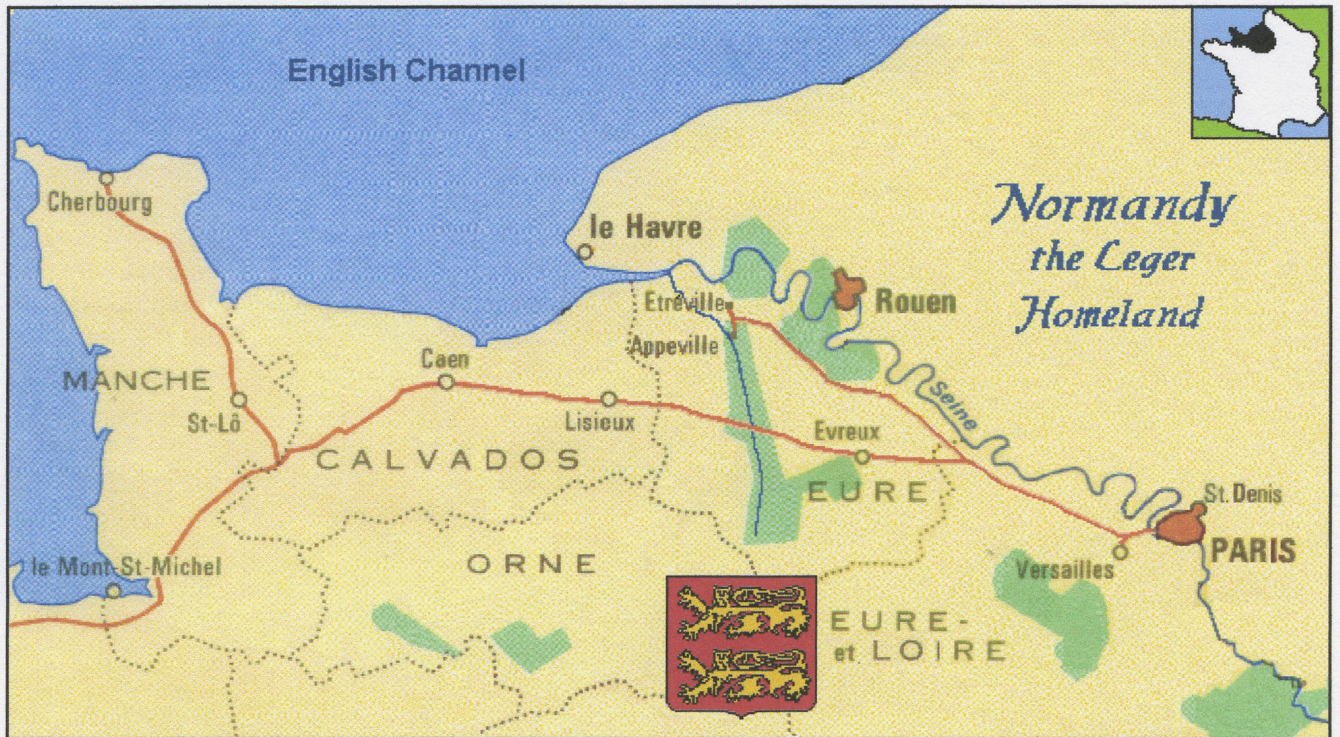


The History of Louis Jacques Leger

This is a history of Louis Jacques Leger, a Frenchman who emigrated from France to settle on the American frontier in 1870.

Geography. Louis Jacques Leger's ancestors came from a region of Normandy in northern France called the "Valley of the Seine." The Seine River runs northwest from



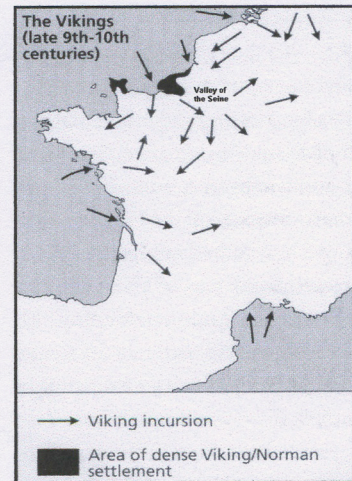
Paris to the English Channel. Although the Seine dominates the geography of this region of France, the Valley of the Seine is also famous for other rivers, as well as open fields, and wooded hills. This area of France is also known for its production of many fine agricultural foodstuffs such as "Camembert" cheese. (Michelin, p. 12-14)

Brief History of Normandy

Romans. Originally settled by a Celtic people called the Gauls, the Valley of the Seine was conquered by the Romans in 51 BC. This area remained under Roman rule until the Franks, led by Clovis, drove the Romans out in 497 AD. Clovis and his successors gradually extended their political control eastward from Gaul into central Europe reaching the pinnacle of power under the dynamic leadership of Charlemagne whose kingdom was designated as the "Holy Roman Empire" by Pope Leo III, in 775 AD. (Jones, p. 49)

Normands. Following the death of Charlemagne in 817, the Holy Roman Empire was divided among his heirs. The western portion (modern day France) was subsequently

ruled by a series of weak kings who were unable to maintain secure borders (Jones, p. 67). Vikings began raiding the coastal cities of Normandy in 800 AD and later launched a series of invasions inland towards Paris between 820-900 AD through the valley of the Seine. These invaders, called "Normands" (Northmen) by the indigenous Franco-Celtic people, were so successful, that their name was eventually applied to this region of France. One of the Viking leaders, Roland, became the first Duke of Normandy, in 911. Although he was nominally a vassal to the King of France, his holdings were considerably larger than those of the french monarch.

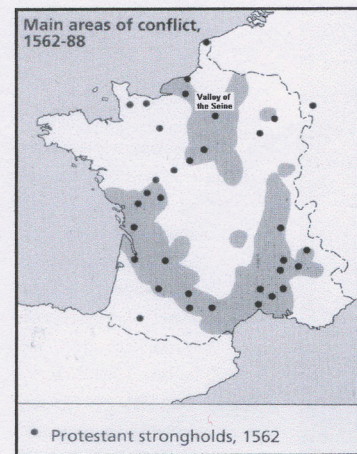


Joan of Arc

Roland's third great grandson, William, became the Duke of Normandy and invaded and conquered England in 1066. For many years William's successors ruled England as well as the french province of Normandy. As a result, the Dukes of Normandy were considerably more powerful than the Kings of France. However, over time, it became increasingly difficult for William's successors to maintain control of Normandy from their base of power in England. The province of Normandy was eventually re-united with the Kingdom of France in 1204. Nevertheless, William's descendants (now considered to be English) continued to claim the right to rule Normandy and fought a protracted, 100 year long war with the french monarchy between 1350 and 1450 to determine who would control this region of France. Following a series of English victories, Joan of Arc rallied the demoralized forces of the French king and defeat the English at Orleans. Although Joan was eventually captured, tried, and executed by the English, the french armies eventually drove the English from France in 1450. (Jones, p. 119)

