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## ABSTRACT

Intended to help readers develop an appreciation of the contributions of Franco-Americans to the cultural heritage of the United States, this book, the second of six volumes, presents 15 readings representing many perspectives--from the historical to the sociological--illustrating the thinking and feelings of those in the forefront of Franco-American studies. This volume focuses on Franco-Americans in western and midwestern United States. The following articles are presented: "French Explorers and Settlers in Northern California, 1769-1870" (William George Reese); "The Church in Colonial America 1492-1790" (John Tracy Ellis); "The Huguenots of Colonial South Carolina" (Arthur Henry Hirsch); "Le Canadien-Francais et L'Amerindien" ("The French-Canadian and the American Indian," Charles Noyes); "Belle-Riviere, Griffon et Creve-Coeur: La Tenace Poursuite d'un Reve Imperial" ("Beautiful River, Griffin and Heartbreak: The Tenacious Pursuit of an Imperial Dream," M. Helene Pauly); "De Normandie en Mongolie? Nicolet chez les Etranges Winebagos" ("From Normandy to Mongolia? Nicolet in the Land of the Strange Winebagos," M. Helene Pauly); "The Fur Trade in Wisconsin" (Larry Gara); "The French Residents of Wisconsin" (Louise Phelps Kellogg); "Minnesota--A History of the State" (Theodore C. Blegen); "The Historical Geography of Detroit" (Almon Ernest Parkins); "The Story of Detroit" (George B. Catlin); "Annals of St. Louis in its Early Days under the French and Spanish Dominations" (Frederic L. Billon); "Gulf Coast Country" (Hodding Carter and Anthony Ragusin); "Sketches of Early Texas and Louisiana" (Frederic Gaillardet); and "Four Cents an Acre" (Georges Oudard). (LH)

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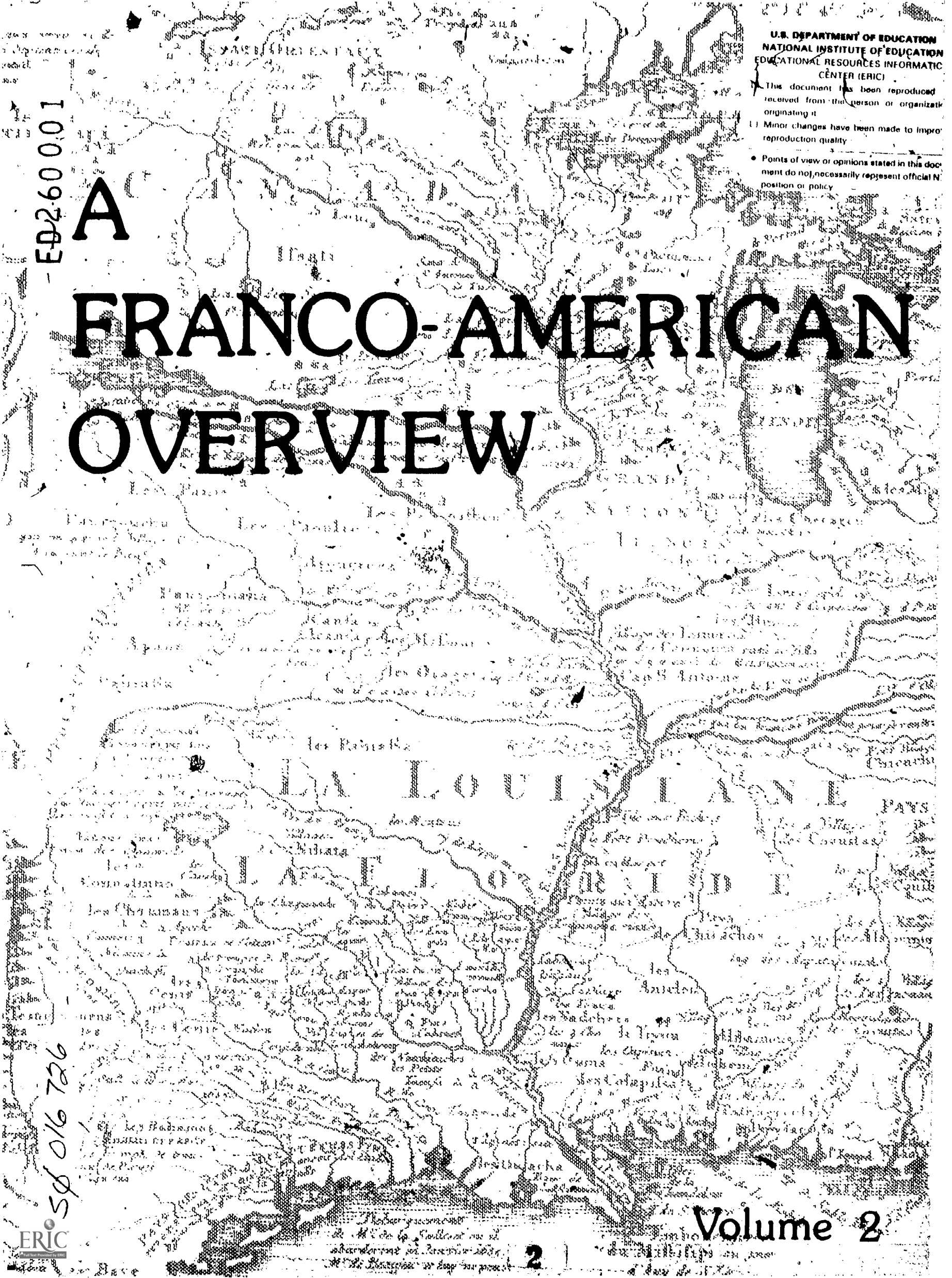
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# A FRANCO-AMERICAN OVERVIEW



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Volume 2

# A FRANCO-AMERICAN OVERVIEW

Volume 2

## MIDWEST AND WEST

*Compiled by: André Martin*

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## INTRODUCTION

When asked by the National Materials Development Center's Director Dr. Normand Dubé, to collect material for inclusion in a projected second volume of FRANCO-AMERICAN OVERVIEW, I was hesitant as I have met few Franco-Americans on the West Coast. Even fewer spoke some form of French or had an inkling of the French heritage of the United States. Even the New England Franco-American is an unknown ethnic group to most Americans. This is in spite of the fact that our country's map is amply sprinkled with French place names and references from Eau Claire, Wisconsin to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and Frenchman Bay, Maine to French Camp, California. Most Americans think of the French in North America as a small enclave in far-off Eastern Canada, or as the members of a rather unusual group living in or near New Orleans. (They may have been required to read *Evangéline* and even realize that these groups are related.) Few were aware that the eastern Canadian enclave of 6,000,000 people (28% of the Canadian population in 1974) and their millions of cousins in the remainder of Canada and in the United States are the descendants of some 70,000 French-Canadians who lived in New France in 1760. New France, at that time, included most of North America from Hudson Bay to the Gulf of Mexico, and from the Appalachians to the Rockies, except for Florida and the small English colonies with their 1,610,000 inhabitants. France's colonial rights to, and control over, this vast territory

was generally recognized throughout Europe during this period.

France effectively controlled most of North America for approximately 150 years (1608-1780). This is readily understandable when one remembers that as early as 1504 Bretons and Normands undertook yearly fishing expeditions to Newfoundland, that as a result of Verrazzano's explorations along the Atlantic Coast in the 1520's, France claimed North America, that a few years later the French were established on Manhattan Island and at Albany to trade with the Indians for their furs, and that with the establishment of a colony at Québec in 1608 the French controlled the Saint Lawrence River. This river by itself penetrates 2,400 miles inland prior to arriving at the Great Lakes. These are linked to the Mississippi River through the Illinois River. From the Mississippi one can go up the Missouri into Montana, up the Platte (Flat) River into Wyoming, and up the Arkansas (Aux Arcs) to Colorado. These river roads and their demanding portages became well known to the French explorers, trappers, and adventurers as they and their various Indian allies sought to enrich themselves through trade. Control of these river routes was of great importance to the penetration of the vast North American continent, and France controlled them until the 1760's when, as a by-product of European strife, they passed into English and Spanish hands.

These original Canadians were not the only French colonists to leave their mark on the United States. In 1620 French refugees arrived on the Mayflower: for example, William and Priscilla Mullins (Moline), and the John Alden (Jean Alton) who was asked to be the go-between when Miles Standish sought Priscilla Mullins' hand in marriage. In fact, more than 100,000 French Huguenots received permission to establish themselves in the English colonies. They founded cities (e.g. Nouvelle Avesne which became New Amsterdam and, in 1664, New York City) or settled among the people of Massachusetts, New York, Virginia and South Carolina. In 1755 thousands of Acadians were forcibly removed from Acadia (Nova Scotia) and resettled among the Louisiana «Creole», the name given by France to the children born in its American colonies.

To illustrate this French movement during the early years of our history, I have selected a number of articles, extracts from longer works, and unpublished essays which highlight these activities of our French and Canadian ancestors who, with limited re-

sources, have left a permanent imprint on the United States. The selections, with a few exceptions, intentionally limit themselves to French influences along the Mississippi in the hope that they will bring an added dimension to the FRANCO-AMERICAN OVERVIEW series and make the reader aware of French roles in the development of North America. It is also hoped that through these readings individuals will become aware that the French influences in America reach far beyond the confines of the Province of Québec, New England, and Louisiana. The French colonist and his children and grandchildren also shed blood and tears, sought food and shelter, explored and settled, dreamed and hoped, and to a great extent led in the western movement in the development of the United States and Canada.

I appreciate the opportunity to present the following collection of readings, particularly as I am not a historian of Franco-Americana. I am especially indebted to Dr. Dubé for having provided the incentive and opportunity for me to have perused the literature and present these samples to you.

— André Martin

# FRENCH EXPLORERS AND SETTLERS IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA 1769-

by William George Reese

## INTRODUCTION

Among the immigrants to California, the French have been an important national group. They have contributed to the economic development of Northern California and have played a role in the shaping of the cultural landscape of Northern California. Frenchmen first came to California in great numbers during the Gold Rush.

The discovery of gold at Coloma by James Marshall on January 24, 1848 led to the period of the so-called «California Gold Rush» which can be roughly included between 1848 and 1850. This period was marked in France by economic difficulties, civil strife, and revolutions.

On February 24, 1848, the government of Louis Philippe fell, and turmoil reigned in Paris, the scene of riots, street fighting, and political intrigues. The discovery of gold at Coloma, California, was at first largely ignored in France because of political and economic problems. Louis Blanc, a member of the provisional government, attempted to relieve the depression by establishing national workshops; however, his socialistic endeavors helped but little.

In June 1848, the provisional government used the army, the «*Garde Mobile*»

and the «*Garde Républicaine*» to suppress the rebellious unemployed in Paris. Frenchmen were unemployed, impoverished, and disgusted. The 1848 revolution had halted the economy of France. Thousands of workers, exasperated by misery, were the prey of utopians and intriguers, who incited them to bloody fights in the streets of Paris. A crowd of minor officials and of white collar workers, suspended by the different governments which had succeeded themselves, increased the ranks of the discontented and of the unfortunate. Faith in the present had been annihilated and the future appeared even gloomier.

Rioting culminated in the frightful days of June 22, 23, 24, and 25. When order was finally re-established, the deaths amounted to 12,000 and 25,000 people had been arrested. It was soon realized however that prison sentence or even the use of force was not a real solution to the situation, and many began to look toward a well-directed emigration to the French colonies or even to other areas of the world as a partial solution.

A well-organized system of emigration would offer many advantages: first of all, it would enable the government to get rid of the most troublesome elements in the population, which would help solve part of the political and economic problems. It was also



a question affecting national interests. All the countries of Europe, particularly Germany and Britain, were sending large numbers of emigrants to California. Some of the gold dug out of the mining fields would find its way to Europe. California, which did not yet have a stable government, was still regarded as belonging to all comers or «*Terra omnium*». France could not hesitate in the participation of the division of the booty. Miners in California, while making a fortune for themselves, would at the same time work for their own country.

One had to wait until November 13, 1848, to find the first noteworthy mention of the Gold Rush in the French press. It was presented with obvious reservations:

The current of emigration which impels a multitude of American citizens towards the newly acquired territory of California does not slacken. It seems that mineral deposits of great value have been discovered; everyone speaks of gold mines, of fabulous riches awaiting only the hands of the miners to be picked up. Whether true or false, exaggerated or not, these rumors seem to have powerfully aroused popular imagination.

At first, however, the news received little attention since people in France were more concerned with their up-coming election and which resulted in making Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, President of the Republic on December 20, 1848. By the end of the year, Paris was getting back to normalcy. At the same time, doubts about the gold discoveries in California were dispelled, and the Gold Rush began to attract widespread attention. Poorer middle-class men and the unemployed office-holders of the previous administrations were listening intently to the reports concerning the wealth to be won in California.

Governor Richard Barnes Mason's report dated from Monterey, August 17, telling of his visit to Fort Sutter and the Mormon Diggings, augmented French interest, which was followed by the report of Robert Patterson, the director of the Mint of the United States, dated December 11 and certifying to the high quality of California gold.

Articles on California, its products, and its history were widely published. For example, the letters and diary of Jacques Antoine Moerenhout, the French consul at Monterey, gave a remarkably accurate and full account of the discovery and early days of the Gold Rush in California. Moerenhout reported everything; workings, activities of Frenchmen, deposits, yield, prospects. Parts of Moerenhout's letters appeared in the French press. Likewise giving publicity to California were the French newspapers: «*Le Moniteur, Le Constitutionnel, Le Siècle, Journal du Havre, La Presse, Le Temps, L'Estafette, etc.*...» Hypolyte Ferry published an excellent account which found an extensive audience. Articles appeared in the «*Revue des Deux Mondes, Annales des Voyages, L'Illustration*» and other French periodicals. Many longer accounts were written, some of which will be discussed in the following chapter.

It was therefore around 1849 that the first important group of French immigrants arrived. In 1851, several companies and lotteries were organized in Paris for the transportation of French immigrants to California. California, prior to 1849, had but a handful of Frenchmen but in less than one year the French population attained several hundred. The French colony then began to evolve and to grow in its significance. The government of France was interested in California for commercial reasons and because it had a strong interest in building up a «new empire».

One of the major contributions of the French to the knowledge of Northern California was the detailed accounts of certain areas by some of their explorers which can be of immense help to an historical geographer attempting to reconstruct a particular landscape. This thesis will evaluate some of the influences the French have had on the environment on a topical basis, emphasizing some of their strengths and other significant factors. The focus will be an historical one, since it deals with the geographical study of a period in the past, 1769-1870. This thesis will not attempt to delineate the boundaries between history and geography, but will be primarily concerned with man as an agent of geographical change.

The genesis for this thesis was suggested by the fact that, at the time of the Gold Rush, there was a sizeable French community in California. Before the Gold Rush there had been only about a dozen Frenchmen in California. However, by 1851, according to Lévy, there were close to 20,000 Frenchmen in California. These immigrants were scattered among three mining centers of the interior and in the San Jose-Santa Clara area. The largest number of French were located in the mines of the north which were situated along the Yuba and Feather rivers. It has been estimated that 8,000 Frenchmen were then present in this region. The most important center was Marysville. In the mining region of Calaveras County, which had as a center «*Les Fourcades*», later known as Mokelumne Hill, there were more than 6,000 Frenchmen. There were also 4,000 Frenchmen dispersed among the gold mines along the Mariposa and Merced rivers. San Jose, which was then the capital of California had more than 1,000 Frenchmen if one included the Santa Clara Valley. One must note however, that there are large discrepancies between various sources as regards the number of French during that period. For example, according

to the 1850 Census, notoriously deficient in California, there were only 1,546 Frenchmen in California. In 1852, an article in the *Daily Alta* stated that there could not be more than 15,000 Frenchmen in California. On the other hand, Guillaume Patrice Dillon, the French Consul, maintained that in 1850 there were 25,000 Frenchmen in the state. An article of the *Evening Picayune* of November 27, 1850 stated that the French population was about one-sixteenth of the state population. St-Amant, who visited California in 1853 stated that there were from 25,000 to 30,000 Frenchmen. It can be stated, however, with fair assurance, that from a group of about a dozen or so Frenchmen who lived in California prior to 1849, the French population increased to nearly 30,000 by the end of 1853.

Some French interest in California had been evident long before 1848, as can be seen in the many detailed accounts of French explorers such as the ones of La Pérouse, Du Mofras, Bernard Duhaut-Cilly, and Du Petit-Thouars as will be discussed in the next chapter. They have all greatly contributed to our knowledge of historical geography by presenting accurate and detailed accounts of contemporary conditions in California, surpassing both the English and the Spanish. Those French explorers examined California's climate, its products, its biogeography, its inhabitants, its economy, and its history.

Raoul H. Blanquié stated that the French who came to California during the Gold Rush probably comprised the most important contingent among the foreign pioneers. He asserted that among them were to be found representatives of the various liberal professions, artists, industrialists, financiers, and agriculturalists.

Since 1844, the French government was represented by a vice-consul at Monterey,



then the capital of California. In 1850, a French theater was opened and in 1851, a French newspaper was published, soon to be followed by many others. As early as 1850, San Francisco had French dry goods stores, French bakeries, French restaurants, and French hotels and gambling houses. The French colony was therefore well-established in San Francisco with its own newspapers, schools, a church, and a hospital. A French neighborhood soon evolved on both sides of Clay Street between Kearny and Montgomery, where there were about 20 French shops including restaurants, hotels, barbershops, clothing stores, and even a bank.

What has been the influence of the French on the landscape of Northern California? What were some of their contributions? What have they meant for present day California? These are the basic questions which will be explored in this thesis. It is evident that no single individual trained in one discipline, namely geography, can purport to unravel all the intricate webs of history, sociology, psychology, economics, politics, and geography which should all be scrutinized to really determine the full impact of the French on Northern California. The primary goal will be to delineate some of the major influences and contributions relevant to geography, emphasizing spatial as well as historical development. It will include the study of location, distribution, and economic significance. Some of the applicable agricultural, extractive, distributive, service, manufacturing, and industrial functions will also be examined. It is hoped that this thesis will encourage additional and more in-depth studies and that it will prove helpful to other persons.

#### LANDSCAPE OBSERVATIONS OF FRENCH EXPLORERS IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

The period of greatest activity of ex-

ploration and settlement along the Pacific Coast North of Mexico was from about the middle of the Eighteenth to the middle of the Nineteenth Century. Most of the explorations were conducted by the Spanish, the French, and the English. Both the French and the English have produced many interesting and instructive narratives of their voyages along the coast of California. The English and French travellers were the most prominent and their results were the most far-reaching. This chapter will stress some of the contributions to the geographic knowledge of Northern California by the French explorers, who in visiting and writing of Northern California easily surpassed the English. These early French explorations were truly scientific expeditions and could be compared to small floating academies of science since usually each exploring party consisted of some of the best contemporary scientists. In general, each French exploring party was comprised of biologists, botanists, physicists, geologists, historians, anthropologists, physicians, and so on. Most assuredly, it is partially for this reason that the French accounts of Northern California between 1769 and 1850 far excelled those of any other nation including those of England. This fact might also be partly due because France at the time was on most friendly and intimate relations with Spain while England was more or less at odds with Spain and Mexico on the Pacific Coast. It will be demonstrated that we owe the larger part of our knowledge of those days, especially of the first half of the Nineteenth Century to such explorers as Comte de La Pérouse, A. Duhaut-Cilly, Laplace, Abel Aubert du Petit-Thouars, Roquefeuil, Dufлот de Mofras, Benard de Russailh, Édouard Auger, Pierre Garnier, Pierre Charles de Saint-Amant, Cyprien Combiér, Ernest Frignet, and Louis Simonin.

The object of this chapter will simply be to present to the reader the extremely in-

formative material available in the numerous and extensive accounts of the French explorers in Northern California. This chapter is not meant to be an attempt to discuss each account in detail but merely to acquaint the reader with the existence of these accounts and to illustrate their usefulness and wealth. The author is aware of the need for further thorough study to truly determine the perception of the landscape of Northern California by the French, for they most surely perceived and interpreted the biophysical setting of this region somewhat differently than other nationals. The term landscape is utilized to indicate land shape in which the process of shaping was not simply physical. Landscape is an area made up of distinct associations of forms, both physical and cultural. Every landscape has individuality as well as relation to other landscapes. A landscape is in continuous process of development or dissolution. Further study of these accounts is also necessary to discuss such a crucial theme in geography as the influence of man on the landscape.

These French accounts are certainly very helpful in determining how the landscape of Northern California has been modified by human action or in attempting to define the cultural landscape. These accounts are the only ones detailed enough to allow the historical geographer to establish a clearer picture of exactly how the cultural landscape evolved through time, from about 1769 to 1870. They relate how man transformed a particular landscape, whether in a destructive or in a constructive manner, since man is to be considered a landscape-forming agent. The interface between man and his physical environment should be viewed from the standpoint of physical and cultural processes. These processes include man as an agent comparable to any other physical or biological agent in shaping the variable patterns present in the landscape of Northern Califor-

nia. Carl Sauer, in his works, emphasized that man although himself directly the object of geographical investigation, has given physical expression to an area by habitations, markets, fields, lines of communication and so on. These accounts provide insight of what man has been doing to and with his habitat. They should furnish some facts to substantiate the second major theme of this thesis, emphasized in subsequent chapters, which is the impact of the French on the landscape through time and whereby the French as both a modifier and a recipient of the environment are discussed. Since the present landscape of Northern California is the result of long-time processes involving sequent occupancy by different cultures and since the French were quite numerous in California during the Gold Rush, they almost certainly left their mark on the landscape of Northern California. Lastly, these French accounts not only greatly contributed to the geographic knowledge of this region, but also had to have influenced the great influx of immigrants from other countries since these accounts were usually almost immediately translated into English, Italian, and German.

It was under the reign of King Louis Philippe and during the administration of Napoleon III that France made the most serious efforts to establish an empire in this part of the world. All one has to do is to read the reports which include such themes as the topography, the flora and fauna of California, to observe the various drawings, paintings, and maps, and to study the actions of the various French dignitaries as well as the voyages of French vessels in the Pacific, to become aware of the nature of the efforts of France. The various accounts written by the French at the time made rousing appeals to France to acquire and occupy California; such, for example, were the accounts of La Pérouse, La Place, De Mofras, and Du Petit-Thouars. Many companies had sent commer-



cial expeditions to California; such as the ones of Duhaut-Cilly, Roquefeuille, and many others. Even prior to 1770, there had been several French navigators who had ventured into the Pacific and who had visited several ports of Lower California. For example, Jean-Chappe d'Auteroche explored Baja California in 1769.

#### CHAPPE D'AUTEROCHE

Chappe d'Auteroche, an eminent French astronomer of the 18th century, was the first explorer sailing around the Cape whose final destination was the coast of Lower California. He recorded his travels to the peninsula of Baja California to observe the transit of Venus on June 3, 1769. The party went to San Jose del Cabo, a mission community at the southernmost tip of Baja California. Chappe d'Auteroche's observations were all meticulous. He described in detail several experiments he conducted while at sea; presented interesting details on the natural history of the area surrounding Mexico City; gave very detailed astronomical observations he made while in San Jose, Baja California, and he described several experiments to determine the longitude and latitude of San Jose. Unfortunately an epidemic which spread among the Indian population struck down several scientists. Chappe d'Auteroche, himself, became very ill and died before he could give a detailed account of the natural history of the area.

#### JEAN FRANÇOIS DE GALAUP, COMTE DE LA PÉROUSE

In 1786, the French navigator Jean François de Galaup, Comte de la Pérouse, visited the California coast. La Pérouse was noted for his efficiency in all that he undertook. His expedition was well equipped to continue and increase what had been learned from the voyage of Captain Cook since able

scientists in geology, botany, geography, and astronomy joined La Pérouse. This expedition was financed by Louis XV who hoped to regain the prestige of France during the second half of the 18th century. The King of France had become interested in this expedition because of the scientific and geographic discoveries which might ensue from it. The King had asked La Pérouse to indicate in his report all that he saw of scientific interest. He was sent by the French government on a scientific and exploring voyage, but incidentally to seek for possible new French colonies. He was instructed to discover «The conditions, force, and aim of the Spanish settlements in the Californias», and to determine at which latitudes furs may begin to be procured and where one could establish a French settlement with the view of exporting the furs to China. La Pérouse commanded the first French Expedition and the first expedition of any nationality other than Spanish, to visit the Spanish settlements of California.

On September 15, 1786, La Pérouse anchored in the port of Monterey with his two vessels, the *Astrolabe* and the *Boussole*. He had first visited the Hawaiian Islands and then the Alaskan shores where he had discovered what is now called Lituya Bay, but which he named Port des Français (latitude 58° 57'). He received a very cordial welcome in Monterey. La Pérouse was a thoughtful commentator as well as an accurate observer. He made a critical, though not unfriendly, analysis of the treatment accorded to the mission Indians.

La Pérouse described how Mr. Pages, commandant of the fort of the two Californias, had already received orders to accord him the same reception in Monterey as to a dignitary of his own nation. La Pérouse stated:

«To these generous proceedings of Mr.

Pages the utmost politeness was added. We were received like the lords of manors when they first take possession of their estates.»

La Pérouse gave a detailed account of all that he observed. For example, La Pérouse was quick to notice that as he entered the church of the mission San Carlos, they had passed through a square in which Indians of both sexes were standing in line. He then proceeded to give a detailed account of the manners and customs of the Indians and of the role of the missions. He stated that the typical day at the mission consisted of seven hours of labor, and two hours of prayer. He deplored the way corporal punishment was inflicted on the Indians of both sexes who neglected the exercises of piety and how many sins were punished by irons and the stocks. La Pérouse strongly felt that the progress of the faith would be more rapid if they were not constrained. He was in favor of a less monastic constitution which would afford more civil liberty to the Indians. La Pérouse was not always critical of the missionaries. For example, he praised Father Lasuen as one of the most worthy and respectable men he had ever met. He felt that his mildness, charity, and affection for the Indians was beyond expression. La Pérouse gave precise and valuable details on the Indians and on the colonizing civilizing role of the missionaries. He did not subscribe, however, to the myth of the «noble savage» which had been portrayed so brilliantly in the works of such well known authors as Diderot and Rousseau during the so-called French Enlightenment period. In fact, he tended to dispel the romantic fallacies of the «noble savage». Although La Pérouse only remained in Monterey ten days, the botanists and other scientific members of his party pursued and wrote some invaluable sketches.

