

Chapter TEN

Damase Bélanger

1830 - 1923

Damase lived during those years where Canada and the United States slowly became to trust one another and to trade among themselves. Relations got better and people started getting over the so called "unfair" resolution of the boundary between Canada and the United States from Washington State to Alaska.



(Can. Geog. Journal)

TRACKING ALONG THE EDGE OF A RIVER

DAMASE

Damase was born on 27 May and christened on 28 May 1830 in St. Andre, Kamouraska, Que. He died on 5 May 1927 at St Alexandre, Kamouraska, Quebec and was buried there on 7 May 1927. Damase married twice and had seven children, all by the same wife.

He married Georgiana Modeste Pelletier on 22 July 1862 at St Pascal, Kamouraska. Georgiana Modeste Pelletier was born on 10 January and baptized on the same day in 1842 at St. Pascal, Kamouraska County, Quebec. She died on 31 October 1882 at St Alexandre, Kamouraska and was buried there on 2 November 1882. Damase also married Emma Nadeau on 21 April 1884 at St Alexandre, Kamouraska. Emma Nadeau was born in 1842 and died in 1923 at St Alexandre, Kamouraska and was buried there. Damase and Emma Nadeau had no known children. His first wife, Modeste (Georgianna) Pelletier was the mother of seven children and our ancestor Lucien was the fifth child.

Living in the Isle Verte and Kamouraska regions was undergoing a big change around 1845, when Damase was 20 years of age. An exodus was about to start which would induce many farmers to leave the region due to poor crop production from the over-farmed land. Crop rotation was not recognized as a method of rehabilitation for farm land and it was producing lower yields each year. The main farming crop was wheat which was exported to many other areas. The wheat crop was being devastated by wheat midge in the 1830s and by 1840 the crop yield was down by some sixty percent. The farmers were relying on their backup crop of potatoes to make a living and this crop suffered from potato blight. The blight took its toll so that, between 1840 and 1850, the yield was down by some fifty percent. With the loss of wheat and potatoes as a stable crop for income, the families were searching for new sources of revenue, either in the immediate area or elsewhere. This caused many to seek their livelihood in the United States. By the time Damase was 30, the exodus was in full swing and brought residents of the area to the mills in the United States or to richer pastures in New Brunswick.

In L'Isle Verte, where Lucien Belanger married Parmella Gagnon, some Gagnons and Belangers started an industry of marketing ocean moss. Although the relationship with the Belangers and Gagnons of our family has not been established, a Jean Baptiste Belanger embarked on this venture with Ferdinand and Ignace Gagnon about 1880 to 1885. The moss, called 'mousse de mer', grew in the river and was harvested at low tide. The tall plants were cut, allowed to float to the surface and then gathered for drying on the river bank. This process, referred to as 'faire la mousse' would yield a product used in the making of mattresses, stuffing chairs and automobile or buggy seats and other uses as a substitute for horse hair. Although a promising industry, it never matured as there was no care taken to ensure the continuation of the crop. The methods used to harvest depleted the available supply and the plant never returned on its own. Had harvesting been done differently, the crop might have continued and provided a suitable income for future generations. By the time our grandfather Lucien made his way to Grand Falls, NB, the 'mousse de mer' industry was all but gone.

By the time Damase was 84, in 1909, there had been so much change in international relations that the United States and Canada had established a permanent International Joint Commission. It was composed of six members, three from each country, and was expected to arrive at joint decisions over disputes between countries. This commission was so successful that it almost always arrived at decisions with a unanimous vote.

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DAMASE BROTHERS AND SISTERS

1. Pierre married Marie Guy on 19 July 1853 at St Alexandre, Kamouraska, Quebec. Pierre and Marie Guy had no known children.
2. Alphonse married Philomene Carrier on 31 July 1860 at St Roch des Aulnaies. He died on 30 March 1911 at L'Isle Verte.
3. Timothee married Adelaide Moreau on 7 July 1858 at Notre Dame du Portage. Timothee Belanger and Adelaide Moreau had no known children.
4. Euchariste Belanger married Arthemise Gauthier. (No other Info)
5. Francois Belanger (No Info)
6. Magloire Belanger (No Info)
7. Genevieve married Benjamin Chouinard on 20 January 1857 at St Alexandre, Kamouraska. Genevieve Belanger and Benjamin Chouinard had no known children.
8. Thais married Elzear Lavoie on 3 March 1862 at St Alexandre, Kamouraska. Thais Belanger and Elzear Lavoie had no known children.
9. Arthemise married Prosper Pelletier on 30 October 1865 at St Alexandre, Kamouraska.
10. Calixte married Arthemise Gauthier on 5 November 1872 at St Alexandre, Kamouraska. Calixte Belanger and Arthemise Gauthier had no known children. The relationship between Calixte and Euchariste both married to an Arthemise Gauthier is not clear. Calixte and Euchariste may have been the same person?
11. Victoire married Pascal Dumont on 15 February 1858 at St Alexandre, Kamouraska. Victoire Belanger and Pascal Dumont had no known children.
12. Domitilde married Adolphe Pelletier on 4 October 1842 at St Andre, Kamouraska, Quebec. Domitilde Belanger and Adolphe Pelletier had no known children.
13. Narcisse was born about 1820. He died on 29 March 1891 at St Alexandre, Quebec. He was buried at St Alexandre, Quebec. He married Marie Rosalie Leclerc on 3 August 1847 at St Louis, Kamouraska, Quebec. Marie Rosalie Leclerc was born about 1839. She died on 25 February 1923 at St Alexandre, Quebec. She was buried at St Alexandre, Quebec.