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Wars of Religion. Following the expulsion of the English, the Valley of the Seine remained relatively quiet until the Wars of Religion between French catholics and protestants during the 16th century. At the beginning of this era, the population of the Valley of the Seine was predominately protestant. As a result, they suffered extensively from the effects of the fighting as well as from a series of poor harvests due to a prolonged period of cool, wet weather. The Edict of Nantes permitted French protestants to openly practice their religion and brought peace to France in 1598. However, in 1685, Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes and forced french protestants (also known as Huguenots) to emigrate from France or convert to Catholicism. (Jones, p. 136)



Following this tempestuous period, the Valley of the Seine remained relatively quite until

Allied forces invaded Normandy during World War II. The most intense portion of the battle of Normandy was fought to the west of the Valley of the Seine. As a result, the ancestral lands of the Legers were spared from much of the destruction which accompanied this ferocious battle.

French Social Life

Family. Traditionally, French society has been organized around the family. Almost no one, except for widows, lived alone. As a result, most French lived in one sort of family setting or another throughout their life. Family groupings could be either "nuclear" or "extended." A nuclear family consisted of a married couple and their unmarried children. An extended family included three or more generations: grand parents, adult child/spouse, and grand children; living in the same household. In some instances two or more couples, related by blood/marriage, would elect to live together and share all of their goods/labor in common.

Births. The birth of a child was usually a welcome event. Although males were born more frequently than females, male infant mortality was slightly higher so that by age 5, the proportion of male and female children was about equal. Most births occurred during the winter (January-March). The birthrate of most villages declined precipitously during the summer months (June-September), presumably, because parents recognized that spring/summer births would interfere with the work of the growing season. The average number of births, per French family, in the 17th century was 4.5. French children were expected to begin working at some occupation at an early age. Although French children could independently inherit property as early as age 15, they usually remained with their family of origin until they married. (Durix, p. 189)

Marriage. The act of marriage was very public in France. The bride and the groom were required to obtain parental consent and the announcement of the betrothal (Les Bañns de Fiancailles) was widely published within the community so that anyone who objected to the proposed union could make their concerns known. The engagement was more significant than the actual marriage itself, because it constituted a legal contract which usually included a promise to transfer of property/money from the parents to the couple to be.

Most couples met in the village of their birth. It was unusual for a man or woman marry a spouse from a village more than 10 km away. Most marriages took place in the fall/winter months. Marriage age for men was 28-29 whereas the marriage age of women was 24-25 years. (Durix, p.192)

Death. "Death was the center of life and the cemetery was the center of the village." Poor sanitation was the root cause of most deaths. However, the death rate increased



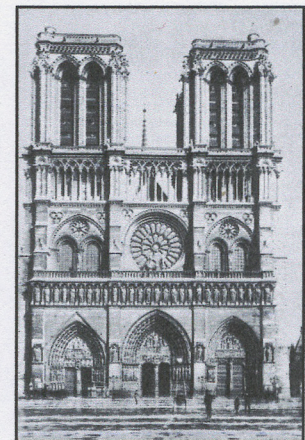
Cemetery of Appeville

substantially during years of bad harvests when widespread famine weakened the most vulnerable members of society. Sixty percent of deaths occurred during the cold season (October-March). Although the mortality rate was particularly high among young children, nearly 50% of deaths occurred in individuals age 0-20. As a result, prior to the 17th century, only one of every two infants survived to become an adult.

French were less fearful of death than of not being prepared for death. Necessary preparations included provisions for the distribution of one's worldly goods and a christian burial. Burial might take place either within the parish church or in a cemetery located adjacent to the church. In either case the burial was supposed to take place on consecrated land. (Durix, p. 201)

Religion. The roman province of Gaul was visited by christian missionaries soon after the death of Christ. Although the Gallo-romans proved to be fairly receptive to the new religion, Christianity did not gain widespread acceptance until it became the official religion of the roman Empire in 325 AD. The invading Franks and Vikings were non-christian but those that settled in Gaul, soon adopted christianity as well. As a result, from the earliest of times, France has been known as a "most christian kingdom."

The predominant form of French christianity is Roman Catholicism. However, the ideas underlying the protestant reformation found receptive minds in France and many french Catholics converted to Protestantism during the 15th century. As noted above, French Protestants and Catholics struggled for political dominance during the 16th century Wars of Religion. However, the Catholics supported by Louis XIV eventually won and the Catholic church dominated the daily lives of the people of France during the remainder of the 17th and 18th centuries. Following the French Revolution, there was a short but violent period of anti-clericalism, especially in the larger cities of France. However, Napoleon Bonaparte allied himself with the Catholic Church and eventually restored it to power within France. As a result, Catholicism has been the dominant christian religion in France ever since. (Jones, p.136)



Notre Dame de Paris

Louis Jacques Leger was a french protestant. According to available records, all of Louis ancestors were baptized into the Catholic Church during the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. Following the formation of the first French republic in 1793, records of births, marriages, and deaths were no longer recorded by the Church so it is unclear how or when Louis became a Protestant. Although french Protestants were not openly persecuted in Louis

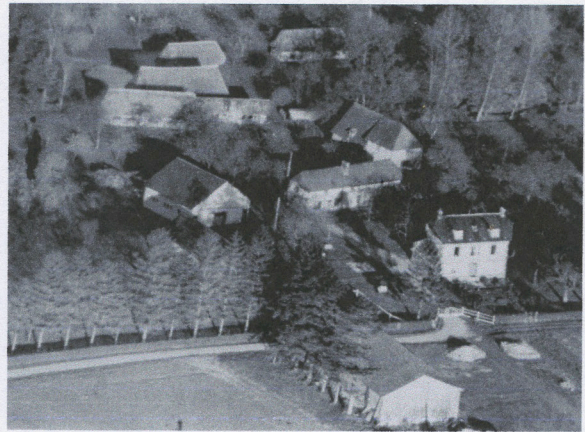
Jacques' day, they were still not accorded the same access to political power and economic opportunity as french Catholics were. As a result, it is likely Louis and his brothers emigrated to America to obtain religious as well as economic freedom.