Doctor Rollin, who was always con-

cerned with mensurations, examined with the greatest care the native women and men, searching for malformations and chronic diseases among them. With the help of an Indian who knew a few words of Spanish, he was able to learn the type of medication they used, their diet, and some of their crude medical techniques.

Lamanon, on the other hand, studied the languages of the Indians and was able to identify an incomplete vocabulary but which even today is still of great value since he discovered the existence of several dialects which formed the basis for several linguistic research projects at a later date. According to A.L. Kroeber, Lamanon's notes on the language of the «Esselen» (Eclémachs) are of the greatest value, since this language is now extinct. Lamanon provided us with some invaluable insights on the methods of communication among the Indians of the Monterey Bay, the Costanoans, and more precisely, he observed two important tribes, the «Rumsiens» and the «Esselens».

The naturalists in La Pérouse's party, who were not able to penetrate within the interior of California, were none the less very occupied. They mentioned, among other things, that they saw bears, martens, and squirrels in the forests of the Monterey Bay.

They noticed pelts of Elk which had been dried by the Indians, but the most precious and the most common pelts were the ones of the sea otter, the sea wolf (almost certainly the sea lion), and the sea bear (?). The birds were not very diversified, but the individuals in each species were quite numerous. The coppice was full of warblers, nightingales, blackbirds, hazel-grouses, sparrows, titmouses, and magpies. They also observed such birds of prey as the Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), the large and small falcons, hawks, the Black Vulture (*Coragyps*

*atratus*), the Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*), the common Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), and the common Raven (*Corvus corax*). They discovered and killed a kingfisher. They also noticed a very beautiful Blue Jay (it is probable that it was a Stellar Jay rather than a Blue Jay), and a few Hummingbirds. They observed that the swallow and the Black Oystercatcher (*Haematopus bachmani*) nest in cavities of the rocks along the ocean. The Pigeon Guillemot (*Cephus columba*), the cormorants, the Brown Pelican and the White Pelican, several species of the sea-gull, the curlew, the plover, the heron, and divers, were the only marine birds they discerned. These naturalists are also to be credited for the first description of the California Quail (*Lophortyx californicus*) with its short black plume curving forward from the crown and which was found in the plains and the foothills of the Monterey region. They also discovered a bird for which the existence and identification remained obscure for a long time which was identified with certainty about fifty years later as the California Thrasher (*Taxostoma redivivum*).

The Naturalists of La Pérouse's party were only able to collect a few specimens of plants since they arrived in the Monterey area at the end of the dry season. However, the gardener botanist, M. Collignon, was able to identify some of the most common species of plants such as: marine wormwood (*Artemisia pycnocephala*), mugwort (*Artemisia heterophylla*), California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), white-downy artemesia (*Artemisia ludoviciana*), California goldenrod (*Solidago californica*), Pacific aster (*Aster chilensis*), Douglas nightshade (*Solanum Douglasii*), pickleweed (*Salicornia ambigua*), aquatic mint (*Mentha canadensis*), yerba buena (*Micromeria chamissonis*), and yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*). Collignon sent seeds of a lovely herbaceous plant to the Jardin des Plantes in Paris, where they were planted.

This species, the first plant from California to be grown in the Old World, proved to be the rose-colored Sand Verbena, common along the coast of California.

Collignon extended the generosity of his hosts by leaving different grains of the best quality as well as seeds of fruit trees which later greatly increased in the missions of San Carlos as described by Malaspina six years later. Among the plants that he offered as a token of gratitude were some roots of the best potatoes of Chile which had remained intact.

*Notre Jardinier donna aux missionnaires quelques pommes de terre du Chili, parfaitement conservées; je crois que ce n'est pas un de nos moindres présents, et que cette racine réussira parfaitement dans les terres légères et très végétales des environs de Monterey.*

De La Langle, ex-captain of the ship «L'Astrée» and an old friend of La Pérouse, had noticed that a great amount of time was spent by the Indian women in the roasting and the grinding of corn. He observed that this operation was both tedious and laborious because they had no other method of breaking the grain than with a roller upon a stone. De La Langle therefore decided to give one of his wheat mills to the missionaries. It was difficult to have rendered a greater service, since four women were now able to do the work of a hundred. It allowed women to have time to spin the wool of their sheep and to manufacture some coarse clothes.

Among some of his other major contributions, La Pérouse obtained valuable information in regards to the possibility of a fur trade with China. He demonstrated the non-existence of several islands which had previously been wrongly chartered on Spanish maps and rectified as well as modified certain observations of his predecessors. La Pérouse

described and recorded several points along the Northwest Coast which Captain Cook had missed. For example, Herbert Howe Bancroft has the following comments in regard to a map drawn by La Pérouse from Port des Français (now Lituya Bay) to Nootka;

remarkably complete, if we consider the limited material on which it rested. Though far superior to any map made before 1786, its value was of course much impaired by the fact that it was not published until 1798. La Pérouse's names were superseded by others which English navigators applied before the French navigators were known to the world . . . The voyage was continued past Nootka and the southern coast, with an occasional glimpse of the coast as the fog lifted; the latitude of several points was fixed more accurately than ever before, the English and Spanish names being retained, and that of Necker Islands being applied to the rocks of Cape Blanco.

Whatever may have been the instructions of La Pérouse by the French government, in the long run, he seems to have been disappointed in California as he found it. On September 24, 1786, the «*Boussole*» and the «*Astrolabe*» weighed anchor and left Monterey Bay. La Pérouse had planned to circumnavigate the whole Pacific, to visit the Philippine Islands, and to skirt the coasts of Asia. The last news from the expedition were received in 1788, from the region of New Zealand where the expedition disappeared mysteriously in an area which was not well known. It was only in 1826 that the wreckage of both vessels was recovered among the reefs of Vanikoro in the archipelago of the New Hebrides. Thereafter, 31 years elapsed before another French explorer appeared along the coast of California.

So in 1786, La Pérouse can be credited

for the detailed description of the Monterey Area, including accounts on the vegetation and the biota in general as well as for anthropological studies, in particular Lamanon's study of the languages of the local native Americans, which according to Kroeber was quite significant. La Pérouse's expedition most assuredly influenced the landscape since it was responsible for the introduction of several plants including the potato which were given as gifts of gratitude for the warm hospitality they had received. Another gift which greatly benefited future California agriculture was the gift of De La Langle, the wheat mill, which rendered it possible for four women to do the work of a hundred. Lastly, La Pérouse's expedition can be credited for the first shipment of plants from California to Europe.

#### CAMILLE DE ROQUEFEUILLE

During the fifty years that ensued, there were many French scientists and officials who came to explore California. Among them, one must cite the lieutenant Camille de Roquefeuille, of the French navy. A victim of the French Revolution, he was engaged by M. Balguière, a merchant of Bordeaux, to lead an expedition around the world. Roquefeuille took command of the three masted «*Le Bordelais*», a vessel of 200 tons loaded with alimentary provisions, guns, and other ammunition. The object of the expedition was to demonstrate the possibility of trade with China in an effort to restore French foreign trade. Roquefeuille entered the port of San Francisco during the month of August in 1817. He stayed nine days during which time the Spanish demonstrated a very hearty hospitality towards him.

After a detailed description of the Sacramento River, he mentioned the Abalone (*Haliotis*) stating that it was represented as an object much sought after by the Indian



tribes. He even mentioned that in fact this shell had brought a high price on the Northwest coast but that it was much less highly valued since the Americans of the United States had introduced whole shiploads which they came to Monterey to get. He then stated that, at the same time, the Abalone had become rare in California, as much because of the immense exploitation as because of their local consumption. For several years the Indians had been eating the shell-fish avidly before they reached full growth, while the Spaniards burned the shells to make lime. Roquefeuille asserted that this shell was never found at San Francisco and began to be common on the coast only at Half-Moon bay or south of it. He also described a fire near Cape Mendocino believed to be attributed by the natives, who at this season would set fires to the vegetation to dry out the husks of certain seeds which they used for food to make it easier to harvest. In regard to the population present at the time of his visit he stated that in 1817 the total population was 20,350; 1,300 of which were Spanish, who were designated by the name «*Gente de razon*» (reasoning people or men). A name which is given in Spanish America to all those who are not of the native race, even to black slaves. The Indians made up the second class numbering 19,000 and distributed very unequally among the missions. Roquefeuille then presented an account of the local Indian population. He later enumerated the chief causes of the dwindling of the Indian race: First, voluntary abortions, second, the carelessness of the mothers toward their children, most of whom died during the periods of breast-feeding, third, the voracity and heedlessness of both sexes which would not let them restrict themselves to any regimen during their illnesses. Roquefeuille also stated that the number of cattle had decreased since troubles in Mexico had suspended the annual shipments of the Puebla herb (*hyerba de la Puebla*), a subtle poison which was used to

destroy a great number of wolves. In his discussion of the agriculture of California, he mentioned that agricultural exports were susceptible to an immense increase. To these, salts could be added, which were found in great abundance at several places along the coast. He also wrote that besides the riches of its soil, California possessed numerous otters along its coasts. He stated that otters and seals were found in greater numbers than in the more northerly parts of America, although the fur was of a lesser quality.

During the ten years following the passage of Roquefeuille, 1817-1822, not a single French ship anchored within Californian waters. However, a merchant association decided in April 1826, to send a ship of 326 tons, «*Le Hérault*» in a commercial venture around the world. The «*Hérault*», which had a crew of 32 men, was lead by Auguste Bernard Duhaut-Cilly, a French naval officer.

#### AUGUSTE BERNARD DUHAUT-CILLY

The «*Hérault*» arrived in San Francisco, in January 1827, which was too early in the season to obtain the hides and the tallow which Duhaut-Cilly had planned to purchase. Duhaut-Cilly and his men took advantage of their stay in California to make extensive trips by sea and by land throughout Alta California. During these trips they set up several trade agreements with the Mission padres and made observations of the country. Describing Duhaut-Cilly and his visit to California, from January, 1827, to September, 1828, H. H. Bancroft stated:

His opportunities for observation were more extensive than those of any foreign visitor who had preceded him. No other navigator had visited so many of the California establishments. His narrative fills about three hundred pages devoted to California, and is one of the most in-

teresting ever written on the subject. Duhaut-Cilly was an educated man, a close observer, and a good writer. Few things respecting the country or its people or its institutions escaped his notice. His relations with the Californians, and especially with the friars were always friendly, and he has nothing but kind words for all. The treachery of his supercargo caused his commercial venture to be less profitable than the prospects had seemed to warrant.

Duhaut-Cilly played an important role as a contributor to the historical geography of Northern California because of the richness of detail he presented to depict what California was like around 1827-1828.

In Duhaut-Cilly's account, bears were very common in the surrounding area of San Francisco and were often seen in herds in the forests and even in the fields without going farther than five or six leagues. Duhaut-Cilly also listed some of the animals his party caught while hunting near Yerba Buena such as a large number of hares, of rabbits, of tufted partridge (probably the California Quail, *Lophortyx californicus*), and particularly an amazing variety of ducks and of marine birds.

Duhaut-Cilly was engaged in the collection of the fauna and flora of Northern California with an eminent scientist Pablo Emilio Botta, who accompanied him during his expedition. Some of the animals they described included: a large number of beautiful shorebirds on the seashore; several fine species of hawks and other birds of prey in the woods, in the hills; and in the coppice, magpies, blackbirds, sparrows, and several frugivorous birds unknown to Duhaut-Cilly or to Botta. Duhaut-Cilly also stated that near ponds diverse species of duck and the wild geese were found in large numbers. He commented that some of his party killed a species of heron, called

in the country «Gruella» (Crane) and which was considered by the local people as a delicate food. They also noticed several species of humming-birds in the heath. Duhaut-Cilly even mentioned that perhaps the smallest humming-bird existing, had a head and throat of glowing fire (probably *Selasphorus rufus*; perhaps *Calypte anna* or *Calypte costae*, all common in California; the real ruby-throat, *Trochilus colubris*, is not found west of the Rockies). Duhaut-Cilly also mentioned that he noticed large numbers of animals in the valleys which he described under the name of coyotes.

Later, as he went to the Mission San Carlos, located about five miles south from the *presidio* of Monterey, he described the road as twisting among the hills covered with verdant grass and shaded by great fir trees and beautiful oaks.

Duhaut-Cilly mentioned that, as his party arrived at the entrance of San Francisco and as it inspected the southernmost of the Farallones, it made out the rude buildings of a hundred Kodiaks, maintained by the Russians from Bodega for seal-hunting. Duhaut-Cilly stated that the Kodiaks would enter San Francisco Bay at night, skirting the shore opposite the fort, and then would settle for a time on some of the small inner islands and would hunt for the sea otter. Duhaut-Cilly mentioned that the sea otter was formerly very common on the coast, from San Francisco to San Diego but that by 1826, very few were to be found.

Duhaut-Cilly felt that the limited population of Upper California caused trade itself to be of little importance for it had to be in relation to the needs of the consumption. He stated that almost the sole objects of exchange were tallow and hides. Grain had little or no market and the missionaries sowed it only for their own consumption.

Duhaut-Cilly visited Bodega and Fort Ross in June 1828. He felt that the settlement of Bodega appeared very different from the *presidios* of California which he called «pictures of the rudeness of the arts». On the other hand, he described the Russian settlement of Bodega as having well-made roofs, houses of elegant forms, fields well sown and surrounded with palisades which he concluded, lent to Bodega a wholly European air. On June 4, 1828, he proceeded on horseback to Ross, crossing the Russian River in a small *bidarka* (small boat), which he compared to crossing the river Styx. He described the vegetation on the surrounding mountains as being covered with enormous firs, mixed with sycamores, bay trees, and various species of oaks. The sketch of Fort Ross, made by his own hand, was the best early illustration of this historic spot. He gave a graphic account of the settlement at Ross, and described the fort and enclosure. He described some of the slopes near the settlement as being divided into fields of corn, French beans, oats, potatoes, etc. . . surrounded with fences, not to put the harvests beyond the reach of thieves, but to protect them from the cattle and the wild animals. Duhaut-Cilly was especially impressed with the lumbering activities of the Russians, which involved almost exclusively firs of various species and in particular the one which he referred to as *Palo colorado* (redwood). He gave a good account of M. Shelikof's felling of wood and how, independently of the needs of the settlement, M. Shelikof would cut great quantities of boards, small beams, and thick planks, which he sold in California, the Sandwich Islands, and elsewhere. Duhaut-Cilly was amazed at the fact that M. Shelikof had entire houses built which could be taken apart and transported.

#### EDMOND LE NETREL

Edmond Le Netrel, a naval officer un-

der Duhaut-Cilly also published an account of the voyage of «*De Hérault*» around the world in 1826, 1827, 1828, and 1829. Le Netrel commented on the California missions as well as on the local Indian population. For example, Le Netrel described Indian huts and how one could not imagine anything dirtier or more revolting than what he saw inside them. He stated that, as he came in, the inhabitants were occupied in hunting and eating their lice. On his visit to the Mission of San Jose he found it hard to conceive that man could exist in the midst of such disgusting excrement and thus didn't find it surprising that many more diseases occurred in this mission than in any other mission he visited. He remarked on the fact that the Mission of San Jose produced abundantly all the fruits and vegetables of Europe. (Le Netrel made cultural comparisons, for example, he noted that to thresh the grain from the ears, the Indians drove their horses over them just as they practiced in the South of Europe.

On the other hand, he described that, thirty leagues inland from San Francisco, there was a volcano which erupted frequently, quite strongly at times (probably Mt. Lassen). Later, he commented on another volcano southeast of Monterey called «Breat» which was not very large but which had been often active. He also noticed that near the beach the ocean was covered with bitumen.

During his visit of Monterey Bay, Le Netrel stated that it would be impossible to find a bay with more fish, such as mackerel and codfish. He also found that flat fish were common and how three men could load an ordinary boat in less than three hours. Le Netrel felt that the location of the Presidio of Monterey was very beautiful. He emphasized how the surroundings were lusciously green and how the pine forests which began near the shore extended beyond the horizon. He stated that there were many deer

and other wild animals and that it was not very prudent to go too far to pursue them. Le Netrel commented that small game was not abundant but that humming-birds were very common.

Le Netrel gave a vivid account of a mission fiesta at the Mission of Santa Clara including a bear and a bull-fight. He stated that the favorite occupation of a Californian was to lasso cattle, deer, and bears, and to sell their hides and tallow, which were the only exports of California. Le Netrel felt that the Californians could carry on much greater trade if they would take the trouble to cultivate the land, which was very fertile. They could plant wheat, which grew very well, and would be an excellent article for export to Peru, where it had a high price. Le Netrel felt that the Californians could cultivate grapes and make wine and spirits, for which they could easily have found a market on the coast of Mexico and Guatemala. He commented that the vines grew almost without cultivation and that, in some of the missions, he drank quite good wines but that they were only made in very small quantities.

Le Netrel stated that from thirty to thirty-five thousand hides were exported annually from California. They were usually bought by American vessels. He felt that a well-selected cargo of merchandise from Europe would have sold very advantageously in California, but he really didn't know what should be taken from there in return.

So by 1827, Roquefeuille had explored the Sacramento River Valley in 1817 and had, among other things, discussed the range and importance of the Abalone, *Haliotis*. He had also described contemporary California agriculture. Duhaut-Cilly, on the other hand, in 1827, had observed in detail the local biota of the Monterey Bay Region and the coastal area just North of it, with an emphasis on

the wildlife including extensive ornithological descriptions. As far as man's environmental impact, he discussed how the Kodiak Indians were responsible for the ecological imbalance which resulted in the extinction of the sea otter. He also commented on how certain landscapes had been transformed by man, the landscape-forming agent. For example, he described the transformed landscape near the Russian settlement of Bodega Bay. During the same period, another French explorer, Le Netrel, discussed the biota near Monterey Bay as well as the local native American population.

#### M. P. MORINEAU

After the visit of Duhaut-Cilly and Le Netrel, there elapsed another six years before another Frenchman came to explore California. In 1833, M. P. Morineau, after having read the accounts of Duhaut-Cilly, decided to make a trip to California. A year later, he published an account on «the inhabitants of California: their manners, customs, and institutions». He recommended California as being a very favorable field for French commerce. His enthusiastic report seemed to have stimulated the interest of the French towards California since from that time, increased activity occurred in California on the part of the French.

According to A. P. Nasatir, during the five years from 1835 to 1840, at least five French vessels visited California. From 1841 to 1845 nine more appeared and seven anchored between 1846 and 1848.

#### ABEL DU PETIT-THOUARS

Captain Abel du Petit-Thouars left Brest, France on the frigate «*Vénus*» to circumnavigate the world on December 15, 1836. The crew of the «*Vénus*» comprised more than 300 men. This expedition's primary goal was



to gather all available information on the condition of whale-fishing in the North Pacific so as to protect and encourage commercial interests in that field. Since the frigate «*Vénus*» was a warship, the French government thought that its presence on the California coast would bolster French prestige in this country. Du Petit-Thouars was also to collect information on the actual conditions of the territories visited. The scientists in his party made valuable contributions in their observations, particularly in hydrography.

The frigate «*Vénus*» stayed 26 days in Monterey. Governor Alvarado accorded Du Petit-Thouars every hospitality and granted him every facility to make his observations. Du Petit-Thouars' voyage was a great success and resulted in the publication of a ten-volume work upon his return to Paris. One of the most informative sections of his account was the one dealing with the observations performed by the physical scientists including all the work in hydrology and geology. M. Neboux, a doctor in the expedition contributed extensive ornithological observations. Among other things, Du Petit-Thouars made a complete scientific survey of San Francisco and its vicinity.

The second volume of Du Petit-Thouars' account dealt principally with his visit to California. He gave an account of the role of the missions as well as on the history of California. Du Petit-Thouars wrote one of the most detailed descriptions of the Monterey Bay Area ever to be written by the French. He depicted the local population, both native and the «*gente de razon*». He commented in detail on the flora and fauna in the vicinity of Monterey. He put forward a detailed account of the landing conditions of Monterey Bay including its various approaches. He mentioned that Monterey Bay was frequented by a countless throng of humpback whales.

Du Petit-Thouars described how, on October 23, 1837, as he was sailing from Monterey to San Francisco, the ocean had an olive green color which he attributed to microscopic animals. He was astonished by the abundance of animals of many different species which inhabited the coastal area just South of San Francisco Bay. His party had established a small observation post on a rock in the ocean not far from the shoreline. The group of scientists noticed such animals as a small whale, herds of sea lions, a herd of porpoises, and an enormous quantity of fish of very diversified species; on the rocks they observed shells of many different species, including enormous mussels (about 15 centimeters in length). Further up on the shoreline, they saw a herd of deer, and, in the air, many flocks of birds of different species. Du Petit-Thouars stated that the Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) was very numerous while only two white Pelicans (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) were observed. He stated that, on the beach near Monterey, he found fragments of some type of siliceous rock which, at times, the ocean broke off from the bottom of the Bay. He described how different fragments were at various stages of dryness and hardness as well as depicted some of their chemical and physical properties. Du Petit-Thouars noted, on the other hand, that the hill on Cape Pinos was composed of granite. He also described what appeared to be an oil spill. He stated that one found, disseminated in small patches on the rocks on the shoreline, a bituminous substance quite similar to asphalt. This substance, according to the local residents, originated from a lake of bitumen in the vicinity of Santa Barbara, about 60 leagues South of Monterey. The residents stated the liquid sometimes overflowed in large quantities into the ocean which then seemed to be all covered with oil, and which the winds or currents then conveyed great distances.

In the section on Physics (volumes V to X), Du Petit-Thouars gave detailed accounts on such topics as navigation, hydrography including various observations on ocean currents and the effects of tides, the determination of longitude and latitude, observations and experiments on terrestrial magnetism including studies of intensity, magnetic inclination, and diurnal magnetic variation. He also commented on optical meteorology including observations of rainbows, coronae (during an eclipse), haloes (of the sun and moon), sunsets, and moonsets. His studies in meteorology included electrical phenomena, hail, rain, fog, clouds, winds, barometric and thermometric observations. He also studied the depressions of the horizon and various oceanographic topics including waves, currents, soundings, and the color of the ocean.

#### CYRILLE LAPLACE

The following year, 1838, Captain Cyrille Laplace, commanding the frigate «*Artémise*», manned by a crew of 450 men, started on his voyage around the world. The cruise of the «*Artémise*», although planned on a much more ambitious scale, continued the tradition of La Pérouse. The Ministry of the Marine persistently urged the political and commercial expansion of France. Laplace anchored at the port of Bodega in August 1839. During his stay, he visited the Russians at Fort Ross, who accorded him a very warm hospitality. Laplace gave many valuable details concerning the workings of the small Russian community. He also presented an account of «*La Bodega*» which he stated was surrounded with plantations and farms maintained by some hundred Russian workmen and farmhands. They furnished vegetables and cereals to New Archangel by means of an active coastal shipping route between the two colonies. During his visit to Bodega, Laplace gave an account of the local Indians including such topics as their method of cooking with

hot stones, the diseases which afflicted them such as smallpox and syphilis, the use of steam-baths, and their hunting of beavers. Laplace also gave justification for the present condition of the Indians. He commented on the vegetation in the vicinity of Bodega and on the local wildlife. On August 21, 1839, Laplace arrived in San Francisco, but was quite disappointed in the town so he remained there just long enough to procure provisions. He then anchored at Santa Cruz, but was once more disappointed; so after only spending one day there, he continued his voyage to Monterey where he remained a week. According to A. P. Nasatir, at Monterey, Laplace found things more homelike, more hospitable, more charming, and more entertaining.

Laplace, while describing the placers in the Sierra Foothills, commented on the evolution of urbanism in Northern California. He discussed the main routes of communication and how there appeared, in a very short time, a multitude of small villages and towns along these routes, populated by workers, merchants, and farmers. These people had, for the most part, traded their profession as miners for less strenuous careers. Laplace stated that even the large forests, which up to that time had been uninhabited except by groups of Indians, were now starting to have villages in all the areas where the soil proved to be fertile. Wheat fields, vineyards, beautiful pastures with sheep and cows were gradually replacing the magnificent trees of these century-old forests.

Laplace described the great activity of the port of San Francisco as well as some of its other commercial activities. Basically, though, as mentioned previously, Laplace's description of San Francisco itself tended to be negative. However, he praised the Bay of San Francisco. He mentioned a canal from San Francisco Bay to Monterey, which unfortunately could only handle small light

boats and canoes. He commented that, according to local tradition, this canal carried a much larger volume of water when San Francisco Bay was only a lake and this canal was its only means of communication with the Pacific ocean. Laplace felt that this hypothesis could be substantiated from mere observations of the local topography. He observed that one could clearly notice the traces of the lowering level of the water as it declined to the level of the sea. He presented several theories in regard to the opening of the Golden Gate.

Later, as Laplace inspected the Bay and observed the local fauna, he commented on how his party noticed here and there sea lions stretched out nonchalantly, not fearing being troubled during their sleep; fishermen now ignored them entirely as they were only the pitiful remains of a species once extremely abundant in the Bay. In the past, the hides of these poor animals were much sought after and every spring they were killed by the thousands. Laplace also observed such animals as foxes, beavers, and black bears in the vicinity of the Bay.

Laplace then described the Mission of Santa Clara and the lack of fertility of the soil surrounding it. Almost everywhere, he stated, brushwood covered the soil and the fields which seemed to have once been cultivated now served as pasture to a few miserable animals. Later, he cited the following animals as being the most menacing toward the sheep population: the black bear, the grey wolf, the fox, and the wildcat. He commented that most of these animals of prey had considerably diminished in numbers since the fur trappers had come to this area and were aided by the local Indians in their work of destruction.

As mentioned, Laplace's description of Santa Cruz was anything but complimentary.

He described how the buildings were all left in ruins and how solitude reigned everywhere, although just a few years back, a thousand converted Indians took care of Santa Cruz, working both in agriculture and in small industry. Presently, all the Indian population had vanished, decimated by misery, sickness, and desertion. As Laplace described Santa Cruz, he really seemed to be writing about a garbage dump.

He commented that he had heard that, in general, the converted Indians demonstrated many fewer abilities and aptitudes than the free members of the same tribes. The free or unconverted Indians expressed a certain amount of intelligence and wit in their methods of hunting, of warfare, in their relations with the settlers, and even in small industrial matters, while the poor Indian slaves were said to be completely lacking any form of intelligence or wit.