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14. Adolphe was born about 1843. He died on 16 December 1913 at St Alexandre, Quebec. He married Henriette Michaud on 7 September 1868 at St Andre, Kamouraska, Quebec. Adolphe Belanger and Henriette Michaud had no known children.

15. Virginie married Paul Laplante dit Labouris on 7 January 1852.

¹THE WINTER OF 1890²

Written by Philippe Belanger, the son of Eugene and the father of Ulric. At the Riviere au Dore in 1890 a historian decides to write the history of the foundation of his parish.

The winter of 1890 was very sad for the first colonists. Therefore, the young men, 5 in number, left to spend the winter in the shipyards of M.B.A. Scott, 45 miles to the north of Lac St Jean, so only the old were left in the homes. The winter was terrible with the cold and snow and the worst thing was the influenza epidemic which struck all the people, happily no one died.

The road at St Felicien was closed for several weeks and all were unable to go out except on snowshoes. The inhabitants of this small locality knew loneliness and sadness at being 12 miles from anywhere. I have always remembered when we returned from the shipyards on the 4th of April 1890, my brother and I, on arriving home, our good father who was waiting for us impatiently, upon seeing us, cried Mon Dieu (My God), my little boys whom I have missed so much. He held our hands and didn't stop saying how he was so happy to see us and he wept hot tears, our poor father, he was pitiful. I have never forgotten that moment.

In the month of January 1890, on the 21st day, we heard the first Mass. M. le Cure of St Felicien, Rev M. Jos Girard, Priest, was the first missionary parish priest and where papa was leaving from this parish it was quite reasonable to have him visit. Therefore it was my father who received, under our poor roof, the first missionary priest, and it was a great honor, because these first colonists were men of faith and they loved their missionary and his visit.

This first Mass was said in the home of Eugene Belanger in a small log camp covered in flagstone which had a very miserable appearance. The inside was also quite poor, a few chairs and other furniture made by hand. It was this poor table, on which the family took their meals, which served as altar where our Lord Jesus Christ deigned to come down to encourage and bless this new colony at its beginnings.

The Spring and summer of 1890 were quiet enough, a bit of construction of new roads necessary to the colonization and the construction of the first sawmill. It pleased us to see arrive during that summer, M. Balarmand Audet dit Lapointe of St Prime who came to build a small sawmill which got its power from the Salmon River (Riviere au Saumon). On number one of the sixth subdivision of land by Dufferin, they built a small dam and a mill. You had to see this construction in the middle of the woods. It was all built of logs, such as those used for building dams, and flagstones stuffed with moss. The machinery was also very simple, two frames, one to remove two layers of bark from the pine and the other with a few saws to cut into boards. Know well that this small mill was for the colonists at that time a great utility, because, before this installation, we had to make our own boards and our roofs with axes. All the people were happy as this was progress for us.

¹Reprinted from the Souvenir Album "Rassemblement des Belanger", Beauport-L'Ange Gardien, Samedi, 19 Juillet 1980 published by la Societe de Conservation du Patrimoine Culterel des Belanger, Ltee.

²Loosely translated into English by Jim Belanger. No attempt was made to change sentence structure into proper English and the original French structure is kept.

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In the Autumn, at the demand of the missionary, we had to consider building a small chapel. The government, at the request of the religious authorities, had given a half lot for the building. A half lot northwest of number 7 of the sixth subdivision of Dufferin. Then the four families of the time and M. Louis Pare, who was not yet a resident but helped a lot with this new construction, had to start by removing their first trees on the property to site the new church and as these poor colonists didn't have the money, they had to ask other parishes for materials like windows, glass, nails and shingles. After 17 days of work from these generous colonists, the chapel of our good Lord was ready to receive the people. It was of logs and measured 20 by 30 feet, a small peak, without floor upstairs, it was blessed by the Rev M. Jos Girard, Priest, who took possession with pleasure. The first sale of pews also occurred that day, giving the congregation a revenue of eleven dollars and 25 cents. The first collection of the Infant Jesus had also produced, that year, the sum of 3 dollars and one cent.