RURAL ECONOMIC CLASS

Anciently, French society was divided into three broad social classes: the Nobility, the Clergy, and the Commoners (also known as the "Third Estate"). Louis' ancestors belonged to the Third Estate which was further divided into three economic subdivisions. (Jones, p. 180)

Inferior Class. Following the end of feudalism, the lowest socio-economic class in France included: "manouvriers", "journaliers", artisans, and widows. Artisans/Manouvriers were usually more skilled than Journaliers and often owned some of their work tools. As a result, these workers were entitled to more pay and longer, more regular, terms of employment. Journaliers, by contrast, usually worked on a day-by-day basis, using tools provided their employer. Women were primarily dependent upon their spouses for support. As a result, a widow usually remarried following the death of her spouse (unless she was too old or poor to attract another spouse). Some widows were forced to live on public charity if they had the misfortune of outliving their children and had no other means of support. (Durix, p. 107)

Middle Class workers (Laboureurs) possessed a greater quantity of personal property. Whereas the inferior class worked the land of others, middle class workers farmed/grazed their own land and often rented additional lands which they worked for profit. These workers usually owned their home as well as their farm implements and animals. As a result, this group of workers was able to achieve a higher level of economic independence than that of the inferior class of workers, because they were less affected by poor weather, poor harvests, or economic turbulence. (Durix, p. 127)

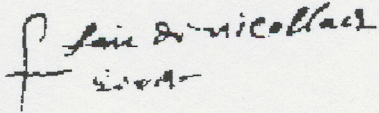
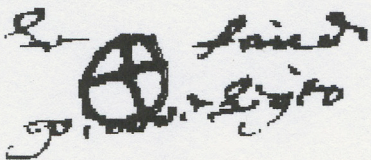
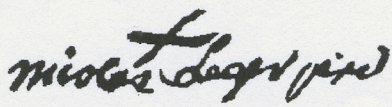
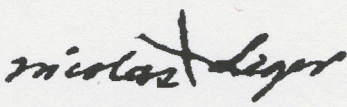
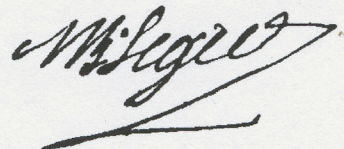
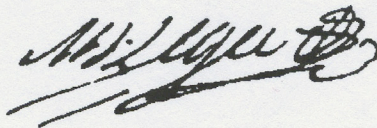
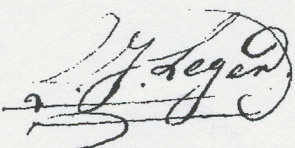


Leger farm Etreville - 1962

Upper class workers (Laboureurs Aises) usually owned more land and property than Laboureurs of the middle class. This class also included farmer-merchants (Marchands Ruraux) who had amassed sufficient goods/capital to support themselves and engage in commerce with their agricultural surplus. (Durix, p. 134)

Louis Jacques's ancestors appear to have arisen from among the middle class of french peasants. Apparently, through a combination of luck and hard work, they eventually joined upper class of workers. This upward mobility explains why Louis was able to obtain an

education and eventually move from Normandy to live near Paris. The following table summarizes the socio-economic status of each generation of Legers.

Leger Generation	spouses children	Infant Mortality	Occupation	Religion	Mark/Signature
Guillaume (1570-	1 5	20%	unknown	Catholic	none available
Nicolas (1600-	1 7	43%	"	"	none available
Nicolas (1628-1691)	1 5	20%	"	"	
Pierre (1660-1719)	1 8	88%	"	"	
Nicolas (1697-1765)	4 8	50%	"	"	
Nicolas (1733-1783)	1 3	66%	Merchant Farmer	"	
Nicolas Bernard (1771-1815)	1 12	45%	Merchant Farmer	"	
Nicolas Bernard (1794-1855)	1 13	55%	Merchant Farmer	unknown	
Louis Jacques (1818-1894)	2 17	36%	Teacher	Protestant	

French Records

Few civil records were kept following the expulsion of the Romans by the Franks. Records kept during the middle ages, primarily documented the official acts and life of the French nobility. Later however, records documenting the lives of the common people were kept as noted below.

Church Records. A few priests began recording births, deaths, and marriages of commoners in their parishes as early as the 1300s, but this practice did not become widespread until King Francois I proclaimed the ordinance of Villers-Cotterets in 1539. This law standardized the format of civil and criminal registers and required parish priests to keep death registers noting the time, day, month, and year of death and location of the burial site by village and parish. The names of the deceased and surviving relatives were also recorded as well as the names of the godparents and the occupation of the parents.



Parish Church - Appeville

Unfortunately, only few parishes complied with this law and record keeping remained erratic during the remainder of the 16th century. In 1563, the Council of Trent canonized the rules governing registers. This church ruling required parish priests to keep records of baptisms, marriages, and burials which occurred within their parishes. Although many additional parishes complied with this later ruling, most of these registers were written in latin. In 1579, the ordinance of Blois required the publication of marriage banns over three successive Sundays as well as approval by the parents of the couple. This ordinance also required parish priests to record baptisms, marriages, and burials and permitted the recorder to charge a fee for this service. During the 17th century, King Louis XIV unified the record-keeping process and enacted stricter penalties for failure to keep accurate records. As a result, from this period on, records were kept more regularly. (Extraction, p. 5)

Civil Records. Following the French revolution in 1792, the task of record keeping was assumed by the new republican government. Republican France was divided into administrative units called Departments. Each Department was further subdivided into Village communes, which usually included one or more of the pre-existing church parishes. Communal officers were required to keep records of births, marriages, and deaths. Initially, civil records were dated according to the "Republican Calendar." In 1805, the republican calendar was dropped and public record keepers resumed use of the Gregorian calendar. (Extraction, p. 6)

French Archives. Following the revolution, church and royal records were turned over to the Departmental governments and stored in regional archives. The records of the villages of the Valley of the Seine are stored today in Evreux, France.

Significance of Birth, Marriage, and Death Records. The records described above reveal much about the life of the families involved. However, the baptismal/birth and marriage records are the most useful for tracing family lineage. Death/burial records usually contain less information but serve as a poignant reminder of the frailty of life in olden times. The biggest problem with pre-revolutionary records is that each event was recorded in the village in which it occurred. There are no regional registers or indexes. As a result, it is difficult to trace family movements from one village to another. Fortunately, families usually remained in one village for many generations. (Sometimes several related lines can be traced in the records of the same village at the same time.) Legibility can pose another problem. The earliest records of Louis' ancestors date back to 1547. Most of the records have been preserved. Nevertheless, some of the registers are difficult to read and/or contain gaps, especially those which were created before 1600.

