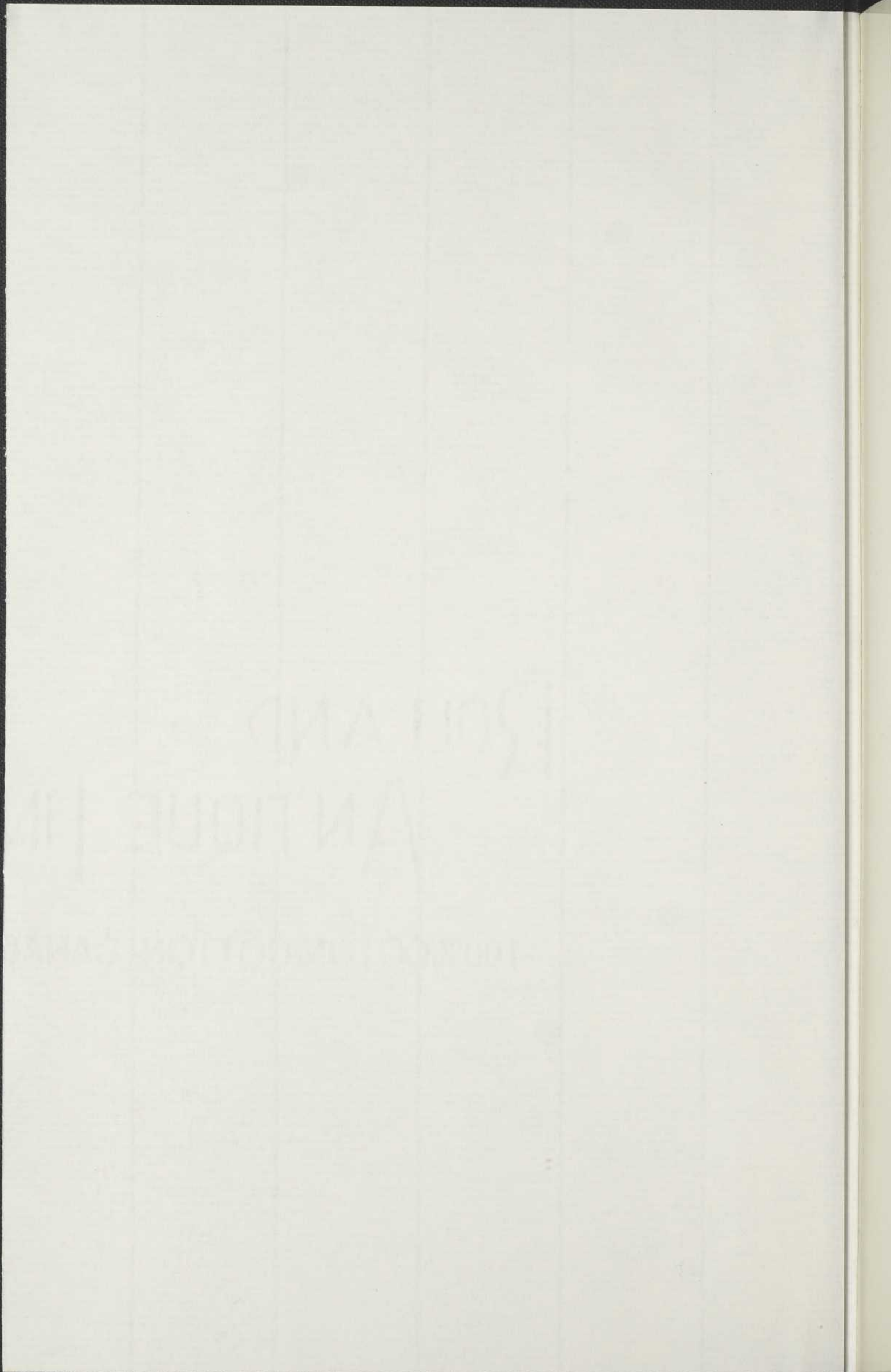
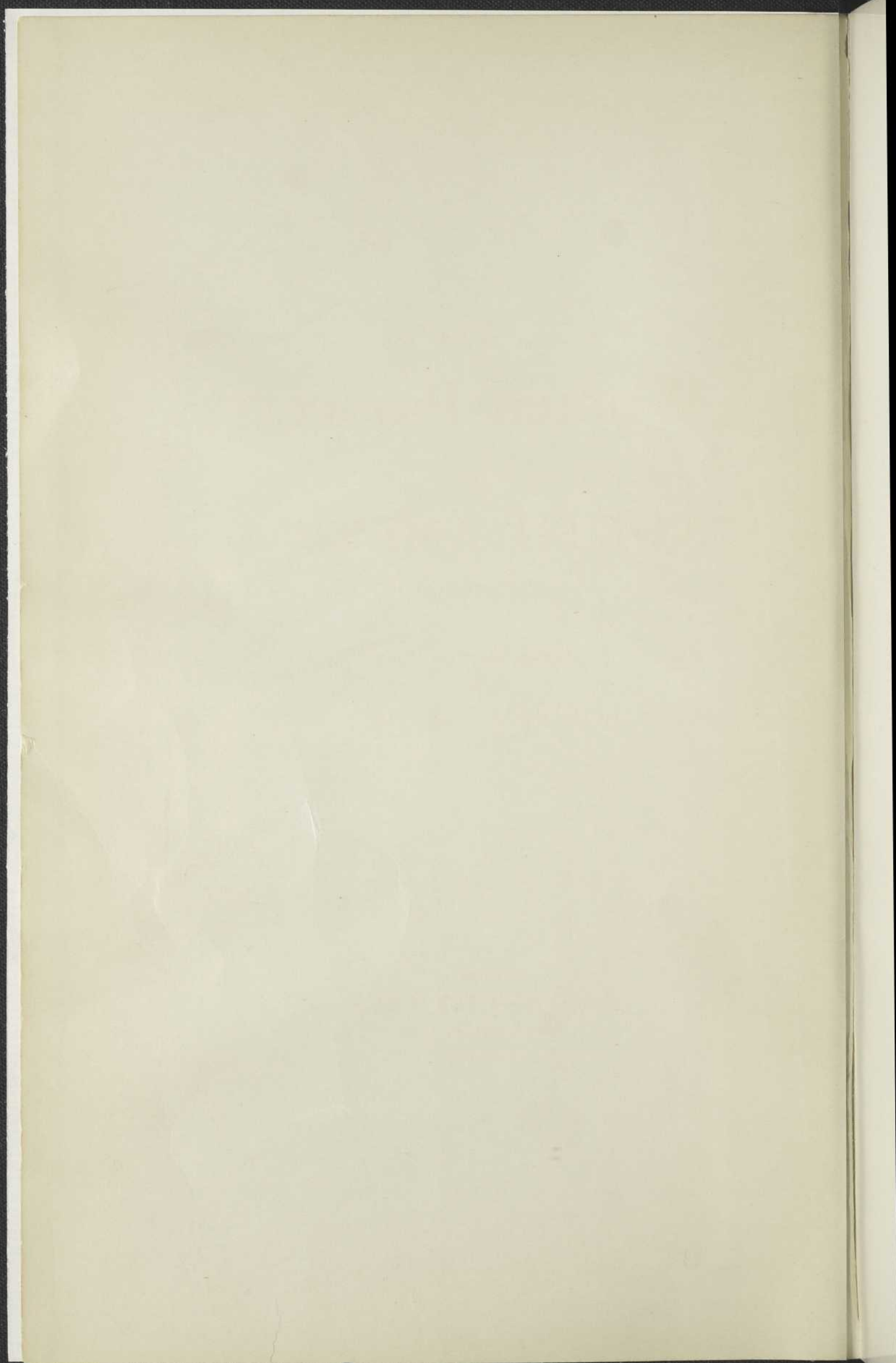


THE
Women
PIONEERS
OF NORTH AMERICA









The
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NORTH AMERICA

Written and Illustrated
by
SOPHY L. ELLIOTT

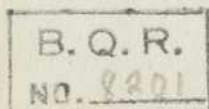


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GARDEN CITY PRESS
Gardenvale, Que.
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Portrait of the Author

by

Oscar de Lall

The latest portrait of Miss Elliott, by the portrait painter, Oscar de Lall, and presented to her for publication in, "The Pioneer Women of North America."



103343



Dedication

This book is dedicated to the Women of Canada, hoping that the unselfish lives of the women of the early regime may be an inspiration for equally noble service to God, King and country by the women of modern Canada.

Appreciation *to* Miss Bouchard

I wish to acknowledge my profound appreciation to Miss Cecile Bouchard, of St. Hyacinthe, Que., whose splendid counsel and encouragement were largely responsible for the publication of "The Women Pioneers of North America"

Sophy L. Elliott

Montreal, Que.
April, 1941.

THE
JOURNAL OF
THE
AMERICAN
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
PUBLISHED WEEKLY
CHICAGO, ILL., U.S.A.
1914

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Grey Nuns' Hospital

The Old Homestead

St. Gabriel Farm House

Villa Maria Convent

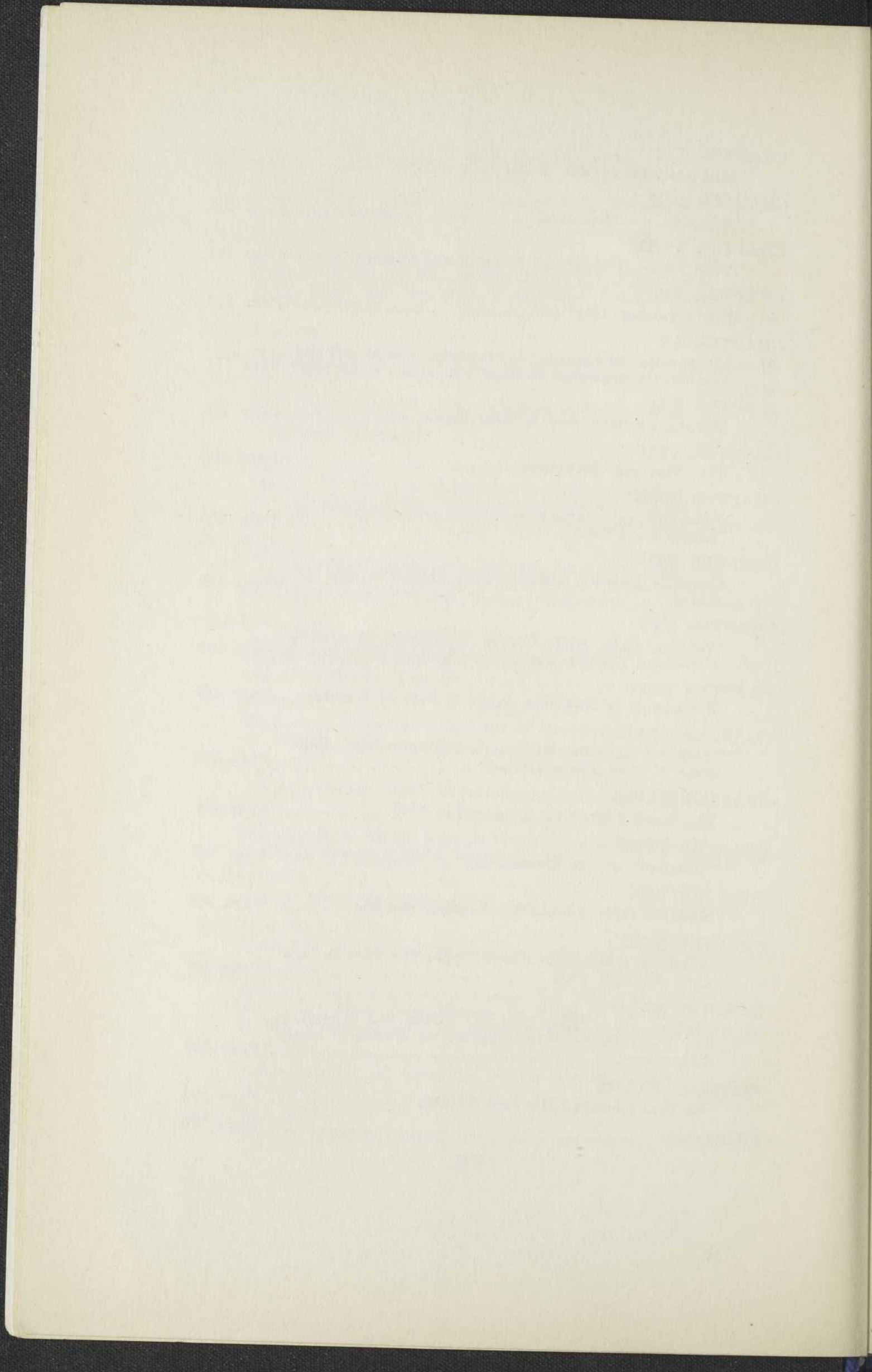
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Introduction



AMONG THE regrettable facts with regard to written works on Canada's heroines of the past is the absence from the librarians, book shelves of any kind of treatise dealing especially with this subject in English. Historians have, naturally, included in their publications short sketches of the early women of New France, but these scattered stories, peppered as they are in various histories, do not give the dramatic picture in a complete and connected form.

There is a constant demand in our libraries to-day for a book of this type and several librarians have asked if a book on the subject could not be undertaken.

It is to meet this need that Miss Elliott studied the brilliant records of our women pioneers, endeavoring to set them up in more or less compact form, so that the reader may not be deluged with dates of battles, along with too much detail relative to politics, losing at the same time the real human aspect of the picture.

In writing the story of Canada's early heroines one must portray the picture in all its truthfulness with regard to the religious inspiration indicated, without exception, in their ceaseless sacrifices and unwavering belief in their calling.

In assembling those women of the past there is no endeavor on the part of the writer to take part in propaganda for any sect, or form of religion, whatsoever. To present a fairminded, unbiased record of brave women, who blazed the trail for later generations, is the primary reason for attempting to recall their mighty efforts for good.

When our beloved Sovereigns visited Canada, Queen Elizabeth left a special message to both French and English Canadians, namely, to use every effort

possible to cement friendship and understanding between the two races.

This book is written under the inspiration of Queen Elizabeth's appeal. It is written for English Canadians, especially; to give them a better understanding of our French Canadian heritage, without which our background would have lost much of its glamour and its picturesque romance.

Therefore, whether Jew or Gentile, Protestant or Catholic, it matters not, so far as the real issue of this book is concerned. What does matter is the presentation of a true account of Canada's pioneer women striving to establish righteousness where evil was grappling to get a strangle hold. It is just and right that those of us who do not know about the lives of the grand ladies from France, pioneering in a wilderness for the sake of others, over three hundred years ago, should be informed and should, with an open mind, without prejudice, listen to the true story of their crusade for righteousness.

Montreal, Que., March 6th, 1941.

DOROTHY SPROULE.

Preface



IN WRITING Canadian history from its earliest source the narrator must dig below the surface and turn back the pages of history to about that period known as the close of the medieval era.

Europeans, up to this particular age, had lived under the shrivelling influence of hundreds of years of ignorance. Superstition crippled progress and education was allotted to the privileged few. Gradually there dawned a realization that the world was full of beautiful and wonderful things. Europe, woke up, rubbed its eyes and looked about. Fetters that hampered progress were thrown aside. The tottering child, education, struggled to its feet and with curious, unsteady strides groped forward towards enlightenment. Suppression, petty wars and religious superstition had almost stifled curiosity. Then the renaissance of religion, art and letters introduced higher standards of living and a general improvement in trade and commerce.

Religion has always played an important part in man's development. When, therefore, the Wars of the Crusades summoned the faithful to fight for Christianity in a foreign land, a definite step was made in the direction of a great event, as yet scarcely in embryo, the discovery of North America and the West Indies.

When a wave of fiery religious ardour called the youth of Europe from their home firesides to take part in the Crusaders' wars it definitely aided in the onward flux of a movement that would eventually transform the entire world. With the manhood of Europe venturing abroad, new avenues of trade were explored which, very naturally, brought about an exchange of new ideas and discussions of strange places both seen and heard of whenever the chance offered.

Having discarded the chrysalis of ignorance and superstition, Europeans were ripe for the period of growth that was stirring. It was a growing, thinking, inquiring era, a time when great cities were founded; when ancient towns enjoyed new life and activity. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries London and Paris, Lisbon, Genoa and Antwerp and so on, showed astounding development. Marked indications of rapid growth were apparent on every hand. Men and women were obsessed with a great urge to unravel the mysteries of Nature; to know the whys and wherefores of problems confronting them.

Prior to the discovery of America men were sadly ignorant regarding geographical matters. They believed the world consisted of three continents—Europe, Asia and Africa—set amidst a circumambient ocean. Now, when the Turks invaded the west and cut off the trade of Europe with nearer Asia, a problem of major importance was presented to the merchants and tradesmen who were in the habit of importing goods from China.

In medieval times the name Cathay was commonly used by Europeans as indicating China. Fabulous wealth was assured the trader who could garner treasures of Eastern inspiration and transport them to Europe. China, or Cathay, was the mecca, the pipe-dream, towards which European merchants and fortune-hunters turned longing eyes. Thus, through the Turkish invasion, another route to China had of necessity to be found.

Since the coming of Jesus Christ missionaries had visited China bearing their message of salvation. With Mahomet's apostles cutting off access to the Mongolian Empire a very serious handicap was presented; even the gentle messengers of Christ were non-plussed. Ways and means of circumventing the evil were sought diligently. The spirit of the explorer was in the throes of growth and development in the meantime.

Christianity, during the middle ages, included in its theories the belief in a terrestrial, supernatural Paradise. China, therefore, was the supposedly promised haven where Christians believed they would find the Golden Gates presided over, not by St. Peter, but by Prester John, a mythical character credited with supernatural powers, his empire embracing the vastness of central Asia. It was described as an earthly Paradise with portals guarded by fiery angels.

Playing upon the credulity of his medieval readers Sir John Mandeville published a book in 1360 wherein he claimed to have visited India and China and, incidentally, the Paradise of their dreams. Whether the writer was inspired in order that he might gather to his coffers more gold than he could ever hope to gain through mercantile means, or what motives moved him to pen such colossal fibs, is one of the mysteries of that age. We have to credit him with the story-teller's gift, because his word pictures were so persuasive that the book ranked as the most widely read of all literature even up to the time of King Henry VIII.

Then Marco Polo, the traveller and adventurer, brought his true report, which oddly enough was published years before Sir John's collection of fairy tales. Marco Polo is credited with telling the first authentic story of China and Peking, where he visited court circles in 1272. His adventures abroad are published in his book, "The travels of Marco Polo, the Venetian".

Towards the end of the fifteenth century the maritime discoveries of Portuguese mariners aroused Europe's curiosity. The years between 1410-90 were rich in geographical "news" made by Portugal, one of the smallest European empires. Her expertly trained adventurers of the sea opened a new vista in world travel and trade. The navigators of England, France and Italy, with ears attuned to the reports of Portugal's discoveries, were fired with a desire to take

part in unravelling the secrets the world's hinterlands and waterways.

Five great explorers stand out as leaders in the vanguard of progress: Christopher Columbus, Sir John Cabot, Verrazzani, Cortereal and Amerigo Vespucci. Each in his way contributed to the discoveries in a new world.

Long before the spectacular journeys of Christopher Columbus, Europeans had visited the Continent of America by a route in the north which, although shorter than the southerly course from Spain, brought no lasting contact with civilization. And so the mysteries of the western sea lay wrapped in mists and fogs and golden sunsets, awaiting the inspired efforts of some great navigator, one brave enough to venture forth into the terrific, boundless wastes of that dreaded horizonline.

At last Christopher Columbus, the great hero of the age, is introduced. His dramatic appearance marks the old from the new just as definitely as day differs from murky night. Christopher became a sailor when he was fifteen years of age. His practical training in the lore of the ocean doubtless prepared him for his great voyage. He is said to have read Marco Polo's travels. He decided to rend the veil of ignorance that so far had paralysed any lasting effort to link up with the hidden, ocean-bound west.

Six years of fruitless endeavor, during which he suffered extreme poverty and heart-breaking ridicule, passed before he succeeded in gaining the attention of Queen Isabella of Spain. She listened to his plans. He was provided with three vessels, the Pinta, the Santa Maria and the Nina, and sailed away on Friday, August 3rd, 1492.

All kinds of weather conditions were experienced en route. With quaking hearts and critical minds the crews saw day after day pass by with nothing but

empty space and water surrounding them. They broke into audible grumbling when, on September 15th, a meteor rent its fiery passage across the firmament and with an angry hiss plunged into the forbidding ocean. They took it as a portent of extremely ill omen. Veiled threats and ominous complaints were unheeded by their leader. A new route to China must be found. On, on he pressed until one glad day a bird was noted fluttering by, then another and another and many more. They were queer looking birds, but they brought with them the very essence of hope to Columbus, the culmination of his castles in the air.

The weather-beaten sailors landed on what is supposed to be the Watling Islands on Friday, October 12th. What stupendous beauty unfolded before them! Here, indeed, was a land of plenty, a land full of promise; verily it was the El Dorado of their rosiest dreams! The curtain falls here on the first act of the New World's drama.

On the heels of the gigantic venture of Columbus, England came forward with her offering towards opening up another hemisphere to the world. John Cabot, of Genoa, an explorer, arrived in London about the year 1484, making the voyage from Italy in a Venetian galley. This ambitious man of the sea, like so many of the early pioneers, coveted the riches in spices, perfumes, silks and precious stones that were to be found in the East. He believed that instead of transporting the goods by caravan across the north eastern part of the country he could find a route from Asia to Europe by water which would greatly speed up trade. Knowing that an extensive traffic was carried on between Bristol and Iceland he decided to venture forth and try to interest the people residing on those islands of the sea that snuggled close to the bosom of Europe.

Nothing is known of John Cabot's early life. The first records find him moving to Venice and Genoa,

thence to England. He made a voyage in 1491-92 from Bristol in search of the Island of Brazil, or the Seven Cities which on medieval maps were placed to the west of Ireland. No land was sighted and the disappointed wanderers returned to England. By this time Columbus had reached the West Indies. Interest in Cabot's plans was doubled.

King Henry VII became interested. He granted John Cabot and his sons, Lewis, Sebastian and Santius authority to sail to all parts, countries and seas of the east, of the west and of the north under the banners and ensigns of the British. They were given five ships, with orders that the King's banners and ensigns were to be displayed in every newly-found village, town, castle, isle or mainland. Also, a fifth part of all profits were to be handed over to the King.

John Cabot sailed away from Bristol with his party on May 2nd, 1497. It took fifty-two days of sea travel before landing at the western extremity of Cape Breton. Unfurling the Royal Banner, John Cabot took possession of the country in the name of King Henry VII. No inhabitants were encountered, but traces of hunters were noted. They called Cape Breton, Cape Discovery. Pushing on they discovered those bleak, lonely islands, St. Pierre-Miquelon, which with Langlade form three separate islands. Cabot called them the Trinity Group.

As the summer season was waning Cabot ordered the "Mathew" to drop anchor on August 6, en route to Bristol. Thus it was that John Cabot, at the close of the fifteenth century, first sighted that part of North America which later became the gateway to Canada.

Then Francis I., of France, awoke to the fact that his realm could be strengthened and broadened if his adventurers sailed across to the new world in search of more territory. After various expeditions

in the early sixteenth century King Francis employed John Verrazzano who explored the eastern coast of North America, from Newfoundland to Carolina. He arrived ten years before Jacques Cartier, that is to say in the year 1524.

The opening of the seventeenth century, therefore, introduced an era of bickerings between England and France. Each believed the other trespassed on ground to which he had no claim. England said she owned the continent through the Cabots, discovery in 1497. France claimed it through the voyage of Verrazzano in 1524. So on and so on.

Henry IV. of France took the bit in his teeth and presented to De Monts, in 1604, all America from Philadelphia to Montreal. Eight years slipped by, then Louis XIII. gave Madame de Guerchville and the Jesuits a much more generous slice of the disputed hemisphere. He handed over to them the whole continent from Florida to the St. Lawrence River. The plot thickened.

James I. of England presented to Sir William Alexander, in 1621, that bit of land known to us as Nova Scotia and the unexplored wilderness adjacent, to be held henceforth as a fief of the Scottish Crown.

By the time France concluded her donations and England had presented different parts of the continent to her members of the British domain, things got pretty much mixed up. With the King of France handing over Boston, New York and Washington to Frenchmen, and England conferring the River and Gulf of Canada, which included the sites of Quebec and Ville Marie, to her sons, an international tangle was soon brewing. In fact the seeds of international warfare sprouted and burst forth with strong roots and healthy branches to flourish with extraordinary vigor for a century and a half.

Haphazardly, man muddled along, laying a rotten foundation on a beautiful continent. A little tact, diplomacy and careful consideration, seasoned with the spirit of understanding, would have healed the festering sores of animosity and paved the way for happiness and peace. But, headstrong, he launched his scheme of hatred, wrecked homes, broken hearts and sorrowing widows and orphans. We must remember, however, that a close perspective does not present the true aspect of a picture. We, of this modern era, can see more clearly what would have been wiser, more helpful for the French and English peoples.

Following Cabot's arrival in North America thirty-seven fruitless years passed; that is to say years when no further headway was made to establish European dominion over the great, new world. But when the thirty-seven barren years slipped by a tremendous, catapulting change surged with increasing volume across mountain passes, prairie lands, lakes and rivers, forests and rock-bound sea coasts. Three to four hundred years of civilization have wrought much through man's ingenuity, despite his blunders and his many pitiful misunderstandings.

CHAPTER I



FRANCE SENDS EXPLORERS TO AMERICA

Jacques Cartier Discovers Hochelaga

KING FRANCIS 1., of France, having learnt with no small amount of chagrin the bitter cost of war with his Spanish neighbours, awoke to the fact that his coffers would be drained dry unless something could be done to remedy the shortage of funds. We can imagine him conferring with his counsellors, arrayed in fashion's effeminate lavishness of styling, but looking decidedly glum.

The conference might have stirred much controversy as to the ways and means of raising more money; at any rate the outcome was quite outlandish in the opinion of some; also it was the course which indicated tremendous hazards involving a considerable output of ready cash. Francis and his statesmen decided to send an envoy to the new world to claim the continent of North America and plant the fleur-de-lis, a token of France's possession; ownership of hundreds and thousands of miles of richly timbered land, plus all that it contained. A very ambitious scheme, indeed.

To whom the important mission could be entrusted was no trivial item under consideration. The

leader must be a man of integrity, good judgment, sound seamanship and loyal. At last they chose Jacques Cartier, born in St. Malo, France. With all the necessary qualifications to his credit, the plan matured, a crew was chosen of picked men, ships were chartered and necessities for the long voyage carefully stowed away in the holds of the little sailing vessels.

Jacques Cartier set sail for America on April 20, 1534. It is on record that on July 24th of that year he planted a cross on the coast of Gaspé; a cross which measured thirty feet in length and bore a shield emblazoned with the fleur-de-lis and the inscription, "Vive le Roi de France". His return to France the following September 5th was hailed joyfully by his countrymen. King Francis doubtless rubbed his hands in glee and relief that his judgment had not failed and that France would be the richer by the daring step. He would send Jacques Cartier back, shortly, to dig still deeper into the heart of New France, to penetrate far inland, eventually to discover a short passage to China. Ah, yes, to China, where riches in merchandize, and other rare treasures of the ancient continent would soon be transported to the back door of France.

Following the triumphant return of the French explorer scarcely eight months passed before Cartier was again leaving his fatherland for foreign shores. The urge to see more of that wild country, peopled with strange savage tribes, drove him on to more daring exploits. His curiosity was keenly aroused with the stirring accounts of territory hitherto unexplored by white men which he received from the two young Indian lads, Taignoagny and Agaya, sons of a noble Indan chief, whom Jacques Cartier had persuaded to accompany him to France. The two Indian youths were the objects of much curiosity and interest to the French people. The boys were taught to converse in French. Cartier planned to use them as interpreters on his return to Canada.

A second commission was granted Jacques Cartier. And so, one balmy May day he gathered together his officers and crew and proceeded to the cathedral at St. Malo. After hearing mass and confessing their sins the party received the parting blessing from the Bishop: it was an extremely solemn occasion. Perhaps they would never return home. The hazards were great and those able seamen realized the fact.

Three days later, May 19, 1535, three vessels, the Great *Hermine*, the Little *Hermine* and the *Emerillon*, the latter about 120 tons, unfurled their sails and pointing westward disappeared from view. The party consisted of pilots, masters, seamen, the two Indian boys and others, numbering in all seventy-four souls.

Fiercely the raging tempests tore at their billowing sails, straining the vessels to the limit, eventually separating the ships from each other. At last Newfoundland was sighted. What joy and relief after that stormy passage! Entering "a goodly gulf, full of islands, passages and entrances, towards what wind soever you please to bend", Jacques Cartier named it the Gulf of St. Lawrence, it being the 10th of August and the festival of St. Lawrence. This name was afterwards extended to the entire river.

As the travellers entered the Strait of St. Peter familiar landmarks were recognised by Cartier's two captive Indians. Excitedly they guided the sailors along the route. Jacques Cartier listened to their stories of gold, pure, shining, glittering gold which was to be found in the vicinity of the sulky Saguenay, beyond those gloomy, threatening rocks whose subterranean depths have yet to be fathomed. The explorer listened closely, storing up the knowledge and determining to penetrate the beautiful St. Lawrence waterway to the limit of his powers.

Six more days passed before finally the party reached Stadacona, or Quebec, as we now call it. Jacques Cartier was introduced to the dignified and lordly Donnacona. They talked of many things, Donnacona was the lord of Canada. The great Indian chief made an oration which, doubtless, was long and elegant as was the custom of the savages of Canada. He expressed his desire for peaceful relations with the visitors and Cartier on his part tried to appear friendly also. At the same time the French leader sought means to glean information respecting the country higher up the river, which he was given to understand was of far greater importance than Stadacona.

When Cartier told Donnacona he intended to visit Hochelaga the chief was not pleased. The Indians, although welcoming their visitors with generous kindness, did not relish a visit to their island hamlet. In their simplicity they devised a scheme which they deemed would scare the white-faced men and prevent any further invasion. Dressing three men as devils they put on a pantomime intended to scare the French away and to give still more emphasis to the artifice the two captives, Taignoagny and Agaya assisted in the phantasy, the former crying out "Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!", raising his eyes to heaven, while Agaya repeated, "Jesus Maria! Jacques Cartier!". They told Jacques Cartier that their God had spoken in Hochelaga and the three devils had come from there to announce that there was ice and snow in Hochelaga and that would all die if they went there. Jacques Cartier replied that should such a condition prevail, well, Jesus would protect them. He gave them to understand that he considered their God, Cudouagny, was but a fool to have told them such stories. He thanked them, however, and completed his plans to go up to Hochelaga.

Reading between the lines one can easily realize the reason why Donnacona and his men tried to keep

Jacques Cartier out of their more remote preserves. Childlike as the natives were in their joyous reception of visitors who came uninvited to their beautiful wilderness, nevertheless, a certain amount of sagacity is apparent in their reasoning, especially with regard to those who threatened to trespass beyond definite bounds of hospitality. It must have been with a marked amount of chagrin that Donnacona saw Cartier give orders for departure on that auspicious nineteenth day of September. Did the Lord of Canada sense the impending doom which was foreshadowed when Cartier's pinnace and two small boats plied their route to Hochelaga? Did he have a foreboding that the happy hunting ground of those simple-minded nomads of primeval forests, sparkling waterways and verdant meadowlands was soon, too soon, to pass from them forever?

Jacques Cartier was spell-bound with the magnificence of the scenery which presented itself with every twist and turn of the glistening green waters of the St. Lawrence River. He sailed to the head of what is termed today Lake St. Peter where he was compelled to cast anchor, because of the many shoals and shallows. Here he took to small boats which were loaded with provisions and ammunition. Cartier took with him Claude du Pont Briand, grand cupbearer to the Lord Dauphin of France, Charles de la Pommeraye, Jehan Gouion, also twenty-eight mariners among whom were Marc Jalobert and Guillaume le Breton. They landed about six miles from the town, below what is called St. Mary's Current.

In Cartier's records he related how in passing the Sorel Islands they landed on one of the islands, "where we found five men who were hunting wild beasts,—one of these men took our captain in his arms and carried him ashore as lightly as he would have carried a child of five years, so large and strong was this man." It was a friendly gesture, an open-hearted

act made spontaneously without guile, or hostile intention.

The Frenchmen landed on the island where Hochelaga was situated on October 2nd, 1535. Montreal's history begins right here. Word was quickly circulated among the natives that some queerlooking boats and people had come up the river from Stadacona. One can picture the event. Doubtless the sun-kissed leaves on spreading oaks and maple trees were in brightest sheen of red and gold, richly-toned browns and tawny yellows. The meadowlands and grassy slopes had changed their dress of emerald green to a more subdued blending of buff and bronze; while here and there a purple and mauve clump of brush and forest growth gave to the silver poplars a more ethereal, shimmering loveliness intermingled with the richness of stately pines and sweetly smelling cedar bushes. Here and there a clump of greenery in lordly, stalwart trees, or sloping hills added charm to the intoxicating beauty on all sides. The brown earth seemed wrapped in silence, except for the gentle rustling of fallen leaves which appeared to whisper of winter's approach and of Jack Frost's withering presence.

Indian men, women and children, scantily clad, hastened forward to welcome the guests with all the fervor of their generous natures. Jacques Cartier wrote, "And we having arrived at the said Hochelaga, more than a thousand persons presented themselves before us, men, women and children alike, the which gave us good reception as ever father did to child, showing marvelous joy; for the men in one band danced, the women on the other side and the children on the other, the which brought us store of fish and of their bread made of coarse millet, which they cast into our said boats in a way that it seemed as if it tumbled from the air."

Never a more unexpected celebration was enacted in Montreal and never more gracious hospitality of-

ferred to guests than on that day of Jacques Cartier's landing. Singing and dancing, gifts, gifts and more gifts. The best they had was none too good for the elegantly dressed foreigners, their uninvited guests. All night long those children of the wilds kept up their welcoming cries of "Aguyaze", meaning joy and good feeling. Great bonfires blazed merrily throughout the night, the vivid reflections casting odd shapes upon the bosom of the great river upon which Cartier and his men reposed peacefully in their own boats. Thus closed the first day of Jacques Cartier's visit to Hochelaga.

Early the following morning the Frenchmen, attired in their most elegant costumes, prepared to visit the Town of Hochelaga. All the party did not go, however, because Cartier notes in his history that they left a certain number to guard the boats. Three Indians led them from the water's edge along a sylvan pathway covered with acorns which had fallen from the giant oaks that grew in abundance along the roadway. Jacques Cartier was enthralled with the beauty and wealth of the island's natural growth.

Authorities cannot say with accuracy exactly where Jacques Cartier and his men landed on the island. Some affirm that it might have been in the vicinity of the Back River, others maintain that the only reasonable landing place was opposite St. Francois Xavier street. However, we can follow the party, guided by Cartier's own account, for about a league and a half when they were met by one of the chief lords of the Town of Hochelaga, accompanied by other persons, who signed to them that they should rest. The Indian hosts had a bonfire burning by the roadside in preparation for the strangers' comfort. It being an early October morning most likely the air was clear and cold. How thoughtful of the natives to thus do honour to utter strangers.

Having seated themselves in groups around the crackling logs the mighty lord of the palisaded town gave an oration of welcome in which was expressed the joy his people felt with regard to entertaining such distinguished guests. In response to the gracious spirit shown by their host the French captain presented the Indians with a couple of hatchets and a couple of knives, useful gifts, greatly appreciated by the Indians. Jacques Cartier then gave the Indian chief a cross and memorial of the crucifixion which he made him kiss, he then hung the symbol around the savage lord's neck, the latter thanking him with evident pleasure.

The ceremonial having come to an end Jacques Cartier and his party moved on towards the Town. Another half league was passed. Then it seemed that the wooded lands opened onto cultivated meadowlands. Cartier relates, "from there we began to find the land cultivated, and fair, large fields full of grain of their country, which is like Brazil millet, as big or bigger than peas, on which they live as we do on wheat; and in the midst of these fields is located and seated the Town of Hochelaga, near to and adjoining a mountain, which is cultivated around about it and highly fertile, from the summit of which one sees a very great distance." So impressed was Jacques Cartier with the beautiful mountain and the panorama which could be viewed therefrom that he gave it a truly regal name, "Mount Royal".

The most accurate description available of the Town of Hochelaga, based on the information given by Jacques Cartier, is one by W. D. Lighthall, F.R.S.C. In this the author has striven to unravel the mystery which prevailed with regard to the formation of the town itself, the original appearance of the landscape and other details.

According to Dr. Lighthall the Town was bounded on the north by McGill University Grounds,

on the south by what we term Burnside street, on the west by Metcalfe street and McTavish street, on the east by Victoria street. The Town contained "about fifty houses, each about fifty paces long and twelve or fifteen wide" wrote Cartier. These "longhouses" Dr. Lighthall explains according to the Jesuit Relations regarding Huron Cabins, "one of which might contain eight or ten families making, say, sixty or eighty persons". Accordingly Hochelaga undoubtedly had a population of at least 3,500 souls.

The site chosen for the Town was particularly good because of three brooks, two of which ran in a southerly direction on the east and west of the settlement, the third tracing its way on Burnside street, but in reality forming marsh lands and a lake, a natural defense in case of enemy invasion. The main brook on Burnside flowed along the present street as we know it today from east to west for quite a distance and was a creek of some size when the island was richly swept with forest growth. South of the stream swamp-lands of blueclay base gave a two-fold service to the natives: first as a medium for hand made pots fashioned in lovely form by the Indian women and also for making those curiously shaped short pipes for the men: the second service played by the lake was to act as a defense, as already mentioned, in case of attack by enemy tribes. The northern bank of this stream rose abruptly to a height of twenty feet. This hill is now graded and forms what is called McGill College Avenue.

The second stream, or 'East Brook', was banked also by an abrupt formation in the east in close proximity to where it met the Burnside Brook. It was a bank of sandy soil where the sand swallows made holes for their nests. Grand specimens of oak and elm, especially the former of which Jacques Cartier made particular mention, fringed the bubbling brook as it traced its way to join the St. Lawrence River. Evi-

dence of the ancient stream is to be seen today where a depression, originally part of the bed of the brook, is used by the students for tennis and skating near Sherbrooke street, directly opposite Victoria street, in McGill grounds. Dr. Lighthall states that, "the east bank still shows a sharp drop from the lane behind Victoria street into the yards below. (And on that lane are still to be seen the lower parts of James McGill's stone Manor House.)"

Rushing down from its northerly source the third brook travelling from the west side, above Sherbrooke street and on the southwest side of Metcalfe street, joined the Burnside Brook and turning continued their course across St. Catherine and Dorchester streets, down Inspector street to the Little River below. Thus the three streams, tumbling over rocks and flinging themselves headlong from raised banks, ran at will through wooded valleys and mountain slopes forming a natural protection such as was customary among the Iroquoian strongholds, and upon the land so pleasantly situated and carefully guarded by Nature, the palisaded Town of Hochelaga, with its famous "long houses", and its primitive fortifications, lay hidden.

Jacques Cartier and his party, as they neared the Town were welcomed by King Agouhanna who was borne on the shoulders of several natives. A number of Indians had, with much ceremony, spread mats on the ground for the guests to sit on. Agouhanna, a man of about fifty years of age, although not more elegantly dressed than his subjects, wore a red band, made of the quills of porcupines, encircling his head in lieu of a crown. The unfortunate man was crippled, having become incapacitated through his diseased limbs. After showing signs of welcome to the strangers the poor fellow showed his crippled limbs to Cartier, begging the Frenchman to cure his ills and bring back his failing health. Jacques Cartier, with evident sym-

pathy, stroked the arms and legs of the stricken King, who with simple trust removed the crown from his own head and presented to the Christian foreigner. The friendly act seemed to be a symbol signifying friendship and trust, so much so that "immediately there was brought to the said captain many sick ones, as blind, one-eyed, lame, impotent, and folks so very old that the lids of their eyes hung down even upon their cheeks". Cartier prayed for them and recited the Gospel of St. John to the simple-hearted natives who listened in silence, gazing heavenward and copying the attitudes of the French.

At the close of the ceremonials and inspection of the Town the visitors prepared to move on, and with the blare of trumpets and the sounding of other musical instruments, which delighted the natives beyond words, Jacques Cartier's men withdrew. With childlike impetuosity the squaws tried to hold them back. They brought presents of cooked foods, quite unsalted and unsavory to the taste of the Frenchmen, who made signs that they did not require anything to eat. Then the party, escorted by many Indian men and women, climbed the slopes of the mountainside, traversing its shaded dells and lovely wooded glades, emerging at last upon the summit where today our modern civilization has retained the same clear vista for many miles; but how changed with regard to the verdant meadowlands and rich forest growth, exchanged of necessity for sky-scrapers and tall church spires. Before him was a spectacle quite unlike anything Cartier had ever witnessed. The Indians told him much about the places lying in the distance, beyond where the eye could penetrate.

The hour of departure found Jacques Cartier and his men plodding towards their boats. Wearied with their long tramp, and evidently showing signs of their fatigue, the Indians, in their usual considerate manner, carried the Frenchmen on their shoulders to the

water's edge. And so closed that memorable visit to a settlement which we have to imagine, because scarcely a vestige of Montreal's primitive life is visible to us. But as we walk along Sherbrooke street, between that short stretch of pavement that spans McGill grounds and the McCord Museum we are at liberty to allow our imagination free scope. We can imagine that fifty cabanes, fifty paces long, surrounding a central square, the latter probably in the midst of Sherbrooke street, just opposite McGill College avenue, are still there. We may, too, visualize the palisades comprised of three walls made of fitted trunks of trees, crossed at the top, having a platform near the top, reached by pairs of notched log ladders, where stones were hidden to throw at possible enemies. We may recall the great midden dump, where the inhabitants were in the habit of throwing their broken bits of pottery, refuse and other relics just beyond the Town gate. We may listen to the call of wild geese and of turkeys, to the plaintive wail of the whip-poor-will and the gentle thud of acorns falling softly from gnarled oak trees whose outspreading branches shelter brown-skinned Hoche-lagans from the scorching, mid-summer sun. Three gurgling brooks echo above the din of motor horns and modern traffic noises; little wild creatures of fin, feather or fur, dart hither and yon, while the silver notes of our modest song sparrows thrill to the whispering winds of the forest. This memory we may keep forever if we but harken to the voices of the past, to the spirits recalled years ago to that Great Hunting Ground every brave Indian hoped to reach after this earthly term.

But we must press on with Cartier as he left Hochelaga to return to Stadacona: he left the Island on the 4th of October, reaching Stadacona on the 11th. Bands of savages followed along the river banks. Preparations were then made to spend the winter in Canada, but it was a venture which cost Cartier many men

who died of scurvy before it was discovered that a concoction of the bark and foliage of white spruce-trees was an effectual remedy. Spring's arrival found Cartier a sadder, but wiser man. As the first white men to winter in the northerly regions the French found to their infinite discomfort that they were not warmly enough clad. It was a hard school of experience, even for those seasoned mariners. At last the spring thaws, with radiant sunlight pouring its lifegiving warmth over the hitherto icebound rivers and rills, releasing the frozen earth from its snow-covered prison, brought renewed hope to the wearied French explorers. Preparations for their homeward trip were at last begun.

That second voyage of Jacques Cartier's was more than an idle, fortune seeking adventure. He proved to the world the existence of one of the largest rivers in the world and he made for himself a name that will remain forever famous in the annals of Canada. Moreover, his wisdom in choosing the sites of Quebec and Montreal as favourable positions for future settlements proves him to have been not only a worthy seaman, but a man with vision as well. His historical records are read today with, perhaps, more interest than in those hectic years when France was torn between political intrigue and religious strife, when the Huguenots fought for their faith even unto death and France was too occupied with home affairs to bother about a wilderness populated by wild men of the bush.

One blot mars the fair record of Cartier's method in handling the Indians, that is with regard to his kidnapping the two Indian lads and again returning to France after his second trip to Canada when he abducted Donnacona and other chiefs and great warriors. It must be remembered that it was almost a universal practice at that time for navigators to bring home with them whatever proof they could to impress those who patronized the ventures; a definite testimony of their fidelity. So we must forgive Jacques Cartier,

even though we may grieve for the homesick savages who pined away and died in France and were buried there.

Five years later Cartier returned to Stadacona. Eagerly the Indians flocked to meet their former friend, expecting to greet their chief, Donnacona and his companions. When they were informed that Donnacona and all the others had died they immediately became distant and sullen. It was an ill-fated step, one that boded ill for the future relations of France and the savages. It undoubtedly helped to weigh against the French in later years when the total resentment smoldered with growing intensity to finally flame up and assume a volume of hatred and venom as only those tribes of the American Continent knew how. The Indians never forgot an injury. They knew the art of biding their time and when the propitious moment presented itself revenge was repaid an hundred-fold.

Regretfully we turn over the historic pages of that sylvan scene of the yesteryears of Canada. Well may the memory of those Algonquin children of the wilds stir the imagination of our poets; well may the tears we shed blur the pages of Hochelaga's tragic passing; well may we blush with shame when we recall the wiles white men practised upon those trusting, generous, kindly Hochelagans!

Returning to France Jacques Cartier met Sieur de Roberval, (whom His Most Christian Majesty, Francis 1, had created viceroy and lieutenant-general of Canada, Hochelaga, Saguenay, Newfoundland, Labrador and several other places), in the vicinity of St. John's, Newfoundland, en route to Charlesbourg Royal, where Cartier had established a fort. Roberval was on his way with about 200 men and women, many of whom were "jail birds", because the French people did not lay sufficient importance upon a continent

where scurvy and suffering from cold might cost them their lives, perhaps; Jacques Cartier's early adventures in New France left a bitter remembrance. No interest was taken, therefore, when requests for pioneer settlers for Canada were advanced by the Government. It was necessary, then, to gather men and women from the jails of France. Later events proved that to depend on thieves and cutthroats as a basis for planting a colony was utter folly. Outlaws, bred to a life of dissolution, did not take kindly to raising vegetables and setting down to a life of homemaking. It turned out to be a tragic failure. Famine and lawlessness prevailed. Surely a rotten foundation whereupon to found a new civilization. Roberval ordered Cartier to retrace his steps to Charlesbourg, but the more experienced gentleman slipped away homeward in the darkness of night.

Montreal's interest in Roberval lies in the fact that in order to reach the Sault which he visited, the man of many titles and his party had, of necessity, to pass the Town of Hochelaga. Furthermore, it is related how Jacques Cartier was sent the fourth time to Canada to recall Roberval for more pressing services. There is no record of this final voyage.

Jacques Cartier, wearied maybe, from a life of hardship and danger, seemed to settle down to enjoy the autumn years of life. He was honoured by his country, ennobled and given the title of *Sieur de Limoilou*. He passed away on September 1st, 1557.

Although Jacques Cartier left no permanent imprint of his visits to Hochelaga, he gave to Montreal the heritage of a vivid account of the Indian village and the surrounding country and a fine appreciation of its fertile soil.



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CHAPTER II



CHAMPLAIN VISITS HOCHELAGA

— In 1602 —

“La Place Royale” Chosen for Site of Fur Trade Settlement in 1611

First Fur Trading at Montreal Transacted June 13, 1611



NE balmy June day in 1603, a battered and weather beaten sailing vessel rounded the picturesque twists and turns of the St. Lawrence River. It tacked beyond the first trading post where Frenchmen had for many years bartered for precious peltries, namely Tadoussac. It crept silently, but steadily up the delightful water route; the pathway used for so many years by dusky-skinned Indians and which today is the highway for ships great and small from every quarter of the globe. Gently the green water gurgled against the prow of the sailing vessel as it bobbed beyond those spectacular mountains of Baie St. Paul whose grandeur in shrouded greys beckons our modern artists to new and more inspired efforts with pigments and the canvas. It sallied beyond what is now known as St. Jean Port Joli and many other lovely hills and dells which line the route

to Cape Diamond. (Champlain founded the city of Quebec in 1608).

At last the vessel is anchored off that repelling cliff which today, (capped by the Chateau Frontenac, with the Citadel's Ramparts bristling nearby, a gentle reminder that foes will not be welcome if on unfriendly mission,) is called Quebec, remaining there until Monday, June 28th, whence it continued on its way to Hochelaga and Lachine Rapids.

But who is aboard the sailing vessel you might well inquire. Who, indeed, but that famous navigator, writer, artist, explorer and founder of Canada's oldest city, Quebec, Samuel de Champlain. He had received orders from the King of France to penetrate the St. Lawrence as far as possible. He was accompanied by, among others, Dupont Gravé. They reached Lachine Rapids on July 2nd, the feast of the Visitation.

Samuel de Champlain did not find the ancient Town of Hochelaga when he traversed the lovely glades and rolling farmlands of the Indians' former stronghold; not a vestige of the palisades, or the long-houses did he discover. He traced his way to the heights of Mount Royal and, as did Jacques Cartier, he viewed the panorama for miles, marvelling at the unspoilt grandeur of the scene.

Whatever had happened to the Indian village? Evidently there had been a feud, a battle wherein the Town had been pillaged, destroyed and the natives either murdered or forced to seek other hunting grounds. Champlain noted the fertility of the soil. He recognised its position as one of extreme importance, especially with regard to the possibilities of building up a fur trade with the Indians, who would come from the west and north to barter their peltries. He it was who first discovered that Hochelaga, now Montreal, was an Island. Having made other observations of

the country Champlain and his party returned to France to report.

LA PLACE ROYALE

We now come to a most important point in the history of the City of Montreal. Champlain had again returned to scout around the vicinity of Hochelaga, that was in the year 1611. It is alleged that previously he passed over the district, but no definite steps were taken to establish a post in this locality. In 1611 Champlain picked out the Island as the most practical spot to establish a permanent trading-post for the fur-trade with the Indians. He had studied the country in much detail, but he found no place more suitable for the site of a settlement than the district he named La Place Royale.

With regard to La Place Royale there is no district on the entire Island of Montreal which demands our eternal remembrance as does the tract of land situated between Notre Dame street, St. Francois Xavier, St. Sulpice street, St. Paul street, and Commissioners street. Here the founding of Montreal was given birth and many of the little settlement's most solemn ceremonies were enacted. Here, with honest, heartfelt integrity Montreal was dedicated to the glory of God and the Holy Family. How far short we have fallen from the high ideals set up by Ville Marie's (Hochelaga) founders we, of the present time, are only too conscious.

Scouting along the shore in a canoe with some of his men and an Indian, Champlain could find no more suitable landing place owing to the swirling waters whose treachery is well known even at the present time. Champlain, in his records declares, "And near this Place Royale there is a little river running back a goodly way into the interior, all along which there are more than sixty acres of cleared land, like meadows, where one might sow grain and make gar-

dens. Formerly savages tilled there. There were also a great number of other beautiful meadows, to support as many cattle as one wishes, and all kinds of trees that we have in our forests at home, with a great many vines, walnuts, plum trees, cherries, strawberries, and other kinds which are very good to eat. Among others there is one very excellent, which is sweet to the taste resembling that of plantains (which is a fruit of the Indies), and is white as snow, with a leaf like a nettle, and running on trees or the ground like ivy. Fishing is very good there, and there are all the kinds that we have in France, and a great many others that we do not have, which are very good; as is also game of all kinds; and hunting is good, stags, hinds, does, caribous, rabbits, lynxes, bears, beavers, and other little animals which so abound that while we were at these rapids we never were without them." Having decided that Place Royale was the most practical and advantageous position for the proposed post Champlain set his men to fell the trees and clear away the dense growth of the primitive forestland. We must pause here in silent reverence, because this hallowed centre is peopled with spirits of that long ago who crowd around us whispering of trials, terrors and tortures; of hopes counter-balanced by despair; of peasant life and savage intrusion; of barter in precious skins of rare and beautiful wild beasts of the hinterlands. They whisper of floods, of hunger and pestilence, of storms and fierce flashes of lightening and rolling thunder followed by earthquakes too terrible to contemplate. This is a spot in the heart of our great City of Montreal quite unlike any other quarter. Do not hurry away. Think well of the price that was paid by those early settlers from France so that we of this war-torn Empire may enjoy the riches and the beauty of Ville Marie de Montreal. What a heritage! What a God-inspired gift!

Champlain cast an appraising eye on the assets of both land and water. He noted the little island not far

off, later called Ile Normandin, about twenty fathoms from Place Royale. He considered it would make a splendid site for a well defended set of buildings. He also remarked on the meadows containing good potter's clay, for use either as in brick-making, or building material. He even went so far as to have some of the clay worked up and fashioned into a wall, four feet thick, about three or four feet high and ten fathoms long. This he did as an experiment to observe how it would weather the winter and to what extent it might aid in preventing the spring floods invading the settlement. It was a busy time for the great man, the leader of his adventurous company.

Not only did Champlain experiment with a breakwater, but he dug two gardens, one in the already cleared meadows and the other in the space he had cleared of trees. On June 2nd he sowed some seeds in those first furrows harrowed by Frenchmen on the Island of Montreal. Champlain was pleased with the result. In a few weeks little green sprouts, healthy and sturdy, proved to Champlain that here the full richness of generous soil would in like manner yield to other tillers of the brown earth a fuller measure of seasonal crops; it was a moment of exaltation for the first farmer of Montreal.

Not satisfied to be the first explorer to discover that Hochelaga was an island, and the first French-Canadian farmer, the first brick-manufacturer and first mason of the Island, he may also be credited with establishing the first fur trading station in the vicinity. It seems that on June 13th, 1611, two hundred Huron savages approached the settlement on a friendly mission. The outcome of the parley was the presentation to Champlain by the natives of 100 beaver skins, which courtesy was reciprocated by the Frenchmen with presents of various kinds of merchandise. Later we shall see how this habit grew until it became one of Montreal's most important activities.

Once again Champlain lead the way for future generations of Europeans in braving the terrors of the wildly rushing waters of what he termed the "Sault", meaning the Lachine Rapids. No white man ever had the opportunity, of course, but that does not shadow the daring of the hardy Frenchman. To begin with he did not know how to swim, he realized, too, that the feat he was to undertake in a little birch-bark canoe was not without its hazards. So, eight canoes were prepared by the Indians, eight delicate, gracefully-formed birchbark, handmade canoes, balanced to float in perfect rhythm to the swift, sure strokes of the expert savages. The natives stripped themselves naked. Every movement had to be free; each dip of the paddle must carry its full quota of power. Champlain was told that he, too, must rid himself of superfluous clothing. "They made me take off everything but my shirt", he wrote in his records. He was given to understand that often men lost their lives shooting the rapids. He was warned that he must hold fast to the seats of the canoe if by chance it capsized and under no circumstances to abandon it. At a given signal the eight canoes shot out into the swirling, foaming, rock-ridden rapids. Fiercely the boiling whirlpools seethed about them; by a hair's breadth the slender canoes slipped by threatening boulders, and parried the madly dancing waters' angry torment. Fighting with practised strokes the Indians won the battle, triumphant in their strength to withstand the almost overpowering forces of Nature. It was a wild ride, a thrilling episode in that visit of Champlain's to Hochelaga which made even so seasoned a sailor hold his breath.

Champlain explored the surrounding districts making copious notes, vivid pen pictures in words of the advantages and beauty of the neighbourhood. As Montreal's first city planner he not only christened La Place Royale, and other famous sites, but he gave the beautiful island opposite the name of St. Hélène,

probably in honor of his young wife whom he had married five months previously, and who, owing to her youth, was required by law to remain with her parents for a couple of years longer.

Champlain stayed four weeks in the new settlement. Four of the miracle weeks of the whole year. May-days on the Island are spring days of ecstasy when all Nature combines to charm and blot out the remembrance of winter's chill. Song birds and radiant sunlight, tender green leaves just unfurled in rare and delicate shades of green, the scent of rich, warm earth; and spring blossoms spilling their sweet perfume on every passing breeze that ripples under skies of purest blue. And June with its wealth of posies, the trilliums and violets from the wooded dells, the cherry blossoms and wild hawthorn. A delirium of loveliness too enthralling to enjoy to the full. All this Champlain must have realized as he lingered by the River with its ever-changing phases and its soothing, constant movement, like music in the distance, a fairylike refrain.