Laplace's description of Monterey was quite praiseful. He stated, for example, that there was nothing more beautiful than this town, viewed from the ocean, at the end of a white sandy bay, bordering a magnificent cover of greenery, dotted with small white houses with red roofs and green shutters, which were half-hidden by trees and rows of flowers. Laplace also described various flocks of partridges, of quail, and many other species of birds. He noted that the area surrounding Monterey was abundant in game of all kinds, including a throng of quadrupeds such as rabbits, wild horses and bulls. Laplace's view of the role of man on nature is of particular interest. He commented that the panorama of the Monterey Bay presented the image of a powerful and fecund nature but still hardly adorned by the hands of civilization. Laplace stated that he would have preferred it otherwise, because, contrary to what the admirers of the wild grandiosity of creation aspired to, Laplace felt that the works of

man, when they were noble in character and useful, did not spoil the work of God any more than rich-elaborate fabrics and glittering attire did the beauty of women when utilized with good taste, to render them even more attractive to our eyes. Laplace was one of the few persons who really believed that man could have a positive influence on the landscape. He was opposed to current popular beliefs that all of man's activities on the earth can only lead to pollution, ecological imbalance, and destruction of the environment in general. Laplace perceived the possibilities whereby man could better or could enhance certain desirable features in the environment. He realized that just leaving nature to its wild state was not necessarily the best solution to our ecological crisis. One can state that Laplace's view of man's influence on the environment was somewhat unusual and thought-provoking. His view could result in certain modifications of some of our current attitudes, which stress the negative aspect of man on the landscape.

Laplace also commented on the fact that Monterey had made hardly any progress for the last 25 years. Monterey lacked commerce and industry. Whalers were the only ones who frequented its port to rest and to replenish their supplies. Even then, it was quite difficult to obtain supplies such as vegetables and meat, and the prices were too high. Water was even more difficult to procure.

By 1859, Du Petit-Thouars' exploring party had made some valuable contributions to the geographic knowledge of the Monterey Bay Area, including its hydrography, geology, climate, local native population, and commented extensively on the local fauna and flora. Man's influence on the landscape can be observed by comparing Du Petit-Thouars' accounts with some of the earlier ones. For example, in his explorations along the California coast, there is no mention of sea otters

as they were apparently already extinct. Captain Cyrille Laplace commented on two major topics: first, he brought forth the theory that the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers flowed south through the San Francisco Bay and then flowed through a natural canal crossing the Santa Cruz Mountains, which emptied into Monterey Bay. It appears that Laplace was the first scientist to discuss and mention such a theory, although it has since then been hypothesized and researched on several occasions. The second important theme was his discussion of man's positive influence on the landscape.

#### *EUGENE DUFLOT DE MOFRAS*

The rivalry of Great Britain, Russia, and the United States for California undoubtedly excited the French to action. After the preliminary groundwork had been laid by the visits of La Pérouse, Duhaut-Cilly, Du Petit-Thouars, and Laplace, the French government ordered Duflot de Mofras to carry on an extensive inquiry along the Pacific coast of Western America.

Eugène Duflot de Mofras was a native of Toulouse, and had seen considerable service in the French diplomatic corps in Madrid, before he was sent to Mexico in 1839, as attaché of the legation there. His mission to Mexico was to include an inspection of California, ostensibly and perhaps sincerely for the purpose of finding out the commercial possibilities of that region.

De Mofras arrived at Monterey in May, 1841, and from that point he traveled over the whole of California, visiting the Russians at Fort Ross, Sutter at New Helvetia, and making his headquarters for most of the summer at Yerba Buena and Monterey. De Mofras visited the missions of California and noted their character and population. He also studied the commerce of California very



carefully. The defense and military strength of California were depicted in considerable detail. For example, he stated that, at Sonoma, Vallejo's garrison was composed of twenty men. He noted that at Yerba Buena there were six soldiers and that the *presidio* was in ruins, and that its fort was abandoned. Minutely careful directions were given for entering the harbors of California. San Francisco Bay, in particular, was given close attention. De Mofras devoted several pages to a detailed description of the Bay. During his stay at Yerba Buena, De Mofras had the opportunity to go on many trips along the Bay and had evidently made an extensive study of its shore and currents. He fully seemed to appreciate the advantages and possibilities the Bay. He carefully noted certain islands in the Bay as important positions commanding the harbor.

De Mofras soon became on friendly terms with several of the higher officials of California, particularly with Governor Alvarado. He formed a close friendship with Nathan Spear, at whose home he lived while in Yerba Buena. On the other hand, he also had an equal number of vindictive enemies. He was, for example, much less friendly with Commandante Vallejo, and even less with his brother, Salvador Vallejo. Salvador Vallejo spoke of De Mofras with evident dislike. He despised what he called De Mofras' insipid questions and arrogant manner. De Mofras was accused of being a spy, the bastard son of a king, and a French traitor.

De Mofras was interested in everything from the physical features of the land to the prospects of trade and commerce, natural history, the character of the people, the California missions, before and after their secularization, the native tribes, their customs, beliefs, and languages, and many other topics. According to Nasatir:

De Mofras visited every place of importance in Alta California and has left us a complete account of each. He was known as a man of gentlemanly manners, talents, intelligence, and keen observation. He was a master of several languages other than his native French, including Spanish, German, and English. He was, however, excitable, conceited, rather impatient, arrogant, bent on self-amusement, fond of personal comfort, not overawed by the dignity of California officials, and somewhat careless about the reputation he might leave in that distant land.

De Mofras gave excellent physical descriptions of California. He stated, for example, that the mountain ranges paralleling the sea, notably the Santa Lucia and Santa Cruz, were thickly wooded, accessible for exploitation, and rich in waterfalls and streams suitable for mechanical sawmills and manufacturing purposes. He claimed that these forests were still in the virgin state. He often described the large number of bears that roamed at large. He gave an informative account of Monterey Bay and its distinguishing landmarks. He noted that the islands and shores of the Port of Monterey were alive with fur seals and sea otters that were easily killed with clubs; but the seals, which were formerly so numerous, had almost been completely exterminated. He mentioned the two small rivers, the Monterey and the Pajoro, which emptied into the east side of the Bay. He stated that they were not navigable because in the summer they ran almost dry. He discussed the lack of adequate water to supply ships on long journeys in the harbor of Monterey. Laplace had already mentioned the same problem. De Mofras pointed out that Monterey was a port of call frequented by whalers who came there to obtain fresh supplies, especially meat. He suggested that ships in need of fresh vegetables and fruit should go to Mission Santa Clara for supplies, where



there were more vegetables than at Monterey. He described Monterey as extremely arid, but viewed from the ocean, it presented a very picturesque site suitable for a large city.

De Mofras described the land around Monterey, especially south and northeast, following the curve of the Bay, as sandy and devoid of pasture. However, he stated that this land was valuable primarily for its salt deposits. He described how, on his way to the village of Branciforte, because of countless marshlands and river openings, he was forced to go by way of the Rancho del Rey, as far as Rancho Navidad on the banks of the Monterey River. He commented on how he left the region of sand dunes and how he entered into a very beautiful plain where the pine and juniper covered the hills while the valley floor offered excellent pasturage. De Mofras gave an explanation for a place known as «La Tembladara». He pointed out that the name referred to the ground which trembled when horses trampled on it. He stated that the ground was probably formed by a solid crust superimposed on a vast miry base.

De Mofras noted that the village of Branciforte was founded in 1796 and was named in honor of Don Miguel Lagrúa, Marquis de Branciforte. De Mofras described the village as one in which the houses were scattered over a vast area which was covered with vegetation and shaded by groups of pines. He stated that the population of Branciforte was close to 300 white residents. The majority were North Americans and were engaged in the cutting of wood or working in the saw-mills.

De Mofras noted that the climate of California was perfectly healthy. The temperature averaged 82.04 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer and 62.20 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter. He stated that the seasons followed the same sequence as in Southern Eu-

rope, with a rainy season and a dry season. According to De Mofras, the rainy season began in October and ended in March. It was somewhat amusing when he asserted that in winter, it rained every day at three o'clock in the afternoon, but seldom during the night. The dry season, he stated, began at the end of March or at the beginning of April and did not end until September or even sometimes October.

De Mofras noted that, on the route from Santa Cruz to Santa Clara, or to the pueblo of San Jose, one crossed superb forests which were notable primarily for a particular species of tall oak, with straight trunks, which were called «Encina de la Sierra» or Mountain Oak (*Quercus lobata?*). De Mofras stated that this particular species of oak was highly prized. As for the fauna of the Santa Cruz Range, De Mofras observed that it abounded in various species of bear and deer.

Later, De Mofras described how one traversed a long plain dotted with clumps of oaks, where numerous herds grazed on the route from Santa Clara Mission to that of San Francisco. He stated that laurels of very large size grew near the small streams of San Francisco and San Mateo. He mentioned the red pines which crowned the mountains on the east side of the plain. He also observed small «tide pools» which were natural salt-pans near the waters of the San Francisco Bay and compared them to enormous snow-fields seen from a distance.

De Mofras wrote that forest or prairie fires were started by careless Indians or white men who had forgotten to extinguish camp-fires. De Mofras described how sometimes the traveller could observe black and copper-colored clouds in the sky, and how he could see fine ashes fall. De Mofras then commented on the destruction of the natural landscape caused by a fire. For example, he stated that

oak, sycamore, and ash burned in their entirety while the trunks of pines resisted the flames because of the thickness of their bark, although they seemed to be the first to catch on fire. De Mofras concluded his section on California by stating that Americans appeared most likely to come into possession of California, because of the increasing emigration to the Far West especially since the creation of several overland trains to California.

#### *ALBERT BENARD DE RUSSAILH*

The discovery of gold at Coloma by James Marshall on January 24, 1848 attracted widespread attention throughout France. The excitement of the Gold Rush led to a notable increase of information about California. Many accounts appeared in French newspapers such as, for example, the one of Albert Benard de Russailh which presented his feelings of the living conditions, gambling, the theater, the women, the Vigilance Committee, the great fires, race mingling and many other topics related to the evolution of San Francisco in 1851.

Albert Benard de Russailh arrived in San Francisco early in March, 1851, and died there a little more than a year later during a cholera epidemic. He had sailed from Le Havre on September 8, 1850. De Russailh was a familiar figure in San Francisco journalism. He overcame countless obstacles in order to create a newspaper for the French population. He also helped to found a French hospital in Marysville.

De Russailh's first impressions of San Francisco were quite favorable. He was surprised by the brilliance of lights on Commerce Street and the life he saw everywhere. He was greatly surprised to see large and fine streets, well laid out as well as wooden and brick houses, all in regular order. He commented on how he walked on board side-

walks instead of on the muddy clay ground. He described Portsmouth Square as being a large plaza around which were handsome brick houses, already fairly old. Among these were the gambling halls: El Dorado, The Verandah, The Bella Union, the Parker House, The Empire, and The California Exchange. He called Montgomery Street the «Rue St. Honoré» of San Francisco as it so closely resembled the one in Paris. De Russailh stated that it extended nearly the whole length of the city. The chief banks and all the important commercial houses were on this street. He commented on how one soon realized the importance of the business that was transacted in San Francisco. He described how the numerous flags and banners, flying from nearly every house, created a strange, holiday atmosphere.

De Russailh found that Commercial Street was also very busy and an interesting sight. Shops right out on the pavement and counters before every door filled with all kinds of food-stuff, from across the Bay, made it a regular market place. Wagons in unending lines drove along this street from morning till evening, taking provisions for the mines to steamers that ran to Sacramento, Stockton, Marysville, Trinidad, and Humboldt, and brought back the cargoes of ships that had just come from Europe. Nearly the entire length of the street was occupied by stores, all heaped high with goods.

De Russailh described the Long Wharf and how the larger part of San Francisco, especially the district from Montgomery Street to the Bay, was also built on piles. He stated that, some years before, the points nearest the shore began to be filled in and how a bit of land was reclaimed every day after that gradually enlarging the area of the city by these additions.

De Russailh commented on the steamers

which were constantly moving back and forth, taking out and bringing back miners who were going to the Yuba, the Feather River, or the Calaveras and the Stanislaus, to work the veins of gold. He described the islands of Yerba Buena, Angel, and Sausalito as very arid but he felt that they helped break the monotony of the harbor. He emphasized once more the bustling activity everywhere in San Francisco; how business was flourishing and how the various commercial transactions must have brought fine profits to those who had enough capital to take part in them, because there were excellent opportunities for markets. He stated that many Frenchmen lived on the two principal streets of San Francisco, Montgomery Street and Commercial Street. This area was often called Frenchtown. He also gave a description of the climate, including seasonal changes. He concluded that all in all, the climate of San Francisco was healthful, although variable.

As far as the living conditions, De Russailh stated that life in San Francisco was not unusually difficult as men do not die of hunger if they were willing to work. He warned that, before a man embarked on an adventure like this, he should think carefully of all the suffering and privations that may await him. He felt that one must have courage, energy, and a firm character. De Russailh gave an extensive account of the gambling houses in San Francisco.

De Russailh described how there was no law in San Francisco to prosecute a bankrupt and that a man might close his office for a few days and before long he could open up again as a new firm and begin to do business as usual. By locking his doors for a short time he was able to get out of paying his old debts.

De Russailh briefly stated that the whole town stank of degradation since every-

one was maddened by the gambling fever. He emphasized the high crime rate after eight o'clock in the evening and how one had to be sure to carry a revolver. He stated that murders were very common. He commented that, after the discovery of gold, the dregs of every nation, from Australia to Europe rushed to San Francisco. He was, therefore, sure that no other city in the world contained as many rogues and cut-throats. The streets and public places were infested with them. He observed that, for all these men, the gambling-halls provided the chief means of livelihood. Their favorite method was to hang around a table and to start a fight. When the brawl was raging, they managed to snatch the money from the bank and to slip away. These rogues even had powerful secret organizations such as the «Do or Die», or «The Society of Death».

De Russailh emphasized the corruption of California justice. Every judge could be bribed; for a small sum a man could have his enemy imprisoned and escape punishment himself. He stated that, as far as foreigners were concerned, no matter how strong their case might be, they had no chance; he felt the spirit of nationalism was all-powerful here.

De Russailh stated that, for a long time, the police authorities had been asleep; public welfare was neglected, robbers, murderers, and incendiaries were allowed to stroll about unmolested. Although the newspapers and the public angrily complained, nothing could arouse the judges from their profound apathy. Finally, the leading citizens organized the Vigilance Committee, assumed the task of patrolling the streets, and resolved to take justice into their own hands. As for the police, De Russailh stated that it was largely made up of ex-bandits, and that naturally the members were interested above all in saving their old friends from punishment. Police-

men in San Francisco were quite as much to be feared as the robbers; if they knew you had money, they would be the first to knock you on the head.

Among his various experiences, he related how, when he was selling various goods he had brought from France, he was making his biggest profit from a wholly worthless article, namely toothpicks. He had brought with him two packages of toothpicks (about 248 small packs) for his own use, or to give away to his friends. However, he soon realized the large profit he could make. He was truly amazed as it had never occurred to him that anyone would buy them.

De Russailh stated that, among some of the drawbacks of San Francisco, was the number of rats which infested the cottages. The rats were everywhere in San Francisco as in all wooden cities, and there was nothing to be done.

De Russailh emphasized how San Francisco's population was amazingly varied, for people from all over the world had flocked to this land of gold. He commented that men of all nations rubbed shoulders in this new city. He felt that all these races with their different costumes and manners created a highly picturesque atmosphere and turned the city into an eternal fair. He described how the French were always recognizable and retained their usual characteristics: love of pleasure, gaiety, and carelessness regarding the future. He asserted that, in general, the French were active and intelligent and, if they had been more numerous here or better prepared financially, they doubtless would have made quite a different country of California and would have exploited its natural resources to much greater advantage. He commented on the fact that most of the Frenchmen here could not live on friendly terms with the Americans, whom they con-

sidered a savage and ignorant people. Repelled by the difficulty of learning English and thus unable to communicate with the Americans, the French lived entirely among themselves and only did business with each other. They had not yet realized that they had to acquire a foreign language in order to help themselves. De Russailh was the first to deplore this attitude and to admit that his countrymen were acting unwisely.

De Russailh described all the major ethnic groups present in San Francisco. For example, he stated that there were many Chinese in California and that large groups of them were still arriving every day. He commented that San Francisco was filled with Chinese goods, which were usually sold cheaply, but which occasionally brought high prices. According to him, except for a few Chinese established as merchants and importers in San Francisco, the Chinese either went to the mines or ran laundries or small restaurants for their compatriots in town. Those who went to the mines started out in groups, worked together, and every week would divide up the product of their labor. Many Chinese women also came to San Francisco and became prostitutes, at which they seemed fairly successful!

Later, De Russailh stated that of all the inhabitants of California, the Indians were the strangest. He depicted a vivid portrait of the way of life of the Indians. For example, he stated that he didn't know if the Indians loved their wives since he knew that the gentlemen rarely exerted themselves and were content to let the ladies do all the hard work. De Russailh commented that the Indian women were nothing but slaves and were burdened with all the chores: they carried loads, did the cooking, and did all the dirty work around the camp. As for the men, they took life easily, strolled along beside their wives, with bows and arrows in their hands,



always singing in a low voice some favorite song; they did not worry if their better halves were sweating and broken down with labor. De Russailh concluded that these savages really seemed to be proud of being males, and they doubtless thought it would be beneath man's dignity to bother about petty matters fit only for women.

#### JEAN-BAPTISTE CHAMPAGNAC

The following year, in 1852, Jean-Baptiste Champagnac came to California and made some instructive descriptions of Northern California in his account.

Champagnac first gave details on the climate and the topography of Northern California. He mentioned that all the plants and fruit trees introduced from Europe thrived in the Central Valley, where the fog lowered the temperature at regular intervals. He also described the geologic formation and composition of the surrounding mountains.

He commented on a singular mode of transport, due to the great difficulty of travelling in the mountains, which consisted of being carried by men who had a chair attached on their backs. This means of transportation was what people referred to as «going man-back riding». The men with this career were called «*cargueros*». Champagnac commented that these men were treated just as if they were horses or mules.

He then described the Tulares Valley and the San Joaquin River. He indicated that this valley was pleasantly diversified by lakes, hills, rivers, and prairies where there grazed huge herds of deer, buffalo, and wild horses.

He also commented on the Sacramento Valley and described how just north of it, oaks, willows, laurels, pines, sycamores, Virginia creepers, wild horses, herds of cattle

and deer animated the landscape. He stated that the only animal to be feared was the grey bear, which one often found perched in an oak tree throwing small sweet acorns to its cubs. Champagnac asserted that the soil of the Sacramento Valley lent itself to all types of agriculture. The farms one found, and which were only a few years old, were already extremely prosperous with a very fine quality of grain, rice, delicious fruits, hemp, flax, and cotton. The olive tree was also cultivated successfully, and the grape promised one day to be a principal source of wealth. Champagnac noted that such precious minerals as serpentine, asbestos, and amethyst were mined near Mount Shasta. He detailed the hydrography of the Sacramento River including information on its source, its depths, its navigability, and its currents. Champagnac described the considerable amount of salmon that could be found in any stream of importance in that region. He also discussed the fauna on the various islands of the Sacramento River such as the countless number of birds which he observed like the various species of ducks, wild geese, cormorants, cranes, magpies, and sparrow-hawks. He also asserted that a large number of bears could be found, particularly the grey bear. Wolves, lynxes, and foxes also abounded in the North of the Sacramento Valley.

He then vividly portrayed the mining regions of Northern California, including a short history of the Gold Rush. He emphasized the enormous wealth of the mines. He described various methods of mining in the placers as well as in the regions of «Dry Digging».

Champagnac wrote an anthropological study of the native Californians. He discussed such topics as their customs, their religious beliefs, their habitats, their food, their medicine and drugs. Champagnac asserted, for example, that the natives were superior in their

fabrication of baskets, which was their principal industry. He commented that these baskets were woven so tightly that they could hold water like a vase. The natives used these baskets to cook their food. They filled them with water, which they then heated by means of hot stones reddened by fire and dropped them every now and then in the water to sustain the desired heat for cooking. Their principal sustenance was acorns, which they gathered under the numerous oaks. They did not cultivate except for a little corn. They also ate wild grapes, berries of several bushes, and seeds of various pine trees.

The medical knowledge of these natives was quite limited. They only utilized a small number of plants such as the aloe, sage, rosemary, nettles, and a few others which they used either as vomitives, or as external remedies. An excellent febrifuge which they used and which resembled quinine was the «*cor-chalaguan*», a plant very widespread and which one encountered particularly close to springs or at the bottom of ravines. He also described the natives' use of steam baths called «*temascal*».

In his description of the fauna of Northern California, Champagnac noted that huge herds of buffalo, of musk oxen, of stag, antelope, deer, elk, and roe-buck roamed the valleys and the vast prairies which surrounded the forests. He also commented on the «*zorillo*» (skunk) and on the silver fox. He discussed buffalo hunting by the natives.

He stated that many of the cattle imported to America by the Spanish had returned to their wild state and actually formed large herds in the interior lands of the region. Champagnac asserted that the same was applicable for horses, which had greatly propagated since the discovery of the New World.

Champagnac stated that, in the proxi-

mity of streams, one found an abundance of otters, badgers, and beavers. Greyhounds, rabbits, and other small game pullulated the woods and the prairies. A significant amount of birds of prey could be noticed in the air, such as the Bald Eagle, the black vulture (probably the Turkey Vulture or *Cathartes aura*), the small and large falcon, the sparrowhawk, the eagle-owl, and the crow. He stated that one found many other species of birds in Northern California. For example, one was apt to observe in the wooded hills such birds as pheasants, turtle-doves, and California quails; in the coastal hills wood-pigeons, snipes, and larks while the bocage contained such birds as white jays (probably the Gray Jay or *Perisoreus canadensis*), magpies, blackbirds, green woodpeckers, titmouses, and hummingbirds. It was not rare to also observe plovers, curlews, orioles, and several species of sparrows which were present only during certain seasons. Champagnac commented that the lakes and ponds were abundantly populated by geese, ducks, swans, cranes, herons, and storks, while the seashore had albatrosses, razorbills, petrels, cormorants, sea gulls, and pelicans.

As for the fish, Champagnac stated that there was a wealth of them in the rivers and the lakes of Northern California. He commented that one found sardines, mackerel, turbot, cod, dolphins, sea otters, seals, sharks, and cachalots in great numbers in the Pacific Ocean. He also asserted that there was an abundance of salmon and oysters and even of whales which frequented the coast of California. The favorite site of the whales appeared to be the Monterey Bay which, during a certain season of the year, offered a very strange spectacle: millions of sardines, fleeing the pursuit of the whales and other large fish, sought refuge in the shallower waters of the Bay, not far from the coast; however, once there, they found other enemies in the marine birds, which, attracted by

the presence of the sardines, came by the thousands along the coast to feast on them while the whales, which remained about in the open ocean, awaited the return of the sardines at the entrance of Monterey Bay. Champagnac also described some of the reptiles he had observed such as the rattlesnake, usually not very large and which did not attack man. He stated that one also found the viper, the grass-snake, and the boa (mistaken identification since there is no boa or viper in California). He commented that none of these reptiles were really dangerous, at least according to the natives.

He described San Francisco and its Bay. He commented, for example, on the daily arrivals from various countries of «pre-fab» houses. He stated that most of them originated from the province of Canton in China. He also asserted that many Chinese had established themselves in San Francisco.

Champagnac described San Francisco as a gathering of houses, which for the most part were wooden, diversely painted, and which had generally just one level. He commented that, on both sides of the city following the beach, rows of tents and shanties of wooden planks extended as far as the eye could see. He gave a detailed account of the actual site of San Francisco, including its principal physical features. He also emphasized the unremitting movement and activity in the streets of San Francisco. He discussed that, despite this amalgam of immigrants from all countries, despite the self-seeking motive which dominated them, the religious sentiment, so weak in European cities, here maintained itself in all its strength. All the immigrants strictly observed the holy day of Sunday. That day, all the shops were closed and gambling was prohibited.

Champagnac also gave a description of Monterey Bay, including certain details of its

population and on the role played by the Missions. He detailed the Bay of Monterey and described the landing sites as well as the general topography. He mentioned, for example, the Salinas River and the Pajaro River. He discussed the city of Monterey itself as well as gave a brief history of the area. He commented that Monterey was founded in 1827. Ten years later, in 1837, the entire population of Monterey was not more than 200 persons, mainly composed of creoles, a small number of natives who were employed for domestic chores, five or six Mexican families, and finally a few Irish, Scots, and Americans of the United States. In 1842, the population grew to approximately 500 inhabitants; in 1847 to about 1,200; it rose to several thousands during the following year and one could not predict when this continual accretion would stop.

Champagnac stated that Monterey had a large commerce of exportation which consisted of tallow and hides of oxen, deer, buck and stag; and of furs of otter, beaver, seal, and bear.

Champagnac gave a brief account of the climate of the region before he discussed the history and role of the Missions and of the missionaries in Northern California. He commented that, since the secularization of 1836, the missionaries had lost all authority over the missions, and the prosperity of the missions vanished along with their skillful founders. From the many thousands of domesticated animals, there remained after six years only about twenty head of cattle, a hundred and thirty horses, and two hundred sheep.

Champagnac presented a detailed account of seals. He discussed their physical appearance and behavior as he asserted that there were several species such as the sea lion, the sea elephant, and the common fur seal.

Champagnac concluded that the seal was the most interesting and intriguing animal that one could observe in Northern California.

#### EDOUARD AUGER

During the same year, in 1852, another Frenchman, Edouard Auger, visited Northern California and wrote an extensive account.

Auger, in his description of Sacramento stated that it was the second city of California; its population then exceeding 40,000 people. Nothing was comparable to the bustling activity in this future capital of California with a continuous movement of men and domesticated animals.

Auger's descriptions related to the various mines. He first commented on the general atmosphere prevalent in the Northern Mines. He discussed the different placers or auriferous lands. He made a comparison between the Northern placers and the Southern ones. He detailed all the various methods of extraction such as the diversion of streams, the «battee», the «rocker», and the «long-tom» methods. Auger presented a vivid picture of the local customs of the mines. He also commented on the mercury mines, four of which were then being fully exploited: Almaden, Guadalupe, San Antonio, and Chabonia.

