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THE STORY OF NICOLAS 1638 - 1682

**Ancestral Home of Nicolas said to be at 600 Ave Royale,
Beauport, Quebec**

SUMMARY

Nicolas Bellanger reportedly originated from the parish of Saint Thomas in the town of Touques in Normandy. Touques is a small port at the bottom of the Touques estuary in the Calvados region, District of Lisieux. From his reported age for the census of 1666, 1667 and 1681 he must have been born between 1632 and 1637 and, as a young man, became accomplished in the salt trade. He is found in New France around 1658 employed by the merchant Francois Perron. He soon found that the salt trade was not going to earn him a living in New France, as it might have in Europe, so he became a fisherman and farmer. On 12 November 1659 he contracted to marry Marie de Rainville, daughter of Paul and Rolline Poete, who was also born in Saint Thomas of Touques. The marriage was celebrated on the following January 11th. They settled at Beauport, perhaps to live with the Rainville family from whom he acquired some farm land on 10 February 1661. This farm had been given to Paul de Rainville as a concession from Robert Giffard in 1655. They increased their land holdings by adding another farm acquired from Joseph Giffard in 1668 and later another in the parish of Saint Michel. In 1681, Nicolas and Marie settled in Beauport with 10 children. They had lost two sons from the original 12 children. Theirs was a successful farm with 41 arpents in value and ten head of cattle. Nicolas was buried in Beauport on 20 October 1682 and Marie deRainville followed him in November 1711.

BEAUPORT

The village of Beauport received its name from Samuel de Champlain. Champlain was a sea going explorer and had found a port in Massachusetts which he dearly loved and named Beauport about 1606. This port was renamed as Gloucester by the English in 1620. In 1613 Champlain had been to Quebec to what is now called Beauport. The bay with its mountains had reminded him of the province of Biscaye which he had seen in Spain when he served with the army of Henry the 4th, King of France. He named our Beauport "Nouvelle Biscaye". When the Company of 100 Associates was given this land in 1634, they were not pleased that one of their possessions was named after a Spanish province since France was at war with Spain. The name was again changed from Nouvelle Biscaye to Beauport which must have pleased Champlain since there were many similarities between Beauport and Gloucester, Massachusetts. Beauport was split up and renamed several times before it finally was again named Beauport, which means beautiful port. Having this name would lead one to believe that the center of activity might have been associated with the sea but this was certainly not the case with Beauport. Although the river was extensively used for transportation, the region was mostly settled by merchants and farmers. The area was quickly growing in population and it soon became obvious that a doctor was needed to serve the people. Robert Giffard left France and came to New France to become Beauport's first doctor in 1621. By all accounts, it appears Robert Giffard was born around 1587 so he would have been 34 years of age when he made the crossing. Since the Indian chiefs of the region refused to allow him to marry one of the Indian girls, Robert decided to

return to France, in 1627, and seek a mate. He met and married Marie Renouard in February 1628 at Mortagne. He was 41 and she was 28. A few months later he left, by himself, to return to New France with the first group sent over by the Company of 100 Associates.

Robert Giffard conveyed title to a lot of land in his Seigneurie, most of which had to be cleared of trees. The area was mostly forest land and clearing was done by oxen as the first horse was not to arrive in New France until 1665. The seigneurial Manor was built next to the Beauport river and close to the St Lawrence river. His manor had rooms which could serve as a chapel, a court room and even a cell for prisoners. Since the neighboring Seigneurie of Notre Dame des Anges was owned by the Jesuits, who were not obliged to build a manor, a mill nor clear the forest, Robert Giffard took on that task as part of his labors. As a result, Robert really had two Seigneuries. Because he spent his time being a surgeon, and not a farmer, he quickly conceded many farms to censitaires so that they could get on with the job of clearing land, growing crops and inviting others to settle there.

The territory which today is named Beauport was split up into several other communities by religious parishes and municipal boundaries. Finally, on 1 January 1976 the townships of Courville, Giffard, Montmorency, Sainte Therese de Lisieux, Saint Michel Archange and Villeneuve were joined under one municipal government and became Beauport, once again. After almost three hundred years, the city of Beauport was once again comprised of almost all the original land that had been named Beauport before. During this period, Beauport had seen many battles as it was a good place for troops to land who were attempting to capture Quebec. The guardians of the river bank at Beauport (farmers and merchants) never allowed their lines to be penetrated and several battles with the English ended in utter defeat to those who tried to access Quebec through the shores of Beauport.