But the chains of beauty that held him had, at last, to loose their hold. Champlain returned to Quebec on June 18th en route to France, which he reached before winter set in, to report to headquarters. Two years elapsed before Champlain again set foot on the shores of the St. Lawrence River to continue his efforts to Christianize the savages and establish fur-trading centres in New France.

Montreal's history is closely interwoven with that of the City of Quebec and to write about the former without noting the development of the latter would be difficult, indeed. The true spirit of French Canada is a deeply religious one. In fact to attempt to portray its character without including the mysteries and visions, the vows and the prayers of black-robed nuns and Christian priests would be utter folly.

Church spires and monastery buildings were an integral part of the movement. A profoundly religious urge swept France from end to end in those days. Both men and women devoted their lives to extending the gospel of Jesus Christ. Celibacy and the cloister moved ladies and gentlemen of wealth and position to forego the vanities of society and devote themselves to the Way of the Cross. It was not strange, therefore, to find them setting out in sailing vessels for New France to take up missionary work first in Quebec and later in Ville Marie de Montreal.

On the other hand there were the fortune-seekers, who sought the power which money offers and who were not influenced so much by spiritual matters. They knew of the wealth in peltries lying almost dormant in New France. Colonists must of necessity settle in the district in order to establish trading posts with Indian trappers whose yearly collections of beautiful skins were the envy of ambitious trademen. It was found necessary to form a company, backed by men of means and influence. Thus, the two-fold movement brought into being a scheme which eventually turned the trade markets of Europe into newer and very profitable channels.

The leaders of the trek to a new world were given a four-fold duty to perform by the companies they represented. First the selection of suitable sites for establishing forts and stations; a most important work requiring wisdom and foresight. Secondly, the sites for future hamlets and towns and thirdly the importation of pioneer settlers who would use muscle and brawn unflinchingly to clear the forest lands and till the soil. The fourth duty was, perhaps, the most appealing to the French crusaders. It involved conversion of Canada's savage tribes and the employment of Frenchmen of sincerely religious conviction; missionaries who were willing to relinquish everything they treasured to face a life of extreme suffering in hunger, (which often

verged onto starvation,) bitter Arctic weather, blistering heat and in many instances martyrdom in its crudest form. And yet those religious, educated gentleman of Christ answered the call. They closed their eyes to horrors, hardships and hazards and harkening only to the voices of conscience they carried their burden without complaint, bearing the message of Christianity even when burning fires scorched their living flesh and savage hatred perpetrated loathsome brutality on their persons. Let us cherish the memory of those priests of the Holy Word who would rather have had their tongues cut out than deny the power of their faith.

To tell the story of Montreal is impossible without portraying the religious side of the picture. There were, of course, schemers and lawbreakers, partisans in wickedness and deceit, but they did not represent the majority, or the great leaders without whose inspiration the struggling settlements would have failed in their mission. Our City has been called a "City of Churches". Well may it be, because under the shadow of the Cross has it thrived from earliest days.

Among Canada's great leaders no name stands out more brilliantly than that of Samuel de Champlain. To begin with he was a deeply religious Christian gentleman. His fair-minded treatment of the French settlers and native Indians could not be questioned. But, he blundered badly by taking sides with lesser tribes against the Iroquois. Hitherto, fire-arms were an unknown power to warriors of the great house of Five Nations. When Champlain mowed down Indian braves on the shores of Lake Champlain he sowed, at the same time, seeds of bitter hatred. Hatred that grew stronger with time. His countrymen paid the price with their life's blood.

Father Le Jeune remarked in his "Relations" of 1633: "It often occurs to me to reflect how this great

man, who, by his admirable sagacity and unequalled prudence in conduct of business, had gained so much worldly renown, yet prepares for himself a very bright crown of glory in heaven by the concern he testifies in behalf of so many, whose souls are in danger of perishing through unbelief in these wild countries. I pray earnestly for him every day, and our Company, having by his means, occasion to glorify God in such a noble enterprise."

But the vivid scars of battle which Champlain waged against the Iroquois did not heal. They were festering sores, searing, livid reminders of a debt to be collected with accumulated interest. Wherever the mighty tribe of Iroquois wandered they tracked down their French enemies, scouting hundreds of miles to do so; relentless, untiring, unscrupulous. France paid heavily and the payment was in blood, tears, torment and torture.

CHAPTER III



MADAME SAMUEL DE CHAMPLAIN

— Prelude —



PERHAPS the loneliest figure of Canada's womenkind of New France is that of Hélène Champlain, wife of Samuel de Champlain. Her story is usually presented by historians in a few words. It is only by reading between the lines, ferreting deeply into the daily routine of the French settlers as recorded some years later by priests and religious sisters, missionaries in Canada, that the pathos of Hélène's four years' residence in New France is realized.

Champlain wrote many volumes concerning the new world. His writings and drawings are a source of valuable information to historians, but with regard to his wedded life he left not a trace. Being many years her senior and busy with the complexities of his work—as founder of Quebec City and an explorer whose duties called him far afield even in the dead of winter, the plight of his young wife may not have seemed of much importance. Perhaps he never realized how terrified she was of the Indians and how she fretted for companions of her own social equal.

Hélène Champlain was the first lady of the French noblesse to take up residence in Quebec. She played her part nobly, as a Christian lady, although she could not continue to live in Quebec on account of broken health. Nevertheless, she had the distinction of being Canada's first Christian woman teacher. Little savage children listened to her lessons with love in their hearts for the beautiful lady who was their friend. She taught the ethics of Christianity in the Algonquin tongue which proved that she had a well-trained mind and a determination to do good despite privations and consuming homesickness.

Hélène's arrival in New France had a deeper meaning than is apparent on the surface. New France needed women of her type to help civilize the savage peoples of the wilds. Doubtless the political leaders of the movement deemed it a wise step to send a lady from the royal courts of cultured France as a decoy to attract other women to the new settlement.

Some years passed before the plan bore fruit. Champlain did not live to see the day when the choicest flowers of France's womenkind forsook the world of fun and fashion in exchange for hardship, hunger and horrors, following the trail broken by his patient wife, Hélène.

As a reward for her magnificent courage and her splendid, kindly patience under circumstances surpassingly difficult, Hélène Champlain deserves high honour in the ranks of heroic Canadian women.

MADAME CHAMPLAIN—CANADA'S FIRST
PIONEER FRENCH LADY TO
PENETRATE UPSTREAM AND
SETTLE IN QUEBEC

About three hundred years ago Quebec city snuggled at the foot of the great bluff with only about fifty settlers of the white race housed in primitive homesteads—hardy sons of France, they were, lured to a new world for various reasons — love of adventure, fortune seekers and that great appeal, the call of the wild. Winter governed at this particular date, December, 1610. The great waterway to France and the inlands of Canada was frozen and inactive. Wild winds from still icier regions raged in vicious temper, battering at the puny cabins and torturing the outspreading branches of pine and hemlock, thrashing them this way and that. Great clots of snow, like wadding, tumbled from off the tree twigs to be tossed at random hither and yon, while sweeping the white carpet before it the madcap winds piled high mounds of snow against the humble doorways threatening to smother and obliterate every obstacle restraining its untamed pranks and diabolic frenzy.

"Mon Dieu", what a climate! Drawing themselves still closer to their primitive hearth fires the pioneers chatted about the problems of food supplies. That was a serious topic at times, too serious to dwell upon. Always ready with a song, the French-Canadian habitants recalled scenes of their homeland with ancient chansons; doubtless many a weary hour was whiled away to the lilt of tunes which, to this day may be heard whenever a French Canadian finds himself bored, or maybe, just happy. Sometimes, in a more serious mood, the settlers discussed if, when spring-time came and waterways cleared, they would again see their beloved leader Champlain. He had left them weeks previously, surely he would not fail them.

For about seventeen years the great explorer had been interested in Canada and its settlers. They loved him. They also respected him. At this precise date Champlain was making arrangements for his marriage to H  l  ne Boul  e, aged twelve years, with the wealthy parents of the bride. Nicholas Boul  e and his wife lived in St. Germain l'Auxerrois, Paris, the former occupying the post of secretary of the King's Chamber. They were Calvinists and in this faith H  l  ne was instructed during the early years of her life.

Champlain's betrothal took place on Wednesday, December 29, 1610, the matrimonial contract being drawn up before Pierre du Gas, Sieur de Monts, a Huguenot and friend of Nicholas Boul  e, two days previously. The contract made H  l  ne heiress of all Champlain's property. Her parents agreed to give him 6,000 livres before the marriage. This agreement, yellow with age, may be viewed today in the Church of Saint Germain l'Auxerrois, Paris, opposite to the Louvre.

Monsieur Boul  e handed over 4,500 livres to Champlain on December 29, as part of the promised 6,000 livres. The following day the marriage was solemnized before relatives and friends, H  l  ne then returned home with her parents, as she was not of marriageable age according to the French laws. She became a Roman Catholic in two years. A short time following the marriage Champlain departed for New France leaving his wife behind. He was destined to make many trips back and forth across the Atlantic before he finally arrived in Quebec, in 1620, with H  l  ne.

MADAME CHAMPLAIN ARRIVES IN QUEBEC

Madame Champlain's arrival in Quebec with her husband marked a new era in the history of New

France. It registered, also, a new phase in the history of victorious women destined to fight like men for their lives amidst surroundings of the crudest and most barbarous imaginable.

Ten years had passed since the day of Champlain's marriage. The young bride, sailing up the St. Lawrence River with her elderly husband, was destined to face problems quite foreign to anything she had hitherto experienced. First a long sea voyage, then New France with its magnificent scenery and utter desolation with regard to civilized settlements. Hour after hour the ship nosed forward. Silence, except for the weird cries of wild birds and the moaning of the wind as it whined and raged through their ship's rigging to fade away in the distance, left H  l  ne with a sense of premonition too fearful to contemplate. Finally, Quebec with its great bluff, repellant, even threatening in its towering strength, fortified as it was by a forest equally frightening because of the hidden dangers lurking in the depths of its shadowed denseness.

Champlain with his bride and her three maids were warmly welcomed by Quebec habitants. Very likely Madame Hebert, Canada's first farmeress and wife of the first apothecary of New France, was with the people who stood on the beach impatiently waiting for the little row boat to land its cargo. Madame Hebert was not of the French nobility, nor had she been trained in the school of culture which H  l  ne had graduated from, but as a pioneer woman keenly awake to the possibilities of great future for New France she was an outstanding figure. She must have tried hard to cheer the beautiful French lady who was twenty-two years old, with a husband in his fiftieth year, and who had left all that she held dear to face life in a wilderness peopled with savages.

One can imagine the procession slowly mounting the hill en route to Champlain's "Habitation", the house Champlain had erected some years previously.

Hélène, having survived the long sea voyage and put up with the discomforts entailed with admirable courage, could not have been prepared for the shock she received when her future home was sighted. A more forbidding domicile for a bride could not be imagined. All gables and angles the building was literally falling into decay. It is said that one wing had almost collapsed, the dove-cote, sun-dial and gallery had fallen like a pack of cards into the weedy ditch and the roof leaked so badly that the bedroom was almost uninhabitable. Broken shutters creaked on their rusty hinges; the tumble-down house was almost laughable in its appalling state of decay. One wonders why Champlain had not given orders to the workmen, living the year through in Quebec, to repair the homestead. Even though Champlain had not realized that repairs were so necessary during his absence in France his artisans surely might have prevented the ruination by a few timely applications of hammer and nails and the expenditure of a small amount of energy. But they did nothing and Hélène, although so warmly welcomed, must have resented the indifference which was to cause her added discomfort and misery in a situation already strained to the breaking point. Was it for misery such as this that she had forfeited comfort and safety, friends, family and religion? But Quebec's records do not reveal one word of Hélène's reactions, nor do they mirror the terror hounding her by day and night of wilderness monsters and savage warwhoops.

As the "Habitation" loomed in sight, (the home that Champlain had probably spoken of many times in glowing terms,) it was a wonder that Hélène did not faint from shock. Broken shutters may not have mattered to Champlain, who was away most of the time and whose mind was fully occupied with miles of forestlands to be explored and the problems of a growing settlement to solve. Leaky roofs and rotten

planks, a decayed dove-cote and collapsed galleries were mere trifles to H  l  ne's husband; but to H  l  ne who was to spend hot summer days and the long, cold months of winter cooped up in the tottering mansion, the crumbling house was a thing monsterlike in its capacity to embitter her beyond words. She might have faced the situation more calmly in a tiny, comfortable log hut, winter-proof and cosy.

H  l  ne and her three maids brought out trunksful of household necessities from France, containing pewter, bedding, hangings, dishes and the various odds and ends which women cherish and which add that unexplainable home touch. Courageously the four women placed the treasures to their best advantage in the rooms. It was an almost useless effort to attain a more habitable appearance, but they were young and youth laughs at difficulties, fortunately.

Quebec at that time was the centre of military expedition and inland fur trade. The steep trails which formed the town's streets were marked by the footprints of trappers, traders, soldiers and savages, rough men hardened by a life of training in the wilds where weaklings have no place. H  l  ne was distinctly out of her element. From the luxury of the Royal Courts of France to be transplanted to a wilderness where rough woodsmen dominated and rough speech grated upon her ears, poor H  l  ne may be excused for the tears she shed and the sadness which warped her outlook.

Champlain was in the habit of spending the odd evening in the Hebert's kitchen, chatting with Louis Hebert beside the blazing hearthfire. Doubtless he encouraged his wife to make friends with Madame. We can picture the pretty French lady calling on the farmer's wife. Perhaps she needed advice about cooking problems, the conserving of wild berries for winter use, how to best undertake the responsibility of baking

bread in large quantities for several week's use, or tasty ways of serving up the inevitable dish of eels which standby became an item of monotony through its almost daily appearance on the menu when other fish was not to be had. Perhaps she hated the smell of eel stew. Other ladies from France disliked the odour. Irritating trifles become mountains when nerves are jarred. H  l  ne had many causes for the increasing unhappiness which made life in Quebec unbearable. Doubtless Madame Hebert was friendly, but conversation must have lagged when the two women had thrashed out the subjects of domestic science and local gossip.

At the end of four years H  l  ne nerves were so unstrung that her husband realized she must return to France. But it was a different H  l  ne who took ship for the homeland. The vivacious young lady, doubtless in love with her bearded husband when she landed in New France, looked at the world through different spectacles. She, like many another convert, became extremely religious. Religion was her safety valve, her salvation in a situation extremely grave. Returning to her former haunts she shunned her old friends and sought seclusion in the convent.

Champlain looked on with an appraising eye. When his wife asked permission to enter the Ursuline Convent to join the cloister he refused her request. He felt it might be a passing whim which in time would lose its allure when H  l  ne once more grew accustomed to the old life.

In all probability Champlain realized, too, the folly of his marriage to a woman young enough to be his daughter whom he had uprooted from her natural environment of ease and plenty to exist in a strange country among savages and bushmen. Whether he fathomed the depth of her misery one can only conjecture. The awakening from youth's rosy dream of a

happy married life, which shattered H  l  ne's outlook, may never have been quite understood by the great explorer.

Nine years slipped by. Champlain in the meantime had plenty to occupy his time and attention with Canada's problems. He saw H  l  ne for the last time in the year 1633 on business in France. Two years later he died in Quebec and H  l  ne was informed by Father Le Jeune that she was free to follow the dictates of her conscience.

But what of the marriage contract drawn up in Paris in 1610? H  l  ne, as Champlain's heir, was to inherit his fortune as already mentioned. Well, H  l  ne did not get the money after all. The Church in Quebec was bequeathed the balance of Champlain's worldly wealth, and his wife did not oppose the last will and testament of her old husband. Therefore, on July 11th, 1637, the legacy was confirmed.

When the worldlywise family connections of Samuel de Champlain heard the details of their relative's will they decided that the money belonged to Marie Camaret, wife of J. Hersault, and cousin of Champlain. A famous lawsuit ensued. Although there was no doubt as to the authenticity of the document with regard to Champlain's last legacy it was agreed by the attorney-general that in face of the deed of settlement it should be set aside. As this point was upheld by the court the property was returned to Champlain's relatives, less 900 livres derived from the sale of his chattels. H  l  ne doubtless heard about the squabble, but in silence she waited, biding her time to join the sisters in the shelter of cloistered monastery walls.

At last she was free from the conventionalities which bound her, taking away her freedom, her youth and her joy in worldly pleasures. Free to enter a religious life, to devote the balance of her time and

money to the only interest that remained, her faith. On November 7th, 1645, she joined the Ursula monastery in Paris as a benefactress, but she could not enter the cloister as such. Technicalities regarding her nunship interrupted Hélène's full participation in the order even as a novice. She decided to found an Ursuline Convent at Meaux. Another delay ensued, more waiting, more patient hoping. Then with the consent of higher authorities she left for Meaux on March 17th, 1648. Five months later she made public confession preparatory to the solemn vows she was making. Wearing a cord around her neck, and in the humble garments required for the act of renunciation, she carried a lighted taper and before the whole community entered the monastic life, her goal for so many years.

Hélène's monastic career was short. She died on December 20, 1654, at rest with the saints of her Order. Her death marked the passing of one of Canada's outstanding pioneer women; it closed the first act of colonization in New France with a lady of the French noblesse taking the leading part.

CHAPTER IV



VILLE MARIE FOUNDED 1642

Company of Notre Dame de Montreal Formed December 17, 1640, Permanent Settlement Developed



NEW FRANCE came very close to collapse in its early struggle to retain a hold, even though a feeble one, on the merest fringe of the vast North American Continent. Although the Company of One Hundred Associates had been conferred by royal charter in 1627 and the fur trade was thus fostered with every hope of eventual success, there were many side-issues which interfered with the development of the plan. There was a war on between England and France, to begin with. The French Government turned a cold eye on extensive moves to populate and Christianize a country which, judging by Jacques Cartier's loss of men and their sufferings, offered almost insurmountable barriers. Apprehension of famine and disease, plus a hard climate, were linked together, it seemed, to prevent any real advancement being made on colonization lines. But the power of peltries, even at that early date, kept alive the few sparks of interest that survived. It was the velvet paws of our four-footed friends of the hinterlands, whose handsome furred

coats were coveted by tradesmen and seekers after riches, which drew Frenchmen and others through bush and forest stretches, beyond the river routes and lake districts, where no white men had hitherto ventured.

Champlain died on Christmas Day, 1635. With his passing a new governor had to be elected. Charles Hault de Montmagny, Knight of Malta, was nominated by the Company and approved by the King. He arrived in Quebec, bringing with him more settlers and two noted French families, the de Repentigny's and the de la Potherie's. Others came the following year. Quebec began to grow.

What about Ville Marie? Was it to be left and lost to the French colonists? It might have, but for the interest shown by the religionists, French missionary priests, who were willing to exert every ounce of strength to save countless savage souls. And the fur industry. That was important; it entailed great fortunes. Even though China could not be reached via Canada here, at least, lay riches in enormous quantities. It was most necessary to establish a fortified town on the island. It developed that the whole island was given over during Champlain's time to a company for the purpose of furthering the trade interests of the primitive French settlement. Time proved their disinterested indifference. Nothing worthy of note had been accomplished.

It is necessary to recall at this point how the Jesuits in their persistent pursuit of heathen souls, adventured into the heart of the forest; paddled in company with friendly savages for hundreds of miles. Along river routes, across wide stretches of water, the lake regions, they roamed. Living and eating with them, they studied their language, their habits and their haunts. They observed the psychology of the average savage, realizing how the most trivial details

Nuns' Island
Home

Among the many islands conceded to M. de Lauson at the annual meeting of the Company of One Hundred Associates, held on January 15th, 1636, St. Paul's Island was among the various island properties granted de Lauson's eldest son at that date. Later it became the property of the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame.

Today it is a farm as well as a recreation home for the sisters. In this secluded spot the nuns enjoy a rest period. They wander at will under tall shade trees; or chat with old friends who have travelled many miles to renew the ties of their novitiate.

Visitors to Montreal may stand on the "Look-Out", atop Mount Royal, and view the historical landmark. Tourists cannot visit the Island. A special invitation must be issued by the Sister Superior, whose gentle hospitality, then, adds to the allure of those fortunate enough to be among the select company of invited guests.

A bird's-eye view of the Nuns' Island home is possible, however, when glancing riverward, slightly to the right from the "Look-Out". Large, round buildings, like mushrooms, mark the property, while other structures comprise the "Home" and lesser buildings of the sanctuary.

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sometimes stirred up enmity which often exploded in warfare. Writing to their superiors in France the reverend gentlemen told in pathetically appealing words the saga of their chequered career.

Soon copies of the Jesuit "Relations", so widely published in the old country, became the rage. High and low, rich and poor, lords and ladies, priests, prelates, ladies of the cloister, women and men of all ages, harkened to hair-raising tales of black-robed priests and naked, dusky-skinned savages far away in New France. What an adventure! What an opportunity to save souls from utter perdition! Some of the readers were fairly consumed with eagerness to serve. Others, with worldly adroitness, read between the lines of religious ecstasy; they sensed the chance to amass great fortunes. And so the movement to civilize and populate, (according to plans laid down by France,) the fair, new country lying on either side of the beautiful St. Lawrence River, became a dominant interest and a scheme of some importance.

The colonization of New France, as already mentioned, necessitated the introduction of settlers from France and the formation of a company to negotiate the furtherance of the movement. Nothing of any account was accomplished for the Island of Montreal by the Company of One Hundred Associates up to the time of Champlain's death, but scarcely a month passed before the members met at the house of M. Jean de Lauson, the intendant of the Company, and a scheme was laid whereby the latter gentleman and his descendants would profit very considerably.

At that annual meeting, held on January 15th, 1636, some important concessions were made by the Company which involved the Montreal Island. M. de Lauson, as intendant of the Company, had a keen eye to the future, it seems. Therefore, it was arranged at the annual meeting that three of this gentleman's

friends should be granted concessions which included part of the Island of Orleans and the Island of Montreal. Furthermore, several other "concessions" were passed on behalf of de Lauson's eldest son, namely all the other islands formed by the St. Lawrence River. This latter grant was far-reaching, because it entailed exclusive fishing rights and navigation throughout the length and breadth of the mighty river. Not satisfied, even with so many favors, Monsieur de Lauson also demanded that his eldest son should receive more than sixty leagues of land facing the River St. Lawrence from the River St. Francis on Lake St. Pierre up to and above Sault St. Louis, (Lachine Rapids).

Modern financiers and profiteers could not have plotted more cunningly than did that crafty Frenchman of the seventeenth century. He resigned as intendant of the Company and the three friends transferred the properties to him. A very slick deal. But, there were certain clauses which the Company inserted in the deeds of Concession which were entirely neglected by the wily de Lauson. The duties entailed included tilling the soil and the colonization of the settlements. M. de Lauson did neither. Later on the oversight was marked by the Company and the concessions were revoked by the One Hundred Associates on December 17th, 1640. We shall refer later to the transaction and push on to the real birth of Ville Marie.

French Canadians of the twentieth century are mystics, but the French of old France in the seventeenth century were infinitely more so. They revelled in signs and wonders of the supernatural. They interpreted their prayers as being answered when dreams and visions haunted their sleeping as well as their waking hours. It was a common and laudable practise to be swayed by visions and led through the paths of mystery which miraculously unfolded problems of worldly import.

The origin of Ville Marie's birth is told, perhaps in its most authentic form, by Dollier de Casson, whose wide experience as a soldier and later on as the parish priest of Montreal made him an authority. He was an intelligent, pious gentleman and he not only kept a vigilant, fatherly watch over his flock, but he kept historical records of the growing town which to-day are invaluable to the history student.

According to Dollier de Casson, (although he was a devout Catholic priest) the "mysterious" revelations of Jerome le Royer de la Dauversière, collector of taxes at La Flèche, in Anjou, were none other than the reading of the Jesuit "Relations". It seems that the writer, in picturing the Island of Montreal to his friends in France emphasized the advantages of establishing a mission on the Island which was placed so that Indians, treking from the hinterlands en route south, would come in contact with the missionaries.

Being a most devout gentleman, M. de la Dauversière spent much time on his knees. He was fired with enthusiasm when he read all about the possibilities of saving hundreds of savage souls from paganism. The thought gripped him. He talked incessantly about the Island, its beauty, its location, and so forth until he visionized the French colony settled and thriving with religious men and women Christianizing the barbarous natives. He believed he was called to give himself up to the work of founding a settlement in Montreal, but on the other hand he was a married man. With a wife and six children and a very limited income. What could he do?

Well, the outcome was M. de la Dauversière decided that he must consult his Jesuit friend and confessor, Father Chauveau, rector of the college at La Flèche. Poor Dauversière was distraught not knowing for certain that his "impressions" were from God or not. One can but imagine his relief when the holy

Father encouraged the idea, advising the worthy tax-gatherer to "engage in it in good earnest".

Greatly relieved in mind as to the stand he must take, M. de la Dauversière hurried home fairly burning with zealous devotion to his cherished scheme. It happened at the time that M. Pierre Chevrier, Baron de Fanchamp, was living in the house of de la Dauversière, and from all accounts he was there for the purpose of increasing his religious ardour. Chevrier was very well off and apparently a gentleman of leisure. He later joined a new order of secular priests known to the world as the "Seminary of St. Sulpice".

Together the two gentlemen discussed the "call". Chevrier must have read the "Relations", because with his host constantly talking about the Island it would have been very unlikely that his curiosity in this connection would not have been aroused. They decided to go to Paris together to form a company. One can imagine the two men, both ardent Catholics, reciting their prayers and supplications to a benevolent Father whose guidance they believed would solve their difficulties and smooth the road to eventual success.

Quoting from Dollier de Casson's *History of Montreal* with reference to the meeting of Dauversière and M. Olier in Paris, he states: "These two servants of Jesus Christ meeting in this mansion, were on a sudden enlightened by a heavenly and altogether extraordinary gleam. They forthwith saluted one another and embraced".

It is impossible to pass by the introduction of M. Jean-Jacques Olier de Verneuil, founder of St. Sulpice in Paris and Montreal, without emphasizing the significance of his efforts towards the foundation of Ville Marie. He was born in Paris on September 20, 1608, the year that Champlain so courageously founded the City of Quebec. He acted as missionary in rural

France during the early days of his priesthood. Then came a day when he was offered a more important position. He was very undecided regarding the proposal and he, like the prophets of old, wrangled with the problem in prayer. Many an hour he spent kneeling in humble reverence before his Maker, seeking guidance. At last he believed his prayers were answered in a supernatural light. He believed he was called to go to New France to be a light to the Gentiles. His superiors refused to consider the idea for various reasons.

In a sweeping effort to revive religion the Roman Catholic Church in France stirred the priests and laity to renewed spiritual quickening. New religious orders sprang up on every hand. Then an epidemic of missionary enthusiasm moved the clergy as well as the people to engage in Christianizing New France. The young priest, Olier, inflamed with the ardent desire to serve in this capacity, became one of the leaders of France's renaissance of religion.

Bowing to the decrees of his superiors in the Church with regard to New France, Olier still clung, in spirit at least, to his vision; and eventually he was the means of founding a training school, the seminary of St. Sulpice, in Paris, whereby young men were trained for the priesthood. Curiously enough when Olier and de la Dauversière met accidentally in one of the galleries of the Chateau de Meudon in Paris they met as old friends. "I know your design", said Olier, "I am going to commend it to God at the holy altar." He immediately left to recite holy mass. M. de la Dauversière attended the ritual, stirred deeply and positively to the realization that his visions were of holy inspiration. "Take this," Olier said, "to commence the work of God", as he talked with his new friend after the service. The astounded de la Dauversière was enraptured when he discovered that Olier had thrust into his hand one hundred pistoles.

One hundred pistoles to found the parish of Ville Marie, in the heart of the wilds of New France! That money cannot be spoken of in an off-hand manner, because it was as the acorn is to the mighty oak, the very root and branch of our great city. One hundred pistoles. Not such a fabulous sum of money in itself. But its strength increased with the passing of days and years until at this moment the spontaneous offering given at a moment of intense religious fervor is living proof of a Godly man's simple faith.

Then de la Dauversière hurried back to his friend, the Baron de Fancamp, who was destined later to become one of the priests of the Seminary of St. Sulpice and serve with Dollier de Casson at the Ville Marie mission. Both men received more ambition to forge ahead, no matter how difficult the route, with that one hundred pistoles as a "nest egg". Soon three other "members" were persuaded to join the little band of missionaries. They were doubtless influenced by Olier as they were his particular friends, the first mentioned being the Baron de Renty, an apostle of remarkably pious habits and a man of good repute. Thus six religious men formed what is known as the Société de Notre Dame de Montréal. They decided to sail in the spring of 1641 for their cherished Island. With this in view they immediately started the necessary preparations.

Although M. Olier never visited the Island his generous contribution and influence are today evident. Three hundred years cannot destroy his spirited determination which founded the religious order of St. Sulpice in Paris. Three centuries of unselfish service on the part of the Sulpicians towards the welfare of Montreal and its inhabitants have crowned the humble priest's sincere effort to spread Jesus Christ's doctrine among the heathen of New France, especially at Ville Marie. The gentlemen of St. Sulpice have stood on guard for the settlement's good from the beginning of

its history. They have given their wealth, their strength and their knowledge, their time and their very lives in fostering the parish left in their charge by M. Jean-Jacques Olier de Verneuil their esteemed founder of the order of St. Sulpice in Paris and Ville Marie, in New France. His portrait may be seen among the precious museum relics of the Notre Dame Church. Many and sundry pass daily before the painted picture, people from all walks of life, and although the costumes of our modern tourists may not be in accord with the modesty emulated (particularly in women's dress) at the time of the foundation of Ville Marie, neither time nor change in modes and customs can alter the gentle benevolence of the reverend Olier's aristocratic mien. He was a gentleman, a scholar and a true Christian.

Having formed the Company of Montreal the members had, among the many obstacles which handicapped the development of their plans, one very serious problem on their hands. The problem was M. de Lauson's possession of the Island. He resided in Vienne, being at the time Intendant of the Dauphiné, whither the two religious gentlemen Dauversière and Fancamp, journeyed. De Lauson refused to part with the property, despite the fact that he had neither tilled the soil, nor colonized it according to his agreement with the Government. He feared, too, that his interests in the fur trade might be interfered with by the new company. A brusque "no" was all the two enthusiasts received for their pains.

It took more than a worldly-minded man's refusal to co-operate in what was termed a "holy mission" to cool the enthusiasm of the Society. Through the influence of Father Charles Lalemant, the first Jesuit superior of the Canadian missions, de Lauson was persuaded to sell his interests in connection with the Island, the deal being transacted in August, 1640.

Besides ships, equipment, provisions, tools, etc., for the proposed journey the Society realized that they must have a leader of experience in warfare. Savage attacks were a menace of no trifling importance. The settlers must be led by a soldier, one who would not fear to meet the blood-thirsty fiends of forest and mountain ranges. Consulting Father Lalemant on the subject de la Dauversière received good news. "I know a gallant gentleman of Champagne named M. de Chomedey de Maisonneuve who has such and such qualities and who might suit you well", replied the Jesuit Father.

Apparently de la Dauversière did not rush in whenever matters of vital decision were concerned. Instead of approaching Maisonneuve openly the astute Frenchman picked up his baggage and very quietly arranged to stay at the inn where Maisonneuve was known to reside. Presumably a tourist he joined the other guests in friendly conversation, chatting amiably about the topics of the day, eventually and in a most casual manner, introducing the subject of New France and the possibility of colonizing the Island of Ville Marie. Maisonneuve was present during the talks. He pricked up his ears with regard to the discussions on New France. At the moment he was on the lookout for just such a post as M. de la Dauversière was referring to. He took part in the pros and cons of the venture. More than that, at the earliest possible moment he approached the clever de la Dauversière in private and disclosed to him how, in order to escape the idle life he was forced to live at the time, he would be only too glad to undertake the work entailed in settling a colony in New France. He stated his qualifications to the sharp ears of de la Dauversière, how he had had a soldier's training, was independent as to time, etc., and to crown all he summed up his assets with a statement that he was willing to use his life and his purse without any other ambition than to have

the honor to serve God and the king in the calling and profession of arms which he had always followed. M. de la Dauversière was more than satisfied with his plan. He considered Maisonneuve a gift from Heaven. Here was the very man to lead the crusaders from France; a soldier, devout, willing to serve without recompense, even unto the grave. What more could France expect of one of her sons?

To the mystically-minded this romantic story of the birth of Ville Marie is very appealing, but to the materialists it, perhaps, appears as a game of chance. Nevertheless, one cannot deny the almost miraculous weaving of personalities (formerly unknown, or unheard of), into a pattern which as a whole presented a perfect assembling of qualities necessary to conduct an undertaking which fairly bristled with difficulties and almost insurmountable barriers.

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CHAPTER V



PAUL DE CHOMEDEY SIEUR DE MAISONNEUVE

**Soldier, Christian and Gentleman, Joins
the Society of Notre Dame de Montreal**

Appointed Governor of New Settlement



WHETHER led by fate, or miraculously guided by a Higher Source, the Company, in making arrangements for the proposed settlement in the new world, could not have found a more suitable leader than Maisonneuve. He was nurtured in a hard school, that of war. At the age of thirteen he entered the army and received practical experience in Holland where he gained first-hand knowledge of war tactics. He retained his religious belief throughout the years amongst men both lawless and Godless. Instead of weakening his belief the worldly libertines strengthened his convictions and gave him an added fear of the Judgment Day. In this way the young man was left to his own resources, pretty much; many lonely hours hung on the French boy's hands. Hours of longing for home and suitable companions. He learnt to play the lute to while away the time.

Maisonneuve was thoroughly disgusted with the surroundings and companions he was forced to endure. He had been reading an account of one Le Jeune, who was, at the actual moment of his reading, working among savages in a wild country across the ocean. Here, thought Paul, is the very life I crave. The more he thought over the matter the stronger he became in his desire to work under difficulties no matter how stupendous provided he could fight for righteousness—the crusader's spirit electrified his waking hours and brought with the night dreams of successful endeavor for God, King and country.

In reading Father Le Jeune's *Relations* Maisonneuve noted the name of Father Charles Lalemant mentioned several times, the latter having been formerly the superior of the Canadian missions and who had recently returned to France. Paul called on Lalemant who realized in talking with Maisonneuve that he was the leader the Society of Montreal was searching for. It was through the influence of Father Lalemant that the meeting described previously was effected. Maisonneuve was in the prime of life, probably within his fortieth year, hard as nails physically and yet absorbed in the doctrine of his beloved Roman Catholic religion. Lucky, indeed, were the members of the Society of Montreal to have discovered so able and worthy a representative and leader.

The organizers of the colonization of Ville Marie had a better chance to equip the colony than did the little group of Frenchmen who settled in Quebec quite ignorant of either weather conditions, food necessities or matters pertaining to health.

Everything that could be thought of, or done, to further the success of the venture was carried out to the letter by the enthusiasts. We are told that Olier and M. Fancamp sent out to Quebec twenty tons of provisions and tools to be kept in Quebec in readiness

for the arrival of Maisonneuve's party. Despite the fact that Maisonneuve met opposition to his scheme of founding a settlement farther upstream, on the other hand the Company of One Hundred Associates were most liberal in their endeavors to assist the cause both in transporting men as well as provisions at their own cost; also taking pains to see that suitable sites were chosen for housing the provisions in Quebec as well as in Three Rivers.

Taking Quebec as their pattern of what a new settlement should be the Company of Montreal planned to have a three-fold strong-hold, with its resident clergy to take care of the morals and the souls of those under their care; a hospital for the care of their bodies and a school for the French youth as well as for the savage children. No colonization effort was more completely organized. No trouble was too exhausting, no demands on their time too exacting for a cause the Company believed was directly inspired by Providence. It was a tremendous undertaking, but step by step they built up the organization, gathering together the materials necessary for the tedious passage across the ocean. Ships were provided, manned by sturdy sailors; worthy seamen who understood the cranky moods of the sea like a book and who gloried in their strength to ride the rolling waves with sails billowing, driving them onward, forward to where new scenes and people, new customs and ways of living would change their outlook on life. All through the winter preceding the summer of 1641 preparations were astir in Old France for the flitting of its sons and daughters to a world which they very fittingly termed, "New France".

"New France." A land of plenty and of promise. Virgin soil, rich in its harvest of all the necessities man required for his bodily welfare. Forest lands teeming in their wealth of timber, of fine peltries and undiscovered mineral deposits. Lakes and rivers, waterfalls

and freshets, each with an offering of silver-scaled fish. And the beaver, those little, almost human engineers working and building to eventually fall prey to Man's greed for gain through the sacrifice of their silky coats. Remembering how ruthlessly men squandered our beaver, ("little men," Grey Owl called them, because they were so human and so appealing chattering to one another in Beaver language, playing like children as they slid down mud embankments to plunge into the water, or playing pranks), we blush with shame and sorrow mightily. "New France". Here men could start life anew. Here the future was rosy with new hopes. It was the promised land in very truth. A rich, unclaimed forest ready to render its bounty to whosoever might venture, to brave men and women with sufficient faith and determination to withstand the bitter struggle which was the price asked for every inch of land and every mile of riverways harnessed to civilized methods. It was a glorious achievement despite everything. Paul Chomedey was to realize this to the full before he returned in later years to spend his latter days in his homeland.

Everything that could possibly have been done to perfect the plans for sailing to America had been carried out. Permission had been received from the King of France by the Company of Montreal to name its governors and take with them artillery and war ammunitions. He confirmed also the cession of the Island to the said Company. There remained, however, another stumbling block. They needed a brave, industrious, motherly, religious woman—one who could take care of their provisions and merchandise, nurse the settlers if they were ill, or wounded—such a woman could not be bought with mere gold. Here was a real problem. Without such a woman the party could not attempt the settlement plan. Too many Indians skulked about the neighbourhood with evil intent. The leaders realized only too keenly that

wounded men would be, perhaps, an everyday occurrence. "What shall we do about it?" was the burning question.

Providence, so far, had seemingly spun the warp and woof of their plans. Could the founders of this tremendous venture dare to hope for more miracles? Yes they could. Down on their knees they implored the Giver of all good for assistance. But, even before their prayers were thought of, the woman they were seeking was already finding means to offer her services.

The woman was Jeanne Mance.

Ville Marie's birth is so astounding, comprised as it was of visions interwoven with prayers, that to state the bald facts in modern phraseology would completely delete the spirit and colour, the very essence of that most romantic tale. So we must play up to the full the drama of penance and prayers, of tolling bells and cloistered chapels, of black-cowled monks and hooded nuns, of spiritual ecstasy and fantastic dreams, of incense, holy water and the story of the Cross which furnished a handful of Christians with a staunchness of spirit unparalleled in the records of any modern city's origin.



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CHAPTER VI



"COME OVER AND HELP US"

Canada's Lady Missionaries Arrive in Quebec 1639

A Triple Alliance — Teachers, Nurses, Social Service Workers



ANADA'S early missionaries, the Jesuits, faced life with heavy handicaps. Arriving in New France, equipped with staunch Christian zeal and frocked in cassock and black-skirted robes, they were ill-prepared to meet in a practical manner the terrible ordeals they were destined to experience. The teachings of their Order, exacting to a degree, demanded absolute obedience, no matter what sacrifices, or trials, suffering, or disaster besieged them in their arduous task of Christianizing a heathen nation.

Armed with prayers, a rosary and the Cross, they were overcome by adversaries whose ethics of revenge, plus cruelty, were beyond the control and comprehension of gentlemen trained to serve others with complete forgetfulness of self.

Such men as Le Jeune, Brébeuf, Jogues and many more bore the brunt of savage hatred; the bitter

resentment and enmity of free men of a vast wilderness towards white-faced usurpers who planned with skilled effrontery to oust the redskins from their heritage of forest wealth and sparkling waterways, of green pastures and bubbling brooks. And in exchange what did those strange men from across the waters offer? A puzzling question for the savage mind to solve. They realized more fully as year followed year that the queer-living people, bearing devilish weapons that exploded and puffed smoke and killed, without warning, savage chiefs, and braves whose prowess had been won according to Indian methods of warfare, were a menace to their welfare. They were tricked outrageously by bushrangers and fur-traders. Inch by inch they were forced to render their territory to the hated Frenchmen.

But they were not such consummate fools, although they knew not the ways of European civilization. Therefore, theirs was the spirit of revenge which grew stronger, yes, stronger and more deadly as time ticked off the months and years. Revenge is a terrible thing when urged by a sense of injustice. It was doubly terrible as interpreted by savages. It became a thing of horror, loathsome and fiendish as its leaders, the Iroquois, the tribe of Five Nations, strove to vindicate their wrongs on every man and woman of the white race they could lay their hands on.

Naturally, nothing pleased them better than to wreak their temper on those meek heralds of Christ, the Jesuit missionaries, who ventured far across the redman's territory into the hinterlands and even took up their abode with Indian converts.

Perhaps, more tantalizing than an aggressive spirit were the pious smiles amidst inhuman torture that the martyrs dared to show and which aggravated their tormentors to fresh methods of inflicting pain on their victims. Thus the Christian priests paid for the

invasion of Frenchmen on redmen's preserves; paid for it with their blood; paid for it in the extremity of torture; paid for it as their flesh, seared on living brands of fire, dropped from their scorched bones; paid for it until death's merciful presence hushed the cries of agony that could not be controlled through unspeakable torture.

And so they wrote endless letters to their monastic leaders in France describing in vivid word pictures what was going on in New France. They described the customs of the Indians, the teeming wealth of forests, of water routes and meadowlands. They detailed their tireless efforts to salvage countless souls from the consuming flames of brim stone and eternal hell-fire and they told of hardships, which, dogging them every inch of their travels, did not in any way prevent them from penetrating far into the woodlands with packs on their backs, of aiding their Indian guides in portaging heavy cargoes over unbroken roads and thicket growths.

Summertime. Although Nature was garbed in rare and pleasing tones of greenery, when trees, shrubbery, forest glades and shaded vales changed the landscape into unparalleled beauty, with wild flowers gracing humble pathways in ravishing splendor, nevertheless she also strove to torture the Christian missionaries through heat and perhaps the most tantalizing and nerve-shattering method, the stings of mosquitos. Many a worthy saint must have cursed under his breath through the relentless ardour of those winged demons whose efforts to provoke ceased not when darkness covered the earth and twinkling stars dotted the mid-night blue sky. Day and night they swarmed and speared their victims until the worthy gentlemen of the Church were well-nigh driven mad. And so, the sun scorched those messengers of love and good-will, burnt and blistered their skin mercilessly and the mosquitos finished up the job.

Through drizzling rain, icy blasts, snowstorms, thunderstorms, blizzards and unbroken trails they penetrated far into the great lake districts in search of a few, pitifully few converts, who were willing to heed the words of the Jesuit Fathers and conform to their Christian way of thinking. The bravery of those zealous priests cannot be overlooked in a survey of Canada's early history.

The letters they penned to their confreres and superiors in France were termed the "Relations" and France fairly gobbled up the adventurous accounts of Le Jeune and his fellow-priests. They were, in modern language "the book of the year". Everybody who could obtain a copy read eagerly about the spell of New France. From the richest homes to the poorest cottage, the "Relations" were discussed in some form or other. To the lover of adventure they thrilled and beckoned. To the tradesman they pointed a quick route to riches. To the political adventurer they offered new fields and risks. To the mystic they opened the door of opportunity whereby precious souls might be saved from ever-lasting damnation.

In the fashionably furnished boudoirs of ladies of rank in Paris the "Jesuit Relations" were pondered over, read and read again. Kings, queens, pawns and princes, high and low, rich and poor alike were stirred by tales related, or read, of monks among savages, of torture and death, of strangely barbarous customs and a new world rich beyond words in furs, in opportunity and wealth exceeding all calculation.

Thus the pathway to New France was broken. Along the newly formed trail westward many women were destined to travel, many sacrifices made and many hearts broken. Those "Relations" were accountable to France for the rarest flowers of their womenkind leaving kith and kin in answer to the call of

the wanderlust, to foresake families and friends, comforts and ease in exchange for war-whoops, bloodshed, hardship and hard work. And their material reward? Lack of food, cold, sickness and sorrow, death and destruction. And yet, had they known beforehand that so perilous a road lay before them, those women of France would not have hesitated so entranced were they with the "call" which they envisaged in dreams and mystic revelations. Albeit, they were sincere, and their sincerity was well bolstered with unselfishness despite the carping of modern materialists who deny the exaltation of service for spiritual achievement.

At this time Champlain's death had been registered and the new Governor, de Montmagny, was aiding New France. Its population began to show signs of real growth. Each year the situation improved. Young Canada needed schooling. This department, with regard to boys, was looked after by the Jesuits. But what about little girls, both of French and Indian parantage? — *Mon Dieu!* They ran wild. There were no women to guide them except their over-worked mothers. With cooking, weaving, washing, mending, gardening, knitting, butter making and all the incidentals of pioneer homesteading, not much time was left to teach little girls, who knew more than their prayers, unfortunately. They romped and roamed the streets at will.

The lawless license of trappers, adventurers, fishermen, soldiers and other escapaders who paced the crooked streets of Quebec was an open spectacle for all and sundry to observe. Drunken brawls, wickedness, and immorality disgraced the community. On their knees the saintly priests implored the Almighty for guidance. Sneers and ribald laughter answered their pleas for righteousness.

Far into the night prayers were recited in the Jesuit residence of Notre-Dame des Anges. Here six

priests were lodged. Their respective cells were anything but spacious. The largest was eight feet square. They had a busy life. When not preaching, saying mass and hearing confessions they aided their men. Spade work was not scorned. On the side they studied, eventually mastering fairly well the intricacies of the Huron and Algonquin languages. They were magnificently ambitious, their plan involving the conversion of the entire Continent of North America. It was a perilous, a woeful outlook. But given a faith staunch as steel, a determination of equal quality and belief in the wisdom of their superiors whom they obeyed implicitly, they crusaded abroad with surprising alacrity even though they knew at times they were stepping into the very jaws of death. And no ordinary death, but a hellish, unspeakable, loathsome, torturous death, lingering, and fiendish as only the minds of ferocious savages could conceive.

These were the missionaries who implored the ladies of education in France to "come over and help us" in the great scheme of converting a continent. The "Relations" henceforth became increasingly interesting. Women who spent most of their time on bended knees in religious fervor heard the call. Tuned to the same harmonizing theme of sacrifice, suffering, toil, abject submission to the religious leaders as advocated by Rome and the vow of chastity, they were ready and willing to join the ranks of martyrs. This marks the spectacular entry of teachers, nurses, social service workers and religious sisters to New France. They were the finest specimens of goodness, greatness and graciousness that France possessed. What an offering! Lucky, indeed, for young Canada that of such calibre were the pioneer women of Quebec and later of Ville Marie. They built a foundation of kindly charity to the unfortunate, of brotherly love and benevolence, of service rendered alone for the greater glory of God. They worked without words of praise,

without even recognition. Their magnificent efforts were often entirely overlooked by great historians. To-day we reap the benefits of their striving. But how many of us realize it?

THE HISTORY OF THE
CITY OF BOSTON
FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT
TO THE PRESENT TIME
IN TWO VOLUMES
BY NATHANIEL BENTLEY
VOL. II.
BOSTON: PUBLISHED BY
J. B. BENTLEY, 1825.

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CHAPTER VII



FIRST AND OLDEST GIRLS' SCHOOL IN AMERICA, the URSULINE CONVENT FOUNDED

By

Two Religious French Ladies

Mother Marie of the Incarnation

Co-Foundress and First Mother Superior



MOTHER Marie of the Incarnation, with the maiden name of Marie Guyart, was born in the ancient City of Tours, in Touraine, France, on October 18th, 1599. The town had once been under the heel of the Romans and traces of their occupation in medieval towers, religious buildings, quaint old streets were still standing and very old long before Marie was born. It bore a charm, a fascination not unnoticed by the little girl as she wandered in and out of the nearby chapel to join in the mass, or tell her rosary and confess her sins. She was a demure, solemn little miss, fully aware of her shortcomings. In fact she lived in terror of the punishment she might receive in the next world for her woeful wickedness.

She was encouraged by her parents to specialize in prayers and supplications to the saints, to seek forgiveness for her evil ways as were all the children she knew at the time.

Mystical signs and symbols played an important part in the daily routine of the French people. They sought the supernatural, the way of the miracle, in every walk of life. Marie haunted the old shrines and chapels of Tours and as she listened to the solemn Gregorian chants her loftiest ambitions were to, perhaps, become a nun. A black-robed priestess with wide monastical collar fastened tightly beneath her chin and a silver cross in her hands.

Monsieur Guyart was a silk merchant. Tours was famous for its manufacture of soft, rustling silks. It was a paying business. M. Guyart was well-to-do, there was no shortage of money in his manner of living, or in the support of his family.

When Marie, his daughter, was of marriageable age a suitable husband was chosen for the young girl. His name was Claude Martin. There was no objection voiced on the part of Marie. Perhaps she secretly enjoyed the passionate caresses of Claude and his ardent love-making. Much care was taken in choosing Marie's trousseau. Lovely silks, delicate, fine laces, gossamer linen; hand-stitched garments representing hours of incessant toil went to fashion the trousseau items of the seventeen year old Marie.

With traditional ceremony the marriage was solemnized in the bride's favourite chapel. "But", she is quoted to have remarked, "if sometime I should be left alone in the world then I shall become a nun, as I have always wanted to do." Strange thoughts for a young girl about to cross the threshold of life's great adventure!

Perhaps it was a premonition, a warning that this marriage was not to be crowned by happiness.

Her biographers touch on "the trials of her two years' of married life." She was a widow at nineteen with a one-year-old son. A widow with a nun's complex. A mother with a yearning for the monastery. She was a dreamer, a mystic and visionary on the one hand, while on the other she possessed unusual gifts as a business woman and organizer.

MOTHER MARIE'S BUSINESS CAREER

Having mourned dutifully for her husband Claude, whose sudden death deprived her of the well-rounded home life she was accustomed to, (and also left her with the old urge for a monastic life) Marie with her baby, went to live with her sister. Her spiritual inclinations were stronger than the mother sense. because shortly after her husband's death, she remarked in all solemnity that as soon as her child was twelve years old she would enter a convent. Poor little boy. Did he know, as he grew older that he was to be parted from his mother, one queries. It was certainly a stern school. But Marie had to be made of stern and inflexible material to carry on her chosen work in later years. Claude, was a sweet child and as the years ticked away he grew more lovable. Twelve years. Without a father and then to lose his mother. One cannot but sympathize with the little fellow.

Some historians say that her marriage was not sublimely happy. That, although there was no fault on either side, they were not suited to one another. She found solace in her religion and after his death, in preparation for the life she eventually determined to enter, she humbled herself in every possible way; going so far as to act as servant to her brother-in-law's servants.

Her brother-in-law, realizing that Marie was a clever woman and wasting her time, prevailed upon her to enter his silk manufacturing business. She was

a decided success. In time she was put in charge of a department where she controlled the functioning of 100 men and sixty horses.

Twelve to fourteen hours a day she laboured. But when she closed her books and returned home she would relapse into her old custom of dreams and visions, voices and rapture. The "holy widow" did what she could for her young son despite long business hours. She instructed him as best she could in the elements of schooling and religion. But her rhapsodies and ecstasies, dejections and self abasement continued. In fact they seemed to increase with the years.

Marie's own journal proved but too clearly that she, like many other women who, perhaps unhappily married, or remaining single, resorted to a form of devoteeship to Christ and regarded the Redeemer as her true love. "O my Love!" she penned, "when shall I embrace you? Have you no pity on me in the torments that I suffer? Alas! alas! my Love, my Beauty, my Life! instead of healing my pain you take pleasure in it. Come, let me embrace you and die in your sacred arms!" Continuing her agonized frenzy she wrote, "Then as I was spent with fatigue, I was forced to say, 'My Divine Love, since you wish me to live, I pray you let me rest a little, that I may the better serve you;' and I promised him that afterward I would suffer myself to consume his chaste and divine embraces."

This religious extravagance wore her down to such an extent that a reaction would plunge the religious dreamer into the depths of despair and despondence. She would then become a prey to dejection. Utter and desperate misery. That she was estranged from God, vain, impure, proud, that the whole gamut of wickedness overwhelmed her, drove the visionary woman to distraction. This state of mind eventually brought with it a violent revulsion, even with regard to the religious rites as sanctioned by the Church.

As might be expected complete exhaustion ensued. With it came the healing sense of a more normal frame of mind. Conflicting counsel from her confessors had more than a little to do with her condition. According to the records of Francis Parkman and other historians her favourite confessor had been promoted in the Church and in his place appeared a man who wearied of her dreams and visions. He advised her that she was endangering her soul by encouraging such supernatural dreams. And he left her to work out her own salvation and shake off the blight of gloomy moods. She was then without spiritual guidance for several months.

Marie de l'Incarnation was a cruel taskmaster to herself. She scourged herself, wore haircloth garments, fasted, did the most menial work which the servants were paid to do and practised every imaginable form of abnormal punishment in her ambition to win the favour of heaven. She aspired to the dizziest heights of spiritual perfection. Her love for little Claude, her son, was transformed in time as an impediment to her attainment of perfect saintship. Her affection for her son had always been the reason for her withstanding the monastic calling.

WIDOW MARTIN TAKES THE VEIL

At last the allotted twelve years brought Marie to the parting. Now she must leave Claude to his fate, or turn her back on the convent. She chose the former. Her decision was not approved by her relatives. And what about Claude? True, he would enter the Jesuit school and receive an excellent education. The boy was frantic. He is reported to have watched his chance and at the propitious moment, dashing into the convent, he raced through the corridors screaming to the sisters to give back his mother to him. The nuns were horrified! But Marie did not weaken. She heard later that he had fallen into bad company.

Claude ran away. Nobody knew where he was. Here was something to cause the serene brow of his mother to pucker. But she kept a calm demeanor, although she did approach her confessor who upbraided her for her worldly weakness. Some time later the child was found and brought back to his school. Who can blame the little chap if he became an outlaw? Fortunately, he became a priest.

Marie de l'Incarnation possessed a two-fold strength in a brilliant talent for business and extravagant spiritual tendencies. Both these assets were destined to be invaluable in helping to build up New France in later years.

Widow Martin was young. She was beautiful, too. Tall and slender, she attracted the attention of more than one prosperous man in Tours. Her lovely oval face, set with luminous, large brown eyes, mobile red lips and a ready smile caused many a heart to skip a beat. But her heart did not flutter to the cadence of a mere man's sonorous voice, or the come-hither look in a masculine eye. Even at the time of her wedding hour with Claude Martin she had in reality become the bride of the Church; the robes and ritual of the convent in her estimation far surpassed the gossamer folds of a wedding veil and the dulcet harmonies of wedding bells and solemn marital religious rites.

In the old city of Tours there stood a convent where religious sisters had kneeled in prayer generation after generation for fully one hundred years. Marie was well known to the nuns. Many a time she had visited them and related the mysterious visions, dreams and premonitions she experienced, to their sympathetic ears. It was the convent of the Ursulines. Hither she arrived one day requesting admission to their order. She remained a member of this order to the end of her life.

Strict adherence to a routine life, up before cock-crow, prayers, a slim breakfast, rigorous daily duties, more prayers and devotions, retreats, meditations, long fasts, then still longer prayers, day in and day out did not cool the religious ardour of that visionary, Mother Marie de l'Incarnation, garbed in gloomy black serge, black flowing veil and stiffly starched monastical collar.

A few years following her admission to the Community Mother Marie saw a vision, so it is related by her biographers, which mirrored to her the way she was to follow in future. This dream made a deep impression. It seems that she was groping hand in hand with a strange lady whom she had never seen before. They traversed in dark and perilous places directed by a venerable personage who indicated their route by a motion of the hand. She saw a large courtyard and the massive walls of a monastery. All about was desolate country. Huge mountains, rugged cliffs, enveloped in a dense fog. Groping in the gloom Marie espied what appeared to be the gable end of a little chapel dimly outlined. A year later the same dream was repeated.