Births. Because of the high infant mortality rate (exceeding 80% at times), french Catholics were encouraged to have their children baptized shortly after birth. In fact, many infants were baptized the same day they were born. As a result, the catholic baptismal record is an excellent substitute for a modern birth certificate. Early baptismal records listed the name of the infant's father and godparents. Later baptismal records also listed the mother's name and in some instances, the age of the parents. The relationship of the godparents to the family varies. In some instances, the godparents were members of the extended family. In other cases, the godparents are simply neighbors or friends of the family. Often, the given name of the infant is the same as that of the godparent of the same sex. In later baptismal records, the godparents signed the record. Post-revolutionary births were usually recorded after the fact. Fortunately, the date and time of the birth were usually noted to avoid confusion as to when the birth actually occurred, and additional information including the names, ages, and the occupation of the parents and the witnesses is often included in these records.

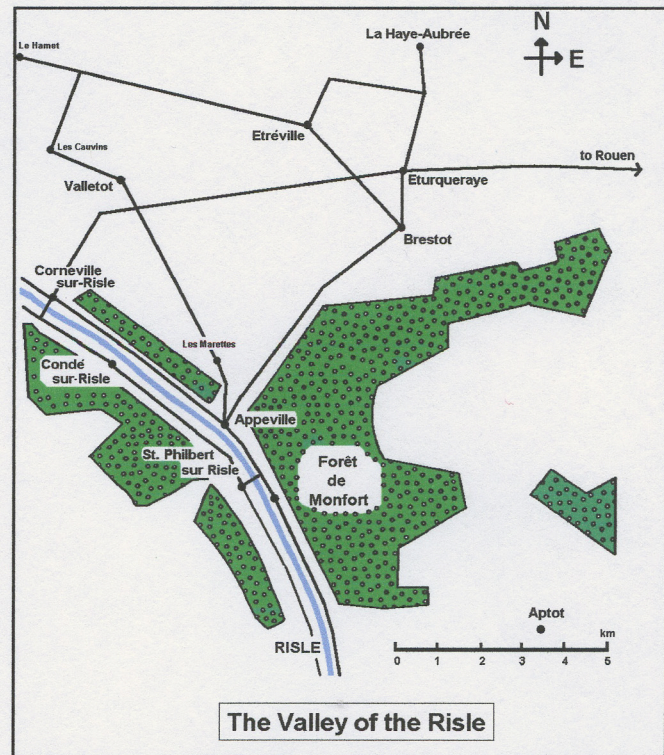
Marriage Records. Unlike birth records, marriage records were usually recorded on the day the marriage took place. Marriage records usually list the parents of both the bride and groom and often list the village of the family of the bride (or the groom) if it is different than the one in which the marriage ceremony took place. Most marriage records also list the names of the witnesses and include their mark/signature. Following the revolution, marriage records usually listed the age and the occupation of the bride and the groom.

Burial Records. It is usually unclear from burial records when the individual actually died. However, many burial records list the age of the deceased and in some instances, the date of death, occupation, and the home village of the deceased (if different from that of the burial site of the deceased), as well as the names, ages, relationship, and occupations of the witnesses.

Villages of the Legers

The ancestors of Louis Jacques Leger lived in several different communities located along (or near to) the Risle river which joins the Seine shortly before it runs into the sea. It is unclear why Louis' ancestors moved from one village to another. Presumably each move was for economic purposes. These communities still exist in modern France today and probably look much as they did in the days of Louis' ancestors.

Etreville. Louis' earliest known ancestors lived in the village of Etreville. Etreville is located on a level plain situated between the Seine and the Risle rivers. Etreville means "the village of Styr/Stur." Styr/Stur is thought to be a Scandinavian family surname whose meaning is otherwise unknown. (Noms, p. XX) Etreville was organized into a parish following the Frankish conquest of



"Les Legers" - Leger Family Farm (Etreville)

Normandy. Although a monastery was established nearby in 1115, Etreville's population only numbered about 70 households by 1470. Parish records for Etreville date from 1552, but are incomplete and difficult to read until 1608.

There seem to have been two Leger families living in Etreville in 1600. By the early 1700's, there were more than 50 Leger families living in Etreville. Ironically, today there is only one Leger family still living in Etreville in 2001. However, this family lives on farm land which has been in their

family for more than 300 years. It is likely that some of Louis' ancestors lived on this tract of land.



Leger farmhouse - 2001

Brestot. In the later part of the 17th century, Louis' 5th great grandfather, Nicolas Leger, moved his family from Etreville to the nearby village of Brestot. Brestot is located about 7 kilometers southeast of Etreville. The word Brestot is derived from the Scandinavian words "breidr" and "topt" meaning "rural country." Brestot is the site of the Abby of St. Leger, named for an early Catholic Saint from whom the Legers may have derived their surname. In the 13th century, the Annebault family was placed in charge of of Brestot. In the intervening years, the Annebaults extended their control to other communities in the region including Appeville (see below). It is unclear why the Legers moved from Etreville to Brestot. Perhaps farm land was more available. In any event, Louis' ancestors only remained in Brestot for about one generation before moving back to Etreville.



Village of Brestot



Valley of the Risle

Appeville. As noted above Louis' great-great grandfather Nicolas moved back to Etreville in the early 18th century. Two generations later, Louis' ancestors moved from Etreville to Appeville. Appeville is located southwest of Etreville, on the east bank of the Risle river. The name "Appeville" is derived from the phrase "village of Apius." Some scholars believe that "Apius" is a Scandinavian family name. While others suggest that Appeville means "Village of Apples." Appeville is also situated along the route of an ancient Roman road which ran between the larger commercial cities of

Lisieux to the east and Lillebonne to the west. As a result, Appeville was slightly larger and more important economically than either Etreville or Brestot.

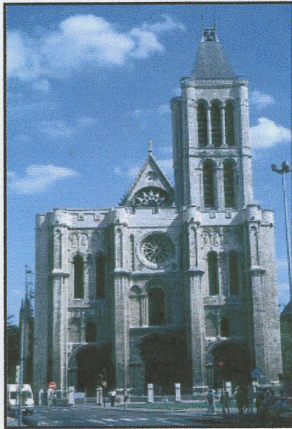
In 1387, Raoul d'Annebault, a French knight who ruled Brestot, was designated as "Seigneur" (Lord) of Appeville. (His descendants continued to exercise this right until the French Revolution abolished the French nobility in 1793.) In 1761, the name of the village was lengthened to Appeville-Annebault, when the Marquis d'Annebault began improving the navigability of the Risle to permit trading ships to ascend this river from the Seine to Appeville. It was during this era of economic development, that Louis' great grand father Nicolas Leger moved his family to Appeville. Presumably, Appeville provided a chance for the Legers to improve their lot economically. Since the Etreville Legers were farmers, it is possible that Louis' grandfather moved to Appeville to take advantage of its larger size and superior transportation grid to help the extended family to market their surplus produce. (We know that Louis' father



Eglise d'Appeville-Annebault

was a poultry merchant. Perhaps, he sold chickens produced on the Leger farms to the north in Etreville.) Although Louis' ancestors lived in Appeville for several generations, records show that his ancestors maintained close ties to the Leger families living in Etreville. Today, there are no Leger families living in Appeville.