SOVEREIGN COUNCIL

The system of Royal Government lasted for ninety-seven years and was administered by a "Sovereign Council". Almost every aspect of a citizen's life was regulated by the council. It controlled how much profit one could make on sales, what price was placed on goods and it made rules controlling agriculture and industry. The council even acted as a high court by hearing cases and punishing offenders. The council was composed of three very important members, the Governor, the Intendant and the Bishop. It met every Monday morning at seven to deal with the work at hand. The Governor had the responsibility of defense and negotiating with the Indians. The Intendant dealt with trade, industry and the daily living issues for the Colony. The Bishop was responsible for the religious life, the missions, the schools and the hospitals. New France's first and greatest Bishop was Francois de Laval, a son of one of France's oldest families. His biggest goal was to make the church the most powerful influence in the life of the colony. He devoted his every effort at this, often traveling great distances by canoe and on snowshoes. He was greatly responsible for the termination of the sale of brandy to the Indians and was severely criticized by the fur traders for this. They felt that, without brandy, their trade for furs was nearly impossible. The church felt that brandy caused "great mind disruptions in the Indians" and vowed to stop this evil. The Royal Government brought stability to the region and was responsible for bringing in six hundred seasoned troops, the Carignan-Salieres Regiment. This Regiment, led by the Marquis de Tracy, were all experienced fighters from France. In 1666, these troops and other citizens, totaling about thirteen hundred men, turned the tide against the Mohawk tribe of the Iroquois nation. The Sovereign Council worked much in the same way as the courts of today. It was very slow in rendering some judgments and then, when it did, it often did not enforce them. This seemed especially true when it dealt with debts. Many judgments were granted but few ever collected on them. Crimes such as adultery, prostitution, incest, sodomy, attempted suicide and rape were punished by banishment from a village. Those banished from the community were sometimes publicly flogged if they failed to stay away from the village.

Perhaps because the residents of New France remembered the horrible punishments handed out in France for crimes, they tempered their punishment standards considerably. In New France, punishment was rather lenient for the same crimes that would have brought about cutting off one's hand, hanging, beheading and life imprisonment in France. In France, some crimes demanded a person's hand be cut off before he or she was put to death. In New France, this crime was punished by cutting off the hand after the individual offender had been put to death. Tongue piercing was a form of punishment dealt out to the robber for a first offense. These offenders might be surprised if they could see the teens of today with rings in their tongues! It seems that the most popular punishment for crimes was branding. Branding was done by burning an offender's flesh in different manners to indicate to all that this person had committed a crime. The most widely used brand was the 'fleur de lys' and was generally done on the shoulder. Although this was the most popular brand, there were variations. A robber might be branded with a "V" to indicate 'Voleur', an "M" (maquerelle) was branded on pimps, "F" for forgery, "D" for deserters, "T" for limited hard labor crimes (travail defini) and "TP" for life sentences at hard labor (travail perpetuel). A second letter was added for second offenders. Although that practice was popular, the custom of branding in the open palm was also widely used. This method of branding, in the case of women, was quickly discontinued in favor of the 'fleur de lys' on the shoulder, however. There is a theory that, raising one's hand with an open palm to take an oath may have had much to do with the practice of branding an open palm for all to see.

1650 - 1660 More Iroquois

During the period 1650 to 1660, the Iroquois menace threatened the very existence of the Quebec settlement. Nicolas and his family lived under this constant threat. The Iroquois were obviously becoming too powerful for the French as well as for the other Indian nations. In the early Spring of 1660 a huge force of Iroquois set out to destroy Montreal, Three Rivers and Quebec. They had one hundred canoes loaded with men and arms and set out down the river north of Montreal. Word of this large attack reached Montreal and Adam Dollard, with a mere sixteen companions, set up a "pallisade" (a fence made of boards) on the Ottawa River at the Long Sault Rapids. Dollard and his companions enlisted the help of forty friendly Indians and this small band held the advancing Iroquois back for a week. Hand to hand combat resulted in which all of Dollard's party died. This small party inflicted such a physical and psychological blow to the advancing party that they didn't have the will to continue their original plans. My uncle Dollard Belanger may have been named after this Quebec hero, Adam Dollard.