Very much confused over the persistence of so mysterious a vision Marie consulted Father Dinet, the Father confessor of the Ursulines. Being a Jesuit the worthy priest was cognizant of the fact that members of his community were already in Canada spreading their teaching among the Indians. He, therefore, informed the pious lady that the church of her dreams was the one the Christian missionaries had built in New France. He very astutely described to her the captivating history of the Jesuits in a wilderness. Spell-bound, the nun drank in the reverend father's words.

At this time the Jesuit "Relations" were being published in France. A copy reached the Ursulines' convent. No one can say who sent the copy, but it is

easy to surmise. Mother Marie read and re-read the fascinating story of those religious gentlemen striving to follow the Master's footsteps in a foreign land. The bait was equal to the catch. Marie would never be content henceforth until her feet rested on the soil of New France. Here was her great mission. The answer to her visions, hallucinations, exaltations and spiritual extravagances! But she must have money. She must also have assistants, women of equal stability as herself.

Kismet shuffled the cards skillfully at this time and the trump queen turned out to be the very woman Marie sought, namely, Madame de la Peltrie, a rich widow, young, vivacious, religious, and adventurous. She possessed qualities of character which acted as sanely tempering measures on the fanatically religious and visionary Marie.

It is almost impossible to picture the Ursuline Convent in Quebec without representing the two prime leaders, joint-foundresses, and partners, namely Marie of the Incarnation and Madame de la Peltrie the benefactress. Therefore, before going forward and completing the biography of the former it seems more in keeping to introduce Madame de la Peltrie at this moment.

CHAPTER VIII



MADAME DE LA PELTRIE FOUNDRESS OF THE URSULINE CONVENT IN QUEBEC CITY



ADAME de la Peltrie, née Marie Madeleine de Chauvigny, is perhaps, one of the most appealing of Canada's pioneer heroines. An adventuress, in a finer sense of the word, she gloried in intrigue, in dramatic by-plays with enough spice and danger to make the effort worthwhile. Sufficient common sense, fortunately, balanced any hazards of stepping too freely beyond the safety zone. Moreover, womanlike, she did not conform to a conventional, rigid pattern with regard to temperament. Devoutly and extremely religious there were occasions when spiritual exaltation did not prevent a somewhat clever act of trickery on Marie Madeleine's part, if in so doing she could more easily achieve the goal she sought.

Champlain founded Quebec in 1608. Madeleine de Chauvigny was five years old at the time. She was born in Alençon, the child of one of the best families in Normandy. From the outset Mademoiselle seems to have had a will of her own. Papa Chauvigny was hard pressed many times with the tantrums of his precocious offspring. Bowing humbly to dictates of parents who

possibly loved her not wisely, but too well, was not the technique adopted by Madeleine when she bent her energies in a certain direction. And so it is related how her doting father had to rescue his head-strong daughter from a neighbouring convent where she had fled from the parental castle and where she declared she intended to remain.

Herewith we introduce the series of battles which father and daughter were destined to stage until the former, a disappointed and aged gentleman, followed the beckoning finger of death. Well, with regard to the convent episode, Madeleine lost the first siege. Back to the ancestral home she was carried. To restore his child to a more harmonious frame of mind M. Chauvigny decided to occupy her time and energies through worldly activities. Madeleine was seventeen years old. A young lady, who should be finding a husband, else she might be relegated to the role of spinsterhood; a situation quite untenable as M. Chauvigny understood the case.

Mlle Chauvigny made her *début*. She must have been introduced to society regardless of expense. Hunting parties brought guests from far and wide. Receptions, balls, dinner parties. A mad whirl of excitement. Perhaps the young lady enjoyed the thrill even though she may not have given her father the satisfaction of knowing it. Gallant young men, elegantly garbed according to the mode in velvet, satin, rich silks and finely wrought lace danced and flirted with the vivacious young lady. Highspirited and full of fun Madeleine can be pictured flitting up and down the grand staircase of her father's castle in frills and furbelows, an attractive creature, lovely to behold and bewitchingly magnetic to the masculine gender.

She probably wheedled from the gullible parent, whatever whim or fancy absorbed her active brain. That Madeleine knew the art of playing on M. de

Chauvigny's heartstrings, cannot be questioned. Of money there was aplenty. With no worries on that score and having been nursed in the lap of luxury who can blame the girl for taking the bit between her teeth and bolting?

Anyway, Madeleine lost the second bout in the battle of wits with her father. She became engaged to M. de la Peltrie, a young gentleman of the noblesse, with a charming personality and rich. Pert and wayward Madeleine seemed to enjoy the migration from prayers and meditations, veils and introspection to the elysium of matrimonial accord. The wanderlust for the time being lay dormant in the breast of the adventurous Madeleine.

For five years M. de Chauvigny purred with pleasure to see his beloved child surrounded with everything the heart could desire. Happiness prevailed in the de la Peltrie domicile. All seemed serene and the doting father enjoyed the spectacle of his child's successful marriage to an adoring husband. Suddenly, the castle of his dreams collapsed. M. de la Peltrie died. He left a childless widow.

Madeleine looked at the old world from a different angle henceforth. By nature she was a fun-loving little person. Her portraits, despite monastical settings, cannot hide the humorous mouth, or the twinkle in her pretty brown eyes. She mourned her departed partner and she mused. Yes, she mused in the old way, of conventual trappings and religious ardors.

Madeleine's old father was again in a pickle. "Perfect nonsense", thought the old gentleman, "wanting to join a nunnery. And what about her wealth? Tut, tut, she must marry again." Marry a man who would know how to take care of both his headstrong daughter and her many worldly assets. "The idea, wanting to

take the veil. What would she do if I disinherited her?" thus the old man raged to himself.

Widow de la Peltrie was summoned to her father's side. She was informed that he, as well as her deceased husband's relatives, were very much opposed to the convent idea. She must re-marry. Father and daughter were once again matching their wits in a bout involving themselves, their relatives on both sides of the family, a not inconsiderable fortune, and a vast wilderness miles and miles away across the Atlantic Ocean.

Madeleine impatiently flounced her silken skirts as she paced the time-worn floors of the ancient castle in frenzied helplessness. Here was she a widow, twenty-two years of age being dictated to. Outrageous! They would see she was no puppet to be treated like a child. Marry again she would not. That was that!

Adding fuel to the fire already kindled, her husband's relatives with very good intentions, no doubt, tried their best to change her views with the result that the young widow became doubly determined to carry out her plans. When they accused her of being a romantic visionary and incapable of managing her fortune, the fat was in the fire. In fact the fire became an enormous conflagration.

Madeleine was fairly consumed with a religious urge. She had been reading the "Jesuit Relations". "Alas", wrote Father Le Jeune, "is there no charitable and virtuous lady who will come to this country to gather up the blood of Christ, by teaching His word to the little Indian girls?" Madame de la Peltrie made her decision there and then. Canada, Canada, Canada! Morning, noon and night the call echoed in her tired brain. Then she fell ill. No worldly aid seemed to rally the poor woman. At length, her biographers state, at the height of the disease the patient made a

vow to St. Joseph that if God would make her well again she would build a house in honour of him in Canada. Then we are told that the following morning the fever left her and she was restored to normal health very shortly.

With health regained, Madeleine once more sparred and parried with her father in the old regulation style. The aged gentleman begged her to remain with him while he lived. Then he threatened to disinherit her. Even the loss of fortune did not weaken the young widow's resolve to go to Canada. Unhappiness took up its abode in the hearts of both father and daughter. Neither could see the other's point of view. Both were rigidly stubborn.

Strategy in politics and warfare is an age-old means of accomplishing certain points of vantage, but when it is used to vanquish parental authority within the family fold one wonders whether or not such tactics are prudent. Madeleine resorted to a very clever bit of, shall we call it camouflage, or dramatics, to hoodwink her honourable father and still lay claim to the laurels of victory.

Thus runs the story as gathered from records penned three hundred years ago. Not such a very great length of time as elementary mathematics prove, but long enough to tarnish many a piece of scandal and many an heroic act. Three hundred years have not, however, lessened the adroitness, the finished execution of an act which was carried out in apparant unconsciousness of iniquity, (because it was considered as a necessary means to an extremely worthwhile end), by Madeleine and her advisors. It seems there was a very respectable acquaintance of the family, M. de Bernières, a man of rank, wealth and good repute. He, also, took his religion seriously, so much so that in his zeal to rise to lofty spiritual heights he had taken the vows of chastity. Through the advice of

Madeleine's religious confessor a letter was sent from the widow to M. de Bernières requesting him to take part in a mock marriage with her.

Upon receipt of the letter from Widow de la Peltrie the devout gentleman was genuinely shocked. But, chivalrous to a degree, he did not tear up the letter, or write a polite refusal to the charming widow. Instead, he consulted his most intimate friends and religious counsellors. They were unanimous in advising him to accept the offer, because it involved the glory of God in a very important missionary field. In this way the conscience of Monsieur de Bernières was salved and his fear of arousing scandal among their mutual friends set at rest.

M. de Chauvigny lost the first round in the battle of wits with his daughter. He was more than delighted when Madeleine informed him that his esteemed friend had made her a proposal of marriage. She told her father that of all men she preferred M. de Bernières and she was glad also to realize that he, too, favoured the man of her choice.

From the "Life of Madame de la Peltrie", by Mother St. Thomas, comes the following excerpt: "Our virtuous widow did not lose courage. As she had given her confidence to M. de Bernières, she informed him of all that had passed, while she flattered her father each day, telling him that this nobleman was too honourable to fail in keeping his word."—This by-play followed Madeleine's betrothal and delayed marriage. The prospective bridegroom had misgivings as to the wisdom and credibility of so flagrant a hoax. His conscience pricked uncomfortably. Hence the delayed mock marriage.

The bride elect's old father, although ageing quickly and visibly failing in health, possibly through worry regarding his daughter's future, was astute enough to sense that all was not as it should be. He

again threatened to disinherit her if the marriage did not take place without further delay. The plot thickened.

While the sham marriage was held off Madeleine's relatives sought other means to deprive her of her property rights. A lawsuit followed. Whatever was the nature of the lawsuit in Caen the results were not in Widow Peltrie's favour. She appealed to the Parliament in Normandy. This time she won.

THE SHAM MARRIAGE

In the meantime M. de Bernières took up his quarters at the house of a mutual friend. Madeleine and he met frequently to discuss plans with their religious leaders as to the most feasible manner whereby they could go through with the mock ceremony. At length the "event" was celebrated. The poor, trusting old father breathed freely once more.

Madeleine and her quasi-husband appeared in public as man and wife. Few knew the truth. Plans were quickly taking shape for the bride? to sail for Canada, accompanied, not by her newly acquired husband, but her fortune. She really loved her father, notwithstanding wilful tantrums and a rockbound determination to have her own way. How she was going to break the news that she had deceived him and was leaving for New France was a problem not to her liking. She realized it would break his heart. Luckily for the weary old man he became very ill and passed away. He was spared the heartache and disappointment of knowing his daughter had fooled him, deceived and tricked him. Madeleine, as victor in the final battle of wits with her father, buried the over-indulgent but affectionate parent and prepared herself for a battle among savages where comfort and ease were unknown and care rested heavily on the missionaries' shoulders.

Madame de la Peltrie loved the limelight. No one can doubt the sincerity of her religious convictions, and it would be wicked to even hint that she lacked integrity and profound interest in the cause of Christianity. She was decidedly human, though. The allure of public approbation, such as she received on her spectacular tour through beautiful rural France en route to the Ursuline convent in Tours, brought a contentment of mind almost celestial in its comforting satisfaction.

It is said that she travelled in company with her pseudo-husband from Alençon to Tours on her way to join the Ursuline sisterhood. Her journey was punctuated by flattering attention from high church dignitaries, religious women and notable personages as she passed through the lovely country lying along the pathway of the River Loire. It is related how she visited Paris and was summoned into the presence of the Queen. Most gratifying, indeed, to be thus lionized, eulogized and stimulated. — The lady of Tours had had so much opposition for so many years. who could blame her for enjoying such unfeigned commendation?

Then, her entry into the nunnery was no less impressive in its pageantry of joyous cloister bells and solemn choir hymns. With studied formality Madame de la Peltrie was greeted at the convent entrance by the Superior accompanied by the entire sisterhood. It would take a heart of wood not to thrill and beat a little faster under such auspicious happenings. Madeleine, filled with the ecstasy of religious fervor, walked slowly and solemnly between a double row of black-robed vestals whose voluntary services were dedicated to the glory of the Church. They sang, in full-throated harmony, their sweet voices blending in rapturous, resonant sequence as the moving column of triumphant nuns led their newly acquired benefactress back to the shelter of monastery walls. Loudly pealed

the bells. Joyously sang the sisters. Faster, chokingly faster, beat the heart of Madame de la Peltrie. Kneeling before the altar, making her sacred vows, surrounded by the prostrate nuns singing softly at first, then louder, louder, until reaching the climax of ecstasy their notes of praise and adoration saturated the holy, cloistered chapel, filling every nook and corner with beautiful harmonies. Ave Maria! Ave Maria! Gloria, gloria, gloria! Loudly, excitedly rang the cloister bells in their little belfry perched on top of the slanted roof. Clanging, clattering, jangling, getting all mixed up in their haste to ring out far and wide, ding-dong, ding, ding, ding, ding-a-ling dong! All the world must know how pride and joy registered within cloistered doors. Doors barred from wordly, prying eyes. Passers-by listened to the noisy bells not knowing that in their metallic way they were registering historical data for future generations. They were splitting the silence to celebrate the act of Madame de la Peltrie when she plighted her troth to the Ursuline Order, the preliminary step before actually becoming the foundress of Canada's first girls' school.

Madame de la Peltrie donned her religious mien, said good-bye to worldly frivolities, and with Mother Marie de l'Incarnation and Mother St. Joseph and another volunteer, Mother Cecile Richer de la Croix, prepared to sail shortly for Canada. Came the day of last farewells said through a mist of tears. Farewell, farewell, France!

And Monsieur de Bernières? Had he fallen in love with his mythical wife? Did he pine away in France while the sweetheart he never could claim as his own lived in exile, converting Indians and their dirty-faced, unwashed offspring? He is said to have remained faithful to the cause of the Ursulines and to have taken charge of their affairs in the Old World.

His gallantry must not be overlooked. He made a tremendous effort to further Christianity, even to besmirching the spotless purity of his sensitive conscience. Alone in his comfortless study, did he regret the lost opportunity of winning to himself a delightful companion, a lovely lady who would have made a most admirable wife? We may, at least, picture him a lonely, cultured gentleman. Rich he may have been as to worldly goods, but empty his heart remained. Bereft of the consolation of soft female lips to caress, of the sympathetic womanly touch and silvery laughter that rang in his ears, mocking and jeering at his stupidity in allowing such a state of affairs to wither his claim to happiness and his right to live in a normal way.

What had he? Prayers and a rosary, yes. Fasts, penances and religious feasts. But the heartache remained. The lonely hearth, a daily reminder of his short-sightedness, lacked the fundamental cheer as did the empty chairs around his dining table. Yes, he could live in a monkish manner, spurn material, worldly assets, but deep below that austere surface did a suffocating sense of irrevocable loss dull his religious urge?

We bid him adieu, knowing these sentiments were not realized by that big-hearted gentleman who acted generously to a lady in distress, and suffered his conscience to goad him mercilessly. He continued his service in faith to the end, a true apostle, a gallant Frenchman.

CHAPTER IX



ADIEU TO FRANCE

Noble French Ladies

SAIL FOR QUEBEC



ANADIAN history took on a more complete and balanced aspect when, on May 4th, 1639, Madame de la Peltrie, Mother de l'Incarnation and her Ursuline sisters and three nursing nuns boarded a little sailing vessel at Dieppe for Canada. Hitherto the story of New France had represented life from the masculine point of view with very few exceptions. From this date forward changes and advancement would mark each year of primitive Canada's growth, aided by the ceaseless, untiring efforts of cultured women. Their duty was to buffet the spirit of lawlessness, to tend the sick at heart as well as the physically unfit, to play the part of the good Samaritan without a complaint or a murmur when they themselves suffered the tortures of the damned.

Let us turn back the leaves of our history books to North America's early settlement by pioneers from France. Never mind the bloody conquests of warriors, of long scouting treks over trackless wastes in search of savage tribes; of Frenchmen scalped and

murdered; of white men starving and striving to wrest the native Indian's territory from his tenacious grasp; of pillage, rape, drunkenness, treachery and deceit. There is plenty of all that. Man, in his greed to gain riches, destroyed the natural forest growths, swept the rivers and lakes almost entirely of their bountiful supply of fish; swarmed across the continent into the most hidden corners of the hinterlands, and trapped in every form of cruelty under the sun the beautiful furred beasts that roamed at will through wilderness and waterways. Do not hover over the disgraceful records of the passing of the buffalo. Remember, though, the savages never took part naturally in wastage of animal life in their wild, roamings and hunting parties. Turn the pages quickly when you come across the repulsive records of Canada's beaver catch. Of how their precious skins were piled in great heaps and set afire, because the market was glutted with their beautiful coats. Do not linger over the heart-breaking records of little baby beavers whimpering alone in the swamplands for their mothers whose mangled forms lay useless in the refuse dump, and whose soft, silken coats of deep-furred, glossy texture fed the bonfires of evil repute. Overlook the destruction of wild fruit, of nut trees, small fruits and wild grapes which so impressed Jacques Cartier when he loitered by the wayside and jotted down notes of the countryside for his records. Close your eyes when you read of how white men gave the dusky-skinned natives liquor, and how it changed their natures from generous, unsuspecting children of the woodlands to demons whose unleashed passions debased the savage men and made them despicable. Overlook the cheapness by which white men bartered priceless peltries from the Indian hunters; how they offered glass beads and a hatchet, or an old gun for skins of wild animals which had cost the Indians weeks of patient trekking over trackless wastes, with next to nothing to eat; enduring every imaginable kind of hardship, even facing death at

times. Forget it, else you will be overcome by the wickedness of white man's unlovely tricks to gain a few more sheekles, a few more pieces of glittering gold. Remember, though, for all that pilfering man has in the end to pay the real price; today his descendants bewail the wastage when depression reigns and wives and babes hunger in the slums of modern cities.

A more pleasing story is penned with reference to woman's entry into the colonization of French Canada. Their's was not to seek the whys and wherefores of enforcing a strangle-hold on the unsuspecting savages and taking from them the land of their progenitors by brute force. Women in those days, especially the ultra-religious type, fixed their vision on the way of the cross. They were to do, and die, maybe, so long as the goal was attained, i. e., the salvaging of savage souls from everlasting perdition. Human nature never changes. What is acclaimed as godly and righteous in one generation is disclaimed as perfidious in the next. Changed ideals mark every milestone of man's history. Therefore, we of this modern era cannot quite attune our philosophy to that of earlier regimes. Rest assured, those early women missionaries who sailed for Canada, from civilized comfort to savage misery, did so according to the dictates of their conscience and to their understanding of Christian reasoning.

Let us peer into the past and observe the departure from Dieppe of Mother Marie de l'Incarnation, Madame de la Peltrie, Mother St. Joseph and another zealous missionary who joined them at the last moment, Mother Cécile Richer de la Croix. Three other religious zealots also take part; they are the hospital sisters, Mother Marie de St. Ignace, Anne le Cindre de St. Bernard and Marie Forestier de St. Bonaventure from the hospital in Dieppe.

All these women were sponsored by high-born ladies in the "upper-tens" of France. Queen Anne of

Austria gave material aid to help in Christianizing the savage and his hordes of fellow-pagans. The Duchess d'Aiguillon made a generous contribution towards founding a hospital in Quebec. She even sent workmen to build the first hospital. Her hand went deeply into her pocket-book so that the enterprise in New France might be a success. She was Richelieu's niece. Power and influence lay behind her gestures to help. The movement surely would attain success if those trusty women in religious robes and fluttering black veils did not falter. Could they bear up under the heavy cross they were shouldering so light-heartedly?

But the sail-burdened vessel is soon leaving its moorings. Several priests stepped aboard. Jesuits. Father Vimont, who was succeeding Father Le Jeune as Superior of the Jesuits. Chaumonot and Ponce followed their superior in the faith, their billowing, priestly robes catching the breeze as they took their places alongside the worthy prelate.

Many oddly shaped bundles are carried aboard. Implements of labour, large sacks of seed for farming. New France must eventually be self-supporting. Salt meat for the voyage. Too bad they could not have carried more meat, because before they reached their destination the poor things were to eat raw codfish. But, we must not anticipate. The journey can only be covered inch by inch. Three months would pass ere they would see the bulky form of Cape Diamond in all its rugged, stoniness, its bristling back burdened by husky pine and thick forest growth and its perpendicular sides a constant reminder of what forbidding strength lay behind its surface grandeur.

Soon the little merchant-ship would be sailing. Too soon for the weeping friends waving farewell. All live-stock, safely stowed away in cruel pens; bulky bundles of drygoods placed carefully away from damp and moisture; great hampers of foodstuffs for the

voyage, at last all is stowed away. All is ready. Pale-faced, the religious sisters watched the breeze creep along the surface of their weather-beaten sails. Answering to the touch of so mighty a hand the compliant sails gradually filled to bursting and gently away they crept, the ship's bow noisily slapping against insurgent waves. It was good-bye forever for most of the missionaries.

Rough sailor voices rasped above salty, whining winds which tore at the rigging like some wild and maddened, unearthly beast. The triumphant sea delighted in torturing the cockle-shell of a vessel, smacking it smartly first on one side then, for no apparent reason, assaulting the opposite. Gallantly the ship battled its way. Heaving, pitching, staggering and trembling as to whether it should split asunder or forge ahead.

Seasickness drove the passengers back to their cramped and ill-ventilated quarters. Day after day in monotonous sequence the tedious voyage was covered. Sometimes the voices of monastery-trained men and women rose in prayerful cadence above the eerie accompaniment of the elements.

One fog-drenched morning a wild voice broke the usual sounds, striking terror to the weary travellers. An iceberg! It threatened in silent, ominous intentness. Who could mistake its determination to crush them to atoms in its frigid, soul-chilling embrace. Marie de la Peltrie threw her arms around Mère de l'Incarnation who remained cool and unimpressed. Father Vimont fell to his knees and vowed a potent and touching message to the Holy Virgin and St. Joseph on behalf of the whole boatload of suffering humans. Who can say his humble plea was not answered when shortly after the iceberg disappeared and the ship sallied forth once more en route to Canada.

Land! A dim outline is distinguished. The outline gradually becomes more distinct. Land at last! Who can reveal the feeling of relief, the lessening of tension as those men and women of three centuries ago realized that in a few days' time their feet would once again feel the assuring comfort of solid earth and their eyes would feast upon green grass and fluttering leaves?

On July fifteenth the battered ship arrived at Tadoussac. They saw the great mountains of rock, bulwarks of nature cast in most forbidding forms. They anchored at the harbour situated where the hoary, fathomless, precipitous mountains of rock formed a passage. Through this natural gateway flooded the taciturn Saguenay River. Black as the robes of the religious sisters, the imperious, tide-driven, swirling waters rushed tempestuously beyond the limits of the rocky sentinels and were soon swallowed up by the gracious, more amenable St. Lawrence whose cool green depths soon dissembled the offending gloom of its sister river.

The nuns transferred into smaller craft at this juncture and sailed for Quebec. Slowly they moved along Canada's famous waterway with its spectacular panorama of beauty on either side. The sisters were delighted with each twist and turn; every rise and fall of the horizon-line. And when eventide brought its magnificent blending of Nature's most entrancing colors, when the sun sank into the mystery of the west, the holy sisters stared in silent wonder, humbled at the sight flung so generously across the measureless sweep of the firmament.

When King George and Queen Elizabeth arrived in Canada in the spring of 1939 their ship anchored off the Island of Orleans, because of night's approach. In the meantime, Quebec's populace spent every last atom of strength in making preparations for the visit of Canada's beloved King and Queen. Flags, drapery,

bunting, banners, pennants and streamers bedecked the Royal Mile from quay to Ramparts. Quebec must look its best. No nation in the world loves pageantry more than the French Canadian. As most of Quebec's people are French, celebrations were planned extravagantly. Loyal hearts of citizens both French and English quickened, swelling to almost the bursting point as, when daylight streaked the sky, the time of their Majesties arrival drew nearer. How trumpets blared, cannons crashed in loud booming and music floated on morning's freshening winds, is history. How throats grew sore from cheering! How blurred was the vision when the two youthful sovereigns drove by looking for all the world like two characters stolen from fairy books. Who cared for the tears that rolled down masculine cheeks? Tears of pride, of joy and of deep and reverential thankfulness that Canada was ruled over by two such perfect examples of worldly majesty.

In the year 1639, but in midsummer, three hundred years earlier, a somewhat similar celebration was enacted when Canada's first women missionaries arrived. It is eventide. Darkness will soon drape Cape Diamond and night's silence approaches. An old-fashioned sailing vessel draws near the Island of Orleans anchoring off-shore. Little row boats pull up alongside and take off the tired men and women. It is too late to enter the port of Quebec. They must sleep on the Island of Orleans.

Only those who have experienced the intoxicating blending of salt-laden winds, pine and cedar perfume and those pungent woodland odors which are offered as Nature's healing balm along the emerald banks of the St. Lawrence River, can appreciate that first night the sisters spent sleeping in Indian wigwams amidst the primeval forest beauty of Orleans Island. "Canada, Canada, Canada" sang a chorus of wild woodland birds. Clearly rang out the bright-plumed oriole's evening song; "Peter, Peter, Quick, Quick". Again and again

the rounded, full theme resounded, the songster's orange and black feathering startling in its Oriental brilliance. Night hawks swooped and thrummed in the high vaulted roof where stars were dimly peeping and a pale moon waited for its consort, night. Bullfrogs piped in shrill, bold tones, grumbling at the world in general and more so with reference to recalcitrant, froggy wives. Far in the distance a melancholy song moaned and wailed amidst silent, stalwart pine trees standing stiffly upright as befitted lords of the wilderness. It was the whippoorwill moaning. Over and over he wept and thrashed out his sorrow to night's hoard of witchery. "Whip-poor-will, Whip-poor-will, Whip-poor-will!"

Gently the sleepy river washed the shores. Swish, swash, swish, swash. Over and over in rhythmic regularity until, lulled in the tranquility of peace and safety, those weary sojourners from the shores of France dropped off asleep. Great silence swept across forest-lands and mountain regions; an awesome, endless silence, enfolding the new world in its comforting presence. In the hallowed quiet of that memorable night slept seven women who would change and exalt the story of New France. Hush, do not disturb them, because their's will be a life of turmoil, of tribulation, of anguish and the extremity of peril.

And so, like the Royal Sovereigns of our British Commonwealth of Nations, the founders of Quebec's great hospital and school for girls awaited the coming of day before attempting to land and mount the crooked pathways that led to the summit of the rock-bound city.

It is dawn. Boom! Boom! Boom! Quebec is firing her great guns, heralding the arrival of men and women from France. See the little yacht, with gaily fluttering pennants dancing its way to the Island. The sisters are most excited. They gather their voluminous skirts about them as they step gingerly into the little boat which has been sent to carry them to the land where they are destined to remain until death.

Already a crowd has gathered along the shore to greet them. It is a regal welcome. Trumpets blare, echoing in the distance; re-echoing until the thinning vibrations fade beyond earshot. A band strikes up familiar tunes. Flags flutter. The fleur-de-lis waves excitedly from mast and dizzy heights. See the Governor standing in the foreground. He is elegantly clad, wearing plumed hat and heavily embroidered coat. How distinguished he is. None other quite equals his noble bearing. He is surrounded by officers of the regiment. They, also, are resplendent in dress uniform, gold braid, scarlet and royal blue, on tunics, caps and be-feathered headdress. What a contrast to the background of cold grey stone in its grim irony, its scornful mockery of man's frailty and his little conceits. Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah! The Governor and his soldiers join in cheering lustily.

No gathering on the bluff promontory of Quebec has ever duplicated before, or since, that sunlit day when Madame de la Peltrie, Mother de l'Incarnation, Mother St. Joseph and their sisters in Christ stepped ashore and falling to their knees kissed the good earth.

Come, let us stand with the crowd and take part in rejoicing, because the reflection of Canada's first women missionaries on this northern hemisphere is shadowed across the bridge of over three hundred years. Among the number were Quebec's gentry, soldiers, sailors, fur-trappers, priests, clerks, habitants and children (and savages standing aloof, inscrutable, but keenly watchful), gathered in groups to welcome six women in conventual garb.

All ships from France were welcome, of course, but none would mark so definitely the parting of the ways. Henceforth, Quebec would know the healing touch of feminine fingers when illness threw its blighting horror among poor habitants. Education, social welfare and nursing care, a triple alliance, landed in the lap of New France that first day of August, 1639.

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CHAPTER X



MADAME DE LA PELTRIE TRUE TO TYPE MIGRATES TO VILLE MARIE DE MONTREAL WITH JEANNE MANCE

IDOW PELTRIE stayed three years in Quebec with her co-workers in the faith, then she left for Ville Marie. One cannot imagine any dull moments boring that lively young woman. A great deal had registered since the morning she and her associates kissed Quebec's green turf and mounted Cape Diamond's roughly hewn slopes. Always the benefactress, Marie Madeleine helped her struggling sisters abundantly with funds. She was a decided asset, both materially and morally.

Having adopted the role of volunteer assistant to the nuns, and accepted hours of prayer, hard work and a grievous lack of life's simplest necessities, Madame, at the end of a trying day would yield to her pagan pupils' invitation to join them in their native pantomime dances. Gathering up her layers of petticoats and overskirts, a child at heart again, the vivacious woman would copy her little savage instructors and gyrate, kow-tow, whirl and stamp in graceful imitation of savage mimicry expressed in rhythm.

Before the first Ursulines convent was built, a humble shed, which the nuns called the "Louvre", was

occupied by the French ladies. Here Madame de la Peltrie and her attendant, Charlotte Barré, shared very cramped quarters. By not spending money on a more elaborate house there was that much gained to feed hungry Indian children.

In the Jesuit Relation of 1639 there is quoted the details of a grand parade held in Quebec fifteen days after the sisters arrived to take up their work. The occasion was a religious event, the Feast of the Assumption. A grand procession was featured in which six Indians marched looking extremely important. They were garbed in robes of silk and velvet which King Louis XIV had sent to them. As the procession advanced one hundred stalwart savage warriors marching two by two, clad in priceless fur garments, followed the emblem of Christ and the fluttering banner of Roman Catholicism. Then, a black-clad figure, Madame de la Peltrie, appeared with some of her young scholars. They wore new tunics of red camelot, and white caps. Next in line came little Indian girls and women, wearing native costumes, a long file of them, contrasting oddly with their silk and velvet clad native warriors marching in the vanguard. Wrapped in a blanket, or a moose-skin falling from the shoulders and held at the waist by a girdle, their long black hair was caught simply at the neck with a ribbon bow-knot. Countless colored beads and bracelets, brightened the savage female attire; the best they could muster for the gala event.

Jesuits priests leading the French population joined the procession from station to station, passing the hospital and convent and pausing a moment to render homage. That night a feast was held in the Governor's castle for French gentlemen and those six Indian braves wearing French court costumes. One hundred Indians took part in the banquet. All were treated like royalty by their hosts. It takes very little imagination to hear the hum of savage conversation, clattering dishes and sense how table manners might

not have been acceptable in the sight of French gentlemen of high birth accustomed to the essence of refinement and polish.

Another event transpired on that memorable feast-day which is recorded very carefully in Quebec's ancient chronicles. Following vespers, the Superior of the Jesuits was notified by the Indians that a council was taking place in the college hall and his presence was requested. Accompanied by the Governor and Madame de la Peltrie and Charlotte Barré, Father Le Jeune and Father Vimont attended the meeting. Twenty-five Indian chiefs and notables, seated on mats according to Indian custom, awaited their arrival.

Then in the usual florid, but fluent Indian manner an address was given by an Algonquin chief who begged the French leaders to help them to build houses such as the French built; to teach them to cultivate the land so that they could grow their own vegetables. "We wish to believe in God", said he, ". . . "The words thou hearest are not mine. I am the mouth of all my brethren seated here. We want help . . . pity us." He then sat down. Another orator stood up, an Abenaki. He appealed equally forcefully and with the same pathos, winding up with, "Do not deceive us. I go to my home where the sun stands in the middle of the sky (the South). When I come back the snow will be on the mountains. I will come to see if thou sayest the truth, if thou hast men to help us, that we may no more live in the woods like beasts."

Father Le Jeune translated the two speeches. Governor de Montmagny promised to do all he could to help. Madame de la Peltrie comes to the rescue with a flourish. "Alas!" she exclaimed, "must it be said that we cannot aid these good people to save their souls? The expense of one ball in Paris, one soirée, would procure the means of opening heaven to those creatures". She declared, with her own hands she would plant something for them; all of which was translated to the Indians.

They smiled and observed that corn planted by hands as delicate as hers would take a long time to ripen.

Madame de la Peltrie spent many busy hours at the settlement in Sillery where the Indians congregated. The benevolent foundress always enjoyed life to the full. It must have been a source of unfailing interest to observe savage women performing their daily tasks, gathering in the corn which was draped on the slanted sides of their bark tents, or roasting it before the primitive fires preparatory to pounding it in wooden mortars. It was endless enjoyment to Madame. Perhaps their cooking technique may not have appealed to a woman of her refinement. However, she managed very well to blink at the utter lack of daintiness witnessed whenever kitchen duties were in operation.

She loved the savage children, hugging and kissing their unclean faces and delighting in their crude efforts to appear like little ladies according to the pattern laid down by their teacher. They tried hard to learn their lessons. Poor little forest children.

From the time Madame de la Peltrie landed in Quebec history was written with remarkable speed, both with regard to convent events and the daily recordings of New France itself. To begin with, Maison-neuve and Jeanne Mance arrived from France, opening up a new settlement inland, so that Quebec's nose became a bit out of joint with jealous pangs. Maybe she was astounded with Canada's petty bickerings and unlovely scheming on the part of Quebec's great leaders.

Canada's early chronicles throw illuminating side-lights on the problems and progress of growing New France. The growing pains consisted, among other symptoms, of the illicit liquor traffic: and drunkenness, naturally, took its toll in crime. But the most stinging evil was the constant harassing by persistent Iroquois. Madame de la Peltrie remained at her post bolstering the community she favoured, but never joined, with

her courage and also her cash. Beloved priests, true heralds of Christ's teaching, were murdered, fiendishly put to death, Fathers Brebeuf and Gabriel Lalemant being outstanding instances of martyrdom, too repulsive to describe. Father Charles Garnier, forty-four years of age, nurtured in the lap of luxury in Paris, was another victim of indescribable and sickening torture. A gentle soul, he went out gallantly as ever a man could. Such entries are Canada's most exalting, inspiring instances of greatness set amidst trivialities, of everyday affairs of a nation undergoing the pangs of growing pains.

Those first few years were fraught with terror, murder and invasion by enemy Indians. Madame de la Peltrie went through the ordeal never faltering. She could have returned to France. But she did not. Instead, when her newly found friend, Jeanne Mance, packed up and departed from Quebec for Ville Marie, the courageous woman, accompanied by bag and baggage, (and her furniture, too,) sallied forth to meet new adventures and more terrible hardships than she had, as yet, encountered.

MADAME DE LA PELTRIE IN MONTREAL

As may be imagined, when the foundress of Quebec's convent decided to decamp and join Maisonneuve's party the news was not received with much rejoicing. Perhaps Madame linked up with Jeanne, knowing what opposition was encountered in Quebec, through jealousy, by the founder of Montreal, and also by Ville Marie's first nurse. True to form, the young widow faced the consequences of disobedience and disfavour, and regardless of scoldings and arguments stepped into a little bateau and made for the new missionary outpost.

It was the lovely month of May, 1642. We can picture the spirited French lady enjoying the rapture of so delightful a journey. Then the memorable day

of landing on Ville Marie island. Jeanne Mance, Madame de la Peltrie and her little maid had a busy time decorating the altar to be used for Ville Marie's first religious service, when the island was dedicated to the Holy Family. It was fun catching fire-flies which were to be used as candles. One can picture Madame de la Peltrie tucking up her petticoats and swooping hither and yon in an effort to imprison elusive fire-bugs.

Maisonneuve's famous tramp to Mount Royal bearing a great cross of wood on his shoulders would not have been quite so picturesque without the Widow de la Peltrie taking communion atop the beautiful wooded mountain as mass was celebrated on the feast of the Epiphany, January 6th, 1643. Each year the procession and mountain mass was repeated, then, perhaps on account of Iroquois attacks, was discontinued. Such a pageant, in a setting arranged by Nature, would be impossible to duplicate. Woodsmen blazed a trail from water's edge to mountain top. Along the rough pathway straggled Ville Marie's populace of priests, missionary women and humble settlers. Fierce winds fraught with bitter venom tempered by Arctic tempests strove desperately to wither the enthusiasm of those zealous Christians. Quite unconscious of the dramatic byplay they were enacting it remains for these later generations to mirror in words and phrases Canada's many picturesque moods as enacted over three hundred years ago.

Madame de la Peltrie entered wholeheartedly into life as featured in Ville Marie. With unflagging patience she suffered fatigue, discomfort and cold. She spent two winters in Montreal. One cannot imagine this dauntless girl lying tucked up in bed when morning light called them to arise. Nor is it possible to picture her allowing others to clear away snow drifts that had sifted through cracks in walls of wood and piled up on their cottage floors. She acted as godmother to a little Indian child

born in Montreal in the year 1644. Her name is etched forever in Ville Marie's early records.

Dr. Atherton in his *History of Montreal* quotes from Kingsford's "*History of Canada*": "Much romance has been thrown over a somewhat commonplace character. Her portraits remain. A more coquettish, heartless form of beauty is seldom to be found, either under the adornment of fashion or the hood and veil of the devotee." Dr. Atherton states: "Madame de la Peltrie never became a nun. It is to be feared that Kingsford theorized on matters of Catholic custom through lack of adequate knowledge, or appreciation."

Such vindictiveness uttered with regard to a lady who, to say the least, was extremely benevolent both as to the convent at Quebec and Montreal's first hospital, smacks of pettiness bordering onto childishness. Madame de la Peltrie may have had the wilfulness of a girl brought up by wealthy parents, but she showed great strength of character in sticking to her post in an ungracious wilderness. She could very easily have returned to France where open arms would have welcomed her back. But no, let Indians attack, murder, ravage and frighten the people; let hard work, discomfort, misery and fear inflict a heavy penalty, Madame de la Peltrie kept her vows of service in Canada made years ago when illness threatened to send her to a premature grave.

We have touched upon Madame de la Peltrie's sympathy for the founders of Ville Marie and how jealousy was rampantly green-eyed and dangerously evident to those who wished to dig below surface veneer. Although ordered by the King of France to found the island outpost, Maisonneuve met thinly veiled opposition both by the bishop and his Jesuit followers in Quebec. With truly human fear of being supplanted by the Sulpicians who controlled the Montreal movement, they did their best to supplant Jeanne Mance and her sister workers with those from the Hotel Dieu of Quebec.

This spirit of enmity, although smothered for the time being, simmered and smoldered for years. When Jeanne Mance had to go to France on business, a keen eye was centered on Ville Marie's hospital, else skillful manipulation on the part of Quebecers would wrench control of the hospital from the capable women left in charge by its foundress, Jeanne Mance.

When Madame de la Peltrie decided to flit to Ville Marie, Mother Marie de l'Incarnation could not have been very pleased. She watched with a jealous eye every move to Christianize New France. Being a strong-minded woman her views, with regard to what methods of procedure were most fitting, must have been firmly rooted. Therefore, when the foundress and benefactor of the Ursulines Convent moved upriver, accompanied by much of the furniture she had brought over from France, Mother Marie de l'Incarnation pondered. She bided her time, too.

It is not surprising to read, then, that in the spring of 1644 Madame de la Peltrie returned to Quebec. She was ordered to return, much to Jeanne Mance's sorrow. Few enough helpers were there to carry on, more especially with regard to women of culture. When winter's ice moved off the generous widow followed it to Quebec where she remained until her death.

Madame de la Peltrie had watched Quebec's growth, its valiant spirit under war stress and its moments of happiness during her years of service there. Bright spots were registered when King Louis XIV decided that New France should be included in the French empire. The busy pen of Mother Marie de l'Incarnation kept pace with the times. She jotted down the current events, giving illuminating, personal discourses which are highly edifying to history students of today.

Widow Peltrie witnessed the Marquis de Tracy's arrival in Quebec in 1665, accompanied by four com-

panies of the Carignan-Salières regiment. She eagerly watched the new arrivals disembark. Tracy was a huge man, tall and sixty-two years old. Mother Mary wrote in her little book that he was the largest man she ever saw. He was surrounded by young French nobles. They represented elegance personified. Lace, satin, ribbons, huge wigs and wide-brimmed, plumed hats comprised their sartorial trappings. Guards, pages, valets, six in number, led the way. It was a worthy sight. The widow Peltrie enjoyed it. After life's crudities in the wilds she must have felt a twinge of homesickness. A guilty longing for a fling at the old, traditional French grandeur, such as she had experienced when making her debut and becoming affianced to M. de la Peltrie. It was a glimpse of old France.

King Louis lavished attention on Cape Diamond's granite port, the gateway, as it were, to a greater, more far-flung branch of his new realm. Ships and more ships sailed from ancient ports of France laden with soldiers, more settlers and young women of marriageable age, horses, sheep, cattle. Before the season of ocean traffic closed about two thousand persons had landed at Quebec at the behest of their monarch.

Religionists in Canada started a crusade. They called it a crusade against the enemies of God and tools of the devil; the enemies being Iroquois natives whose heritage was at the moment being wrested from them by a means quite beyond the ken of savage intellects. They called it a holy war, those godly men and women, sublimely unconscious of their own shortcomings in invading another's territory. Filled with zeal to save savage souls they fired the French settlers and soldiers with a spirit half warlike and half religious.

The time was ripe for peace with their Iroquois enemies and France took the surest means of obtaining that peace by sending skilled soldiers with arms to end the continual attacks of vindictive red-skins. It was not accomplished in a moment, though. Patience and

time were the worthy accomplices which in the end triumphed victoriously.

A hardy race of French were, in the meantime, being carved from habitant stock, the measures used to chisel the models comprising hardship in its direct form. Poor families, with eight children, or more, lived on eels and bread. Little children ran about in winter with bare heads and feet and a little jacket on their backs. Only the fittest survived. Out of this sturdy stock, nursed in the lap of hardship, sprang the bush-rangers and bush-fighters whose prowess has enlivened many a vivid pen and stirred into glorious song the bards from far and wide.

The years are quickly passing. But Madame de la Peltrie does not look old, neither does she feel the advance of that dreaded consort, age. But death overtook the sprightly dame in her sixty-eighth year. A violent attack of pleurisy carried her off in seven days. It was a bleak November day, the nineteenth to be exact, in 1671, when she drew her last breath and followed her forebears to another world.

Her death was a great shock to the community. She was so full of life no one thought of her as growing old. She was buried with great ceremony. The Governor and all his suite, all the most distinguished persons of the city paid their last respects to a lady who, despite her love of the spectacular, was an unfailing source of courage and edification to all with whom she came in contact, whether hooded nuns, humble habitants, or children of Canada's wilderness. She was deeply and sincerely mourned. Her passing was an irreparable loss to Quebec.

CHAPTER XI



MOTHER MARIE DE L'INCARNATION IN QUEBEC



WE HAD to set aside the personal story of Mother Marie de l'Incarnation for the time being in order to transplant her and Madame de la Peltrie to the Ursulines' Convent at Quebec. Here she is established, the respected Superior with manifold duties of widely-varied types. Pupils, converts, adherents, march boldly up the steep incline to ask assistance, instruction, advice from the "Mother" of the community. She never refuses her aid, growing stronger in executive ability; yearly gaining in the knowledge of Canada's problems and how to best overcome difficulties naturally arising in her far-fung field of missionary activities.

To make the Ursulines a living force in Canada Mother Marie de l'Incarnation had to be endowed with almost superhuman religious inspiration, physical strength and an unlimited amount of worldly common sense. The pious visionary, dreamer of dreams and mystic signs, of self-scourgings and lengthy fasts and penances became, in her role of missionary, a dynamic source of energy; the fountain-head of industry, patience and foresight under the daily, rigid endurance and hard work which she bore with uncomplaining courage.

This remarkable woman was not only the leader, the ruling factor among her sister missionaries in establishing a school in Quebec, she was an accomplished historian. Far into the night her flickering oil lamp must have spluttered while Mother Marie wrote prodigiously of every angle of life presented to her in the convent of Quebec. Rapturously she tabulated the conversions of Indian children, because the major part of her duties involved the saving of savage souls. She also gave accurate and glowing accounts of Quebec's daily life. Nothing escaped the vigilant eye of the Mother Superior. She was conversant with Canada's various missions scattered miles apart in wilderness wastes where only savage feet trod and a few daring furmongers ventured, but where the Christian priests of France took up their abode. She kept a constant survey of the mission field from Labrador to the western hinterlands. She could quote the total number of deaths and baptisms recorded in any and all of the settlements even to the Great Lake district.

Quebec's head schoolmistress kept up an enormous correspondence with her people in France. One autumn it is claimed her letters to the homeland amounted to 600 pieces of mail. Not sketchy, duty letters. Vivid word pictures descriptive of the life of France's struggling settlers in a new, strange world. They appealed to her friends. Many donations of money and goods for the upkeep of the Ursulines Convent were the direct result of her appealing word pictures. In this way the ultra-mystic, the dreamer of dreams, became a practical woman. Faced by a continent of, as yet, measureless distance, by savage invasion, pestilence and war, she developed an organizing ability of unusual excellence. Her courage, foresight, knowledge of human nature and sagacity brought immeasurable benefits to settlers and savages.

Studying the Indian character the Mother Superior realized how difficult civilized habits were to men and

women born and bred to a life of freedom. She realized that it was far easier for a Frenchman to become a savage than vice versa. She stated that despite the great number of Indians among whom they had contact scarcely one in a hundred really became civilized.

Authorities in France declared that as royalty decreed it was imperative to civilize the Indians, those in charge of educational institutions in Quebec must make the experiment. Young Indian boys and girls were accordingly placed in the boys' college and the convent. Mother Marie de l'Incarnation realized the impracticability of the plan. She wrote, "We found them docile and intelligent, but they have not the constancy to remain with us after a certain time. They must see the woods. They must follow their parents to the chase. They find more pleasure in their wigwams than in our fine houses. It is the nature of the Indian, he cannot submit to restraint. If deprived of his usual liberty he becomes melancholy and sadness makes him sick."

Let us not imagine that the writing of lengthy letters, convent matters, keeping daily journals and religious duties comprised Mother Marie's entire obligations. Not at all. She was a skilled needlewoman. She excelled in fine stitchery, took pride in embroidery for altar embellishment and was an artist, too. Idleness was a vice unknown by the reverend mother.

Life in young Quebec began to surge with political intrigue; the increased population brought with it many angles of unrest and controversy. Struggles between church and state grew in intensity. Hot words hailed from pulpit and political platforms. Changes were making history among those in the seats of the mighty. The Marquis de Tracy arrived in the city, his dramatic entry featuring the formal practises of pageantry which would later on be carried out regularly during his regime in Canada. Four companies of the famous Carignan-de Salières regiment had landed in Quebec: that renowned body of soldiers who fought in Hungary against the

Turks with bold, fearless gallantry, and who established a strengthening of morale among French Canadian settlers; added color both as to their sartorial elegance and social prestige; had also become a factor of importance, of very significant importance in the development of Canada. Ville Marie de Montreal had been founded. Talon was shaping the young colonists into something of worth by encouraging the pioneers to become self-sufficient; he fostered home industries, sealing, lumbering, hemp growing. A tannery was first seen under his regime in Quebec, and the mineralogical possibilities were studied by French Canada's leader whose vision and foresight were of superlative value to those French settlers who bravely met Nature's most hostile moods in trying to homestead in Canada's wild woods.

Throughout the maelstrom whirlpooling and eddying with increasing velocity around her, the placid Mother de l'Incarnation carried on her daily duties. Let the church dignitaries and political firebrands waste their energy and time in plots and counter-plots; let the daily bickerings between fur traders and fish mongers flourish as they would, Mother Marie had her work to perform. She and her dependents must not lessen their efforts one iota; because of the trust placed implicitly in her ability to do the almost impossible she drove desperately; laggards had no consideration within the fold of that grey stone convent.

There was a time when Iroquois invasions and terrorism were so frequent that daily the hair on one's scalp was threatened. The habitants dare not venture far from home and farming was accomplished under mounted guards. War cries echoed and re-echoed, destroying the silence of primeval forests and striking horror among the bravest of Quebec's settlers in their frail huts. The savages, the savages! No German bombs over England shattered the nerves of the people more than did the cruel war tactics Iroquois savages applied to French Canadian pioneers in New France. All were

in danger, from the highest to the lowest. But nevertheless, Mother Marie de l'Incarnation and her workers set their teeth, determined to win.

Quebec's first school mistress lived in the midst of religious and political bickerings in Canada. She also had her ear attuned to disputes and quarrels simmering to the boiling point in France between the Papal authorities in Rome and the Huguenots. She kept her weather eye on another religious problem, that of Jansenism, a doctrine too free-minded to be acceptable in the sight of Rome. But ever mindful of her natural leanings towards the supernatural, she had most likely approved of the spiritual delirium of another form of "ism", "Quietism". Although the clergy did not openly acclaim this latter phase of piety they refrained from making any downright commendation, or condemnation. It was among the women of France that this particular sect appealed. Spiritual day-dreams found deep roots among ladies of rank who had plenty of time on their hands to encourage mystical exaltation and heavenly visions. It is not strange then, that Quietists found their way to Canada.

An outstanding enthusiast in this cult was Madame d'Ailleboust whose husband was nominated Governor of Quebec in March, 1648. Historians record how, during her girlhood, this wealthy lady vowed her body to Jesus Christ during a period of pious elation. This virginal innocence she kept intact up to her widowhood; thence to her grave. The governor succeeding her husband, M. de Courcelles, evidently fell in love with the rich widow and asked her to marry him, as did also M. Talon, the royal intendant. Both were refused. She divided her interest and wealth between celestial raptures and practical gifts for the Hôtel-Dieu of Quebec of money, silverware, bearing the d'Ailleboust crest, furniture and other incidentals. The historical museum in Quebec's Hôtel-Dieu bears out this statement in the many relics; gifts on exhibition of the generous, pious

woman. She passed away in "full flavor" according to her Quietest friends; "being filled with the spirit of prophecy, the gift of tears, discernment of the unseen world, and many other heavenly favors."

Mary-of-the-Incarnation and Mme. d'Ailleboust had much in common. Both revelled in the supernatural. Fortunately for Mary life in Canada was not attuned to long spiritual feasts. There were times, however, when she had good excuse to allow herself the luxury of celestial raptures. One of these occasions was presented during the series of earthquakes which rocked the country lying on each side of the St. Lawrence River for a period of months. Trees danced in drunken uncertainty in wooded dells; mountains disappeared and lakes and rivers swept in hitherto unknown ranges. Churches and homesteads teetered uncertainly, torn between a desire to collapse, or stand up under the terrific subterranean uproar and upheavals. That was in the year 1663. Men, women and children cowered in abject fear. Mon Dieu, what sinners they were to be punished thus!

Caught on the rebound, as it were, the people were more than ready to listen to priestly warnings of hell-fire and brimstone. But the most exalted renderings of judgments to come for sinfulness was offered by the Quietists, those women votaries of super-excellence in signs and wonders pertaining to the ethereal.

Both the lady superintendent of the Hôtel-Dieu of Quebec and Mary-of-the-Incarnation saw apparitions of future punishments to be levied on the harrassed community if they did not mend their ways. They hit while the iron was hot. Many converts entered the fold and much wickedness was quelled. Between earthquakes and forecasts of more to come if not converted from the wiles of the Devil himself, men and women flocked to Church, told their beads, confessed their sins and followed the precepts of their religious teachers with unflinching zeal. Its an ill wind that blows nobody good!

The Ursulines Convent, erected in 1642, was destroyed by fire in 1650.

Ten years slipped by since the arrival of the Ursulines in Quebec. Were they worth anything to the community? Did the expense and effort overshadow their usefulness? New France was passing through a critical era at this time. About two thousand French scattered in settlements and trading posts along the St. Lawrence were the front-line of defence against numberless Iroquois. Thousands of Hurons had been wiped out by the dreaded Iroquois tribes. The nuns were too well aware of the facts.

When it became known in France that the convent was a charred ruin the missionary sisters were implored to return home. Many communities would have welcomed them. Ten years of almost superhuman effort, surely a long enough time. Now they were homeless. Why not abandon the scheme and sail home to friends and comfort? "No", answered Mother de l'Incarnation, "we are not so cowardly as to betray our trust, or abandon our post. Our enemies are powerful, but God is greater than they." And so they remained.

Governor d'Ailleboust presided over a meeting of the chief leaders of the town, and the Jesuit Fathers. Discussing the nuns' lack of funds it was agreed to offer the Ursulines a loan free of interest for six years. They pledged themselves to give as much practical aid as possible in rebuilding the convent. No other assurance was necessary to prove the value of their missionary efforts.

The "Mother" and her helpers in training Canada's youth were fortunate in the selection of emigrants sent out from Europe to settle in New France. Perhaps they used their influence to have it so. Scrupulous care was advocated as the field was considered more a missionary venture than a colonizing scheme. At least from the point of view of the clergy and the nuns it was as it

should be. Apparently, as apostles of righteousness, those religious men and women kept a vigilant eye on everybody's morals. Over a period of sixty-nine years records show that only two children were born out of wedlock. With a circulating influx of soldiers, mariners, fur traders, trappers and adventurers of widely varying types, that such perfection could prevail seems, to say the least, most astounding. Remember, however, neither the priest in his petticoats, nor the guileless sisters could keep track of venturesome, full-blooded Frenchmen roaming the bush. If they respected the laws of Church and state in Quebec, well and good. Who could record their wickedness living, as they very often did, with savages? Many an Indian maiden must have fallen in love with those care-free bush roamers and seekers of thrills and adventure. Happily, their escapades were not on record. It was that much less worry for Mother Marie.

Speaking of worry brings about thoughts of Claude Martin's career after he found himself deprived of the mother he loved so devotedly. The young man evidently returned to the fold eventually, although one cannot believe that, under the circumstances, he did not sow his wild oats. Mary-of-the-Incarnation could not erase the memory of her beloved son. We may picture her eagerly watching for letters from home. Her mother love could not be smothered as easily as she had hoped. Such a winsome child must have grown to be an attractive man. He was as a stranger now. Oh, bitter thought! It was balm to her soul when Claude entered the novitiate of the Benedictines.

A letter from Mother St. Joseph to the young man, (discovered not long ago in the National Library, Paris), offers congratulations to the budding priest. In her usual thoughtful way she begs him to remember that should he find, through lack of strength, that it is impossible to continue "the Rule" he had adopted, compelling him to return to the world, she begged Claude

to go to her own mother. The lady stresses the fact that she received a letter from home on the last ship, replying to her request of a year previously that Claude would have the same consideration from her mother as if he were her own son. With consummate tact she mentions that his mother had casually remarked to her one time that Claude had no means of support. Not only would he have a home with her mother, she added, but a post in the office of her uncle, the Bishop of Xinte, would assure him a livelihood. This closes the chapter of Claude's worldly career. His monastical leanings and training released Mother Marie de l'Incarnation from a load of anxiety.

One could ramble along indefinitely jotting down the many and varied phases of Mary-of-the-Incarnation's life in Canada. She is ageing now. Always attuned to heavenly rather than worldly aspirations the approach of eternity exalted, inspired and soothed the pious woman. When Madame de la Peltrie fell ill and passed away in seven days her friend was greatly shocked.

