of the U.S. Public Health Service described it as “a very contagious kind of cold.”¹²

Influenza is a viral disease. A virus is different from bacteria. Bacteria is a single cell microorganism that attaches itself to cell membranes. The human body can more easily identify and attack bacteria using its own immune system than it can fight off a virus. A virus is much smaller than a bacterium and, rather than *attaching* itself to cells, it *invades* and *seizes* the cell’s genetic machinery. After that invasion the body’s immune system is not able to find it and kill it like it would many bacteria. By literally reprogramming cells, viruses hijack the body in order to keep themselves alive: viruses are extremely selfish. There are means by which our bodies can fight off viral infections, one of which is for the cells to commit “suicide,” but these backup systems are not always effective. Even more perplexing is that, by some philosophical standards, viruses are not “living” insofar as they have no machinery of their own; they only have genetic material which, ingeniously, supplants the host genetic machinery. As my friend, Hung Doan, Ph.D., MD patiently explained: It would be like double agents intercepting CIA cables and replacing real instructions with fake intelligence.¹³

The Spanish Flu virus of 1918 was more than just selfish. It was cruel and terrifying. This flu had a unique pathogenesis wherein infection invaded both the upper and lower respiratory tracts. This made it both easily spread as an aerosol and extremely fatal. Pathologists at the time noted lung tissues with extensive fluid and hemorrhage. What was once believed to be a “very contagious kind of cold” soon became a nightmare of full body agony, delirium, and blood spurts from the ears, nose, and sometimes,

¹² John Barry, *The Great Influenza*, New York: Penguin Books, 2005, page 171; *St. Landry Clarion*, October 12, 1918.

¹³ See: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/infectious-diseases/expert-answers/infectious-disease/faq-20058098>; Barry, *The Great Influenza*, pages 35, 100, 104, 107, & 378; I am hugely indebted to my friend Hung Doan, PhD, MD for his help in understanding the biology behind this. But, of course, any errors are my own.

the eyes. Its capricious selection of victims made it even more sinister. As with all diseases, the vulnerable—already unhealthy—succumbed. But many others including healthy young adults in their prime, like young soldiers vigorous enough to endure basic training, had been crowded into barracks and ships headed for the Great War in Europe. An alarming number saw their lungs fill with fluid and cellular debris placed there by their own immune systems; they died because they could not breathe. The condition is called Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome, or ARDS. Their own bodies' immune systems reacted so violently to the virus that it killed them. It is creepy, but this is what is happening in the 2020 Coronavirus Pandemic. The virus is *both* good at multiplying rapidly and causing a massive inflammatory response leading to ARDS.¹⁴

October 1918

By September of 1918, Clarville and Aline Lavergne had been married for nine years and were living with Aurelia Thibodeaux Olivier (Aline's mother). They had five children: Pauline, Ben, Joseph, Alton, and Louis. Two years later, the 1920 Census (See Figure 5 below) identified Clarville as the head of household and Aurelia Thibodeaux as the "mother-in-law." Their home was in St. Landry Parish in "Plaquemine Point," an area so sparsely populated it could barely be considered a community. Today, there are more houses in this area between Lawtell, which is still an unincorporated community, and Lewisburg, which does not have its own zip code, but it is still decidedly remote and rural. The three-generation family lived on a tenant farm owned by a Mr. Frank Tweedel of Lewisburg. Very likely, the arrangement was a typical one (as described above) in which Clarville farmed the land and retained 75% of the harvest; 25% went to Mr. Tweedel. For the families of the area, electricity was as mysterious and hard to understand as viruses, and indoor plumbing was about 40 years into the future (even more for some of the poorest). Even I remember hand-cranked water pumps and outhouses in that area.

70	Street	House No.	Dwelling	Visited No.	Name	Relation	Home Ow.	Mortgage	Sex	Race	Age
82	✓				Alberta	daughter			W		1
83	✓	77	77		Lavergne Clarville	Head	R		M	W	32
84	✓				Aline	Wife			F	W	25
85	✓				Pauline	daughter			F	W	9
86	✓				Ben	son			M	W	7
87	✓				Louis	son			M	W	1
88	✓				Thibodeaux Aurelia	Mother-in-law			F	W	59

Figure 5: 1920 Census of the United States, Enumerated January 1, 1920

¹⁴ Ibid.; Barry, *The Great Influenza*, pages 224, 249, 378, 460; *St. Landry Clarion*, October 12, 1918.

The Great War

On April 2, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson went before a joint session of Congress to request a declaration of war against Germany. No one in the Lavergne household could read, but they knew that Congress had enacted a Selective Service Act in May, which required all young men between the ages of 21 and 30 to register for possible conscription into military service. Clarville was 27, and on June 5, 1917, the official date of the first registration, he dutifully reported and registered. He easily received a deferment since, as the only adult male in his household, he supported seven people, including four children (the oldest of whom was seven), a wife, and a 56-year-old mother-in-law. What was interesting is the added claim of a “sprained leg” as an exemption. Given the rigors of his agrarian life at the time, the condition could not have been very debilitating. Perhaps it was an “extra” added by the registrar to assure the well-being of the young Lavergnes. (See Figure 6 below.)