In Auger's description of the vegetation present in California, particularly the auriferous regions, he stated that it was not rare to encounter trees with a circumference of 40 or even 50 feet. He commented on herds of deer, antelope and of roe-buck which roamed the prairies of the Central Valley. He stated that one also encountered the black and brown bear; however, the animal to fear the most was the Grey Bear. He discussed how the placers were, once in the past, the richest hunting grounds of the world. The game

seemed to be replenished at the same rate as it was being exterminated. Therefore, on market days in San Francisco, one would see bears by the half dozen, deer and roe-buck in rows of thirty and forty, masses of hares, quails, of geese, and of wild ducks. This superabundance, however, was beginning to decrease from day to day, and to locate game, hunters were obliged to go progressively farther away from the inhabited regions. Auger also mentioned the cougar, the jaguar, the grayish-red-brown fox (probably the Kit Fox or *Vulpes macrotis*), the prairie wolf, the badger (*Taxidea taxus*), the porcupine (*Erethizon dorsatum*), the hedgehog, the coati, the grey squirrel (*Sciurus griseus*), geese, wild duck, California Quails (*Lophortyx californica*), the curlew (probably the Long-Billed Curlew or *Numenius americanus*), the Wild Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*), the «Wap-po» (a small prairie ostrich?), the common and the Ring-Necked Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*), the grouse, and the hare.

Auger then discussed the history of Alta California, including a study of the customs of the natives. He estimated that the white population of Alta California prior to statehood was about 5,000 persons: 4,000 Californians of Spanish descent; 360 Americans of the United States; 300 English, Irish, and Scots; 80 Spanish of Europe; 80 French; 90 Germans, Italians, Portuguese, and Hawaiians; and 90 Mexicans. The Americans were generally settled in Branciforte, the English and the Spanish in Monterey and in Santa Barbara, while the French were in Monterey and in the Pueblo of Los Angeles.

He commented that the search for gold had, for a long time, caused the neglect of agriculture, but that it had slowly regained its importance; to the point that then, in 1852, all the region which bordered the route from San Francisco to the pueblo of San Jose presented, along a distance of more



than 120 kilometers, a succession (almost uninterrupted) of cultivated fields. Auger realized that the time when California would become fully self-sufficient agriculturally was not very distant. Meanwhile California imported its flour from Europe, the remainder from the United States and Chile; its wines from France; its rice, sugar, coffee, and potatoes from Manila, Hawaii, Mexico, and Peru; and its horses, cattle, and sheep, bought at great cost, from Oregon and Mexico.

Auger also made some remarks on the general commerce and industry of Northern California. He gave an account of the discovery of gold at Fort Sutter and a detailed description of New Helvetia. He also presented an interesting picture of the various Indian tribes of Northern California.

In his detailed description of San Francisco, Auger commented that San Francisco, which already had a population of close to 80,000, was destined by its geographic location to become the general warehouse for the South Pacific and Indochina. He stated that already the Isthmus of Panama, which was the shortest route from Europe to California, possessed a railroad which had considerably shortened the length of the trip. He commented that, within two years, the United States would have completed a railroad linking San Francisco to the cities of the East. Auger truly saw the potential of a route from Paris to Canton, China via New York and San Francisco.

Auger described the harbor of San Francisco as being large enough for all the navies of the world at the same time; at least this was the opinion of Vancouver and Kotzebue, who both had visited the San Francisco Bay in the late Eighteenth Century. Auger deplored the numerous possible marine dangers one might encounter on his approach

to the port of San Francisco. He stated that San Francisco was built as an amphitheater on the side of a hill facing the Bay. He also described another hill to the north of San Francisco rising very abruptly on the side facing the Bay and which was surmounted by a telegraph. He commented on how the water between the wharves was filled with earth and how, by this time, a «new city» was created which slowly encroached on the Bay. Auger gave a good description of San Francisco; its buildings, streets, commercial activities, its various local customs, gambling, betting, auction sales, police and Sunday activities. Auger stated that, of the 80,000 persons composing the population of San Francisco, the Americans comprised about half, the French about one-sixth, and the remainder was an amalgam of all the nations of the world among whom the Chinese then dominated.

#### PIERRE GARNIER

Another account written by a Frenchman during the 1851-1852 period was the one by Dr. Pierre Garnier. Professor Chinard praised the account:

Except for an early report written by a military surgeon and published by the California Historical Society, 1942, it is the first description of California written by a bona fide physician. It describes conditions for a period on which there is a dearth of authentic observations made by a reliable witness and should be of value to social as well as to medical historians.

Garnier's account was a significant contribution to the medical history of California. The history of medicine in California up to the Civil War had been only sparsely treated. Garnier presented an excellent description of gold-rush medicine.

Garnier arrived in Monterey on April 7, 1851. He commented on how Monterey was the capital of the province before the American occupation and was also a commercial center, handling the tallow and cattle skins which were the only source of wealth for the inhabitants. He stated that, at the time of his arrival, the population of Monterey numbered between 1,200 and 1,500 people, composed largely of the foreigners attracted by the installation of the new American government. Garnier described the country in the vicinity of Monterey as being fairly wooded, although the hand of man had been busy cutting and destroying. Pine and oak were the dominant, almost the exclusive, species. Certain medicinal plants, such as large absinthe or wormwood, grew in abundance; bittersweet and rhue formed a tall, thick undergrowth in some places. He commented that there was also Poison Ivy (*Rhus toxicodendron*) called «Yedra» because of its poisonous effects. Garnier, however, was mistaken since there is no Poison Ivy in California. He stated that this «Yedra» was a pretty and very common shrub, generally no taller than two meters; it had woody and running roots, weak branches covered with little suckers which attached themselves to neighboring plants, brownish-green and glossy leaves which were trifolied with a long petiole, and very small greenish flowers in clusters.

Garnier commented that the fauna displayed little variety but great abundance. This was especially true of cattle, which were generally small but were found by the thousands living wild. There were also horses, but it was rare to see donkeys, mules, sheep, goats, pigs, or chickens. There was, on the other hand, abundant game including hare, rabbit, partridge, pigeon, duck and geese. Deer were so common, he stated, that venison was as cheap as beef. Crows were everywhere, approaching and even entering the houses. He then stated that there were also

many destructive and dangerous animals such as wolves and jackals. Bears were known to attack the herds, and foxes and coyotes ravaged the chicken-houses. The «zorillo» (skunk) had a powerful weapon in the urine which he shot like an arrow at pursuers, and hunters were repelled by the strong and nauseating odor. Lastly, he noted that the «ardilla», a kind of grey squirrel, swarmed everywhere, destroying fields and gardens and was the farmer's worst enemy.

In his discussion of the climate of Northern California, Garnier commented that the temperature was usually mild and more or less constant during the changing seasons. It varied spatially however, according to location in the plains, valleys, or mountains.

Garnier stated that most Californians lived on their «Ranchos» in the midst of their fields. He described the *ranchito* as a type of farm measured in square leagues. He commented that these farms did not resemble those of Europe. There was very little general farming, and only seldom was there a tiny tilled plot near the house where maize, «frijoles» (brown beans), some other vegetable or even «cebada» (barley) were grown.

Garnier commented that the «*ranchero's*» sole occupation was the care of his «*ganado*» or cattle, checking their whereabouts and preventing them from straying or mixing with other herds. He stated that, since cattle were his only industry, the «*ranchero*» used all the cattle products which he did not sell for his own domestic needs. Tallow made his candles; skins provided his carpets, the webbing for his bed, and his ropes and straps. He emphasized though that since the discovery of the mines, commerce had developed and education had spread the influence of thousands of foreigners entering California. The Americans had greatly encouraged farming and the Europeans propagated gardening and

the useful skills connected with building and food preparation. He stated that it was primarily the discovery of gold which transformed the condition of medicine in California.

Garnier asserted that there was no institution of public assistance in Northern California before the discovery of gold. He commented that there was only one United States Hospital, the first to be founded in San Francisco under the name of Mariner's Hospital. The hospital was located on Rincon Hill and was completed on December 12, 1853. He also stated that there were three private sanitariums in San Francisco, and that one of them was known as the French Hospital. Garnier mentioned that the French community founded a welfare society in San Francisco in 1851, to help the poor and sick French. Frenchmen would gather at the French hospital in almost family style and were treated as if they were in their own homeland.

Garnier commented that illness was rare in California. He stated that this was especially true among the natives in the southern part of the country. He mentioned how he was able to observe most of the local illnesses at Monterey for more than a year. He stated that there were only thirty patients suffering from such conditions as intermittent fever, gastroenteritis, arthritis, and childhood cerebral inflammations. He commented that San Jose was often chosen by the local doctors for its mild and uniform temperatures as the most favorable and healthful place for recuperation. He asserted that, by then, illness was much less frequent in the mines because previously, miners did not know where to find help or food and simply trusted to chance. By this time, however, miners were everywhere in large numbers. Rapid, easy and certain communications between the most important centers of commerce and

the smallest mining centers were provided by daily steamboat and carriage services.

Garnier stated that sick people from all points arrived daily in San Francisco for treatment. He commented that the population of San Francisco, unlike that of Monterey, was composed almost exclusively of foreigners. He stated that it was then recognized that intermittent fevers and diarrhoea were the predominant infections in Northern California. He mentioned that they prevailed during the whole year but occurred more frequently after the rainy season. He commented that they appeared everywhere, but especially in the mining areas, because of intemperance and the lack of the simplest sanitary precautions. He stated that sometimes forced labor among new arrivals seemed to be a factor, as these illnesses appeared more often among those who did hired work. Garnier stated that intermittent fevers appeared commonly in some places in the interior which were uninhabited before the gold mines were discovered. He commented that epidemics seemed rare in California, although the cholera outbreak in 1849 and in 1850 were deadly enough in some places. The disease became so great in San Francisco that several cholera hospitals were established. Only epidemics of eruptive fevers were recorded, such as smallpox which had disappeared since the importation of vaccine.

Garnier commented that surgery played the major role in medical practice. He verified this predominance of surgery over other medical cases at the American Hospital in San Francisco, among those supported by the French Welfare Society, and among patients in the province of Monterey. Knife and gunshot wounds predominated, especially at the mines, since everyone carried arms and used them in the smallest quarrel.

Garnier mentioned how *Rhus toxic-*

*dendron* or «Yedra» (Poison Ivy, mistaken identification; it was probably Poison Oak) was the cause of rather frequent and serious cases, especially among foreigners. He commented on how if a traveller simply encountered emanations of this shrub, his skin, especially the face, became covered with little red spots and he suffered itching and violent headaches. He stated that the attacks were much more serious when actual contact had been made with the leaves of the plant. Delirium sometimes occurred if the contact had been prolonged and large blisters formed which turned into wounds, especially on the legs, which were difficult to heal.

Garnier observed that the natives showed little or no reaction when they were ill. He cited, for example, that in cases of inflammatory illnesses, general symptoms were usually limited and slight, and discharges frequently occurred into the serous cavities. He stated, however, that the slightest fever plunged these natives into prostration and dejection and prolonged their recovery. They could not stand a special diet, or any weakening medication, and blood-letting was rarely effective. He commented that one had to rely chiefly on local bleedings, revulsives, tonics, and stimulants.

Garnier concluded that cases requiring medical assistance were rare in California and that patients did not always resort to a doctor even when it was necessary. He mentioned that one-third of the deaths among old people and infants in Monterey occurred without a doctor being called. He felt that, for some Europeans, this was a matter of economy. He explained that, for the Americans, it was the habit to go for help to an apothecary who always served as a doctor for them. As for the Californians and for the Indians, he stated, that they often doctored themselves and placed more trust in the weird remedies of the «*viejas*» (old witches) and

Indian healers than in the intelligent prescriptions of a doctor. He mentioned that they never followed such a prescription accurately in any case; they only called the doctor to obtain his prognosis and soon abandoned him if he could not guarantee and deliver a prompt cure.

Garnier mentioned that no law regulated the healing arts in California. The practice of medicine and pharmacy was absolutely free and unlimited, and the first comer could take up either or both. He stated that this situation had produced a crowd of individuals who had usurped the titles of doctor, pharmacist, dentist, etc. . . . He mentioned that everywhere, but particularly in the towns, was a group of people mistakenly known under the generic term of «doctor» who publicly practiced the healing arts. Garnier stated that, at San Francisco, for example, the doctor's sign was hung on nearly every door and medical shops abounded. He asserted that dentists were the greatest charlatans of all. They were very numerous and their task was still the most rewarding of all the healing arts. Garnier described how all dental procedures were highly priced.

Garnier asserted that there were very few serious medical practitioners among the crowd of charlatans. He stated that, for example, in San Francisco there were scarcely thirty of them out of two hundred «doctors». Garnier explained that serious practitioners could not compete with their rivals and were all the more burdened because public opinion had no effect among this heterogeneous, roaming, and vagrant population; good doctors were therefore deprived of the only support and protection available. Some of these unfortunate serious practitioners took up farming or gold mining if they could stand the hard labor. Other doctors had become gardeners, dairymen, cattlemen, poultry farmers, etc. . . . They could at least make a



comfortable living if not a fortune in these areas. Others who were too old or sick or were prevented by circumstances from changing their profession found themselves destitute.

Garnier admitted that it was impossible to determine the exact number of real doctors in California; one could say only that they were of every nationality including Chinese. The French were not the smallest group; seven or eight were practicing in San Francisco and there were others in almost every populated center. According to Garnier, the French doctors usually had a fine reputation and were held in high esteem by the Americans, especially the South or Spanish Americans, who preferred the French to all others because their language was easy for the French to understand and because they were more at home with the customs and habits of the French. Garnier stated that the fact that French doctors could not speak English limited their prosperity. Few of the French doctors would submit to the necessity of learning English. Garnier also commented that the French doctors suffered in comparison with the majority of other doctors because they did not own drugstores or retail pharmacies. He explained that it was to a doctor's financial interest to own one. They followed French custom and kept neither drugstores nor medicines, except in small communities where they had no alternative but to keep a small supply of drugs for their own use. Thus the French doctor was, so to speak, isolated; while he earned a superior reputation in practice, he was called only by his own countrymen, by Spanish Californians, by Mexicans and other natives of Central America. Garnier felt that most doctors, despite modest medical fees and the scarcity of illness, would be quite satisfied as long as they were paid in full. This was not the case, for they lost a great part of their income thanks to the vagrant life which afforded

most Californians almost immediate escape from their creditors. He admitted that the French doctors lost more of their fees than any other doctors and were sometimes unable even to register a claim, which may help to explain why they could not supply drugs; they would have lost the price of those as well.

### *SAINT-AMANT*

Another Frenchman, Saint-Amant, was sent to California in 1851-1852 by the French government which offered him a consular position. Saint-Amant wrote an extensive account of his travels.

Upon his arrival in San Francisco, Saint-Amant portrayed a picture of the city including a description of the moral atmosphere prevalent in the city at the time. Saint-Amant described, for example, the streets as cesspools littered with all kinds of old second-hand clothes and rags. He commented that the climate must have been quite healthy since nothing proved it more accurately than the condition of the lower end of the city. At ebb-tide, putrid miasmas infected the air along the wharves and under the houses constructed on piles. In most other regions of the world this situation would have had a pernicious effect on the general public health, causing intermittent fevers at the very least. Such was not the case for San Francisco — the only common disease was dysentery, which usually affected the newcomers.

Saint-Amant commented that there was no law about the disposal of dead bodies, so that, on the outskirts of the city, one saw nothing but these evidences of destruction and breathed the pestilent odor of putrefaction.

Saint-Amant made some comments in regard to the California wine industry. He

mentioned that vines existed in California since time immemorial; these vines grew wild in their natural state. Several Frenchmen, as will be discussed later, created vineyards in the pueblos of San Jose, Santa Barbara, and Los Angeles. Saint-Amant stated that, previously, the grape harvests were very productive, successful, and reaped high profits. However, since the discovery of gold, labor had become so prohibitive in cost that the price of native wines had greatly surpassed the imported wines despite the shipping costs and the duty imposed.

Saint-Amant commented that California was a land of great promise for construction workers, servants of both sexes, and craftsmen in general.

Saint-Amant discussed such topics as various monetary values, the postal system, the United States and the California constitutions, the judicial organization in California including some of its irregularities, schools, California societies, employment and leisure activities in San Francisco, religion, banking and various other commercial ventures within the city.

Saint-Amant stated that the Chinese were the only people in California whose numbers could be counted accurately because they came over in special ships, were numbered like sheep, and either stayed in one place or went out in large companies. The Chinese had numerous gambling houses, a theater, a newspaper, and a cemetery to which inquisitive white people followed them as to a show.

Saint-Amant asserted that in number and in influence, after the citizens of California, the French were next in significance before any other ethnic group. He stated that the French sedentary population comprised between 25,000 and 30,000 persons. He

commented that of all the Europeans, the French were the quickest to reach the gold mines. He discussed various aspects of the French population including its composition and its origin. He mentioned, for example, that shoe cleaners were for the most part from Bordeaux, a city renowned for its fine polish as well as its fine wines. The knife-grinders usually originated from Auvergne or from Savoy, while the street sweepers were from Paris. He also stated that there were many successful French gardeners in Northern California.

Saint-Amant discussed how the sand dunes in the vicinity of San Francisco were completely transformed into productive lands. Previously, only a few scraggly trees and bushes grew on these dunes; the vegetation was all cut, the sand on the dunes was improved and fertilized and new trees and bushes were planted.

Saint-Amant described Mission Dolores as a site where one went for pleasure and relaxation. He commented that it was there that the first attempts were made in gardening and where all the vegetables and flowers for San Francisco were grown. Irrigation, proper drainage, and the fact that the soil had been enriched with animal wastes accounted for its great fertility.

Saint-Amant portrayed the various customs of the native Californians, including the location of the various tribes, their movement, and some of their hunting methods. He commented that, instead of soap, they utilized the «ammole», a bulbous plant.

Saint-Amant commented that he was able to bring back to France a small collection of plants and seeds. He described the immense prairies where Wild Oak (*Avena fatua*) and white mustard (could be Tongue Pepperwood or Shepherd's Purse) grew abundantly

and which accounted for some of the best fattening pastures for cattle.

Saint-Amant mentioned some of the harmful and annoying plants of Northern California such as the artemesia (probably the *Artemesia vulgaris*) which grew and engulfed everything on the eastern side of the Sierras. He stated that this plant was especially bothersome to people walking. Another plant which could be annoying was the Wild Rose (*Rosa californica*) since its thorns often tore clothes into shreds. Saint-Amant also discussed the fear the miners had for the «Yedra» or Poison Ivy. He described huge pines or redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*). He stated that the cedars and the pines were the most useful woods in a region where one had so much to build in the cities and in the country. He mentioned that the acorns of the oak (most probably the Coast Live Oak, *Quercus agrifolia*) were ground into meal, water leached and cooked as mush by the Indians. He also commented that one saw an abundant number of maples, poplars, elms, ashes, alders, beech trees, birch trees, sycamores, cotton plants (probably cottonwoods) and plane trees. Saint-Amant, however, stated that in terms of sheer beauty the umbrella magnolia, (probably the Tulip Tree or *Liriodendron tulipifera*), when it was covered with flowers occurring singly among the leaves in summer, was unrivaled.

Saint-Amant also presented a detailed account of the gold mines, including such topics as the various mining techniques, the life of the miners, and the establishment of a claim. Saint-Amant concluded by stating that the gold mines in Northern California were inexhaustible.

#### ERNEST FRIGNET

Another Frenchman, by the name of Ernest Frignet visited Northern California dur-

ing 1851-1852. Frignet wanted to acquaint the French people still living in France with California. His account was therefore extremely informative, since he presented California under many different aspects including such topics as its history, political organization, administration, legislature, and judicial organization. He compared them with similar institutions of Europe. Frignet gave a detailed description of the population of California and its customs, on the physiognomy of the land, on the climate, on its geologic formation, and on its resources. In the first two chapters of the first volume of his account, he discussed the discovery of California, the origin, organization, and the role of the missions, the settling of the Russians at Bodega Bay, and the predominance of the Americans within Northern California.

In the third chapter of the first volume, he dealt with San Francisco during 1848-1849. He discussed such topics as the discovery of gold, new construction and the development of San Francisco, the affluence of emigrants, the excessive increase in prices of food, lots, labor, and gambling.

Frignet noted most American towns had a surrounding fringe of wooden houses which were expected to be replaced by more permanent structures as the city grew.

Frignet's third volume is of interest to a geographer as it dealt with the physical and geologic description of the state as well as with a description of its commerce, agriculture, and industry.

Frignet first presented an account of the hydrography of California including a description of the coastline and of the effects of the California Current on the atmospheric temperature both in winter and in summer. Frignet then proceeded to discuss California during the Tertiary geologic period, including

an hypothesis of the geologic formation of California, a discussion of the eruptive action of the Coast Ranges, and a description of the formation of various rocks in California. Frignet then described California during the Quaternary period, including the formation of lakes, the great mammals during this period, glaciation and flooding, and the formation of certain mineral deposits such as sulphur and gold.

Frignet then depicted the surroundings of San Jose. He stated that, at the end of the Santa Clara Valley, one could observe abundant harvests, vineyards, olive groves, and orchards with fruit trees of all kinds. He explained that, higher in the surrounding mountains, one found cedars, oaks, sycamores, laurels and manzanitas. He felt that these trees, combined with the prairies covering the ground, were reminiscent of an English park. Frignet discussed the manzanita or *Acrostophylos glauca* in greater detail. He then asserted that, at higher elevations, one observed coniferous forests with sequoias, pines, and madrones which acquired proportions in California unknown anywhere else in the world. Frignet commented on the madrone or *Arbutus menziesii*. He mentioned that, in ravines, capricious streams descended purling under thickets of lilacs, cacti, and wild roses. He stated that what Americans called lilac in California was simply a lovely variety of *Ceanothus*.

Frignet then commented on the shores of the San Francisco Bay, on the picturesque site of San Francisco, on the Northern Coast Range, including a description of Mendocino county, the geysers of Sonoma county, the Russian River, Napa county, and the Central Valley with the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers.

In the second chapter of his third volume, Frignet dealt with the agriculture, in-

dustry, and commerce of California in 1851. He discussed the nature and extent of arable soil, the various types of cultivation including cereals such as: barley and oats, corn, rice, tobacco, cotton, hops, fruits, vegetables, and vineyards. He stated that the method of agriculture in California was one of the most succinct and simplest since it required no fertilizers and no rotation of crops as the virgin soil was of an excellent fertility.

Frignet then discussed the raising of cattle, horses, mules and sheep. He then commented on the mining of quartz, silver, mercury, copper, and lignite, as well as on mining legislation and on the various mining companies.

Frignet concluded his account by discussing such topics as metallurgical industry, the manufacture of wool, the commerce of wood, various other commercial uses, the railroads, the steamers, and banking.

#### LOUIS LAURENT SIMONIN

Lastly, another account of Northern California written by a Frenchman prior to 1870, was the one of Louis Laurent Simonin. He wrote several informative works such as his account of California in 1860, which was published in the French Review, *Revue des Deux Mondes*.

In this account, Simonin wrote on many diverse topics related to California, including a description of the land and its production, its fauna and flora, its climate, its political divisions, its population, its principal cities and towns, its mining centers, its routes of transportation including a discussion of the railroads, steamers, and ocean liners. He also commented on the material progress of California, on religion and on the ethics of the people within California.



In regard to the population of San Francisco, he stated that in 1859, it was around 80,000 persons. The white male population was approximately 50,000, of which only about 1/9 was comprised of foreigners: French, German, Spanish, and other groups. He commented that the number of women hardly even reached half that of the men. The remainder of the population was composed of about 4,000 Chinese and about 1,600 Blacks.

He also gave the numbers of persons in San Francisco, by professions. He stated that it was calculated that in July, 1860 there were about 800 liquor dealers, 373 grocers, 288 lawyers, about 288 tailors, clothes salesmen, and hotel keepers. There were about 200 doctors and 200 brokers. There were approximately from 100 to 150 butchers, tobacco dealers, owners of fancy goods stores (of which he stated many were French), carpenters, and bankers. All the other professions which when grouped together did not exceed the number of liquor dealers.

In his description of the placers, Simonin commented on the proportions of the various races and on their usual professions. He stated that, in the mining centers, about one-third of the population was comprised of Americans who were hotel keepers, saloon owners, owners of department stores and goods depots. The Americans also often exercised the various communal administrative functions such as judges of the peace, constables and so on . . . . The English and the Irish had diverse occupations. The Italians were usually gardeners or merchants. The French were launderers, butchers, bricklayers, or blacksmiths. The Mexicans and the Chileans were generally rarely employed. The German Jews were usually owners of ready-made men's clothing stores. The Chinese were usually gardeners or washers of gold; they ordinarily lived in a secluded remote neighborhood. A

few Blacks were cobblers, barbers, or bath-keepers. Simonin also gave an account of the various transportation routes within and to California.

In the account he wrote in 1868, Simonin presented a detailed description of his arrival in California by land from the Sierra Nevada to Donner Lake and into Sacramento. After the description of Donner Lake he commented on black fir trees he noticed near Auburn. He stated that, as he descended the Sierras, the fir trees were succeeded by the oaks, which at a lower elevation were then succeeded by the manzanita. The manzanita had small brown berries which the Indians ate. Simonin discussed the latest undertakings of the Central and Union railroads. He commented on the ceremony when the two railroads met and on the importance of this completed railway linking the West with the East.

Simonin's description of San Francisco was of interest as he commented, for example, on the use of registers in hotels, on the way Californians had a passion for titles, on Chinatown, on Mission Dolores, and on the Cliff House. He described the Cliff House as a place where one went to enjoy a bottle of wine and to eat in front of the breakers. The sea lions were usually assembled in a multitude on the neighboring reefs. The road which led to the Cliff House was very delightful, as one saw very attractive houses and cottages all along the way.

Simonin stated that the sand dunes around San Francisco were removed by steam-driven dredgers, and that a railroad had been completed linking San Francisco to San Jose.

Simonin asserted that the principal street of San Francisco was Montgomery Street. It was the neighborhood of high soci-

ety with large hotels that could accommodate from 1,800 to 2,000 travellers, fashion shops, jewelry shops, and bookstores.

Simonin also depicted the geysers of Sonoma, Napa, and Lake counties. He discussed a new method for treating auriferous sulphurs which was invented by a Frenchman, M. Rivot.