St. Denis. Although Louis Jacques Leger was born in Appeville, he lived much of his adult life in St. Denis, a suburb of Paris, before emigrating the United States. St. Denis is the patron saint of France. He was sent by Pope Fabian to convert the Gauls to christianity in 250 AD. St. Denis left from Rome and traveled north and eventually arrived in the Roman-Gallic village of Lutece (modern-day Paris) and was able to convert many of the locals to



Cathedral of St. Denis

his faith. Unfortunately, this success led to his undoing. He was arrested by the Roman authorities and tried for sedition. When he refused to renounce his faith, he was taken outside of the village and beheaded near the Temple of Mercury (in the present-day Paris neighborhood of Montmartre). According to legend, the de-capitated body of St. Denis stood up, picked up its head, and walked 6 kilometers northward into the countryside where it collapsed at the feet of a christian woman who provided the body with a proper burial and erected a shrine to honor this miraculous event. A chapel was subsequently built to commemorate the martyrdom of St. Denis. Later, following reports of miraculous healings, pilgrims began to travel to the shrine of St. Denis to worship in the Chapel.

Eventually, a large cathedral was built on this site. This cathedral served as the model for the famous cathedrals of Notre Dame (in Paris) and Chartres. The Cathedral of St. Denis is the traditional burial place for the Kings of France. (XXX)

Emigration to the United States. Louis Jacques Leger moved his family from St. Denis to America in 1869. The family left from the port of Honfleur and arrived at Ellis Island, New York after crossing the Atlantic in the "lowest hold of the ship." Louis initially settled his family near present-day Chicago (close to his younger brother who had already emigrated to America). Later, Louis moved his family to Seward County, Nebraska, near present-day Lincoln. Here, he remained until he died in 1894. (Fetty, p. x)



St. Denis

Genealogy of Louis Jacques Leger

Guillaume Leger (1570-1623) was the sixth great grandfather of Louis Jacques Leger. Guillaume (french for William) was possibly named after "Guillaume Le Conquerant" (known to the English as William the Conqueror). Guillaume's birth date is unknown, but he lived in Etreville and died there in 1623. He appears to have had at least five children. Unfortunately, baptismal records of his children not available. However, the family links can be reconstructed from the marriage records of his children.

Guillaume Leger of Etreville	Nicolas I	abt 1600
	Thomas	abt 1605
	Antoine	abt 1607
	Guillaume	1609
	Richard	1617

Nicolas Leger I (1600-1660) was the fifth great grandfather of Louis Jacques Leger. The exact date of his birth and death are unknown. He married Marie Sourd in Etreville in 1623 and had several children:

Nicolas Leger I married Marie Sourd in 1623	Anne	1626
	Pierre	1628
	Nicolas II	1628-1694
	Thomas	1631
	Philippe	1635
	Marie	1638-1698
	Magdeleine	1642-1675

Nicolas lived during the chaos of the Thirty Years War. Not much else is known about his life.

Nicolas Leger II (1628-1694) was the fourth great grandfather of Louis Jacques Leger. He was born in Etreville during the Thirty Years War. After he married Simonne Le Sourd, he moved to the village of Brestot and raised a large family there.

Nicolas Leger II married Simonne Le Sourd in 1659	Nicolas	1659-1694
	Pierre	1660-1719
	Philippe	1663-1679
	Thomas	1665
	Michel	1665
	Robert	1667

His children grew up during a period of relative calm which followed the end of the Thirty Years War and which preceded renewed persecution of french Protestants by Louis XIV.

Pierre Leger married Catherine Le Prestre in 1691	Magdeleine	1692-1692
	Marie	1693-1696
	Anne	1695-1695
	Nicolas III	1697-1765
	Magdeleine	1700-1701
	Marie	1701-1719
	Pierre	1704-1705
	Pierre	1706-1706

Although Pierre remained in Brestot most of his adult life, the connection between the various Leger families (living in Etreville and Brestôt) was very close with many ties by marriage and much traveling back and forth to witness births and deaths. Catherine LePrestre died in Etreville during the severe winter of 1709. Pierre lived on for another 10 years and was buried in Etreville in 1719 at the age of 70. His burial was witnessed by Guillaume Leger and Nicolas Leger. The relationship of these witnesses to Pierre is unclear, but Pierre's sole surviving child, Nicolas, was married and living nearby, in Brestot, at the time of Pierre's death, so he was probably one of the witnesses listed above.

Nicolas Leger III (1697-1765) was the second great grandfather of Louis Jacques Leger. Nicolas was born in Brestot, in 1697, to Pierre Leger and Catherine LePrestre. Nicolas was married at least four times. His first marriage, to "Marie Leger of Etreville" (a distant cousin) took place in Etreville in 1718. After the marriage, Nicolas and Marie set up housekeeping in Brestôt and had three children, two of whom survived to adulthood. Marie died in 1722 and was buried in Etreville. (Marie's burial record indicates that she and Nicolas were still residents of Brestôt at the time of her death.) Since Nicolas had two small children to take care of, he promptly married a widow named "Marie Le Denis" of Brestôt in Nov 1722. Nicolas and Marie Le Denis remained in Brestôt and had two more children (who both died in childhood). Nicolas married (for the third time) Magdeleine Lamy in Etreville in 1732. Following this marriage, Nicolas moved his family to Etreville. He and Magdeleine had one child, Nicolas, born in Etreville, in 1733. Magdeleine Lamy died in 1742 and Nicolas married (for a fourth time) Marie Saillot (also of Etreville) and had two additional children by her.