REGISTRATION CARD		No. 87
1	Name in full <i>Clarville Lavergne</i>	Age, in yrs. <i>27</i>
2	Home address <i>Louisburg La.</i>	(State)
3	Date of birth <i>June 9 1890</i>	(Month) (Day) (Year)
4	Are you (1) a natural born citizen, (2) a naturalized citizen, (3) an alien, (4) or have you declared your intention (specify which)? <i>natural born citizen</i>	
5	Where were you born? <i>Stegouine Point La.</i>	(State) (County) (Nation)
6	If not a citizen, of what country are you citizen or subject?	
7	What is your present trade, occupation, or class? <i>Farmer</i>	
8	By whom employed? <i>Frank Powell</i>	
9	Where employed? <i>near Louisburg La.</i>	
10	Have you a father, mother, wife, child under 12, or a sister or brother under 12, wholly dependent on you for support (specify which)? <i>wife and 4 children and mother-in-law</i>	
11	Married or single (which)? <i>married</i>	Race (specify which)? <i>white</i>
12	What military service have you had? Rank <i>no</i>	Branch <i>no</i>
13	Do you claim exemption from this generally grounds? <i>sprained leg</i>	
I affirm that I have verified above answers and that they are true.		
<i>Clarville Lavergne</i>		

REGISTRAR'S REPORT			
1	Tall, medium, or short (specify which)? <i>Tall</i>	Slender, medium, or stout (which)? <i>slender</i>	
2	Color of eyes? <i>Brown</i>	Color of hair? <i>Brown</i>	Hair? <i>no</i>
3	Has person lost arm, leg, hand, foot, or both eyes, or is he otherwise disabled (specify)? <i>no</i>		
I certify that my answers are true, that the person registered has read his own answers, that I have witnessed his signature, and that all of his answers of which I have knowledge are true, except as follows:			
<i>Joseph A. Seguin</i>			
(Signature of registrar)			
Precinct	<i>St. Landry</i>		
County	<i>Louisiana</i>		
State	<i>Louisiana</i>		
<i>June 5 1917</i>			
(Date of registration)			

Figure 6: Selective Service Registration of Clarville Lavergne, June 5, 1917

From the second half of 1917 to September of 1918, throughout the globe, the news was of World War I raging in Europe and the slow but steady arrival of the American Army in Europe. On the home front, Woodrow Wilson led the nation in a complete mobilization of the civilian and military might of the United States. The sleeping dragon had awakened. What had been a rather tiny U.S. military establishment quickly turned into a world power. To save time, and to get to Europe before Germany could defeat the Allies, millions of healthy young American men were packed into extraordinarily tight barracks, quarters, ships, and trenches. Homefront factories brought millions of workers from all parts of the country into areas with inadequate housing and sanitation. These workers ate and drank from the same utensils and dishes. In some cases, they shared beds in shifts, and they all breathed the same damp, stagnant, stale air—and all of the surfaces—tables, floors, door knobs, hand rails—hosted bacteria and viruses.¹⁵ The “social distancing” we practice so carefully during this current Coronavirus Pandemic was unheard of and non-existent in all of 1917 and the first nine months of 1918.

¹⁵ Barry, *The Great Influenza*, Page 131.



Figure 7: Moving the American Expeditionary Force to the battlefields of Europe during World War I.

The Home Front

As a former high school teacher and university administrator, I have come to appreciate how schools are a barometer measuring how serious an environmental or social problem really is. For example, we know a freeze, flood, or a hurricane is serious when schools close. Conversely, when things are *really good* like if The University of Texas or LSU win a national football championship, classes will be cancelled for at least a day. Schools were some of the first institutions to close as America began to “shut down” in response to the 2020 Coronavirus Pandemic. In 1918, however, school attendance was only beginning to become mandatory in Louisiana. Following two failed attempts in earlier legislative sessions, the legislature had enacted a compulsory school attendance law in 1910, but it applied only to Orleans Parish. The 1916 legislative session passed more meaningful and statewide attendance laws that required attendance by children between the ages of seven and fourteen and provided for penalties for parents who did not comply. In September of 1918, newspapers in Opelousas still found it necessary to remind parents to send their children to school. St. Landry Parish public schools opened for the 1918-19 school year on September 2 and the pupils had to be there by September 30.¹⁶ So, Pauline, the oldest of the Lavergne children, had to go to school. (With a birthday of January 13 Ben missed the mandate by only two weeks.)

Alongside coverage of the war, in August and September of 1918, newspapers displayed their usual columns of health advertisements; none of them referred to influenza. Instead they promoted elixirs and remedies for chills and fevers, diarrhea, malarial germs, “biliousness,” and “worms in children.” (Personal note: I still remember my maternal grandmother explaining away some of my childhood illnesses as “maybe he’s got the worms.”) Entertainment ads listed moving picture shows beamed into theaters by miraculous Edison cameras. In St. Landry Parish local newspapers excitedly promoted the impending arrival of the Al G. Barnes Wild Animal Circus. The festivities were to begin with a two-mile parade through Opelousas. It was billed as “a melting pot of the Animal World” featuring four rings in a huge tent and over 1200 performing exotic animals, including lions, tigers, and leopards. In September

¹⁶ *St. Landry Clarion*, September 28, 1918; Wallace L. Jones, Jr., “A History of Compulsory School Attendance and Visiting Teacher Services in Louisiana.” (1967). LSU Historical Dissertations and Theses. 1340. Pages 29, 31, & 99.

of 1918, in Opelousas, that was the local news of the day. No one could have known that, just maybe, that the Barnes Circus spread one of the deadliest diseases in the history of Imperial St. Landry.

Even war coverage focused on rather undramatic Red Cross drives to collect linens for European hospitals and supplies to meet the needs of millions of refugees in Belgium and France. During the first week of October, the American Red Cross proudly announced that during September they had donated over five million cigarettes to the war effort. September was also a time of preparation for two nearby institutions of higher education. St. Charles College, a Jesuit school in Grand Coteau, and the relatively new public college (it was less than 20 years old), the Southwest Louisiana Industrial Institute (SLII, later to become the University of Louisiana-Lafayette), both announced that they were to become military academies to prep boys for officer training schools. They made much of how they were to be commanded by an Army officer as they vigorously recruited eligible students. They were to open on October 1. Separately, advertisements for the Louisiana State Fair (“It is the school for the farmer”) scheduled for October 30-November 4, 1918 in Shreveport, took a patriotic flavor with an image of a stern-looking President Woodrow Wilson admonishing everyone that “It’s your fair so be there.” (See Figure 8 below) The War Department did its part by announcing that “two carloads of government [War Exhibits] will be on display, FREE.”¹⁷



Figure 8: Patriotic advertisement of the Louisiana State Fair featuring President Woodrow Wilson.