Historians speak of a bilious affection from which the Venerable Mary suffered for eight years. Her last hours were torture. Mercifully death draws the veil and we write *finis* to a career lived in utter abandon to duty. She passed away the 29th of April, 1672, at the age of 72. Thirty-three of those years she spent in Canada.

Her death plunged the people into the depths of sorrow. Since the loss of Champlain there had been no heavier load of grief laid upon the citizens of Quebec. She was buried in the convent garden beside Madame de la Peltrie and Mother St. Joseph.

Modern architecture rears itself loftily skyward in Quebec's effort to appear up-to-date. Progress makes itself evident even along the steep incline of the "Royal Mile" leading to the Chateau Frontenac. But no shadows cast by sky-scrapers and stream-line buildings can tarnish the grandeur of the old Ursulines Monastery of

grey stone mellowed by Nature's tempests and stained by smoke and fog. Here stands a daily reminder of the convent's first school mistress, whose remains are guarded with scrupulous care by her sisterhood of twentieth century vintage. Within the sanctuary of the cloistered garden no vulgar, prying eyes may desecrate the peace and quietude of Mother Marie de l'Incarnation's last resting place.

CHAPTER XII



MOTHER ST. JOSEPH HELPS TO FOUND QUEBEC'S URSULINE CONVENT

THERE was a little nun of ancient, noble lineage, delicate, devoted, but humble to a fault whose name is written in Quebec's book of fame, and whose memory goes down through the ages as an inspiration to great and small alike for the furtherance of all things good. She was not spectacular, or dramatic in her way of life. Constant, quiet endeavor marked her career in New France, while a disposition for merriment cleared the pathway of tribulation for her monastic confrères when disaster seemed to deluge the worthy sisters in various tragic forms.

This lady, Marie de la Troche de St. Bernard, was of the noble family of de Savonnières. Like many of her little girl friends the lure of religion with its mystery of incense, dim candle light in vaulted cathedral silence, tolling church bells and solemn choir chants had a magnetic charm. She probably received enthusiastic encouragement during her convent days from the religious sisters. How the parents of Mlle. de la Troche took the announcement of her desire to enter the Ursuline monastery at Tours is to be imagined. "Her vocation to a religious life at the early age of fourteen, had already cost her parents immense sacrifice", wrote the

nuns in their records. Fourteen years of age, just beginning to step onto life's great stage and swept within grey-stone walls where prayers and penances dulled worldly temptations and silenced the desire to seek secular pleasures. But such a state of affairs was not unusual in those seventeenth century years. Many young girls jumped from the kindergarten of youth to the fold of religious fervour.

Therefore, when Marie de l'Incarnation was determining who should accompany her from the convent at Tours there were many young nuns clamoring to join in the great adventure. Much speculation kept the religious sisters guessing as to who would be the lucky one. Marie de la Troche was a delicate girl, rather too gentle one might suppose for the post in question. She watched the bright eyes of her sisters in the faith sparkle with anticipation. What a lark, indeed! An ocean voyage, new scenes, new work and a change from the daily monotony of conventual routine. There might be hardship, yes. But what of it? They were young and willing to take part in the great move to save thousands of souls from everlasting perdition. Marie de la Troche looked on. She listened to her black-robed associates chattering excitedly during their short hours of recess.

When announcement was made that Mlle. de la Troche was to accompany Mother Marie de l'Incarnation to aid her in establishing a school in Quebec no one was more astounded than the little lady herself. By this time she had adopted the name of Mother St. Joseph, attributing all the favours she received in life, more especially as to her religious successes, to the protective influence of the father of Christ, St. Joseph. Having received permission from church and parents along with the Archbishop's blessing she packed her bags and prepared to depart. The Archbishop, in his address to Madame de la Peltrie, on this momentous occasion said: "Behold the two corner-stones of the temple you are about to erect in the New World to

glorify the Almighty. I entrust them to you for this end, conformably to your request. May they be precious gems in the fountain, like those of the heavenly Jerusalem."

At last the day of departure dawned. It was a wrench to say those last words of good-bye to familiar faces, perhaps forever. A very great wrench. But having accepted the duty imposed they turned their backs on Mothers and Sisters, on relatives and the scenes of their childhood and started on their journey first to Paris, then to the port of sailing.

MOTHER ST. JOSEPH IN QUEBEC

Wide-eyed and fearfully the squaws, standing among the crowd who welcomed Quebec's missionary ladies in 1639, were ready to take to their heels to the woods when the hooded nuns in their strange habits stepped ashore. War paint and gargoyle faces were less frightening to Indian mothers. Watchfully they guarded their savage offspring, because who knows, those queer, bulky, black forms might represent evil such as the imagination of wild men and women of wilderness and mountain regions knew how to conjure. However, their fears were soon dissolved by a Jesuit priest who informed them that the women in black were "daughters of Captains", who had travelled far from home to teach them a better way to live. Very few days passed before forebodings and distrustfulness melted into friendship through the religious ladies' tact and gentle consideration. Mother St. Joseph did much to win over the squaws and their vagrant children. She mothered them, petted them, joked and played games with them, until romping, dancing, laughing and singing, the wild urchins loved her with all the strength of their little savage hearts.

Writing about her religious co-workers Mother Marie de l'Incarnation remarks, "Mother St. Joseph is a charming person, most accomplished in every way.

During recreation she often makes us laugh until we cry; it is impossible to be melancholy in her company. She loves the little Indian girls like a mother. After catechism she teaches them to sing hymns and play the viol." This tribute from the Mother Superior was well merited. Mother St. Joseph never lost her wit, or her jolly spirits no matter how desperate and calamitous the situation might be.

What patience and persistence those ladies of France possessed. There was a tremendous gap between convent life and forest dwelling. Young Indian girls recognised very little authority and discipline. True, they were taught to show a certain amount of respect and obedience to their mothers and grand-parents. The headstrong, wilful miss was never corrected, or punished, she spent her days as she willed without having to obey man or woman. Scanty, indeed, were the garments of the wild young women of the woods, and what there was of it was of the coarsest, roughest weave imaginable. With hair a tangled mass of uncombed and dirty wisps the savage maiden's beauty aids were more than passing strange. Bear's grease and soot was the compound advocated by fashion among Indian maids. One does not need to possess a vivid imagination to realize that the perfume from rancid bear's grease was not exactly equal to the most delicate perfumery extracted from rose leaves, or exotic essences created by Parisian laboratories. In winter, coarse moccasins and gaiters were added to the wardrobe of savage young ladies. Their boudoirs were not too dainty. They slept on the ground by the wigwam fire which was shared by all the family and by the dogs. Untamed, unclean and freedom-loving there must have been a powerful magnet to draw those nomads of the wilderness from their woodland homes to convent desks.

To learn the Algonquin language was no mean achievement. Many of the missionary French ladies did so, nevertheless. Mother St. Joseph mastered it along

with the Huron tongue. She did not find her dusky-skinned pupils ungrateful for the unremitting care lavished upon them. Loving kindness and sisterliness work more miracles for good than the bitter gall of hatred and unkindness. One of the most pleasing characteristics with regard to the savage girls was their willingness to aid new scholars who might have lacked sufficient clothes by giving what could be spared from their own wardrobes and helping them with their lessons. They reflected the unselfishness of the patient nuns. It was a worthy tribute to the nuns' patience and speaks volumes on their behalf.

Rapturously the nuns wrote long letters home praising the little Indian girls' aptitude both as to religious instruction and other departments of the convent teachings. They discoursed at great length on the conversions and how their savage pupils copied the religious fervor of their saintly teachers. Mother St. Joseph was never happier than when she laboured among the little children of the wilds, and she would not accept any high office, because she would naturally be unable to spend so much time among her brood.

When Champlain was approaching the end of his earthly span, in fact five years before his death, a great company of Hurons paid a visit to Quebec. They travelled from the Huron country, a matter of nine hundred miles via water, to see for themselves what those strange white men were doing in their town of strange houses perched on the summit of a rock. They paddled from the north shores of Lake Huron, six, or seven hundred dusky visitors, tall, brawny braves, handsome in their swarthy, savage way. Fifty canoes shot like arrows over boiling, seething rapids, across wide stretches of water and along rural rivers where bird songs throbbed to the rhythmic timing of hundreds of skillfully handled paddles, and woodland beauty was etched in mysterious shadows on rippling, silver streams and brooding, stagnant pools.

No artist's brush could reproduce the spectacle of that savage journey. Each bark canoe carried four or five warriors. They wore coverings of rough-haired skins across their shoulders; their faces, distorted with grease and war paint of brilliant hue, were enough to scare the Devil himself. Paddling with even, short strokes they covered the hundreds of miles with easy grace, eager to reach their destination, to see for themselves those strange people their comrades had described so vividly, in picturesque Indian language.

They were anxious to see for themselves those big canoes with wings; to inspect the great wigwams which were not made of bark and to see that Captain of the day, (meaning a clock), whose long fingers told the French people when to eat, when to sleep and when to attend great gatherings of their warriors. Curiosity was keyed to action with reports of grand robes of bright hue, of cooking utensils that could be set on great fires and would not burn and which could be exchanged for a few silky beaver-skins, or other peltries which the Indians knew how to trap far away in bushlands where no white man had as yet placed his foreign feet.

This heralded the first of a series of yearly visits paid to Quebec by the Huron race. They usually came about the time that merchant ships arrived from France. They must have witnessed the arrival of Quebec's missionary ladies in 1639. Quickly the news spread. Tales were related around wigwam fires of how the daughters of Sachems had crossed the great sea to live in Quebec and to teach the Indians to love them.

Mother St. Joseph showed much good sense in learning the Huron language. She had occasion to make good use of her ability to understand the Huron tongue when Huron maidens sought instruction at the Ursulines. Her name became famous in the Huron country. They called her the "Mother of the Hurons". Henceforth there was always a class of Hurons at the convent.

Husky warriors consulted Mother St. Joseph and docilely became her pupils in order to receive the gift of baptism when they had acquired sufficient knowledge of the intricacies of Christian principles and the catechism.

Many requests did Mother St. Joseph send to France by letter to her parents, begging for supplies and clothing for the destitute Indian families who appealed to her motherly sympathy. She never begged in vain. At this particular time there were thirteen missionaries in the Huron country instructing the Hurons in the ethics of Christianity. Shortly their Iroquois enemies began their relentless ravages which did not cease until the Huron territory was completely ruined.

Quietly carrying on her daily duties Mother St. Joseph kept a listening ear to reports circulating from the Huron tribe. Sad was the picture presented to her by Huron warriors fleeing before their pitiless foes. Pillage, destruction and death, fire, torture and torment. Mothers and children separated, husbands murdered before the horrified eyes of Indian wives. It was a pitiful, sorrowful saga of humble priests taking torture, diabolical, frenzied torment with a smile and a prayer on their lips for their offending enemies. Famine, pestilence and their shadow, death, followed on the heels of murder and completed more thoroughly the hateful massacre of Iroquois provocation.

Almost completely wiped out, the remnant of their 35,000 souls clustered in poverty in miserable huts within view of the Ursulines Monastery. Men, women and children, troops of forty and fifty suffering Hurons, gathered around Mother St. Joseph to glean from the great-hearted woman solace for their aching hearts and broken spirits. She undoubtedly comforted the poor things, gave unsparingly of her good spirits and faith in God's protecting arms to those who sought refuge from worldly afflictions.

An undercurrent of danger rumbled closer and closer to the French settlers in Canada. Swaggering Iroquois, grown bolder through repeated successes against the Hurons, were now threatening the French. It must be remembered that only about two thousand French were sparsely settled along the banks of the St. Lawrence River. It was a time to pause and shudder at possible developments, to strengthen ramparts and renew fortifications. An easy mind and peaceful mien were gifts almost impossible to achieve. Yes, French Canada faced fearful odds!

Prior to the convent fire in 1650 Mother St. Joseph had been a very sick woman. She suffered from tuberculosis for four years. All that summer she had kept on instructing the Hurons and guiding them with her good counsel. Her classes numbered from forty to fifty men and women, suffering souls listening eagerly to words of comfort falling from feverish lips, day in and day out. It was a tremendous effort for the woman whose days were numbered and whose strength was waning with each day's round of duties.

Never too robust, Mother St. Joseph must have found the severe winter months in draughty buildings a heavy drain on her strength. Exposure from the convent fire when she and her community had to escape with their lives in their night-dresses, standing in the snow, bare-foot, shivering from cold and doing her best to aid in salvaging their treasures and their pupils, was too much for the ailing lady.

Ten years she had striven for the kingdom of God. Ten withering, strenuous years! Now she is stretched on her death-bed. Even at this time little of comfort, or quiet soothed the dying nun's tortured frame. Her wracking cough, try as she might to smother it, wrenched her wasted frame and left her exhausted, weaker and still weaker.

She lingered from the second of February until April 4th. Germs and contagion were an unknown quantity. Her bedroom was not a secluded retreat where the ailing lady could hide her sufferings from others. No, indeed! She faded day by day in the common dormitory where rows of beds, arranged in tiers and uncomfortable for those in perfect health, offered no privacy whatsoever.

All the various noises of a busy convent life broke the silence of the patient nun's death chamber. All who attended chapel must tread the creaking boards near her bedside. Clattering wooden shoes, disturbing kitchen noises below, with but a thin layer of wooden flooring between; children reciting lessons, breaking wildly out for recess, singing, shouting, laughing, talking; the noisy chapel bell clamoring, jangling; life and death strangely mixed up, definitely opposed and uncompanionable.

Add to this the odor of eels which permeated every nook and cranny of the makeshift convent, because Mother St. Joseph was never to see their new convent. Chimneys must have been faulty, because Mother de l'Incarnation jotted down in her chronicles: "The odor of eels infected the whole house; the smoke forced us to open windows, even in the coldest weather." All of which added to the affliction of lungs none too capable of bearing life's burden under the most harmonious surroundings.

Her beautiful death was full of consideration for others. She never regretted coming to Canada. "I now look forward", she whispered, "to the crown of eternal life in the next, according to His word . . ."

They buried her in the Monastery garden. Whispering trees murmured in the breeze, and little green shoots, ready to burst into leafage when summer's arrival was due, waved in silent guardianship above the mortal remains of Mother St. Joseph, daughter of

one of the noblest families of France. Humility, charity and brotherly love were never more graciously represented than in the beautiful character of Marie de la Troche de St. Bernard of the feudal lords of St. Germain and Savonnières.

CHAPTER XIII



MOTHER CECILE RICHER DE LA CROIX THE THIRD URSULINE SISTER WHO ACCOMPANIED THE NUNS TO QUEBEC IN 1639



BEFORE winding up the story of Quebec's Ursuline Convent with more details of the famous institution and its gradual progress, there is another character, Mother Cecile Richer de la Croix whose biography must be included in this book, else we would be guilty of grave neglect.

This lady had already taken the vows of the Ursulines and was residing at the Ursulines' convent in Dieppe when Madame de la Peltrie and her missionary nuns arrived to sail for New France as soon as favourable winds permitted. Her appearance seems to have been unexpected, but none the less welcome to Mother Marie de l'Incarnation and the rich widow.

The faultless piety of those Ursuline sisters shines through the long vista of over three hundred years with pristine splendor. Yet, when the Revolution of 1793 swept before it good and bad, rich and poor, high and low, it also laid its poisonous fingers on the innocent convent sisters of the Ursulines Convent at Tours. They were forced to leave, driven from the building where

good works were glorified and personal sacrifices for Christian principles happily accepted. Later on, it is related by the nuns, the monastery building became a Catholic college.

Quietly, unofficially, but loyally, Mother Cecile de la Croix worked shoulder to shoulder with her monastical sisters in New France. She passed through their sorrows, their trials, their joys and fears. She watched the new convent being erected and marched triumphantly into the spacious, brand new monastery with proudly beating heart and intensified ardor to serve. Her's was the tragic experience of also standing and gazing upon the horrid splendor of roaring flames stretching skyward in frenzied greed to destroy every atom of their cherished school. She saw this duplicated in the year 1686, the twentieth of October.

To the Ursulines, October brings a special spirit of solemnity, when the sisterhood, like a family celebration, gathers in the ancestral home to feast and rejoice. It is the Feast of St. Ursula, patroness of the Order. High Mass, chanting, flower-bedecked and candle-lit altars, the spirit of thanksgiving voiced in prayers and heavenly music sung by holy sisters, whose lives are a living example of devotion, occupied the Ursulines that day in Quebec.

It was Sunday. All the choir members and the monastery residents had gathered in the chapel. Worshipers beyond the grating, which separated the cloistered sisters and the world, could vaguely distinguish the nuns kneeling in their stalls to render homage to their Maker. Partaking of Communion the black-gowned Ursulines then, with lowered veils, returned to their seats, reverently exalted and inspired to further service in Christ.

Suddenly, the sacred spell was shattered! A bell clanged, loud voices echoed through the long convent corridors and broke the peaceful meditations of kneeling

figures wrapt in prayer. Hastily the Mother Superior made her way through smoke-filled corridors to a room at the far end which was in flames. With quick presence of mind the distressed nun closed the door through which the smoke was belching and fairly ran back to the chapel.

"All is lost! The whole house is in flames. Get to a place of safety as quickly as possible." Rudely awakened from pious meditations when the Mother Superior thus summoned her community, pupils, and nuns filed into the courtyard, fleeing for their lives while the roaring flames destroyed the second Ursuline monastery within a space of thirty-six years.

The convent was a total loss. Even the out-houses melted before the onslaughts of wind and flames. Only Madame de la Peltrie's little homestead remained, which thirty-six years ago had sheltered the nuns and offered them a small, but welcome home.

Mother Cecile Richer de la Croix experienced the terrors of Iroquois invasion. She, too, must have helped the invincible Mother Marie de l'Incarnation distribute ammunition to the soldiers standing ready to fire when perchance, some bold marauder of savage blood tried to break through the boundary line. For eight days they stood on guard. Twelve French blood hounds added to the martial atmosphere surrounding the holy sisters.

Like the German treaties of today, those Iroquois scalawags signed assurances of peace and goodwill, but in a flash they disregarded their solemn declarations and broke their word if it suited their schemes.

After forty-eight years of service in New France Mother Cecile de la Croix passed away in her seventy-eight year. It seems an epidemic of measles ravaged the city. First the pupils of the Ursulines Convent fell ill, then their teachers took the disease. In September

old Mother Cecile de la Croix was attacked. Her aged body could not withstand the burning fever, although she fought for life for three weeks.

Like Mother St. Joseph she suffered from lack of the most simple comforts, because the nuns had not yet moved into the newly built convent. The dying nun lay in a miserable hut, originally the wash-house, which had to be used as an infirmary. At last she drew her final breath, with weeping members of the community surrounding her cot. They buried her beside others of the sisterhood within the monastery garden walls. To add to that mournful occasion autumn rains deluged the funeral cortege as it slowly carried Mother Cecile de la Croix' mortal remains to its last earthly resting place.

Celebrating the centennial of the arrival of Madame de la Peltrie, Mother Marie de l'Incarnation, Mother St. Joseph and Mother Cecile de la Croix in 1639, the sisters of Quebec's Ursuline monastery paid glowing tribute to their foundresses. Among the inscriptions and epigrams inspired by members of the Community is the following:

"One hundred years this house has stood,
Yet all within is firm and good.
Without reform the charter stands;
Thus let it pass to younger hands:
For where no rotten wood is found,
It kills the tree to bark it round."

To say these four valiant women of the seventeenth century leave us without inspiration to achieve a higher plane in this iniquitous, wordly universe is utterly impossible. They rendered to their pupils, their friends, confrères and even their enemies a monument of towering strength to uphold the righteousness which we in this war-torn twentieth century are striving to save for posterity. Thank God for such women.

CHAPTER XIV



DAILY ROUTINE OF URSULINE SISTERS CONSTANT AND STRENUOUS

Picturesque Incidents in Quebec's Seminary For Young Ladies



BEFORE writing finis to this phase of woman's entry into the primitive life of New France, a fleeting glance across the yellowing sheets of conventual happenings will emphasize more forcefully how, despite repeated disasters, the ideals pursued were valiantly upheld; in fact the constant danger of losing those celestial heights of spiritual perfection and service to mankind through Christ served to heighten and burnish the symbols of their faith and trust in God's protecting presence, no matter how perilous the situation.

We shall, then, turn back to the arrival in Quebec of Madame de la Peltrie and her three nun missionaries. We watched the ladies step from little row boats and kiss the soil of the great Continent of North America. Thoses kisses were the most humble of all kisses, because they embodied a vow of perpetual service to mankind and they also symbolized their faith

in New France which they were befriending with all the staunchness of womanhood in its most exalted perfection.

Up the Royal Mile they trudged accompanied by grateful men and women. A gentle breeze set flags and pennants aflutter. In those days the hill was much steeper, more precipitous and difficult to ascend. Zig-zagging to ease the strain at length the summit was reached where the Chapel of our Lady of Recovery was stationed. Here the procession halted. How Champlain would have thrilled to witness the happy people entering the chapel he erected in 1632; to have seen with his own eyes devout French men and women rendering thanks to their Maker.

Musty old volumes recording the acts of those pious women do not give details of that first day in Quebec, so we must imagine how they, perhaps, visited the most important families. Surely Madame Hebert must have received the sisters and rejoiced in the fact that now Quebec would march forward in something like real civilization. When those teachers and nurses stepped ashore they brought with them the spirit of refinement sadly lacking, because of the rudeness of life itself and the lawless men whose haunts were mainly in the wilderness.

An old house near the quay comprised of two rooms was their first home in Quebec. One room was set aside as a classroom, the other, sixteen feet square, being utilized as living quarters. Here the four women lived and worked in what included their dormitory, refectory, kitchen, parlor and choir. There was a crude lean-to beside the house which was used as a reception room. Here flocked parties of Indians seeking advice and help. The teachers adapted themselves quickly to the new order of life. Mother Marie's splendid gift of organizing insured an immediate success for their enterprise.

One of the most magnetic influences in their new institution was the always-ready pot of steaming sagamite around which some sixty or eighty Indians would congregate. It was a strange spectacle. Swarthy braves, hideous in their warpaint and almost nude, meekly squatting around the humble house while cultured ladies of France's "upper ten" waited upon them and fed them lavishly from the great pot. Sagamite had an alluring appeal to those savage appetites. The concoction was based on "a bushel of black plums, twenty-four pounds of bread, a due quantity of Indian-meal, or ground peas, a dozen of tallow candles melted, two or three pounds of fat pork all well boiled together". This dish was relished by the sachems and warchiefs as well as by the poorest tribesman of the bush. Mother Marie knew how to win those barbarians of Canada.

At first the work of development was slow. However, when two years later Madame de la Peltrie laid the foundation stone of the monastery, they felt that they were at last making definite progress. The Governor, in the name of the Hundred Associates, gave them six arpents of land within the city's limits. It was an excellent location for their convent on the top of the cliff.

During building operations the school work went ahead slowly, but surely. Already fifty pupils were enrolled. These were mostly Indian girls. The parlor visits were an important item in their routine. More than eight hundred were recorded on their visiting list in the course of a single year. The nuns now numbered five in all, but their work was so incessant and the Indian visits so continual that they had well nigh more than they could accomplish in their daily round of duties. Despite the fact the "pot of sagamite" was never empty. There was always a welcome for the humble redskin; the good sisters never failed them.

All was not manual labour, however, because in order to make proper contact with their dusky visitors the nuns had to learn the Indian tongues. Two languages, at least, had to be mastered, the Algonquin and the Huron. It was a tedious task. Physical fatigue hampered their mental exercises. But tempered with determination to succeed they soon became proficient in the queer sounds and phrases so unlike the French tongue.

The Ursulines had arrived in Quebec at a very opportune time. With the way already paved by the French missionaries a rich harvest could now be garnered and in fact had already begun to yield fruit. But the expense was more than they had thought to cope with. Not only did the good sisters have to feed and clothe the Indian children, but many times the entire family depended on the kind teachers for their daily needs. Here was a problem almost too great for them to handle.

Appealing to their friends in France the nuns raised money time after time and little sailing vessels brought in their holds presents of clothing for the seminarists, tools for the workmen and at one particular time a chalice for their altar. The Ursulines in Paris and Tours were always in the vanguard with their ready assistance. And so the work grew and prospered, the roots spreading deeply, thriving upon the spirit of unselfishness without which the effort would have been useless. The Duchess d'Aiguillon and the Duchess de Brienne gave bountifully. Other benefactors kept the convent coffers from running low, assuring the seminary more scope for its activities.

CHAPTER XV



QUEBEC: URSULINE CONVENT COMPLETED IN 1642

THREE years passed; each day's work a step forward, another rung upward on the ladder to prosperity. The Ursulines slaved to win. Victory they gained at last, when, in the year 1642, Mother Mary of the Incarnation and her very small community of seven nuns, established themselves in their newly-erected monastery, an imposing structure for the period, built of dark lime-stone quarried on the property. Although simple in architecture there was a feeling of stability to the three-storied convent with its belfry set in the centre of the ninety-two foot long edifice. The slanted roof bore dormer windows and the width of the building from end to end of the ninety-two feet school-house was twenty-eight feet.

Although the building was a delightful spot during the warm months it cannot be denied that winter must have been a sore trial to the patient, uncomplaining women. Four large fire-places were provided, but these were decidedly inefficient to withstand winter's spells of cold, subzero weather. Those great hearths gobbled up one hundred and

seventy-five cords of wood before the spring. Even so, they were useful only within a very limited area beyond. It was impossible and dangerous to stay away from the fire-side more than an hour at a time. Large boxes, or chests were built, somewhat like bunks, in which blankets and bedding and the sleeper were housed so that in a degree the cold was not felt as keenly. And still they suffered, although they did not actually freeze.

When the Ursulines finally entered their new home they did so with great formality. Early one crisp, cold autumn morning they stepped out into the frosty air and followed Father Vimont up the steep incline that connects lower with upper Quebec to the site of their seminary. A cutting wind caused Mother de l'Incarnation and her followers to draw their wraps more closely around them and walk a bit faster. They led their French pupils and seminarists who followed jubilantly, only too anxious to enter the spacious building that was to be their new quarters.

Groups of Indians peered from the near-by forest trees, some of them joined the procession, all deeply moved and truly thankful. Shouts of admiration broke from the waifs of the forest; they were over-joyed with the magnificent "wigwam" that from this time would be their home.

Father Lalemant followed the band carrying the Holy Sacrament. All entered the chapel where the Reverend Father officiated at the first Mass. It was not a large chapel, twenty-eight feet by seventeen, but it was gay with lighted tapers, the gilded tabernacle and the crimson drapes borrowed from the store for the occasion. Prayers of thanksgiving and praise were fervently offered by those pioneer servants of the small settlement.

The fine new house did not in any way change the simple menu of the sisters and their pupils. A

plain pine table bore the usual salt fish, pork and the inevitable eels. Those of us who have not had a daily diet of eels, the pungent smell of which in the cooking process permeates through every room in the house, cannot appreciate the monotony and actual dislike arising from such a bill of fare. A tremendous amount of added labour naturally resulted in consequence of moving into more spacious quarters. It would have taken something more than poor food and hard work to discourage those pious French ladies. The more they added to their daily tasks and denied themselves in their daily rations, the greater their ambition to speed forward, to accomplish the work at hand.

Eight peaceful years slipped away. Many Indian followers became enthusiastic converts. Savage men and women asked instruction from the missionaries, because they saw how well their children had improved under the new regime. It brought prayers of thankfulness from the teachers when Indian converts left the convent fold and treked to the hinterlands as missionaries to Indian tribes.

When native tribesmen from other parts of Canada walked hundreds of miles to visit Quebec and enjoy religious instruction and material benefits offered by the Ursuline nuns, the teachers were overjoyed. Huron Indians, as we have said, profitted well at the hands of Mother Marie and her household, but when numbers of Iroquets from the great island of the Alumettes, away up in Ontario, passed through the country of their enemies, the Iroquois, in order to visit the Ursulines, the good sisters' cup of gratitude was full to overflowing.

Camping near the monastery eighty Iroquets paid the Ursulines daily visits to receive instruction in the Christian doctrine. Many were baptized. They swarmed the convent for six weeks and during their

stay it was the uncomplaining duty of Mother Marie's community to feed the entire troupe. Good eating may have had much to do with their faithfulness. "No matter", said the sisters, "we shall convert them in this way."

As time slipped away the cloistered family grew and flourished. In 1648 there were eight professed choir nuns and two lay-sisters. Before the end of that year one of the daughters of the noblesse, Mademoiselle Philippe-Gertrude de Boulogne, sister of Madame d'Ailleboust, joined the community. She was a valuable addition to their forces.

FIRE, FIRE, FIRE!

One cold December evening in 1650 disaster fell upon the convent and brought to the inmates terror and sadness.

It was the evening hour of recreation. Glowing hearth fires and twinkling candle lights cast their reflections on casements and chased the gloom from grey monastery walls. Inside the cloister a pretty scene was taking place. Black-robed sisters with stiffly starched white coifs and flowing veils sat in happy informality around the central table. Some were knitting, others sewing or mending, but all were merry and glad to chat and relax after a day full to the brim with duties and religious rites.

Let us study each figure in turn. First, because she was the Mother Superior, having succeeded Mother Marie de l'Incarnation in 1645, comes Mother St. Athanasius a bit pale and worn after her arduous tasks of the day, but jolly and bright, keen to hear what the sisters had to tell of the day's work. Mother St. Joseph was also present, her fund of wit still unspent after ten years of incessant toil. Mother Mary of the Incarnation sat among the group, her lovely smiling face bearing a few more lines, symbols of the

struggle she has been through. Others present were Mothers Ste. Croix, Anne de Ste. Cecile, Anne de Notre Dame and Mother St. Ignatius.

Three lay sisters in the kitchen below were busy finishing up their chores for the day. They included St. Laurence, St. Ursula and St. Michael. They were assisted by a poor Indian widow, along with Mother St. Dominic, the former Mademoiselle de Boulogne.

In the largest hall of the house adjoining the community young Indian girls were laughing and talking. Those in charge of the lively group were Madame de la Peltrie and Mother Anne of the Seraphim. An animated discussion relative to the New Year celebrations and the possibility of receiving and giving gifts kept the conversation flowing rapidly. Such a care-free, happy group.

Mother St. Clare presided in the evening recreation room upstairs where French instruction was usually carried on. Proud families of New France were represented among the animated circle of school girls. Among those on record were: the Misses de Repentigny, Elizabeth and Marie Couillard, Juchereau de More, Le Tardif, Marsolet, de la Poterie, Bourdon, Hayot, Hertel, Godefroy, Madeleine and Genevieve Chavigny, Porchet and Nicolet.

A bell clanged loudly through the corridors, breaking the peaceful calm. It proclaimed the hour of silence. A half hour of prayers and hymns closed the day. Soon the monastery lights were out. The entire community slept.

Sometime after midnight one of the sisters was awakened by the smell of smoke. Aghast, she saw flames bursting through the flooring. Shrieking fire, she roused the children and then called to the nuns sleeping in the dormitory nearby. Panic gripped the hearts of the faithful nuns, but their heads remained

clear. Someone rang the fire bell, while the Mother Superior unlocked all doors. Two sisters broke down the parlor grating which allowed a way of escape for those on the second floor.

Little children were carried to safety outside the building which had soon become a mass of flames reaching skyward through the roof. Mother St. Athanasius called the roll. Fortunately all the inmates were saved, but the beautiful convent, only eight or nine years old, was reduced to an empty hull, charred and blackened beyond recognition.

Standing in the snow, with nothing to cover them but their night clothes, the children were a pitiful gathering, weeping bitterly because of the loss of their fine school. Neighbours took them in, placing the Indian girls in the nearest shelter and taking the little French children home with them.

Coolly the nuns looked after the children in their care. With amazing calm they handled the situation until the last child was safely housed and tucked in a warm bed for the night. Kind women supplied the nuns with shoes and clothes and the Jesuits gave them shelter that night in their college.

It was a terrible blow. They had had to work so hard to find the funds to build, begging and working weeks, months and years. They lost all. Mother Mary in accounting for the source of the catastrophe stated that the Sister in charge of the bakery had prepared the dough as usual. In cold weather the cook used to put the bread trough over a pan of hot coals to ensure its rising. Unfortunately she forgot to remove the coals before going to bed.

Mother Marie performed a conspicuous act of bravery while the building was in flames, she risked her life to save the papers of the community and assisted by the Jesuit fathers rescued the Blessed

The Mountain Mission

M. de Belmont, a Sulpician missionary, built these two watch towers, to aid in protecting the Mountain Mission. He also raised a palisade, with four bastions surrounding the Mission, against Indian invasion. The founder of St. Sulpice in Montreal was Jean-Jacques Olier de Verneuil.

Marguerite Bourgeoys' nuns taught in the tower to the right, or the one farthest west on Sherbrooke Street. The east tower is where the Sisters of the Congregation lived while teaching there. It became a chapel in 1824. The body of a great Iroquois warrior, a Christian, François Thoronhiongo, baptized by the Jesuit martyr, Père de Brébeuf, lies in this tower. It is said his grand-daughter is also buried in this hallowed spot. The great Iroquois warrior lived at the Mountain Mission.

After the Seminary of St. Sulpice, (situated next door to the Notre Dame Church,) on Notre Dame Street west and which is the oldest building in Montreal, these two towers and the piece of stone wall come next in age. They remind us of Montreal's traditions of the past and the supreme effort necessary to perform life's daily tasks, no matter how simple, by the stout-hearted men and women of New France.

(See page 142)



Edw. L. Elliott

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Sacrament and sacred vestments before the fire reached the chapel.

A smoking heap of ruins was all that remained when next morning the nuns wandered desolately around their gutted home. An invitation from the Governor to take refuge in the castle and another from the Hospitallers brought assurance of tangible goodwill to the sisters. They gladly accepted the latter's offer, the entire body of Ursulines and Madame de la Peltrie taking refuge with the hospital-nuns who supplied them with their own clothing and made them welcome.

With the fruits of ten years' labor a blackened and charred ruin the Ursulines also lost their provisions stored away for the next six months. Friends, indeed, were those Hospitallers who did their utmost to help in a material way their distressed neighbours.

Madame de la Peltrie's vacant house was offered to the Ursulines by their benefactress. This gesture was gladly accepted and before long the nuns had moved there and started life anew. A loan amounting to five hundred livres worth of commodities from the Hospitallers gave them a start and helped them to pass the remainder of the winter months.

While they were the guests of the Hospital nuns the Ursulines were deeply touched when the Huron Chief, Louis Taiearonk, in a speech that only the Indian tongue knows how to embellish with flowery and complimentary phrases, expressed his tribe's sorrow in their trials. He brought two wampum belts, stating that it was the hope of his people should friends and relatives try to persuade the nuns to go back to France that the one belt would fix their feet so firmly on the soil of Canada that nothing in the world would remove them. The second belt represented the foundation of another house. Truly a touching tribute, because the Hurons had suffered

and lost irrevocably through Iroquois invasions. They were greatly diminished in numbers and extremely poor.

It would have taken harder hearts than the Ursulines' to resist so pathetic an appeal. They decided to rebuild as soon as possible. Their decision was received with rejoicing by both the citizens and Government and religious bodies. Financial aid came to them through prominent Quebec families and the Jesuit Fathers. The loan was offered free of interest for six years, the money to aid them in erecting a new convent. Governor d'Ailleboust presided at the meeting.

Those weeks before spring broke were a series of hardship and trials. Many who were in the habit of receiving aid from the nuns brought their pittance to reimburse the sisters. Sometimes the present was but a few eggs, or a loaf of bread, perhaps a chemise, a cloak, a chicken, or a towel. No matter how small the gift it was gladly received.

THE SECOND CONVENT

Under sorrow's shadow Mother Marie of the Incarnation with her religious sisters resumed their school duties. Each year added to the numbers of little French girls under their care. Some of the most notable French families were represented among their pupils and later on several took the veil. Major Lambert Closse, who played such a prominent role in Montreal's history, found among the pupils of the Ursuline convent, a Miss Moyen, whom later on he married. Her sister, who also attended the convent, married Captain du Gué of the Carignan-Sallières regiment.

Those carefully-schooled ladies, pupils of Mother Marie, were considered a real "catch" by the elite of Canadian society. Hence it was not surprising that

many brilliant Carignan officers married girls from the Ursulines. For instance Monsieur de Sorel went to Quebec in 1668 and took as his bride Catherine LeGardeur de Repentigny. Marie LeGardeur was united in marriage to Monsieur Berthier in 1672. Chambly married Louise de Launay; Verchères married Marie Perrot, whose daughter became the noted Canadian heroine, Madeleine de Verchères. M. Gauthier de Varennes went to the altar with another Ursuline pupil, Marie Boucher.

Another of the Ursuline boarders was Mlle de Denonville, daughter of the Governor of the Colony. Since then Canada's best French families have continued to send their daughters to the Ursuline sisters, because of the splendid training received from the religious, cloistered nuns.

In the meantime Quebec continued to develop and increase both as to size and population. From 1665 to 1671 a definite improvement in birth registrations is apparent. Prior to 1665 statistics prove that less than 2,500 Europeans resided in Canada. In two years' time the population had risen to 5,870. But in 1684 no race suicide, or lack of immigration was evident in the records of 17,000 persons of European birth registered in New France.

Intendant Talon, with his genius for colonization, helped the settlers considerably when he introduced industrial improvements. In encouraging the women to spin he gave them a tremendous boost to happiness and independance. Instead of having to wait months for sailing vessels to arrive from France with materials for fashioning the clothes for the family he made them self-sufficient and taught them the value of initiative.

Talon offered to provide materials for the pupils of the convent, both French and Indian, so that they might learn to spin and weave. His leadership in in-

roducing the raising of hemp and flax from which the natives learnt to weave, with wool also as a medium, brought to the habitant something of independence and pride of occupation. Iron foundries and tanning factories offered to the men of New France more scope for a livelihood and more independence to face life's problems. Had the Iroquois been more peaceful it would have been a very happy era for young Canada. But wickedness prevailed among those warring tribes, they lived and slept with the vision of revenge on their French enemies always in mind.

MONASTICAL REMINISCENCES

One finds in conventual records highlights of the times that are very often most valuable. Thus it is from the old Ursuline Monastery books that we learn how the Viceroy Marquis de Tracy took on the regal pomp of Louis XIV when he spent two years in Quebec lording it over the citizens. It is stated by the sisters, who may or may not have had their tongues in their cheeks when they noted it, that whenever the pompous old gentleman appeared in the streets of Quebec he was attended by four pages and six footmen. Preceding him were 24 guards. Not satisfied with servants and soldiers as heralds of his august presence he added to his "royal" staff officers of different grades attired in France's most gaudy military garb, or wearing the dignity of court dress.

He is reported on one occasion to have exceeded his usual courtly appearance in public by adding to the cortege not only the military men at his command, but the clergy and all the citizens. Ah, well, young France revelled in pageantry and pomp. Even to this day all Quebec's male population march to the dictates of the Church whenever occasion permits. Men, women, young and old, rich or poor, mass Quebec's narrow streets to take part in religious rites

and celebrations; banners, flags and pennants fluttering, thousands of tongues wagging and smiling faces bearing witness that a grand parade is not contrary to French happiness, but increases their conception of good fellowship.

At any rate the Ursuline nuns were in a position to watch from their cloistered windows many of de Tracy's pompous parades. He was, however, a staunch friend of the Ursulines. Many a time it fell to the Marquis de Tracy to uphold the interests of their community and his interest took concrete form when at his own expense he erected a chapel dedicated to St. Anne.

Mère Marie de l'Incarnation deplored Marquis de Tracy's return to France after nearly two years' residence in Quebec. He was their best friend, she wrote, and his example of intrinsic value to society.

Records of another "parade" are to be found in the yellowing sheets of Mother Marie's historical data and to this day celebrations are featured according to vows taken in 1690 when invasion of alien powers threatened New France's stronghold.

With simple fortitude Mother Marie de l'Incarnation's documents reveal how the peace of Quebec was threatened when a fleet of thirty-four English vessels approached to take possession of the country. It happened on October 7th, 1690. The French were terrified, because Quebec was not in a position to defend herself. Only two hundred male citizens could be mustered to protect Quebec. The Governor, and all the troops were at Montreal defending the frontier town from Iroquois attacks.

The poor little cloistered sisters did their best to meet the situation bravely. With batteries mounted in Lower Town and streets barricaded, soon Quebec took on a military air, although depleted of fighting men. Major Prévost did his utmost to make the best

of a bad bargain. Inhabitants of Quebec's peaceful homes were forced to play the part of soldiers. There was some talk of sending all the nuns of both communities up to Montreal. There were no boats at hand for transportation, so that plan had to be discarded. Finally it was decided that they should be sent to Lorette where greater safety from flying bullets might be attained.

We can picture the black-robed figures of Mother Marie's household pattering up and down-stairs carrying their precious linen and other articles prized by the community to the cellar and stowing them safely in hidden compartments hoping that no prying eyes would discover their cache.

Mother Marie and three other sisters were deputed to leave for Lorette whenever the enemy's ships were sighted. This exigency did not have to be resorted to as circumstances developed. "We commenced a novena to the holy Angels and to St. Joseph, the patron of our country", wrote the reverend lady. Mass was said daily and supplicatory prayers offered in the hope of appeasing a wrathful Divinity. Many, many times those saintly sisters had recourse to prayer. They prayed while the soldiers fought. Like Moses on the mountain top, praying for victory over warring Amalek, with arms upheld by Aaron and Hur until sundown when the Israelites prevailed, achieving victory through prayer rather than through Jewish soldiers' valor, in like manner the Ursulines used their supplications to the "Bon Dieu", praying incessantly for help in times of stress.

Contrary winds prevented England's ships from reaching a vantage point near enough to Quebec to do them any damage. When nine days later they succeeded in reaching Quebec Count de Frontenac with troops recalled from Montreal, and that crack French regiment commanded by de Callières, became a formi-

dable stumbling-block to Quebec's surrender to England.

Persistent attacks by the English kept Quebec's population on tenter-hooks. In cannonading the citadel enemy cannon-balls entered the convent in various places and fell within their walled garden. No casualties resulted.

The convent was crowded with people. Madame de la Peltrie's house became a storehouse meanwhile; furniture and supplies being placed there for greater protection. People from the city and beyond filled the boarders' quarters, the Indian class rooms, the refectory and novitiate and the three cellars. Frightened women and children blocked the passageways and it was with difficulty that Mother Marie and her overworked staff could pass to and from their kitchen. "We took our food standing and in haste", says the foundress in her records.

That first night of attack was spent in prayer. Hourly, death was anticipated. No one undressed. A painting of the Holy Family was loaned by the Ursulines and exposed on the steeple of the Cathedral, a symbol that Quebec was fighting under the patronage of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. The enemy retreated, with ships a bit the worse after their encounter with Quebec's batteries, on October 21st.

Victorious and happy New France literally fell to its knees in grateful thanks to heaven. A procession of thanksgiving marked that auspicious day, in compliance with orders from the Bishop. Solemnly the "Blessed Virgin" Mary's image was borne aloft for all to witness, threading Quebec's narrow streets to four churches, ending at the cathedral where the *Te Deum* was sung.

That evening great bonfires blazed cutting night's gloom in fiery columns, just as our Quebecois cel-

ebred in honour of two beloved sovereigns, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, in May 1939, along the sloping banks of the St. Lawrence water route.

It was decided by the church authorities that a chapel that was shortly to be built in Lower Town would bear the title, "Our Lady of Victory".

Victory it was, yes. But for the nuns it was not alone a victory in arms. A far greater conquest they achieved in harnessing evil, ignorance, crudity and ungodliness. Each hour, each day, each month, each year was a battle. They won their spurs humbly and heroically. No cross for valour, or for spectacular bravery. No stripes, or titles, no substantial grants of money, or worldly assets, no extra comforts, or luxuries. They slipped into the hereafter worn out in body, but triumphant in the knowledge of duty performed well, with reverence inscribed on each righteous act, no matter how menial.

CHAPTER XVI



MADemoiselle JEANNE MANCE

— Prelude —



LESS than three hundred years ago the fate of Ville Marie de Montreal lay trembling in the balance. Maisonneuve, the founder, was at his wit's end. Defeat hedged him in on every side and the ignominy of giving up the inspired work of establishing a colony on the beautiful island seemed the only solution of the problem. Countless invasions by the aggressive Iroquois and the increased violence of their attacks had seriously diminished the number of his little band of fighting men, as well as definitely lowered the morale of the community. He realized the futility of continuing his endeavors without sufficient funds to finance the expense of bringing from France both men and arms to defend the frontier town and keep the colony flourishing.

It was not his fault that the outlook was so uncompromising and in all probability he did not put the blame on his predecessors, Jacques Cartier and the famous explorer, Samuel de Champlain. In their zeal to present to France a vast continent teeming with wealth in furs, fish, minerals, etc., etc., (not to overlook the thousands of savages and just as many souls to

be saved from the jaws of hell), they had undiplomatically forged bitter enemies for France through their aggressive and ruthless tactics.

Oddly enough the difficulty was solved for Maisonneuve by a woman, Jeanne Mance, who through her shrewdness and intelligence saw a loophole of escape from the utter failure that seemed to engulf the little group of pioneers. Had not Jeanne shown Maisonneuve the possibility of overcoming the difficulties that so heavily handicapped his work Montreal would not stand as it does today a noble tribute in wealth, learning and beauty, one of the great cities of the world.

This is the first instance of feminine leadership in the records of Ville Marie, now called Montreal. Many times later on in the struggling years of the settlement Jeanne Mance gave her sound advice to Maisonneuve when he was nonplussed, leading him forward and inspiring him with the courage she so bountifully possessed.

Montreal owes a great debt to that dauntless woman, because, without her untiring efforts the colony, weak as it was, could never have survived. Her work of healing is still kept up and the spirit of unselfish service thrives at this moment in the Hotel Dieu in Montreal, where its cloistered nuns offer their lives in holy sacrifice, gladly giving their time and energy in their efforts to heal the sick and help the downhearted. All this is done kindled by the fiery zeal of devout love to the Holy Family, the root and branch of their organization.

JEANNE MANCE MONTREAL'S FIRST NURSING SISTER

While the struggling French pioneer settlers eked out a precarious existence in New France a far different scene was being enacted in the homeland during

the early part of the seventeenth century. Prosperity had seized upon the old world. France basked in the splendor of that golden age when the most brilliant court Europe had ever encountered swayed the mighty. Culture had reached a high standard, accompanied by reckless extravagance among the favored classes. Great names were being etched on the escutcheon of France in art, letters and triumphs of war and travel. It was a stirring age, bristling with unfathomed pitfalls though.

Colonization in New France, however, was practically at a standstill. The French Government gave but lukewarm attention to the tales of a rich, virgin forest teeming with possibilities in natural resources. The recollections of Jacques Cartier's voyages and his records of climatic conditions, as well as the fatalities among his men from scurvy, had left a definite feeling of indifference, despite the valiant efforts of the great explorer, Champlain. As far as the general public were concerned it was the trader, the seeker after commercial gain, that kept aflame the dying embers of interest in the new world.

During this portentous era France was unwittingly inscribing on her roll of honor, among the names of great men and women, that of a simple country maiden, Jeanne Mance, who was destined to become one of the greatest heroines of that newly discovered continent that lay beyond the horizonline where the sun sank in painted glory far away in the mystical west. She brought with her no exceptional talents, or great wealth, but she possessed a loving heart and a devout desire to serve her God through aiding the sick and afflicted in New France. At the time she was considered of little importance in France. To tell the truth two centuries later her name was quite forgotten in her own home town, or for that matter, in any part of France.

It took time's seasoning outlook to bring about a realization to the general public that her's was one of the most illustrious personalities of the seventeenth century. She embodied the spirit of Florence Nightingale set amidst savages, forests, uncouth woodsmen and want in starvation's gaunt form.

JEANNE MANCE AS A GIRL

Jeanne Mance was born in 1606 at Langres, France. Some confusion has arisen as to the real source of her birthplace owing to a girl of the same name having been born in Nogent-le-Roi, which is not very far from Langres. This, however, has been denied recently by authorities of the Hotel Dieu sisterhood, in Montreal and Quebec. They definitely declare that her birthplace was undoubtedly Langres, which statement they have been able to prove through very careful research of authentic records. She was one of a large family of boys and girls and it was not until she reached the mature years of thirty-six that her lifetime wish, to serve humanity, became a fact.

Very little can be gleaned of her earliest years, but it is known that she took active part in nursing the wounded on the actual battle-field when, in 1635, the district she lived in became invaded by the Lorrains. The invading army besieged not only Jeanne's home town, but her own home also received the brunt of their activities. Barbarism and bestiality rode victorious through the district. Pillage, massacres and crime spread their net of terror over the heretofore peaceful province. The scourge of death and pestilence scorched the beauty of the old French town and wrenched the hearts of the natives. It was a bitter school of training for gentle, timid Jeanne, who so heroically served her apprenticeship in the craft of easing the sufferings of the maimed and dying. Nature endowed her with the gift of healing the sick and binding up the wounds of the afflicted. Little did she realize that her training

on the war path was but an introduction to her life's career in a foreign land, where she would blaze the trail for posterity in a wild country, sparsely cleared, and skirted by the threatening gloom of a virgin forest.

One spring day in the month of April, 1640, Jeanne came to the parting of the ways. It appears she had been attending the Lenten services of the city, and besides listening to many forceful sermons she met one of the divines of the Cathedral at Langres, an old canon, who was very much impressed by her intelligence and her zeal to become useful in what we might call in modern language social service nursing.

During the course of their conversation the subject of New France was brought up. They talked of the martyrs that were giving up their lives and suffering privation and even torture and death so that the furtherance of their religion might be increased. The old man told her instances of bravery and devotion that had come to his notice, and he related the plans of the Church to civilize and Christianize hordes of pagan savages. When Jeanne heard about the Hospital Nuns at Quebec and of such brave women as Mother Marie de l'Incarnation and Madame de la Peltrie she was deeply impressed. Conflicting emotions kept her from making the decision, but her conscience gave her no peace. What should she do? Her health was not the most robust, how could she face the terrible hazards of an uncivilized country where she would be cut off from all the comforts she was accustomed to? She brought her troubles to the old priest.

Upon the advice of the old Canon she left shortly for Paris and eventually called on Father Lallemant, who had charge of the Jesuit missions in Canada. Naturally, her relatives considered her move utter madness and she was obliged to hide from them the real

reason of her trip. Giving them to understand she was going to visit cousins she set out for the great city on May 30th, 1640. She kept her word and made her headquarters at the residence of her cousins which was within a few steps of the Church of St. Sulpice, and close to the Jesuit Novitiate, where Father Lallemant resided. She called on the church dignitary immediately and disclosed her plans to him. She saw him twice. The second time he advised her that there was a great field of usefulness for her in Canada, but that he was called out of town and could not go further into the matter with her.

For three months poor Jeanne tried to find a listening ear. Her plan seemed doomed to failure. At last, however, she met another priest who advised her to throw off all restraint and declare to the world that she was going to Canada to establish a refuge for the sick and afflicted. Acting upon his advice she returned to her cousins and unfolded her plans, to their horror. She must be mad, they thought, but no arguing could dissuade her from taking the fatal plunge. How could she go without means? All sorts of obstacles were presented. Jeanne brushed them all aside and forged ahead.

Gossiping tongues repeated the whisperings regarding a cultured lady giving up her life to take up work in an uncivilized wilderness. How romantic! All Paris rang with the story. Ladies of distinction heard about Jeanne Mance and her project, until one fine day the shy country girl found herself in the presence of none other than Queen Anne of Austria. The outcome of the whole proceeding was that a rich widow, Madame de Bullion, came forward with the money to launch the scheme. She gave the money with the understanding that her name would not be connected in any way with the undertaking. There was a certain Father Rapin with whom Jeanne was to correspond when she wished to write to her benefactress.

Instead of sailing from Normandy, as her friends desired, Jeanne decided to embark at La Rochelle. By taking this route she played into the hands of fate, because while waiting for the ship to sail she met M. de la Dauversiere who divulged the plans for founding a settlement at Montreal. The outcome was that Jeanne was included among the members as a full-fledged Associate of the Company of Montreal. As proof of her executive ability, before sailing Jeanne asked M. de la Dauversiere to put in writing the details of the Company's plans and to have copies made. These she sent to her various patronesses with a personal note from herself. It was a wise move as developments proved later on. With Jeanne Mance's entry the little body of colonists was complete and all they had to do was to await the fateful hour when, with sails unfurled, the ship would carry them beyond kith and kin to be at the mercy of storms and baffling fog for weeks to come.

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FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT
TO THE PRESENT TIME
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Jeanne Mance

*Foundress of the
Hotel Dieu - Montreal*

One of the famous stained glass windows of the Notre Dame Church of Montreal, copied in water colors by the author of "The Pioneer Women of North America."

This window is one of a number placed in the Church at the Centennial celebration held in 1929, commemorating the completion of the Church in 1829.

Starting originally in a bark chapel, in 1642, this parish church grew and developed with the passing years, until today it houses about 15000 people.

Funds for the installation of the beautiful collection of windows were donated by well-known Montreal families and institutions of Montreal.

The window illustrated herewith represents Jeanne Mance, wearing pink, foundress of the Hotel Dieu of Ville-Marie. It is the gift of the Cloistered Sisters of the Hotel Dieu who today promote the hospital work started by their foundress in 1642.

Monsieur J. Baptiste Legacé, professor of the University of Montreal, itimized the details and costumes each window was to depict. These sketches were forwarded to Limoges, France, where the finest stained glass is manufactured.

The actual drawings and art work were created by F. Chicot, of Limoges, France. His representation in colored glass of Canada's pioneer days is among the finest of Montreal's rich collection of religious and community life carried out in stained glass.

(See page 143)



hy L. Elliot

1644.

JEANNE MANCE
FONDATRICE DE L'HOTEL

DIEU

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CHAPTER XVII



ADIEU TO FRANCE

IT IS now the month of June, 1641, and the sun is shining brilliantly, lighting up the harbour of La Rochelle, as though in honour of the departing sons and daughters of France who are preparing for their long voyage across the Atlantic. Two sailing vessels are being loaded with all sorts of queerly shaped bundles. And what a motley crew is gathered together: mechanics, farmers, craftsmen of various types, soldiers in their gay attire and flashing weapons that fitfully catch the sparkling rays of the sun; somberly garbed priests, and finally four women, including Jeanne Mance. Our heroine hears of the three women who at the eleventh hour made up their minds to join the passengers. She smiles delightedly.

Maisonneuve is there looking every inch the man of executive ability as he bids farewell to his friends and superintends the loading of the vessels. Jeanne shakes hands with la Dauversiere. On each deck of the little vessels a priest on bended knees beseeches the blessings of heaven on their gallant company.

Three vessels in all went with the voyagers. One from Dieppe carrying the three other women, a company of men, provisions, arms, ammunition and supplies

for the maintenance of the colony in food and other necessities. Of the other two vessels sailing from La Rochelle, Jeanne Mance with twelve men, and a priest, were passengers in one; while Maisonneuve, Father Laplace and twenty-five men sailed in the third.

High up in the heavens the sun cast its warming, brightening reflections and at a given signal the sails of the two little vessels spread out to catch the passing breeze that very gently rippled the waters of the bay. What a propitious moment! Slowly the sails filled with wind and almost imperceptibly the two ships became smaller and smaller to the friends and relatives who stood for an hour, or more watching the diminishing forms of Jeanne Mance in one vessel and Maisonneuve in the other. Tears mingled with their farewells, for none could tell what the future held in that fearful, savage-ridden forest. Silently the two vessels vanished from sight and those left on land traced heavy footsteps to the nearby church to pray for the safety of the brave adventurers.

Passing the shelter of the islands the two ships were plunged into riotous waters whose angry billows tossed and buffeted the frail little craft as chips upon the tide. Jeanne descended to her tiny cabin and was destined to remain there during the entire voyage which lasted six weeks. Maisonneuve's vessel was separated from Jeanne's and was not seen again by them until finally reaching the harbour at Quebec.