Wives and Children of Nicolas Leger III (1697-1765)							
<u>Marie Leger</u>	<u>(1691-1722)</u>	<u>Marie Le Denis</u>	<u>(1700-1732)</u>	<u>Magdeleine Lamy</u>	<u>(1702-1744)</u>	<u>Marie Saillot</u>	<u>(1694-1790)</u>
Thomas Leger	(1719-1743)	Marie Leger	(1723-1723)	Nicolas Leger IV	(1733-1783)	Marie Anne Leger	(1746-1819)
Maire Anne Leger	(1721-1721)	Jacques Nicolas Leger	(1725-1727)			Jacques Leger	(1748-1750)
Pierre Leger	(1722-1787)						

Of Nicolas' eight known children, only four survived to adulthood. Nicolas witnessed the marriage of each of his adult sons: Thomas, Pierre, and Nicolas IV. However, he died in Etreville in 1765 before his daughter Marie Anne Leger was married. His burial² was witnessed by "Pierre Leger" (son of his first wife Marie Leger) and Nicolas Leger (son of

² GS Film 0368984 - Parish Records of Etreville, Eure, France 1733-1772

his third wife Magdeleine Lamy). (Marie Saillot survived Nicolas' death and lived with their daughter Marie and her son-in-law Pierre Beaudouin, in Appeville, until her death in 1790.)

Ce jour d'hui vendredi 26^e jour de juillet 1765 par moy
 le curé de Etreville sousigné le corps de Nicolas Leger
 âgé de 70 ans ou environ décédé hier Muni des sacrements
 de l'église a esté inhumé par nous de pierre et Nicolas
 Leger ses enfants *Pierre Leger, Nicolas Leger*

Burial record of Nicolas Leger III

Translation: "Today, Friday the 26th day of July 1765, as certified by the parish priest of Etreville, the **body of Nicolas Leger**, about 70 years old, deceased yesterday, was buried in the presence of **Pierre** and **Nicolas Leger** his children."

Nicolas Leger IV (1733-1783) was the great grandfather of Louis Jacques Leger. He was born³ (to Nicolas Leger III and Madeleine Lamy) in Etreville in 1733. He married Marie Magdeleine Theroude of Appeville (in Appeville) In 1764. Together, Nicolas and Marie Theroude had at least three children: Marie Anne Leger, Marie Magdeleine Leger, and Nicolas Bernard Leger.

Nicolas IV's life spanned a period of intense economic growth which followed the death of Louis XIV in 1715. During this era, food production rose and the population of France increased by 30%. Internal improvements in transportation (such as the project to permit ships to ascend the Risle river to Appeville) permitted rural areas to export surplus agricultural goods to rapidly growing urban areas. Farming communities such as Appeville prospered as never before and farmers who produced surpluses were able to acquire enough wealth leave the inferior class and join the middle/upper economic classes of the Third Estate. Apparently, Nicolas IV profited from these good times. Although he is listed as a "worker" in the baptismal record of his first child in 1765, he was subsequently listed as a "merchant" at the time of his death in 1783.

Marie Theroude, Nicolas' wife, was born in 1730. Her father Pierre Theroude, was from

³ GS Film 0368984 - Parish Records of Etreville, Eure, France 1733-1772.

Appeville. There were other Theroudes living in Appeville at this time and the family surname is spelled variously: as TROUDE, TROULDE, and THEROULDE. Marie was a widow when she married Nicolas in 1764. Nevertheless, Marie outlived Nicolas, dying in Appeville, in 1790 at the age of 60. She never re-married and was listed in her burial record as the "widow of Nicolas Leger, merchant of the Parish of Appeville." Their sole surviving child, Nicolas Bernard Leger, witnessed Marie's burial and signed his name to her burial record.

Le jeudi quatorze jour de mars mil sept cent quatre vingt dix,
nous sommes allés à l'église dans le cimetière de cette
paroisse le corps de Marie Magdeleine Theroude, veuve
de Nicolas Leger, en son vivant marchand de cette paroisse,
morte d'un âge d'environ soixante ans, munie des
sacraments en présence de Nicolas Bernard Leger son
fils aîné de cette paroisse et de Pierre François Ducieux
marchand de la paroisse de Cauverville soussignés.

N. Leger
P. Ducieux
Dul. A. veuve Dauschaert

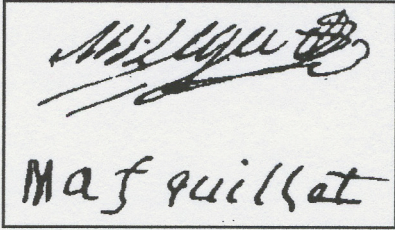
Burial Record of Marie Theroude

Translation: "Thursday 24 March 1790, was buried the body of Marie Magdeleine Theroude, widow of Nicolas Leger, merchant in life, of the Parish of Appeville, who died yesterday at the age of about 60 years, provided with the sacraments, in the presence of her son, **Nicolas Bernard Leger** and Pierre Francois Ducieux of the Parish of Cauverville."

Marie Theroude's mother, Marie Hauard, was born in Brestot, in 1704. Pierre Leger (grandfather of Nicolas Leger IV) witnessed the wedding of Marie Theroude's great-great-grandfather Nicolas Hauard in 1671.

Catherine LePrestre + Pierre Leger 1691 - Brestot	Nicolas Hauard + Simonne Lormier 1671- Brestot
(Magdeleine Lamy) Nicolas Leger 1732 - Etteville	Thomas Hauard (Anne Colombel) 1703 - Brestot
Nicolas Leger + Marie Theroude 1764 - Appeville	

Nicolas Bernard Leger, Sr. (1771-1815). Nicolas Bernard Leger, Sr., was the grandfather of Louis Jacques Leger. He was born⁴ to Nicolas Leger IV and Marie Theroude, in Appeville, on 31 Mar 1771. Nicolas Bernard married Marie Anne Francoise Quillet of Etreville in 1793 and the newly-weds set up housekeeping in Appeville. Nicolas Bernard's family was quite large but only a few of his children survived to adulthood.

Nicolas Bernard Leger +Marie A. Quillet	Nicolas Bernard, Jr.	1794-1855
	Louis Aime	1796-1796
	Louis Nicolas Honoree	1797-1799
	Marie Anne Desiree	1799-1870
	Pauline	1801-1811
	Pierre Philippe	1803-1807
	Magdaleine Rose	1804-1804
	Marie Margueritte	1805
	Jean Baptiste	1806-1821
	Victorine Josephine	1809
	Honorine Desiree	1811-1887
	Alphonse	1814-1825

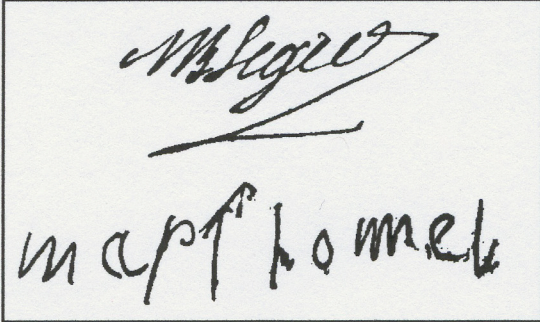
Nicolas Bernard and Marie are the first of Louis' (direct-line) ancestors to sign their names. Nicolas Bernard was a merchant. His life spanned a momentous era of change in France. The economic boom which preceded his birth, was followed by a lengthy economic recession, which weakened the french monarchy. As a result, Nicolas witnessed the final days of the "Ancien Regime," the political chaos of the French revolution, the proclamation of the first French Republic, the beheading of King Louis XVI, and the rise and fall of the first French empire under Napoleon. Ironically, Nicolas Bernard Leger died as the Battle of Waterloo sealed Napoleon Bonaparte's fate.