OUR ROOTS IN BEAUPORT 1655

The exact date of Nicolas' arrival in New France is not known. His name appears in the records of the Seigneurie of Beauport on 15 October 1655 as owner of a piece of land consisting of one arpent and 61 rods. It is here, in the actual research of genealogists, that the first mention is found of our ancestor on an official document of the colony. The second mention was found on a paper dated 28 September 1658 before the notary Audouart where Nicolas made a claim against Michel Desorcys.

1659

On 12 November 1659, we find Nicolas Bellanger and his future wife, Marie de Rainville, before Paul Vachon, Royal Notary in the Seigneurie and Jurisdiction of Beauport and Prevoste of Notre Dame des Anges, to draw up their marriage contract in the presence of witnesses, relatives and friends, which was the custom. This contract reveals that the intended couple were natives of the Parish of St Thomas de Touques, in Normandy. It states that Nicolas was master of his trade and that the parents of his fiancée were Paul de Rainville and Rolline Poette. The parents of Nicolas are not mentioned and the spelling of his family name is Bellanger, which corresponds to the most widespread pronunciation of the times.

1660

Nicolas and Marie were married on Sunday 11 January 1660 in the presence of father Paul Ragueneaux of the Company of Jesus in the chapel of the high manor. This is where religious services were performed by

visiting priests performing parish functions since Beauport was not yet a parish. The contract of marriage, which was written in the records of the mother parish (Notre Dame de Quebec), also does not mention the names of the parents of Nicolas. The custom of the times was that one always gave the names of his or her parents whenever legal documents were prepared. This was especially true of marriage contracts and it is not known why Nicolas never seemed to give the name of his parents in all of these transactions. These omissions continually keep us from linking Nicolas to his parents and reinforces a theory that he may have been the illegitimate son of Francois and Marie Guyon. Nicolas and Marie settled in Beauport and raised 12 children. Father Archange Godbout, O.F.M. (noted genealogist), has researched several names of Bellanger in the records of St Thomas de Touques between the period of 1628-1657.

Here are some: Jacques, Jean, Hector, Louis, Robert, Marguerite, Francoise, Marie and Catherine. Note here, the name Catherine which was a dit name for Nicolas. Although this is a clue, it is impossible to establish any certain lineage with Nicolas. Catherine may have been the mother or grandmother of Nicolas. It was the custom of the day to name boys after their godfather and girls after their godmother. It was the priest who added Joseph or Marie to their names at baptism.

Professional Activities 1664

In the marriage contract, Nicolas is said to be a master salt maker. During that time, in New France, that title designated a dealer in salt. Salt was used in the curing of fish and meat and someone who supplied that commodity was in demand in France but, not so much so in New France. In the deliberations of the Sovereign Council on 9 February 1664, a man named Desorcys testified that "Bellanger had caught and furnished Codfish" on 20 October 1659 and that he had been known as a Cod Fisherman since then. This paragraph certainly confirms that Nicolas was a fisherman by trade. Now, five years later, (8 November 1664) Nicolas Bellanger, Pierre Lefebvre and Leonard Leblanc were summoned before the Sovereign Council in a matter of rights to fish. The defendants were ordered to pay, to the clerk of the court, taxes which they owed for fishing rights on the coast of Lauzon. From this information we conclude that Nicolas was into fishing for a living and that he must have come to that occupation from his past experience reclaiming salt from the ocean waters. It seems only natural that someone who came from France with knowledge of the salt trade would turn to fishing even in a predominantly farming community. The two trades would have been complimentary businesses at this time. On 1 February 1664 Nicolas again appeared before the sovereign council. This time he was appealing a judgment which ordered him to pay some past debts of his own and to pay some outstanding debts for a friend of his. It seems that Nicolas had co-signed a note for a friend who had since passed away. Daniel Suyre had attached the goods of Nicolas for payment of this debt since Nicolas had obligated himself, by co-signing, before the notary Audouart on 28 September 1658. So Nicolas was faced with two debts to pay. The first, his own, was for 302 livres, 6 sols and the one for his friend was for 221 livres. Nicolas claimed that some of this debt had previously been paid and that his should now be reduced to 70 livres and the second to 48 livres, 7 sols, 6 deniers. Nicolas said he had paid on his debt with money from an inheritance he received from Roger Dorre. Nicolas asked to be dismissed as a debtor on the debt of his friend since he was merely a co-signer and the principal party had passed away. On 9 February 1664, Nicolas returned to the sovereign council with documents to prove that his own previous debts had been paid in November 1659 and the entire matter was dismissed.