On the morning of August 10, 1641, the anniversary month of Jacques Cartier's first excursion up the St. Lawrence River, Jeanne Mance appeared on deck for the first time since sailing. The gloomy, brooding depths of the Saguenay had already been passed and a rare picture of beauty was unfolding before them as they slowly beat their way up the mighty St. Lawrence River. With tide and wind in their favour they watched the Island of Orleans and its beautiful undulations and the ever-changing glamor of the north shore as the

moving ship gradually led them towards the forbidding heights of Stadacona and the boiling, frothy beauty of Montmorency Falls. Quebec at last! Imagination falters in trying to picture the scene and register the innermost feelings of those dauntless men and women who dared to leave their homeland for this forest primeval and its bristling fringes of pine trees that hid from view the terrors beyond.

Fortunately the men who sailed from Dieppe had already docked and preparations for the arrival of the associates were going forward. One great disappointment that marred the excitement of their landing was the news that Maisonneuve had not yet reached the port. Many came to greet them as they stepped ashore, among whom were those of the contingent from Dieppe. Mounting the hill, where the parish church was situated, Jeanne and her companions gratefully offered their thanks in that first church of the colony. They were deeply mindful of the dangers that now lay behind them in their voyage across the Atlantic. Maisonneuve's vessel came to Quebec ten days later.

JEANNE'S FIRST CANADIAN WINTER

Summer days were fast disappearing and the shadows of autumn foretold to the wayfarers that the cold hand of winter would shortly grip the land and it would be impossible to carry on settlement work. It was considered unwise to attempt the trip to Ville Marie and, much to the disappointment of the group, quarters for the next nine months had to be provided in Quebec.

Oddly, the first opposition the colonists encountered was not entailed with ferocious savages, but with their own countrymen, those already settled in Quebec. It seems the Governor of Quebec and the leading men of the town were decidedly against the idea of opening up a frontier settlement which might take from the members of the Grande Compagnie part, at least, of the fur

trade with the Indian tribes and might, incidentally, lessen the power of the Governor at Quebec. Ville Marie de Montreal was to have its own governor. A child could understand the spirit of jealousy that existed with regard to the Quebec point of view.

The upshot was, a public meeting was called at which Governor de Montmagny was to preside. An invitation was sent to Maisonneuve to discuss "the situation". To this latter gentleman's astonishment they offered him the Island of Orleans for settlement if he was so set upon establishing such an entirely unnecessary colony. Rising to the occasion with dignity Maisonneuve advised the gathering that he was surprised that they considered it necessary to hold a meeting at all, because he had not been sent out to discuss the undertaking with them, but to execute orders. Furthermore, he indicated that were the venture to cost him his life he would go, he added, "I would go there if every tree were an Iroquois". The meeting was dissolved. Maisonneuve, however, had made a new friend in de Montmagny who offered to go up to the island with him to have a look at the place. That autumn they made the excursion along with Father Vimont. A deed of possession of the island was drawn up and at the same time Maisonneuve chose the spot he considered best for the establishment of the settlers in the coming spring.

The problem that was most pressing at this time was to find suitable lodging for the travellers while biding their time at Quebec. The majority of the houses were small, only large enough for the immediate families. Finally, M. Puiseux, a hospitable colonist with a large house at St. Michel, near Quebec, and close to the Sillery Mission, and a smaller house at St. Foye, came forward and offered to take the group in his rough, but roomy abode, now Quebec's "Spencerwood", the residence of the lieutenant-governor; the overflow going to his St. Foye residence.

Jeanne Mance did not waste her time while awaiting the day for departure for the Island. There was much to be seen to while the men were busy building boats, etc., in preparation for the great spring flitting. Food supplies, household duties and the care of the arms and ammunition were her particular duties. She was only thirty-six years of age, but her natural tact and good judgement placed her high in the esteem of all the colonists. They looked up to her as a mother.

Historians relate how daily Jeanne was to be seen tramping along the snow-covered pathway that ran from behind the house at St. Michel to the old St. Louis Gate and across the historic Plains of Abraham en route to the city. Here she would make purchases for the household and attend Mass. It was a pleasant spell of quiet which she would never again enjoy throughout her busy life as foundress of Montreal's first hospital.

Jeanne made one important move during her stay in Quebec, she forged a staunch friendship with Madame de la Peltrie who had two years previously accompanied the Ursulines to Quebec and helped them found their establishment. This wealthy lady decided to join the Island company and take with her some of the furniture she brought with her to Quebec. This, naturally, was anything but pleasing to her former associates, but a decided addition to the group that Jeanne Mance belonged to. Maisonneuve was delighted with this new member and as the months passed the feeling of pleasurable anticipation filled the little band of emigrants.



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CHAPTER XVIII



VILLE MARIE DE MONTREAL FOUNDED AND BLESSED

ARLY in May Nature was donning her bright green garb and the peoples' highway, the St. Lawrence River, shone clear as crystal, stripped of its enshrouding coat of winter ice. Little sun-kissed brooks had burst from their frozen stillness of the frost-bitten months of winter, while the call of the crows and other wild birds brought something more of happiness in their friendly notes flung far and wide for all to enjoy. Wild flowers peeped above the brown earth and shone in their beauty amidst the stirring to life of all Nature's horde of beautiful things.

It was a morning such as this, the 8th of May, 1642. A little group of people could be seen not far from what is called Wolfe's Cove. They were extremely busy. A flotilla of oddly shaped craft was being launched filled to the brim with packages large and small. Great flat bottomed boats with oars, two four and a half fathom bark canoes with paddles were seen to glide away from the shore and head for Montreal. Maisonneuve was leading his company to their new home. They travelled slowly, because, loaded down as they were with provisions, clothing, household utensils, ammunition, tools,

church vestments and ecclesiastical appurtenances, implements and a thousand and one details that were dire necessities for those pioneers who were to settle where no white man had ever lived, travelling had, of necessity, to be slow. Loaded to the gunwales as were the boats and passing over waters where a swift current impeded rapid movement, it was not until the 17th of the month that they finally came in sight of Montreal. An early start was made each morning, with a couple of hours' rest at noon and camp at sundown. Jeanne Mance, Madame de la Peltrie, her personal servant, a young girl from Quebec, M. de Puizeau, Maisonneuve, Father Vimont and the male paddlers made better progress in their lighter craft and it was their duty to find suitable camping places. By the time the laden boats arrived an appetizing picnic was in readiness for the hungry voyagers. Thus they travelled from one camping ground to another, the ever changing panorama of beauty calling them to hasten to the goal they had in mind. Despite the hazards it must have been a jolly experience. Every night a different scene, every morning a picture more lovely than the one of yesterday. They spent one night at the base of the rocky cliff marked today by the church of Lotbiniere, another night they slept at the mouth of the Bastican River; once they rested at the foot of the cape just below Three Rivers and so on. They scouted the north shore, in and out among the many islands en route, until reaching the foot of the channel in the vicinity of Berthier they crossed the river to the south shore, pitching their camp about a mile above the mouth of the Richelieu River. Once they camped quite near Contrecoeur. Vercheres was one of their stopping places and owing to a storm which raged for hours they stayed an entire day at a cliff which they christened Saint-Michel, commemorating the house they occupied at Quebec. Then came the last camping place on Isle Gros Bois which is situated in the midst of the St. Lawrence River opposite Boucherville and about six miles from Mont-

real. They could see the sloping heights of Mount Royal and its fringe of virgin forest and spreading meadow lands. They heard the birds singing their vesper hymns, and they watched the sun set in flaming glory as it sank out of sight in order to allow the silver moonbeams to sparkle on the wide expanse of river. With one accord they sank to their knees while Father Vimont offered up a prayer of thanksgiving. A truly heartfelt rendering to a kind and bountiful God.

The next morning, May 18th, 1642, was brightly sunlit without a cloud in the peerless blue sky. The travellers, like children, could not wait for the rising of the sun, so they busily packed their tents and prepared breakfast long before the rosy fingers of dawn sketched gilded tracery on every outstretched branch and delicate twig. Before dawn they were vigorously paddling and rowing up the river. They landed at about nine o'clock in the morning, at "Place Royale" which is at the foot of Notre Dame and McGill Streets. The place was sparsely cleared. Great elms, pine, spruce, tamarack, spreading oaks, and many maple trees trailed their way almost to the water's edge.

Willing workers, they all helped Maisonneuve in clearing a space upon which birch-bark tents were erected by the workmen who had learned how to make the simple bark wigwams during their stay in Quebec. A roughly formed barrier of felled trees made a sort of encampment in the centre of which an altar was erected and preparations for Mass immediately progressed. Never, in all their many trials and tribulations did the venturesome pioneers forget that the basic urge of their accomplishments in this foreign land was to glorify God. Therefore, historians who overlook the spirit of religious zeal that permeated every move on the part of these first habitants do not represent the picture in its true form. The vast Continent of North America was dedicated to the use and purposes of the Almighty, while the Island of Montreal was given

wholesale, from the brown earth and its towering trees, and the least important inhabitant, to the glory of the Holy Family. That first day was spent in prayer, dedicating the island.

As luck would have it the Iroquois were away at this time on some trek or other and were unaware of the arrival of the newcomers. Which was fortunate, indeed. Jeanne Mance and Madame de la Peltrie arose early and gathered bouquets of wild flowers to bedeck the altar. Mass was to be said that day. The first Christian religious rite to be celebrated in Montreal was held that May morning at the brink of the green waters of the St. Lawrence River. Father Vimont said the Mass and never during the forthcoming years of Montreal's history has a more profoundly solemn service been celebrated. Only the gifts of Nature for the Church walls in stately pine and elm trees, only the twittering of countless birds for the church choir, and only the blue dome of heaven for a vaulted roof. But of utterly wholehearted unworldly devotion there was untold wealth. The awesomeness of that auspicious event reaches us even in this materialistic era when dictators and isms hide from us the real meaning of life. We say amen, amen to their humble prayers. Fireflies tied in bottles with threads and strung around the primitive altar by Jeanne and her helpers, kept their vigil throughout the night; living candles, burning in delicate, flaming fitfullness under the dark blue, star-spangled canopy of heaven.

The first year of Montreal's history was one of work and peaceful preparation for years to come. In the meantime the absence of marauding Iroquois assured the even routine of life when buildings were erected and tracts of land were cleared. Those who today live in the Province of Quebec know how dear to the heart of French Catholics are the religious ceremonies, festivals, processions and celebrations. Montreal introduced the first of these religious rites when on August 15th,

1642, the vibrant booming of cannon and the rattle of musketry announced the celebration marking the Feast of the Assumption and also stressing the consecration of the Island. The chapel of birch bark had been beautified with some lovely ornaments which had been sent out from France along, with a fine tabernacle made in Paris purposely for this first Montreal Church. According to J. K. Foran, K.C., part of this tabernacle is still housed in the old Bonsecours Church in Montreal.

Thus the first colony lived happily until in December, 1642, the first catastrophe threatened their peaceful life. The great River St. Lawrence, with its heavy tonnage of ice, over-flowed its banks and the little settlement was in danger of being wiped away. Threatening, swelling water rose up, up, up, until it covered parts of the shore ten to twenty feet deep. No barriers protected their homes as we have today. Terror-stricken the settlers had to move their dwellings farther inland.

We have a large cross on the summit of Mount Royal and it is not only a beacon illuminated brightly with electricity, but it marks the spot where Maisonneuve planted a cross, fulfilling a vow he made three hundred years ago. Horrified with the prospect of utter destruction to his little band of pioneers, Maisonneuve made a vow that if the flood would cease he would make a pilgrimage to the mountain peak and plant a cross thereon. Before Christmas the water subsided. On the 6th of January, 1643, Maisonneuve, bearing the cross on his shoulders, marked his course up to Mount Royal accompanied by the entire community, including the Governor and the priest. An altar was erected and prayers said. Surely it was a glowing tribute of thanksgiving to the Maker of all things.

By springtime, in March, when the first harbingers of coming summer were appearing, the fort was completed. It was not a secret that the colony was in danger of invasion by the Iroquois. They had to be prepared.

There was room for one hundred people within the fort, besides ammunition, arms, food and clothing for emergency. A fence surrounded the fort around which was erected a rough palisade for defence purposes. There was a space of about one hundred feet between the palisade and the fort proper where wooden and bark houses were placed. One of the larger houses was occupied by Maisonneuve. Jeanne Mance and Madame de la Peltrie and her servant, with a couple of women who had come up from Quebec, too, lived in a similar abode. The inauguration of the fort was the occasion for another celebration and solemn mass. It was a day of festivity for the men and women, so few in number, placed alone amidst a vastness of territory beyond their calculation.

Jeanne Mance was particularly pleased at this time, because word had come from France that her patroness, Madame de Bullion, had sent to the Company of Montreal quite a large sum of money to be used for erecting a hospital in Montreal, and for her own use. So far no Indians had molested the settlers and Jeanne thought it more to the point if the grant of money were handed over to the Jesuit mission for their mission work among the Indians. Madame de Bullion refused to hear of it and sent out word that the funds must be used for a hospital and were to be employed "for a St. Joseph's Hospital in Montreal". It was fortunate that their benefactress had this foresight, because shortly after Jeanne awoke one fine day to find herself binding up the wounds of one of her countrymen who had been badly mutilated by some passing Iroquois. Another chapter of life was opening for the French woman, one of horror and bloodshed, of terror and turmoil.

Each new day now brought its quota of trouble for the harassed habitants. Farming work was a real hazard and men who left their simple homes to work and plant the seeds sent out from France: peas, rye,

wheat, buckwheat and the native Indian corn, did so under the shadow of the battle axe, or amidst war whoops of wrathful savages who thirsted for their hot, foreign blood. The enemy gloried in the suffering of their victims and those who escaped were often pitifully wounded. On March 30, 1644, the air was rent with ear-splitting war cries and the thirty colonists were besieged by two hundred Iroquois. It was dreadful! Three Frenchmen were killed. Many others were wounded. Something had to be done, else the colony would be wiped out.

Feverishly the hospital was erected, consisting of a kitchen, a room for Jeanne, two large rooms for the sick and a room for the servants. At first the hospital, which was sixty feet in length and twenty-five in breadth, was built of bark and logs. Later on they added a clap board covering, reinforced with wood.

Sheds and stables were added to the hospital and Jeanne's establishment was further increased by the gift of two oxen, three cows and twenty sheep. The property, fenced in to include all the buildings, measured four acres of land. Over this Jeanne was sole mistress. She reigned supreme in her little kingdom that was laden with so much suffering and trouble. Visitors to the modern *Hôtel Dieu* may see today the selfsame bottles that Jeanne used in her dispensary, row upon row of them, about seventy-five in all. They are a lovely shade of blue on a white background.

As time passed changes naturally took place. One of the greatest griefs during the early years of her regime was the departure of her loyal friend and supporter, Madame de la Peltrie, the latter receiving orders from authorities in Quebec that she must return to the headquarters of the Ursulines in that city. It was a bitter day. Jeanne shed sad tears as she said farewell to her co-worker. What misgivings were her's as she stood at the edge of the river waving good-bye and knowing how precarious was the outlook for her com-

munity with such bitter savage enemies watching for the propitious moment to spring and annihilate the pitifully small band of pilgrims.

Not only were their troubles of warfare and bloodshed, but the difficulties of the climate were a sore trial to the most patient. As the buildings were of necessity hastily constructed of green wood, in time, with the drying out of the timber, great cracks appeared in the wooden walls. Jeanne and her helpers suffered intensely, especially during the hard winter season. Snow sifted through the crevices and their foodstuffs froze stiff over-night, while solid ice formed in their water vessels which had to be thawed out in the morning. One of the most irksome and troublesome of their many trials were the vast hordes of mosquitos that besieged them when summer cast its spell. The persistent humming of the stinging pests caused even the most hardy adventurer to wince and many records give vivid accounts of the suffering caused by mosquitos whose attacks could not be baffled by fly netting, because they did not possess such a luxury in those primitive days.

Still, their friends in France were faithfully working for the Company of Montreal, despite the jealousy of the Grande Compagnie at Quebec. It was unfortunate that the latter Company considered the newly-formed party at Montreal detrimental to their ambitions, because it was nothing of the kind and did not in any way interfere with their material gains. However, as time passed Jeanne was over-joyed to welcome to her hospital Madame d'Ailleboust and her sister, Philippine de Boulogne. Maisonneuve benefitted also with the addition to his staff of Louis d'Ailleboust de Coulonges as his lieutenant. Louis had been sent out to Maisonneuve from France with splendid credentials as an expert in the art of constructing fortifications. Hailing from La Rochelle he brought with him a number of expert workmen who were a most valuable asset to the colony during this critical period. They built a series

of forts, or bastions, to replace the palisades of wood the early settlers had erected so hastily on their arrival. It was definitely a forward move and a most welcome one for the Company.

Fortune favored the Montreal Company in other ways. Louis XIII and Louis XIV eventually realized and considered the settlement a most important phase in the opening up of the New World to the glorification of France through the means of civilizing and Christianizing the native inhabitants. From a commercial point of view importance was not attached in this connection. Louis XIII is said to have forwarded from France a number of powerful cannon for use in Montreal's Fort. It is also on record that a ship was built and sent out to Montreal for transportation purposes and christened "Notre Dame de Montreal". This title was no doubt used for the first time in Montreal's history.

All this time Madame de Bullion, the bountiful benefactress, had continued her generous donations which amounted in all to sixty thousand livres. But, notwithstanding the apparent success of the venture, the Company had really become weakened through death and other causes. It is a remarkable fact that Jeanne never lost hope. She managed to keep confident in the ultimate success of the movement. Her buoyancy of spirits and determination helped not only herself, but was of inestimable value to the drooping spirits of her confreres.

It is interesting to note what was transpiring in France as the struggling community in Canada cast appealing eyes to the motherland. France was torn and bleeding. Civil and foreign wars divided her peoples and from end to end the country was in feverish agitation. Soon the Company of Montreal was reduced to nine members in France. Nine members to hold interest in that new world whose untold wealth had never been even faintly sounded. Does it not read like a fairytale?

Can we moderns overlook the gigantic gesture on the part of that resourceful woman, Jeanne Mance, who would not look upon defeat and accept it as fate?

Jeanne's letters to France truthfully told of much struggling and fearful outrages on the part of the Iroquois towards the French settlers. This aspect of the situation, and the internal fermentation in France, prevented those interested in pushing the scheme with any enthusiasm. To them the time did not seem propitious. With the Company of Montreal in France reduced to nine members any spectacular move to advance the cause of the settlement in New France seemed almost an impossibility. In fact the very existence of the Company was in jeopardy.

At this date Jeanne Mance steps into the gap and saves Montreal from being listed among the failures and going into oblivion with other lost efforts. For business reasons she had to go to Quebec one spring, and to her great astonishment she learned of the desperate straits of the Montreal Company in France and of the fact that M. Le Royer de la Dauversiere was at death's door. Her quick, unswerving action saved the city from dissolving through lack of funds and friends. She sailed immediately for France to settle matters in her own way.

Reaching La Rochelle in due time, Jeanne pushed on to Paris and interviewed M. Olier, de Fancamp and de la Dauversiere. The latter was much improved in health and ready to fight for the life of the colony. One of Jeanne's great attributes was her business-like qualities. She knew what she wanted and what was needed and no one could dissuade her from reaching the goal she desired. She worked fast and furiously, she saved the Ville Marie de Montreal from the extremity of peril.

First of all she arranged with de Fancamp and de la Dauversiere to withdraw their claims as owners and

seigneurs of the Island of Montreal and become co-proprietors with the Company. M. Olier was made president of the Company and Louis Segulier was named secretary. She snatched the Company from toppling into an abyss of failure, she secured further funds from Madame de Bullion and other friends, she reorganized the Company of Montreal, and hurrying back to La Rochelle she caught the same vessel which had brought her over from New France and was back among her own colony all within the space of three months. Well, well, well, no modern statesman could have done better under the circumstances!

While she was abroad, history was being made in Canada and it was a sad story that greeted Jeanne when she stepped ashore at Montreal. Those bitter enemies of the French, the Iroquois, had banded together the warriors of their tribe from far and wide and attacked the Hurons with such intensity that they practically wiped out those peaceful natives who were, in many instances, on very friendly terms with the French. It is recorded that over thirty thousand Hurons met their death at the hands of the Iroquois.

Highly elated over their success, the victorious Iroquois formed plans to destroy the settlement at Montreal and kill the abominated foreigners. They advanced, two hundred of them, tried warriors of the battlefield, braves in every sense of the word and cruel to a degree. Quickly the danger signal was sounded throughout the settlement. No time could be lost. Jeanne had quite a few sick patients in her hospital. All were hurriedly bundled into the Fort, awaiting in fear and trembling from six in the morning until six at night, while the battle raged and Lambert Closse and his brave men, but sixteen in number, held off the assailants.

Jeanne Mance in her various writings mentions how fiendishly arrogant the Iroquois had become to-

wards the French and as time passed their enmity became increasingly aggravated. Attacks were sudden and frequent. Houses were burnt to the ground and no one was safe to go beyond the fortifications. Two redoubts were erected near the hospital. Farming had to be done with sentinels posted and firearms at hand. The unfortunate men who became the prisoners of the savages were cruelly tortured and as often as not scalped. Homes had to be abandoned and the settlers forced to take refuge in the Fort.

The situation drifted from bad to very much worse. Maisonneuve faced the possibility of having to abandon Ville Marie if help did not come from France. Again Jeanne Mance steps into the gap and leads the way in her quiet, unassuming manner. She persuaded Maisonneuve to go to France and bring back with him trained soldiers to protect the French people settled in Montreal. Money was needed and Jeanne pointed out to the Governor that Madame de Bullion had given twenty-two thousand livres for maintaining a hospital and that in order to keep the establishment running it was actually imperative that they should have a body of soldiers to protect them from the Iroquois. She argued that Madame de Bullion would surely agree to this, under the circumstances. Always business-like in her transactions, Jeanne stipulated that for this loan Montreal should give in return for the money one hundred acres of cleared land on the island for the use and ownership of the Hospital.

As Jeanne had sworn that she would not divulge the name of her benefactress the utmost diplomacy had to be practised. Jeanne felt that under the circumstances Madame de Bullion would not consider it a breach of faith if she gave a clue, without actually naming the doner of such generous gifts, to Maisonneuve. Upon learning the conditions, it lay with Maisonneuve to approach the lady without seemingly going against her wishes.

Maisonneuve agreed to the plan and appointed M. de Musseaux as Governor during his absence, and sailed straightway for France. Twenty-seven fighting men were left at the fort to defend the little town of Ville Marie. It was a trying tie for those waiting for the return of Maisonneuve; a time when nerves were taut and the signal to arms brought stark terror to the patient colony.

All that winter they waited and with the return of spring and open waters along the St. Lawrence highway, Jeanne hastened to Quebec to meet Maisonneuve. Fortunately she did not stop at Three Rivers. Had she remained even two days her story most likely would have ended at this point, because just two days after she left that locality the Iroquois descended upon the town and six hundred of them attacked the French inhabitants, killing and pillaging in their usual manner.

Reaching Quebec, Jeanne was over-joyed to learn that the Governor, Maisonneuve, was on the high seas bringing a regiment of soldiers with him. Anxious to relieve the worry of the Montrealers she requested the Governor of Quebec, to send a boat to her friends with the welcome news. The Governor did so, but quickly it returned with the news that hordes of Iroquois were attacking Three Rivers. The Quebec people realized that, with the fate of Three Rivers so critically at stake, their own city lay under a similar pall. Fervently they prayed for the return of Maisonneuve. Records do not reveal whether or not the public recognized the fact that but for that business-like woman, Jeanne Mance, Quebec as well as Montreal would have fallen before the savages' persistent aggression.

Adverse winds delayed Maisonneuve's ship over a month and it was not until September 22nd, 1653, that the welcome vision of his weather-beaten craft gladdened the eyes of the entire community at Quebec.

He brought with him, besides soldiers, a crew of skilled and able-bodied workmen.

Maisonneuve had a wonderful surprise for Jeanne Mance, one entirely unexpected, in the arrival of Marguerite Bourgeoys who was to act as teacher in the first school of Ville Marie. They became good friends at once and remained so to the end.

Owing to Maisonneuve's late arrival from France the party did not reach Ville Marie de Montreal until early in October when building operations went merrily ahead on a well-fortified hospital building eighty feet long, thirty feet wide and twenty feet in height. A chapel at one end, with a steeple and two bells, was placed in such a way that when Mass was being celebrated the inmates could hear the service quite easily. A huge double chimney was placed at the opposite end of the building which did duty as a heating plant for the whole establishment. The following spring, 1654, Jeanne and her patients and helpers were able to move from the Fort into their new home situated on St. Paul Street.

In the meantime the Iroquois, fearing the company of trained soldiers from France, ceased their policy of aggression and Montreal was thus enabled to make more progress in building up the new fortress town. Maisonneuve, also, in keeping with the plans suggested by Jeanne Mance some months ago, officially ratified their agreement in Paris on March 4th of the following year. This provided for the hospital at Ville Marie one hundred acres of cleared land and one half of the buildings and animals thereon.

Having through her foresight and wisdom saved the colony from extinction, Jeanne wholeheartedly concentrated her energies on the work at hand. With the addition of Marguerite Bourgeoys and several other women, who came with the latter from France, they were able to further their work as originally planned; not

that there was an atmosphere of absolute peace, because the Iroquois hovered at the edge of the forest and the ever-present danger of bloodshed and blows kept the French people constantly on the qui vive. Jeanne had overcome reverses that would make the most robust warrior cringe, she had been the means of constructing a hospital that was a constant boon to the white as well as the Indian tribesmen and she had turned wilderness wastes into a garden yielding plenty for the pioneer people. Nothing daunted her determination to succeed. Rigorous winters, whose spell of frost and blizzards lasted so many months in the year, contrasted vividly with almost tropical heat when summer was at its height, but these were incidentals brushed aside by her splendid vision of greater and more important incidents.

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CHAPTER XIX



THE GROWING CITY

THE development of Montreal was at last a reality, more especially with regard to the work of Jeanne Mance. The St. Sulpice seminary was established, thus providing more facilities to handle the question of civilizing the savage tribes and Christianizing them. At this date, 1657, Maisonneuve had brought back with him from France four missionaries, along with others; also, a couple of years previously, he clinched negotiations securing the co-operation of the Hospitallers of St. Joseph at La Fleche for Montreal.

This year of growth and development brought to Jeanne Mance a trial of a very serious nature. On the morning of January 28, 1657, on her way to visit a sick patient, after attending mass, she fell on the ice and fractured her right arm and dislocated her wrist. Dr. Etienne Bouchard, who had come to Canada in 1653 with Maisonneuve, was called to her aid and found her in the hospital lying on her bed in a dead faint. He discovered that two bones in her forearm were broken, but he did not notice the dislocated wrist. Six months passed when the doctor found the condition of the dislocated wrist, but owing to the severe pain he could not adjust it. The news of Jeanne's condition reached

the Governor General at Quebec, M. d'Ailleboust, who sent his own surgeon, Jean Madry, to her aid, without success. The broken bones healed, but the hand and arm began to shrink. Her's was a sad plight for an active person with so much on her hands.

Time passed, and, still with her arm in a sling, she was unable to carry on her duties. She decided to go to France. Besides, although the Hospitallers of St. Joseph La Fleche had promised to send out helpers, none had arrived. Another worry pressed: the houses promised for their use in Montreal had not been erected owing to shortage of funds. Marguerite Bourgeoys, hearing of Jeanne's plans decided to accompany her. She wanted to appeal to her old friends of the Congregation at Troyes to come to Canada and aid her in her work of teaching in Montreal. So they sailed to France from Quebec on October 14th, 1658.

On their arrival they visited M. Dauversiere at La Fleche, thence to Paris. Jeanne's biographers relate how, by touching the casket containing the heart of M. Olier, founder of the Sulpicians, her hand and arm were cured miraculously. This aroused much enthusiasm and caused a real sensation in Paris.

Their visit was most successful. Madame de Bullion gave generously. In addition to paying Jeanne's passage, and money for poor families in Montreal, along with presents for the Church, she donated 22,000 livres for the continuance of the hospital work at Montreal. In all, Madame de Bullion's donations in money amounted to a fortune for Jeanne Mance's work. Marguerite Bourgeoys was also successful in her efforts for the school she had established.

Sailing on July 2nd, from La Rochelle, by the "St. Andre", the two devoted women and their followers stepped into a veritable pesthouse, a floating abode of infection. It seems the vessel had done service as a hospital fever ship and had not been quarantined. Soon

The Stable School House

This is a reproduction of Montreal's first school-house, based on an old print, and painted according to the imagination of the author of "The Pioneer Women of North America", as an original winter scene. The building was first used as a stable and later presented to Marguerite Bourgeoys, by Maisonneuve, for a school-house.

One of the odd features of the old school-house was the fact that each of the three apartments, or rooms, was formed without access to the other. There were no connecting doorways. Sister Bourgeoys added the extra room herself, thus providing a school-room, a kitchen and a bedroom upstairs, (the latter being reached by a ladder placed outside).

Both the nuns and their pupils slept upstairs. Simple, rough furnishings and the barest necessities sufficed. Luxuries were unknown. Privation was their common lot.

Pupils entered the door painted green where the patient sisters instructed them in religion, the three "R"s" and in household science.

On the far side of the building was another door giving entrance to the kitchen. The charitable sisters always kept a vessel of bread loaves filled to over-flowing just inside the kitchen door, intended for the poor. This custom is still maintained today by the community, whose branches are scattered throughout the length and breadth of the Island of Montreal, as well as in all parts of Canada, the United States and elsewhere.

(See page 187)



Sophy L. Elliott



the passengers were battling for life against an insidious disease. One hundred and fifty people were on board. Eleven of the sick died. Jeanne developed the malady and was extremely ill, so much so that she was unable to accompany Marguerite Bourgeoys to Montreal when they docked at Quebec on September 7th. She reached Montreal on November 3rd.

It is interesting to note Montreal's progress dating from 1665. A clustering group of forty small houses, each with a porthole for defence purposes against the Iroquois and each forming a little fort in itself, housed the 525 inhabitants. The arrival of French soldiers changed the character of Montreal; the formerly pious and Godly settlement. They were a gay company of richly dressed French noblemen and gentlemen adventurers, on their toes to take what life had to offer in an untamed wilderness. The Government, in sending out women as wives for the bachelors in Canada encouraged early marriage and large families. Fourteen was not considered too young for girls to marry and the boys of eighteen, or nineteen were considered quite old enough to be fathers of families. A few years later, about 1669, the nuns felt saddened by the sinful acts of the growing colony. Scandal, drinking, licentiousness, trickery, utter lawlessness were rife in the new town sanctified so few years ago to the Holy Family. The holy fathers implored for purity, but the officers and soldiers scoffed and sinned the more. Political intrigue was rampant, when opposing parties schemed and plotted against each other. With the flux of varying influences the little community was forced to accept changes, some most unwelcome, the greatest being Maisonneuve's return to France through counter influences.

Jeanne Mance fought every inch of the way she had to travel just as did Florence Nightingale. Obstacles were placed in her way by persons in authority and by religious institutions, particularly at Quebec. Through bad management the capital of the Hotel

Dieu in Montreal had been lost over in France, and it was only through thrift and drastic economy that they surmounted the avalanche of trouble and poverty that threatened their great work.

Marie de l'Incarnation leaves the following record among her writings: "The good Mothers Hospitallers who came last year to settle in Montreal were nearly going back to France as their funds were seized and considered lost. But Monseigneur, our Prelate, kept them at the persistent request of the inhabitants of Montreal; for they are persons of great edification."

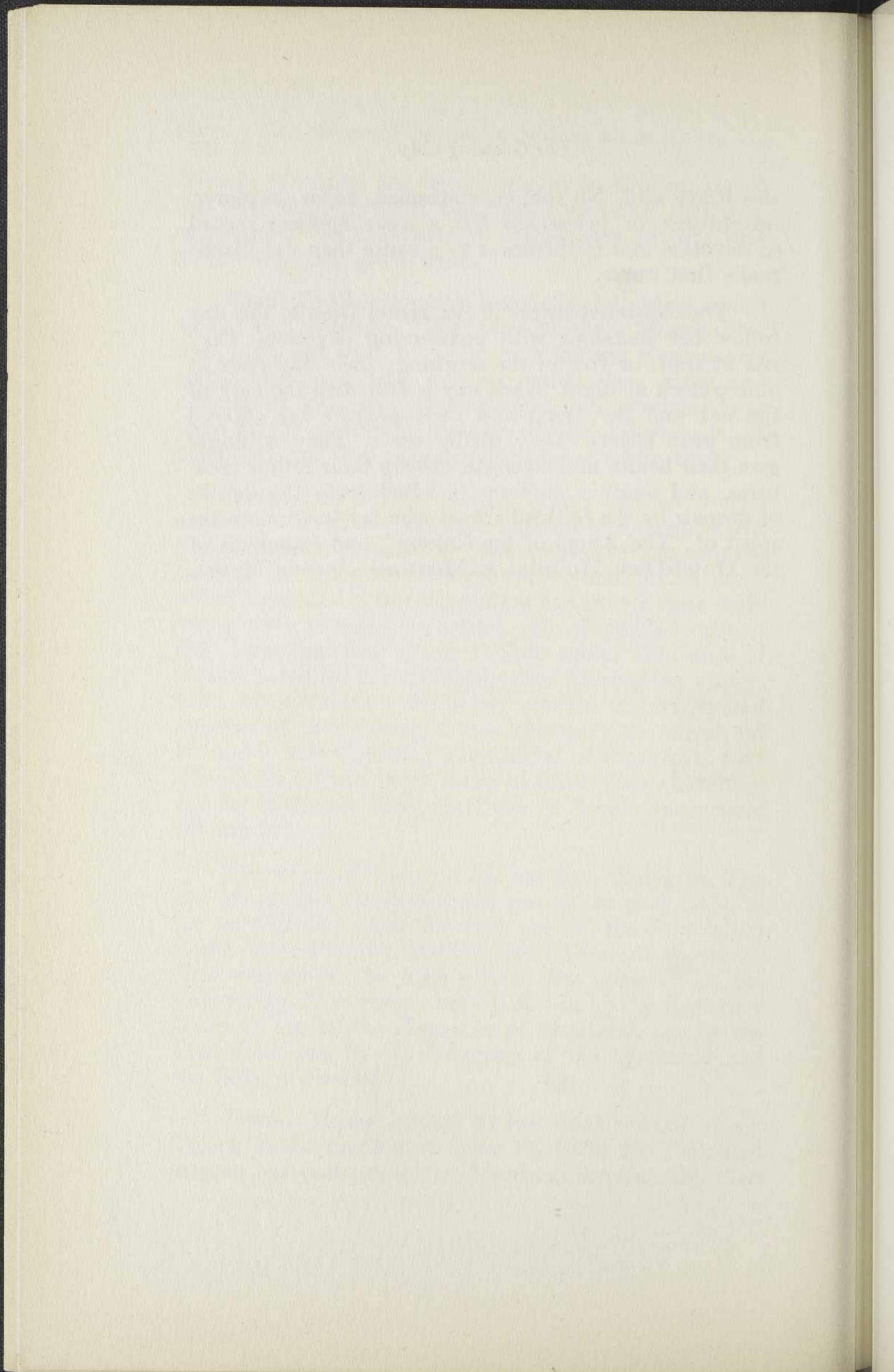
In extreme poverty Jeanne Mance and her women carried on. Their dresses were patched to such an extent that it became a standing joke regarding the original color of the garment. Rough, very coarse bread, pork, salted meat and a few vegetables comprised their daily menu, with perhaps, an added gift of pickled eels, or fish. Luxuries came rarely to their table. This state of affairs lasted for twenty-eight years. During the winter-time, when the snow drifts had entered the cracks and crevices of their house, it was necessary to shovel out the snow, before getting a mouthful of breakfast; very often it took them three hours to finish their shovelling and by that time their food was so frozen they could not use it.

The years of Jeanne's life are fast closing in. The last official act she performed was in the year 1673, in the springtime, when she laid one of the foundation stones of the Parish Church of Notre Dame of Montreal. This act shows the high esteem she achieved in the community. Five stones were laid, one by the Governor General, one by the Governor of Montreal, one by the Intendant, one by the Superior of the Seminary and the fifth by Jeanne.

Jeanne Mance passed to her final reward at six o'clock in the evening of June 18, 1673. No Canadian woman has done more for Montreal, or Canada, than

this brave soul. No soldier, statesman, sailor, explorer, adventurer, or priest has left a more spotless record of devotion and faithfulness to a cause than did Montreal's first nurse.

The cloistered sisters in the Hotel Dieu to this day follow her footsteps with unswerving devotion. They rise at four, or five in the morning; their day ends at nine o'clock at night. Each day is full with the care of the sick and the dying and their prayers are offered from pure hearts. They gladly serve. They willingly give their health and strength to help their fellow creatures, and many a sufferer is lifted from the depths of despair by the faithful sisters who try to emulate the spirit of "The Angel of the Colony", and foundress of the Hotel-Dieu Hospital in Montreal, Jeanne Mance.



CHAPTER XX



MARGUERITE BOURGEOYS

TEACHER - SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER

- OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

- INSTRUCTOR - UNDERTAKER

— Prelude —

FEBRUARY 8th, 1653, was an auspicious day in the history of New France, although the colonists themselves were unaware of the move that would so greatly benefit the little settlement in Ville Marie, because fate was juggling her pawns far away in France.

On this particular morning the cracking of whips and clattering of horses' feet announced to the populace at Troyes, France, that the stage-coach would shortly leave for Paris, thirty-five miles distant. Among the passengers were two ladies and a gentleman. These three were on their way to Paris as the latter, M. Cosard, had business to transact in the great metropolis. The younger woman, in very simple garb, was accompanying her uncle to the city, but for a vastly different purpose; while the other lady, Madame de Chuly, sister of M. de Maisonneuve, Governor of Ville Marie, was accompanying them, in all likelihood, for pleasure.

The roads were rough and many a lurch and bump was experienced en route. Amidst the driver's roughly-

voiced orders to the horses in his charge and the rumble of coach wheels and constant thud of swiftly moving horses' feet, Marguerite Bourgeoys, the younger of the two women, made a statement to her companions that fairly astounded them. She told them that she was going to Paris to see a notary so that she could legally transfer all her worldly wealth to her brother and sister, as she intended devoting her life to teaching in the newly-formed settlement at Ville Marie, New France. They thought she was joking and laughingly gave her a playful answer. Marguerite, however, explained to them that she had taken the vows of poverty and chastity and would sail shortly for Quebec with Maisonneuve. Over-joyed that she had accepted the invitation put to her by the Governor a few days previously, the trio gladly entered Paris.

Her arrival in the island frontier town of Ville Marie brought to the community a woman of courage, determination, religious fervor and unremitting self-sacrifice. It heralded the opening up of a new phase of civilization in the settlement where lawlessness and terror abounded and where the primitive life spelt hardship in its most aggravated complexity. Ville Marie was the richer by the advent of this woman of Troyes, because she introduced many of the niceties of life and helped to curb the ever-growing lawlessness that pervaded the forest-fringed town.

Marguerite Bourgeoys, in her quiet, self-effacing manner, was the first real social service worker of the town and by introducing teaching to the children of the pioneer people she laid the foundation for the great institutions of learning that abound in modern Montreal at the present day. Her's was the first boarding school in Canada, and as a memory to her indefatigable services the great Mother House of the Congregation of Notre Dame of Montreal and the splendid college for young women on Westmount Avenue, Montreal, stand as glowing tributes to an heroic French girl who so

courageously denied herself the comfort of home and friends to help the helpless and to care for the sick and the ignorant.

Montreal is deeply indebted to Marguerite Bourgeoys. As the years roll on the sacrifice she offered in a lifetime of toil and tribulation becomes more apparent; we realize that the spirit she emulated was greatly to the advantage of the newly-born colony of Ville Marie, as well as to the modern metropolis, Montreal.

MARGUERITE'S EARLY HISTORY

Marguerite Bourgeoys, daughter of Abraham Bourgeoys and of Guillemette Garnier, of Troyes, France, was born on April 17th, 1620, the spring of the year when Champlain and his wife left France for Quebec. She was baptised in St. John's Church, in Troyes, the day of her birth. Little can be written about Marguerite's parents, except that Abraham was a merchant of good standing in the town and his wife, a woman of sterling qualities, was the mother of five children, Marguerite being the third. Madame Bourgeoys died when Marguerite was about ten years old, leaving the young girl to look after her father and the family, like a little old woman; first the chatelaine of her father's household, then both mother and teacher of her young brother and sister.

The sway of religious mysticism and exaltation was at its height in France at this period. Children were encouraged to spend hours on their knees in the chapel, or at home. Things of the soul weighed more heavily in those times than did exercise and physical culture, games and recreation. It was not a care-free, happy era for youth. Boys and girls were reared in an atmosphere of fear. Fear of punishment for sins knowingly, or unconsciously committed, but in either case they paid heavily in penances and penalties. Lapses from the straight and narrow paths of righteousness were paid

for in renouncing their most cherished possessions, or playthings and denying themselves the pleasure of this life in fearful anticipation and trembling for their future welfare. Life beyond the grave held them in a grip of terror. In this atmosphere Marguerite breathed religion into her very being. It was not surprising that with the dawn of womanhood she heard and answered the call of the pious to deny worldly weakness and join the army of religious sisters.

One Sunday a solemn procession of the Dominicans of Troyes was celebrated along with the feast of the Holy Rosary. It was in October, 1640. Marguerite Bourgeoys was twenty-one years old at this time. As the devout religious members of the Order and their friends filed along the ancient streets, Marguerite, already a devotee in spirit, fell into the ranks of the confraternity, overwhelmed with spiritual quickening.

This was the first step. Soon after she renounced all worldliness; denied the weakness pertaining to vanity and sought the performance of good works as an outlet to her energies. Daily she plodded forward treading pathways allotted to those who delighted in religious ecstasy. It happened that a Sodality for girls was in operation at this time, under the direction of the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame. They met on Sundays and holidays to pray and receive religious instruction. During the week acts of charity were practised among the poor and needy. Joining the circle Marguerite soon felt that still more was required of her time and energies. She decided to join the Carmelite Order. This grieved her father. He was growing old. However, he gave in, but for some reason she was not accepted, neither did she gain admittance into the Convent of the Poor Clares where penance and solitude comprised the daily routine of the Order. Convinced that she was destined to serve the world in some way she made a vow of chastity. This was followed not long after by the vow of poverty. Then home ties interrupted Mar-

guerite's religious career. Her father became ill, fatally so. Caring for him to the last sadly she saw his mortal remains buried in the family lot. The last link binding her to the world and its affairs was sundered. She was free to lead her own life, to choose between duty and pleasure. She chose the former.

In the meantime Marguerite took up house with Madame de Chuly. She met here the latter's brother, Maisonneuve, Governor of Ville Marie. The young woman was deeply interested to hear all about the life and work of Madame's clever brother. In fact she begged to go with the Governor, but it was not considered feasible for her to do so at the time.

Maisonneuve returned to New France without her. A few years later, on a mission to secure soldiers to serve overseas, he saw Marguerite again. This time he inquired whether she were still of the same mind with regard to serving in his colony. Would she go back with him and open a school?

Without hesitation Marguerite accepted the invitation. Shortly she was on her way to Paris to make final legal arrangements before sailing for the wilderness. From the outset many problems confronted her. The misery of long hours of travel by stagecoach and poor accommodation, plus little comfort, would have staggered a frame built on much sturdier lines. But material disadvantages were disqualified. Serve mankind she must and would despite all bodily unpleasantness. Her journey took her to St. Nazaire on the right bank of the Loire, forty-five miles from Nantes. She was booked to sail by the ship, "St. Nicholas". Marguerite was decidedly pleased on arrival to find two young women at the dock who, through the influence of Paul de Chomedey de Maisonneuve, were also bound for Canada. They departed on July 20th, 1653.

For sixty-three days their ship battled with high seas, contrary winds and the grim enemy, fever. Vessels

were not built at that time for comfort. The passengers' quarters were dark and airless. Perfect breeding places for disease. Eight sailors died during those nine weary weeks on the Atlantic Ocean. Unwholesome drinking water was the cause of the trouble, a condition which might have been avoided had the authorities taken proper precautions.

Marguerite had to nurse the victims as best she could. The hard school of training that she was to endure for so many years in Ville Marie had started. Would she turn back at the earliest possible moment when she reached Quebec? Life was much easier in France and not so hazardous. Marguerite Bourgeoys never flinched from the path of duty she set herself when she decided to take up her mission in New France. As soon as their vessel staggered into the harbour of Quebec on September 22nd she immediately started planning for the river trip to Ville Marie.

Maisonneuve and Marguerite Bourgeoys had to contend with jealousy and opposition on the part of Quebec's authorities, just as did Jeanne Mance on her arrival in Quebec. The Governor of Quebec refused to give the party boats to take them to Montreal. It was a strained situation, very strained indeed. They took up their quarters in the storehouse of the Montreal Company in the meantime.

CHAPTER XXI



MARGUERITE BOURGEOYS IN VILLE MARIE



WHEN Marguerite Bourgeoys arrived in Ville Marie with Maisonneuve and his brilliantly garbed soldiers she was more privileged than her predecessor, Jeanne Mance, because Ville Marie boasted about forty houses. The buildings were clustered together in close proximity, (for safety's sake when Indian raids threatened) and an air of progress was already taking tangible form. Jeanne and her confreres had twelve years' experience in the frontier town before the arrival of Montreal's first school-mistress. They had learnt much in that time, especially with regard to keeping their houses warm during the winter season. Each year helped to lessen the hardships of a land that was none too friendly to the French men and women settling in New France.

Marguerite landed on the Island on November 16th, 1653. Autumn's charm was at its height. Leafage of gleaming gold, or stained blood red, turned the landscape into a picture too rare and too beautiful for mere words. Mount Royal was in burnished bronze, set amidst the feathery loveliness of heather-grey brush which contrasted vividly against scarlet and ruby-red, frost-kissed foliage, whose flaming outlines stood domi-

nant and lovely under a faultless blue sky. Marguerite was astounded, she had never seen anything like it. And the welcome she received was only equalled by the lavish gifts of Nature. One can picture the scene on that mid-November day, the hurrying figures making tracks to the beach, eagerly watching for the clumsy boats as they slowly plowed forward, the rowers pulling hard because the current ran swiftly, whirlpooling and eddying, at cross purposes with oars and boats alike. At last the people on shore could actually see the lady's features. They liked her at first sight. It would have been difficult to do otherwise. What a happy day for Ville Marie and a fortunate one, too, because she came at a time when the frontier town required a good woman's guidance to show the children, (little native savages with instincts of lawlessness too far developed even though scarcely of kindergarten age), how to become good citizens.

Mademoiselle Bourgeoys began her social service duties with a round of personal visits to the native homes. In this way she grew to know her pupils and their mothers, she saw for herself the need of instruction in simple household science. Literally rolling up her sleeves she attacked her problems with practical demonstrations of how to wash dishes, cook, mend clothes and wash the family linen. As washerwoman, cook, dressmaker and housemaid she added to her list the onerous service of undertaker, all of which was given gratis.

Infant mortality was heavy at that date among the French. None of the children survived infancy. Draughty log houses, nearly as cold as the outside zero temperature which prevailed for many winter months, were unfit nurseries for little newcomers; improper food added to the hazards of rearing a family. Marguerite helped the mothers lay out their young, she then nursed the sorrowing women, giving them courage and inspiring them with fortitude and patience which they sorely needed. Sauntering along the oldest streets of Montreal

today one can imagine the founder of the Congregation of Notre Dame in Ville Marie trudging through great mounds of snow on her way to some needy family, with a basket slung across her arm containing household necessities.—Blinding snow and cutting north winds did not prevent the courageous French lady from playing the good samaritan; neither did the scorching summer sun interfere with the daily round of tasks she performed so willingly and thoroughly. No work was too menial for Ville Marie's first school-mistress.

For four years the courageous sister of mercy fought the good fight of faith, holding fast to the vision of a school-house filled with light-hearted children of the French colonists, along with beady-eyed savage youngsters, whom she would convert into meek little Christians telling their rosaries and saying their prayers as good young converts should. She realized that eventually her people would understand the problems of climatic changes, and through the knowledge of former mistakes, face the future with greater assurance of community betterment and improved health conditions.

Soon more settlers were brought to Ville Marie from France. More settlers meant more houses, a feeling of growth, advancement and improvement in farming and marketing of produce. Little French children pattered up and down the streets of the growing community, eventually entering the ranks of Mademoiselle Bourgeoys' pupils.

On April 30th, 1657, Sister Bourgeoys, as she was called, established herself in a stone stable which she converted into a school-house. Maisonneuve made her a present of the building with its dove-cote and substantial native stone walls. The teacher and some of her helpers and pupils slept overhead, the entrance to which was reached by a ladder from the outside. Some improvements were carried on in time, an extra room at one side for actual teaching being added, thus providing

three rooms, the kitchen, school-room and sleeping quarters above. Humble as it was Marguerite thrived under the inspiration of quarters to carry on her real work, with the possibility of a larger building some day.

All walks of life in Ville Marie led to the Chapel, the hospital and the school-house. This three-fold service was a very strong bond which welded the habitants closely, as one united family, even though evil men and women horrified the missionaries with acts of unsavory wickedness. When in trouble the weary sufferers left their foot-prints on the pathways of either of the three buildings confidently assured that they would receive physical and material benefits, or spiritual comfort if they asked for it. The parish priests and both Jeanne Mance and Marguerite Bourgeoys were known to deprive themselves of the necessities of life in order to bring ease to their flock when cares pressed and life's burdens seemed overwhelming.

The importance of Marguerite Bourgeoys' work cannot be over-estimated. If ever the younger set needed to be guided along paths of righteousness those of early Ville Marie were justified in being so wisely tutored. It was a stupendous task to overcome the wickedness introduced by bushmen who heeded no authority but the right of might. They introduced into the town vile-ness hitherto unknown by Montreal's holy men and women; their sinfulness drove the saintly French missionaries to longer hours of prayer and supplication; long into the night and before the first signs of dawn streaked the sky, prayers went up from Chapel, hospital and school-house, beseeching the Heavenly Father to turn the wicked men and women, too, from their sinful ways. Fur traders, soldiers, wild Indians, adventurers and gentlemen of fortune thronged the streets of the little community, at certain periods of the year especially and without a guiding hand the youth were in constant danger of becoming outlaws and sinners of unsavory reputation. Sister Bourgeoys laid the foundation of

good citizenship in teaching the growing youth of both French and Indian parentage. They had constantly before them a model of Christian benevolence and sincerity, if ever school children had.

And so they started the school, Marguerite and her assistant, Marguerite Picaud, in a stable that had been used to shelter cattle, with an attic for housing pigeons. It was the only building available and was presented by Maisonneuve as a dwelling for those who would help in the school. A chimney was added and Marguerite, and her pupils, who came later on, lived upstairs which was reached by an outside ladder-like staircase. In this humble manner the school flourished until the work grew to such an extent that it was found necessary to seek other helpers.

Sister Bourgeoys decided to go to France. The time seemed especially propitious, because Jeanne Mance was going over to see the French doctors in France about her arm. Marguerite felt that she would easily get recruits among her old friends in Troyes and at the same time she would have an opportunity to raise funds for the school work.

The two women left Montreal on September 29th, 1658, docking at La Rochelle about Christmastime. Eventually reaching Troyes, after visiting in Paris, Sister Bourgeoys sought her former friends and placed the proposition before them. She was singularly fortunate in enlisting three volunteers, her former companions, Aimée Chalet, Catherine Crolo, and Marie Raisin. These three women gladly abandoned the comforts of home and the companionship of relatives and friends to join their friend in her work of teaching savages and French kiddies in a foreign, uncivilized, frontier settlement. In this materialistic, luxurious age it seems incredible that girls of culture and social standing should deny themselves so much to plunge into abject poverty, peril and hardship.

Contracts were duly drawn up and signed. Shortly the four enthusiastic women set out for Paris, thence to LaRochelle, their point of sailing. Taking advantage of the missionaries' sailing, the Sulpicians arranged for a number of men and girls to accompany the party. To augment the ranks of settlers in Montreal. Twenty-three men and thirty-two women of good character boarded the ship which carried two hundred passengers aboard, one hundred and ten of whom were bound for Montreal. Jeanne Mance was on board en route, too, for Montreal. The story of their trials on a fever infested hospital ship and their sufferings has already been related in the record of Jeanne Mance's life. It is one of the greatest blots in the history of early Canada, because from authentic accounts there seems to have been deliberate scheming and plotting on the part of opposing political and religious organizations to prevent the colonists from landing in Canada. Some one was responsible for placing those poor people on board a fever ship and allowing them to sail on a long, hard voyage in face of the most incredible fiendishness.

Sister Bourgeoys, upon her arrival in Montreal, found her stable school-house, with twelve months' accumulation of cobwebs and grime, looking anything but shipshape. She and Jeanne Mance, using elbow grease and energy scrubbed and swept until immaculate neatness replaced the neglect of a year. Not many pupils were enrolled during those first few seasons, but it took more than a scarcity of scholars to cool Marguerite's enthusiasm. One of her earliest pupils was Jeanne Loysel who was the first French girl born in Montreal. She started school when she was just four years of age. Later she joined the Community and in time was nominated second Superior of the Congregation of Notre Dame in Montreal.

School-room activities were constant and strenuous for the next few years. One of the greatest sor-

Villa Maria
Convent

Villa Maria Convent, the original residence of the Hon. Judge Monk erected in 1749, and known as "Monklands"; the mansion was later used as the residence of Canada's Governor Generals, i.e., Sir Charles Bagot, Lord Metcalfe, Earl Cathcart and the Earl of Elgin.

Today the old manor house is enlarged on either side with wings comprising dormitories and school rooms where instruction is given to Canada's young ladies by the sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame, who purchased "Monklands" many years ago.

The decorative scheme first used by Judge Monk is carefully preserved; original pastel colors being scrupulously guarded when redecorating is necessary. A delightful little chapel, in soft greys and warmer rosy tints, delicately aided by paler greens, mauves and ethereal blues, bears out the main theme of Villa Maria's old-fashioned drawing room, reception rooms and the banquet hall of an earlier regime.

Villa Maria is a scrap of Montreal's regal yesteryears, when spirited horses and grand carriages, surmounted by coachmen and footmen, carried society ladies from fashionable Notre Dame street to state balls and formal receptions at "Monklands", which was then considered the country.

(See page 193)

The "Villa Maria Convent Chapel"

A door opened
A door closed
And we stood,
The world shut out,
Before the statue
Of the Blessed Virgin.
The light around her
Like a halo of her face.

