

Phil:

This is great stuff. Thanks for passing this along. My completely unscientific observations are that the LaBarge or Labarge variation seems more predominant in English-speaking areas. When I looked through phone books in Montreal years back, I only found a few Labarges and an whole pile of Laberges.

There also seems (at least to me, anyway) that there seem to be clusters of LaBarges in the U.S. such as the mid-west (St. Louis, in particular), upstate New York and Western Massachusetts (where my family hails from).

In my own family, the LaBerge/LaBarge thing could have gone either way (and, actually, it did). My great grandfather's baptismal record from Wotton, QC, gives his name as Antoine Laberge. Around the turn of the century he showed up in the Northampton, MA city directory as Anthony LaBarge. All of his descendants adopted the LaBarge spelling. His tombstone is inscribed with Antoine LaBarge but his obituary gives his name as Antoine LaBerge. Other records indicate that he was illiterate, so I don't think he cared much how his name was spelled. :-) Antoine and his siblings in the Northampton, MA area all seemed to go by LaBarge. Antoine's siblings who lived in other parts of New England adopted the LaBerge spelling. Antoine and 3 of his brothers are buried in the same cemetery outside of Northampton. Two have LaBarge on their tombstones and two have LaBerge.

Thanks again for sharing this.

Merry Christmas,

Craig