1665

By 1665, the Iroquois were raiding French villages and slaughtering the villagers. France's best troops (what our Green Beret's are to us today) of the time were the Carignan-Salieres Regiment. King Louis XIV sent 1200 of these French troops to quell the Indians. They accomplished their task within 2 years and the countryside became peaceful for a time. About 800 of these men returned to France but the remaining 400 stayed in New France. The officers were enticed to stay by being offered concessions of seigneuries (fiefs of many square miles) and the enlisted troops received concessions of rotures under the very officers they had served for. Many of these soldiers married the "Daughters of the King".

1667

At the time of the census of 1667 Nicolas (at age 29) was recorded as owning 2 cattle and 12 arpents of land as his net worth. Fourteen years later, at the census of 1681, Nicolas owned one gun, 10 cattle and his farm at Beauport was worth 41 arpents of cultivated and pasture land. He may have had additional un-cleared land but, as you may remember, un-cleared land was "worthless". This increase of 30 arpents in area signified an average of 2 arpents per year which represented an enormous accomplishment considering the means at their disposal for clearing land in the 17th century. It seems Nicolas may have turned to farming around 1670 in order to provide his family with a more dependable income than fishing. Nicolas may have owned, for a few years, a farm designated "number 16" in the land survey register number 46 of the parish of St Pierre de L'Isle d'Orleans. It is important, later, to remember that Nicolas owned property on the Island of Orleans. In a contract from Charles de Lauzon of Charny to Antoine Poulet presented before notary Paul Vachon on 4 November 1662 Nicolas Bellanger was mentioned as neighbor. In the census of 1666 he is still neighbor to Poulet but in 1667 his farm was owned by Laurent Benoist.

DON'T FENCE ME IN ! 1669 - 1673

On 23 July 1669, Marie Regnouard, the widow of Robert Giffard, and Joseph Giffard of Beauport, filed an action before the sovereign council against Nicholas (sic) Bellanger, Paul deRainville and all farmers of the village of Fargy. She claimed that fences along common property lines between the farms had been removed. The complainant wanted the fences rebuilt to prevent future problems with subsequent owners.

On 16 January 1673, Nicolas and other farmers appeared before the sovereign council as witnesses for Jean Galloup who was appealing his case with regard to fences. This case had been heard and ruled on by the Seigneur of Beauport on 16 May 1672 in which the farmers were made to erect fences, at their own expense. They had also been ordered to pay 5 livres to the church of Beauport building fund, 3 livres for bail fee, 4 livres for witness fees and 5 livres for the judge's vacation. The sovereign council upheld the order and demanded that all property in the village of Fargy would be fenced in by the owners.

A WITNESS TO NICOLAS - 1673

A little white house with a high pitched roof, located at 600 Avenue Royale in Beauport, was built by or for Nicolas Bellanger on land granted to him by the Lord Joseph Giffard on 24 January 1673. This land grant had been recorded before the notary Paul Vachon when Nicolas was 35 and had 7 living children. The original house was built of stone and measured 22 by 20 feet with a stone foundation. This house was passed on to Pierre, a son of Nicolas, around 1700. Pierre lived there for about 20 years and then sold it to a family named Marcou. The house is now known by the name of its first and last resident (Mr. Girardin) as the Bellanger/Girardin house. After Mr. Girardin, the house was eventually sold to the Sisters of the Congregation by the last owner, Mr. Michel Dufresne. It was Mr. Dufresne who was later successful in saving this historic site from being demolished. The house is completely restored, today, and is operated by the Canadian government for exhibits. It is open to visitors and, should you go visit the home, ask the employees to show you the video tape of the restoration. This tape is not always in the player but is available for viewing upon request.

THE CHURCH IN BEAUPORT - 1676

Nicolas is one of the censitaires who relinquished their rights to 6 acres of their land so it could be used to build a church. The land was given to the "Church Council of Beauport" (Fabrique de Beauport) and this was recorded in a notarized document presented before Paul Vachon on 14 June 1676. In gratitude, the deacons promised to have said, in perpetuity, an annual mass on the day after the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary for the intention of these generous and devout parishioners. At the writing of this document, this expression of recognition had long been forgotten. In 1676, Nicolas got into trouble with Therese Leblanc, the wife of Doctor Piere Lavallee, his neighbor. The exact nature of the trouble is not known.