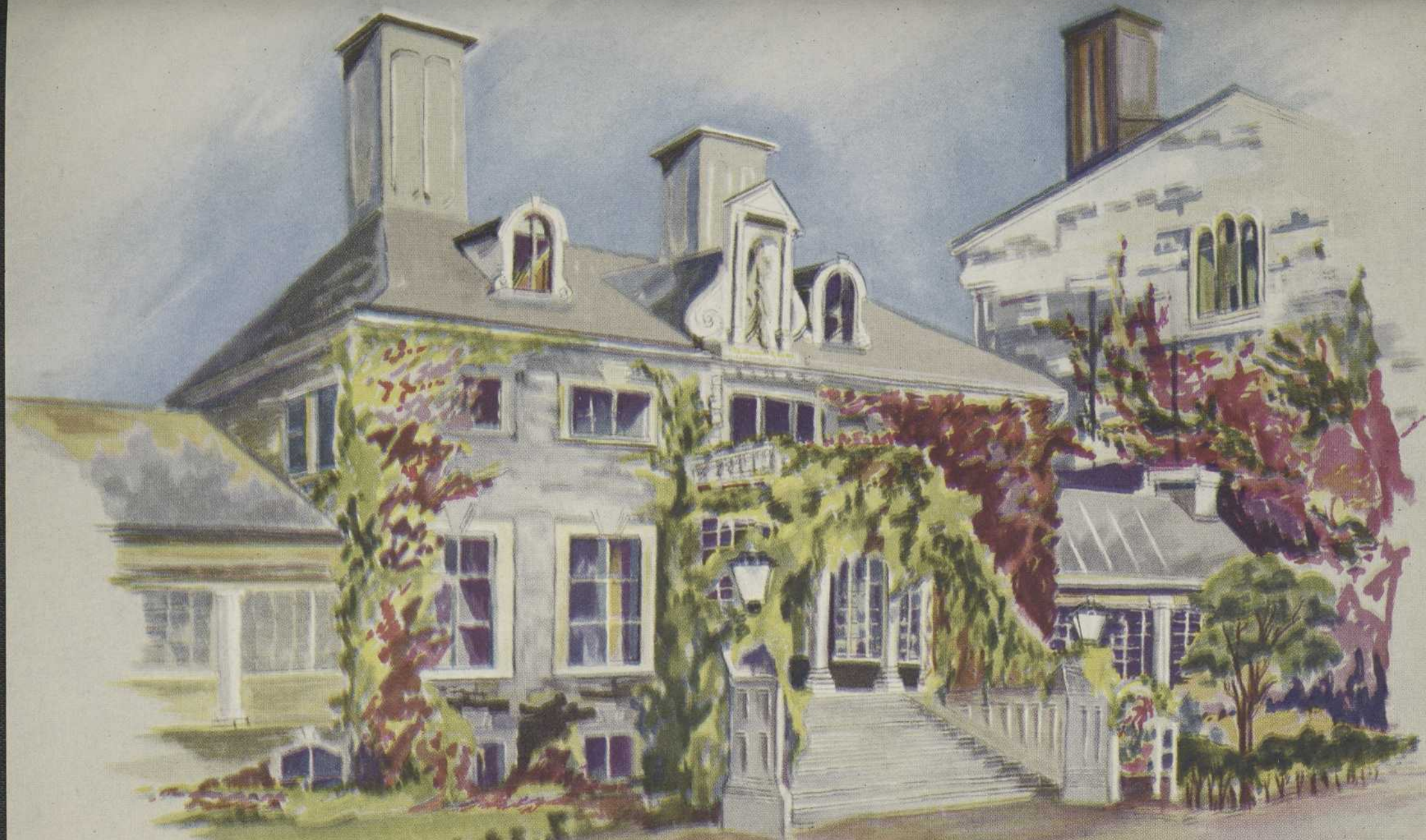
No sound was there
In the stillness,
Lips moved
In prayer,
Opening
The door
To the heart
Of God.

Ralph Cusack,
Montreal, Que.

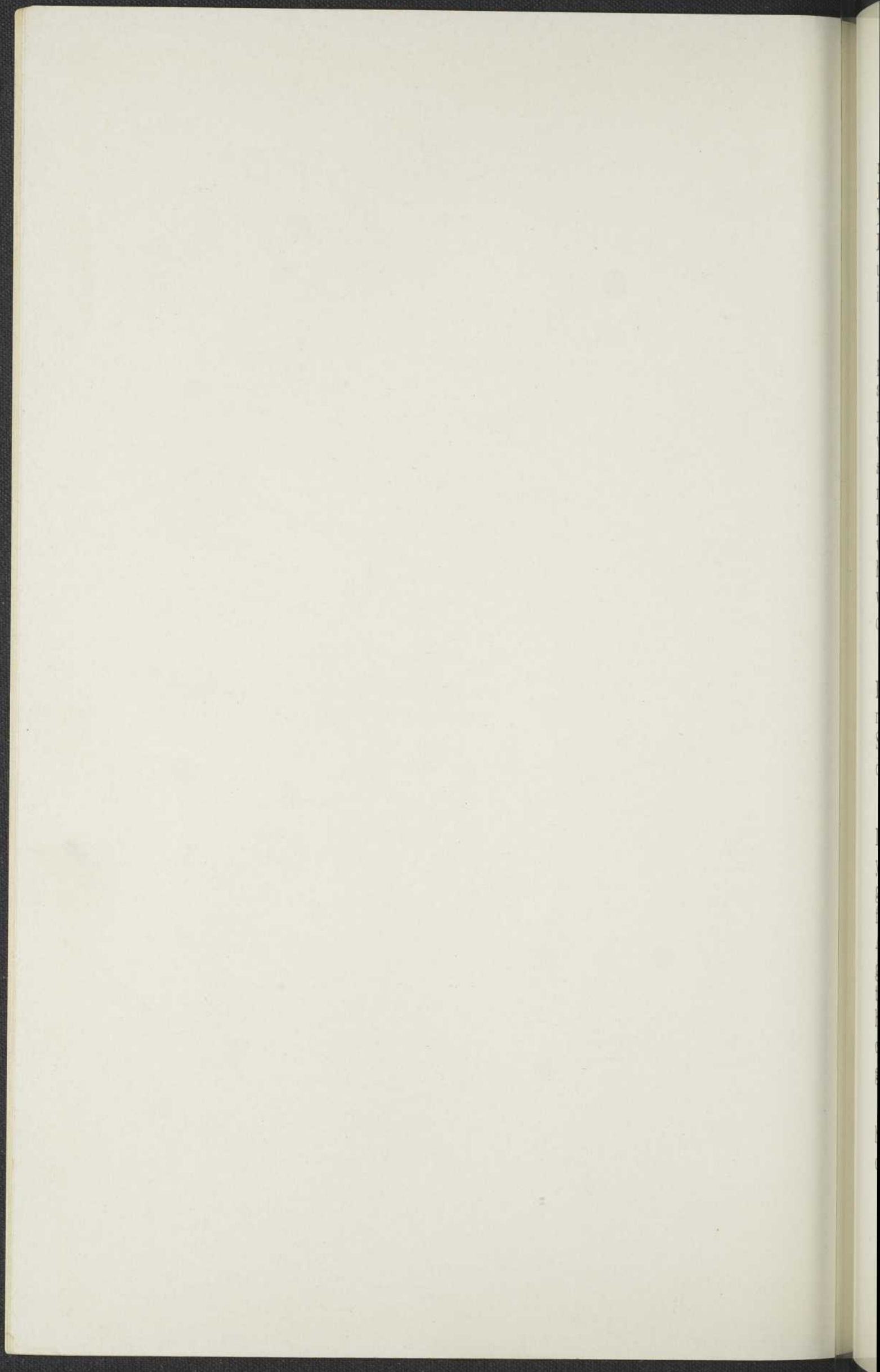
April 17th 1941.

April 17th 1941.

Montreal, Que.



Sophy L. Elliott



rows Marguerite had to suffer was the departure to France of Montreal's founder and efficient Governor, Maisonneuve. He had been her friend and advisor. His good counsel helped her over many a difficult situation. His return to France was a real calamity, an irreparable loss to the community.

As the years rolled by the school-house gradually proved too small for their requirements. In 1669 an adjoining piece of property was used upon which was raised a convent, Montreal's first of the many convents which were eventually scattered all over Canada from coast to coast. Marguerite decided that she must place her establishment on a legal basis. This necessitated another trip to Paris. It also entailed weeks of waiting. Red tape and indifference balked her. Nevertheless, she bided her time, hoping each day would bring her nearer to a final decision one way or the other.

Six months elapsed and still nothing was done. For a woman like Sister Bourgeoys whose energy never faltered this was, to say the least, most unseemly. She viewed the problem impersonally and finally decided upon her plan of action.

That May, Louis XIV and his court arrived at Dunkerque, France. It was a brilliant assembly of youth, wealth and beauty. Ladies of fashion, courtly gentlemen, arrayed in all the extravagance of that foppish period, finery personified and regal revelry, All were represented in the most luxurious extravagance. To this gathering entered the humble petitioner, Marguerite Bourgeoys, begging for funds for her little school for poor French settlers and savage children in a land scarcely heard of by the fashionable gathering of light-hearted butterflies.

Strange as it may seem her story touched the hearts of those worldly men and women and success crowned her courageous gesture. The Congregation

of Notre Dame was then legally established in Montreal. From town to town Marguerite travelled pleading the cause of her primitive school. Sometimes she travelled on foot and again she covered the distances in public conveyances, but in the end she succeeded in persuading six girls whom she considered suitable to sail with her to Montreal. The new recruits included: Elizabeth de la Bertache, Madeleine de Constantin, Therese Soumillard, Perrette Laurent, Genevieve Durosoy and Marguerite Soumilland.

It was two years before all the business at hand was completed in France; two years of struggle and fighting against odds, but Marguerite was satisfied. She sailed again for New France with her group of helpers; glad at last as she stepped ashore on the island and viewed once more the old landmarks.

In studying the history of Montreal's first school mistress one must not overlook another very important achievement which also may be laid to her efforts: namely, the erection of that charming little Bonsecours Church dedicated to the Virgin Mary and standing on the site of the chapel she caused to be erected in 1657. Originally it was of oak with a stone foundation, measuring forty feet in length and thirty feet in width. This small chapel was replaced by a more pretentious building, which was destroyed by fire in 1754. The present Church of Notre Dame de Bonsecours dates from 1772 and was remodelled in 1888. It was one of the cherished dreams of Sister Bourgeoys to erect this chapel which today is represented on a far more elaborate scale than she anticipated. It is the mecca of sailors who, arriving from the four quarters of the globe, find a haven in the quietude of that quaint little church inspired, in the first instance, by one of the most distinguished of Montreal's pioneer women.

Sauntering along Sherbrooke Street, near Atwater Avenue, the imposing building, representing

the Mother House of the Congregation of Notre Dame cannot but impress one, so extensive is the edifice. But to the lover of old treasures the two stone towers on the north side of Sherbrooke Street and a short distance eastward are infinitely more interesting. In the tower to the west Marguerite Bourgeoys' assistants taught the savage children the elements of the French language and the rudiments of the Roman Catholic religion. This spot, now occupied by the Grand Seminary of the Sulpicians, was originally called the "Mountain Mission", opened by the Sulpicians in 1676 for the instruction of Indians. The plan of the Mountain Fort included a small settlement where the Indians resided, a residence for the missionaries, a vegetable garden, bastions, redoubts and palisades of wood, and two towers and walls of stone. Later on Sister Bourgeoys sent two of her teachers to take care of this mission school. The tower to the east was used as a chapel which today is the mausoleum of an Indian chief and his daughter who are buried under the grey stones of the picturesque landmark.

Marguerite Bourgeoys is said to have practised the strictest economy in both dress and diet. She robbed herself of rest and sleep, praying far into the night and allowing herself little in the way of luxury. There were times when that pious lady must have felt discouraged, because of the sinfulness abounding in the young city. Intemperance was the ruin of both men and women, but saddest of all young boys and girls gave themselves up to violence and excesses of every imaginable kind. The extremes of good and evil were strangely woven into the very texture of Montreal's early history; saintly nuns and priests willing to squander their life's blood for their flock were elbowed on the city streets by the most ribald ruffians and women of questionable character. It took the patience of Job to cope with a problem

of such a nature. Only the inspired souls found in Montreal's holy edifices could have overcome obstacles so overwhelming and so beastly.

Although danger faced the early settlers of Ville Marie in countless forms, perhaps the cry of fire was the most terrifying. More so, of courses, when winter prevailed. In December, 1683, the convent took fire and two of the sisters were lost. It was a terrible loss. The school was razed to the ground and there was no money to rebuild.

France was not interested in digging deeply into its coffers to support a cause which the Government considered of little import. By persuasion, a paltry five hundred livres were offered. No more. Marguerite was cut to the heart. Never had so small an amount been granted an institution under similar circumstances by the mother country.

Drawing up a paper signed by all the sisters Marguerite begged the community to come to their aid. Entirely in sympathy towards what the colonists considered a very worthy movement a new convent was built, but a much larger and better model one more suited to their requirements. It was manifestly a tribute of appreciation on the part of the people to the teaching sisters and their work.

In building their new monastery a little higher up on the rising slopes, which Dollier de Casson marked off as the Upper Town, the school-mistress was in closer contact with her Hotel Dieu friends. It was a step forward.

One of the remarkable features of the first school-mistress of Ville Marie was her lack of scholarship which we, today, consider part and parcel of a school teacher's training. She did not pretend to be other than a humble Christian willing and able to instill the simple truths of good living and in addition impart to her pupils that understanding of what we

term good breeding, or gentle manners, because she herself was au fait with such things through her manner of life.

She definitely had a natural aptitude for teaching, understanding the value of a varied curriculum which included, besides the three "Rs", singing; the soothing, rhythmic tunes of old France which even at this sophisticated date transport French Canada into rapturous moments of care-free abandon, forgetful of anxiety in the charm of tuneful harmonies and ancient chansons, sweetly lilting hymns and holy psalms.

As head school-mistress Marguerite asked the advice of her friends, the Jesuit priests. That she followed their words of wisdom is evident in every page of her monastical records. But, the main issue was to equip her pupils with practical knowledge of housewifery. How to bake bread, spin, weave, wash clothes, sew and care for the family was the great issue at stake. Besides, she emphasized the things of the soul. Well she knew how temptations dominating power rampaged freely just beyond the pale of cloistered walls, how sin and disaster would swallow up her little savage charges, yes and her French pupils, too, if she did not encompass them well with the armor of faith and prayer.

This picture of Ville Marie's first instructress in reading, writing and arithmetic brings a glamour, such as a beautiful stained glass church window rich in line and color, yet delivering its message of beauty and truth, might envisage. There is an old-world charm, poise and satisfaction in the remembrance of that humble woman's effort to proclaim gentleness and beauty where, just around the corner, lurked the very embodiment of sin and corruption.

CHAPTER XXII



THE THRIVING SETTLEMENT



WHEN Marguerite Bourgeoys arrived in Montreal the miniature town had already begun to assume the dignity of definite progress towards civilization. Simple settlers' houses dotted the trails which in a few years' time were officially named after various saints. Today we recognise the primitive pathways as Notre Dame street — the city was dedicated to the Virgin Mary and the Holy Family — St. Paul street, named after the patron saint of Paul de Chomedey de Maisonneuve; St. James street, honouring the patron saint of M. Jacques Olier; St. Francis Xavier, in memory of St. Francis d'Assise to whom Dollier de Casson St. Francis owed his name, and also to acclaim St. Francis Xavier, the apostle of the Indies, the surname Xavier being added some time later on in the history of Ville Marie. Modern Montreal has continued the lists of saints, too numerous to catalogue in detail, but they reflect the spirit of New France giving to our great metropolis a character quite different from the usual custom of other great cities. And so the ancient titles remain with us; St. Jean-Baptiste, St. Gabriel, St. Peter, St. Lambert, St. Therese, St. Giles, St. Victor, St. Anne, St. Sacrement and St. Denis, are all lined up to remind us of sainted personages of long ago whose pattern of life we should take as an example. Many of the

names were given to the streets during Marguerite's career as Montreal's first school-mistress. When she died the officially registered population of Montreal had reached two thousand, one hundred souls.

Although the fur trade held the spotlight in New France and the foundation of fabulous wealth lay in the beautiful peltries brought from the northlands by Indians and *coureurs de bois*, it was the farming industry, however, that was the real backbone of the growing hamlets. To encourage the farmers a market-place was established in the vicinity of St. Paul street about the site now occupied by the Inland Revenue buildings and reaching to the beach. Previous to this it was the custom for farmers to peddle their produce from door to door. The market-place was a decided move in the right direction. Today we follow the same custom on a larger scale and tourists are escorted by trained guides who point out the Bonsecours Market flanked by the monument of Nelson standing with his back to the river, and by the dignified old mansion of de Ramezay, with its massive stone walls and interesting chimneys, which at the moment is Montreal's treasure-house of antiques telling the story of Ville Marie's struggles and also of the more recent history of our great cosmopolitan metropolis.

The selling hours of the original market-place were short. At the time the parishioners were without a town clock. As usual the hand of the Church comes to the rescue by clanging the Parish Church bell to proclaim to one and all that legitimate selling in the market had begun. — Ding-ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-ding! Market days were held every Tuesday and Friday from eight o'clock in the morning in summer and nine o'clock during the winter season; closing time being again heralded by the agitated chapel bells' ringing reminder, "eleven A. M., market-place is closed!" "Ding-dong, ding."

The market produce was of an extremely limited variety in those formative years. Ancient records proclaim forty-five or fifty livres as the average good price for a pig. A whole barrel of eels brought the magnificent sum of twenty-five, or thirty francs. Butter was surprisingly cheap, twelve to thirteen sous a pound. Planks of wood were among the offerings on sale in the market-place. Doubtless it saved the homesteaders much time and labour to be privileged to purchase planks ready for immediate use. Wheat, tobacco and corn were staples carried by the produce vendors. Dried peas we can be sure were among the usual stock. One cannot imagine the French habitant without the family pot of pea soup simmering with appetizing aroma on the back of the kitchen stove.

Thus the great Bonsecours Market came into being, to become one of the landmarks of the city. To-day, tourists wander through the various paths which are flanked on each side with all the season's farm produce plus homemade wool, and the inevitable sheaves of tobacco.

But the real spirit of French Canada is still to be found in quaint farm characters, men and women bundled up on the old farm cart behind their patient horse and jogging at break of dawn on their way to Montreal to market their wares. See the old woman, with a shawl over her head, crooning to herself in morning's pale light, while her good man arranges his produce to better advantage on a plank resting on two tubs. Beside the old woman is a sophisticated rooster standing on one leg. He, too, notes the morning light and stretching his neck twice its length he announces, "cock-a-doodle-doooooo! Madame is asleep. Monsieur takes out his old pipe and fills it with habitant shag, strikes a match and, mounting watch beside the other two, awaits the hour when customers and friends will break the silence of early morn.

During Talon's regime the habitants were encouraged to weave their own fabrics. He is quoted as saying that from head to foot his wearing apparel was fashioned by the French Canadians. Quite in keeping with the effort to be self-sufficient and not depend on the mother country for every article of clothing, and many other necessities, too, from France, Marguerite Bourgeoys taught her classes to weave, knit, cook and learn the art of domestic science from a commonsense viewpoint. Thus equipped, when of marriageable age they could meet the demands of motherhood and housewifery with calm assurance and skill. It was very valuable knowledge, as time itself proved.

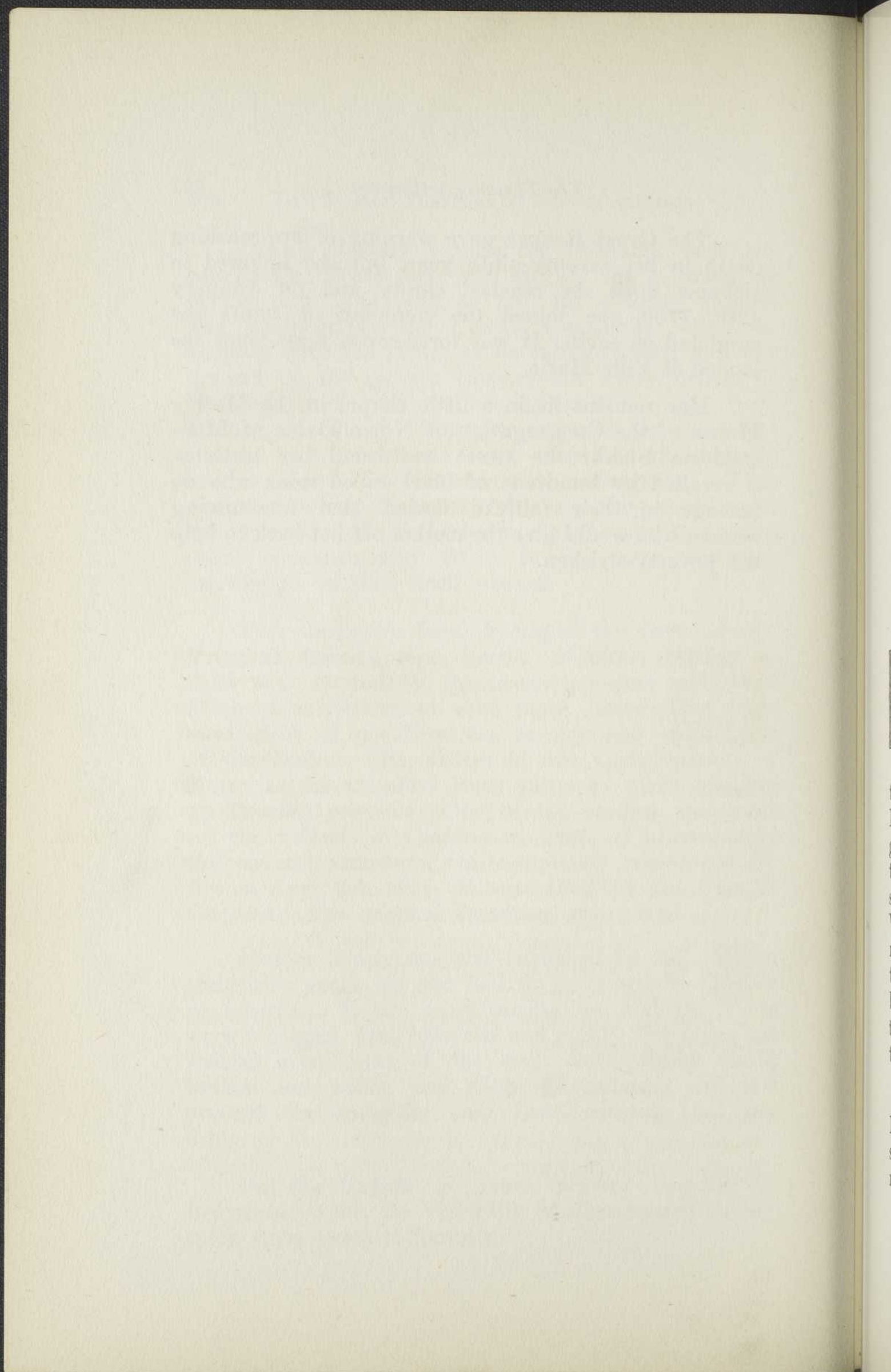
Two successive fires destroyed the first schools. Priceless records were burnt. Missions farther afield were started by the teaching sisters and when Marguerite Bourgeoys died eight foundations were established as proof of the energy and enthusiasm of the Order. The Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame travelled from place to place opening up floating missions. One of the earliest was built on the Island of Orleans in 1685. Unfortunately this ancient structure was completely wiped out by fire on April 6th, 1941. It was called the Ste. Famille Convent. The original furniture was saved.

Mother Bourgeoys was hardened by toil. When sixty-nine years old she had to go down to Quebec on business. It was early springtime and the roads were not open. One hundred and eighty-five miles she walked every inch of the way. Soft, slushy snow, broken ice, water and slippery roadways did not prevent the sprightly lady from carrying out her duty.

But the burden of years pressed heavily. In September, 1693, the Venerable Mother retired having spent forty years in harness.

The Great Reaper gave warning of approaching death in her seventy-ninth year, but she lingered in sickness until she reached eighty and on January 12th, 1700, she joined the company of saints she emulated on earth. It was forty-seven years since she landed at Ville Marie.

Her remains lie in a little chapel in the Mother House of the Congregation of Notre Dame of Montreal on Sherbrooke street west, and her birthday is recalled by hundreds of black-robed nuns who do homage to their faithful leader, that unassuming woman who would give the clothes off her back to help the poverty-stricken.



CHAPTER XXIII



MADELEINE DE VERCHERES WARRIOR AND DEFENDER OF "CASTLE DANGEROUS"

— Prelude —

BLOWS, blood, barricades and bullets were the daily routine of Canada's early settlers. Sometimes the battle was a bit of a skirmish; at others hours of struggle, starvation and suffering ended, more likely than not, in a horrible death. The treachery of the Iroquois nation against the French cast a perpetual gloom over the intimidated homesteaders; more particularly those residing in the districts beyond the safety zone of Ville Marie's stockaded fortifications. Within the barricades it was bad enough. It took more than the average, simple-minded, trusting habitant's wit to interpret the wiles and artifices of those bands of vicious cut-throats whose cunning smiles hid the wicked, perfidious scheming that lurked behind the sharp savage eyes.

In consequence of all this, M. Callières, Ville Marie's Governor, ordered redoubts built on the seigneuries in the vicinity of the town. It should be recalled that the two village settlements of Indians,

stationed near what is today known as Kingston, were composed of a neutral tribe of Iroquois, close allies of the Sulpicians. Those children of the wide open spaces of North America, scouts of trackless hinterlands, kept faith with their priestly friends and repeatedly refused to join forces with the aggressive Iroquois against the French.

Denonville, the new Governor General, decided to purge the land of the invading Iroquois. It was his theory that an Iroquois, no matter how friendly, could not be trusted under any circumstances. He conceived a plan so treacherous, so infamous, that no matter how cruelly the savages treated the French their actions from this date were not entirely without just cause. Denonville invited those friends of the Sulpicians, trusting children of the forest to a feast; and to a feast they went as lambs led to the slaughter house. Taking them prisoners he sent them away to France and as galley slaves they remained to the end. Could anything more stupid, wicked and short-sighted have been conspired? To a man, the barbarians welded themselves into a band of burning hatred. Revenge, revenge, revenge, was their continuous cry. From that day they schemed and scouted, pillaged and scalped ferociously. It brought to the innocent Frenchmen and their families a load of trouble and care, and caused the blood of peace-loving men and women to be shed uselessly.

This was the atmosphere that Madeleine de Verchères was reared in, the cradle song she slumbered to and the fear she sheltered in her heart. Her hymns were intermingled with Indian war whoops and battlecries and her prayers were intoned under the threatening shadow of the battle axe.

Madeleine de Verchères typified the pioneer women of New France. The courageous stand she made, while in her early teens, on guard, alert, keen-

mindful, ready for any emergency, cheerful amidst adversity, guarding the fort for a week, heartening the wavering spirits of her people, indicates the school of training she received.

The spirit of bravery that was extant among those pioneer women was truly amazing. Their's was the difficult role of the trailmaker which they played with infinite patience, not counting the cost, but spending their efforts recklessly, defending their humble firesides, erecting a foundation of peace for their children and their children's children.

Madeleine de Verchères stands shoulder to shoulder with Canada's most valiant soldiers. No man in Canadian history arouses our admiration more than that frail little figure asleep with her head on a table, but grasping her gun, ready in a flash to shoot in defence of those in her care. "Bon quart, bon quart"!

MONSIEUR AND MADAME JARRET DE VERCHERES' HOMESTEAD ON THE BANKS OF THE ST. LAWRENCE

During the year 1665, when fortune was moving adversely for Maisonneuve, Governor of Montreal, who was removed from office at the end of the year for no good reason beyond political intrigue, Sieur de Tracy arrived in New France with the famous Carignan-Sallieres regiment. These picked soldiers represented some of the finest noble families of France; gentlemen of fashion and culture. Never had such glittering pomp and splendor been seen in Quebec, or Montreal. Richly dressed young noblemen and perfectly trained soldiers trod the narrow, crooked streets of the pioneer settlements; their presence not only assuring the people of greater safety, but social life took on an air of gaiety hitherto un-

thought of. Among the noblemen of the regiment was one François Jarret, son of Jean de Jarret and Claudine de Pécaudy, the latter a sister of d'Antoine Pécaudy, first seigneur de Contrecoeur. The young soldier was an officer in the company of his uncle, d'Antoine Pécaudy, and later was to reflect fame to the noble stock from which he sprang through the notable bravery of his daughter, Madeleine de Verchères.

It came about that as time passed members of the regiment married and settled in the vicinity of Montreal. François Jarret spent four years in New France before he eventually fell in love with Marie Perrot, of the parish of Ste. Famille, Ile d'Orléans. She was the child of Jacques Perrot and Michelle Leglo and at the time of her marriage she was fourteen years of age. François Jarret was in his twenty-fourth year.

The young couple made their home a few miles from Montreal on the brink of the River St. Lawrence. It was a pleasant situation and as the years slipped by their property as well as their family increased in size. Through the influence of Intendant Talon, F.-X. Jarret de Verchères was granted a concession of land fronting on the shore of the river, in recognition of the good service he had rendered his country in France as well as in Canada. This act was performed October 29, 1672, and on August 26, 1673, Frontenac added more land to his estate, which was followed in 1678 by another tract of property to the south of the seignory.

M. de Verchères now realized the responsibilities arising from his position as seigneur of Verchères. Constant reports of approaching Iroquois, bent on pillage and murder, kept the colony in nervous anxiety and actual fear. Montreal was too far away to bring immediate help, therefore, he caused a fort to

be erected of wood which was large enough to house the entire community. It was built on similar lines to the one erected in Lachine in 1689, but of smaller proportions. With a frontage of from 150 to 180 feet, the fort of Verchères contained bastions, a wind-mill, storage houses for ammunition and provisions, living quarters for the villagers, suitable space for use as a chapel, all of which was encircled by a palisade of wood fifteen, or sixteen feet in height. The four corners of the palisade were flanked by bastions constructed with port holes giving a wide area of country for the soldiers to survey.

Monsieur and Madame de Verchères had twelve children, but at present the spotlight is playing on Madame, the unsung heroine of an illustrious family. This valorous woman defended the fort when it was first under attack by the Iroquois; she it was who imbued her daughter, Madeleine, with that admirable courage which enabled her to stand the prolonged siege of ferocious savages against odds truly terrific, a few years later.

Without such a woman to lead and set an example of bravery and clear-headedness who can say what would have been the fate of the people of Verchères, and for that matter those in Montreal and the surrounding settlements. Once successful the Iroquois knew nothing but victory and many times their strength was not realized by the leaders. The French settlers had to be quick witted and Madame de Verchères acted as a true daughter of France. Her gallant efforts saved the community from destruction.

HEROIC DEFENCE OF MADAME DE VERCHÈRES

The fort of Verchères was particularly exposed to the attacks of the savage tribes, because en route to St.-Ours, Contrecourt and then Sorel they had to

travel through Verchères. Consequently, it was seldom safe for the villagers to remain away from home for any great length of time. Sometimes it was necessary for the men of the community to visit Montreal, or other settlements for business purposes, leaving the women and children to guard their homes during their absence. Under such conditions women and even children knew the technique of handling firearms and defending themselves from savage invasion.

Students of Canada's early days must read between the lines, scent out the diminishing clues fast fading through age, neglect and indifference and, one of the most destructive obstacles, complete loss of records through fire. Building around sketchy records the recorder of lives lived some two or three hundred years ago must, of necessity, play upon the imagination and bring to life those ghostly figures whose courageous daily duties were taken for granted by their confreres who were too busy hounding down the wolf that snarled at their doors to keep diaries and jot down doings of the hour.

In writing about Madame de Verchères the great obstacle that trips up the narrator is just this very thing. The sketchiest details are all that the historian can discover: a mere skeleton upon which to build the story of her tempestuous existence.

Studying the pages of history about the time of Madeleine de Verchères' birth and on to the year 1684, the germ of hatred and revenge on the part of the Iroquois towards the French grows steadily more potent. The hated foreigners, usurpers of their heritage of a country teeming with Earth's bountiful offerings in animal life and forest wealth, ate like a festering sore into the savage soul, embittering his days with ever-increasing venom.

Realizing the extremity of danger that surrounded the colonists, Denonville gave orders that

all householders of the community should be armed, and well armed, from the father and mother, to the children and domestics who had reached the age of fourteen years. They were forbidden to barter, or exchange their arms for other goods unless they had weapons over and above the actual necessity. Furthermore, he forbade all, no matter what the station in life, to confiscate, truck, or buy the householders' arms under heavy penalties.

Gathering together his forces early in the summer of 1687 Denonville numbered among his warriors M. de Verchères, Madeleine's father. With thirteen hundred soldiers the French leader embarked for Fort Frontenac on June 11th with a flotilla of two hundred flatboats and as many canoes; his mission being to rid the country of the Iroquois. Incidentally, Louis XIV was instrumental in perpetrating the treacherous act of Denonville in ensnaring the friendly, trusting Indians with an invitation to a feast and taking them captives to serve as galley slaves for France. One of the royal letters to those in power in Canada stated that the Iroquois prisoners of war would make good convict gangs, because of their strength and vigor. The germ for the infamous deed developed beyond the plotters' reckoning, acting as a boomerang with dire and fatal results to innocent French settlers.

Denonville showed no mercy to the Iroquois; he also attacked the little town so thoroughly that half at least of the canton was utterly destroyed. Quickly the savage messengers carried their sad news to adjoining camps where vengeance was vowed against the Frenchmen who had deceived their brethren so foully. Two years later the massacre of Lachine took place; the savage answer to Denonville's contemptible act.

Knowing as they did the comings and goings of their French enemies, through their trickery and spy

system, the Iroquois doubtless were quite aware that de Verchères took part in the attack on the villages in the neighborhood of Fort Frontenac. Biding their time they waited and watched patiently, steadfastly, never losing sight of the watch-word, "revenge". The longer they waited the more cruel their intent. Would they show more pity than the Frenchmen who mercilessly stole their men away and destroyed their homes? Well might the homesteaders tremble when a redskin scouted silently, noiselessly in the darkening shadows of the eerie forest land. Well indeed, might the warning bell ring out its call to arms, because the toll when paid would be heavy, oh, heavy and so sad!

One day in the year 1690 Madame de Verchères was left alone with her daughter to take care of the fort. Her husband was called away on business, but the woman thought nothing of it. Perhaps the constant cry of "wolf", "wolf", had deadened the necessary spirit of precaution. At any rate, going about her daily tasks as usual kept her too busy to anticipate trouble. It is impossible to tell where the other members of the household were at this time. In all likelihood they were off in the forest, either cutting down trees, or maybe doing a bit of hunting. Little Madeleine, twelve years of age, was with her mother that day doing her share of the home tasks.

Happening to scan the landscape Madame de Verchères spied the skulking forms of advancing savages, their evil intentions quite apparent. Cool-headed, she called her daughter hastily, instructing her to run to one of the bastions and take up her post as a soldier. Madame poured heavy fire on the approaching Iroquois, who returned the compliment with fury. Realizing she must not allow the enemy to think she was in such an unprotected situation, with perfect equanimity she instructed Madeleine to keep up a constant fusillade while she herself doubled her ef-

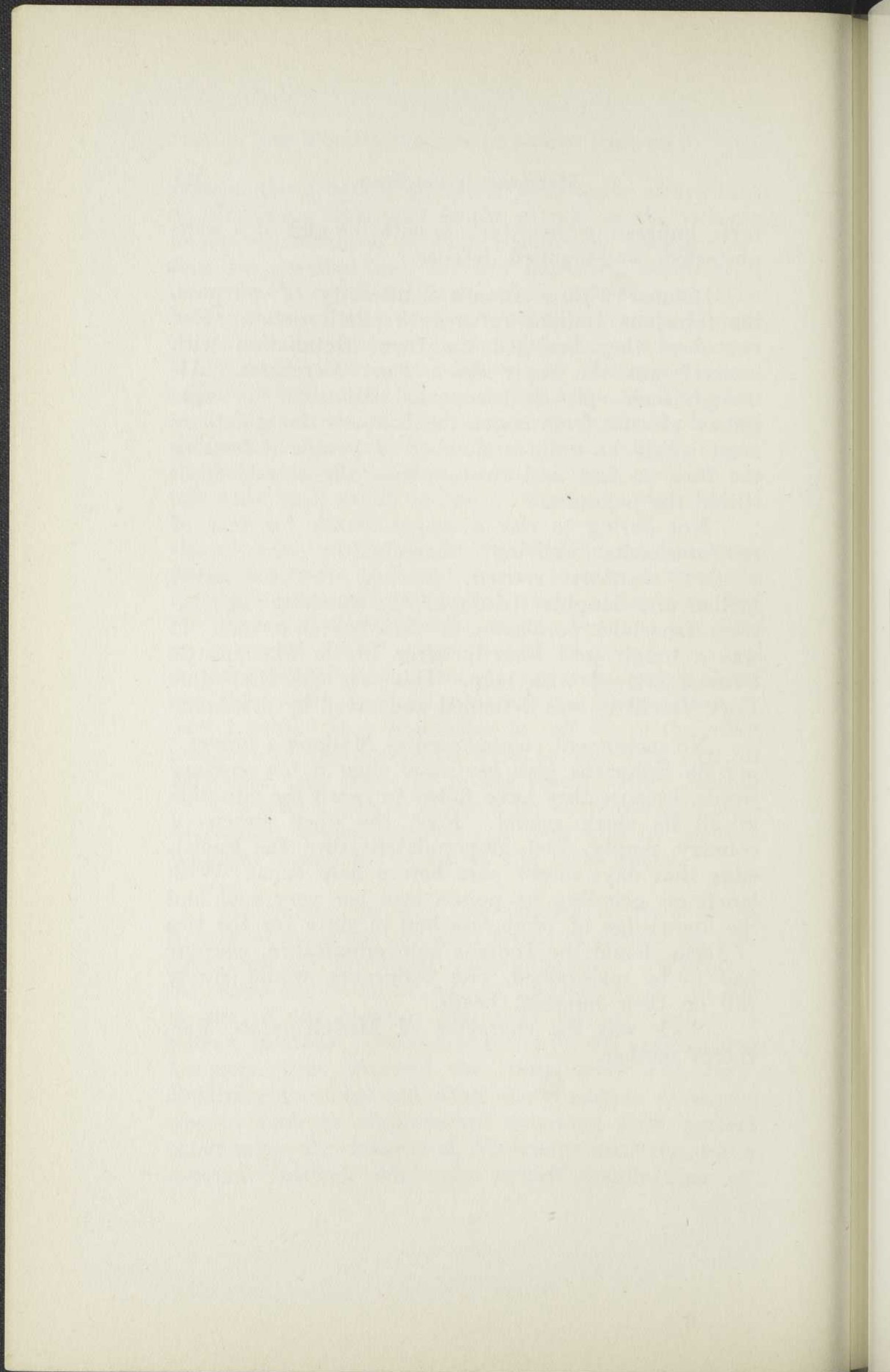
forts, impressing the attackers with the idea of a well-protected, well-manned defence.

Imbued with a fanatical intensity of purpose, the ferocious Indians refused to admit defeat. For two days they besieged the fort. Retaliation with interest was the reply from Fort Verchères. Although their spies had reported Monsieur de Verchères' absence from home, the Iroquois thought there must surely be quite a number of people defending the fort, so fast and furious were the retorts from within the palisades.

Not daring to risk a longer attack for fear of reinforcements arriving, shamefacedly the hoodwinked warriors retired, leaving the exhausted mother and daughter triumphantly watching their retreat from the port-holes of their watch-towers. It was a tough job! Shortly after M. le Marquis de Crusasi arrived with help. This was the first time Fort Verchères was defended and saved by a woman.

No monument commemorates Madame's bravery, nor do historians give her more than a few cursory words, because they have failed to recall the situation in all its stark reality. First the open sweep of country, empty, vast, unpopulated; then the knowledge that days might pass before help came. With loneliness grinding its poison into her very soul and the knowledge of what fate had in store for the two of them should the Indians gain admittance, courage had to be maintained, else vengeance would surely fall on their innocent heads.

Such was the character of Madeleine de Verchères' mother.



CHAPTER XXIV



CANADA'S BATTLING GIRL HEROINE MADELEINE DE VERCHERES



IT WAS the last week of October, 1692. Autumn was waning quickly and Winter's approach could not be doubted, because already the frozen earth was receiving its baptism of pure white snowflakes. Bitter, cutting winds swept across the St. Lawrence River and howled dismally around the few scattered houses clustering, as though for protection, about the seignory of F.-X Jarret de Verchères.

About three years had passed since the massacre at Lachine, since the chill hand of fear had gripped the hearts of Canada's white-faced men and women who cowered in terror behind the barred doors and windows of their simple houses. With loaded guns always ready, primed for use, and ears attuned to the tocsin's agitated warning of danger, and farmers, woodsmen, housewives and children hurriedly rushing indoors to safety, thus the people had existed, day in and day out, year after year. But three years had slipped by with no further wholesale Iroquois invasions. Fear was losing its grip and the even tenor of every-day routine dulled the instincts of the peace loving French people; lulled their premonitions of approaching catastrophe.

On this particular morning Madeleine de Verchères and the household were astir very early. Curling plumes of pearly grey smoke issued from the great stone chimney and spent their strength in thinning streaks against the dour, grey autumn sky. As daylight crept over the countryside great clouds hung heavily in the west; clouds that presaged ill with their burden of snow as yet unspilled. Slowly dawn's awakening scattered the darkness that hid the restless River St. Lawrence which very soon would wear an armour of ice to veil its winter passage from unknown mountain fastness to the sea.

Seigneur Jarret was away, he had been called to Quebec on official business, while his wife was in Montreal, perhaps visiting friends, who knows? At any rate Madeleine de Verchères and her two young brothers had to carry on as best they could, the young girl, fourteen years of age, and the eldest, being in charge.

With winter hastening forward and months of idleness forced on the homesteaders while snow crippled the land, no time could be lost; there was much work to be done. Having swallowed the last mouthful of breakfast the men set out to adjoining pastures leaving the fort in charge of Madeleine. She had her two brothers, an old man of eighty and a number of women and children to look after, but she was young and fearless. Doubtless she would have remained fearless had she known then that the Iroquois were lurking around the corner with murder under way. This is the state of unprotectedness they were in when the Iroquois suddenly burst in upon them.

As a pack of hounds keen on the scent of their quarry, the Indians laid their plans of attack according to rumors that the master and his wife were well out of sight, far away from the danger that threatened their children and the helpless old men and children

of the settlement. It was a scheme that boded ill for Madeleine and her brothers. A trick that cost the lives of able-bodied men busy in the meadows, at work for their homes and families. Broken hearts and bowed heads, sorrowing for dear ones cut off in the midst of life, because of a wicked deed planned in the black heart of Denonville when he betrayed the trusting Indians away up in Ontario five years ago, marked that morning of October 22nd in the little hamlet of Verchères.

On that bleak autumn day Madeleine and the man servant found occasion to go down to the landing a short way from the fort when the air was rent with "bang, bang-bang", rifle shots coming from the vicinity of the fields where the settlers were at work. La Violette, the hired man, cried out, "Run, run, here come the Iroquois". Glancing quickly Madeleine spied forty or fifty Iroquois on the other side of the field, darting hither and thither among the trees. She heard the flying bullets whiz by. How close she was to death. "Mother of Jesus save us", prayed Madeleine as she ran for her life.

Like an arrow shot from a bow the girl sped homeward with La Violette close behind her. Wildly the Indians yelled at sight of the flying figures, shooting at random, but missing their targets. Steady, steady, one false step and the cruel fingers of men wild with the lust for blood would crush the life from their bodies, or worse still bind them and take them prisoners to be tortured as only the Iroquois knew how. Steady, steady! Suddenly a savage lunged towards her from his hiding place in the bushes. Swiftly he swung upon her catching her neckerchief, but instantly Madeleine slipped off the entangling kerchief, leaving the Indian holding the bit of cloth in his hand, while the two figures rushed madly for the fort.

"To arms, to arms", cried Madeleine as they drew within earshot of the fort. She hoped the inmates would come to their rescue and scare off the pursuing redskins. No sign, or sound came from behind the palisades. Where were the two soldiers? By this time they have almost breathless. At last they reached the gate where they met some women weeping pitifully, because the Indians had taken their husbands as prisoners. Entering the gate with all speed and closing the door with an echoing bang, they bolted it securely and proceeded to take stock of the situation.

Panic reigned within the palisades. All had lost their heads. Tears and lamentations rent the air, while entirely missing were the two French soldiers left to protect the lives of those in their care. Not for one moment did the little girl lose her command of the situation; never once did she falter and wring her hands despairingly as well she might have done under the circumstances. Like a well-trained soldier she surveyed the condition of the fort and taking full charge she issued orders with military thoroughness.

Noting the gaps in the stockade which might easily be entered by the enemy she ordered the inmates to mend the broken palisades, helping with her own hands to carry the pickets to the required places. Urging her helpers to make haste, because she realized every minute counted, she knew that each moment gained stalled the enemy's schemes for their destruction and for the utter annihilation of the Fort of Verchères. The repairs were soon completed.

A true daughter of her valiant mother, that wisp of a girl became a veritable rock of strength to all within the fortified walls. Searching the blockhouse where the ammunition was kept she discovered the two soldiers hiding in a corner, while one of the men

held a lighted fuse in his hand. On being asked what he intended doing with the fuse the miserable coward replied that he was going to light the powder and blow up the fort and all within its walls. Scornfully Madeleine ordered them away calling them cowards, at the same time flinging her bonnet to the floor and clapping a soldier's hat on her head, she grabbed a gun, calling to her brothers to get ready to fight. Reminding the two boys what their father had taught them, how he had instilled in them that gentlemen were brought into the world to shed their blood for God and King if necessary she admonished them to fight until death. "We fight for our country and our religion", she exclaimed! Fiery words for a young girl in her 'teens. They answered their sister's call to arms like little gentlemen and their behaviour changed the weakling soldiers into something more like men, because they once again took up their guns and began potting the savages through the portholes.

Meanwhile, the Iroquois, not knowing for certain how many people were inside the fort to guard it, employed themselves chasing and butchering the settlers in the nearby fields. By this time Madeleine's two brothers were playing the part of real soldiers each stationed with musket in hand ready to shoot if necessary. Madeleine ordered a cannon to be fired which would, in the first instance, warn the soldiers who were hunting at some distance off and at the same time discourage the enemy from carrying out an assault.

Things were at a pretty pass inside the fort. The women and children were screaming and crying aloud. Madeleine sternly ordered them to keep quiet lest the wailing should encourage the savages. Pacifying them into some sort of order, another problem arose in the appearance of one of the settlers and his family by the name of Fontaine; they were arriving by boat trying to reach the fort for safety. As the

soldiers would not budge from the fort Madeleine had to face the ordeal herself, marching down to the landing, musket in hand, leaving orders that should an Indian appear he was to be shot when within easy range.

At this point Madeleine's courage reaches a peak of heroism truly astounding. As she stepped from the sheltering walls of the fort she knew that if taken by the Iroquois she would receive not only death, but punishment infinitely more horrible. Yet she walked out of that gate, a slender child, the target of Iroquois' watchful, waiting warriors who would leap upon her without remorse and rend her to pieces. It was a sublime gesture of heroism never surpassed in any historical relations.

The very audacity of her proceedings puzzled the Indians. Madeleine sauntered down the grassy slopes to the water's edge. She assumed an air of nonchalance, her play of easy indifference leading them to believe that there must be a strong defense behind the fortified walls. She marched the settler and his wife, who were almost paralyzed with fright, in front of her across the grass-covered slope to cover and safety. The Indians did nothing, because they feared it was trick played on them by French soldiers lying in ambush to catch them.

Daylight was fast disappearing and with the approach of darkness the depression of the besieged band of settlers steadily increased. A biting gale swept its withering breath down the river, its roaring passage further intensified by blinding sheets of sleet, snow and hail. Fitfully the gusts of hail-laden wind beat at the walls of the fort; the temperamental St. Lawrence River lashed itself into almost maniacal fury, with increasingly larger and angrier waves dashing, splashing and rushing beyond the allotted

beachline, licking up the pebbles on shore like a wild beast at large.

Madeleine was aware of the fact that to hood-wink the Indians she must present the idea of great numbers of soldiers. As night came her first act was to herd all the women and children in the blockhouse with the two none-too-brave soldiers on duty, this being the safest point and strongest part of the fort. Thus housed, she spoke to the two soldiers in charge, stating that even though she might be taken and burned before their eyes, or cut up in pieces, they were not to give up. She assured them that the enemy could not reach them in the fort, provided they showed sufficient fighting spirit.

The chief defence of the fort was the outer wooden wall formed with a small tower, or bastion at each corner. Placing her brothers in two of the towers and the old man in the third, she occupied the fourth, the most dangerous tower herself. Inky blackness, tempered by howling winds outside and drifts of snow blanketing the scene; could one imagine a more dismal situation when night enveloped the inmates of the fort! Hour after hour through the long night the reassuring cries of those four brave souls heartened their people and drove the Indians away from the fort. "Bon quart, bon quart". All's well, all's well, rang out into the gloom of night every quarter of an hour, the sentinels wide-eyed and watchful as from blockhouse to bastion, from bastion to blockhouse, the encouraging voices echoed across the space encompassed by fortified walls. "All's well, all's well"!

In those dark, foreboding hours of that first awful night, the Iroquois held a council. Originally they had intended to capture the fort that night. But now—? It was a dangerous step if the place were full of soldiers. Those echoing calls from four sentinels,

two little boys, a stripling of a girl and one old man who had never fired a gun, kept fifty mighty braves guessing and fifty crafty men perplexed. Ah, bravo, Madeleine, bravo, indeed!"

Madeleine, referring to that black night, says: "I assembled all my troops, that is to say six persons". What a pathetic tale; its simple bravery accentuates the pathos of the event. They had one greater fright that first night when one of the sentinels, stationed nearest the gate, reported to Mademoiselle that he heard something. Peering through the darkness, and aided by the white snow Medeleine saw some cattle begging to enter; the miserable few left by the Iroquois of their valued herd. Fearing the savages might be staging a trick, precautions were taken to open the gate without risk, the two little boys ready to shoot, while Madeleine rescued the cattle.

What a long night! At last day peeped over the grim horizon-line and with the light the greater anxieties of the besieged colonists were allayed, with the exception of Madame Fontaine, who wanted her husband to take her to another fortress. With old-fashioned wisdom Madeleine remarked in her report that everybody took courage except Madame Fontaine, who, in common with all Parisian women, was very timid. Sieur Fontaine stood by his little commander, vowing as long as she held on he would not forsake her. Madeleine assured him that she would never abandon her post, stating that it was of the greatest importance that the Indians should never gain possession of any of the French forts, because if they overcame one they would become presumptuous and attack other garrisons.

In her own account of the siege Madeleine tells how she never once left the fort to go to her father's house, but kept her post in the bastion, or visited the blockhouse to see how the people were behaving. She neither ate nor slept for 48 hours. She wore a smile, was always cheerful with purposeful intent: the courage

of those under her care must not be allowed to waver. A true daughter of her forceful mother and soldierly father was that young girl holding the "Castle Dangerous" for one full week and a day of constant alarm; days and nights of terror and anticipation of utter annihilation. It took strong nerves and a courageous heart to face such odds.

The eighth night brought relief in the person of M. de la Monnerie, a lieutenant, sent by M. de Callières who was then commander in Montreal, and a company of forty men. Not knowing whether the fort was taken the lieutenant approached with the utmost caution until he heard the cry of "Qui êtes-vous?" It seems that hearing in the distance the oft-repeated thundering of cannon from the vicinity of Verchères they surmised in Montreal that the Iroquois were besieging the fort and so, with a detachment of forty men, de la Monnerie came to their assistance travelling by water.

At the time of their arrival poor little Madeleine was overcome by exhaustion. She slept with her head on the table, fully dressed, her gun resting on her arms. The sentinel on guard at the time, hearing a noise in the great silence beyond the walls demanded, "Who is there?" Instantly the militant Madeleine was on her feet and mounting a bastion she asked who was there. La Monnerie replied that he had brought help from Montreal.

In Madeleine's own account of the siege her simple story recalls the bald facts, but she omitted to mention her personal relief when told in the French language that help had come to her at last. True to the discipline of army precepts the girl-soldier prepared to meet her friends who were stationed on the beach, ordering the gate to be opened so that she could pass out, but giving instructions, at the same time, for a sentinel to stand guard in case of emergency. As yet Madeleine could not believe that the voices carried across to the garrison from the beach were bona fide French. And so, alone

again, she stepped beyond the safety zone of fortified walls, marching down to the water's edge to meet whatever fate had in store for her.

Step by step she marched in the pitch darkness, gripping her gun and hoping for the best. *Le bon Dieu* be praised! Her prayers were indeed answered for soon she saw with her own eyes the familiar figure of *Monsieur de la Monnerie*. Never forgetting the part she had played for the last eight days she stood at attention and saluted her superior officer and said, "*Monsieur* I surrender my arms to you". He answered, "*Mademoiselle*, they are in good hands". "Better than you think", answered the sprightly maiden.

Together they marched back to the fort, *de la Monnerie* inspecting the garrison and finding everything in order with a sentinel at each bastion. *Madeleine* then spoke up, advising him that it was time to relieve the defenders of the fort, because they had not been off their bastions for a week.

Having triumphed in her effort to save her people from torture, or death, *Madeleine* retired from the picture until several years later when, through poverty, she appealed to the wife of the secretary of the marines humbly asking if it were possible for her father to have a pension of fifty crowns; or if that could not be arranged might her brother be promoted to the status of ensign in the army, because at the time he was merely a cadet. She modestly mentioned her share in the siege of *Verchères*, hoping against hope it would bring some relief to their poverty-stricken household.

Reading the pathetic letter, for the first time those in loftier positions in *New France* awoke to the knowledge that here was a true daughter of France, a heroine, a woman whom the nation should honor, in need of life's simple necessities. *M. de Frontenac* hearing the remarkable story issued orders that *Madeleine's* request should be attended to. Both the *Marquis de Beauharnois*

Grey Nuns' Hospital
and
St. Gabriel Farm

Grey Nuns Hospital

The first Mother-House of the Grey Nuns which was originally built by Brother François Charon in 1694. Mother d'Youville, foundress of "Les Soeurs Grises" took possession of it in 1747.

With the exception of one wing the building was destroyed by fire in 1765, and partly rebuilt by the Grey Nuns.

(See page 254)



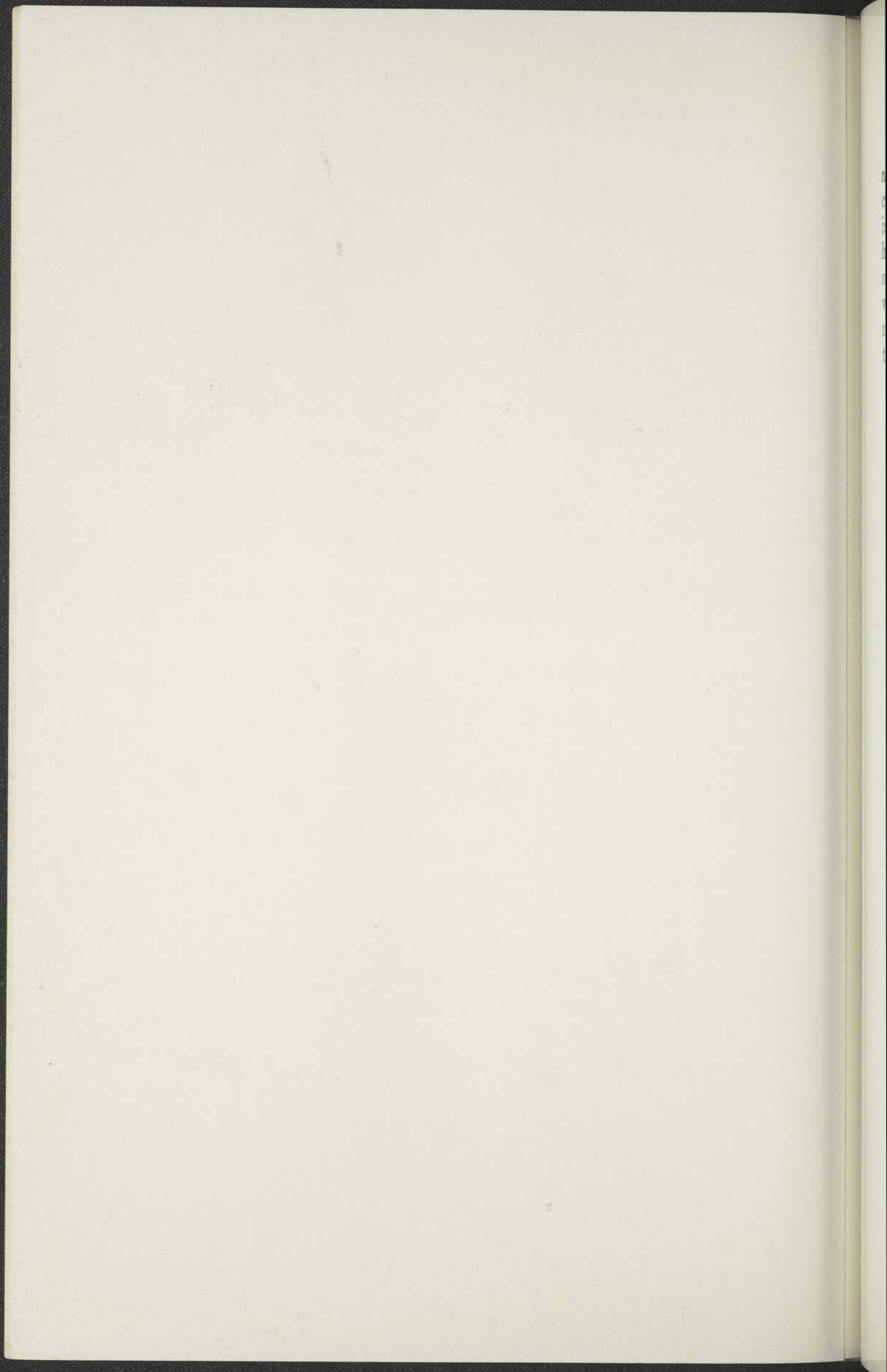
St. Gabriel Farm

This old farm house is still standing and is among the relics of Margaret Bourgeoys' efforts to Christianize and uplift Ville Marie's growing settlement.