Simonin mentioned that in 1867, the production of wheat had reached the value of gold. During the same year, California produced 3,500,000 gallons of wine and 400,000 gallons of brandy while 9,500,000 pounds of wool was gathered. Simonin stated that in two years, real estate property, had increased by 20 per cent. He commented that all these figures compensated for the diminution in the production of gold. Simonin concluded his account by presenting various descriptions of several mining centers such as Mokelumne Hill.

Generally speaking, the French explorers and travellers mentioned above have all greatly contributed to our knowledge of the historical and cultural geography of Northern California by presenting the most accurate and detailed accounts of contemporary conditions, surpassing both the English and the Spanish; we owe a great deal to the keen observation of these Frenchmen.

#### THE FRENCH IN THE MINING CAMPS DURING THE CALIFORNIA GOLD RUSH

It became apparent that the gold fields offered opportunities for both emigration and speculation; consequently, emigration and mining companies were hastily organized. Some of the promoters of the gold companies were obviously dishonest and at the same time, were eager to make money both easily and rapidly. According to Chinard it seemed certain, also, that a large number were sin-

cerely hoping that emigration to California would contribute to relieve a truly distressing condition.

On January 13, 1849, appeared the first advertisement in one of the Parisian newspapers, announcing that «*La Meuse*», a small clipper, had been chartered by the «*Agence Américaine*» and would sail for San Francisco on February 15. This voyage marked the first considerable group of Frenchmen (about forty) coming directly from France to arrive in San Francisco debarking there on September 14, 1849. From that time on, French nationals began to pour in by the thousands through the Golden Gate. California was widely advertised in France. According to Nasatir, from a group of about a dozen or so Frenchmen who lived in California early in 1849, the French population increased to perhaps 30,000 by the end of 1853.

On February 1, mention was made of a regularly constituted society called «*Expédition Française pour les Mines d'Or de Sacramento*» being formed. This society established the basic principles utilized by the majority of the California companies subsequently organized for almost two years: issuing shares to build up enough capital to charter ships, purchasing merchandise, and providing equipment for the workers once they reached the gold mines.

Numerous companies were created for such objectives as the colonization of California, the mining of gold and the promoting of agriculture, real estate, and commerce. Their goal was to rid France of her undesirables as well as to make money. Not all companies were reliable; in fact, many of them were fraudulent.

These companies appealed to regional, political, social, and religious sentiments of the time. For example, some of the names of

the companies were: «*L'Union Française*», «*La Confiance*», «*La Républicaine*», «*L'Espérance* (Hope)». Others bore the alluring names of «*La Toison d'Or*», «*La Ruche d'Or*», «*La Moisson d'Or*», and «*Comptoir des Deux Mondes*». These companies appealed to the idea of association which was popular toward the end of Louis Philippe's reign.

In 1850, the French government created «*La Compagnie des Gardes Mobiles*» to transport members of the «*Gardes Mobiles*» to California. The «*Gardes*» had been armed to overthrow Louis Blanc in 1848. Many of them were anti-Bonapartists, and the government felt that emigration would prevent any difficulties they might cause. Probably 1,000 emigrants were sent to California by the various companies. However, the companies were all unsound financially and few made adequate preparations for transportation. None of the companies had been able to organize an effective labor group, and, when it was learned in France that the companies were dissolved as soon as the emigrants reached San Francisco, the companies were doomed. However, several of the emigrants formed new associations such as the «*Projet d'Association Agricole pour la Californie*» and settled in different parts of California. As will be discussed later, those who stayed in San Francisco established the first savings bank to be opened in the city and, as early as December, 1851, they started the organization of the association which was to become the «*Société Française de Bienfaisance Mutuelle de San Francisco*».

Another reason for the decline of the companies was the rise of the «*Loterie des Lingots d'Or*». The «*Loterie*» was formed in August, 1850, and the French government even gave it official backing. Two hundred and twenty-four prizes were to be given away and the first prize was a golden ingot worth 400,000 francs. The profits were to

be used to transport 5,000 emigrants to California. The French government thus planned to encourage political radicals to emigrate. During eighteen months the lottery was in operation, millions of tickets were sold throughout Europe. On November 16, 1851, the drawing took place in Paris, and the profits enabled the government to send 3,885 emigrants to California.

Most of the prizes went to the «small people» of Paris and the provinces such as day workers, fishmongers, servants, and seamstresses. . . . The campaign of publicity and the promotion of emigration was represented as a miraculous means for investors to recoup their recent losses. The promoters attempted to exploit the gambling spirit and escapism of people who were going through a period of extraordinary political confusion.

California was depicted as an Eldorado, and an earthly paradise where one could expand and prosper almost indefinitely. At the same time, the conservative people were assured that the loss of so many impoverished, famished, and turbulent elements in the French population would be a definite gain for the country. According to Chinard, those who went were in a large majority: merchants, tradesmen, artisans, and farmers, with a sprinkling of artists and adventurers.

At its peak during the Gold Rush, the French population of California hardly reached a total of 25,000 and not more than 10,000 came directly from France. When two or three hundred emigrants per month were sailing from France, by contrast, thousands were leaving the British Isles and Germany.

Many of the immigrants arrived penniless and had to procure help from the French consul, Dillon. He encouraged the French merchants in San Francisco to form the

«*Société Française de Bienfaisance Mutuelle*»  
to assist these immigrants.

As stated earlier, although there were a number of French in California prior to 1849, the greater proportion of the emigration directly from France took place after that date. It was the belief of Nasatir that the bulk of French families in California today stemmed from the efforts of the Society of the Golden Ingots. By far the most important, most fruitful, and most ingenious society, it received the backing of the French government and was the only company actually to transport a large number of emigrants to California. The Marziou Company which transported the immigrants, granted a loan which made possible the building of the French church, Notre Dame des Victoires, in San Francisco. In order to encourage as many unemployed as possible to leave France, entire families were allowed to enlist for the voyage. Approximately 4,000 unemployed, representing every profession, were transported to California. They were almost all from the Paris Region.

The first French immigrants to California came naturally from the closest lands: from Mexico, Chile, Peru, the Hawaiian Islands, Tahiti, the Eastern United States, Québec and especially from Louisiana. However, there is record of a French native immigrating directly from France as early as 1848: M. Eugène Sabatié, who arrived in San Francisco with a shipment of flour.

As was seen earlier, the discovery of gold in California excited French opinion and led to a sizeable increase of information, largely erroneous, about it. The newspapers published every scrap of information about California.

From the outset of the verification of the news of the discovery of gold at Coloma,

many Frenchmen left France and went directly to California. The majority of them travelled chiefly around the Horn or via Chagres (the Isthmus of Panama).

Not only the well-to-do, but also many of France's worthless and indolent persons came with the many companies that formed in France. However, while a large number of Frenchmen were brought over by the societies, many also came on their own as it was relatively easy to obtain a passage on commercial ships sailing from France to San Francisco.

Most of them were from the middle classes, and they came to obtain enough gold so they could return to France and live a better life. Very few Frenchmen thought seriously about making California their permanent home.

According to Chinard, on the whole, the passenger lists of all the emigrants who had sailed on the ships of the company «*La Californienne*» seemed to provide a fair sample of the French people as it was constituted at the time. He stated that, based on this particular company, a very large proportion came from the provinces, small towns, and villages and that practically all professions and occupations were represented. Chinard commented that many were probably small farmers, but that there was even a slight sprinkling of names belonging to the nobility. He felt that this diversity of the French immigrants might help to explain why the so-called «French colony» of San Francisco had for so long preserved the characteristics of a «Little France»:

Many of the French emigrants who came to California did not fare well, as they had been fooled by the companies they had enlisted with, arriving penniless and deserted completely in San Francisco.



In the mines, the French were often in trouble. They could not work in companies. They enjoyed their independence and therefore were found isolated in groups of four and six. They were scattered everywhere since, according to Nasatir, a few Frenchmen were to be found in every district: at Marysville, in the Trinity Region, in the lower, middle, and upper districts. The French, who were in the mining districts, were on several occasions the butt of anti-foreign agitation, and several fights occurred, such as the one at Mokelumne Hill, which will be discussed later. It seemed that the French were the target of anti-foreign agitation because they formed more companionship with the Latin Americans than they did with the Anglo-Americans, so the latter felt that the French might be allying themselves with the Latins. Furthermore, the French made few attempts to learn English. The influence of the French can be detected by the mere fact that, scattered over the entire region of Northern California, one finds the names of French Camp, French Bay, French Corral, Fourcades, etc. . .

The French seemingly had poorer success than others because of their constitutional inability to get along with each other well enough to work in company, and they had suffered much from the Foreign Miners' Tax and attendant abuses.

In the mines as well as in San Francisco, the French were separate from other ethnic groups; they did not assimilate with the other immigrants whom they could not understand. Among themselves, they formed small companies of two persons or at times somewhat larger, according to the importance of the claims or the auriferous holdings which they were exploiting.

The French among themselves were gregarious. According to Borthwick, they were either found in large numbers or not at

all. They did not travel about much, and, when they did; they were in parties of half-a-dozen. Americans would travel hundreds of miles to reach a place which they believed to be rich, while on the other hand, the great object of the French seemed to be in their choice of location. It had to be near where a number of their countrymen had already settled. However, although they seemed to be so fond of each other's company, they did not seem to possess that cohesiveness and mutual confidence necessary for the success of a joint undertaking. Many kinds of diggings could only be worked to advantage by companies of fifteen or twenty men, but the French were never seen attempting such a combination. Occasionally half-a-dozen or so worked together, but even then the chances were that they would fight among themselves, and that they would separate before they had gotten their claim into working order; therefore, they would lose their labor from their inability to keep together in one place of operation.

There is no question that, as miners, the French were far excelled by the Americans and by the English. The French, in proportion to their numbers, did not bear a sufficiently conspicuous part, either in mining operations, or in those branches of industry related to the converting of natural resources to the service of man.

The French as miners were never engaged in the same daring undertakings as the Americans. The only pursuits they engaged in, except mining, were the keeping of restaurants, estaminets, cafés, billiard-rooms, and such places catering more to the pleasures than to the necessities of man; and not really adding much to the wealth of the country by rendering its resources more available.

The French would usually delimit the

boundaries of their claims with wooden pickets planted in the ground. They would usually sleep out in the open, although a few had tents or small huts made of branches.

Whenever a camp appeared to possess any potential for future development a retailer would immediately come to it and would open a «*tienda*» or shop where the miners could get food supplies, clothes, tools, etc. . . . Others would then open a saloon, a carpentry workshop, a blacksmith workshop, a small hotel, a dance and gambling hall, etc. . . . Then the camp, to which some name was given, became a village, and if the surrounding placers continued to prove profitable, the village would soon be promoted to the rank of town or even city. Such is the beginning of most of the Sierra centers of population, of which some have acquired and conserved a true and lasting importance, and of which others have completely disappeared with the exhaustion of auriferous deposits which had once made them prosperous.

Two other factors contributed to mar the existence of the French in the placers: the Foreign Miners' Tax and the hostility of the American miners, who were often either Irish or former convicts from Australia. Another cause of perturbation for the French was the anarchy and the great brutality of manners which then prevailed, and which, in the absence of any officially organized authority, compelled everyone to watch over his own safety as well as to defend his rights, usually with arms in hand.

At first, the French immigrants went principally to the Southern mines and had demonstrated a preference for the tributaries of the San Joaquin. There, one could work almost through the entire winter as one did not have to fear as much the rigors of the season of snow and floods as in the Northern mines.

The French miners were the first explorers in the Southern mines, along with the Mexicans, especially the Sonorans who were renowned as «*lavadores de oro*». There, they had agglomerated at Quartz Hill, and Oro Grosso, and at Oro Fino in the Upper San Joaquin, at Fort Miller, at Chowchilla, at Fresno, at Mariposa, which was the most important center of the placers of the extreme South, at Agua Fria, at Hornitos, at Bear Valley, at Merced, etc. . . .

In a radius closer to the center of the mining region, one would find French miners in great numbers at Sonora, Columbia, Murphy, Campo Seco, Mokelumne Hill, Volcano, Sutter Creek, Amador, and other deposits of great wealth easily exploitable. In the region of the Southern mines, at Sonora or Mariposa, the mining procedures were relatively easy and simple: Gold was found on the surface of the ground or at very little depth. All one had to do was to collect gravel and to wash it in a «*battea*» (a large wooden dish in the shape of a *sebille*) to discover the precious metal.

The great majority of the miners in the Southern placers would average earnings between four and five dollars a day in 1850, but they would spend about two or three dollars of those earnings daily just for the bare necessities. However, there were a few rich strikes for a small number of lucky miners. For example, around the end of 1850, a large nugget weighing 12 pounds was displayed in San Francisco. Its value was estimated at close to \$4,000. This fabulous sample had been discovered, along with others, in the Southern mines, by three Frenchmen who, in fifteen days, were able to amass a small fortune.

As early as 1850, Stockton was beginning to grow in importance. The post office, a theater, and the jail had been constructed.

in wood on the quay, and a certain number of stores were erected on the peninsula which extended on the San Joaquin. During this period, the French were already quite numerous in Stockton, more so than in Sacramento. Misters Poursille, Duval, and Hestres all had opened dry goods stores. Mr. Fagothey had created a restaurant under a tent, which he had called the «*Petit Véry*». The father of Mr. Louis Grégoire, the head librarian of San Francisco, had built a hotel with wooden planks, called the Phoenix Hotel.

The largest settlement of the French in the Southern mines was to be found at «*Les Fourcades*», later known as Mokelumne Hill, situated on the south bank of the Mokelumne River about 45 miles north east of Stockton. There were eight thousand French who were sent by the French government to work at «*Les Fourcades*». They were largely composed of the «*Gardes Mobiles*» who were sent to Mokelumne Hill at the expense of the French government for their services previously rendered.

In the spring of 1851, three Frenchmen found an extremely rich old channel high up on the side of French Hill north east of the town of Mokelumne Hill, and in a few days took over \$180,000. The Frenchmen had attempted to keep their wealth a secret, but in vain, and some Americans found it out and went into the claim at night and stole from it. It soon became known among the Americans that the Frenchmen had discovered the richest sort of diggings. For a time, it almost appeared as if there was to be a regular war. Hittel states that:

Messengers were sent out in all directions by respective parties for recruits and arms, and as soon as they could come together, two small armies assembled and camped opposite each other. There is no telling what might have happened if the opposing forces had

come to bloodshed. Fortunately there were cool heads among the Frenchmen at whose insistence the tri-colored flag was finally hauled down, some concessions were made on both sides, and the hostile hosts dispersed. After the restoration of peace, other rich discoveries were made, more miners came in, good fortune attended almost all the diggings, and the town acquired a population of between three and four thousand inhabitants.

The Frenchmen took possession of their mines once more without any opposition. However, unfortunately, marauders had taken advantage of the disturbance and general confusion to pillage the tents of the Frenchmen and set them afire.

French Hill proved to be the richest spot in the state of California, the pocket alone over which the trouble first started was credited with a yield of over a million dollars. From 1851 to 1853, the yield from French Hill was over \$10,000,000.

Further north, another significant group of Frenchmen, approximately 10,000 in 1851, according to Dillon, were exploiting the mines along the Yuba and Feather Rivers. Marysville was the principal center of this mining region. The French were also quite numerous in Placerville, Coloma, Auburn, Camptonville, Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Nevada County. Everywhere in Nevada County and its surrounding area, one would find Frenchmen who were established either as traders, storekeepers, restaurant and hotel owners, or workers of diverse professions but especially as miners. Oroville and Downieville also had a large French population as well as Rich Bar, Missouri Bar, Sicard Bar, etc.

In these Northern mines, work was much harder and more costly than in the Southern mines. One required capital to undertake

mining in order to ensure its success. One had to establish huge sluices of several hundreds of feet and sometimes of several thousands of feet in length. However, the miners would predominantly utilize the hydraulic process of mining. It has been stated though that the chances of success were greater in the Northern mines. It was not unusual to observe companies from one day to the next come into possession of incredible treasures.

At the point where the Sacramento is no longer navigable and even further North, the French were also present. Some French settled in Shasta, Weaverville, Yreka, Trinity, and Orleans Bar on the Klamath River, which were all central gathering places. Mount Shasta had first attracted the attention of the French miners. All they had to do was to follow the gradients of the land to discover gold. Thus, a whole new group of centers was formed, each with its own history.

In 1851, two Frenchmen, the Baron Amaury de la Grange and Fred Beaudry, were responsible for the development of mining in Trinity and Siskiyou Counties. The mine in Trinity County, located near Weaverville necessitated the hydraulic process. Since there was not enough water, engineers in 1854 dug enormous water reservoirs in the Trinity Mountains which became lakes known today as Lake Sapphire and Emerald Lake. The mine was then bought by a French company and Baron de la Grange became its superintendent. The mine soon became known as the La Grange Mine and apparently was the largest hydraulic mine in the world. In 1854, a miner discovered some gold six miles from Crescent City, in a river tributary to the Smith River, in present day Del-Norte County. It started a real gold rush to the area. Just six miles east of the «Bald Hills», a French émigrant A. Villard discovered an auriferous vein and established a mining camp there. This was the origin of Villardville. French

Corral, situated on the ridge near the confluence of the Middle Fork with the main Yuba, was the lower limit of the gold-bearing gravel range in that region. It received this name because its first settler was a Frenchman who built and maintained a corral for mules there. Later, it was found to be on a valuable gold deposit, but even after it became a thriving mining town the old name was retained.

Marysville, the most prominent town north of Sacramento owes its development to a Frenchman, Charles Covillaud. A trading post of two adobe houses, called New Mecklenburg, had originally stood on the site of Marysville. Covillaud, in October, 1848, bought one-half of the interest and three months later the rest was sold to M. C. Nye and W. Foster. The place then became known as Nye's Ranch. In September, 1849, Covillaud bought the whole place and established a firm, Covillaud & Co., with three other partners, J. M. Ramirez, J. Sampson, and T. Sicard. Covillaud hired A. Le Plangeon to lay out the town under the name of Yubaville, which was later changed to Marysville, in honor of Mary Murphy, Covillaud's wife. In 1849, there were approximately 500 inhabitants, all living at the two hotels, the «United States Hotel» and the «City Hotel». In 1851, the number of Frenchmen in Marysville was large enough to necessitate an agent from the French government, called Dr. Pigné-Dupuytren. In 1853, there was even a French hospital in Marysville, headed by Dr. H. L'Amouroux. A Frenchman, Henry Videau, was supposed to have built the first real hotel of Marysville, in 1851, which was called the «Hotel de France». (The other two hotels mentioned previously were just large tents.)

There were many Frenchmen who contributed to the development of mining in Nevada County. For example, two Frenchmen, Jules Fricot and André Chavanne started the Quartz Gold Mines of Nevada County.



They were almost certainly the first ones to build an ore crusher which was soon known under the name of French Mill. Chavanne also invented a mechanism for electric generators. Mr. Glasson, another Frenchman, was largely responsible for the establishment and development of Grass Valley. Fauchey, also a Frenchman, was the engineer who developed the Magenta Flume at Eureka Lake. Etienne Derbec, a French journalist, founded a mining establishment called Progress Camp near Grass Valley.

In the county of Nevada, the French were not only the first to build quartz mills but they were also the first to construct reduction ovens. In North Bloomfield, then known as «Humbug City», a few Frenchmen decided to explore the peaks of the Sierra Nevada. They climbed up to and even above 10,000 feet. There, they discovered huge lakes. They built dams to ensure a year-round water supply. The Frenchmen then dug canals for several hundred miles and thus brought the water from the melting snow to the great auriferous deposits of the High Sierras. The «Eureka and Mining Company» which was responsible for these enormous undertakings was for a long period headed by Frenchmen. Another contribution to the mining technology was the presence of Etienne Derbec. He was a journalist, publisher, and editor, as well as a metallurgist and miner. In 1863 and 1864, he built at Progress Camp, near Grass Valley, an establishment for the chemical reduction of the auriferous sulphurites. Derbec had laboratories and assaying furnaces in San Francisco, Progress Camp, Virginia City, Gold Hill, Grass Valley, and the Derbec Mine. In 1875, he bought forty mining claims, and later twenty more, each 100 feet wide, and some up to 6,000 feet long, on Big Blue Ledge at North Bloomfield, in Nevada County. In the same year, he explored Amador and Calaveras Counties in Central California, and discovered new rocks and formations con-

taining gold, silver, and other minerals. Derbec developed a new system to work the mines, a system of drifts that he claimed was better than the old ones, and an improvement on the hydraulic systems that were then in general use.

It was three Frenchmen by the names of Claude Chana, François Gendron, and Philibert Courteau who discovered gold in Placer County in 1848 after having explored many sites along the Yuba and Bear Rivers. It was on June 15, 1848, along the American River, at a site near the present day hamlet of Phir that Chana struck it rich. He and his associates established a camp called «Wood's Dry Diggings». During the summer of 1849, a group of soldiers, deserters, arrived at this camp. They were all from Auburn in New York State. Soon, Chana's Camp became known as Auburn.

Frenchmen have been associated with two mining methods. In 1848, the «cradle» or «rocker» method was introduced, but there is some question as to whether Isaac Humphrey of Georgia or Ruelle, a Frenchman working for Captain Sutter, first used the «cradle». The introduction of hydraulic mining has been credited to a Frenchman, A. Chabot. In 1852, Chabot had a gravel bank on Buckeye Hill, about a quarter of a mile north of Nevada City, and he used a hose to carry the water down to his sluices; such was the humble beginning of hydraulic mining.

According to Borthwick, the French were the only people in the mines who appeared to be entirely at home. They constructed their cabins carefully giving them a finished appearance which seemed to indicate a greater degree of permanency. The French did not travel around as much as some of the other miners. They would work hard and steadily as long as there was nothing to disturb them. However, if a stranger entered

the Camp, all work was stopped for the day and their time was spent in discussion.

The French miners congregated in camps and were not often found working with miners of other nationalities. They were seldom seen alone wandering through the diggings. Besides mining, the French managed restaurants, estaminets, *cafés chantants*, gambling halls, and billiard-rooms. In many respects the French were a most valuable addition to the population of California, especially in the cities; however, as colonizers and subjugators of a new land, their inefficiency was very often apparent.

#### THE FRENCH AND THE AGRICULTURE OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

As we saw in the previous [section], many of the French in northern California during the Gold Rush were engaged in mining and other business enterprises. A reminder of the influence of the French can currently be seen in the geographical place names throughout northern California such as French Creek, French Bar, French Camp, French Hill, etc. . . This [section] will investigate some of the contributions the French made to the growth and development of agriculture in Northern California largely between 1850 and 1870.

One of the most important pioneers of Del-Norte County was the Frenchman, Horace Gasquet. He left France around 1848 and sailed for San Francisco. He first went to the Sacramento District but found that the good jobs in the mines were already taken. He worked in poorer mines and held a variety of other jobs before leaving for the northernmost section of California, Del-Norte County. He travelled by sea and landed at Crescent City. Since he found that the coastal district was already occupied, he went across «Redwood» and came to the Smith

River where he obtained 205 acres of land which he first used for the panning of gold, and then kept it as his business headquarters. He named it Gasquet's. Gasquet's still exists today on the road leading from Crescent City to Grant's Pass in Oregon. Gasquet's was a halting place, 18 miles northeast of Crescent City at the junction of the middle and northern arms of the Smith River. Horace Gasquet's estate, at Gasquet's, included approximately thirty houses and sheds of various kinds: a hotel, Gasquet's house, a general store, houses for the personnel, a post office, a cellar, goods sheds, stables, cowsheds, the blacksmith, the saddlery, etc. . .

Horace Gasquet proposed to connect Crescent City with the nearest railway station when the railroad from Portland to San Francisco was built. He therefore undertook the construction of 45 miles of road in the mountains, 18 miles of which he gave to the County, and 27 miles on which he obtained payment for the use of same. Horace Gasquet also ensured the daily postal service, and a daily four-horse stagecoach service between Grant's Pass railway station and Crescent City.

Gasquet's ranch included normal farm activities: certain parts of the land had vineyards, others were under cultivation for vegetables, cereals, and European fruits. Gasquet also had forty or so cows and bulls; hundreds of chickens, ducks, and pigeons; as well as forty or fifty horses, both for the ranch itself and for the stagecoach. Gasquet even owned two estates in nearby Siskiyou County. He had two general stores in Happy Camp, Siskiyou County, one of them under the name of J. Camp, so as to give the impression of competing with each other. He also had several other estates, and, in particular, two mines which were located about 6 to 10 miles from Happy Camp. Gasquet's was also considered an excellent summer resort likely to attract all Californians. Horace Gasquet un-

dertook some advertising on the subject.

In Humboldt County, the founder of the resort town of Blue Lake was a Frenchman named Clément Chartin. He settled in Humboldt County around 1869 and first built the Hotel Blue Lake and several houses in 1871. He then created a general store and a post office. Chartin distributed lots to settlers who promised to either build a house or a store on each lot. He also allocated land for the building of several churches. Chartin cultivated large portions of land in the vicinity of Blue Lake and started a newspaper enterprise.

The first orchard in the Sacramento Valley was created by a Frenchman. Théodore Sicard arrived in California in 1844 and first settled in Placer County, on the south bank of Bear River. There, he built a small adobe house. It was the first house in Placer County. He cultivated the land he had been granted by the Mexican government. Since he was situated on the path which led the immigrants from the East to the fort of John Sutter, these immigrants would stop over at Sicard's house. Claude Chana arrived at Sicard's farm in February, 1846. A family of immigrants had given Sicard peach pits, which Sicard had successfully planted. Chana gave Sicard some almonds and helped him plant them. Thus was created the first orchard of the Sacramento Valley. Claude Chana later purchased Sicard's ranch and traded his fruits and vegetables with the miners.

It was in 1853 that Dr. Paul de Heiry, a doctor in the French navy, purchased a large section of land in Marin County at San Rafael, behind the ruins of the Mission and near the present location of the Hall of Justice. Since he was originally from a family of horticulturists, De Heiry had seeds sent from France, as well as vine-stocks, slips of rose bushes, saplings of apple trees, and other fruit

trees. It was he who imported the rose bush called «Marshal Ney» and which can be seen today in many of the gardens of San Rafael. De Heiry suddenly disappeared, and no one ever heard of him again; however, his influence is still felt in the many beautiful gardens of Marin County which are often adorned with flowers, climbing plants, apple trees, pear trees, and other plants which he had introduced from France.

As mentioned earlier, it was the French explorer La Pérouse in 1786 who introduced the potato from Chile to northern California, as he visited the town of Monterey.