Judge Bailly, in Beauport, rendered two judgments in the case against Nicolas. One judgment was imposed on 8 August and the other on 12 August. He was to deliver a pastry or bread to Jeanne Langlois, wife of Rene Chevalier. This pastry was to be distributed among the poor families of the parish and, if it was not done, Nicolas was to pay a fine of ten livres. In addition, Nicolas had to pay the court costs or suffer the loss of one of his cows. Nicolas fought these judgments and, on 17 August 1676, appealed to the Sovereign Council. The Council combined the judgments and came up with one which was more fitting of the crime. They ordered Nicolas to pay Therese Leblanc the sum of three livres for damages and interest for half the value of the porcupine in question and expenses were reduced to six livres. (JDCS, 1676 T.p.24-25) It is hard to imagine a problem arising over a porcupine or the value of one. However, if one does not interpret the wording too literally, the word porcupine might have been used as a slang expression meaning "a sticky situation". It is so sad that the original legal documents of the Seigneurie of Beauport cannot be found because they deny us the background on these actions.

THE DEATH OF NICOLAS - 1682

Nicolas died on 19 October 1682 at the age of 50. His oldest son, Bertrand Pierre, was 19 and his youngest daughter had just turned 1. One son had died very young (just days old), another had died before 1681 and one daughter, Marthe, was married. This left 9 children still living at home.

THE DEATH CERTIFICATE

Nicolas Bellanger was buried the 20th day of October 1682 in the cemetery at Beauport. He was 50 years of age and had died the day before. Assisting at the burial were Rene Remy, notary Paul Vachon and Jean de Rainville (brother-in-law of the deceased) who all signed the record except for Jean de Rainville. Rene Remy, notary Paul Vachon and Charles A. Martin, priest, signed with initials.

MARIE de RAINVILLE

The birth of Nicolas' wife, Marie de Rainville, has not been traced. She was probably born at Touques around 1645 because at her death on 6 November 1711, she was said to be 66 years old. If this birth year is correct, she would have been 14 or 15 years old when she married and was a young widow of 37 with 9 children still at home. At the celebration of the first baptism in the church of Beauport on 12 March 1673, she was godmother to Pierre, the son of Pierre Rondeau and Jeanne Perusseau.

Marie must have been a feisty young woman who didn't allow her neighbors the upper edge. She was not afraid to fight for her rights, as she saw them, even if it involved litigation, as shown by the following account. On 9 July 1695 a neighbor complained to the Lieutenant General of Quebec, Pierre Morel. He stated that Marie de Rainville killed and kept his chickens that had strayed onto her property. The complaint was recorded and a royal bailiff ordered the widow Bellanger to appear within 8 weeks before the Lieutenant General. The judgment rendered is not known and it leads one to wonder if she was guilty or not? This was not a strange incident as, at the beginning of the Colony, the courts heard many complaints resulting from damage by stray domestic animals. They also had strict rules about property rights and it is thought that, had Marie received a judgment against her, it would have been recorded. From this we can assume that nothing became of the complaint. She must have played on the sympathy of the Lieutenant General. No account of the matter appears in the records of the Sovereign Council.

RECORD OF BURIAL OF MARIE de RAINVILLE

Marie de Rainville, widow of Nicolas Bellanger of Beauport, was buried in the cemetery of the area on 7 November 1711. She was said to have died suddenly, the preceding day, at the approximate age of 66. Paul Bellanger, Jean Parent and several others of the area, as well as the Priest Boullard, were present at the burial.