It is in the vicinity of Verdun, and faces St. Paul's Island. Today the sisters operate the farm, gathering in the harvest for the use of the members of their Order.

Many interesting relics are carefully cherished in the old farm house — bits of furniture and cooking utensils, as used daily by the pioneer teachers, being among the treasures which are shown with great pride to visitors by the gracious sisters.





and M. de Vaudreuil seem to have been moved by the conduct of one of their pioneer daughters. The latter is said to have come forward offering to find a suitable husband for Madeleine, who chose among the number of suitors M. de la Pérade de la Naudière. Her brother was promoted to the post of ensign in the troupes of the marines and her father no longer suffered from the threatenings of that pitiless enemy, poverty.

CHAPTER XXV



WEDDING BELLS RING OUT IN VERCHERES

Madeleine — A Married Woman, Leaves for Ste. ANNE DE LA Parade

JOY and sorrow stirred the inhabitants of the village of Verchères one September morning in 1706. Hurriedly they arose from their beds, donning their very best garments, because their idol, "Madelon", was to be married that day and move away from the settlement with her husband who lived in Sainte-Anne de la Parade. For twenty-eight years she had lived among them. They knew her as a faithful daughter and they revered her as their savior, their heroine; they loved her deeply, truly. Glad for her sake, yet with heavy hearts, they trudged solemnly to church to witness her marriage to Pierre-Thomas Tarieu, sieur de la Pérade, son of the late Thomas Tarieu, sieur de la Naudière and of Marguerite-Renée Denis. The bridegroom's father had, like Madeleine's own father, come to New France as a member of the de Carignan-Salières regiment. The solemn service was followed by the full-hearted congregation who could not see the bride at times, because of the welling tears that blurred their vision. Neither could they make their responses to the intonations of the priest; how could they respond when throats were so

tightened that sobs instead of music choked their utterances? And so she departed with her husband, many of them never again to see their cherished friend. Good-byes were said and away Madeleine went with her bridegroom to take up her life among new and strange neighbours.

The manoir of *Sieur de la Naudière* was pleasantly situated at the confluence of the *St. Lawrence River* and *River Ste. Anne*. According to the account of Madeleine's life written by the *curé* of *Verchères*, *F. A. Baillairge*, in 1913, she is pictured as the sweet, evangel, strong in good works and Christian deeds. He quotes a letter from the bishop of *Quebec*, dated *January 18th, 1727*, in which *Madame de la Naudière* receives profound thanks for the generous contribution she had made towards the new church in the seigniory.

Although it is pleasing to remember the girl defender of *Castle Dangerous* as a gentle, but firm philanthropist, unfortunately there are records in *Quebec's* archives which cast an entirely different aspect on the character of *Canada's* soldier heroine.

Monsieur de la Naudière could not have been the master in his house. In fact, much as we dislike to tarnish the gilt on Madeleine's reputation as a meek, motherly saint, facts must be faced. Her's was the stronger character. She it was who collected the tenants' dues. And no vacillating disturbed her rigid determination to take what the law allowed. Time after time she took her tenants to court. She fought for her rights with relentless vigor. She was the "femme terrible" to all; her long-suffering husband having to submit to his wife's militant temper in controlling his household affairs and his holdings as seigneur. Madame was the man of his manoir, who ruled with a will of iron. She must, however, have looked after the poor, because destitution could not be permitted among the seigneur's tenants. Starvation is not a pretty thing among the

tenantry and Madame de la Naudière was full of worldly wisdom.

But philanthropy was not the only phase of Madeleine's married life. Many French gentlemen entered the hospitable couple's doors en route to Quebec, or maybe Montreal, on business of the Government, or for private reasons.

When members of the Carignan-Sallières regiment sailed from France many years before Madeleine was born, they brought with them various articles of furniture, family jewellery and knick-knacks. Many of their number were descendants of famous French families, nobles in their own right and proud of their inheritance which had been handed down from father to son for hundreds of years.

The sieur de la Naudière, as heir of a distinguished French family, had many beautiful treasures to offer his bride. When she entertained his friends at the tea hour, or at after dinner coffee, she presided over a massive solid silver service which to-day may be seen at the table of one of her descendants living in Montreal, and from which the writer has often and often enjoyed an excellent cup of tea.

The de la Naudière homestead was not an imposing mansion, but it doubtless represented comfort and happiness to Madeleine and her husband. It was a long, low-set building, comprised of two stories, with square-formed dormer windows upstairs and a graceful, slanted roof.

It is not difficult to imagine the bride and her "mari" seated before the crackling fireside, glad to be alone together after a busy day. Madeleine would relate the details of needy families she attended and to whom she played the role of stern, fairy god-mother. Some of the habitants were very poor. And families grew so quickly. Good wives found it almost impossible to keep pace with climatic conditions and seasonal

changes of clothing. Weaving, knitting, household work and farming duties were often too exacting for one pair of hands. Sickness, childbirth, and ignorance of how to handle both left the poor things poorer, less able to cope with the situation and more susceptible to poverty's grim partnership. Madeleine, with her practical head and not too soft heart, knew how to bring relief in its most acceptable form to her habitant dependents.

One of the tragedies of New France was the desire, on the part of more or less high-class French settlers arriving at various periods in Canada, to play the part of "gentilshommes". Denonville seems to have had a certain amount of trouble in this connection. He remarks in his letters that several of the would-be gentlemen and their wives had come out to Canada that year, the latter being most discontented with the manner of living they were forced to put up with. They persisted in playing the part of "grand dame". Real peasants had a much rosier future in New France, with regard to worldly possessions, than the shiftless gentilshommes, who hunted and fished most of the time while their families remained at home languishing on the brink of starvation, Denonville stated.

Playing the part of country gentleman is all very well if funds in the bank keep up; but, as in the case of the seigneur who neglected his duties as landowner and dabbled in trade, the inevitable sequence of poverty and debt lowered the prestige of country squires and their families faced pauperism. Intendant Champigny deplores this evil, declaring in a letter to the French Government, "It is pitiful to see their children, of which there are great numbers, passing all summer with nothing on but a shirt, and their wives and daughters working in the fields." Speaking of de Repentigny and his thirteen children, Champigny remarked "We must give them some corn at once, or they will starve." The same observation he made with regard to Tilly and his fifteen hungering offspring. Also the family of Aille-

boust comes under the same category. What a tragedy! Three out of the four best families; the original "gentleman" settlers' descendants, those nobles who arrived in Quebec arrayed in silks, satins, sweeping plumes and gilded buttons; who looked with scorn on the menials who waited upon them and who felt they were too genteel to lower themselves to handle a plow, or bend their backs to the honest toil of weeding and hoeing the virgin soil of New France, and whose sons and daughters were fast becoming penniless beggars, vassals to their servants' descendants.

Pride and laziness were the two great sins of French Canada's sons of the noblesse. A beggerly lot they were called by the leaders and by the governors at that time. They implored France not to send any more to flood the land with an increase of do-nothings, but to send out labourers, men who were fitted to handle the axe and follow the plow, to tend cattle and plant potatoes, corn and tobacco.

Beggars, laggards, outlaws of the bush. What a record! Sons of noble French descent, unwilling and unable to meet new conditions, preferring to sink rather than swim. No wonder the governors wrote complaining letters to those in authority in France. Eventually the fur trade helped to save some of them, while others gave to posterity a grand and glorious heritage. How? By discovering new pathways, pushing across the continent and presenting to their countrymen a never-ending source of revenue through the discovery of the Rocky Mountains, the Mississippi River and those hinterlands of Canada's north which even today are rendering to mankind enormous fortunes in minerals, farmlands, oil wells, timber, electric power and so on, ad libitum.

While Madeleine grew from girlhood, to womanhood, thence to marriage, New France was making history quickly. Like a great unopened book North America's vast secrets were gradually being unfolded.

Mile upon mile of new territory called Frenchmen from their firesides and drove them to reckless daring beyond the Great Lakes, across prairie lands to the foot of the Rocky Mountains, and southward. Burning with curiosity to find what lay beyond familiar haunts they traced streams, rode rapids, shot in frail bark canoes across enormous stretches of water; those lakes which today hint of nothing so primitive as aboriginal redskins, strikingly imposing in their nakedness, their war-paint and bright feathers; pathetic in their fear that soon they, and their Indian sons and daughters would be servants of white men; or frightening in their savage determination to kill, torture and ravish everything that savoured of their greatest enemies, the foreign devils. But they did leave us sweetly sounding names of pure Indian inspiration. Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, Lake Kamachigama; the Ottawa River, the Mohawk Valley, Manhattan and Delaware; Chicoutimi, Stadacona, Ticonderoga, Donnacona, Hochelaga, Kipawa, Kiskisink, Maniwaki, Mistassini and countless others. All musical, rhythmic and unlike any other names in the world.

Thus Canada maintains her character, her background, her flavour of the yesteryears when savages owned the land and primitive outdoor silence was not rudely broken by sirens, motor horns, and the ever-strengthening noises forced upon humanity through mechanical devices created by the wizardry of modern science.

As a married woman Madeleine lived through that stirring period of New France when men in high places tricked the Government and one another; cheated and won because of influence; lined their pockets with gold stolen from voyageurs whose weary feet struggled hundreds of miles beyond the ken of their countrymen who sat at home in comfort scheming how to take toll when the *coureurs de bois* returned to Quebec with canoes laden with packets of beaverskins; the gleanings of many hard weeks of toil.

But, the glory of men like Pierre Esprit Radisson and his brother-in-law, Médard Chouart Groseillers, the first white men to discover a passage to the Great Northwest, and co-discoverers of the Great Lakes, comes to heal the wounds left by greed and iniquity, by sanctimonious hypocrisy, jealousy and injustice. Other names follow in the wake of the two comrades just mentioned; Du Lhut, La Durantaye, La Salle, La Motte-Cadillac, Iberville, Bienville, La Vérendrye, etc., all brave Frenchmen, hardy, daring; courageous under the most stupendous opposition on the part of Nature and Indian enmity. Traversing thousands of miles, almost frozen, nearly starving, panting under scorching sunlight, smothering and battling against blizzards, and soaked to the skin, they blazed a trail from east to west, from north to south, leading the way for generations to come.

Madame de la Naudière lived amidst the unfolding of Canada's magic book of secrets. In those days coureurs de bois were familiar figures and very much taken for granted. Today we appreciate the heroism of their treks west, north and south in search of new paths on a great continent. Madame must have watched canoe loads of Canada's discoverers slip along the famous waterway not far from her homestead. It is not unlikely that she had friends among the husky Frenchmen whose happy songs echoed and died away as they dipped their dripping paddles into the whirling waters with steady regularity.

Although the de la Naudière lived in the country, it is interesting to know something about the laws passed in Quebec and Montreal about the time they lived. Police regulations in Quebec enforced each habitant to dig a gutter along the middle of the street in front of his house. Garbage was disposed of quite simply by dumping into the river. Smoking was prohibited in the street. Fire was too great a hazard, so this precaution was resorted to. Dogs had to go home at nine o'clock.

No loiterers beyond that time of night, with regard to dogs, anyway. Each householder had to possess a ladder. When the fire alarm was sounded all able-bodied citizens were supposed to drop their work and run, helter-skelter, to aid in extinguishing the flames with buckets, or kettles of water.

Denonville deplored the matter of fires. He wrote to the Government in this regard, stating that Quebec was in a bad way when fires started, because the houses were slapped together, cheek by jowl, out of all reason. To add to the danger, piles of cordwood were heaped nearby adding fuel to the pitiful sight of flaming homes. Outhouses, nearby, filled with stores of hay, blazed away merrily when tinders from adjacent fires dropped on dry-as-matchwood shingled roofs. Despite precautions on the part of Government officials tragedy in the form of fires rampaged throughout the years in every part of New France, through carelessness. Endless time, effort and suffering was entailed, but the lessons were not sufficiently drastic; one fire after another ate up landmarks of the early regime and many precious records with them.

In Montreal similar problems had to be cared for by those in authority. An order was issued by the city fathers that all pigs wandering loose throughout the town had to be muzzled. One can picture the neighbour's sow and her growing family mumbling among the street refuse, their grunts of dissatisfaction, when a particularly choice bit of garbage was encountered, muffled and muted. Ville Marie's streets after a period of rain were slimy with deep ruts of mud and clay. Step by step improvement was apparent in growing towns and hamlets, and as the years slipped by man gradually claimed mastership in a wilderness bristling with difficulties; rife with hardship and disappointment.

In country parishes autumn hummed with busy workers stowing away foodstuffs for winter. *Frigidaires* being unknown, the habitants were content with frozen

vegetables, meat, fish and eels. But while winter months dragged along, time hung heavily. Later, when Talon introduced weaving, a happier picture is reflected. Madame has her loom, her spinning-wheel, her knitting and her dressmaking; she loves the musical whirr of the wheel as yards and yards of good, strong wool twirl around the spindle. It brought a spirit of peace and satisfaction, restfulness and contentment.

There was still another phase, that of the dare-devil French-Canadian soldier, the man trained in warfare from his youth, and especially those of the Carignan-Sallières regiment who fought the Turks and knew the tricks of terrorizing their enemies. Some of these latter gentlemen did not, as we have mentioned, take kindly to the monotonous routine of farm life. Bored to distraction, at times, they joined forces with Indian warriors and sallied south to wreak their temper on New England's peaceful settlers.

This famous regiment was the first regular army that France had, as yet, sent out to New France. It was raised in Savoy by the Prince of Carignan in 1644. Beneath the attacks of bored French-Canadian soldiers upon harmless English settlers in out-of-the-way districts where they could not possibly do the French any harm, there lurked a design fashioned to keep the Abenakis Indians from linking their friendship with New Englanders. Vaudreuil, in writing to the French Government, declared that it was politic to keep things astir in the vicinity of Boston. Therefore, the constant invasions were in reality a planned scheme whereby the savages would actively engage in hostilities which, at the same time, would permit New France to convince the savage warriors that France stood behind them in their quarrels with the English.

Pouncing on their victims in dead of night, their Indian assistants making the act more horrifying with blood-curdling battle cries, French Canada's fearless sons of war brought sorrow, bloodshed, death and de-

struction, superimposed by taking captive little children, wives and daughters. Many a heart-rending tale can be related of the sufferings of their captives, half-clad, marching miles and miles over rough roads and entangling thickets, to fall exhausted by the roadside and forced up again and forward. Some died along the route, others were put to death, mercifully, because they were too weak to carry on. Young children were often carried on the backs of their captors, many of whom were later placed in convents and forced to adopt the Catholic faith.

We, of the twentieth century, are able to get a better perspective of the situation as a whole. There were wheels within wheels that revolved slowly, but surely; and they ground in perfect timing to the orders of men who held the reins and who planned according to their comprehension of right and wrong. What a tangled web of misery was spun! And how unnecessary.

This background of Madame de la Naudière's lifetime serves to heighten the drama of the renowned woman's career; it resembles the scenery of the theatrical stage without which imagination does not have the same scope to play upon the heartstrings, or to transport its audience to the seventh heaven of delight.

Thus Madame lived amidst struggles and joys, fear and happiness. She bore five children. It is easy to realize how childbirth in a wild, half-civilized country was not accomplished with even a smattering of scientific knowledge. Woman gave birth according to Nature's command and when climatic conditions were rugged to a degree in winter little hope there was for weaklings to survive.

We must picture Madame de la Naudière weeping over her first-born child lying cold in death. "Marie-Madeleine qui décéda en bas âge", wrote the curé of Verchères, many years later. Yes, like a pretty wax figure lay her little baby, dead and in its coffin. Then

she had a second child, Louis-Joseph, who died a bachelor. Her third baby brought honour to the family name. He was christened Jean-Baptiste de la Pérade, and he was called the chevalier by friends and neighbours. Inheriting both the ancestral name and the courageous spirit of his mother, as well as his soldierly father, death came to him on July 10th, 1755, from wounds received in the battle of Monongahela.

Madame's fourth child was another girl, Marie-Anne. Little Marie-Anne grew up to be a tall, dignified woman with remarkable beauty. Of course, she must have been a tom-boy with three brothers as playmates and the wide open spaces of river and countryside as a playground. She married Richard Testu, sieur de la Richardière, in the year 1728.

In presenting New France with her fifth child, named Charles-François, Madame de la Naudière brought the family into line with the most distinguished French-Canadian nobility. François-Charles married Mlle. Longueuil of the house of Baron de Longueuil; and the family tree includes in its long list of illustrious French-Canadian names, the Babys, de Beaujeus, Le Moines, De Montenach, de la Naudières, De Gaspès, Delagorgendieres and several other old and noble families. The Longueuil family originally descended from the Count of Salagne, who enlisted on the side of Charles VII in 1428. "Whosoever possesses the name of Longueuil, whether male, or female, is entitled to the title and distinction of a baron of the kingdom of France", thus wrote an Englishman, Mr. Falconer, residing in Paris, about the year 1842. Digging very deeply into the subject Mr. Falconer gave a lucid account of the noble Longueuil name, with a statement that he had sought the advice of an eminent French lawyer on the subject and that "there can be no further dispute on the subject."

Madeleine de Verchère's fifth child covered her illustrious name with honour. He also brought glory in

the role of soldier, his brave deeds during the battle at Carillon meriting recognition in the form of a letter to his sister from Montcalm and the croix de St-Louis.

CHAPTER XXVI



MADAME DE LA NAUDIERE AGAIN
IN ROLE OF WARRIOR

LET us look back again to the days when Madeleine de Verchères was a girl. That she was not a "molly-coddle" is substantiated by her actions in defending the fort. She lived a healthy out-door life, playing with her brothers and sisters, rowing up and down the swiftly-running river, chopping trees, stacking logs for their great fireplace in winter, and shooting game. She is said to have had sufficient skill with a rifle to bring down a duck, or a partridge on the wing; a sure, deadly aim which in later life would save her husband from the Iroquois invaders.

When she left Verchères to accompany her bridegroom to Ste. Anne de la Parade, Madeleine did not expect to lead a life of idleness. She was not built that way. Let the young women of Quebec and Ville Marie primp and simper; spend hours curling their hair and fritter away their entire time in search of added cavaliers to their already long list; it was their business. She had more serious matters to claim her attention.

And so she took up life and its cares, fully equipped to be a comrade and co-partner in whatever life might offer as wife of the seigneur and the mother of his children.

As time passed, the fear of Indian invasion continued to be a serious problem. One day M. de la Naudière was informed that a number of Iroquois were seen hovering in the vicinity of the farm. "Madeleine", said he, "I'm going after those fellows". He grabbed his rifle and made for River Ste. Anne. Humph, thought his wife, not alone if I know it, or words to that effect. Calling others to follow she watched her husband's movements and shortly noted the Indians creeping up behind him. To call a warning would have been folly. Silently, she and her group took aim, putting the savages to flight with more haste than dignity.

One evening, about sixteen years after they had been married, M. de la Naudière and Madeleine were sitting together chatting beside the blazing hearth-fire. Although changes in the family had cast shadows along life's pathway, they had had a very happy home. Madame looked older, naturally, but her youthful charm and beauty were still a never ending source of admiration to Pierre-Thomas, her husband.

Industriously knitting while her husband smoked, Madeleine kept up a lively conversation on the day's activities, when suddenly the front door flew open with a bang. In stalked two Abenakis Indians. Bent on stirring up strife they started to quarrel with the seigneur. Ordering them out of the house M. de la Naudière once again resumed his place, cursing the audacity of savage redskins; more particularly with regard to the Iroquois tribe.

However, uneasiness disturbed their peaceful evening. "Let us see if they are not up to some mischief", said Madeleine. They searched through the rooms, but all seemed serene, so they sat down again. Knowing the Indians as they did it was not surprising, therefore, when soon the smell of smoke brought the realization that all was certainly not well. Then strange, muffled cries, issuing from another part of the building, led them to an old barrel. Here, poor old Tagariauguen, their

*A French-Canadian
Homestead*

In a homestead similar to this low-set building Madeleine de Verchères started housekeeping as Madame de la Naudière, wife of Sieur Pierre-Thomas de la Naudière. The house was pleasantly situated at the confluence of the River St. Lawrence and St. Anne's River, facing St. Pierre-les-Bicquets.

A few years ago the original manoir was destroyed by fire.

(See page 226)



Sophy L. Elliott



faithful Iroquois servant, was thrust in a dying condition. He had been murdered by his own tribesmen.

"Madeleine", cried M. de la Naudière, "we must barricade all the doors". At that very moment two brazen savages burst into the house, each flourishing an axe. No need to explain matters now, their purpose was quite apparent. Swiftly one of the burly fellows lunged towards M. de la Naudière, battle-axe poised for action, but the seigneur was too quick for him.

Poor Madeleine stood idly by for a few minutes, watching her husband fighting the Indians who were particularly tall and muscular men. Realizing that there was little hope against two such powerful enemies she acted promptly. Flinging her full weight against the Indian who was most accessible, the impact was so sudden and unexpected that, losing his balance, he toppled over stretching his full length on the floor. By this time Madeleine was no longer the serene wife of the Seigneur de la Naudière. Like a tigress she pounced on his tomahawk and with all her strength she smacked him smartly. So smartly, in fact, that he lay stunned and unconscious at her feet.

At this crucial moment four squaws arrived. Well, never a more wicked battle was ever staged than the skirmish that took place between those five females; five vicious she-cats, venomous, revengeful, pitiless; fighting for their men like animals. The first round did not go well for Madeleine. Between an effort to strangle, and scalp the hated Frenchwoman they managed to tear the clothes off her back. As yet Madeleine was intact. Puffing and snarling the frenzied squaws seized the almost naked woman and struggled to thrust her bodily into the fire. Horrors! "Here", thought Madame, "I am certainly going to die."

While the undignified battle waged between the women, whose screams made the hitherto peaceful

livingroom an inferno of earsplitting discord, young Charles Tarieu, Madame's twelve-year-old son, came dashing in to his mother's assistance. Armed with a gun, he whacked the squaws with the butt end. He whacked so thoroughly that Madeleine was able to spring away from the fireplace. Charles kept on whacking. Whack, whack, whack, on arms, heads and shoulders. Even a squaw gets too much of such treatment.

In the meantime M. de la Naudière, who had been defending himself from the savage warrior, saw from the corner of his eye that the four squaws were advancing to add to his torment. Madeleine saw their intensions, too. Quick as a flash she grabbed the Indian who was still unconscious on the floor, declaring that she would kill the wretch.

Madeleine acted well. Threatening death and vowing she must have vengeance, which could only be satisfied with the death of the miserable creature, whose greasy, black hair she held tightly in her hands. She pretended that the battle-axe was about to fall on his unconscious head.

Praying and beseeching for mercy, the Indians ceased fighting and with promises of good behaviour in the future, they were allowed to carry the injured warrior away to their camp where his squaw could nurse him back to health.

Alone again in their disarranged livingroom the weary de la Naudières rendered thanks to heaven for their miraculous escape from death. Madame de la Naudière retired that night with an aching, bruised body, but happy in the consciousness that through her militant daring Pierre-Thomas was once again spared from his savage enemies.

Some years later another attack was made on the de la Naudière's homestead when several Indians slipped down the St. Lawrence water lane and set fire to the

house. *Sieur de la Naudière* was ill in bed at the time and *Madeleine* was alone with a little maid taking care of her husband. After an exciting parley with the Indians, in which *Madame* won out, the outlaws tramped back to their canoes. Retreating, they shot several flaming arrows onto the shingled roof. As the wood was very dry, and before *Madeleine* was aware of it, a good-sized blaze ate its way through, igniting the beams in the upper storey.

Although the house was full of smoke, the poor woman tore upstairs in search of *Pierre-Thomas* who had crawled out of bed and whose moans could be heard in another part of the house. Groping her way to the spot where her despairing husband lay gasping she tried to drag him down stairs. "Save yourself", he moaned, "as for me I am content to die; adieu, my dear wife, good-bye, forever." Determined to save him, she lifted the heavy man and carried him down stairs and out to the clear night air. Then she fainted. Providentially, a heavy fall of rain, which had threatened all day, broke from the overlaid clouds, smothering the flames which otherwise would have completely destroyed the house.

The Iroquois had tried for many years to kill *M. de la Naudière* but they never succeeded. He lived to a ripe old age despite their determination to track him down in one way or another.

And now we write *finis* to the career of *Madeleine*, heroine of the hamlet of *Verchères*. She went to her grave two years after the death of her husband at the age of sixty-nine years.

We must never allow her heroism to fade, neither must we forget to glance at her monument when passing the site of the old fort. The beautiful sculptured, wind-blown, girlish figure, grasping a gun, her hat on jaunty angle, alertness imaged in its lifelike poise, was the work of *Hébert*, the famous Canadian artist. This

monument was inspired by Lord Grey, Canada's former Governor General. It is pleasant to remember that tribute is paid to one of Canada's notable women by an English gentleman and a French sculptor, uniting the two in a common bond of sympathy.

"Bon quart, bon quart"!

CHAPTER XXVII



MOTHER D'YOUVILLE MONTREAL'S PHILANTHROPIST FOUNDRESS OF "LES SOEURS GRISES".

Prelude

N RECORDING the efforts of Canada's pioneer women, one cannot but be astounded by the willingness to serve humanity under the most appalling discomforts and hardships that was shown by the saintly, self-effacing ladies of culture and refinement who came of their own accord to a lawless, comfortless, war-ridden land under the banner of religious faith and a zealous desire to serve others.

Their selfless lives have left a deeply-rooted imprint on the spectacular birth and development of French Canada and the Canada of today. In the majority of cases they encountered opposition from both Church and State, but armed with a consuming desire to follow in the Master's footsteps every obstacle was swept aside in the face, at times, of almost overwhelming adversity.

Such was the story of Madame d'Youville, although she was born in Canada and bred to the way of living from the cradle. Her tenacity in withstanding cruel misrepresentation, insults, even attempted bodily in-

jury; her heroic efforts to parry the scheming and plotting of Government officials, high church dignitaries and perhaps the most bitter thrust, the jeers of the people for whom she worked so faithfully, place her undoubtedly among the martyrs and the saintly.

She succeeded in proving her innocence of lies and false accusations made by those who would benefit by her misfortune. To her satisfaction she lived to see the day when former ardent enemies became her staunch supporters in the work of charity and community welfare that she was endeavoring to establish.

Modern Canada is indebted to this unselfish woman beyond calculation. She has left the record of a saintly life spent recklessly for the underprivileged and the down-trodden. Street women, soldiers, savages, abandoned, nameless infants, the diseased, the aged; all sought her motherly care which was given regardless of creed, or race. She put into daily practise the precepts of Christianity, gathering to her bosom the suffering sons and daughters of an omniscient God.

Her work has developed with the years and the sisterhood she founded over two hundred years ago holds aloft the torch of tender mercy not only in the thickly populated areas of Canada's largest cities, but in the frozen regions of the Arctic, where life's crudities are uppermost. The grey-robed sisters of mercy carry on their self-imposed duties of service and self-sacrifice cut off from family and friends among strange, primitive, nomad peoples whose habits and ways of living are so foreign and distasteful at times. No worldly reward is theirs and no public approbation marks their lifetime spent amidst poverty and privation for the betterment of humanity. A humble grave beside their monastic sisters closes their earthly career.

THE VENERABLE MOTHER d'YOUVILLE,

Foundress of the Sisters of
Charity, Grey Nuns

Merrily the parish church bells rang out their joyous marriage chimes announcing to all and sundry living in the vicinity of Montreal that a solemn ceremony was being performed within the confines of the sacred walls. It was the month of August, 1722, the twenty-second of the month, with its wealth of foliage and wild flowers, ripening corn and full-blown vegetation. Truly a propitious day to celebrate the nuptial ties. Noisily, loudly and clearly the bells chimed their glad message, because one of the sweetest maids of the community was taking her marriage vows.

Marie Marguerite Dufrost de la Jemmerais was plighting her troth to Francois You d'Youville, a dashing buck of the growing city of Montreal. All the elite of the town were present and others not so highly bred, too, because Marie was a friend of all. The bride was born at Varennes, P. Que., not far from Montreal, on October 15, 1701, of an illustrious family.

Her father, Christopher Dufrost de la Jemmerais, hailing from Medreac, Brittany, France, came to Canada in 1687 and had distinguished himself while fighting the Iroquois, achieving the title of Captain in the army. In 1701, the eighteenth day of January, he claimed as his bride Marie Ren   de Varennes, daughter of Ren   Gauthier de Varennes, the latter at the time of his death being the Governor of Three Rivers. Pierre Boucher de Boucherville was Marie de Varennes' grandfather.

Christopher de la Jammerais died in 1708, leaving a widow with six children, the future Mother d'Youville being the eldest of the family. Madame de la Jammerais was left a small pension through the influence of the Marquis de Vaudreuil. But it was scarcely sufficient to

support a family of six growing children. Eventually she married an Irishman, Timotheé de Silvain (or Sullivan), who as King's physician with honorary brevet, practiced medicine in Montreal.

Marie Marguerite, as eldest in the family knew well the pinch of poverty. Had not her grand-pere, Pierre Boucher, provided the money to send her to the Ursuline Convent in Quebec she might not have been so well equipped to take her prominent place in Montreal as she did.

In passing over the records of this notable family it is interesting to recall that one of Marie Marguerite's brothers, Christopher, accompanied his now famous uncle, Pierre de Varennes de la Verendrye, discoverer and fur-trader, to the hinterlands. But the lad was too delicate, he was not robust enough to overcome the hardships of such a life. He died in 1736 at Fort Maurepas.

And so, when Marie Marguerite Dufrost de la Jemmerais married young d'Youville her friends rejoiced thinking at last their dear Marie would have sufficient wherewithal to keep the wolf from the door. But they closed their eyes to François' shortcomings. his love of gambling, dissipation and lack of stability. Perhaps they thought he would settle down with marriage. But he did not.

Mlle. de la Jemmerais possessed a charm of her own and grace and beauty added still more to her attractive personality. She was very popular and no party of young people was complete without the company of this little lady, whose admirers were many including the most eligible young beaux of the colony.

The day of her marriage she was the envy of her comrades. They made a handsome couple, the bride, all beaming with smiles, graciously receiving the congratulations of her many friends. She was deeply in love with her gay cavalier, who possessed a fascinating

personality, too attractive for stability, and a love for gambling, which, with dissipation, soon wrecked their little home, as time only too definitely indicated. He was extravagant, arrogantly vain, hard and cruel. Very soon he neglected his faithful wife and children, the former having to contend with an irritable and jealous mother-in-law, besides the worry of having to provide for five children.

Eight years of married life were brought to a close with the premature death of her husband who was stricken in his early thirties and after an illness of a few days died on July 4, 1730. His death left Madame d'Youville with a heavy quota of debts and two young sons to educate and support. Her three other children had died and a fourth survived birth but a short time.

This short sketch of her girlhood and married life closes the chapter as far as social concerns are chronicled. Madame d'Youville makes her dramatic entry into the history of Montreal when Intendant Bigot and his unscrupulous coterie of high functionaries and officers of the militia were on the royal road to the ruination of New France. These men were of the get-rich-quickly-no-matter-by-what-means type and they ably reflected the morals and manners of Paris and Versailles, playing their part of corruption and excess so thoroughly that in time they squandered away the fortunes of the common people and brought to ruin the affairs of Canada. These were the people in high places with whom Madame d'Youville had to deal, with whom she had to match her wits. It was not easy.

THE FIRST GENERAL HOSPITAL IN MONTREAL

Now we have to go back a number of years to 1692 when the King of France gave permission to those interested to establish in Quebec, and other places where necessary, a general hospital and houses of charity.

There was a wealthy man living in Montreal who wished to erect a hospital for the sick and afflicted, orphans and those in need. It was his desire to consecrate his fortune to this worthy cause. Ancient records reveal that Jean François Charon started a hospital in Montreal in the year 1694 and associated with him were Pierre LeBer, brother of Jeanne LeBer, the recluse, and Jean Fridin. The institution was to house 80 to 100 persons.

It took time to organize an institution which was designed, not alone as a hospital, but to encourage manufacturing, handicraft and art instruction, tuition in trades and a school for the young. The budding young city required much to reclaim even a fraction of the culture of the French towns from which the people sprang. The relics left to posterity prove how skilled the workmen and builders were in those early days of struggle to create in Montreal a centre of trade, as well as a residential settlement.

Thus, in planning the institution Charon ambitiously aimed to give emphasis to the technical features, with, in addition, a normal school to train teachers for the newly-formed districts now cropping up beyond the city limits. In 1699 new letters patent were granted the Hospital Brothers of Montreal to further the type of development and educational work they desired. The stumbling block was political intrigue which handicapped the worthy brothers very considerably.

Charon and his confreres struggled on for some years, the final catastrophe being the founder's sudden death on the ocean in 1719 while returning from France with six teachers for the school. Without the inspiring enthusiasm of M. Charon the work gradually suffered from a decline caused by lack of interest on the priests' behalf and mismanagement. Montreal's first General Hospital was threatened with extinction. Down grade it slipped, yearly gliding into decay, a complete loss to the community.

Fifty-three years had elapsed since the hospital was first started and in the midst of apparent dissolution the figure of a woman, compassionate and motherly, casts her shadow on the pages of Montreal's early records, and Madame d'Youville comes forward to save the decaying hospital from utter ruin. She possessed executive ability to a rare degree, vision to carry her through many a stormy passage and a deeply religious nature, combined with an unquenchable well of sympathy for her fellow-beings. She had already worked among the poor for many years.

For some time she and three young women, Louise Thaumur Lasource, daughter of a physician of the town, and the Misses Demers and Casson, had managed to rent a house and offer a home to five or six homeless persons. It was understood that the Sulpician priests had encouraged them to work in this way with the idea of later on giving them charge of the hospital which was fast approaching ruination. Such a move was contrary to the views of certain individuals, in fact it was very unpleasant indeed.

With her usual determination Madame d'Youville overcame the obstacles of poverty, small and inconvenient quarters and an over-abundance of work. She and her assistants slaved and suffered. They worked under the yoke of derision and suspicion. They were the targets for criticism, which had its roots in falsely circulated reports as to their manner of living and means of support. The story spread among the respectable citizens that they sold liquor in their house and that they imbibed too freely themselves.

Ridiculed and scorned they were mockingly given the name of "Soeurs Grises", which not only signified grey in color, but it bore the stigma of drunkenness. Public indignation rose to an alarming degree, so much so that the Recollet Fathers refused publicity to give the patient leader and her companions communion.

In the meantime, Father Normand was making plans whereby the much-slandered women could take over the crumbling old hospital and whip it into shape, as soon as proper legal arrangements could be transacted. When the Governor of Montreal, M. Boisberthelot, heard the news he and eight officers of the troops and about twenty prominent citizens signed a petition which they addressed to the minister of marinees, M. Maurepas, making a vigorous protest. The letter was circulated throughout Canada and later forwarded to France.

Disparaging reports continued to be launched against Madame d'Youville and the population were incensed almost to what seemed like frenzy. Added to the patient woman's supposed wickedness and shortcomings her enemies spread the report that she was incapable, that she was full of ambition and unjust. One regrettable day they were on their way to church, those cultured ladies of charity, when some of the people took it upon themselves to throw stones at them and insult them grievously.

As children we used to sing, "sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me" and this was the policy Madame d'Youville had to follow, regardless of enemies and untrue, wicked rumours. The four women struggled on, working to support themselves and their poor dependents. They sewed for a living long into the hours of the night, while in the daytime the duties of their household were attended to with patient thoroughness.

Misfortune shadowed Madame d'Youville from girlhood and continued to do so as she spent her energies for those in need. She developed a knee affection which lasted six or seven years. Inactively seated in her chair the heroic woman would not recognise defeat. And then, another sweeping blow was to follow shortly after her physical recovery, when the little house caught fire on a cold January night in 1745 and all that was left lay in charred fragments.

Out of the embers of the razed home the spirit of unity in a common sorrow drew the sisters more closely together. Father Normand, ever their friend and adviser, passed an act whereby they pooled their goods and drew up a religious rule of life. Madame Lacorne befriended the sisters of charity and offered her home which they accepted for a short term, after which they obtained a much larger place more suitable for their requirements and nearer the Parish Church. Their household included three ladies, (Mlle. Cusson had died on November 2, 1741, her strength being unequal to the privations) and nine dependents.

And what of the General Hospital buildings and the work it was supposed to cover? As the years wore away so did the old Hôpital General. Down grade it slid, yearly falling into still deeper decay. Something had to be done about it, because the work it encompassed was of great community benefit. The administrators, by letter, gave the provisional control to Madame d'Youville with the proviso that the two remaining hospital brothers should be taken care of to the end. This move was dated August 27, 1747. The transaction was completed under the jurisdiction of Marquis de Beauharnois and Intendant Hocquart.

So far so good. Before moving into the old building Madame d'Youville had workmen in to repair the delapidated masonry. Twelve hundred panes of glass had to be replaced and a general clean-up brought the neglected structure into a more liveable condition. All during the month of September they laboured to dress up and repair what threatened at one time to be nothing but a wreck and a ruin. It was a red letter day when the doors were thrown open to receive the sisters of charity who laboured not for payment in money, but for love. Four old men greeted the newcomers, four anxious, gentle creatures who needed the motherly attention of these warm-hearted women.



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CHAPTER XXVIII



THE GENERAL HOSPITAL REOPENED IN 1747



ONE autumn day, to be exact October 7th, 1747, six grey-robed figures were seen to enter the doors of Montreal's first General Hospital. They were Mother d'Youville and her helpers. All the surrounding country was ablaze with dazzling beauty, the rich, rare foliage that nowhere in the world equals the spectacular display staged by the eastern North American continent. The day was fraught with not only great beauty wherever the eye lighted, but Montreal was experiencing an important step in her already stormy, tragic, and dramatic records. Madame d'Youville was entering on another phase of her busy life, but she did not approach a peaceful period, in fact had she known it the obstacles before her would have made the staunchest flinch.

The new directress brought with her as co-workers, Mlles. Thamour de la Source, de Rinvile, Demers, Veronneau and Despins. Miraculously the spirit of the neglected institution was changed from gloom to happiness. Good cheer and comfort replaced the abject misery, both physical and moral, that was the daily routine of the poor old men. Two wards were opened, wards hygienically controlled, airy and spotlessly clean.

Aged men and women were immediately housed therein, given a home until the last trumpet call summoned them from earthly cares and misery.

Ever in the vanguard for improvements Madame d'Youville caused other wards to open shortly. These, instituted to care for incurable, invalid soldiers and orphans, were soon fulfilling their office effectually. Shortly she added another ward on the top storey to be used exclusively for fallen girls and women. This gave the "smart Ales" of the town a topic for scandal and the soldiers of the community christened it "Jericho" Threats and insults assailed the worthy directress, even by the very individuals who had in the first instance been the means of ruining the unfortunate women now in her safe keeping.

Her splendid efforts were appreciated by the Sulpician priests who, from the earliest development of Montreal, had nothing but the welfare of the people at heart. Society ladies soon recognized the value of the work of those six women whose sole ambition was wrapped up in a zealous desire to create a home for the homeless, the aged and afflicted. Some of the ladies boarded there, enjoying the peaceful atmosphere of the well-regulated establishment. Three of the Sulpician fathers, by the way, supported the movement in a most realistic fashion by sacrificing their entire personal wealth to the upkeep of the Hospital. Those generous men were Fathers Deat, Navetier and Hourdé.

With the old hospital restored and improved, Mother d'Youville began improvements on the grounds. Draining the land and cultivating former useless property. A flourishing garden soon took the place of weeds and swamps. She caused barns to be set up with a fence to enclose the buildings and insure greater privacy. All this was costly, but she carried on under the impression that the promise given her, when she undertook the administration of the hospital, that she would control the institution in perpetuity, was main-

tained. Here civil and ecclesiastical authorities shamefully failed the trusting woman.

M. de la Jonquiere and that dissolute, scheming, unscrupulous Intendant Bigot were at the head of the Government. They scented out a loophole of attack to remove Mother d'Youville from her position. Discovering that her contract had not been signed by the Court, they got busy and used their power to annoy and criticize her, issuing orders that no new applicants were to be admitted into the hospital without authorization by the Governor, or the Intendant. They placed their finger on a vulnerable point of her armour, because without new patients constantly coming and going the work would flag and eventually die from stagnation. It was a despicable, insidious move. Furthermore, they criticized her administration, accusing that splendid executive of extravagance and so on.

Louis XV and his court were at this time speeding along the road to chaos. The royal leader, scion of a long line of blue bloods, spent lavishly on his mistresses. Madame de Pompadour and later Madame du Barry, both bled the country's exchequer with their constant demands for more and more of the good things of this world. Louis had no money for his colony in New France, or very little, and conflicting parties brought such opposite reports to his attention that the colonists suffered as a result. Intendant Bigot's unscrupulous and corrupt juggling of the funds sent by the King became more and more daring. It was certainly an unpropitious period for the furthering of Madame d'Youville's plans for improving her hospital.

Having squandered the funds of the people, Bigot and his co-swindlers decided that, in order to economize, they would dispense with Madame d'Youville's institution. The advisability of such a move was evidently placed before the king who apparently approved the plan. Schemes were laid whereby the General Hospital

would be united with either the Hotel Dieu in Montreal, or Quebec.

Fruitless efforts on the part of Madame d'Youville and Father Normand to save the hospital definitely indicated that more than their feeble gesture to ward off the approaching doom of their cherished welfare dreams would be required. Both the governor and the intendant were heedless of their urgent supplications to save their institution. The day of reckoning was fast approaching.

Despite the approaching shadow of doom Mother d'Youville had to keep her wards fed. So, armed with a list of requirements for the family's bill of fare, she sallied forth one raw autumn day quite unconscious of the auspiciousness of the moment. It was the 23rd of November, 1750, a day she would always recall with its heart-break and its disappointment. From stall to stall she wandered, buying necessities for her children who looked upon her as a mother, and for the aged who leaned hard upon her strength and her buoyant spirits.

Her purchases being complete and the basket strung across her arm over-flowing with vegetables, eggs and other sundry odds required in the kitchen, the patient woman was retracing the road homeward when a crowd gathered at the corner of the wayside claimed her attention. What's this? An official document pinned up for all passersby to read! At the same time the voice of the "crier" proclaimed in a loud voice from the nearby square that her hospital was receiving its death sentence.

Could it be possible! Could it be possible! She hurriedly made for home, almost falling in her desire to get back to her precious charges who might be frightened when the dreadful news reached their ears. As she approached the front door, there an officer stood with official aggression forestalling her arrival, with notice to quit the building.

Although the Foundress and Father Normand had explained to the governor and intendant in their letter how the expenditure for hospital repairs and improvements had been carried on under the impression that the formal promise of the Court that she was definitely installed for life would be ratified, those villainous plotters disregarded it as a scrap of paper and pursued their course.

Their act was performed quietly and quickly and care was taken that the proclamation should not be made public until the ships could no longer pass the barriers of ice that blocked the St. Lawrence River, when communication with France was impossible. The official document of August 27, 1747, was declared null and void. Furthermore, the hospital and its contents, with its buildings and adjoining land automatically became the property of the Administrators of the Quebec Hospital, to dispose of when and how they desired.

By this time the people of Montreal, realizing the good work that was being done for the community by the hospital nuns, rose up in wrath at the injustice of the proceedings. Another petition was drafted, signed by the people and addressed to the Bishop, the governor and the intendant. Madame d'Youville packed her bag with the precious document placed safely therein and off to Quebec she proceeded. It was useless. She was received like a usurper; her trip was utterly hopeless.

Triumphantly the opposing factions at Quebec carried out their plans as originally designed. It was their intention to sell the buildings in Montreal and what furniture they could not transfer to Quebec they would make it their business to sell to the highest bidder. Picking and choosing the finest pieces of furniture those scheming tricksters were having it removed with the greatest possible speed when a bomb was landed in their midst. Halt! A message from France, from the

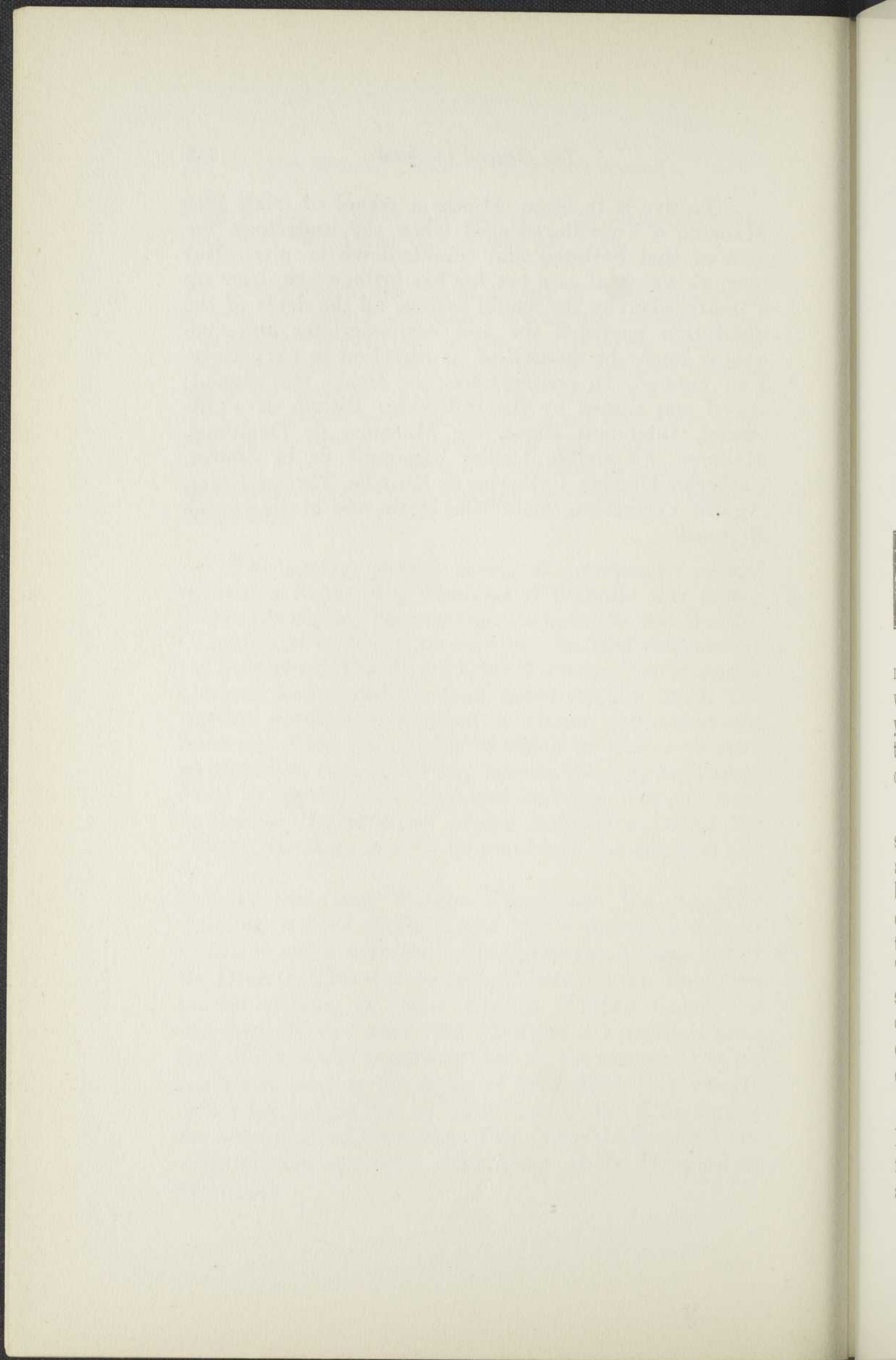
king, no less. What's this? An order to stop the execution of the ordinance of October 15, 1750.

Unknown to the grand society of functionaries in Quebec the Sulpicians talked among themselves. They recalled the transaction in the first instance when the Charon Brothers started the Hospital and they remembered the manner by which they were able to secure land. As soon as navigation opened, off to France scurried the messengers of good hope. They opened up the archives of the Sulpicians in Paris and produced documents that would fairly stagger those rascally plotters in Quebec.

The ageing, yellow sheets of parchment proved without a doubt that Madame d'Youville was acting within her rights. They brought to light the fact that M. Charon had built his hospital on the land donated by the Sulpicians. The Rev. Father Tronson, then Superior General, had signed the deed, dated April 9, 1692. The worthy gentleman inserted a clause protecting the interests of the community to which he was connected, which stated that if, for any reason, the hospital should cease to function, the land and buildings thereon were to become the property of the Sulpicians, unless the Charon Brothers saw fit to reimburse the Seminary.

At that time Father Cousturier, the Superior General, resided at Paris and was a powerful unit at Court, together with Father d'Aguesseau, Chancellor of the Diocese. This was a stroke of luck entirely unknown to the enemies in New France. Father Cousturier marched off to Court with Madame d'Youville's petition. Being a clever man he used all the eloquence at his command, putting the rights of the petitioner so clearly before his judges that on June 3, 1753, the King signed the document at Versailles. This gave Madame d'Youville, and her associates, full charge of the Hospital at Montreal.

To live is to learn. It was a school of trials that Madame d'Youville entered when she undertook the care of that battered and tumble-down hospital. But now, as watchful as a cat for her kittens, she drew up a treaty whereby she would assume all the debts of the institution provided she and her associates and successors might be assured of its direction in perpetuity. Fair enough. In consequence, the treaty was signed; sealed and signed by the following: Bishop de Pontbriand, Intendant Bigot, the Marquise de Dequesne, Madame d'Youville, Louise Thaumur de la Source, Catherine Demers, Catherine de Rinvile, Therese Laser, Agathe Veronneau, Antoinette Ralle, and Marie Joseph Bernard.



CHAPTER XXIX



"ANNALES" OF THE COMMUNITY



LIFE began to flow along normal channels for Madame d'Youville. One of the first great moves she carried out after "the storm" was to have her Community legally sponsored. On June 3, 1753, the Community was approved by Royal Charter and an official visit from an ecclesiastical authority was followed three years later when the Bishop gave his episcopal signature to the modest rule every Grey Nun makes on the day of her profession.

The name given in derision, "soeurs grises", and the simple grey habit that brought such humiliating insults and mockery seventeen years previously, were retained by the gentle directress. In the privacy of their little chapel they received their livery which today distinguishes them as "Sisters of Charity, Grey Nuns". Thus equipped, with the good-will of the people to strengthen her, the Foundress, like the Crusaders of old, marches onward triumphantly, leading her band of grey-robed sisters of charity into the deepest hovels of poverty and disease; good Samaritans to all.

We approach a sad period for New France. Poor, bleeding New France dashed to the ground, suffering and sobered. Our modern hearts throb in pity and in misery to see your buildings and barns destroyed,

to witness the vicious, licking flames eat away your precious, hard-earned homes, leaving but a few scattered, charred relics. We wring our hands in the agony of pity. The bitter tears fall for our suffering fellow-men.

Truly the Sisters of Charity were needed at this time. War and its bestiality raged around the peace-loving Sisters. No distinction was made between race, creed or occupation. Gentle hands were ever outstretched to bind up the wounded, or heal the broken-hearted. Little children especially received her motherly care and so that they might not be brought up in ignorance she opened up an orphanage to shield them from the world's wickedness and teach them religion and care for their growing bodies.

One day Mother d'Youville and a companion were out on an errand of mercy. It was a bitterly cold day in winter. The women walked quickly, because it was all they could do to keep warm. White, soft snow covered the land, it lay in heavy layers on the bare, outspreading branches of trees and bushes; it hid the hard ice that smothered River St. Pierre and formed queerly shaped mounds wherever Nature had left a stump, or a ragged rock whose nakedness seemed to offend the eye amidst the perfection of white purity that draped the countryside.

Although it was so cold, the ladies were enjoying the brisk freshness that carried health-giving ozone to their lungs. Remarking on the surrounding beauty they suddenly halted, horror-stricken! Here was another mound, but different. They peered into the little heap of snow, and could they believe it? A little baby hand, two little baby hands, held up as though pleading for mercy and a tiny, baby face. The infant's throat was ripped open, the dagger thrust of some cruel hand. Then and there Mother d'Youville registered a vow that she would open a creche for foundlings and this was the birth of the first Foundling Asylum in North America. Since then thousands of little babes, discarded little

waifs, unwanted by those responsible for them, are taken care of and cherished by the sisters, who work from dawn to dark, from year to year, serving, helping, and praying, without wordly recompense beyond their actual keep.

During the harrowing period of the Seven Years' War, the two "f's", food, fuel, alone were a problem to be solved daily, with an added load in the shape of clothing for the army of poor to be sustained. The spectre of war had left the people close to the borders of famine. Completely disorganized, the populace suffered acutely and so did the patient nuns and those in their care. Plunged into the keenest anguish, surrounded by sorrow and suffering the Foundress and her faithful sisters knew hunger and want in its stark reality.

From the Hospital records one gleans a sad picture of those terrible days. Courageous in the face of starvation the patient nuns, it is related in the "Annales", often sat down to an imaginary feast. There might be no flour. Well, what of it? They ate corn meal. But perhaps there was no corn meal. "Oh, well", the dauntless women exclaimed, "here is a fit time for fasting".

As the currency of the country depreciated the necessities of life climbed in price owing to a scarcity of every-day requirements. Flour was too high-priced to think of, especially where a charitable institution, housing penniless dependents, is concerned. A boiled egg for breakfast was a luxury, because \$3.50 per dozen was the general rule at that time. Mutton ran high, \$13.40 a pound, while lard was 40c a pound.

Coming to the rescue of the suffering Community some kindly friends anonymously left barrels of flour in the refectory, or mysteriously slipped handfuls of gold in the pockets of Mother d'Youville, who, upon discovering these welcome gifts, poured forth her soul in humble thanks, in prayers of pious thanksgiving.

Soon Mother d'Youville realized that she must start another type of work, a ward to care for the sick soldiers, a miscellaneous crowd of sufferers who appealed at the doors of the hospital craving aid in their extremity of pain and disease. All were welcome, the English red-coated officers, French and English soldiers who were broken in body and spirit, and the savage Indians whose war triumphs claimed many a scalp of the scorned white man. No distinction was made, friend or foe, all were shown the same devoted care without charge.

From the archives of the Community many a touching incident is related and many amusing anecdotes are recorded. For example, among the patients being cared for at one time were several Indians, extremely ill patients who, despite the approaching shadow of the grim reaper, death, leaped out of bed and rushed upon a wounded English officer who was entering the ward as a patient. Had not the Sisters intervened the injured soldier would have measured his length on the hospital floor, a victim, murdered in savage frenzy. Another tale is on the list, the account of the method employed to release two English officers from the hospital. All sorts of tricks had to be played on the crafty savage patients whose venom rose fiendishly upon the slightest provocation. Dressing the two men in their grey livery, hoods, veils and flowing robes, they marched the masqueraders under the noses of the cunning Indians, who never suspected anything out of order, through the sick wards and out the front door.