Now that the chapel was blessed, the parish priest made an appeal to the people who were of a small number, to form a choir. Two responded to his request. Mr. Joseph Coulombe, a trustee, and Philippe Belanger. Finally these two singers began with the 40 hours devotion exercise, something very difficult for beginners. Mr. Jos Coulombe knew music a little and the other not at all. This Mr. Coulombe, who had a jovial character as those who knew him could tell you, said to his choir companion, "I do not know a word of Latin, so you read the Latin and I will hum the tune". This gives us an idea of the choir that they had then.

This was the way things went in 1890. Lack of necessities existed everywhere. The 4th of August saw, after all the formalities, the election of 3 trustees who were the three first colonists; Eugene Belanger, Paul Belanger and Joseph Coulombe.

Damase & Georgiana Pelletier had seven children.

- 1➤ Alice who married Roy Viateur dit Lauzier on 2 October 1900.
- 2➤ Arthur (1873-1957) who married Laura Pelletier on 10 July 1900.
- 3➤ Alvine who married Ciriaque St. Pierre on 13 February 1888.
- 4➤ Alma
- 5➤ Lucien (1869-1939) who married to Parmella Leda Gagnon 26 October 1887 at L'Isle Verte, Que.
- 6➤ Joseph (1869-1939) who married Reine Arseneault on 16 April 1888.
- 7➤ George (1870-1958) who married Amanda Alexina Masse on 17 July 1894 and Angelina Pelletier on 5 October 1914.

It is interesting to note that Lucien named many of his children after his brothers and sisters.

Family Group Record

Page 1

Husband Damase Belanger		
Birth	27 May 1830	St Andre, Kamouraska, Que
Chr	28 May 1830	St Andre, Kamouraska, Que
Residence	2 Oct 1900	St Alexandre when Alice married Viateur Roy-Lauzier
Death	5 May 1927	St Alexandre, Kamouraska, Que
Burial	7 May 1927	St Alexandre, Kamouraska, Que
Marriage	22 Jul 1862	St Pascal, Kamouraska, Que
Father	Joseph Marie Belanger (b 4 Apr 1797)	
Mother	Baselisse Dufour	
Other spouse	Emma Nadeau (m 21 Apr 1884)	
Wife Georgiana Modeste Pelletier		
Birth	10 Jan 1842	St Pascal, Kamouraska, Que
Chr	10 Jan 1842	St Pascal, Kamouraska, Que
Death	31 Oct 1882	St Alexandre, Kamouraska, Que
Burial	2 Nov 1882	St Alexandre, Kamouraska, Que
Father	Pierre Pelletier	
Mother	Marie Bard	
Children		
1 F	Alice Belanger	
	Spouse Roy Viateur dit Lauzier (m 2 Oct 1900)	
2 M	Arthur Belanger	
	Birth	abt 1873
	Burial	2 Jan 1957 St Pascal, Kamouraska, Que
	Death	abt 2 Jan 1957 St Pascal, Kamouraska, Que
	Spouse Laura Pelletier (m 10 Jul 1900)	
3 F	Alvine Belanger	
	Spouse Cyriaque St Pierre (m 13 Feb 1888)	
4 F	Alma Belanger	
5 M	Lucien Belanger	
	Chr	1868
	Birth	26 Oct 1868 St Pascal, Kamouraska, Que
	Burial	1939 Grand Falls, Victoria, NB
	Death	18 Apr 1939 Grand Falls, Victoria, NB
	Spouse Parmella "Leda" Gagnon (m 26 Oct 1887)	
6 M	Joseph Belanger	
	Birth	1869
	Death	1939
	Spouse Reine Arseneault (m 16 Apr 1888)	
7 M	George Belanger	
	Birth	1870
	Death	1958 St Alexandre, Kamouraska, Que
	Burial	1958 St Alexandre, Kamouraska, Que
	Spouse Angelina Pelletier (m 5 Oct 1914)	
	Spouse Amanda Alexina Masse (m 17 Jul 1894)	
Prepared 25 Oct 1997 by: Jim Belanger 32 Plain Road Hollis, NH 03049 603 465-2301		Comments:

Pedigree Chart

Chart no. _____

No. 1 on this chart is the same as no. _____ on chart no. _____

2 Joseph Marie Belanger

B: 4 Apr 1797
P: St Roch des Aulnaies, L'Islet, Que
M: 12 Jun 1820
P: St Roch des Aulnaies, L'Islet, Que
D: 22 Nov 1884
P: St Alexandre, Kamouraska, Que