At this writing, President Donald Trump has declared the nation in a “state of war” against the Coronavirus, and in a limited way, he has mobilized the military to assist states and localities. He ordered the Army Corps of Engineers to construct hospitals and deployed exceptionally large hospital ships to “hot spots” in New York and California. The 1918 Pandemic was different. The front-line mobilization for the war effort had already been underway and was centered around the activities of the Red Cross, and more specifically in St. Landry Parish, the Red Cross Ladies. Throughout America, the

¹⁷ *Opelousas Star-Progress*, September 14, 1918; *St. Landry Clarion*, September 14, 21, 28 & October 5 & 12, 1918.

Red Cross functioned as the supply line for medical personnel for all branches of the military. They vigorously recruited young doctors and nurses to report for a patriotic duty to defeat the Germans, which they also called “The Hun.” Unlike today, where military medical resources were deployed toward the *civilian* population, each Red Cross division, and each chapter within each division, was given a quota to move civilian medical resources and personnel to the *military*. The Red Cross compiled a list of all nurses in their area and pressured those nurses to leave their communities and join the military. They also pressured doctors, sanitariums, and hospitals to release what nurses they had. Wealthy patients with private nurses were made to feel unpatriotic. As John Barry wrote, “The drive was succeeding; it was removing from civilian life a huge proportion of those nurses mobile enough, unencumbered by family or other responsibilities, to leave their [homes and communities]... it all but stripped hospitals of their workforce, leaving many private hospitals around the country so short-staffed, or understaffed with young and vigorous medical professionals, that they closed until the war ended.” The Centers for Disease Control estimated that as many as 30% of American physicians were inducted into military service during the war. An example in Opelousas was the St. Landry Sanitarium; it closed on October 5 when Dr. O. P. Daly, Jr. was inducted into the Army Medical Corps.¹⁸

In September of 1918, the people of St. Landry Parish, Louisiana had no clue what was coming. There had been no meaningful coverage of what came to be known locally as “The Malady” even though the virus had been spreading throughout America’s Army camps. Only a few miles away in Alexandria, in a new induction center called Camp Beauregard, about 4,000 cases had been reported by the *St. Landry Clarion*. The same issue also reported that physicians and authorities are said “to have a firm hold of the situation and expect to have the disease under control in a very short time.”¹⁹

And yet, on that exact date, October 5, 1918, everything changed when Dr. Oscar Dowling, President of the State Board of Health and Louisiana’s Chief Health Officer, ordered the mobilization of the *all* health resources to “...combatting the present influenza epidemic.” Three days later all schools in Louisiana were abruptly closed until further notice. Before the end of the month the State Fair in Shreveport had been cancelled. Theaters, bars, social clubs of all types, businesses, and any place where people gathered, closed indefinitely. The indomitable and fiercely patriotic Red Cross Ladies, singularly focused on the Great War, suddenly announced their efforts had switched from defeating the Hun to “battling the flu.” Less than two weeks after they had opened, the Army officer prep schools set up at St. Charles College in Grand Coteau and SLII in Lafayette were both paralyzed with very sick young men. Opelousas Red Cross Ladies volunteered as nurses, reported to St. Charles College, and found that 103 of the 300 boys housed there were seriously ill—three would die and some of the volunteer nurses would themselves contract the disease.²⁰

As with the Coronavirus Pandemic of 2020, New Orleans was hard hit in 1918. Oscar Dowling’s reaction was much like Governor John Bel Edwards’ in 2020: he focused on New Orleans, where the people were, to stop the spread. The Port of New Orleans, then and now, is one of the busiest in the world and the metro area has from 25-30% of the state’s population. Evidence shows that as early as September 4, 1918 local physicians made the first military diagnosis of influenza with a sailor who had arrived on the *Harold Walker* from Boston. Another sailor reported. Then the next 40 of 42 patients reporting to the

¹⁸ Quote is from Barry, *The Great Influenza*, Page 320; *Opelousas Star-Progress*, October 5, 1918; <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/reconstruction-1918-virus.html> accessed April 10, 2020.

¹⁹ *St. Landry Clarion*, October 5, 1918.

²⁰ *Lafayette Daily Advertiser*, October 5 & 14, 1918; *St. Landry Clarion*, October 5, 12, & 19, 1918; *Opelousas Star-Progress*, October 26, 1918.

hospital were found infected.²¹ Less than two weeks later, an oil tanker arrived at the port with crewmembers suffering with influenza. Officers on board reported that the ship's radio operator had died at sea. They assumed he had died of pneumonia. When health inspectors visited the ship they were conscious of the influenza cases that had been reported in hospitals and army bases. They immediately quarantined the tanker. Two days later, five more of the crew reported sick. The desperately ill men were removed from the tanker and brought to a local hospital. To be rid of the stricken vessel, and perhaps, to not have to take on any additional patients, Orleans officials allowed the ship to travel upriver to Destrehan, unload its oil, and get the hell out.²²

The Malady in New Orleans was present and in full force by September 16. But the communication and data structures needed to track the flu—cases, hospitalizations, recoveries, and deaths—was nonexistent. Dowling believed that there were at least 7,000 cases in New Orleans; it was what led him to issue drastic orders closing all public places and banning all social gatherings in all of Louisiana. His estimate for New Orleans, although unbelievably frightening at the time, turned out to be wildly optimistic. By the end of the epidemic in April of 1919, New Orleans had 54,089 reported cases resulting in at least 3,489 deaths for a fatality rate of 6.5%. The *per capita* death rate was 734 per 100,000, placing it third in the United States among metro areas.²³ As John Barry wrote in *The Great Influenza*, “The virus followed rail and river into the interior of the continent, from New Orleans up the Mississippi River into the body of the nation...”²⁴ For Louisiana, the number of cases between October 1, 1918 and February 28, 1919 was to be reported as 244,857 out of a population of 1,750,000, (approximately 10-15% of the population). There were about 5,500 deaths, a fatality rate of 2.2% of cases reported.²⁵ Those statistics are almost certainly underestimating what really happened.²⁶

²¹ Barry, *The Great Influenza*, page 192.

