

The LaFramboise Doll Collection

**Laframboise, Michel I**

1790 c-1861

The indomitable Michel was one of the best-known scouts, brigade leaders, emissaries and avengers in the Northwest. He was born near Montreal, sailed on the Tonquin to Astoria, and transferred to successive fur companies. He was literate at a time when many were not, and served as clerk as well as brigade leader. Many of his books are still preserved. His particular "run" was the Umpqua-California route. It was his boast that by having a wife of high rank in every tribe, he was able to travel in safety everywhere. With the arrival of the priests, however, he married Emelie Picard and became a provident, if indulgent, father. Besides the children borne by Emelie, he had two previously recorded—Josette (1831-1837), by a chieftess of the Tsaleel tribe on the Umpqua, and Michel II, by a "Sassete woman". Little Josette died at the age of six while being cared for by the Rev. Herbert Beaver and his wife at Fort Vancouver; a second Josette was born to Emelie in 1839. In appearance he was short and stout, almost anthropoid in face, a big talker and a hearty drinker, but his generosity was boundless and his leadership unquestioned. In his later years he ran a ferry across the Willamette at Champoeg until a stroke forced him to sell his holdings; he seems to have lived with his daughter Josephite until his death two years later.

Harriet Duncan Munnick, *Catholic Church Records of the Pacific Northwest, St. Paul, Oregon* (Binford & Mort; Portland, Oregon, 1979), A 83–4.

A box of Laframboise dolls is in the St Paul Mission Historical Society (SPMHS) collection. The dolls have been matched with photos from the SPMHS collection showing the dolls wearing dresses of the same fabric seen in the photos. In some cases, the sun has faded the fabric, but there are places where the original vibrant colors still show through.

The photo on the next page shows Michel Laframboise and his wife Emile Picard with their son Abraham (born 25 December 1856). It states the photo came from the "Labonter album." It may be that a member of the Labonte family donated the dolls to the Society.

Connie Lenzen

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Michel  
Laframboise  
and his wife  
Emile Picard  
and son  
Abraham

Original in  
Harriet D  
Munnick  
collection.

Another photo  
has “Original  
– Labonter  
album” on the  
back.



Abraham Laframboise was born on 25 December 1856, and this dates the photo. The dress fabric and pattern are reproduced in the doll shown on the next page.

Note the red bow in the hair. This duplicates the bow in the photo on the preceding page.

The dress is faded. The original background color is red.



## Josette LaBonte

1838 – 1879

Josephine Laframboise “was the eldest daughter of Michel Laframboise and Emelie Picard. She became the third wife of Louis Labonte II. Of her six sons, only one survived to carry on the family line. Her one daughter, Josephine, married David Gregoire and died at the age of twenty-one, leaving no children.”

Harriet Duncan Munnick, *Catholic Church Records of the Pacific Northwest, St. Paul, Oregon* (Binford & Mort; Portland, Oregon, 1979), A 83–4.



The only photo from St. Paul Mission Historical Society collection showing Josette Laframboise is this one. It is hard to tell if she is wearing the dress shown on the doll.



Caption: Josette Laframboise LaBonte and daughter Josephine about 1870.

## Anastasio Labonte

1844 – 1929

Daughter of Michel and Emelie Laframboise. Married Henry Hilleary



Photo from SPMHS, Harriet Munnick collection

Anastasio (Louise in later days) was the second daughter of Michel Laframboise and Emelie Picard. She was a spirited, active little woman, “straight as an arrow, of whom no ill word was

ever spoken. She married Henry Hilleary and lived in eastern Clackamas County, where she and her husband donated land from their farm to found the Damascus United Evangelical (now Community) Church, for she had long since left the Catholic Church in which she had been reared. A daughter Pearl and a son John were born to the couple; they also reared Charlotte Larkins, a relative of Hilleary. ...Most, if not all, of Anastasie's family are buried in the churchyard of the church she helped to found, but only the graves of Henry and of Charlotte are marked."

Harriet Duncan Munnick, *Catholic Church Records of the Pacific Northwest, St. Paul, Oregon* (Binford & Mort; Portland, Oregon, 1979), A 83-4.

## Angelique LaFramboise

1851 – 1907



“Angelique and her sister Anastasie married brothers, George and Henry Hilleary. George and Angelique (“Anne”) lived at Martin’s Ferry on the north bank of the Columbia River below St. Helens; only a few of their numerous children were recorded in the Willamette Valley. In old age Angelique became blind. When visiting, she would say plaintively, ‘I can’t eat that!’ until someone remembered to cut up her meat for her.”

Harriet Duncan Munnick, *Catholic Church Records of the Pacific Northwest, St. Paul, Oregon* (Binford & Mort; Portland, Oregon, 1979), A 83–4.



Notice the braid in Angelique’s hair and on the doll.

## Rose Laframboise

1848–1879

Harriet Munnick wrote, “One of the Laframboise daughters, perhaps Rose, is said to have been sent to the East to study music. She sang ‘in the opera,’ the family recalls, and she does not appear again in the West. Pictures sent home from Richmond, Virginia, shows her a woman of poise and excellent taste in dress. Her musical ability was no doubt a gift from her father, Michel I, who had ‘a good and strong voice, and he knew all kinds of sons; he could sing for hours,’ his widow Emelie used to recall proudly.”

Harriet Duncan Munnick, *Catholic Church Records of the Pacific Northwest, St. Paul, Oregon* (Binford & Mort; Portland, Oregon, 1979), A 83–4.

Rose wears ruby earrings and a ruby cross on a chain around her neck.



## Voyageur

A male figure is in the doll collection. He is a French-Canadian voyageur. Michel LaFramboise was a voyageur. Could this doll represent Michel?

Notice the red sash worn by all voyageurs.



**Unidentified**

This doll is in the family collection.



Another unidentified doll. She is a school girl and might be the daughter of one of the Laframboise children.

Her book contains spiritual readings for every day in the year.