Nicolas Bernard Leger, Jr. (1794-1855). Nicolas Bernard Leger, Jr., was the father of Louis Jacques Leger. He was born⁵ in Appeville on 21 Feb 1794 and subsequently married Marie Rose Thonnel of St. Philbert sur Risle, in 1813. Nicolas' life spanned the era of the first empire under Napoleon Bonaparte, the restoration of the french monarchy and the rise of the second french empire under Napoleon III (Napoleon Bonaparte's nephew).

Nicolas' family was quite large but unlike his forebears, more of his children survived to adulthood. Nicholas occupation is listed as a farmer in the birth record of his first child. Later he is listed as a poultry merchant ("marchand poulaillier"). The style of his signature is very similar to that of his father Nicolas Bernard, Sr.

⁴ GS Film 0368033 - Parish Records of Etreville, Eure, France 1760-1772.

⁵ GS 0287206 - Civil Records of Appeville-Annebault, Eure, France 1792-1802.

<p>Nicolas Bernard Leger Jr, and Marie Thonnel</p> 	<table> <tr><td>Nicolas Bernard III</td><td>1815</td></tr> <tr><td>Marie Rose Desiree</td><td>1816-1816</td></tr> <tr><td>Richard Bauche</td><td>1817-1827</td></tr> <tr><td>Louis Jacques</td><td>1818-1894</td></tr> <tr><td>Auguste Desiree</td><td>1819-1819</td></tr> <tr><td>Marie Anne Rose</td><td>1821</td></tr> <tr><td>Marie Margueritte</td><td>1821-1830</td></tr> <tr><td>Honorine Virginie</td><td>1823</td></tr> <tr><td>Veronique Victorine</td><td>1825-1839</td></tr> <tr><td>Henriette Desiree</td><td>1827</td></tr> <tr><td>Clementine Ismerie</td><td>1829-1837</td></tr> <tr><td>Louis Theodore</td><td>1833</td></tr> <tr><td>Adolphe Antoine</td><td>1836-1914</td></tr> </table>	Nicolas Bernard III	1815	Marie Rose Desiree	1816-1816	Richard Bauche	1817-1827	Louis Jacques	1818-1894	Auguste Desiree	1819-1819	Marie Anne Rose	1821	Marie Margueritte	1821-1830	Honorine Virginie	1823	Veronique Victorine	1825-1839	Henriette Desiree	1827	Clementine Ismerie	1829-1837	Louis Theodore	1833	Adolphe Antoine	1836-1914
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Louis Jacques Leger (1818-1894). Louis Jacques Leger was born in Appeville on 26 Jul 1818 and died in Pleasant Grove, Nebraska on 9 Jan 1894. From a biographical sketch, published six years before his death, in 1888, we learn that Louis was:

“... raised a farmer boy until about sixteen, when he learned a trade, making weaver's reeds. Took a regular course of study in the normal school of Paris, after which he became a teacher and was principal of the Gospel Society school at St. Denis, near Paris, where he was in charge 24 years. Was secretary of the Protestant Institute of Paris nine years, and was associated with many of the leading men of France during the reign of Napoleon 3rd. Was professor four years of photogenic association. For his effective work received three silver medals. He also received one bronze medal for his efficient work in the deaf and dumb asylum. He left Paris the year before the Franco Prussian war, and came to this country in 1873, and took a homestead in "I" precinct. Mr. Leger has a family of twelve children, seven boys and five girls. Mr. Leger is a very intelligent gentleman, being thoroughly versed in all European affairs, and familiar with French history especially.”

Aside from the foregoing history, we know little else of Louis early life in Appeville. Louis' family had apparently achieved some degree of economic success and were undoubtedly now considered to be “petit bourgeois.” In those days, Appeville probably looked much like this post card which was taken at the beginning of the 20th century.





St. Denis (ca. 1900)

Louis eventually moved to Paris where he married Marianne Grey, in 1846. Their marriage certificate states that Marianne was a native of Brighton England and was working as a chambermaid and living in Paris when she and Louis married. Following their marriage, Louis and Marianne moved to St. Denis and live at 19 Cours Benoit. There they had two children before Marianne died of Cholera in 1849. Following Marianne's death Louis Jacques wrote the following entry in the family bible:

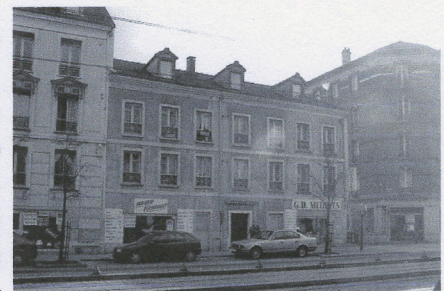
*Ma femme bien-aimée s'est endormie dans la paix
de son Sauveur à l'âge de 35 ans le 6 juillet
1849 à la suite d'une attaque de choléra qui a
duré 14 heures. Le Seigneur me l'avait donnée, le Seigneur
me l'a ôtée que son saint nom soit béni. Job
Cette épreuve pour celui qui l'a tendrement aimée
a été une douleur bénie; Le Seigneur la place
dans les cieux afin que j'élevasse mes pensées et
et mon cœur plus souvent vers le séjour des
bienheureux où elle repose en paix.*



St. Denis City Cemetary


Translation: "My beloved wife is gone to sleep in peace with her Savior at the age of 35, on the 6th of July 1849, following an attack of Cholera which lasted 14 hours. The Lord give her to me and the Lord took her from me, may His name be blessed. This test for him that she loved tenderly is a painful blessing. The Lord has placed her in the heavens in order that I may lift my thoughts and my heart more frequently towards heaven where she rests in peace. L. J. Leger."