²² The University of Michigan Center for the History of Medicine has an excellent “Influenza Encyclopedia” with histories and studies of the Spanish Flu Epidemic of 1918. See: <https://www.influenzaarchive.org/cities/city-neworleans.html#> and accessed April 9, 2020. It is hereafter cited as “Influenza Encyclopedia.”

²³ Ibid. Only Pittsburgh (806) and Philadelphia (748) had higher death rates.

²⁴ Barry, *The Great Influenza*, page 225.

²⁵ *Louisiana Morbidity Report*, Louisiana Office of Public Health—Infectious Disease Epidemiology Section, January-February, 2006. Page 1.

²⁶ The first axiom of statistics is that the value of its output (statistical reports and its summaries) is determined, not just by the volume, sophistication, or power of computing, but by the validity and reliability of its input (data collection). Even today with the unimaginable technology and supercomputing available to health officials during the present Coronavirus Pandemic of 2020, some of the data is problematic. The output, and thus the conclusions that result, is worthless in the absence of controls to guarantee consistency in reporting, definitions, methods, and statistical modeling. For example, in all probability, only a few highly placed authoritarian Chinese officials know the complete truth of the extent of the Coronavirus penetration and mortality of China in 2019 and 2020. (Even more so in North Korea.) As long as it has a command economy and authoritarian control by the Communist Party, what China and North Korea reported will never be scrutinized or audited, much less experimented with or manipulated, by legitimate, truth-seeking healthcare professionals. As a result, modeling based, even in part, on Chinese or North Korean data are suspect, at best, and dangerously fatal, at worst. In America, in 1918 and in 2020, even in a transparent environment, challenges exist with the standardization of data gathering, the accounting of “underlying” medical conditions, associated diseases (like pneumonia), and comorbid chronic conditions such as diabetes and hypertension that may compromise an immune system. The radio operator on the oil tanker docked in New Orleans in September of 1918 provides a case-in-point: The ship's officers reported that he died at sea of pneumonia. Suppose he had died of pneumonia because the Spanish Flu made him susceptible to the pneumococcus bacterium? When reporting his death, what did he die of? The Spanish Flu or Pneumonia? That would likely depend on the judgments of individuals, such as a Coroners, with varying degrees of expertise.

Joseph and Alton

In 1918, health professionals and decision makers had limited access to shared information and data, everyday Americans had almost none. Even so, those statistics meant *nothing* to Clarville and Aline Lavergne in the prairies of St. Landry Parish. The terror they came to face showed up in their house in October of 1918. At the time, three generations shared the Lavergne home: a grandmother aged 57 (Aurelia Thibodeaux Olivier); parents (Clarville and Aline) ages 29 and 27; and five children ranging in age from 5 months (Louis) to 8 years (Pauline).

Today, in America we see almost hourly counts of confirmed cases, hospitalizations, recoveries, and deaths. Not only that, the “mainstream media” makes drama out of numbers of masks, protective gear, respirators, beds, and other factoids, and they seem almost gleeful if any of those commodities are scarce. We also know, for example, that the Coronavirus Pandemic is deadliest for the elderly and those with “underlying conditions” and other morbidities: that makes sense. When it came to identifying high-risk groups, the Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918 made no sense: mortality was highest in three age groups: toddlers and infants younger than 5; young adults 20-40 years old; and the elderly (65 years and older).²⁷ So, in the Lavergne farmhouse in Plaquemine Point, parents Clarville and Aline, and children Joseph, Alton, and possibly baby Louis (who may still have been benefiting from his mother’s passive immunities) were most at risk. Of course, no one will ever know how the malady actually entered their home. The incubation period for the Spanish Flu was anywhere from two to five days and the sickness itself typically lasted from three or four days to a week. In homes everywhere there were four possibilities: (1) the patient never contracted the virus; (2) the patient contracted the virus and stayed asymptomatic (never knowing he had contracted the virus); (3) the patient contracted the virus, showed symptoms, and got better; or (4) the patient contracted the virus and died.

This is speculative: most likely the first to become gravely ill was two-year-old Alton. Perhaps simultaneously, four-year-old Joseph became ill. Clarville, Aline, and Grandmother Aurelia could not read or write, but they probably heard from neighbors what had been written in the local newspapers. Rumors they certainly hoped to be true were that the flu in the South was not as bad as in the Northern and Eastern seaboard. The weekly *St. Landry Clarion* reported that while churches, schools and picture shows were all ordered to close, the epidemic was “not very apparent” in Opelousas. “The danger here is slight” the news said, and there are “only a few cases.”²⁸ In the very next issue, headlines called for nurses and anyone else with any experience treating patients to “report to the present emergency.” The paper explained that “It is an epidemic in every state of the Union and the infection and death rates are becoming alarming.”²⁹

By the third week of October, Opelousas was in chaos. The Red Cross opened a soup kitchen they called a “Canteen Service.” (In nearby Lafayette the Boy Scouts donned their uniforms and delivered buckets of soup to those unable to reach a kitchen that had been set up in a local hotel.) Opelousas automobile dealers volunteered their cars to deliver soup to those too sick to leave their homes. Others with cars chauffeured flu patients to free healthcare at a hospital funded by local donations and service organizations like the Knights of Columbus and Masonic Lodges. Dr. Frank Shute turned over his

²⁷ Influenza Encyclopedia, accessed April 9, 2020.

²⁸ *St. Landry Clarion*, October 12, 1918.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, October 19, 1918.

