

# The Charest Family



This website is built for the Charest family descendants of Ilphonse (Alphonse) Charest and Emilie Frechette of Manville, Rhode Island.

There are several theories about the origin of the Charest name. Some family members believe the name originated from Central France; others feel that Normandy is the likeliest home; some popular histories of name origins claim that Charest originated in Brittany.

The surname of Charest is believed to have been a medieval European occupational name derived from the old French "Char" signifying "chariot," a carriage of two wheels. The surname "Charest" would have originally signified a person who made carts, carriages, or chariots. There are numerous modern spelling variations of the Charest name including Charrest, Charet, Charret, Charette, Carter, Charais, and Caretto.

We are able to trace our Charest residency in the new world to at least 1812 in Quebec, Canada and the Frechette family to the late 1600s. We believe our Charest ancestors may have been in Quebec as far back as the early 1700s or late 1600s.

Ilphonse was born in the village of St. Gabriel, in Quebec province. Emilie was born on a farm in St. Didace, also in Quebec province. They met at an amusement park somewhere between Fall River and New Bedford, Massachusetts, which

indicates they emigrated to the United States from Quebec sometime earlier. They actually married in Joliette, Quebec, on October 4, 1916 and took up residence in Quebec City for one bitter cold winter. Emilie gave Ilphonse an "ultimatum" and they moved to a city called Grandmere (grandmother) that presumably offered more mild winters.

They had their first two children there, and then moved back to the United States to Pawtucket, Rhode Island, in 1919. About 1921 the growing family moved to Woonsocket, Rhode Island. A few years later the family moved and settled down in [Manville](#).

Today our extended Charest family is spread across the United States from Washington in the northwest down to California, across to Tennessee and Indiana in the Midwest, Rhode Island and Massachusetts in the northeast down through Virginia to Florida in the southeast, with one member living abroad.

## **Genealogy and Family History**

In addition to this site, we also maintain a companion website providing detailed genealogy and personal histories of our extended family, This genealogy site is a work in progress and we continue to add new information as time and resources permit. If you would like to browse our genealogy and history please visit "[Our Family History; Genealogy of the Charest Family](#)." Feel free to contact our Webmaster Ron Charest to share or discuss genealogy information using our "[Contact Us!](#)" form.

## **About the Family Coast-of-Arms**

The Coat-of-Arms (heraldic crest) is one of several variations published for the Charest name. Based upon the reference [Fluer-de-lis.com](#) our family crest contains the following meanings.

The Colors

- Gold – Generosity and elevation of the mind
- Red – Warrior or Martyr
- White or Silver – Peace and sincerity

## The Symbols

- Helmet – When depicted on the shield, denotes wisdom and security in defense; strength, protection, invulnerability
- Shield – When borne on the arms, represents the defender
- Star – Celestial goodness; noble person; Leadership; Excellence

Ron Charest

Webmaster

[Charest Family on the Web](#)