On May 18, 1765, the Community entered one of the saddest eras of its history, because fire broke out in one of the dwellings and spread to the hospital roof destroying the buildings and reducing to ashes the much-needed institution. A high wind fanned the flames; higher, higher they rose, crackling and belching great volumes of smoke until, having gobbled up anything there was to gobble, grim, gutted stone walls

yawned in place of the trim buildings of but a few hours previously. Instead of wringing her hands and lamenting the inspired Foundress, standing beside the smouldering ruins of her life's work, encouraged the Sisters who stood by weeping, and cheered the harassed inmates who knew not where they would lay their heads that night.

The fire left one hundred and eighteen persons houseless, bereft of all their worldly possessions, who were given a refuge in the Hotel Dieu, where all that could be done for their welfare was offered and gladly received. Comfortable beds, following a good, hot, tasty supper, brought physical relief for the moment and strength to face the coming day.

Mother d'Youville carried a heavy burden. She realized that the Hotel Dieu could not continue to care for her people indefinitely. Very soon she had the hospital barns and woodsheds fitted up to house certain groups. Many friends came forward offering material assistance which the Foundress declined, because she planned to restore a wing of the hospital at once.

There was a stumbling block. She was without the necessary funds. However, the wing had to be built and within a month the directress began the reconstruction work, working in faith of Providential assistance. By September 23rd the first group of aged, infirm men and women took up their quarters again in the renovated building. On Christmas eve all the inmates were again gathered under the hospitable roof, with the sheltering wings of their Mother Directress protecting them and bringing them peace. Of course many of their former comforts were missing, but they managed and overcame such bugbears.

It took two years to re-instate the hospital and rebuild the ruins. Collections were made in England which were assuredly welcome; this timely, financial aid coming at the crucial moment. Again the hospital ran

its daily course; again it fulfilled the promises made through the selfless prayers of a saintly lady, and today it does not falter in upholding the precepts of charity, love and poverty which their noble Foundress practised daily throughout her guileless life.

TWO HUNDRED YEARS OF SERVICE

Madame d'Youville and her helpers rented a little house to care for the sick and the poor on October 30, 1738, two hundred years ago. This was the cradle of the great Institute that carries the tidings of good hope and bodily welfare up to the Arctic Circle, into the slums of Japan and the wilds of Africa, as well as to the poor, sick and needy in Canada's great cities.

The first grey-robed sisters, missionaries to the West, said *au revoir* to their relatives at Lachine on April 24, 1844, as they stepped into flimsy, birchbark canoes and set out on their fourteen hundred mile journey, a trip that would end at St. Boniface, Manitoba. Their canoes were forty feet long and five feet wide, with a depth of two and a half feet. Two men could carry the delicate canoes, so light were they and so sensitive to the expert paddlers' skill in guiding them over the broad expanse of the turbulent waters, of great lakes, tricky rivers and whirling rapids. They passed seventy-eight rapids and waterfalls and likewise portaged just as many times. The entire voyage was covered via water.

It took fifty-eight days for the Sisters of Charity Grey Nuns to reach St. Boniface. Fifty-eight days leading the life of fur trappers and *coureurs de bois*. Fair weather, or foul, they pushed on. Drenching rain, scorching blistering sun, tempestuous storms, lightning, thunder; no matter. Forward they treked, unheeding climatic unpleasantness; deaf to thunder's earsplitting blasts which seemed to rock the very ground they trod; blind to the fierce flashes of lightening ripping the

heavens with terrific intensity; numb to the ravages of myriads of mosquitos whose importunities continued throughout the night; uncomplaining when fatigue seemed too over-powering to bear.

Unsuitably clad, because they must wear the habit of their order, their clumsy, voluminous cloth skirts with petticoats yards around added another burden, especially when the temperature rose to over the ninety zone and breezes were tempered with torrid qualities. Seared by the scorching sun rays, bitten by countless mosquitos and midges, those Christian women bore their burden with saintly smiles and never a word of complaint.

Today they fly to the Arctic and they do so with the same unselfish enthusiasm as did their predecessors. No patient is too ill for them to tend, and, no matter what type of contagious disease the patient is suffering from, those little Sisters of the Poor hover around hoping to help, anxious to serve.

When the typhus epidemic took place in Montreal in 1847 and the three fever-laden ships arrived from Ireland with their burden of sick and dying people who were unloaded on the wharf, the City fathers were up against a tough proposition. The majority of the poor creatures lay at death's door. They and those not quite so ill required immediate care. Something must be done about it. It was an emergency that had to be met without delay, because all the residents of Montreal were in danger.

Quietly the Mother Superior called the sisters to her side. She told them the contagion was fatal; she did not hide from them the seriousness of the situation. What happened? Twenty-three Sisters came forward eagerly and before a month had passed seven of those noble women entered death's portals. Could Montreal ask for better service whether offered by man or woman?

We Montreal women should look back with pride on the heroic efforts of Madame d'Youville who passed to her reward on December 23, 1771, in her seventieth year, surrounded by the sorrowing Sisters. As the shadow of death drew nearer Mother d'Youville whispered her last message to her sisters in faith. "My dear Sisters", she haltingly spoke, "be ever faithful to the duties of your vocation; always walk in the path of obedience, regularity and mortification. But, above all, let the most perfect charity reign among you."

Her remains lie buried in a vault in the crypt of the Grey Nuns Hospital on Dorchester Street, Montreal. When you step from the long corridors of the great Institution into the death chamber you enter another world. Here rows and rows of black crosses with white inscriptions and the skeleton shape of a coffin laid before each little cross, tell the story of saintly lives lived for the good of others.

In the silence of that subterranean vault there arises before you the image of the Foundress of that band of charity workers whose bones lie beneath the soil in regular rows. A strange awe steals over you in the hallowed quiet where death reigns supreme. You turn away saddened, but gladdened to remember that the spirit of the leader, Madame d'Youville, is still living.

CHAPTER XXX



MADAME DE LA TOUR THE ACADIAN HEROINE



WOMEN'S arrival in Acadia was less pious, less unselfish than that of Quebec's group of high-bred ladies. They planted their feet on the Maritimes' soil aspiring to a higher level in society and with a keen eye to the possibility of attaining a superlative degree of wealth. They arrived some years before Quebec's illustrious women, but their entry must be studied from an entirely different angle. They were undoubtedly brave, following the daring footsteps of intrepid explorers and adventurers with equal fearlessness; challenging Nature's churlish moods with astounding courage.

For some years tradesmen had cast longing eyes westward. A new world lay beyond the Atlantic's shore line and peltries of fabulous price were roaming across wilderness wastes and wild hinterlands; to venture so far was a gamble, though. One might never reach land. Queer, naked savages roamed the country. One might be murdered. Was it worth taking such a risk? It would cost a lot of money to charter a vessel with, perhaps, total loss of life and untold suffering as the toll. Look what happened to Jacques Cartier's company that time he wintered in New France. Yes, it was true, very true!

Yet, the dream of riches still held its charm and in the end curiosity and greed for gain, stimulated by the love of adventure, led Europe into footpaths strange and beautiful, where riches lurked and death played hide and seek with every newcomer from beyond the mighty seas.

A strange pattern was woven in the warp and woof of North America's background. For many years France was divided between Roman Catholic interests and Huguenot opposition. Enthusiasts on both sides led the people this way and that. Bitter hatred thrived between brothers; hatred which had its roots deeply buried in bigotry, in the culture of unreasoning, blind intolerance and its twin, fanaticism.

While de Monts planted the first permanent French colony at Port Royal (Annapolis), Nova Scotia, in 1605, and Champlain founded Quebec in 1608, England was not idle. One of her sons, a care-free, fearless adventurer, Sir Samuel Argall, sallied forth from "Merrie England" and arrived in Virginia in 1609. He was able to release several captive Englishmen held prisoner by Powhatan, a Potomac chief, by abducting his daughter, Pocahontas. Having succeeded in that most thrilling act of daring Sir Samuel marked well the assets of the French settlement at Port Royal, which he destroyed. This latter questionable act of glory happened in 1613. Let us leave the lawless adventurer heading again for Virginia and take up the threads of Nova Scotia and the story of her famed heroine, Madame de la Tour.

The generosity of both the French and English monarchs of the early 17th century was truly remarkable. Sieur de Monts received from Henry 4th of France an enormous slice of North America; and eight years later on Louis XIII presented to Madame de Guercheville and her co-workers, the Jesuits, the whole continent from Florida to the St. Lawrence. Reckless giving,

indeed, which involved England and her claims for colonization. Fool-hardy it was, very fool-hardy.

James I of England, on behalf of his realm, made over Nova Scotia and the wild forests beyond, to Sir William Alexander, to be held forever as a fief of the Scottish Crown, in 1621. An additional grant was donated to Sir William consisting of the "River and Gulf of Canada".

These royal gifts on behalf of both French and English rulers increased yearly. But the French held on to Acadia, (Nova Scotia) young Biencourt (Poutrincourt) wandering, with the remaining handful of followers, through the wild woods keeping body and soul together on roots and lichens at times and, during the more plentiful season, living on fish and game.

The young Frenchman built a fort on Cape Sable which he named, Fort Loméron. Fishing and fur-trading seemed to be his mainstay. At any rate he hung on and, if he had not, the story of Madame de la Tour would not have become part of Canada's illustrious past.

Some years previously Claude de la Tour arrived in Acadia with his son, Charles. The la Tours hailed from Normandy, France. They were descendants of a fine French family, originally called Turgis. When the famous Kirke brothers roamed the high seas they captured Claude and carried him away to England. Apparently, the change of climate and nationality did not displease widower Claude de la Tour, because the next move on his part links his name to that of the lady-in-waiting to the queen. She was a Protestant. Claude renounced his French allegiance and marrying the lady joined forces with the enemy and incidentally became the antagonist of his own son, Charles St-Etienne de la Tour.

Meanwhile Biencourt, or as he was known after his father's death, Poutrincourt, elevated Charles de la

Tour to the rank of lieutenant in his very puny army. Evidently Poutrincourt was attached to the lad, because on his death Charles de la Tour was bequeathed all the former's property in Acadia. Henceforth, Charles controlled Fort Loméron and the colony of Cape Sable.

Young Charles, although living the life of a vagabond, with practically no religion, or education, grew to revel in Nature's wild allure. Mingling as he did with his savage neighbours, he understood the fur-trading business in all its tricky phases. His was a strange background. With his own father turning Huguenot and married to an English lady of high degree, all was not harmonious, or conducive to peace of mind. But, with his success as fur-trader, he prospered well. The Indians liked his friendly personality, his winning ways and his reckless daring. Thus, under the rule of Louis XIII, Charles held away as feudal chief with unlimited powers.

Now, with regard to the English, and their claims on Acadia, (or Nova Scotia), we find Charles de la Tour receiving the title of baronet of Nova Scotia. Well, well, what a pretty kettle of fish to fry! Not too savory, one must admit. Sir William Alexander fitted out two ships, the elder de la Tour being in charge, with orders to sail immediately for Nova Scotia and take over Fort Loméron.

Imagination runs riot in trying to recall, in the smallest degree, that first meeting of father and son. Indignation on Charles' part seemed stronger than his father's concern for the welfare and future of his bush-ranging son. However, Claude de la Tour offered Charles some very tempting promotions if he would give up the fort to England and join forces with him. "I'll take no favours except from the King of France", the young patriot is quoted in reply. Pleadings on the part of Claude were fruitless. Must he take up arms against his own flesh and blood? Battle with his own

son, that brave, winsome young man who knew no laws but those of the wilderness, who culled from a rugged land sufficient wherewithal to keep the wolf from his door and who was part of that primeval forest set on the Atlantic Ocean's shoreline, where salt breeze tempered woodland fragrance, and whining winds wailed sweet lullabys unequalled by any symphonies penned by man.

Under orders from England Claude de la Tour attacked the Fort and was driven off, vanquished by his own son. Ah, bitter as gall was the dose! England would have no more of him. An outcast, a derelict on America's unfriendly shores. He was a crushed, defeated soldier of fortune. Charles is supposed to have built a house for his father beyond the confines of the Fort, with orders never to enter Fort Loméron.

The whole tale is a twisted tangle of intrigue and ambition, a race between two great nations to obtain possession of unparalleled wealth wrapped up in wilderness wastes, with brave men as puppets seeking honor for their prowess, and riches, to boot.

But we must press on, leave the squabbling partisans in their struggle to wrest from one another the gleanings of a new world, and refer to the treaty between England and France whereby the Canada snatched from under the very nose of Champlain by the Kirke brothers, was returned to France by the Treaty of St. Germain.

With the restoration of New France to the French, King Louis bestowed upon Claude de Razilly, a knight of Malta, full charge of the wilderness domain. Not only did Sieur de Razilly become the leader of New France and all its spreading mileage, but he was signally honoured by receiving from his King concessions of the River and Bay of Saint Croix, these grants of land to be his own personal property.

A black shadow now falls on the pathway along which Charles de la Tour must travel. The shadow was cast by a man who was destined to be Charles' bitterest enemy, Charles de Menou d'Aunay Charnisay.

When Razilly arrived in Port Royal in August, 1632, he brought with him three hundred men. According to agreement, England gracefully decamped. Sir William Alexander and his men packed up their bundles, their baggage and their arms and departed. They left behind them a few straggling English and Scotch settlements scattered along the coasts of Nova Scotia and Maine. Fate rubbed her hands with glee while thus addling Scotch, English and French blood, because nothing was more natural than intermarriage where settlers were few and means of travel primitive.

Razilly's right-hand man was Charnisay. A gentleman by birth, Charnisay was entrusted with many of his commander's state secrets and in his charge Razilly placed the sparsely settled English and Scotch communities. Dangerous days loomed ahead, days when two Frenchmen would parry and thrust with acid hatred. Days when a brave woman bore the brunt of their enmity and pitiless hostility.

It must be recalled here that when Claude de la Tour was given grants of land in Nova Scotia by England, it was deemed diplomatic to curry favour with Charles de la Tour, even though he was supposed to flout the English and despise them. Therefore, he too, received and apparently accepted the gift of grants of land from the hated heretics. Charles de la Tour evidently played a double game. He is severely criticized by some historians for his flexible loyalties, but changes were wrought with lightening speed in those pioneer years. Let us, with magnanimity, think only of the lovable side of his character. He had many friends who were true to him to the end. Perhaps he considered those concessions a mere bagatelle as com-

pared with the larger issues which confronted the adventurous coureur de bois.

After Charnisay's dramatic entry, Charles de la Tour found himself relieved of his claims at Cape Sable. Humph! Pretty bad! He legally possessed nothing. De la Tour hurried over to Paris and managed to wangle no mean grants of land at Cape Sable and the title of Lieut.-General for the King in Fort Loméron and its dependencies. Furthermore, he very adroitly arranged with the Company of New France to hold the post of commander at Cape Sable representing the said Company. Charles knew a lot about the fur trade. He had first-hand information which would come in very nicely when the Company required expert guidance relating to savages and peltries.

Razilly received his commission to take up his post in New France in the year 1632. His regime was short-lived, because death came three years after his abrupt entry on the north American Continent. He bequeathed his authority to his assistant and relative, Charles de Menou d'Aunay Charnisay.

The announcement of Charnisay's promotion scuttled de la Tour's dream ships. It also drove home the pernicious realization that his enemy would wield strong weapons against him. Meanwhile, Charnisay established his headquarters at Port Royal. There was no question raised as to what authority, or legal proceedings placed him in so lofty a seat, except on the part of de la Tour.

Well, storms between the two gathered in strength as time passed; dissensions and bickerings flamed red-hot. Finally, open warfare brought petty squabbles to a ghastly finish.

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CHAPTER XXXI



A BARBER'S DAUGHTER PLAYS IMPORTANT ROLE IN ACADIA'S MILITANT PAST

FRANCOISE Marie Jacqueline's father was a barber in the town of Mons, France. Many interesting men came to the shop to have their sartorial finishing touches completed by the expert fingers of the gifted barber. Sometimes the customers hailed from across the Atlantic Ocean. They talked about strange people, strange customs and a magnificent new world. Françoise Marie hovered nearby listening to the hair-raising accounts of tomahawks wielded by savages who scalped white men and strung their blood-drenched locks around their waists; gory trophies of victories over white devils. The young girl thrilled deliciously, each story burning itself into her brain, to be recounted to wide-eyed girl friends later on. Would that she were a boy, and off she would go, sailing and slaving to master the ocean's cranky moods; tramping through bush, climbing mountains, shooting rapids in little bark canoes. "Mon Dieu, here I am a girl and here I must stay".

One day a man by the name of Desjardins entered the shop. Françoise Marie noticed the man talking

very seriously with her father. They talked a long time. She was called to meet the stranger. Her father seemed delighted to introduce her to M. Desjardins who was acting as agent for a French gentleman living in New France. Françoise Marie's heart skipped a beat. New France, far away from the hum drum of every day monotony such as she experienced day after day, year in and year out. Mon Dieu, was there anything unusual in this introduction?

She listened while her father explained that M. Desjardins had been requested by Charles Saint-Etienne de la Tour, a gentleman of noble birth living in Canada, to find him a wife. A wife! "Does that mean he wants to marry me", thought the astonished girl. How often she had heard about girls being shipped to that new world where they married and became ladies and were part and parcel of life's thrilling adventures.

Sieur de la Tour had left the choice of a mate to his agent with instructions to choose a woman who would be equal to the great task of homesteading under most stupendous difficulties and one who possessed robust health rather than a fine pedigree.

Parents were accustomed to arrange marriages for their children in those days. Besides, what a disgrace to have a daughter pass through life with spinsterhood branded on her name, a perpetual reminder of her lack of womanly charm with regard to the male sex, at least. Marie Jacqueline accepted the proposal without demur. Perhaps she never realized how uncertain was the passage across the ocean and how a toss of the coin of chance would either fling her to utter destruction, or send her sky-rocketing to the dizzy heights of success, happiness and maybe fame.

Busy days followed. Trunks were packed, good-byes said, and away. Weeks of ocean travel, with seasickness, discomfort, storms, fog, windless days, when

the little sailing vessel scarcely budged along its route westward. Finally, land. First a thin, dim outline, then as they drew closer to Nova Scotia's south-western extremity, a primitive fort could be traced—Fort Loméron, standing sentinel over Port Latour, a picturesque bay named after her affianced husband.

Marie Jacqueline stepped ashore. She was greeted by her fiance, the latter frankly pleased with his agent's choice. They were married and Madame Charles de la Tour was known from this date as the devoted, faithful wife of her renowned husband, her loyalty never flinching throughout the stress and struggle of her married life. Charles, at the time of his marriage was a stalwart young man, not quite thirty years old. With youth and health, plus an harmonious home atmosphere, life promised them both a rosy-tinted future. We shall soon read the sequel, the climax and calamity resulting from the unleashed tempers of two rash men; men who were blinded by hate and ambition, by lust for power and dominion, for wealth and wide-flung estates, and who both eventually felt the brunt of bitter disappointment and shattered castles in the air.

Charles de la Tour's arch-enemy, Charnisay, had also brought out to Acadia a wife, Jeanne Molin, or Motin, to quote Parkman, daughter of the Seigneur de Courcelles. The wives of these two men lived about forty miles apart; miles of lashing waves and green sea water, and miles of enmity, too, on the part of their better halves. The feud kept up year after year for ten years, to be climaxed by murder and tragedy, death and broken hearts.

La Tour decided to move to a new stronghold at the mouth of the St. John River. And so he moved Madame de la Tour and all his household to a new and stronger fortress. Here he controlled the entrance, or gateway, to the Baie Chaleur and the highway to Quebec. The new fort stood prominently on a rocky cliff overlooking the Reversing Falls. It was a sub-

stantial building of logs, following the usual manner of protection with palisades and four bastions; a hint to trespassers to keep off, else cannon might speak and muskets break the monotonous waterfalls' soothing babbling.

This new post furthered de la Tour's hold on the yearly fur yield. Here the Indians were in the habit of landing with their bulky bundles of precious peltries. Here, also, ships from France must stop, unloading supplies from overseas, necessities, without which the French settlers would have a sorry time. In between these main events, life was a round of monotonous repetitions. Although the post was comprised of the de la Tour household and the necessary soldiers and traders who helped to uphold the strength of the Fort, Madame de la Tour had no female companions. She had her maid and her neighbour across the harbour, Madame Charnisay, and the wandering, women of forest ranges, the squaws.

Although de la Tour's family tree bore honourable traces of noble stock on its ancient branches, Charnisay's progenitors far outshone his competitor's. The latter also possessed savoir faire, a broad education, polished manners and influence in the courts of France. He was proud of the fact and delighted in playing the "gentilhomme français" if for no other reason than to embarrass the rude, forest-bred de la Tour, who cursed his enemy and his grand manners. He loathed his swashbuckling neighbour across the bay with fierce, jealous detestation, which rankled and soured his temper and fed the spirit of hostility until it sparkled into a mighty blaze.

Insofar as gaining a livelihood in New France was concerned de la Tour far outstripped his neighbour. He gleaned many more peltries from his Indian confreres and he knew the surest means of assuring for himself a goodly market each season. Charnisay detested la Tour for this success.

Charnisay brought elegance, pomp, splendor and formality to his estates at Port Royal, but at what a cost! Having sold all his assets in France, borrowed all the money he could lay his hands on, besides trading in the fur-trade to the best of his ability, his exchequer yearly shrank to an alarming degree. The three thousand moose skins, many beaver and other precious furs brought to his gates in one year did not bring in sufficient funds to meet his expenditures. His great manor house and smaller buildings, his soldiers with three hundred good appetites to appease, and his many retainers, drained his pocket-book to the dregs. Charnisay was anxious, very anxious for the future of his little realm set on the rocky shores of a great continent whose length and breadth was yet to be fathomed.

Port Royal presented a theatrical setting in those tragic yesteryears when Acadia was a budding settlement. The great log homestead, the hub as it were of seminary, chapel and lesser buildings, with Micmac and Abenaki wigwams just beyond, was protected by a fort, and cannon mounted on ships and bastions. Port Royal was enlivened by its stalwart soldiers in breastplate and helmet, their glittering armour flashing in the sun, as they marched to and fro guarding their sieur and his estates. These flashes of medieval glory were strangely contrasted by primitive Indian simplicity; naked, bronzed muscles, brilliant eagle's feathers and daubs of war-paint to scare away devils and enemies alike; men with masklike faces, inscrutable, shrewd, cruel, but friendly if treated well; true as steel.

Over all the splendor set amidst wilderness desolation the cloak of Roman Catholicism was obvious. About forty families lived in the vicinity of Port Royal. Charnisay had visited France in 1641 and at his own expense he brought with him, on his return, twenty families to populate his seigneurie. In time, twelve Capuchin friars arrived. They took up their duties in the

usual garb of sombre brown cloth, cowled hoods, sandalled feet and the cord of St. Francis tied at the waistline. They hunted savages' souls and kept the lord of the manor and all his household and retainers shrived and churched in the most approved style. But Charnisay did not love his enemy de la Tour. He coveted his rival's fur trade and his Fort La Tour, thus breaking two commandments without as much as batting an eyelash.

Like fighting cocks those two lords of the forest fed a brand of hatred to the fires of conveteousness which gathered in intensity each year. At the same time, English heretics menaced the safety of French settlers along the coastline. And the Dutch non-Catholics, too, gave food for thought, settling as they did in the Massachusetts Bay district; swarming northward, competing in the fur trade, building trading posts upon soil consecrated to God and France; all of which stirred the ire of both de la Tour and his rival. They decided to rid the country completely of the unwelcome invaders. Both men fought the enemy at different times, but upon a request from Charnisay to de la Tour for aid to rout the enemy at Penobscot he refused, not wishing to give his rival the satisfaction of being top man.

Suddenly the feud exploded into open warfare between the two leaders. It seems Charnisay heard that the English were planning to take Penobscot. He forwarded nine men, munitions and provisions to save the post for France. La Tour got wind of his plans and succeeded in seizing the men, carrying them to Fort St. Jean and, the most humiliating and exasperating trick of all, making them his slaves. At least, so said his enemies.

Four months slipped by before Charnisay heard about la Tour's unworthy act. He immediately took two small vessels and personally directed a visit to Penobscot. Reinforcing the post he sailed for Port

Royal, but en route was met by de la Tour in charge of two armed schooners. A battle ensued. Captain Jamin, de la Tour's chief officer, was killed and one of Charnisay's ships was dismasted, while de la Tour and his wife were taken prisoners and thrown into the dungeons long ago prepared for them. Charnisay chuckled and de la Tour and his wife cursed the day they met their hated host.

Poor Madame de la Tour, a guest in her neighbour's manoir, but locked up in a dungeon. Tasting the acrid venom of prison fare. How it rankled, seared to the innermost being with devilish tenacity.

But the cowled priests of St. Francis intervened. They disapproved of Frenchmen warring together like beasts and they held up the Cross to shield de la Tour and his wife from Charnisay's acts of revenge. Charles de la Tour was persuaded to sign a paper agreeing to keep peace in the future, whereupon the prisoners were released and permitted to sail back to Fort St. Jean.

Instead of each going his way, both gentlemen took their squabbles to the courts of France. Perhaps Charnisay had more influence than his enemy, at all events Charnisay won and de la Tour was issued orders to report to France to receive the King's commands. Furthermore, de la Tour's commission was revoked.

Said de la Tour to himself, "I'll ignore the whole thing. Acadia is so far away from France that the King will probably never know, or remember such orders were issued." He acted accordingly. But he reckoned without the knowledge that Charnisay's father reported the whole story to the court. Stormy clouds gathered; fierce, unleashed hatred concentrated in rebellious actions which brought calamity speeding forward to halt at the portals of Madame de la Tour's abode.

Charnisay received orders from the courts of France to seize de la Tour's forts in the name of the

King, the said forts to be placed in the charge of reliable persons. But Charnisay's strength was insufficient to carry out the commands. He did, however, present the orders to his headstrong opponent, advising him that he would supply transportation to France if he would go. De la Tour ignored the commands, consequently Charnisay reported his attitude to France.

Charles de la Tour was ordered to be sent to France as prisoner upon Charnisay's report of his conduct. Having turned rebel, de la Tour stood at bay, snarling and ready to spring at his tattling neighbour's throat. One August day in 1642 Charnisay took ship for Port St. Jean. Anchoring offshore he sent three gentlemen in a boat to present to the erring son of France the decree of the council and the king's orders. De la Tour grabbed the papers, crumpled them disdainfully in his hands and after roundly cursing his visitors made them, and the four sailors, prisoners. "Ha, ha", chuckled de la Tour, "I have them now". Vindictive Charnisay waited and waited and waited, but his men did not return. The impudent, daring vagabond, the unlettered wayfarer of the woods had tricked him again. Charnisay was furious and sailed for his Port across the bay. His men remained captives at Fort St. Jean for a year.

This preamble of Acadia's none-too-pretty story has to be fully related, else Madame de la Tour's entry on the tragic stage of life would lose its point. She was dragged into the maelstrom of hate and spite as a chip floating with the tide. Nothing she could, or would do, altered the malignity that strengthened daily between the two Frenchmen angling for supremacy on the rock-strewn shores of New France.

It must be noted that de la Tour's agent, Desjardins, the individual who chose Françoise Marie from among the belles of France as his patron's wife, sent aid to de la Tour right under the nose of justice; he chose one hundred and forty Huguenots to man the

vessel. The good ship *St. Clement*, in charge of Capt. Mournon, bearing its burden of heretics, carried in its hold large quantities of stores and ammunitions.

What the French authorities thought of the proceedings can but be imagined. Rank insubordination, topped by consummate impudence. It was preposterous! Arriving safely across the ocean with his vessel, Capt. Mournon was unable to dock at Fort St. Jean. The astute Charnisay, hearing of the approach of the *St. Clement*, met the vessel with two armed ships at the mouth of the river.

De la Tour soon learned that his enemy had played a trump card on one of his best tricks, so, with his wife, he set out in the black of night in a little boat and boarding the *St. Clement*, slipped away to Boston where he intended to ask aid of heretical Puritans.

Having defied the orders of his king, and linked up with the enemies of his church, de la Tour was not in good favour with the courts of France, or church dignitaries in either the old, or the new world. He was in a spot, most decidedly. But, always the daring son with a vagabond training he threw the dice recklessly, believing his only chance lay in the crooked path of intrigue.

At the time that de la Tour's vessel sailed into Boston harbour, the growing city was thirteen years old. A small cluster of simple wood houses, centred by the meeting house, comprised the settlement. It was not with great joy that the Puritan colony noted a strange sailing vessel entering their port flying the French flag. They had no means of defence as the garrison was away at the time, temporarily. Men and women ran from their homes to scan the ship which might mean death and destruction to the whole community. It was a nervous moment.

De la Tour landed with a few of his men and soon assured the distressed people that his mission was

purely friendly. At this point our adventurous coureurs de bois shows a duplicity of character not entirely in keeping with a straight-laced concept of integrity. He pretended to be a Puritan. Not too ardent a Papist, his role of heretic with Puritan views must have been a difficult part to play. He is quoted as attending the little meeting house on Sunday with a long, smileless face, grave, sanctimonious and pious. The crafty Frenchman satisfied his English friends that his belief in their form of faith was genuine. He marched to church linking arms with Governor Winthrop each Sabbath and listened to the pastor's tedious discourses with unfaltering attention.

With regard to Madame de la Tour's religious bearing while visiting the Bostonians, she is reported to have given entire satisfaction, not only with reference to her sincerity as a good Protestant, but as a fine, Christian woman.

The la Tours made up a good story in their appeal for aid from their Puritan neighbours. Their request was simple enough. Would Monsieur Winthrop give him sufficient aid to bring his ship safely to Fort St. Jean. Carefully considering the pros and cons of the proposition Winthrop and his magistrates decided that the arrangement could be clinched without endangering the safety of Boston's growing strength. Besides, Madame de la Tour had taken pains to emphasize the villainous behaviour of Charnisay when he seized the Plymouth trading post at Penobscot.

During their stay in Boston the de la Tours were the guests of Captain and Mrs. Edward Gibbons. It was with Gibbons, therefore that a plan was forged whereby the French-Canadian visitors were to be supplied with four vessels, bearing from four to fourteen small cannon and manned with a given number of sailors. La Tour paid for the required number of extra Englishmen necessary for the undertaking. The agreement covered a period of two months, de la Tour

to pay two hundred and fifty pounds sterling for the service. As a further guarantee of assurance Fort St. Jean and all de la Tour's Acadian property were mortgaged in favour of Gibbons and a merchant by the name of Hawkins. No fighting was to take place except in the case of attack.

Off they sailed to Fort St. Jean. It did not take Charnisay long to decide that to flit homeward was his best policy when de la Tour and his four armed vessels approached aggressively. De la Tour gave a sneering smile as he watched the fleeing ship scampering back to its harbour at Port Royal.

But Charnisay bided his time, vowing vengeance; he could afford to wait. Some months later uneasiness fell upon blustering de la Tour when he learned that his enemy had been to France and was en route homeward with formidable reinforcements. Hastening back to Boston the rebellious Frenchman sought for the second time.

This time it was not so easy. His request was refused, but a letter was sent to Charnisay by the Puritans in an effort to show him that the essence of diplomacy superseded any aggressive tendency, and with a gentle reminder that satisfaction was requested with reference to Charnisay's seizure of Penobscot and other points at issue. De la Tour recognized the repugnance on the part of his heretic friends to become involved still deeper in a squabble which would eventually terminate in a stalemate.

With keen political astuteness Charnisay sent his emissaries to Boston armed with papers bearing the great seal of France and stating that de la Tour was a rebel, with orders to arrest Monsieur Charles Saint-Etienne de la Tour and his equally rebellious wife, Madame de la Tour. The agent took special pains to explain to the Bostonians that the said lady was the leader who instigated her husband in his lawless drive. This information was definite proof to the Puritans

which side was empowered by the King of France. It was a very bad sign for de la Tour.

Madame de la Tour was not going to allow her Charles to pine away in prison if she could help it. Packing up her bags she hurried to France in the good ship *St. Clement*. But Charnisay heard about Madame's mission and took care to have his agents in France do all in their power to undermine her efforts. He succeeded well, because she was accused of being an instigator in her husband's illegal tricks and forbidden to leave the shores of France under pain of death.

Before the slow-moving fingers of the law reached out to imprison the French-born amazon she sailed for England. Here friends assisted her to return to New France. Chartering the *Gilliflower* she sailed for America accompanied by supplies badly needed at Fort St. Jean, (St. John). The commander of the ship, Captain Pilgrim, did not comply with the original arrangements to land his passenger at St. Jean. He had other plans and sauntered up the St. Lawrence, losing six months of the distressed woman's time.

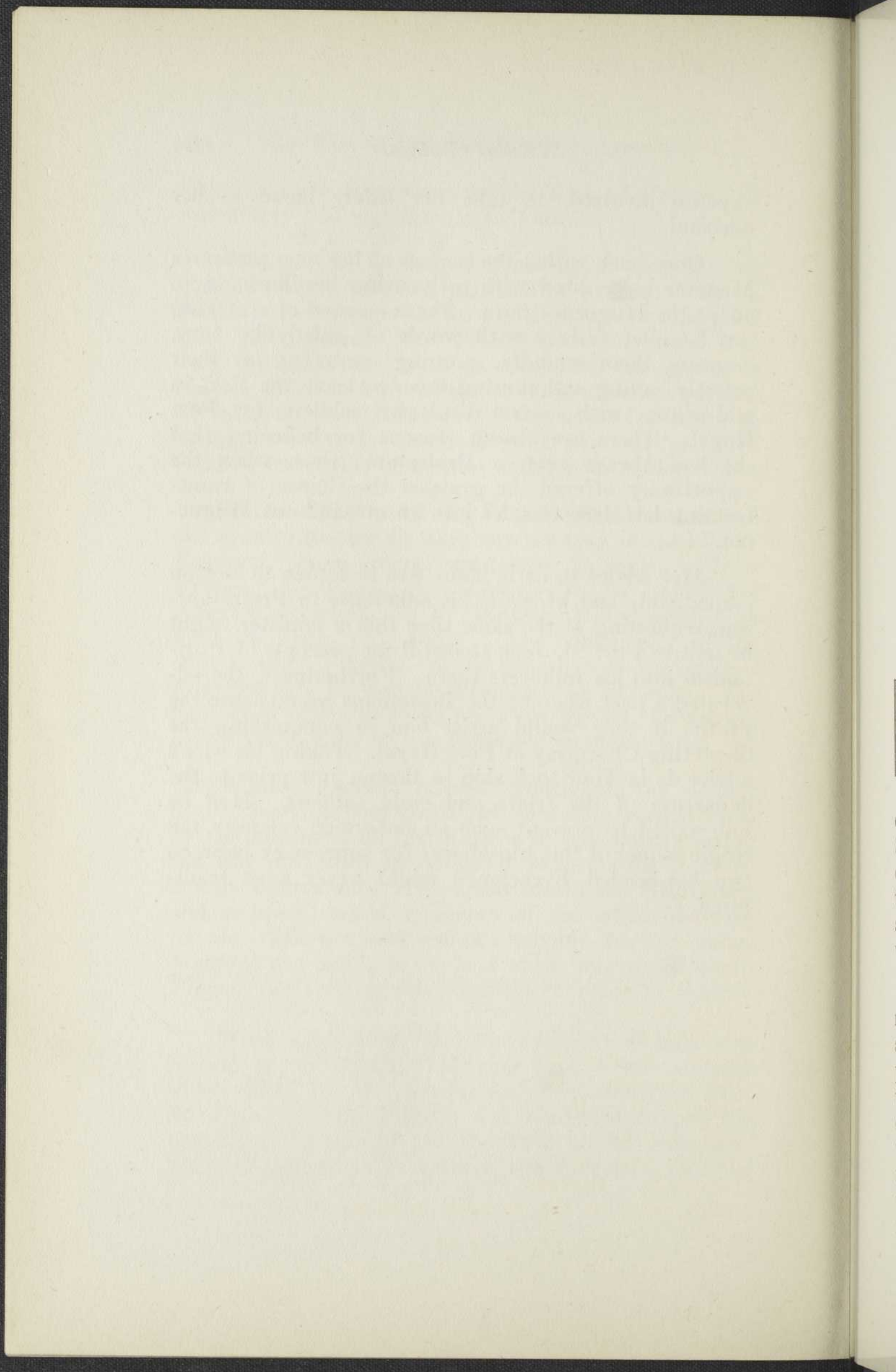
When the vessel sailed at length into the vicinity of St. Jean harbour great consternation was aroused by the approach of Charnisay who had been cruising the Bay of Fundy in search of Madame de la Tour. Boldly the warring Frenchman halted the *Gilliflower* and stepped aboard in search of the will-o'-the-wisp female. He got nothing but trouble for his pains. Madame was hiding in the hold of the ship and Captain Pilgrim declared he was English, en route to Boston.

Much against her will the exasperated lady was carried on to Boston. Having broken his contract which called for the deliverance of Madame at Fort St. Jean, Captain Pilgrim was sentenced to pay his passenger the sum of two thousand pounds damages. She was allowed to have three armed vessels, plus the

expense involved, to take her safely home to her husband.

Once back within the portals of her own preserves Madame is credited with influencing her husband to adopt the Huguenot faith. She is accused of attacking the Récollet fathers with words of unladylike fury, berating them roundly, pouring contempt on their priestly calling and causing them to leave the Fort in mid-winter, with several displeased soldiers, for Port Royal. There are strong reasons for believing that she had always been a Protestant; thus, when the opportunity offered she grasped the chance of transforming her dear Charles into an out-and-out Huguenot.

Her advice to de la Tour was to return to Boston immediately and proclaim his adherence to Protestantism, requesting at the same time that a minister might be sent to Fort St. Jean to instill the precepts of Puritanism into his followers there. Furthermore, she advocated a pact whereby the Bostonians would share the profits if they would assist him in vanquishing the blustering Charnisay at Port Royal. Taking his wife's advice de la Tour took ship to Boston just prior to the departure of the friars and eight soldiers. Had he but waited to prevent such an unforeseen calamity the tragic sequel of this tug-of-war for supremacy between two hot-headed Frenchmen might never have transpired.



CHAPTER XXXII



MADAME DE LA TOUR BECOMES VICTIM AND MARTYR IN THE FINAL BATTLE WITH CHARLES DE MENOU D'AUNAY CHARNISAY

WHEN the insulted Recollet friars and their companions, the eight disgruntled soldiers, put out to sea in a not too seaworthy ship loaned by Sieur de la Tour, who most likely hoped they would sink to the bottom of the bay, they bore in their hearts a great injury. Struggling to reach Port Royal in a rotten old craft did not salve their tempers, or lessen the desire to pour their grievances into Charnisay's sharp ears. They told a whole lot that would have been better unsaid, at least with regard to the de la Tour's future welfare.

Among other choice scraps of information Charnisay heard that Madame de la Tour remained alone at Fort St. Jean with only fifty soldiers to guard the place. A strategist of no mean calibre, he realized the advantage. How the de la Tours could have blundered so stupidly will ever remain a mystery. Anyone with a grain of sense could have foreseen that the monks were not going to shield heretically-minded turncoats. Perhaps they, the de la Tours, put too much trust in the decayed qualities of an old ship,

never believing it possible to reach Port Royal in such an insecure craft.

Charnisay immediately got busy. Gathering his men for this last and most heinous act of vengeance, he embarked in an armed ship and crossed the bay, anchoring in a small harbour not far from Fort St. Jean. His first move was an attempt to cull more deserters from the armed camp of his enemy. Père André, a Récollet friar, was the bait used in this case. He failed to influence even one of Madame's faithful guardsmen.

For two months the ships lay at anchor just beyond the Fort. With what anxiety Madame scanned the distance for news from her Charles can be imagined. Day followed day, still no news; and the menacing ships of Charnisay, reinforced by another vessel and a pinnace, brought grave concern to the inmates of the Fort. They could not see their enemy seizing the little merchant vessel *de la Tour* had sent from Boston with supplies and a message to his wife that he would be home in a month's time. Nor did she know that Charnisay had seized the man Crafton, and all aboard his ship and placed them on an island to fume and fret. Later on, giving them a leaky sail-boat, Charnisay allowed the Bostonians to take their chance of making the home run, or otherwise.

Suspense at last culminated in action. Boom, boom went the great guns of Chevalier Charnisay, but his audacity was soon turned into disaster. Madame spat deadly fire from her bastions. She might be a lone woman in charge of a handful of men, but she was determined to hold her position to the last ditch. Her enemy decamped with twenty dead and thirteen wounded men. Madame drew a breath of relief as she watched her humiliated antagonists retire. But it was a short respite; an interval of ill omen.

The final attack lasted three days and three nights. Hoping hourly that Charles would arrive with help,

heartening her soldiers, cheering the other two women in the Fort and comforting her own little boy, who was scarcely more than a baby, Madame de la Tour held on. Her men fought desperately. The enemy suffered heavy losses, but their efforts on the fourth day brought a brave woman to her knees and tarnished the name of Chevalier Charnisay forever.

How much longer she could have held on is a question, but she was betrayed by one of her own soldiers, a Swiss sentry who accepted a bribe from Charnisay. His treachery led to the capture of Fort St. Jean.

According to the terms of surrender Charnisay agreed to spare all within the Fort, to liberate them and do no further acts of violence. How he hanged all but one of the men whom he appointed as executioner of his comrades; how he forced the lady of the Fort to witness the diabolical act has been tabulated on Canada's records as one of the most faithless, dastardly tricks ever instanced in the chronicles of New France.

It seems like desecration to lay bare the tragedy of a trusting woman whose heart was broken by a felon act and whose misery in witnessing her faithful guardsmen's anguished cries of death brought her, too, to the gates of Paradise.

CHARNISAY RULES THE FORT

Having buried the dead, Charnisay put his men to clean up and repair the damaged fort. He lost no time in performing the work. De la Tour might arrive any day. But he did not. Daily Madame searched the bay, but no Charles appeared. She is accused of trying to write to her husband through the aid of an

Indian. Who could blame her if she did? Then, thrust away, locked up to brood over the sadness and crime which overwhelmed her, Marie Jacqueline pined to death. Never again did she hear the beloved voice of her Charles; the music of winds from the forest and ocean; the tang of salty brine and spring buds just ready to burst into life: all, all had lost their magnetic charm. A broken heart cannot easily be mended, nor a crushed spirit regain its buoyancy. Within three weeks she died. Where her captor buried her remains is uncertain, but authorities believe her grave must be within the limits of the City of Saint John.

Now Charnisay ruled Fort St. Jean. It took many years to gain his objective. He had his revenge. Was it a sweet memory, that last crime and the record of his broken pact? We wonder. He did, it is true, receive commendation from King Louis XIV. But empty phrases of praise did not fill an impoverished purse, and added acreage extending from St. Lawrence to Virginia bestowed upon him by the king was a farce, a vain effort to express applause. But the fur trade was his, now that de la Tour was silenced. He prospered, he grew richer each year, but across his pathway advances the shadow of disaster, just as a few years previously de la Tour's successes were shadowed by approaching doom. On May 24th, 1650, five years after he took Fort St. Jean, the Chevalier was accidentally drowned while canoeing on the bay at Port Royal. He died of exposure, really, sitting with his valet on the up-turned canoe for hours. A violent storm swept the bay, overturning the canoe. In May while winter's ice still lingers, its chilling presence cooling spring's freshets, it is in no way conducive to safety for swimmers. Charnisay and his companion, sitting astride the overturned canoe, waist high in water for nearly two hours, numbed with cold, watched night's darkness enfold them. The Chevalier held on as long as his strength permitted. Then, little by little his lifeless fingers refused to cling to the canoe. Slowly he

slipped away into eternity. He died from cold, not from drowning. The lord of the Manoir, of Port Royal, of Fort St. Jean and the mighty forests stretching north and south hundreds of miles, was no more.

Fate had tricked him, routing him from the great estates he had striven so desperately to attain, had cheated and lied for and had won ruthlessly from a woman. His valet clung, in fearful anticipation, to the slippery seat while the storm raged, lashing the waves to foamy fury. Rescued in an exhausted condition by some Indians he was brought back to Annapolis a messenger of death, the only man who witnessed the proud Charles de Menou d'Aunay Charnisay's last struggle, who watched the frenzied Chevalier lose his hold on earthly possessions and pass beyond the ken of man.



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CHAPTER XXXIII



LA TOUR RECLAIMS TO HIS FORT

ND what had Charles St-Etienne de la Tour been doing during those five interminable years of Charnisay's occupation of Fort St. Jean? Ah, the charm of living had lost its savour; ambition crumpled and failed him without the inspiring Marie to light the uncertainty of dark, untrodden pathways, and to infuse courage when despair wellnigh overwhelmed; when the burden seemed more than humanly possible to bear.

Back to his old haunts he plunged, seeking the healing of the wilderness in its primitive, unsullied beauty. He needed this respite. Yes, he needed it badly to heal his wounds. Like a hunted beast he trailed old, beloved pathways. Were his dreams centred on happier days with Marie at his side, or did his subconscious mind grope for ways of revenge upon his conquering rival? Who can tell! But wander he did in that lonely, echoing forest, bereft of Marie, of his Fort and, merciless reminder, of his friends, too.

Charles had lost his friends in Boston. They had accepted Charnisay's word that he was a turncoat, an adventurer, a man of no account. Like acid on an

open wound such a turn of fortune seared its stinging, fantastic reality into the very kernel of his being. Over and over he must have visualized Marie's last days, pining to death, sorrowing with a broken heart. *Mon Dieu, mon Dieu*, could there ever again return to him the healing balm offered by Time to ease the pain of such tragic scenes! Slowly, almost unconsciously a veil formed, thin as gossamer at first, then more substantial, until at last the fierceness of its power faded; Charles faced life again in a more normal state of mind, accepting the inevitable, plodding onward in monotonous, heavy-footed patience.

Suddenly, the sunrise of hope dawned again on de la Tour's chequered career. Friends of the forest, his savage comrades, must have relayed the news that Chevalier Charnisay was dead. La Tour, aroused at last from the coma of despair, saw hope flickering and a possibility of regaining his Fort through his agents in France.

Less than a year had passed since the death of Charnisay when France made a complete turn-about and heaped praise and honours upon the head of the man she had hounded as a desperate outlaw. Charles St-Etienne de la Tour was reinstated in February, 1651, given the title of governor and lieutenant-general of New France. His agents had certainly worked well in his behalf.

With fortune beaming benignly on him Charles returned to his Fort and prevailed upon Madame de Charnisay to return his rightful property to him. The widow had eight children, all minors, to fend for. Through knavery of Le Borgne, a merchant from Rochelle, and former agent of her deceased husband, the Port Royal property was claimed by the unscrupulous trickster. A not too clever business woman, at best, and tormented by de la Tour for still further inroads on property and fur trade rights, Madame de Charnisay, a widow of three years' standing, joined

her husband's prime enemy in marriage on February 24th, 1653.

Of all the trump cards played by fate this last was perhaps the most crude, inconceivable and amazing. Madame tried to ward off usurpers, trespassers threatening to play sleight-of-hand tricks with her children's rights. But she is reported to have failed pitifully. When she and de la Tour returned to Fort St. Jean as man and wife the four boys and four girls of her former husband could not have welcomed the new step-father with open arms. They eventually sought refuge in France, the boys joining Louis XIV. army, in which all were killed, and three at least of the girls entering the convent as nuns. Charnisay's castle of dream-cards crumpled in a bewildering mass; the great name he planned to found in Acadia was swept away forever.

Undoubtedly Charles de la Tour married his enemy's widow for business reasons. In the game of chance played so recklessly for years by the vagabond, Charles, he probably saw no other means of regaining his property than through marriage with Widow Charnisay. If ever a farce were written in words the farce of those two bound by the holy bonds of matrimony by far excels any fiction-created drama of life. It serves to heighten the glory of Françoise Marie and her faithfulness, her spirited daring and sorrow-laden soul.

That Charles remained faithful at heart to his stout-hearted wife is the hope we advance, and that he took no joy in the meekness of his enemy's widow is the picture we would pen, so that as lovers, true to eternity, we may send Charles St-Etienne de la Tour and Françoise Marie, hand in hand along the great pathway that winds beyond the gates of Paradise.

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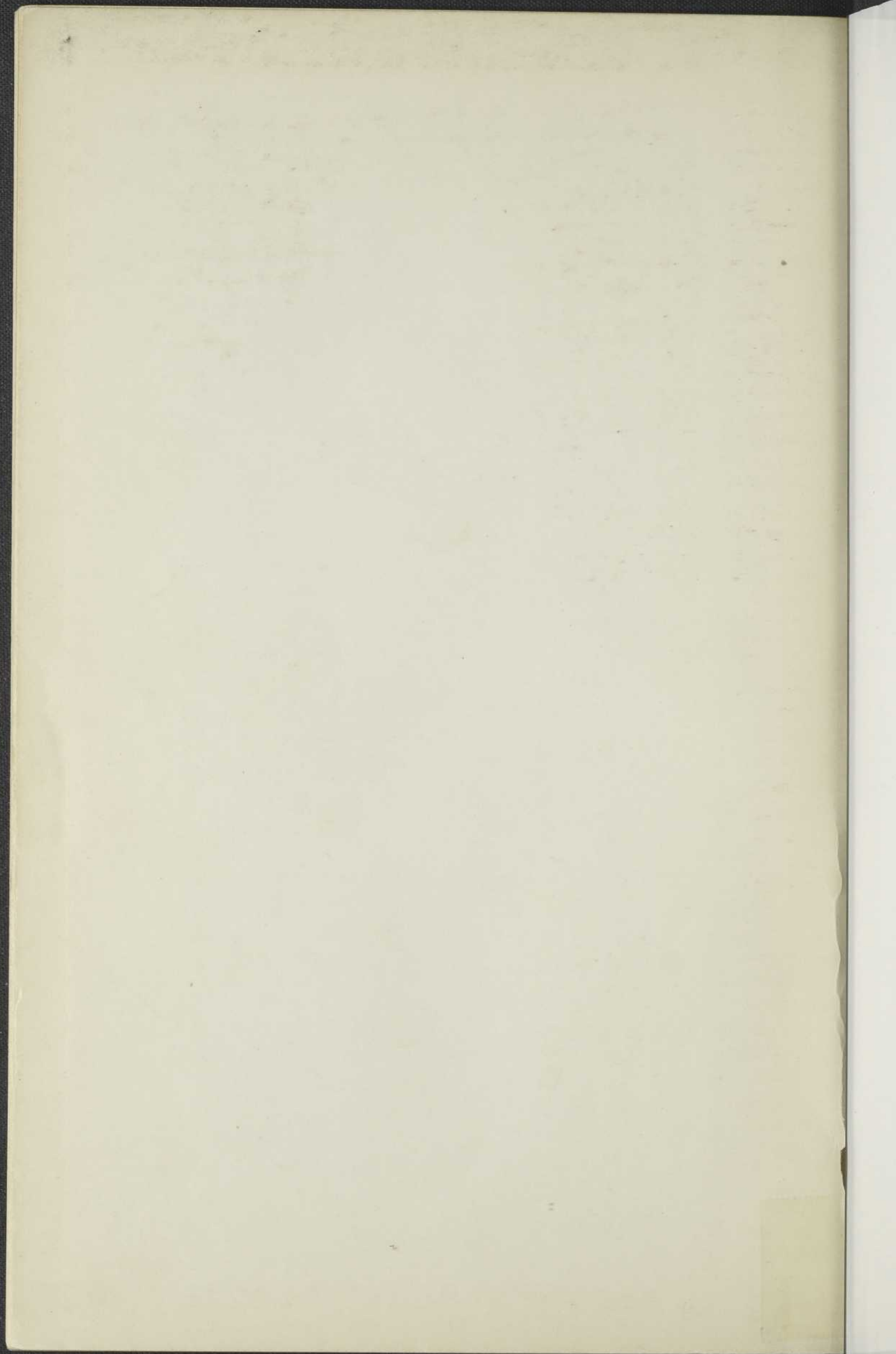
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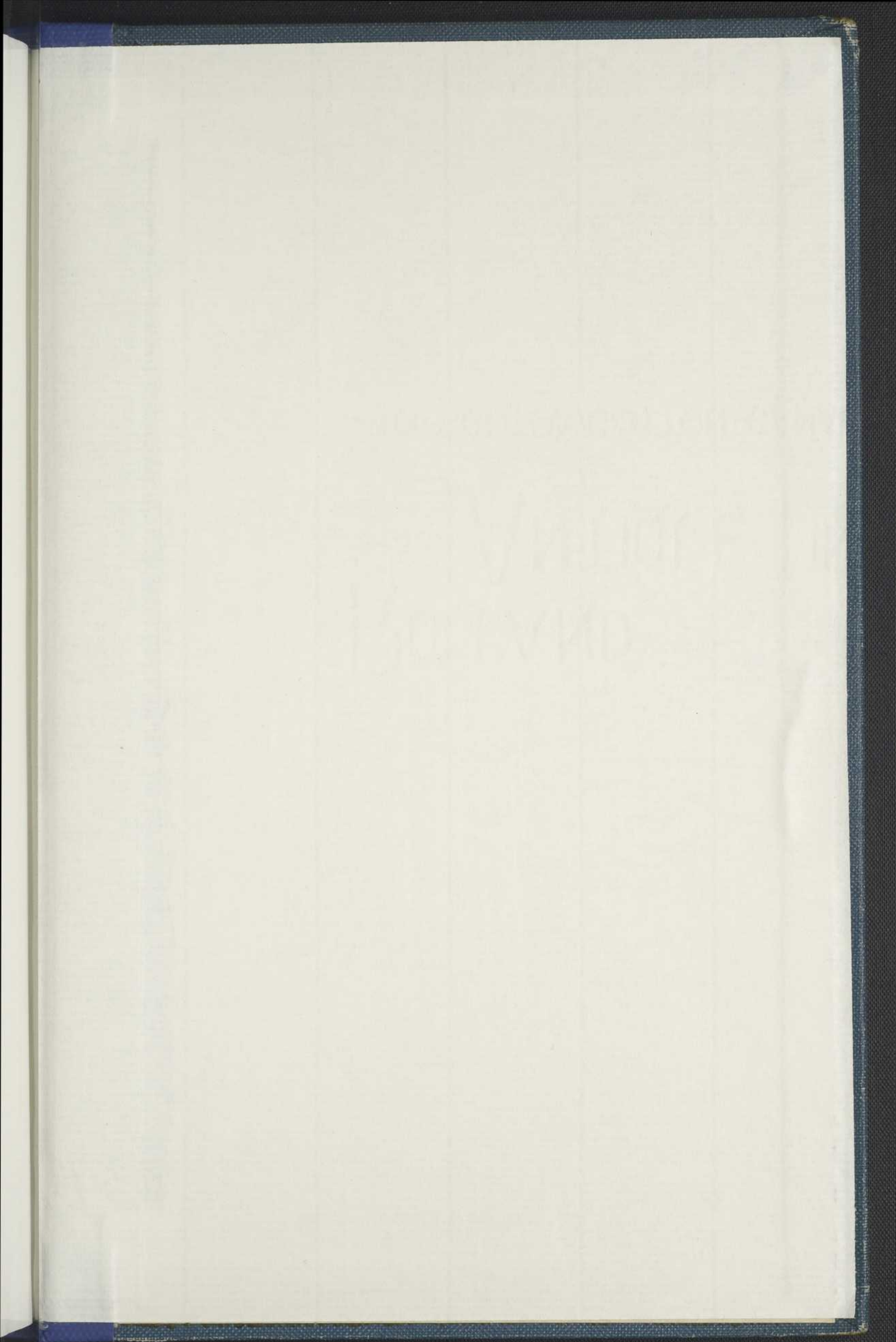
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