Opelousas Sanitarium to local officials. Soon, all the beds were taken and, even then, some died helpless and alone or with families utterly baffled by what was happening.³⁰

Generations of Lavergne family lore had it that Joseph and Alton died during the “flu epidemic of 1918” on the same day at their home in rural St. Landry Parish. That is not totally accurate: The Louisiana State Death Index places Alton’s date of death as Saturday, October 19, 1918. The same source shows that Joseph died two days later, on Monday, October 21, 1918.³¹

I am haunted: it gives me the *frissons* to think about what it must have been like to be in my grandparent’s house, in a setting that should have been serene and pastoral, during that terrible week. If Joseph and Alton died at home, it is highly unlikely that they received any professional medical care while Opelousas was in such turmoil and all doctors and nurses were called to report to packed free clinics. If the boys died of the flu itself, given the symptoms, their deaths must have been a horrific sight. It would have been only slightly more merciful if they died of pneumonia—merely gasping for breath. Perhaps Clarville and Aline called upon a local *traiteur* in a desperate attempt to save their boys. Maybe they soaked those boys in buckets of cool well water to relieve a high fever or calm delirium. I grieve to imagine MaMom clutching her dying boy, Alton, and watching him die in her arms. And then, doing it again with Joseph two days later. Or maybe, while the U.S. Public Health Service was warning people that “no one but a nurse should be allowed in a room with a patient,”³² the Laverignes faced those heartbreaking deaths by quietly kneeling nearby and praying rosaries, the whole time wondering whether the Malady would proceed to others after taking Joseph and Alton.

What happened to Old Pop and MaMom puts a toilet paper shortage in perspective. And I cannot help but wonder how the America of the current Coronavirus Pandemic of 2020, “stuck” at home eating potato chips, watching Netflix, and having food delivered to their door, would handle such 1918-like horrors.

This will go away.

During the Coronavirus Pandemic of 2020, in his own inelegant way, President Donald Trump sought to reassure the American people that “This will go away.” In late October and early November of 1918 in St. Landry Parish, Louisiana the Malady exited almost as quickly as it entered. Even before the end of that month the *Lafayette Daily Advertiser* ran a headline that “The Sun Is Shining and the Flu Is Fleeing.”³³

³⁰ Ibid. & October 26, 1918; *Louisiana Morbidity Report*, page 1; *Opelousas Star-Progress*, October 26, 1918; *Lafayette Daily Advertiser*, October 21, 1918.

³¹ The Louisiana Death Index, 1819-1964 accessed through Ancestry.com.

³² The quote is taken from a reprint of a U.S. Public Health Service Announcement published in the *St. Landry Clarion*, October 12, 1918.

³³ *Lafayette Daily Advertiser*, October 24, 1918.

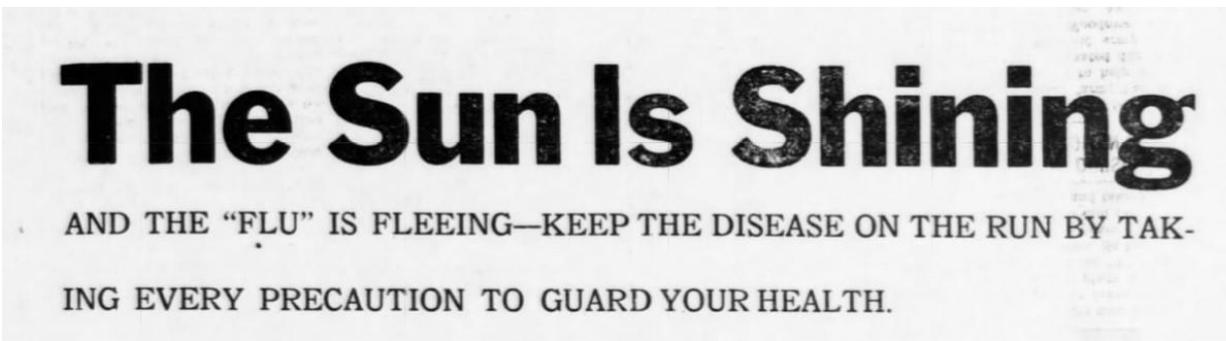


Figure 9: Headline from the *Lafayette Daily Advertiser*, October 24, 1918.

During the first week of November, Army camps, where it all started and what was the primary vehicle for spreading the disease all over the world, reported that the flu has been practically “stamped out.” In Opelousas, on November 11 the Red Cross closed the emergency hospital and returned the sanitarium to Dr. Shute; St. Charles College in Grand Coteau reopened and became, once again, a Jesuit School. St. Landry Public Schools reopened on Monday, November 18 to a six-day week to catch up on the five-week closure. Pupils from homes that had the flu had to secure a doctor’s certificate of good health in order to re-enroll.³⁴ (The irony is that now we know that these children probably carried new antibodies that protected them and others from the Spanish Flu and related viruses for the rest of their lives.) But perhaps the “official” end of this deadly episode was Armistice Day. “Opelousas Goes Wild” and “Glorious Peace Day Marked by Greatest Celebration in the History of This City” headlined the end of World War I.³⁵ There would be another influenza “wave” in early 1919, but with millions now carrying antibodies, it was not like October of 1918.

October of 1918 was the deadliest month in American history: 195,000 Americans died. The three waves of the Spanish Flu Epidemic (spring 1918, fall 1918, and spring 1919) killed approximately 675,000 in the United States alone; almost six times the number of deaths America suffered in *all* of World War I. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control estimated that about 500 million people, or one-third of the world’s population, became infected with the virus that caused the Spanish Flu. The number of deaths worldwide was estimated to be at *least* 50 million, but as I already stated (see above in footnote 21), geopolitics, non-standard or sub-standard reporting, and sloppy statistics may very well have resulted in the under-reporting of infections, hospitalizations, and deaths. The actual death toll could have been as high as 100 million worldwide.³⁶

Final Thoughts

Josef Stalin, a truly evil man, was reported (perhaps inaccurately) to have said, “The death of one man is a tragedy. The deaths of millions is a statistic.” In 1918, my Uncles Joseph and Alton Lavergne were treated as statistics. While researching this essay, I found it difficult to find any record of their existence. Through a subscription to Ancestry.com I accessed the Louisiana State Death Index; it lists their birth

³⁴ *Lafayette Daily Advertiser*, October 24, 1918; *Opelousas Star-Progress*, November 16, 1918; *St. Landry Clarion*, November 2 & 16, 1918.