1 Damase Belanger

B: 27 May 1830
P: St Andre, Kamouraska, Que
M: 22 Jul 1862
P: St Pascal, Kamouraska, Que
D: 5 May 1927
P: St Alexandre, Kamouraska, Que

Georgiana Modeste Pelletier

Spouse

3 Baselisse Dufour

B:
P:
D:
P:

4 Pierre Belanger

B: 2 Mar 1759
P: Montmagny, Que
M: 18 Jun 1781
P: St Roch des Aulnaies, L'Islet, Que
D: 17 Mar 1834
P: St Roch des Aulnaies, L'Islet, Que

5 Marthe Talbot-Gervais

B: 10 Sep 1764
P: St Roch des Aulnaies, L'Islet, Que
D:
P:

6 Pierre Dufour

B: 9 Jan 1769
P: Ile Aux Coudres, Charlevoix, Que
M: 29 Apr 1792
P: Ile Aux Coudres, Charlevoix, Que
D:
P:

7 M Josette Audet dit Lapointe

B: 17 Aug 1773
P:
D:
P:

8 Ignace Belanger

B: 8 Feb 1723
P: Charlesbourg, Quebec, Que
M: 14 Nov 1746
P: St Vallier, Bellechasse, Que
D: 21 Jan 1797
P: Montmagny, Que

9 M Genevieve Gagne

B:
P:
D:
P:

10 Pierre Talbot-Gervais

B:
P:
M: 12 Jul 1763
P: St Roch des Aulnaies, L'Islet, Que
D:
P:

11 M Marthe Pelletier

B: 6 Jun 1745
P: St Roch des Aulnaies, L'Islet, Que
D:
P:

12 Gabriel Dufour

B:
P:
M: 9 Jun 1756
P: St Jean, Isle Orleans, Que
D:
P:

13 Madeleine Boissonnault

B: 7 Oct 1737
P: St Jean, Isle Orleans, Que
D:
P:

14 Pierre Audet dit Lapointe

B: 14 May 1736
P: St Jean, Isle Orleans, Que
M: 8 Oct 1764
P: Ile Aux Coudres, Charlevoix, Que
D:
P:

15 Madeleine Louise Bouchard

B: abt 16 Apr 1743
P: Ile Aux Coudres, Charlevoix, Que
D:
P:

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Pedigree Chart

Chart no. _____

No. 1 on this chart is the same as no. _____ on chart no. _____

2 Pierre Pelletier

B:
P:
M: 28 Nov 1837
P: St Pascal, Kamouraska, Que
D:
P:

1 Georgiana Modeste Pelletier

B: 10 Jan 1842
P: St Pascal, Kamouraska, Que
M: 22 Jul 1862
P: St Pascal, Kamouraska, Que
D: 31 Oct 1882
P: St Alexandre, Kamouraska, Que

Damase Belanger

Spouse

3 Marie Bard

B:
P:
D:
P:

4 Germain Pelletier

B:
P:
M: 8 Feb 1796
P: St Roch des Aulnaies, L'Islet, Que
D:
P:

5 M Theotiste Lizotte

B:
P:
D:
P:

6 Fabien Bard dit Jambard

B:
P:
M: 11 Jan 1813
P: Riviere Ouelle, Kamouraska, Que
D:
P:

7 Marie Lavoie

B:
P:
D:
P:

8 Pierre Pelletier

B: cont. _____
P:
M: 27 Jun 1757
P: Kamouraska, Kamouraska, Que
D:
P:

9 M Madeleine Lebel

B: 2 Mar 1734 cont. _____
P: Kamouraska, Kamouraska, Que
D:
P:

10 Francois Lizotte

B: 7 Oct 1735 cont. _____
P: St Anne de la Pocatiere, Kamouraska, Que
M: 9 Jan 1764
P: St Anne de la Pocatiere, Kamouraska, Que
D:
P:

11 Lse Miville dit Deschesnes

B: cont. _____
P:
D:
P:

12 Auguste Jeanbard

B: cont. _____
P:
M: 10 Jan 1780
P: Riviere Ouelle, Kamouraska, Que
D:
P:

13 Modeste Levesque

B: cont. _____
P:
D:
P:

14 Charles Delavoie

B: 7 Nov 1739 cont. _____
P: Charlevoix, Que (St Francois Xavier)
M: 4 Nov 1766
P: Montmorency, Quebec
D:
P:

15 Madeleine Pare

B: 3 Sep 1741 cont. _____
P: St Joachim, Montmorency, Que
D:
P:

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