Following Marianne's death, Louis married Augustine Clarisse LeMarchand, of St. Denis in the spring of 1850. Clarisse was the daughter of the postman who lived down the street from the Legers. Louis and Clarisse (who apparently preferred to be called by her middle name) continued to live in the same house that Louis and Marianne had previously occupied. Louis and Clarisse had 13 children during the next 18 years. According to a family



Cours Benoit - St. Denis (ca. 2001)

history “each child was accepted into the family with the attitude of “C’est le Bon Dieu” (the will of God). (Fetty)

 <p>Louis Jacques Leger and his second wife Augustine Clarisse Lemarchand</p>	Marie Lydia	1851	St. Denis
	Samuel Jean	1853	St. Denis
	Henri Edouard	1854-1857	St. Denis
	Georges Gabriel	1854-1855	St. Denis
	Samuel Paul	1857	St. Denis
	Anna Elizabeth	1858-1948	St. Denis
	Lea Clarisse	1860-1862	St. Denis
	Louis Auguste	1861	St. Denis
	Lea Clarisse	1863	St. Denis
	Henri Eugene	1864	St. Denis
	Marie Alice	1865	St. Denis
	Paul Louis	1857	St. Denis
	Louis Adolphe	1869	St. Denis
	David Washington	1871-1891	USA
Julian Charles Theophilous	1873	USA	

Louis was listed as an “Instituteur” (teacher) in the local voting records. He taught in both public and private religious schools during period that he lived in St. Denis. He also helped teach illiterate workers in a series of courses offered by the “Association Philotechnique” of St. Denis between 1867 and 1868. (He was subsequently awarded a silver medal for this work by the City of St. Denis.) This educational association still exists in France today (www.philotechnique.fr).



Silver Medal awarded to Louis Jacques Leger in 1868

Louis was also very active in the French (Lutheran) church. He helped to translate passages from the Bible into french and taught the first protestant congregation in St. Denis (which was located around the corner from his house on Cours Benoit).

By 1869, Louis had two grown sons: Louis Alfred, age 22 (by his first wife) and Samuel Jean, age 19 (by his second wife). According to family tradition, Louis and Clarisse decided to emigrate to America in order to protect their grown sons from the looming military conflict between France and Germany. The Legers may have also decided to come to America to escape continuing religious intolerance towards French Protestants.

Louis settled his family in La Salle County, Illinois, close to his younger brothers Adolphe and Louis Theodore, who had previously emigrated from France to America. While living in Illinois, Louis and Clarisse had two more children. In 1873, they moved to Precinct I of Seward County, Nebraska. Louis eventually became a naturalized US citizen in 1879. It is interesting that following his emigration to America, Louis gave up teaching and reverted to farming. Apparently no price was too great for this man to pay, in order that his family be safe. In 1880, the US census recorded the following information:

STATE **NEBRASKA**

Leger, Louis

VOL 9 E.D. 140

SHEET 9 LINE 15

W M 62

Seward

Francis

S. Precourt

OTHER MEMBERS OF FAMILY

NAME	RELATION- SHIP	AGE	BIRTHPLACE
Leger, Clarisse	W	50	France
Leger, Samuel	S	20	France
Auguste	S	18	France
Alfred	S	15	France
Paul	S	12	France

1880 CENSUS - INDEX
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

STATE **NEBRASKA**

Leger, Louis

CONTINUATION

OTHER MEMBERS OF FAMILY

NAME	RELATION- SHIP	AGE	BIRTHPLACE
Leger, David	S	9	Missouri
Joseph	S	6	Nebraska

1880 CENSUS - INDEX
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

1880 Census Index - Louis J. Leger Family

By this time several of Louis and Clarisse's children had left home. Most of Louis and Clarisse's children survived to adulthood, married and had children of their own.

In 1884, Louis and Clarisse purchased a quarter-section of farm land in Seward County near Milford, Nebraska for \$1,257.58. Louis and Clarisse eventually sold this land to their son, Louis Alfred Leger in 1892 but they continued to live on the farm for the rest of Louis' life.



Nebraska homestead of Louis and Clarisse Leger

Following his death in 1894, an obituary described Louis as a highly respected citizen:

“who was known as an earnest and careful servant of Him who died that all might live in that bright home over the river — in the mansion not built by the hands of man.”

Following Louis' death, Clarisse moved to Sharon Springs, Kansas, to live with her son Samuel Paul. She remained there until her death in 1914. Today, Louis



Tombstone of Louis and Clarissa Leger

and Clarisse are buried together (along with two of their children: David W. Leger and Lea Clarisse Leger) in the Pleasant Dale Cemetery near Milford, Nebraska.



Clarisse Leger shortly before her death in 1914

PLACE OF DEATH.		STATE OF KANSAS.	
County <u>Hallam</u>		STATE BOARD OF HEALTH-DIV. OF VITAL STATISTICS.	
Township _____		STANDARD CERTIFICATE OF DEATH.	
City <u>Shore Springs</u> No. _____ street, Ward _____ Registered No. <u>1</u>			
* FULL NAME <u>Clarissa A. Leger</u>			
PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS.		MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH.	
Sex. <u>Female</u>	Color or Race. <u>White</u>	Marital Status. <u>widow</u>	Date of Death. <u>Jan - 23 - 14</u>
Date of Birth. <u>July 9 1830</u>	Age. <u>83</u> yrs. <u>6</u> mo. <u>14</u> da.	Place of Birth. <u>France</u>	I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from <u>May 1912</u> to <u>Jan 1914</u>
Occupation. _____	Birthplace. <u>France</u>	Name of Father. <u>Elisa B. Marchand</u>	that I last saw her alive on <u>Jan 1</u> 19 <u>14</u>
Place of Birth. <u>France</u>	Name of Mother. <u>France</u>	Place of Birth of Mother. <u>France</u>	and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at _____
Name of Father. <u>Elisa B. Marchand</u>	Name of Mother. <u>France</u>	Place of Birth of Mother. <u>France</u>	The CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows: <u>Cancer of the stomach and Pan</u>
Name of Mother. <u>France</u>	Name of Mother. <u>France</u>	Place of Birth of Mother. <u>France</u>	
The above is true to the best of my knowledge.		Contributory Cause. _____	
Signature. <u>Paul Leger</u>		Signed. <u>J. E. Scott</u>	
Address. <u>Shore Springs, Ne</u>		Date of Burial. <u>Jan 24 1914</u>	
Date of Death. <u>Jan 23 1914</u>		Urdertaker. <u>J. E. Scott</u>	

Death Certificate of Clarissa Leger



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3. Genealogy Society of Utah. Extraction of French Records. Call # 944D27F.
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6. Hazel Fetty in. Seward County Nebraska by the People of Seward County. Seward County Nebraska Historical Society, 1982.

Louis Jacques Leger Family Pictures



Louis Alfred



Marie Lydic



Marie Alixe

L. J. Leger

A. G. Lemarchand



Samuel Paul



Anna Elisabeth



Lea Clarisse