CONTRACT OF MARRIAGE

NICOLAS BELLANGER & MARIE de RAINVILLE

[Note: This is long and probably boring but is presented simply to show you an example of the documents of that era]

Paul Vachon, Royal Notary, 12 November 1659

Before us, Paul Vachon, Notary in the Seigneurie and jurisdiction of Beauport and Provost of Notre Dame des Anges and undersigned witnesses present in person, appeared Paul de Rainville and Rolline Poette, presently living on the coast of Beauport in the parish of Quebec. Those present were informed that Rolline Poette, as the wife of Paul de Rainville, was authorized to speak for her husband and for their daughter, Marie de Rainville, with her consent and also on behalf of Nicolas Bellanger, of the parish of St Thomas of Touques in the Province of Normandy. These parties, of their own free will, acknowledge and confess having made an agreement and promise of marriage by which the following is known that the said Paul de Rainville and his said wife promise to give the hand of their said daughter in marriage to Nicolas Bellanger who promises to take her as his wife. The said girl promises to take him for her husband and spouse and the said marriage is to be performed and solemnized in the Roman Catholic & Apostolic Church as soon as it is possible to do so and that this will be announced and discussed among their relatives and friends so that no legitimate hindrance between them can intervene and God and our Mother the Church consents and agrees for them to be one in common in all goods, tangible and intangible, acquired following the custom of Paris in favor of the future marriage and so that it may succeed, the future bride will bring the sum of three hundred livres at which amount her goods, tangible and intangible, have been estimated between the said parties. The future bride will be dowried of three hundred livres, which dowry was determined in advance in order to one time pay back the survivor who will be reciprocated in the amount of three hundred livres should the future bride bring about the dissolution of the said marriage, renounce to the community and in so doing take back that which she will have attained with her said future husband these dowries and survivorship that which above beyond and all that which during and unchanging the said marriage will have come about and expired by inheritance or gift and otherwise the whole sincerely and abandoned without paying any debts of the said community yet to which she is still obligated and sentenced. And again in favor of the present marriage the future spouses for the good cordial and sincere love which they have for one another and in which they hope to continue by the grace of God they make themselves by these presents irrevocable gifts between the living and the survivor of the two of each and all goods, furniture and real estate whatever in general belongs to them presently of their own and acquired even of all these which thereafter could fall due and appertain while their acquired property which otherwise in some kinds of places and situations in which they will find themselves situated to enjoy by the survivor in field property and to use like things that belong to him, provided that on the day of the dissolution of the said marriage there are not any living children of the two. Therefore these are the points and conditions agreed upon in the presence of Master Michel de Soises, merchant living in Quebec and of Rene Chevalier, mason, living in the village of Fargy at said Beauport, namely on the part of the said future groom, relatives and friends of the said future groom and also on the part of the said future bride as witnessed by her father and her mother and her brothers and her sister, by Jean de Rainville oldest brother of the said bride and by Charles de Rainville her brother and by Marthe de Rainville sister of the said future bride and also by Jean Lehoux and by Elizabeth Dragon and all relatives and friends of the said future bride.

Because the above was accomplished between the promising parties and each waived their rights and this was done and witnessed in the house of Jean Juchereau, seigneur of the village where the said Paul de Rainville and his said wife presently reside and also the said future bride, this 12th day of November 1659 in the presence of the above named witnesses who have signed with us, except for the said wife of the said de Rainville and their said daughter and of Jean de Rainville and of Charles de Rainville and of Marthe de Rainville and of Elizabeth Dragon, all of these have declared not knowing how to sign when asked by the Notary following the ordinance.

ACT OF MARRIAGE

The year of grace 1660 finds, the 11th day of January, after betrothal and publication of the banns for three continuous days before the Masses of the parish and not having discovered any legitimate hindrances and having been questioned by father Paul Raguenu of the Compagnie-de-Jesus by Permission of Jean Torpacel, Pastor, Nicolas Bellanger and Marie de Rainville presently living in this parish. And their mutual consent taken by their solemn words presently joins in marriage and gives the nuptial benediction in the presence of the witnesses Jean de Louison Seneschal and Jean Guyon dit du Buisson esquire.

Descendants

Nicolas and Marie de Rainville had 12 children.

Jean was born 31 December 1660 and died 22 January 1661.

Marthe was born 23 November 1661, married Etienne Souet on 07 April 1682 and died 18 March 1741.

Pierre Bertrand was born 13 September 1663, married Madeleine Chevaudiere 13 August 1703. Pierre had also married M Catherine Gignard on 23 February 1694. He died 19 April 1736.

Suzanne was born 01 March 1665, married Jean Giroux 12 February 1686 and died 27 February 1707.

Martin was born 24 November 1666 and died between 1667/1681.

Marie was born 19 October 1668, married Jacques Parant 09 November 1705 and died 07 January 1719.