³⁵ *Opelousas Star-Progress*, November 16, 1918; *Lafayette Daily Advertiser*, November 12, 1918.

³⁶ <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/reconstruction-1918-virus.html> accessed April 10, 2020; <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/1918-pandemic-h1n1.html> accessed April 10, 2020; <https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/2018/05/outbreak-pandemic-strikes> , accessed April 10, 2020.

years and dates of death and nothing else. Alton is incorrectly listed as “Elton.” There is a baptismal record for Joseph in the archives of the Catholic Church in Church Point. I have resources and the expertise to do a thorough search, and I am very good at this stuff, and there are no other archival references to those two little boys that I could find. Perhaps I need to go home, to the prairies of St. Landry Parish, to put on white gloves and search old pages scribbled upon by human hands, to find my lost uncles.

Joseph and Alton Lavergne were buried side-by-side in what is today St. Bridget’s Catholic Church Cemetery in Lawtell, Louisiana. They would have been one of the first to be buried in what was a new cemetery. The exact location of their plots is not certain. They are lost to time. And even if St. Bridget’s has a cemetery grid to identify exactly where they were placed in 1918, their bones may have been moved because of a common practice of burying family members “on top” of one another. There are no headstones for Joseph and Alton. My late Uncle Ben, an older brother, once told my cousin Jimmie that an old metal cross, which is still there, had been placed on either Joseph or Alton’s grave. But clearly the little cross had been moved. (See Figure 10 below) Surely, there must have been two crosses standing side-by-side and one of them has been lost to time. Joseph and Alton probably lie beneath their brothers, Jean Willis and Louis, or beneath other close relatives in that section of Lavergne graves.



Figure 10: The metal cross believed to have marked the grave of Joseph or Alton Lavergne in St. Bridget’s Cemetery in Lawtell, Louisiana.

Towering above the other tombs is a two-tiered crypt and there lies Aline and Clarville Lavergne. Clarville died of cancer at home on Gerald Street in Opelousas on September 17, 1958, one month shy of 40 years after his boys Joseph and Alton. (MaMom’s name had not been added to the grave until I bought her a headstone over a decade after her death.)



Figure 11: John Clarville and Aline Olivier Lavergne, circa 1955.

Aline “MaMom” Olivier Lavergne spent her last years in a small house on Gerald Street on the western edge of Opelousas. The home, which has since been removed, had been purchased with GI Benefits earned during World War II by her son Jean Willis. He was a very large man we all loved and called “Uncle Coon.” She outlived him, too.

I remember MaMom as a hard woman who looked the part of an old Freddy Powers country song: *“The lines in her face tell the story of an uphill fight.”* She walked with a cane with a white knob worn smooth by her wrinkled hands. She refused to be helped by anyone. After Uncle Coon died in 1974 she often slowly crossed the quiet street she lived on to visit her daughter. She would crawl on all fours up the steps to enter the house and would slap the hand of anyone who tried to help her. Some of us remember how she would beat her antiquated cotton-stuffed mattress with her cane to flatten out the lumps. Her world had always been what she could see from her front porch, only now the porch was in a neighborhood. She once lamented that some “Americans” had moved nearby. She wore a whistle and blew it if she needed something. Eventually, she moved across the street with my Aunt Aurelia Lavergne Saucier, and towards the end, she spent a lot of time nervously tapping the arms of her favorite rocking chair. None of her surviving grandchildren remember her venturing further than Lake Charles, Louisiana, less than 100 miles away, to visit my Aunt Pauline. She had a flock of grandchildren who visited often and they made a lot of noise, but it never seemed to get on her nerves. “It’s good to hear the children laugh,” she said. On one occasion, she observed that one of her grandsons “looked just like Alton.” Perhaps at that moment she thought to herself, “Don’t be discouraged, put your heart to the wind.”

Aline “MaMom” Olivier Lavergne died in Opelousas General Hospital on November 3, 1977. She was 86.



GARY M. LAVERGNE
AUTHOR AND EDUCATOR

Growing Up Cajun

A Personal Essay by
Gary M. Lavergne

© 2020 Gary M. Lavergne
All Rights Reserved

My mother, Helen "Bobbie" Richard Lavergne, was in many ways a quintessential Cajun woman. She was verbal and very open to persons she knew, and quiet and reserved with those she did not. She seldom criticized or complimented individuals or groups, preferring instead to mind her own business. "Ms. Bobbie's" ultimate compliment was, "Those are good people." In her eyes, money, prestige, and position really didn't amount to much, but there was no greater honor than to be a good person.

The descendants of Acadian exiles, Cajuns, are one of America's most watched ethnic groups. During stressful times like war, recessions, and now, epidemics, the apparent free-wheeling, carefree lifestyle of Cajuns provided relief from the "me generation" mentality of the 1970s and the "greed generation" mentality of the 1980s. *Laissez les bons temps rouler* and the Cajun mystique provided fodder for an American establishment searching for a simpler way of life. Good music, good food, lots of drink, waltzes and two-steps, broken English and unique accents have become an antidote for the pressures of a technological era. For many, Cajuns epitomized a carefree lifestyle that most Americans admire, but would not likely lead themselves.

Most stereotypes have some basis in fact, and as a Cajun boy growing up in Church Point, Louisiana, I witnessed and experienced the food, drink—lots of drink—music, dances, and broken English. (Since English corrupted French and French corrupted English, some cynics claim that Cajuns are illiterate in two languages.) The Cajun people I know work hard and are not wealthy; but that has never stopped them from having a good time, and it has never prevented them from being good people.

