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Special Note for School Projects

Many primary schools now assign projects where students are asked to prepare a report about their family history. I've received many requests for help with these projects and I'm always glad to assist. This family history will be a big help in preparing those projects. The Vermette family lived, and often participated in, many interesting and historically important events.

If you are descended from the Vermette line for instance, you are related to Barbe Menard, our first female ancestor on the North American continent. Barbe was a 16 year-old French girl from La Rochelle, France, whose parents were Huguenots. Huguenots were early followers of John Calvin, a follower of Martin Luther and a founder of what is now the Protestant church. Barbe later converted to Catholicism and in 1649, she volunteered to travel by ship to France's new colony in Quebec, Canada, then known as New France. Soon after her arrival, she married Antoine Vermet dit Laforme, a farmer who arrived there from northern France in about 1665. The colony of New France was established to compete with the British settlement of the American colonies to the south. In 1649, not much was known about the new world (North and South America) and it must have taken enormous courage for a young woman to make a journey into the unknown. It's been estimated that 85% of all French Canadians are related to the approximately 775 brave young women who journeyed to the new world to start their families. These brave women became known as "Fille du Rois" ("Daughters of the King") because king of France, Louis XIV, provided them a dowry to start their marriage in the new world.

If you are descended from our Lalonde branch of the family, you may be interested to know that you are descended from a Sarah Allen. When Sarah was just 12 years old in 1704, she was captured during a French and Indian raid on her home town of Deerfield, Massachusetts. At that time, Deerfield was a Puritan settlement at the northern edge of the American colonies. Along with other captives, Sarah was taken to New France (Montreal) and lived with a French family until she married Guillaume Lalonde. Guillaume's father, Jean de Lalonde dit L'Esperance, was a soldier who arrived in New France in 1665 to protect the early colonists from attacks by the Indians. The Lalondes played a significant role in settling what is now Quebec, Canada and in exploring the lands to the west. Through Sarah Allen, the Lalondes are related to English sea captains and early Puritan colonists who arrived in North America in 1634, only 15 years after the original Puritan settlers arrived at Plymouth Rock. An ancestor of all Lalondes, Captain George Lamberton (1604-1645), was the subject of the poem "The Phantom Ship" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

These stories, and others, are fully described in the Private Family History section. If you'd like to know what your exact relationship was to anyone in the family tree, contact me and I'd be glad to provide a full personal family tree for you.

Family history is more than just the summary of the bare facts about when people lived and died. It is a story about people and their struggle to survive and raise families. We can only begin to imagine the challenges they faced. As you read the history of our family, imagine yourself living in their time and place and think about how you would face those challenges.