As one of the first pioneers of the Santa Clara Valley, one should mention the Frenchman Pierre Sainsevain, who built the first saw-mill in the Santa Clara Valley as well as the first flour-mill around 1848.

In 1853, Louis Pellier founded the first association of horticulturists in San Jose. He had arrived in California in 1848, where he had first gone to the mines. In 1850, he bought a large parcel of land in San Jose, just west of San Pedro and near St. James. On this parcel, he planted one of the first orchards of this county and established a beautiful nursery. He had brought saplings of fruit trees from France as well as seeds of flowers. In 1854, he sent his brother Pierre to France, asking him to collect cuttings, stocks, and seeds. Pierre spent more than two years searching for the best slips and for the nicest saplings. This is how such vine stocks as Black Burgundy, Chasselas grapes, and Fontainebleau grapes were introduced to the Santa Clara Valley. He also imported small French plum, the large purple plum, the mirabelle plum, cherries, pears, and apricots from France. All the other horticulturists of the region obtained their supplies of cuttings, slips, and seeds from Louis Pellier. His large garden and nursery were maintained for a

long time in San Jose and were known under the name of Pellier's Garden.

Perhaps one of the most visible and lasting influences of the French was the introduction of the European Brown Snail or *Helix aspersa* Müller to the Santa Clara Valley.

The European Brown Snail always displayed an interesting dispersion pattern as it has followed man in his migrations, either through direct effort by man to introduce it into new surroundings because of its use as an article of food, or accidentally by transporting it on plants. This pattern has resulted in widely distributing the *Helix aspersa* throughout the temperate zones.

According to Tryon in 1888, the *Helix aspersa* was present in southern and western Europe, England, Syria, northern Africa, the Canaries, the Azores, Madeira, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Guiana, Cape of Good Hope, Mauritius, New South Wales, New Zealand, Haiti, and Cuba. On the other hand, W.G. Binney in regard to the *Helix aspersa* stated in 1878 that this species was found:

In gardens in Charleston, South Carolina, and vicinity, where it has existed for fifty years: I also found it plentifully in St. Michael's Churchyard, in 1875; also, has been found at New Orleans and Baton Rouge: Portland, Maine: Nova Scotia: Santa Barbara, California: Haiti, St. Jago, Chili, etc. . . : it is a European species, accidentally introduced into this country, or rather by commerce as an article of food. It is evidently a species peculiarly adapted to colonization.

For two centuries, man has involuntarily contributed to the dispersion of snails. The transport of vegetables from one region to another, and sometimes from one continent to another has resulted in a true migration of certain species of mollusks. The *Helix aspersa*,

especially, has benefited from this dispersion pattern. Portuguese sailors would procure snails in Western France in Charente and introduced them to the Azores Islands and to Brazil. They have been reported in the 18th century in South America, and in the 19th century in North America, in Mexico, in Cuba, in Brazil, Chad, Senegal, Congo, South Africa, and other countries. The acclimatization of the *Helix aspersa* is not successful everywhere or at least very irregularly. The *Helix aspersa* is widespread but it is not universal.

It is known that the European Brown Snail is a native of Asia. It lives in a determined region, more or less defined. The sector determined for the *Helix aspersa* can extend quite far from east to west, but is quite limited from north to south. In short, there is a much larger limitation in latitude than in longitude. The principal agent of delimitation is heat.

As for California, the *Helix aspersa* was first discovered in Santa Barbara in 1850 by Kellett and Wood, who were collecting specimens in the area. However, Stearns felt that the discovery of the *Helix aspersa* by Kellett and Wood was an error due to mistaken identification. Stearns stated that it appeared that the shell which had been identified as *Helix aspersa* by Kellett and Wood was probably either a specimen of the species described as *Helix Tryoni* which had been described by Dr. Newcomb in 1864, or that it was an aberrant *Helix Kellettii*, which in color, elevation, and general appearance resembled a dwarf *Helix aspersa*. Stearns also noted that he had discovered numerous specimens of the *Helix Tryoni* on Santa Barbara Island, which led to his hypothesis of the mistaken identification.

According to Stearns, the *Helix aspersa* was introduced from France about 1858 near San Jose, in Santa Clara County by a



Frenchman, M. A. Delmas. Why Delmas introduced the *Helix aspersa* rather than the *Helix pomatia*, which is considered a superior species as far as a food delicacy, is perhaps explainable by the fact that Delmas came from a region where the *Helix aspersa* was cultivated or where that species occurred. Stearns asserted that it was intentionally introduced or «planted». Delmas brought the stock from his native region in France and turned it out among the vineyards on the west bank of the Guadalupe. The Guadalupe is a river formed by several minor streams which flows northerly through the Santa Clara Valley and empties into the Bay of San Francisco at its southerly end near Alviso. It was almost certainly introduced to northern California as an experiment because of its utility as an article of food. Stearns listed four reasons to explain why such a species as *Helix aspersa*, near the population center of San Jose, had remained unknown to the local naturalists for over 23 years after its introduction to northern California by the French. First, he stated that the location where the snail was «planted» was on private ground of considerable area as it covered several acres. Secondly, he felt that the local climate with its rainless summers did not promote the rapid multiplication of individuals as would the native climate of the species. Thirdly, Stearns felt that the increase was very likely the measure of consumption as food by the parties owning the locality. Fourthly, the French who introduced it and used it as a food source kept its presence a secret. Stearns also stated that apparently Delmas later «planted» colonies of *Helix aspersa* in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Mrs. A. E. Bush of San Jose wrote the following concerning the area where the *Helix aspersa* was introduced:

There are a few French families about there (on the Guadalupe), but they

seem very unwilling to give any information, which may be because Americans are prejudiced against snails as an article of food . . . The soil where the colony was placed is a rich, sandy loam, well shaded; when the summer heats come, the *Helices* descend into the ground several feet, in the cracks that form as the ground dries; and the gopher holes make retreats also for the *Helix*.

In a later report written in 1900, Stearns asserted that the *Helix aspersa* was now also present in Oakland, Pacific Grove, and East Side and Elysian Parks in Los Angeles. One can therefore say that by 1900 the *Helix aspersa* was quite widely distributed in California. Today, the *Helix aspersa* has spread throughout most of the cultivated areas of the state.

Antoine Camin, from Cannes, France, arrived in San Francisco around 1850. He soon settled near the town of Mariposa. In 1867, he purchased 180 acres of land at Hornitos. He established a large nursery and developed the first orchard in the region. Camin would send the delicious fruits he grew in his orchard throughout northern California. He also sold seeds and small trees in all the surrounding counties.

The last part of this[section] will discuss the influential role the French played on the California Wine Industry. Winemaking itself was not introduced to California by the French. It is one of the oldest commercial agricultural enterprises in California. Its history may be traced to Cortez (1524) in Mexico. The Jesuits introduced the grape into Baja California from Mexico. It is from there apparently that came the first slips for the vineyards of Alta California, concurrent with the establishment of the Spanish missions. It was the Franciscan fathers who cultivated it during the middle of the eighteenth century. It is therefore to them that the credit should

be given for the beginnings of California's viticulture.

It is interesting to note that although viticulture extended as far as the missions did, which would be from San Diego to Sonoma, Los Angeles was the vine-growing region of the 1830's. In 1831, more than 100,000 vines were growing within the present city limits of Los Angeles, more than one-half of those growing in the state. Even though the land and climate of California was ideal for grape growing, Forbes in 1839 felt that it was not enough to establish wine-making as an industry. He wrote that California needed intelligent and trained persons to make superior wines. He also stated that California offered a «wide and promising field for the cultivation of the grape in all varieties».

The first of the «intelligent persons» whom Forbes had felt California viticulture needed arrived at Monterey in 1831. His name, appropriately enough, was Jean Louis Vignes. He was probably the first permanent French resident of California. After a reverse in his fortune, he left with his family and departed from Cadillac, a wine-producing colony near Bordeaux in 1827. Vignes had been trained as a cooper and distiller in France. In 1831, he came to Monterey by way of the Sandwich Islands where he had spent three years. He moved very shortly to Los Angeles, where he remained until his death in 1863. By 1833, he was established there as vineyardist. Los Angeles was already known as a wine center as it had at least six wine growers with an estimated one hundred acres and 100,000 vines. However, a Frenchman and connoisseur pointed out that the reputation of Los Angeles suffered greatly from ignorance in its wineries.

«The vine succeeds very well,» wrote Auguste Bernard Duhaut-Cilly after his visit in 1827, «but wine and brandy extracted from it are very inferior to the

exquisite quality of the grape used for it, and I think this inferiority is to be attributed to the making rather than to the growth.»

Duhaut-Cilly felt as Forbes that the time had come for an expert.

Vignes purchased 104 acres of land and set up a commercial vineyard where the Los Angeles Union Station stands today. He planted an extensive vineyard which was long known as the «Aliso vineyard» («Alder vineyard») after the beautiful tree which shaded its entrance. At Los Angeles, Vignes began importing foreign grape cuttings, which were shipped from France to Boston, then around Cape Horn to California. Although the cuttings were used principally for experimentation, several shipments of different varieties, in quantities large enough to be used in wine-making, arrived in California in the early 1830's. William Heath Davis claimed that Vignes was the first person to bring foreign cuttings to California. Davis stated that,

«I regard him as the pioneer not only in wine making, but in orange cultivation, he being the first man to raise oranges in Los Angeles and the first to establish a vineyard of any pretension.»

Davis also stated that Vignes once told him:

«William, I only regret that I am not of your age. With my knowledge of vine and orange cultivation and of the soil and climate of California, I foresee that these two are to have a great future. This is just the place to grow them to perfection.»

Davis also asserted that Vignes was one of the most valuable men who ever came to California, and the father of the wine industry here. He had an intelligent appreciation of the extent and importance of this interest

in the future. Vignes was not only the first Californian to specialize in wine-growing, but he was also the first one to age his vintages in quantity.

Vignes also induced several of his relatives and a number of his more intelligent countrymen to come to California to engage in the business. He wrote to France stating that he believed that California was destined to rival France, not only in the quantity of wine produced, but also in the quality of its wines.

The number of friends Vignes induced to leave France and to start vineyards in California cannot be estimated, but at least eight of his relatives emigrated. Probably the first of his relatives to join him was a nephew, Pierre Sainsevain, also from the region of Bordeaux. When he joined his uncle at Los Angeles in July, 1839, Vignes' vineyard consisted of more than forty thousand vines and a good cellar with oak casks that he had constructed from nearby oak trees. In 1840, Vignes began regular shipments of wine to other parts of California. For example, in 1840, Sainsevain loaded the ship Mooson, with wines and brandies manufactured by Vignes and sailed for the ports of Santa Barbara, Monterey, and San Francisco. The real significance of this trip being that it was the first known shipment, in quantity and for any considerable distance, of California wines. According to Davis, Vignes' coast-wise trade was thriving by 1842. Vignes continued to manage his vineyard and winery until 1855, when he sold it to his nephews Jean Louis Sainsevain and Pierre Sainsevain for \$42,000 which was the highest price paid for any piece of Los Angeles real estate up to then. Vignes' vineyard was the largest in California with an annual wine production of more than 1,000 barrels. The sale of Vignes' vineyard was the beginning of the firm of Sainsevain Brothers, which later became known for the high qual-

ity of its wines.

Jean Louis Vignes was, therefore, not the first Californian viticulturist, but his significant contribution was to improve the quality of California's wines. Californian wines were, up to that time, quite mediocre as stated by Forbes and Captain Duhaut-Cilly who blamed this inferiority on weaknesses in wine-making techniques. However, when Vignes came to California, he determined that the American vine stocks were equally to blame and thus, he ordered chosen cuts from France. Vignes was successful as his wines were premium products on the local market.

Vignes' success gave Los Angeles a stimulus which resulted in the fact that during the decade 1840-1850, at least a dozen new wine-growers won prominence there. Los Angeles County yielded an estimated 24,000 gallons in 1841; this rose to an official 57,355 in 1850. This last figure exceeded that of Guernsey County, Ohio, the closest competitor in the United States, by more than 20,000 gallons. California had therefore become in the first year of its statehood, the richest wine producing land in the United States. Vignes had played the most substantial part in achieving this fact than any other of his time as he foresaw the great future of viticulture in California. Idwal Jones stated that Jean Louis Vignes alone attracted at least thirty Frenchmen from the Bordeaux region and converted others already in California.

Vignes' example and the Gold-Rush resulted in an unprecedented boom in wine-growing during the 1850's as it was soon realized that it was a surer way to riches than the trail to the mines. As new settlers came to California, new vineyards were planted and new wineries were also built. The Los Angeles area, throughout the 1840's, was the

most important viticultural region of California. However, with the onset of the Gold Rush, one sees that commercial viticulture had a significant northward advance.

The Sainsevain Brothers carried on with stamina from the point where their uncle had left off. They concentrated on making the first California champagne. Pierre went to France in 1856 to study the processes, and returned the following year with a technician from the Champagne district. During 1857, Pierre produced 50,000 bottles of California champagne, and the next year 150,000. However, basically their attempt at producing champagne failed. The brothers established wine cellars in San Francisco, at the corner of Jackson and Montgomery Streets in 1857 so as to facilitate further the wine trade between Los Angeles and San Francisco. It seemed as if the lack of adequate transportation was one of the major obstacles which confronted winemakers at that time. The two brothers' partnership was dissolved by 1863. Pierre Sainsevain possessed 116 acres of vines at San Jose, and from 1869 to 1874 conducted a native wine business in San Francisco, in association with at least three other Sainsevains.

Even as early as 1849, some good wine was being produced along the coast within a hundred-mile radius of San Francisco. Once the excitement of the Gold Rush had lessened, many of the gold miners returned to their previous occupations so that many Frenchmen began to grow grapes and to make wine on a commercial basis.

The lack of adequate transportation between Los Angeles and San Francisco, which was so necessary because of the influx of population into Northern California, made it imperative that new areas closer to San Francisco be cultivated. The increased demand for wine both in San Francisco and in the

mines resulted in a period of dynamic planting of grapes in the surrounding regions of the San Francisco Bay Area. Even Bancroft as he wrote about the agriculture of the 1850's stated that:

Chief among all first products . . . is the grape, the cultivation of which has . . . roused the interest of the entire community and absorbed the chief attention among the inflowing land tillers . . .

It appears that the quality of wines from non-irrigated vineyards as well as the rise of San Francisco as the principal wine market of California were largely responsible for the commercial development of viticulture in Northern California. By the end of the 1860's, San Francisco was not only the principal grape and wine market but also the main export center of California wines. The gold miners who had come in large numbers increased the demand for wine to such a degree that Northern California was soon to surpass Southern California in the annual number of vines planted.

It seemed therefore that it was the Gold Rush which was the principal stimulus to commercial viticulture in the early period. The wine industry today is principally the product of developments that began in the decade 1850 to 1860.

A complete census of Frenchmen who became viticulturists in California has not yet been undertaken, but it does seem that they were quite numerous. Some actually purchased land and established their own vineyards as Vignes or the Sainsevain Brothers. Others, who would not or could not begin their own vineyards, went to work for other Frenchmen, for other Europeans, or even for other planters of the area such as Jean Faure, a wine expert who worked for General Vallejo in the Sonoma region. Duflot



de Mofras mentioned two French viticulturists, whom he had met in Los Angeles in 1841 called Bouchet and Giraudeau.

Idwal Jones described some twenty Frenchmen «huddled» on the slopes of the hills of Los Gatos and Saratoga between Santa Fe and the ocean. He also stated that others were settled a little farther south near Gilroy and Hollister and in what is now San Benito County. Others still, such as Jules Mortier and A.C. Chauche were settled around Livermore about twenty miles east of Oakland.

Around 1852, a Frenchman named Eugène Théé arrived at Monterey from Bordeaux. He settled about eleven miles south of San Jose where he purchased 350 acres. He soon established a vineyard. Later, another Frenchman who lived in the neighborhood, Charles Lefranc joined him on the vineyard. At this point, the vineyard doubled in size and took the name «Almaden», Spanish name for mine, after a quicksilver deposit which had been discovered on a nearby hill. Later, Charles Lefranc's daughter married a Frenchman from Burgundy named Paul Masson. Eventually Masson specialized in champagne after 1892. He successfully achieved the production of a quality champagne. In the early 1880's Paul Masson became superintendent of the Almaden Winery. At this time, he planted his own vineyards close to the town of Saratoga which eventually became the famous Paul Masson Vineyards. At a later date, the Almaden vineyards passed to other hands.

Although the time span for this thesis is up to 1870, one should very briefly mention that two Frenchmen, Jean A. Brun and Jean Chaix imported thousands of cuttings from Bordeaux and founded Nouveau Médoc in the upper Napa Valley in 1877. While Paul Masson was establishing his vineyard in Saratoga, the Order of the Brothers of the Chris-

tian Schools founded a school in the Napa Valley and started producing wine for sacramental use. Later, the winery expanded to support the school and started producing wines of all varieties; dry and sweet under the Christian Brothers label. Another French winery, Beaulieu Vineyards, was established in the Napa Valley at the beginning of this century by Georges de Latour. It should be stated that there are many other French viticulturists such as Bouchet, Rubidoux, Mirasou, Vache, and Prudhomme [ . . . ].

The development of the disease Phylloxera was quite interesting in terms of its effect on California viticulture during the Nineteenth Century as it not only destroyed numerous vineyards but even threatened the whole wine-making industry. It has been agreed by viticulturists that the Phylloxera is not only indigenous to the native vine stocks of the eastern United States but practically harmless to them. According to Hutchins, the insect responsible for the disease is an «aphid-like form that lives upon the roots and sometimes upon the leaves» of the vines.

Although a native of the eastern United States, the Phylloxera was accidentally carried to Europe between 1858 and 1863, when many American native vines were being transplanted to Europe for grafting purposes.

It was first sighted in England in 1863 and several years later it was discovered in France. However, it was after 1869 that it became a real menace to the French vineyards.

The exact date of the introduction of the disease to California has not been established. However, Hilgard maintained that the introduction of the Phylloxera was coincident with the introduction of the European vines.

With the introduction of the highly sus-

ceptible European vines (*Vitis vinifera*) the Phylloxera became a pest in California, especially where the European vines were cultivated in abundance such as in Sonoma and Napa Counties since the pest thrived on the European species. The counties north of San Francisco were thus the ones to suffer most seriously. The interesting fact was that the only practical defense against the disease as discovered by Europeans was the American resistant vines. This defense had already proved successful in France.

The French and other European viticulturists therefore decided that the way to fight the Phylloxera was to plant vines that would hardly suffer or not at all. They decided to plant the native American vines and then to graft the European species on them. The French viticulturists felt the resistant vines were the most certain as well as the cheapest answer to eradicate the disease. However, the Californians hesitated and it was only very reluctantly that they finally accepted the planting of American species. The principal problem with this technique was to find a stock whose root was resistant to the Phylloxera but concurrently adaptable to the soil and climate of the region as well as compatible with the European variety that was to be grafted. The French played a vital role in the fight against the Phylloxera since they discovered some of the native American species which were resistant to the disease and thus contributed greatly to arrest the course of this plight and possibly saved the entire wine industry both in California and in Europe. The Phylloxera outbreak in California vineyards was only brought under control once the California viticulturists imitated the French in slowly transplanting their vineyards from domestic to resistant stock.

Most assuredly the French played an influential role in the agriculture of Northern California, as they introduced many varieties

of vegetables, of fruits, and contributed significantly to the development of the wine industry in Northern California. They also introduced the snail, *Helix aspersa*, which later caused great damage to the agriculture of Northern California. The French, agriculturally speaking, have exerted a definite influence on the landscape of Northern California, both spatially and historically.

#### THE FRENCH IN EARLY SAN FRANCISCO

The main objective of this [section] will be to discuss the influence the French had within San Francisco prior to 1870. We do know that presently, there are over 40,000 people in the San Francisco Bay Area whose native tongue is French. Of these, over 10,000 are natives of France, which makes San Francisco the second largest center of French life in the United States after the city of New York.

One could claim that the city of San Francisco started its existence under French auspices since, in 1839, a Swiss-French architect named Jean Jacques Vioget drew up the first plans for the small village which at that time was called Yerba Buena («Good Grass»). Vioget's survey laid out the blocks between Pacific, California, Montgomery, and Dupont streets.

In 1844, when there were 500 inhabitants at Yerba Buena, two of them were French: Vioget and a man called Victor Prudon, who had come from Mexico where he had been a colonel in the Mexican army.

Among the early immigrants to San Francisco, the French were an important national group. French people had settled in California as early as 1827, as stated earlier, and since 1844, the French government had been represented by a vice-consul at Monterey, then the capital of California. Many French

immigrants came to San Francisco during the Gold Rush, to such an extent that they probably comprised the most important contingent among the foreign pioneers. This was due as much to conditions in France as to the lure of gold. The depression and confusion that resulted from the revolution of 1848 had paralyzed industry and commerce in France. Political and economic turmoil in France ensued. Thousands were unemployed and in great misery as France witnessed a period of significant violence and economic depression. Professionals were impoverished by the general paralysis of commerce and industry. It was no surprise, therefore, that upon learning the news of the discovery of gold in California, there was a great influx of immigrants from all levels of French society to California.

In 1849, the first important groups of French immigrants arrived and in 1850 several companies were organized in Paris for the transportation of French immigrants to California. Some of the French came to San Francisco as part of the various lottery schemes to send deprived persons abroad. From 1852 to May, 1853, the company «*Les Lingots d'Or*» from Paris sent more than 3500 immigrants to San Francisco. Others arrived by sea and land from the Eastern States, especially from Louisiana, but also from French Canada, Mexico, Peru, Chile, Tahiti, and other islands of the Pacific. Most of these French immigrants did not stay long in San Francisco but journeyed on to the Sierra foothills to work in the mines. The typical immigrant would arrive in San Francisco, buy the equipment and gear needed, and would leave as soon as possible for the gold mines in the Sierras. However, many achieved little success as miners and soon tended to drift back to San Francisco. There, advertisements were placed in the papers to obtain employment, and the French consul loaned money to some so that they could establish their own

businesses. The later immigrants of the Lottery of the Golden Ingots, or Lingoos, as they were called, were not welcomed by the early French settlers for they were considered to be wild revolutionists and communists. However, despite their countrymen's indifference, according to Shepard, many did achieve considerable success in their first decade in California as newspaper editors, merchants, and craftsmen.

Nearly all the Frenchmen who came to San Francisco had to work. At first, no social classes were recognized and no one was «too good» to perform even the most menial tasks. For example, a prominent Frenchman, Ernest de Massey, in his extensive journal mentions such persons as Picot de Moras, a relative of Vicomte de Chifflet, who, for a while, sold newspapers on the streets of San Francisco; or Théologie, who had recently served as secretary to the ex-minister, Montalivet, and whose ancestors were noted scholars, was in San Francisco peddling oranges, cigars, matches, and various other sundries. De Massey also mentions that with him was a certain Fichaux once popular at Parisian social functions and now waiting for something to turn up. He also describes Baron Blanc, a rich Savoyard aristocrat, who was selling merchandise in the streets of San Francisco.

According to Shepard, the immigrants of the Lottery of the Golden Ingots contributed significantly to the cultural life of San Francisco. Several achieved considerable success in the French theater. Others added to the commercial and industrial development of the city.

Many of the immigrants followed the trades which they had learned in France. For example, Isadore Boudin, a baker's apprentice, founded a bakery which is still in operation and is one of the few real French bakeries left in San Francisco. Victor Ansous, Albert

Aubert, and Hippolyte Dereins continued their former occupations as butchers. Aubert's business flourished and he became a leading packer of hams and bacons. As might be expected, a large number of these people went into the laundry business. Others found their backgrounds in tailoring to be in great demand, while others operated saloons, restaurants, and grocery stores.

San Francisco, which prior to 1849 had but a dozen French persons, saw in less than one year its French population reach several hundred. The French colony started to organize itself. Several clubs were created. By the beginning of 1850, there was a sufficient French population in San Francisco to justify a French newspaper. On January 1, 1850, *Le Californien* was published by the French. Although there were only four issues published of *Le Californien*, within a few years an impressive number of French newspapers were published in San Francisco such as the *Courrier d'Europe*, *Le Messager*, *Le Phare*, *Le National*, and *La Revue Californienne*. In 1852, a French journalist, Etienne Derbec, founded *L'Echo du Pacifique* which became the foremost means of communication of the French population for nearly ten years. After an incident in 1865, when upon learning the news of President Abraham Lincoln's assassination, an angry mob attempted to destroy Derbec's newspaper office, as well as several other San Francisco newspapers, *L'Echo du Pacifique* became *Le Courrier de San Francisco*. The mob blamed foreigners for Lincoln's assassination.

As early as 1850, San Francisco had French dry goods stores, French banks, French restaurants, French cafés, and French hotels. Later in the 1850's, the French colony established its own schools, church, hospital, and theaters. A French neighborhood evolved on both sides of Clay Street, between Kearny and Montgomery, where there were about

20 French shops including restaurants, hotels, barber shops, clothing stores, and a bank.

The many French people who remained in San Francisco brought a definite influence to the city. French restaurants such as Marchand's, Maison Dorée, the Poodle Dog, Maison Riche, and Tortoni's became world famous. In San Francisco, the French monopolized some professions of a semi-artistic nature, furnishing skilled workmen who were responsible for the decoration of the finer shops and buildings. The boot-blacking trade was entirely in the hands of the French, their location of business being in the plaza and on long rows of steps in front of the saloons.

The background and morals of some of the French women to arrive in San Francisco was, of course, questionable since they were for the most part prostitutes of the Parisian boulevards.

«If the poor fellows had known what these women had been in Paris,» stated Albert Benard de Russailh, «how one could pick them up on the boulevards and have them for almost nothing, they might not have been so free with their offers of \$ 500 and \$ 600 a night.»

On the contrary, in San Francisco they were accepted almost like gentlewomen, given seats at the Captain's table as they travelled to San Francisco, and once there were royally received by lawyers, judges, and doctors who paraded with them, unabashed by day or night, along the plank sidewalk of Montgomery Street.

Many of the French immigrants to San Francisco during the 1850's were of upper-class background, but as stated earlier, even these persons had to get involved in all kinds of occupations. After the 1860's, the influx of the settlers was mainly from the provinces,



not from Paris, and this changed the composition of the French colony. After the Treaty of Frankfurt in 1871, an important group of Alsatians and of Lorrainers arrived in San Francisco to seek refuge.