Pierre was born 12 March 1670, married Marguerite DeLaunay 08 February 1700 and died 02 March 1703.

Nicolas (our ancestor) was born 12 January 1672, married Marie Magnan 02 November 1699 and died 12 April 1742.

Paul was born 24 March 1674, married Jeanne Maheu 07 April 1704 and died 01 May 1717.

Marie Therese was born 1675, married Jean Premont 28 June 1709 and died 12 June 1710.

Marie was born in 1678 and married Joseph Parent in February 1696.

Marie Francoise was born 13 October 1680, married Jean Parant February 1696 and died 20 June 1746.

Because of the uncertainty of the parents and origins of Nicolas Belanger, our earliest ancestor, we must recognize that his wife, Marie de Rainville is as much a part of our ancestry as Nicolas was. This makes Marie's father, Paul de Rainville the ancestral grandfather of the descendants of Nicolas Belanger and is our link to France. Because Paul de Rainville is the grandfather of all Belangers descended from Nicolas, it is fitting that a portion of this work be dedicated to him. Paul de Rainville was born in 1619 at St Thomas de Touques, in Normandy, north of Lisieux near Manche in France. His father was Jean de Rainville (born in France about 1595) and his mother was Jeanne Brechet (born in France about 1597). Although the prenuptial contract with his first wife, Rolline Poette, was never found, it is believed that they were married between 1633 and 1638 in France.

Their oldest son, Jean, appears to have been born around 1639. This fact is derived from information gathered during the census of the seigneurie of Beauport in 1667 and again in 1681. Although baptismal records have not been found, it is known that their first daughter was named Marie. The baptismal records, that were found, indicate a daughter named Marthe and a son named Charles. Neither of these two children survived but we know that Marthe was baptized on 20 February 1646 and Charles was baptized on 21 September 1649. When Jean and Rolline Poete had their fifth child on 1 March 1647, they named her Marthe. Their sixth child, and the fourth to survive, was also named Charles and he was baptized 21 January 1652. When Paul de Rainville left for Canada with four children born at Touques, he already had quite a small family.

We don't know exactly when or what influenced Paul to come to New France. We only know that he must have come during the summer of 1655 because, after that summer, we find the name of Paul de Rainville showing up regularly in the civil and religious acts of New France. One official document, which was executed before notary Francois Badeau, dated 11 November 1655, tells us that Robert Giffard, seigneur of Beauport, conveyed to Paul de Rainville, a concession (farm) of one arpent of frontage by ten in depth situated on the edge of the village (bourg) of Fargy. This concession did not have a house on it for his family but it is believed that his first home was actually the seigneurial manor itself. This, by the way, was

the custom of the day. It was several years later that Paul built his first house. The exact location was on land now occupied by Beauport town hall. Within a few years, Paul's children grew up and the records started indicating weddings in the family. The documents of notary Paul Vachon, indicate Marie de Rainville and Nicolas Belanger prepared their marriage contract on 12 November 1659. They received a nuptial blessing by the priest Paul Ragueneau on 11 January 1660 at the Beauport seigneurial manor. By February 1661 Paul de Rainville had transferred his land concession to his son in law. On 8 January 1662 Paul's second daughter, Marthe de Rainville, married at age 14 years. This wedding was also held at the Beauport seigneurial manor where Marthe wed Pierre Marcoux, son of Claude and Marie Juneau. These two are the ancestors of all the Marcoux families in Canada. On 26 July 1665, Jean, the oldest of Paul de Rainville's sons, married Suzanne Badeau in the first chapel of Beauport. It seems that Paul de Rainville was well known in high circles. Seigneur Robert Giffard, granted him another piece of land on 10 February 1662 with an arpent of frontage by twenty arpents deep on the border of the town of Fargy. By then Paul de Rainville's land holdings were more

than even the sovereign council of the region had. Some documents dated 16 February 1664 show that Paul de Rainville was the Sergeant of the Militia in Beauport. This was a very honorable post to hold in any village. The Rainville family felt tragedy when, on 16 February 1666, Paul's wife Rolline Poet died. Although the funeral ceremony was held in Beauport, the burial was on the side of a mountain at Quebec. Before the end of the year, however, Paul de Rainville remarried to Marie Michel, the widow of Louis Gasnier. Paul de Rainville was appointed the bailiff of the Seigneuries of Beauport and of Notre Dame des Anges. He signed many documents for those pioneers, and their young offspring, who were credited with the exploration of New France; as most of them could not write nor sign their names.