My former teacher, Glenn R. Conrad of the University of Louisiana-Lafayette, once correctly asserted that many contemporary articles and works of history tend to homogenize the Louisiana French into a single "Cajun" culture.³⁷ Such a simple view does not do justice to the Acadians or other French speaking peoples of Louisiana. (See above my essay "Louisiana's French Amalgam.") My hometown, Church Point, once called "Bayou Plaquemine Brûlée," is distinctly Acadian (among white and multi-racial peoples), and growing up Cajun is a singular experience. What I am most proud of is the security and resilience of the Cajun people. By security I mean that, unlike many ethnic groups, Cajuns are very quick to laugh at and make fun of themselves. Most Cajun jokes and stories I've heard originated from and are repeated

³⁷ As an example see, "How Acadian Is Acadiana?," *Attakapas Gazette*, XXI (1986), 148-167.

by Cajuns themselves—with genuine glee. It is exceedingly difficult to insult a Cajun. "Cajun" was once a pejorative term. It was adopted by the Acadians and now appears to be a term of endearment. "Coonass" is considered an insult by most people, even by Louisiana's Legislature, which passed a resolution declaring the terms "Cajuns" and "Acadians" to be official. And yet, while growing up Cajun I don't remember a single instance where anyone ever burned with rage at being called a "Coonass" (unless, of course, they weren't Cajun). One of my father's favorite LP records was a French comedy album by a "Nonc Helaire" called "*For Coonasses Only*." Governor Edwin Edwards often used the term "Coonasses" on campaign stops throughout Southwest Louisiana to the glee of hundreds and thousands of Cajun voters who flocked to the polls to put him in Congress and the Governor's Mansion. I specifically remember him using the word "Coonass" during a speech celebrating Church Point's Centennial Celebration on September 29, 1973. "Coonass" is less common now, more because of a sensitivity afforded all minorities than a concerted effort from Cajuns to gain respect. Maybe that is best, but I am not sure.

Growing up Cajun was fun, and it still is fun to be Cajun. Even today, during unguarded moments I catch myself speaking "Franglish." Franglish occurs when a Cajun thinks in French but speaks English. (Hispanics have "Spanglish.") More specifically, Franglish happens when French usage and mechanics and English verbalization are combined. For example, in 1983 in Church Point I heard the following Franglish sentence: "Mr. Bacilla, him, he got two of his teachers pregnant at his school." In correct English the sentence is, "Mr. Bacilla has two pregnant teachers at his school." In French the adjective (pregnant) follows the noun (teachers); in English the adjective precedes the noun. Franglish often confuses civilians who don't know any better. Fine examples of Franglish include:

"Dean, there is a horse dead in the ditch by you house."

"Francis, throw the cow over the fence some hay."

While speaking Cajuns also tend to take short cuts. Interjections such as "Poo Yie!" "Kee Yoo!" "Cher!" "Mais La!" and "Ahn!" are paragraphs to Cajuns. At grand opening of the Cajundome just before a Kenny Rogers concert I heard the following conversation:

Lady: "Was it you or your brother who died?"

Man: "Oh *Cher*, it was my brother."

Lady: "An you momma died huh."

Man: "Yea, her too."

Better still, half sentences often suffice if meaning is obvious. "Come see" is really "come here and see this." "You sick" is really "are you sick?" and "an you" literally means "the characteristic you attribute to me is more applicable to yourself." Often, the retort to "An you!" is "An you, you!" Quite often, Cajuns corrupt or synthesize clichés. "Mais, dats how da cookie bounces!" and "Well if we lucky we can kill two birds wit one gravel."

Furthermore, it is not possible to argue with Cajun logic. My grandmother once told me, "Gary, don't complain about where you going because wherever you go—you gonna be there!" The remarkable thing about that is that it is so obvious that it is impossible to contradict. Wherever you go, you will be there!

On another occasion my grandmother warned me not to play in the mud "cause it will make you retarded." What? She quickly retorted, "Well then why do crawfish walk backwards?" How does a person argue or even reply to such a statement? Crawfish do walk backwards!

Exaggeration is an art form to Cajuns.

"Sim, did you hear dat ole Madam Belle died."

"No."

"Well, Madame Belle died and look, I was sicker than her!"

Everything is fun about being a Cajun, even spankings and punishments. Ms. Bobbie was a classic Cajun disciplinarian. She could never say more than one word without getting in a "lick" with a switch or a belt.

"DON'T—YOU—EVER—DO—THAT--AGAIN—DO—YOU—HEAR—ME!"

I always wanted to say, "No Mama, say it again." But I knew much better than to say such a stupid thing.

My father, Nolan Dale Lavergne, was less violent but much more terrifying. He had a George Washington stare, and as Gouverneur Morris once felt after a famous Washington stare, I wish the Earth would open up and swallow me. One rebuke I remember especially well went, "Boy, you better straighten up before I take your eyes out and look at your brain to see what's wrong with you."

In Cajun tradition, I too, try to make discipline a moment to remember. Just recently I told Mark, "Do that again and I'll shove my arm down your throat and squeeze your pancreas." My Cedar Park, Texas neighbors were mortified until they saw Mark laughing hysterically.

Meals in Cajun homes are real events. I learned at a very young age not to pile on food and eat at one sitting. It is much better to "eat three or four plates." The first meal I ever shared with my soon-to-be mother-in-law is a good example. In hopes of making a good first impression, I piled on the food and ate everything. She then asked me if I wanted any more. When I said "Oh, no" her reply was, "What, you don't like it?"

The problem with Cajuns and eating is, that while the eating occurs, good judgment disappears. I had a first cousin who wrapped boudin around his arm as he ate it; an uncle who would take off his belt and unbutton his pants whenever he ate gumbo; and frequently I myself will have to stop eating and stand so that "my food can go down!" My wife, Laura, and I were asked by the Texas Folklore Society to represent Cajuns in a book called *Tales of Texas Cooking*.³⁸ We contributed a recipe and an essay that the editor told me was one of the funniest stories she had ever read. It is based on a true story I heard from my aunt about a man from Opelousas who ate *four pounds* of boudin. He could barely breathe as he sat prostrate in a hospital bed in incredible discomfort. He was asked,

³⁸ Frances B. Vick, ed., *Tales of Texas Cooking: Stories and Recipes from the Trans Pecos to the Piney Woods and High Plains to the Gulf Prairies*, Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2015, pgs. 301-303.