The French were particularly partial to public amusements and often opened a theater and presented plays, vaudeville, and operas. In 1852, the French built the Adelphi Theater on Dupont Street (Grant Avenue) which produced plays in French only. French fashions, French shops, and French masqued balls added to the elegance of San Francisco.

The French women influenced not only the social atmosphere, but the outward appearance of San Francisco as well. By January, 1853, a few street corners began to be lighted with spermaceti lanterns. Around houses, the beginnings of gardens began to appear. Not only the houses, but the shops became more attractive, quite in the «*rue de Rivoli*» tradition according to Altrocchi. Frank Soulé claims, in his *Annals of San Francisco*:

The expensive and fashionable style of dressing among the French ladies has greatly encouraged the splendid character of the shops of the jewelers, silk merchants, milliners, and others whom women chiefly patronize, while it has perhaps increased the general extravagance among the whole female population of the city.

The French formed a significant part of the foreign population of San Francisco. Although the French were not very willing to change their official political allegiance, they took their place among the leading citizens. For example, in 1851, the French organized the «French Benevolent Society» for the purpose of relieving the sick and indigent countrymen. The French in San Francisco also established the first savings bank to be

opened in the city. They had also created one of the first groups of vigilantes. Later, on September 19, 1853, they organized the first official organization to prevent fires in San Francisco called «*La Compagnie Lafayette des Echelles et Crochets*» (The Lafayette Hook and Ladder Company), a volunteer group which rendered great services until December, 1866 when the municipality of San Francisco started organizing its own fire department.

One hundred and twenty-four years ago, in May, 1850, a chartered galleon sailed through the Golden Gate with a cargo of costly silks, satins, and laces as well as cases of champagne and casks of choice cognac. The name of the ship was «*La Ville de Paris*». The ship was flying the tricolors of France when it anchored in Yerba Buena Cove at the foot of Montgomery Street. News of its arrival was quickly relayed to townspeople from a semaphore station on Signal (Telegraph) Hill. This was the beginning of the mercantile enterprise of the City of Paris and of the Verdiers. Events on the European continent that affected world history in the Mid-Nineteenth Century, played a vital role in the establishment of this historic elegant department store. The first was the French Revolution which brought the French Republic into being; and as an aftermath, an economic slump. The second event was the discovery of gold at Coloma, California, on January 24, 1848. When the news of the gold strike reached France a year later, it stirred the adventurous of the European continent.

Madame Verdier and her husband Félix, a prominent hosiery manufacturer of Nîmes, France, often discussed the «land of gold» across the ocean. One evening while talking about the golden opportunities that existed in California, Mme. Verdier cast the die: «While others are hunting for gold,» she said, «we will supply them with silken and lace finery

for which they will spend their gold». So Félix sold his Verdier-Hosiery Mills and then with the help of his brother Emile, collected a shipload of precious goods that was brought around the Isthmus of Panama to launch a historic business on San Francisco Bay in 1850.

From the start, Verdier's first merchandising venture was a success. Luxury-starved businessmen, preachers, miners, gamblers, and the few wives and sweethearts who had arrived in San Francisco, swarmed onto the decks of «*La Ville de Paris*» to buy the beautiful French fabrics, fashions, and fine wines. After spending the summer disposing of their goods from this original City of Paris store, the three-masted ship, the brothers toured Northern California's mines to get ideas for their next boatload. Félix made the 15,000 mile journey with his second shipment in 1851. He opened his first store, «The City of Paris. Verdier Frères, Proprietors», at 334 Clay (between Montgomery and Kearny) near Portsmouth Square, the hub of San Francisco during the roaring 50's. The Verdiers and their partners seemed to have an uncanny ability to sense the direction in which the business center would move. To keep pace with this ever-shifting central business area in bustling San Francisco, the «City of Paris» was to have six locations over the years.

The Verdier Brothers continued to thrive in their City of Paris store, with ships bringing merchandise twice a year from Le Havre, France, to «Kearny Street, California», as mail was often addressed in the early days. A second store was opened at 150 Kearny Street between Clay and Sacramento in 1855. By the 1860's, the son of Félix Verdier, Gaston, had become active in the company, and on the death of his father in 1869, became president of the store. Under Gaston's leadership, the City of Paris moved a third time to a

choice shopping center at the corner floor of San Francisco's most beautiful hotel, the Occidental (1869). Here, the fame of the City of Paris spread until it was recognized as the leading department store of the Pacific West. For eleven years, the location of the store was the pivotal point of San Francisco's commercial life. In 1889, still heeding the watchword «onward», Gaston moved his store to the southeast corner of Geary and Grant, then considered «far out» for a commercial enterprise. But, when the City of Paris pioneered the way, other firms followed, and the store was again in the heart of the shopping district. San Francisco's oldest department store moved again in 1896 to its present location adjacent to Union Square on the southeast corner of Stockton and Geary. The present plans of the City of Paris were drawn by the firm of Bakewell and Brown (later architects for San Francisco's City Hall, War Memorial Opera House, and Veterans Building), assisted by French architect Louis Bourgeois. All three were trained at the *Ecole des Beaux Arts* in Paris, accounting for the subtle French flavor which gives the store its unique beauty. Decorative themes from Parisian prototypes of the turn of the century were picked. The mezzanine windows and the friezes separating the floors are lively and pleasant to look at. The glass-dome rotunda of the central court is very impressive. A replica of the historic galleon «*La Ville de Paris*» is depicted on the leaded glass dome. It was under the leadership of Paul Verdier that the six-story store of the City of Paris enjoyed its most spectacular success. He saw his store as an amalgamation of specialty shops under one roof. In 1969, the store was purchased by Amfac, Inc., which also operates 38 Joseph Magnin stores in California, Nevada, and Colorado, the Liberty House stores in Hawaii, and the Rhodesway mass-merchandising group, in the San Francisco Bay area. The entire store had now undergone a total restoration. Recently, the beginning of

1974 saw the end of a great department store. The City of Paris, or rather, Amfac/Liberty House, was purchased once more by the world-famous Texan chain of Nieman-Marcus. The building itself, unfortunately, has been slated to be torn down, which will result in the loss of a fine building.

The French are also responsible for «*La Bibliothèque*» («The Library»), which is one of San Francisco's oldest operating libraries; truly an historical landmark of California's early culture boom, it grew out of the «*Ligue Nationale Française*», which owes its beginnings to the events following the Franco-Prussian War. In February, 1871, at the end of the Franco-Prussian War, the French lost the provinces of Alsace-Lorraine. Mr. Alex Weil, himself an Alsatian, proposed that a patriotic committee would take the initiative to form an association which all the French in California could join. Such an association, he felt, if well-directed, would do a lot for the regeneration of his unhappy country. In July, 1871, the «*Ligue Nationale de la Délivrance*» (later, «*Ligue Nationale Française*») was created. The «*Ligue*» included many Alsatians, some of whom had come to San Francisco to escape the German occupation. Its purpose was to help these people to keep in touch with French culture and civilization. It was very patriotic in tone. After the second year of existence, one noticed a sort of cooling of enthusiasm among the members of the «*Ligue*». Daniel Lévy did not think that one could question the patriotism of the colony but that its faith was weakening, so in order to remedy this situation, he proposed on August 31, 1872, the creation of a French library. His idea was that by encouraging French people to know their literature and especially their history, they would regain their enthusiasm for patriotic causes. Eighteen months later the proposition was adopted. In October, 1874, the number of books was important enough to start organizing the li-

brary. The library was inaugurated on January 24, 1876 in its first location, 120 Sutter Street. After the building at 120 Sutter Street burned down, during the 1906 earthquake, the library was moved to 110 Sutter Street. New books were largely acquired through donations.

Another prominent French merchant was Raphael Weill who arrived in San Francisco in 1855. He was born in Phalsbourg in the Alsatian region of France on February 24, 1837. His three-masted clipper had gotten stranded on Coronado Beach just before entering the harbor of San Diego. He arrived a month and a half later in San Francisco, where he began working as a clerk in a dry-goods store, Davidson and Lane, located on Sacramento Street. The firm Davidson and Lane represented the beginning of the business career of Raphael Weill. Although he was a silent partner, Raphael Weill had a tremendous talent as a salesman, and very shortly he started certain innovations which spurred a keen interest in San Francisco. Raphael Weill was less wealthy than Félix Verdier when he arrived in San Francisco. The owners, Davidson and Lane, were happy to hire him because they needed a French-speaking person to help their numerous and wealthy French clientele. Any major commercial outlet in San Francisco at the time had at least one French-speaking person. Raphael Weill had the real genius of commerce, and he quickly climbed the social ladder from clerk to becoming a partner in the firm. In 1864, the drygoods store moved to a luxurious neighborhood at the corner of Montgomery and Sutter where Weill decided to create very attractive window displays of all the latest French imports; silks, fine muslins, costly and elaborate embroideries, rare shawls, etc.

Raphael Weill became a prominent businessman and in 1870, he opened the famous White House, which was a three-story

brick building at the corner of Post and Kearny and which was modeled and named after «*La Maison Blanche*» in Paris, France. The great fire of 1906 completely destroyed the department store. A week later, a temporary store was opened in a private house located at 1806 Pacific Avenue and three months later the store was transferred to a nice locale on Van Ness Avenue. On March 13, 1909, the new building of the White House was inaugurated with great ceremony. It was located on Sutter Avenue between Kearny and Grant Avenues. The White House was considered one of the best department stores in San Francisco for many years by many persons. In February, 1965, it was with regret that San Francisco saw the White House close permanently. The store was no longer profitable due to increasing competition from suburban shopping centers such as Stonestown and Serramonte. It closed before true bankruptcy, so the Weills and other part-owners of the White House were and still are among the affluent society of San Francisco.

To celebrate the taking of Sebastopol, there was organized at South Park, a great French festival on November 26, 1855. Father Blaive was there to chant a «*Te Deum*», and at the banquet which followed, he delivered an eloquent address. His appeal was for a French Catholic church to be called «*Notre-Dame-des-Victoires*» as a lasting memorial to the glorious victories won by the French Army in Crimea. A French Catholic church was assured. In the month of April, 1856, a former Baptist church, situated on Bush between Dupont and Stockton Streets, was bought by Mr. G. Touchard, the director of a San Francisco bank, subsidiary to the Banking House of Marziou and Company, Paris. Father Blaive offered the cost price of \$15,000. This church site was selected because of its central location and because it was the only church available at the time. After some interior changes, the church was

ready for Catholic services and was blessed by Archbishop Alemany on May 4, 1856. It was placed under the patronage of *Notre-Dame-des-Victoires*. Since that time, the French colony has had its own church. In fact, it is the parish of all the French people in the San Francisco Bay area and their children. To pay the \$15,000, subscription lists were opened, entertainments given, and committees of men and women were appointed to solicit money. At the end of the four years, the \$15,000 was still unpaid. The Banking House of Marziou and Company threatened to take back their property. The French Catholics appealed to Archbishop Alemany, who in 1861 obtained a loan from the Hibernia Bank sufficient to save the property. Father Blaive lived in the basement of the church and died on September 30, 1862 from an attack of inflammatory rheumatism. His successor was Father Jean Molinier, a native of Aveyron, France. In six years, all the debts were paid. The first parochial residence dates back to the 1870's and was completely renewed in 1886. The Marist Fathers have been in charge of the French church since 1885, when the church was entrusted to them by Archbishop Riordan. Father Renaudier took charge in November, 1885. During the earthquake of 1906, the whole roof of the church collapsed and when it was seen that destruction by the encroaching fire was inevitable, a large hole was dug in the ground and all church records placed in it. Records dating back to 1856 were thus saved. By the autumn of 1907, with the help of Mr. E. Garin, a French architect, Father Guibert had the basement for a new church and a comfortable parochial house built on the ruins. Under Father H. Thiery, the new *Notre-Dame-des-Victoires* was almost completed, a beautiful architectural structure in the Byzantine style. It was designed after the famed church in Lyon, France, *Notre-Dame de Fourvières*. It is an example of the 19th century French taste in the Byzantine mode. Its



many statues and interior are typically French in design and character. While Father Henry Gérard was rector, 1921-1927, a school was opened at 659 Pine Street. It is interesting to note that Father Gérard was also asked to create a small French Catholic Chapel and School for the French parishioners of the Bayview District or Butcher Town. Father Guibert had, in 1907, bought three lots on Quesada Street with this intent in mind. On July 9, 1922, the Archbishop of San Francisco blessed the first stone of the school and of the Chapel «Joan of Arc». It was located at the corner of Quesada and Lane Streets in the Bayview District. A few months later, the school opened its doors to 68 children. The chapel of Joan of Arc was placed under the patronage of *Notre-Dame-des-Victoires*. It was permanently closed in 1948, due to lack of French parishioners in the Bayview District.

The church of *Notre-Dame-des-Victoires* is a «national» parish, non-territorial for all followers of French nationality or of French descent of the San Francisco Bay area. The church is the center of the religious life of the French people. In general, according to Father Neyron, the French Catholic Church has had a strong influence on the formation of the American Catholic Church. Many American Catholic priests have received their training under the French.

François Louis Alfred Pioche, who was born in France in 1818 of a middle-class family, was also a significant figure in the history of San Francisco. Pioche was employed in the French consular office of Santiago in Chile. He subsequently left the consulate for employment in a French-owned mercantile firm, where he met J.B. Bayerque. At the time of the discovery of gold in California, they both left for San Francisco with a cargo of merchandise, arriving in the city in February, 1849. They opened a general

merchandise store on Clay Street which specialized in French-imported goods. Their business venture was a success, but they slowly turned to banking: storing gold for miners in their safe and using their capital to lend to businessmen. In 1851, Pioche went to France to seek more funds to invest in the Golden West. The funds went to work immediately through the banking firm of Pioche and Bayerque, in San Francisco real estate. Pioche bought property and developed Montgomery Street from Sutter Street to Market Street and almost the entire block bounded by Montgomery, Washington, Sansome, and Jackson Streets. Pioche also bought large undeveloped tracts of land in what is today known as the Mission District. Pioche felt that the city's population was not moving fast enough into the Mission and buying lots in the early land development operation, so Pioche built the Market Street Railway to bring them there. This railway was one of San Francisco's earliest transit systems. Since the profits they made on both the land and the transportation system were enormous, Pioche purchased more real estate. He bought large ranches in virtually every county of northern California. Pioche also financed the Jackson Street Wharf Company, which was one of the several private wharves which extended into the San Francisco Bay. In fact, according to Dalin and Fracchia, in 1860, Pioche and Bayerque was in the forefront of a group of San Francisco capitalists who sought to obtain the shore area of San Francisco for private use. Pursuing this objective, they succeeded in having the Bulkhead Bill passed by both houses of the California State legislature. Pioche was also a major financier of both the San Francisco Gas Works, the principal component of the current Pacific Gas & Electric Company, and the Spring Valley Water Company, which several years later the City and County of San Francisco purchased for its municipally-owned water system. Pioche and his firm were also the

pioneers in western railroad construction. In mid-1852, a group of businessmen in Sacramento incorporated the Sacramento Valley Railroad. Pioche & Bayerque became the financiers and the controlling interest in this first railroad in the west.

The Pioche & Bayerque Building which was located at 736 Montgomery, the present site of the Playboy Club, was a monument to the influence the French had on San Francisco. This building was erected in 1853 by Pioche and Bayerque. In their building were offices of the city's first street railroad demonstrating the influence of Frenchmen on the city's growth. As stated, Pioche contributed immensely toward the upbuilding of San Francisco, helping to create the first gasworks, the first business block, the first wharves, and one of the first street railroads. Pioche was responsible for the development of Hayes Valley, Visitacion Valley, and Mission Dolores District. Pioche was a builder and an industrialist. He also had large cattle ranches from Monterey to Santa Barbara. Pioche was dissatisfied with the food in San Francisco during the Gold Rush, so he imported over forty chefs from France, and soon the city had numerous restaurants with excellent reputations for their French cooking. Pioche spent millions of dollars to help finance the growth of San Francisco as well as to promote the city's cultural and educational life. Pioche was one of the principal architects of the prosperity of San Francisco. Apart from San Francisco, Pioche helped finance the Temescal tin mines in Southern California, the Malakoff diggings at North Bloomfield, Nevada, the Rivot process for treating refractory ores and sulphurets, the Nolf process for the same purpose, and various hydraulic mining enterprises in California. Finally, according to Dalin and Fracchia, the fact that San Francisco is one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the world is, in part, due to Pioche. It was Pioche's love for fine

food, good wines and spirits, and the arts that led him to finance French restaurants and to import French wines and liquors, to support music and art in San Francisco, and to develop the San Francisco style of entertainment.

It was Prosper Huerne, a French architect, who was put in charge of the construction of the first docks at North Point in 1853. He also designed the first street railway on Market Street which extended from the Bay at the foot of Market Street to the Mission Dolores. The railway was financed by the firm of Pioche and Bayerque. In 1859, the Pioche and Bayerque Company began a huge project to clear Hayes Valley of trees and created the streets of the valley. This undertaking was also under the management of Prosper Huerne who employed 500 workers, 200 of which were French. Later, in 1869, Huerne was the architect for a group of 23 houses built for a jeweller named Rondel at 16th and Mission. It was one of the first Homesteads in California. The tenants could become owners of these houses by paying a certain amount of cash and then monthly installments for a determined number of years. This housing project was known as the Rondel Place. Huerne also designed the Bella Union gambling hall on Portsmouth Square.

As early as 1844, California, then still a Mexican province, already had a French consulate in Monterey, its capital. France was the first country to have an official representation in this region. In March, 1849, France appointed a consular agent to San Francisco who was replaced after the joining of California to the Union in 1850 by a consul of diplomatic service. The existence of a French consulate was justified by the number of French people living in California. Out of 325,000 inhabitants of California then, there were 28,000 French people; 5,000 in San Francisco alone. The first consul of France

was M. Patrice Dillon who exercised his functions until 1856. He undertook to help facilitate the settling of French patriots. Since then, 34 consuls and consul generals have represented France in San Francisco.

Around the end of 1851, when the city of San Francisco was only in its first stage of development and its population was made up mostly of adventurers from all points of the world, a few French persons became concerned to create a project to relieve French nationals who had become destitute or hit by sickness. A Frenchman, M. Etienne Derbec, made an appeal to his patriots in the columns of the *Daily Evening Picayune*, after which a certain number of French persons met and created the «*Société de Bienfaisance*» («The Society of Benevolence»). The committee, elected at that meeting, decided to rent in January, 1852, a small wooden house situated at the northeast corner of Jackson and Mason Streets and placed its sick patients there. This location was only temporary. The Society bought during the month of October, 1853, a lot at the corner of Bush and Taylor Streets and erected there a modest building with the intent of serving as a rest home. This establishment was completed in December, 1854 at the cost of \$9,659. Until then, the Society was of a purely philanthropic character. It granted assistance indiscriminately to the sick of the Society as well as to those who didn't belong. Its charity extended itself even to those of other nationalities; but it soon realized that its financial resources were not equal to its good will and that it had to limit its liberal policies. The Society changed names several times, finally deciding to be based exclusively on the principle of mutuality. It became known as the «*Société Française de Bienfaisance Mutuelle*» («The Society of Mutual Benevolence»). The institution from then on started to develop rapidly and powerfully. The number of its adherents have continually accrued. Soon it

was able to purchase on Bryant Street a lot of 250 square feet and erected there a hospital which was inaugurated on March 15, 1858. It was then only a ground-floor building, but it soon was a noteworthy progress over the previous building on Bush Street. After ten years, this building also became insufficient, so it was decided that another floor should be constructed. Prosper Huerne erected the new level. During the following 20 years, the Society gained power and importance and the hospital ranked among the highest hospital institutions along the Pacific Coast. With time, even this hospital on Bryant Street proved no longer to suffice the requirements of the period. It was therefore decided in 1884 that the Society would procure a wider and better situated location where the Society eventually was able to construct another French Hospital with all the latest medical facilities. It was built on a lot with a frontage of 240 feet on Point Lobos Avenue, now Geary Avenue, with sides of 600 feet on 5th and 6th Avenues to the East and West respectively and the back facing A Street. On February 25, 1894, the new French Hospital was completed and inaugurated. Currently the Society has over 8,000 active members of French nationality or of French origin.

In their great majority, the French of San Francisco, as individuals, presented very few problems. They enjoyed an excellent reputation. Their professional quality as well as their serious and arduous work was very much appreciated. We have seen that for the most part, Frenchmen have played an important part in the life of San Francisco. There were numerous commercial establishments along the waterfront owned by the French. Some of the French became prominent merchant dealers in French luxuries. French hotels, restaurants, and especially gambling houses were numerous and most of them were prosperous enterprises. French newspapers were started and two were able to keep

up a continuous publication for several years. There were also French theaters, notably the Adelphi Theater. A number of Frenchmen in San Francisco became bankers, while still others became promoters, miners, land speculators, and shipowners. Many Frenchmen became bootblacks, cooks, hairdressers, porters, waiters, wood-cutters, wagoners, gamblers, journalists, architects, etc. . . , living chiefly upon their wits. However, one should mention that the determined clannishness of most Frenchmen which resulted in a refusal to learn the English language proved to be a great handicap to them, making it more difficult for them to earn their livelihood. Some commercial men lost heavily because of the cluttered condition of the markets, the slowness of shipments between France and California, and the costly duties which had to be paid in specie before they could be landed in San Francisco. One must admit though, that their determination to maintain their national

characteristics gave an interesting flavor to San Francisco, and their love of amusements led to the opening of French gambling houses and theaters. The expensive and fashionable style of the French women encouraged businessmen to make their shops more attractive and led to more extravagance on the part of the rest of the female population. Although many of the French had come to San Francisco only to obtain gold and then to return to France, they had brought with them French taste, fashions and manners and these did much to improve San Francisco society.

The French colony to this day still jealously guards the traditions of the homeland. The French as a group have contributed a large share to the economic development of San Francisco. They have imprinted an indelible mark on the manners and customs of Californians today.

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THE CHURCH IN COLONIAL AMERICA  
1492 - 1790

by John Tracy Ellis

In the case of France, the other major power through whose agency Catholicism entered North America, many characteristics of its colonial missions resembled those of Spain. Here too, Church and State were at the time united, and since the concordat signed by Pope Leo X and Francis I in 1516 the crown had enjoyed the right of nominating to vacant bishoprics and to newly established sees. But the Gallican tendencies which by the time of Louis XIV had brought about so tight a control over the church in France were never able to effect quite the same results in North America. In no small measure this was due to the precedents set by the first bishop in New France, François de Montmorency Laval, a man of iron will and determination, who after his arrival in the colony in 1659 gave battle at every turn to the officials of the State when the rights of the Church were threatened. A recent writer has said of the bishop: «In all, Laval guided the destinies of the Church in New France for thirty-four years, ruling in a more authoritarian and absolute fashion than any representative of the all-powerful Sun King. He left more of a mark upon the colony than any governor except the great Frontenac, with whom he had quarreled violently.» The union of Church and State in New France was nonetheless real, and it was the basis for many a contest waged between the two throughout the North American experience of France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

But apart from political matters, there were other similarities between Spain and France in the New World. The same concept, of the Indian as a man whose soul had equal value in the sight of God with that of the white man, motivated the French Jesuits and Recollets around the Great Lakes and through the Mississippi Valley as much as it did their Spanish brethren farther south. Father Jean de Brebeuf, for example, lived nearly three years among the Hurons for the sole purpose of learning their language and gaining a knowledge of their customs. Enriched with this background, he wrote out in 1637 a set of instructions for his confreres who were to evangelize the tribe, and if any of the future missionaries had thought that his superior education would impress the red men, Brebeuf was quick to disillusion him: «Leaving a highly civilized community, you fall into the hands of barbarous people who care but little for your Philosophy or your Theology. All the fine qualities which might make you loved and respected in France are like pearls trampled under the feet of swine, or rather of mules, which utterly despise you when they see that you are not as good pack animals as they are». Fully cognizant as he was of what was in store for him, Brebeuf yet continued his Indian ministrations through the next twelve years up to that day in March, 1649, when he was captured by the Iroquois near Georgian Bay and submitted to a series of tortures that has made many a modern

reader recoil in horror. Francis Parkman detailed his last hours and remarked of Brebeuf: «He came of a noble race — the same, it is said, from which sprang the English Earls of Arundel; but never had the mailed barons of his line confronted a fate so appalling, with so prodigious a constancy. To the last he refused to flinch, and his death was the astonishment of his murderers'».

As Spain's high missionary zeal in the sixteenth century had been quickened by the triumph over the Mohammedans and the contest with the Protestant north, so a century later the compelling faith that carried the French missionaries to North America was fired by one of the most resplendent periods in the Catholicism of France, the age that produced a St. Francis de Sales, a St. Vincent de Paul, a Jacques Olier, a Cardinal Berulle, and a host of other striking figures in religious thought and action. In France, too, the union of Church and State facilitated the arrangement for joint undertakings in the distant colonies, even if it later hindered their execution. But there was a difference between the Spanish and French ecclesiastical regimes. After 1659 there was a bishop at Quebec in the person of the forceful Laval who, once admitted to the governing council of New France, powerfully barred the encroachments of the civil arm against the Church. Though distances were great and travel slow between the Great Lakes and Louisiana, the official position and high ecclesiastical rank of Laval and his successors told with more effect when disputes arose between the missionaries and civil officials than was true of the remonstrances of bishops in Mexico and Cuba.

For a century and a half, Jesuits, Recollets, Capuchins, and the diocesan priests of New France traversed the heart of the continent in pursuit of a goal that often eluded them. If the souls of these steadfast priests

had not been kindled by a deep and abiding faith, they would soon have despaired; the story of the sufferings of the Jesuits alone during the 1640's at the hands of the savages remains one of the most heroic tales in our colonial past. From the time that Isaac Jogues, after incredible tortures, was felled beneath the ax of an Iroquois near the little village of Auriesville, New York, in October, 1646, to the murder of Brebeuf Lalemant on Georgian Bay in March, 1649, the slaughter continued. Then the insensate hate of the Iroquois against the Hurons and their friends seemed for a time to abate.