On 26 August 1667, Jean and Charles (the two sons of Paul) each received a concession of land from Joseph Giffard. This land was two arpents of frontage and twenty arpents of depth at the village of St Joseph. During the following year, Jean de Rainville built a house of stone which has always been considered the ancestral home of the Rainvilles. It should be noted that, as of the date of this writing, the home of Adelard Jobin (41 Avenue St Joseph, Beauport-West) is constructed on the same foundation as this ancestral home of the Rainvilles. All was going well for Jean de Rainville until, in 1669, he lost his wife Suzanne Gadeau. Two years later (26 October 1671), at Beauport, he married Elisabeth de la Gueripiere who was from St Sulpice of Paris, France. During the following January (1672) Paul de Rainville conveyed to his son, Jean, the farm (concession) which he had received ten years earlier. In 1674, Paul acquired the property of Michel Lecourt with a house on the road between the village of Fargy to the stream of fish scales (Ruisseau des Ecailles).

Paul de Rainville's life, as a farmer on the coast of Beupre, did not bring much historical attention except for some notable events experienced by some of his close relatives. On 4 September 1681, his youngest son Charles, who was not yet 30, decided to wed Jeanne Masse. At that time, his father, Paul lived on the Riviere Sud (South shore of the river) at Bellechasse but we don't know why. We do know that he lived there for five years, from 1680 to 1685. We know very little about his life during those years but, at the end of that period, he had a successful farming business. He obviously gathered enough wealth to have owned and sold a sailboat, as shown in a document signed on 30 July 1683 before Pierre Duquet, a notary of Quebec. Paul exchanged homes with a nephew, Pierre Bazin, and returned to live in Beauport in 1685. He established himself on the road from St Michel in a house which is today owned by the family of Joseph Mailloux. Paul de Rainville had accomplished much in a short time. He died at Beauport on 10 December 1686 at 67 years of age. He was buried on the 12th at the cemetery on the side of the mountain in Quebec. The record of his death shows us that he had received the last sacraments and that he had lived a good Christian. The Rainville family celebrated, in September 1955, the tri-centennial of the arrival, in Canada, of the first Rainville ancestor. Banquets, parades, dances and folk songs accompanied the grand reunion of the Rainvilles in Beauport, the place marking the arrival of the ancestor Paul. The above information was extracted from the souvenir program booklet they produced. Although the author is unknown, it was undoubtedly compiled by the committee who researched the Rainville family.

Marie de Rainville's Brothers and Sisters

Jean de Rainville was born about 1638 or 1639. He was listed as being 28 years of age at the 1667 census and 43 at the 1681 census. In 1704 there is documentation that he is 65 years old. He married Suzanne Badeau, daughter of Jacques and Anne Ardouin, on 26 July 1665 at Quebec. Jean and Suzanne had two boys, one in 1666 and one in 1668 before Suzanne died in December 1669. Jean remarried to Elisabeth de LaGueripiere, daughter of Jean and Gabrielle Bouteiller of Paris, France. Jean and Elisabeth had 5 girls and 4 boys between 1672 and 1687. Marthe was born on 1 March 1647 at St Thomas de Touques in France. She married Pierre Marcoux on 8 January 1662 in Quebec, at the age of 14. They had five boys and six girls between 1664 and 1686.

Charles was born 21 January 1652 at St Thomas of Touques in France. He married Jeanne Masse, widow of Gilles Jean and daughter of Pierre and Marie Pinet. Jeanne Masse was widowed twice before she married Charles. Her first marriage lasted from 1661 to 1674 and she had five children. Her second marriage went from 1674 to 1681 and she had at least three more children before that husband died. So, when she married Charles on 4 September 1681 she had about 8 children but the oldest was 18 and already married. Jeanne's first marriage was at age 12 and she was 32 when she married Charles. Her other children were ages 16, 14, 11, 9, 7, 5 and 4. Charles and Jeanne had three more children, 4 boys and one girl. Anne was born about 1653 as she was listed as being 14 at the census of 1667. She had died by the census of 1681.

Nicolas Belanger's house was said to be located at 600 Avenue Royale, Beauport. Quebec but deeper research indicates only the land belonged to Nicolas and he donated it to the church.

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