"Why did you eat so damn much boudin?"

"Because it was good!" was his reply.

Another uncle of mine once ate four large servings of fried and stewed catfish with rice. After the fourth plateful he said, "You know, if I had some tea I could eat some more!"

Finally, there is the *cliché* of Cajun men who spent hours preparing a very elaborate supper. They drank as they cooked all day long and by the time the meal was ready they were too drunk to eat.

As someone who once made a living making speeches throughout the United States, I reached a point where I was no longer surprised at some of the silly questions that highly educated persons often ask me about my people. In Washington, DC, while my son Charlie and I waited to enter Skylab, on display at the Smithsonian Institute's Museum of Air and Space, a very polished, dignified, obviously well-educated, middle-aged lady asked, "Where are you from?" She had detected our accent. Very politely I explained that we were Cajuns from Louisiana. The ensuing conversation went:

Lady: "Oh, I know very much about you people!"

Gary: "You do."

Lady: "Oh, yes, especially about your wonderful food. I enjoy it very much, but I'll never eat rattlesnake."

Gary: "Madam, you'd love it if I cooked it for you!"

Lady: "Yes, I suppose so!"

As a political science fellow at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, a good friend and classmate of mine from Tennessee innocently asked, "Are you a Coonass?" Our group consisted of scholars from all parts of the United States, and as soon as he asked that question a collective gasp was heard throughout the room and all eyes and ears awaited my reaction. "Yes" was my answer. I figured that there was nothing to be gained by being insulted just because I was in New Brunswick, New Jersey, instead of Church Point, Louisiana. While studying School Law at Harvard, a classmate of mine told me of a documentary produced by *Encyclopedia Britannica* which strongly implied that Cajuns use their children to lure alligators. "I know better than that!" she said proudly. "Thank you!" I replied.

More often, throughout my career, being Cajun worked to my advantage. People remembered me for my "delightful" accent and funny stories—many of which are absolutely true but they do not believe. During a meeting in Austin at The University of Texas, a delegation from France included an elegant woman with the last name of "Giry." She was French President Nicolas Sarkozy's Chief Advisor for Higher Education. Throughout the meeting Americans pronounced her name as "Jeery." During my presentation I used a good ole Church Point pronunciation. Stunned, she looked at me and before she could say anything I said: "*Je suis Gary Lavergne et je suis Acadien de la Louisiane. Mais je parle très peu français.*" I wasn't sure I had said that correctly, but she beamed. Later that year, I was invited to Paris for a series of lectures, including the Sorbonne and the Ministry of Higher Education, on the Texas Automatic Admissions Law.

Some of the questions I am asked about Cajuns are fair, like whether or not it is true that there is a Cracklin Festival, a Frog Festival, a Boudin Festival, a Praline Festival, a Crawfish Festival, and so on. I usually explain that in addition to hundreds of festivals there is *Mardi Gras* (Fat Tuesday) whose festivities can last several days or even weeks. Moreover, there are "Cajun Days" in most small communities. Religious holidays like Easter and Christmas, or events like First Communion, Confirmation, and Marriages can be festivals in themselves. While at Rutgers University a classmate of mine observed, "Well, you people are always looking for a reason to celebrate aren't you?" I guess we are. So what? We are good people.

I am proud to be a Cajun, and would never deny my heritage, if for no other reason than because Cajuns and many of their traditions have survived, except for the language. My great grandparents spoke no English; my grandparents spoke very little English; my parents were completely bilingual, and I envied them; I speak a little French; my children speak no French. Most elderly Acadians will readily admit to participating in a concerted conspiracy to eliminate the French language from Louisiana. They tell of spankings for speaking French at school and of the irony that government and the media now struggle to preserve and resurrect the Cajun culture they once tried to suppress and of how teachers are frantically trying to teach what children were once punished for. They were good people; at the time it seemed like the right thing to do.

But there is a dark side of life in Acadiana. *Laissez les bons temps rouler* exacts a price. Cajun food is very likely the eighth wonder of the world; the Cajun lifestyle is the envy of many in the United States, and rightly so. But Louisiana has the lowest life expectancy and one of the highest illiteracy rates in the United States. There is precious little to show for the "embarrassment of riches" of the oil boom of my youth. Cajuns pay little or no property taxes and have deplorable roads and schools to prove it. (These low taxes did not result in new business or jobs—at least none of any consequence that I've heard of.) After living in Texas for more than thirty years, I find myself paying property taxes that are unimaginable to my Louisiana friends and family, but I pay them and the world hasn't come to an end. Many Cajuns laugh at and are entertained by politicians who think corruption is funny; the price exacted, however, is corruption itself.

Cajuns are very tolerant people who pretty much don't care what other people think. The tendency is to "just let it pass." Cajuns do battle over things that are really important; it's just that there isn't a whole lot that is really important. Like almost everything else Cajun, that is a strength as much as a weakness. In the end, Cajuns have the greatest strength of all—they are just good people.

About the Author



Gary M. Lavergne is a retired Director of Admissions Research and Policy Analysis for The University of Texas at Austin. He has authored four books and is the winner of the Writers' League of Texas Award for Best Book of Non-fiction, the Carr P. Collins Award for Best Work of Non-fiction by the Texas Institute of Letters, and the Coral Horton Tullis Memorial Prize for Best Book on Texas History by the Texas State Historical Association. He has also written for the New York Times, CNN, and numerous magazines and scholarly journals. He is an elected member of the Texas Institute of Letters and has appeared on DATELINE NBC, the Today Show, Good Morning America, the History Channel, Biography, American Justice, The Discovery Channel and many other network and cable news shows.