The Huron mission, it is true, had failed, but the Blackrobes did not quit New France. Instead they directed their eyes westward toward Lake Superior where Isaac Jogues had traveled as early as 1641. These were the years that saw a renewal of war in Europe and a more aggressive policy upon the part of France once Louis XIV had assumed personal control of the government in 1661. As rivalry for the mastery of North America intensified, Jean Talon, the royal intendant of New France, laid plans to forestall competition in the heart of the continent. On June 4, 1671, Simon François Daumont, Sieur de Saint Lusson, acting as Talon's representative, took formal possession of the entire western country in the name of God and Louis XIV. In this ceremony at Sault Ste-Marie, to which the chiefs of all the neighboring tribes had been invited, Father Claude Allouez, already a veteran in those parts, played a prominent role. After the cross and the standard of the king had been raised aloft as the symbols of the dual auspices of the undertaking, Allouez preached a sermon in which he explained to the savages the doctrine of Christ's redemption of mankind on the cross. Then pointing to the royal banner, he said, «But look likewise at that other post, to which are affixed the armorial bearings of the great Captain of France whom we call King. He lives beyond

the sea; he is the Captain of the greatest Captains, and has not his equal in the world.» Thus were Church and State joined at that remote spot on Lake Superior to advance the policies of Louis XIV, Colbert, and Louvois.

The years that followed bore greater fruit for the Jesuits' missions than they had hitherto known, and by 1673 there were 1,800 refugee Ottawas and Hurons resident at St. Ignace Mission on the north shore of the Straits of Mackinac. South and west from these northern bases, the Blackrobes fanned out into the future states of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Illinois, and as the civil and military arms of France advanced upon the Mississippi they were either in the vanguard like Allouez — tracking for thirty years over the prairies and through the forests of the Old Northwest — or like Jacques Marquette had spent at La pointe de Saint Esprit on the south shore of Lake Superior, he had received visits from tribesmen, including the Illinois, who spoke to him of a great river and asked that he come among them. The thought of establishing a mission for these Indians was uppermost in his mind, therefore, when in May, 1673, he set out with Jolliet on their famous expedition. In the long and arduous months that lay ahead, the missionary was sustained by his hopes for the conversion of the Illinois and by his deep and abiding faith in God and the Mother of Christ. No one has written more majestically of this personal devotion of Marquette for the Blessed Mother than Parkman, who, although he in no way shared in the Jesuit's sentiments, appreciated the beauty and elevation of his thoughts. Parkman said of Marquette:

He was a devout votary of the Virgin Mary, who, imagined to his mind in shapes of the most transcendent loveliness with which the pencil of human genius has ever informed the canvas, was to him the object of an adoration not

unmingled with a sentiment of chivalrous devotion. The longings of a sensitive heart, divorced from earth, sought solace in the skies. A subtle element of romance was blended with the fervor of his worship, and hung like an illumined cloud over the harsh and hard realities of his daily lot. Kindled by the smile of his celestial mistress, his gentle and noble nature knew no fear. For her he burned to dare and to suffer, discover new lands and conquer new realms to her sway.

Before this great missionary gave up his life in May, 1675, near where the river that bears his name empties into Lake Michigan, he had the joy of opening the mission of the Immaculate Conception for the Illinois near the present village of Utica. Although his failing health permitted only a brief stay, others came to spread a network of Jesuit stations on the shores of the Great Lakes and the banks of the rivers of the Middle West.

Meanwhile, members of other orders appeared in these inland regions to supplement the Society of Jesus in affording religious ministrations to the white settlers in the wilderness and to seek converts among the red-men. It was a Recollet, Louis Hennepin, who explored the upper Minneapolis and named the Falls of St. Anthony. Hennepin's confreres, Gabriel de la Riboulde and Zenobe Membre, who visited the tribes of northern Illinois, met violent deaths, the former in September, 1680, at the hands of the Kickapoo near Seneca, and the latter with a fellow religious, Maxim le Clercq, in January, 1689, as a member of LaSalle's ill-starred venture on the coast of Texas. Diocesan priests trained at the seminary of Bishop Laval at Quebec also played a part as missionaries to the Indians of the Middle West and as pastors of the infant parishes in the frontier towns. Authorized in May, 1698, to

open missions for certain tribes along the Mississippi, these priests often became pastors to the French, as, for example, did Henri Rolleux de la Vente, who in September, 1704, was installed as first pastor of the Church of the Immaculate Conception at Fort Louis, the forerunner of the present city of Mobile. After the French had established the new colony of Louisiana in the early years of the eighteenth century, an agreement in May, 1722, brought the Capuchins, who endured throughout the century and beyond the time of Louisiana's purchase by the United States.

It was fortunate for Catholics that the Recollets, Capuchins, and diocesan priests had been enrolled, for the disaster which befell the Jesuits in the colonies of Spain had been visited even earlier upon their French brothers. When in July, 1763, the superior council at New Orleans ordered Jesuits banished from Louisiana and the Illinois country, a most dismal page was added to the history of the Church in colonial America. The harshness with which the civil officials acted and the manner in which they profaned even the symbols of religion justified the comment of the old Jesuit who described the episode: «One might have thought that it was the enemies of the Catholic religion who had caused it».

To understand the persistence of the French missionaries in the face of so many apathetic or hostile Indians, one must remember that they not only were trained for hardship and disappointment but were schooled as well for failure in the sense that the world reasons failure. To the Jesuits, for example, it was not a failure for more than three hundred of the finest specimens of French manhood to expend their lives in converting a few Indians and in the end to be ruthlessly expelled from America by the government that had brought them here. To men imbued with a living faith in the super-

natural and in the philosophy of the cross, this type of failure was akin to that of the martyrs of the pagan Roman Empire out of whose sufferings in the first three centuries of the Christian era the Church of Europe was born. It is the kind of attitude toward failure that we have been hearing almost monthly since 1950 as the missionaries expelled from Communist China reach Hong Kong only to declare that they will reenter China at the first opportunity. It is an exceedingly difficult thing to convey a spirit of this kind to paper, but Parkman caught something of its meaning when he wrote of Father Marquette, and even such moderns as Charles and Mary Beard, to whom the New World empires were mainly predatory operations, remarked: «The heroic deeds of Catholic missionaries, daring for religion's sake torture and death, bore witness to a new force in the making of world dominion».

French Catholics in colonial America were less successful than the Spaniards in converting Indians, but they were, perhaps, more successful in planting permanent settlements in the wilderness. At towns like St. Louis, Vincennes, Detroit, New Orleans, and Mobile the Church continued to play a leading part in the restricted lives of the inhabitants down to the time of the American Revolution. Amid the rough surroundings of the frontier the spirit of religion often burned very low, but it was never completely extinguished.

When these frontier posts were later engulfed in the stirring events of the Revolution and the War of 1812, the French Catholic population was found loyal to the American cause. George Rogers Clark and his Virginia militiamen experienced that loyalty firsthand when they took Kaskaskia in 1778 and received aid from Father Pierre Gibault, the village priest. It was Gibault's influence that won Cahokia, and it was he, too, who



tracked through the forests to help deliver Vincennes and its Indians into American hands. Father Gabriel Richard at Detroit was so noticeably attached to the United States in the War of 1812 that the British ordered his house arrest.

Throughout the western expanse traversed by the missionaries of France and settled by its Catholic people before the American nation was born a litany of cities, towns, and rivers tells of who once settled there. There is Vincennes, there is Marquette, and there is St. Louis, named to commemorate the saintly Louis IX. There is Dubuque, named for a Canadian descendant of the French. There is Louisville, called after Louis XVI, and Marietta, Ohio, after Marie Antoinette. To these settlements the refugee

French priests fled after 1790 before the whirlwind of revolution that had broken over France. In the wilderness these priests kindled anew the fire of religious faith and enriched the lives of all — Catholic and non-Catholic alike — with their cultured manners and minds. D.W. Brogan has said that the old towns of the Middle West are more American and more touching to the historical imagination than the large cities. Vincennes and Bardstown, a cathedral and a college were staffed by bishops and priests from France before the advancing frontier had passed their doors. Here, then, was a significant stabilizing factor in the maturing process of the newborn states, an ancient and fixed tradition to mellow the rough and raw elements of the West.

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## THE HUGUENOTS OF COLONIAL SOUTH CAROLINA

by Arthur Henry Hirsch

### THE EUROPEAN BACKGROUND AND THE BEGINNINGS IN CAROLINA

The persecution of French Protestants and their journeys to America constitute a familiar chapter in the history of migrations. Driven from France, nurtured in England and carried across forbidding seas, scores of thousands of refugees, seeking shelter from political and religious adversity, found a home in the colonies of the New World. During the last quarter of the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth, great numbers of these persecuted Huguenots fled from Europe to America. Thousands of families settled at various convenient points along the Atlantic coast. South Carolina was one of their most favored retreats and became known as the home of the Huguenots in America. In this province they made eight settlements, six in and about Charles Town, one to the extreme south of the province, and one in the distant back-country.

The European background for the history of the Huguenots in South Carolina centers naturally in two events: the Edict of Nantes, issued in 1598, and the repeal of that famous decree in 1685. The Edict of Nantes was but a confirmation of various treaties and other agreements concluded between Catholics and Protestants. It presumed to cancel all past grievances and injuries.

Sentences that had been imposed upon Protestants on account of their religion were annulled. The legitimacy of Protestant children, settled abroad, was conceded, and prisoners were set free. Wherever Catholic worship had been interrupted, it was restored. Unlimited freedom of conscience was guaranteed. Special courts were set up to administer religious cases. This solemn edict was given perpetual and irrevocable character, and when proclaimed it was heralded as a star of promise and the beginning of a new era of historical development and religious toleration. But, alas, its postulates soon lost their force and the Edict became a dead letter. In many provinces, where Catholic authority was still heavily chained to mediaeval narrowness, and where the Protestants persisted in running risks of liberty, the force of the Edict was publicly annulled. Widespread proscribing, unbridled persecution, and intemperate outrages followed — excesses that enthusiasm can easily encourage and fanaticism accelerate — with the result that in 1685 the famous Edict of Nantes was revoked. The extensive migrations from France quickly followed.

It is interesting to note then that seventy-five or a hundred years before the Revolution, hundreds of Protestants were leaving France on account of the opposition directed against them in local politics, because of restraints of trade and other reasons, social and political. Many of the clauses in laws

and charters were in practice only dead letters. It is clear that before the repeal of the Edict of Nantes the Huguenot leaders were forced to face the prospect of a great exodus. Employers of labor were making arrangements for a transfer of their industries to places of greater safety.

These people found a welcome in all parts of Europe and America. Especially cordial was their reception in the British Isles and in America. England gave asylum to all who fled from persecution. For more than a hundred years, in one way and another, she encouraged the Protestants of France. It is not strange then that thousands of Frenchmen sought shelter in England. So great was their number and so genuine the welcome accorded them and so complete the tolerance, that French churches were founded and entire freedom of religion was granted them. The parish registers of the English churches contain thousands of French names, attesting to the fact that many readily identified themselves with Anglican religious bodies. Scores of these French names reappear in the records of South Carolina.

Though Huguenots were heartily welcomed in the British Isles, there were a number of reasons for their emigration to America. As we shall see, English economic policy lay in the background. The British Crown had granted a patent for the Carolina region and the Proprietors wanted it inhabited. French Protestants were therefore encouraged to go to America. Here was a hardy race, skilled in numerous trades, expert in the culture of wine, silk, and oil, perturbed in spirit by persecution, inured to labor, fatigue, and privation, yet enthusiastic in religious zeal. This is the very material needed for successful colonization under adverse primitive conditions: Because honorable toil is a balm to persecution and hard work an outlet for religious zeal, they were considered admirable

subjects for encouragement. Besides, it was a time when conformity to the Church of England was urged with great earnestness and when the persecutions of Protestant dissenters in England were at their height. The strict laws against nonconformists drove many from England. Clergymen not ordained by the Bishop of London did not enjoy the same ecclesiastical standing as others, and to make matters worse, the possibility of a «popish successor» was greatly feared. It was a time too when competition in England was bitter and intense, especially after the Huguenot immigration. English tradesmen and craftsmen were complaining. Anxiety pressed the people on every hand. In the charity bureaus it was equally trying. So great was the demand for «poor relief» that even the most deserving found it difficult to obtain aid.

But besides these conditions there were other temptations to lure them to their new home in America. America was looked upon as a place inhabited by placable natives, a place of salvation and informal life, where the children of the old races of Europe could without difficulty live in comparative innocence, free from the rigid requirements of antiquated religious limitations. Furthermore, the proprietors promised large tracts of land to their friends as inducements for booming the new colony. To all emigrants of proper quality smaller grants were offered. The Carolina Charter promised liberty of conscience. These things at a time when dissenting bodies were persecuted in England and Protestants were driven out of France, proved especially inviting to French refugees.

In South Carolina, the religious sympathies of the people were aroused and the destitute were generously assisted. Subscriptions were raised to support them; liberal allotments of land were bestowed. The poor were received with generous hospitality. The alien born were naturalized. Privileges and immu-

nities were granted them to induce them to remain.

Generations before the first successful colonization in Carolina, French Protestants sought there a shelter from political and religious persecution. Admiral Coligny dreamed of it as a haven for destitute countrymen, at a time when the coasts of Florida proper, Georgia, and the Carolinas, were still vaguely designated Florida.

In 1555 the first expedition under Durand de Villegagnon had landed at the mouth of the Rio Janeiro, in Brazil. Here a fort was constructed on the island that was named for the intrepid enthusiast, Coligny, patron of the colony. But the small settlement was finally betrayed by Villegagnon, and in time entirely failed.

The second expedition, 1562, under Jean Ribaut and René de Laudonnière, touched at the mouth of the Saint John's River, in Florida. Here a column of stone, bearing French arms, was erected. Not satisfied, the party proceeded thence up the coast to Port Royal harbor, within the bounds of the present South Carolina. Here on a small island, now called Parris Island, Charlesfort was constructed and the foundations of a colony were laid. These adventurers, however, returned to France, but the country received the name Carolina, a name later retained by English colonists.

In the third expedition, which was undertaken in 1564, with Ribaut and Laudonnière again in charge, Fort Carolina was built at the mouth of the St. John's River (River May) in Florida. But this expedition, though consecrated with fervent prayer and dedicated by the blood of martyrs, was throughout doomed to disaster. The mistakes and misfortunes of earlier undertakings were repeated. The adventurers neglected the culture of the

soil and yielded to the temptation of quarrelling among themselves. In the end the fort was destroyed by the Spanish, under the leadership of Pedro Menéndez. Then a fierce storm broke its fury upon the coast, finishing the work of destruction which Menéndez had begun. Carolina, thus occupied for this brief moment, by French Protestants, relapsed into decay. The ruins of the fortifications were overrun by savages, and for nearly a hundred years it gave but little promise of resuscitation.

In view of such things one need not be surprised to find that in 1629 French Protestants were once more in communication with Charles I, of England, for the purpose of establishing a colony in Carolina. The patent that was issued to Sir Robert Heath, as sole proprietor of the region, grew out of the proposals of Soubise (Duc de Fontenay), representing the Huguenots in England. The Baron de Saucé and M. de Belavene, both Frenchmen, are said to have been the originators of this fruitless design of settling French Protestants in Carolina. The promoters were so certain of the success of the enterprise that the Crown issued particular instructions respecting the creed and other matters of those who would go to the new settlement; and William Boswell, one of those interested in the undertaking, gave power of attorney to Peter l'Amy to receive all his rights and profits accruing from the project.

Accordingly, in 1633, a colony of French Protestants sailed for Carolina from England in the *Mayflower*, with Edward Kingwell, their first Governor. But miscarriage in the passage landed them in Virginia instead. Owing to the carelessness or else wilfulness of Samuel Vassal, the contractor, or of the captain, they got no farther. After an eight-months' stay in Virginia, waiting for a vessel to take them to Carolina, Kingwell, in May, 1634, started for England. He ulti-



mately received £611-1-14 from Vassal and Andrews for damages and losses. What became of the families that remained is not known.

Records of similar attempts are found in the years that follow, good examples of which are such efforts as those of 1663, 1670, 1677, 1687, etc. In 1663, when Charles II granted all of the area comprised in the two Carolinas to a company of English gentlemen and the lots in Charles Town were distributed, three men whose names seem to be French, Richard Batin, Richard Deyos, and Jacques Jours, were invested as free tenants and given all of the rights of English subjects. In the records that survive are found individual grants to John Bullon in 1677, to John Bazant in 1678, to Richard Gaillard in 1678, and to Mary Batton in 1683. Possibly some or all of these were persecuted French Protestants, though the complete evidence to support such a conclusion is wanting. In January, 1670, the ship *Carolina*, which was one of a fleet of three, sailing from London, carrying Huguenots, arrived in Carolina. This enterprise started in 1667. After sending Sayle over to survey the coast, the proprietors in England had decided to found a colony in the section previously surveyed by Robert Sandford, Secretary and Chief Register for the Lords Proprietors. The colony was to be composed of emigrants from England, supplemented by additions from Barbadoes, Ireland, and the Bermudas. Preparations required two years in time and £120,000 in money. In 1669, three vessels were purchased and equipped with the purpose of settling two hundred people in the new territory. Joseph West was put in charge of the fleet, until it should reach Barbadoes, where Governor Sayle was to take command. On August 17, 1669, the three vessels, the frigate *Carolina*, the *Port Royal*, and the sloop *Albermarle*, were at rest in the Downs. The *Carolina* contained ninety-three passengers

and supplies of all kinds, ready for the sea. The list of passengers on this ship contains the names of Mellicent Howe, Robert Doné, (alias Donne), Abraham Phillips, and Thomas Gourden (Gourdin), presumably French, and all servants. The lists of passengers on the other two vessels are lost, but it is highly probable that they contained a number of Huguenots, also bound for Carolina.

These were the beginnings of permanent French colonization in Carolina. The three ships, after touching at points in Ireland and Barbadoes, headed for the American coast. The frigate *Carolina* reached there August 30, the *Albermarle* and the *Port Royal*, under stress of weather, tossed on the sea some six weeks, and though reported lost, reached harbor. The colonists settled in the country of the Cacique of Kiawha, twenty leagues north of Port Royal. Dissatisfied with the location, they soon moved to a point on the Ashley River, almost directly across from the present site of Charleston. But in 1682 a second move of the seat of government was made to the neck of land formed by the confluence of the Cooper and the Ashley Rivers. Huguenots are found there when Charles Town was first laid out.

It is not known when Richard Deyos, Richard Battin, his wife, and George Prideaux, a servant, who were in the province by 1672, arrived. George Gourdon (Gourdin), John Bullen (Bulleine), Richard Gilliard (Gaillard), and Thomas Fluelline and wife were there by 1679. William Argent, the record states, came «in the first fleet», probably in 1670. In January, 1672, Joseph Dalton, a passenger on the *Carolina*, wrote Lord Ashley, from Charles Town,

«that 337 men, 71 women, and 62 children, a total of 470, had arrived in the province and that of this number, 43 men, 2 women, and 3 children had died».

Sixteen others were absent when the enumeration was made, leaving a total of 406 in the province. How many of these were Huguenots can probably never be ascertained.

It is not difficult to come to the conclusion that the French Protestants reaching Carolina before 1680 were in the main individual adventurers, who escaped from France to the British Isles and then went to Carolina with others of their nationality, many of whom had been denized in England. The first important accession on record of Huguenot refugees as a colony, is that of 1679-80. In that year the first large company of French Protestants came to Carolina under the direction of René Petit, the King's Agent at Rouen, and Jacob Guerrard, gentlemen from Normandy. These two men, on February 10, 1678-9, presented a petition to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, asking leave to settle about eighty families of foreign Protestants, «skilled in ye manufacture of silkes, oyles, wines &c.», in Carolina and requesting that the £2,000 necessary outlay on the part of the undertakers be reimbursed from the first money accruing to the King's customs by bringing into England the commodities of the new colony. This request was referred to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, who required the consent of the Lords Proprietors. Consent was given in writing on March 5, 1678. Thereupon a third petition was sent by the undertakers, stating that fifty or sixty planters were ready to go immediately. This again was referred, though this time, through the Lords of the Treasury, to the Commissioners of Customs. The latter reported unfavorably upon the project, advised that the refugees be persuaded to remain in England and proposed that the Proprietors and not the King bear the expense of the voyage if it were undertaken. The King in council, on May 28, however, gave his consent to the plan of the petitioners and agreed that as soon as the latters' promises were fulfilled,

ships would be fitted out. This long routine of necessary official procedure, which is a good example of what others encountered, continued until October, 1679, when still another petition appeared in the King's council. It suggests that since the Crown had granted the request of the petitioners, and owing to the fact that many of the families had already arrived in London and little extra expense would be incurred by allowing them to go to Carolina on the ship *Richmond*, then almost ready to sail for Barbadoes, the *Richmond* be commissioned to make the voyage to Carolina, after touching at Barbadoes. The petition also stated that since the remainder of the families would not be ready to go until December, when they should be transported, a list of the persons concerned in the entire undertaking would be submitted. This was agreed to. Then on the bonded promise of the two undertakers they were loaned £1,400 with the understanding that in due time they would submit the list of the persons conveyed to Carolina. By the *Richmond*, loaded with freight for Barbadoes and forty-five French Protestants for Carolina, went a letter to the Governor and Council of the province recommending those on board and requesting for them such treatment as would encourage others to follow them. Extracts from the log-book of the *Richmond* show that on December 17, 1679 above five o'clock A.M. they went aboard and that they landed at Oyster Point, in Carolina, on April 30, 1680. This group of refugees, like other large groups arriving later, was gathered by promoters. René Petit and Jacob Guerrard were well repaid for their efforts, for on their arrival in Carolina each was granted a manor of 4,000 acres.

The supposition that one or more other vessels, loaded with Huguenots, followed the *Richmond* immediately, is not based on extant material. Other ships mentioned in the records, as the *Swan*, the *Oxford*, and the

*Sapphire*, but apparently none of these went to Carolina, or carried French immigrants thither. The *Oxford* carried Lord Culpepper to Virginia, but did not touch at Carolina. It seems therefore that the King loaned only one ship, the *Richmond*, in 1679, for the transportation of French Protestants, and that the promise to submit a list of passengers was never fulfilled. Here then is a colony of French refugees, solicited in continental Europe, assembled in London, and transported to Carolina to produce wine, silk, and oil.

Naturally enough, emigration of Huguenots continued with greater activity after 1685 than before, owing to the fact that the persecutions in France were not only more severe, but extended over a wider territory. Dragoons were now sent to Normandy and other sections, which had been exempt prior to this time. Persecutions in France continued through practically the whole of the eighteenth century, resulting in the continuation of the stream of emigrants from that country into England and from there to South Carolina. A large part of the contingent of 1687, numbering six hundred, consisting chiefly of artisans, and laborers, to whom even their tools were given, came to Carolina. They were the recipients of a royal bounty. The English Revolution of 1688 opened anew the channels of immigration. No large groups, however, are known to have reached South Carolina then until the arrival of the French Protestants who came with the Purryburg settlers in 1732, and thereafter none until 1764, when 371 French Protestants arrived. Nevertheless, throughout the period individual families and small companies of emigrants of French nativity went to Carolina, to escape the rigors of the law in France and to satisfy the never-dying hunger for liberty of conscience.

## THE HUGUENOT SETTLEMENTS

### *Charles Town*

Probably the richest and most populous center of Huguenot activity in South Carolina was Charles Town. Its harbor was the gateway through which most of them entered. The only known exceptions were the small colony that came to Santee, overland from Virginia, and the small groups of individuals and families, who migrated by land from New York, Pennsylvania, and other colonies.

[ . . . ] before 1706 Charles Town and the Santee section contained a number of Frenchmen, and the Goose Creek area, Orange Quarter, and St. John's Berkeley had small groups. French Protestants were also found after 1706 in St. Stephen's in considerable numbers as well as in Granville County, St. John's Colleton, St. Luke's Parish, St. Matthew's, Christ Church Parish, etc., but in none of these places were purely Huguenot churches maintained after 1706, nor separate and distinct settlements founded or established except in the city of Charles Town, in Orange Quarter, and in Hillsboro Township.

Among the original lot-holders of Old Charles Town, situated on the west side of the Ashley River, who had moved from the settlement at Port Royal, were Richard Deyos, who owned lot 19, Richard Battin, owning lot 13, and others. But there were French emigrants there prior to the removal of the seat of government to Oyster Point, in New Charles Town. In October, 1692, the following received grants of lots in Charles Town:

«Peter Le Chevalier, Sr.; Isaac Dugue, Sr.; Ja. Dubourdeaux, Jr.; Jonas Bonhoste; Peter Le Chevalier, Jr.; and Jas. DeBourdeaux, Sr.»

### Santee

The largest settlement of Huguenots in the province outside Charles Town during the early life of the colony, was on the Santee River, sixty miles north of Charles Town. How early its plantations were occupied is not known, but by 1690 about eighty families of French had settled there, distributing themselves along the waterfronts of streams, from Mazyck's Ferry, South Santee, two miles below Wambaw Creek, in what became St. James Parish by the Acts of 1706 and 1708, to within a few miles of Lenud's Ferry, and thence back from the river into the parish of St. Denis, called Orange Quarter. The area south of the Santee comprised the parishes of St. James Santee and St. Stephen's. The boundary limits north of the river were not fixed before the American Revolution. By 1706 there were a hundred families of French and sixty families of English in the district. The settlement immediately south of that made by the English was known as French Santee. Though the date of the original settlement can not be fixed, a number of grants of land are found in that area in 1685. This leads one to suppose that a number of French families settled there at that time. On October 10 of that year, for example, a land warrant was issued for 600 acres to Joachim Gaillard in «Jamestown Precinct». A grant of that size to Mr. Gaillard can not be found in the records, but three grants of 200 acres each, adjoining each other on the Santee River, were recorded on January 18, 1688. They are made out to Jean François de Gignillat. On May 5, 1690, they were conveyed to Joachim Gaillard and his sons Bartholomew and John, 200 acres to each. Warrants of land were issued also to the following: Moreau Sarazin, Jacob Sator, Andrew Rembert, René Ravenel, and others. Tombstones in the Santee burial ground still bear inscriptions of Colonel Elias Horry, 1707-1783; Hannah Simons, 1748-1787; and

Lewis Dupré, 1767-1787.

In this area the refugees settled on their plantations to cultivate the vine, olive, and silk worm and to produce naval stores. Jamestown was the principal center and the only town of the settlement. It was laid out after the inhabitants of that region, at a meeting held on January 29, 1705-6, had passed resolutions that 141 acres on the banks of the Santee be set aside for a town and that a remaining 219 acres be disposed of at the best advantage. The inhabitants appointed Mr. Bartholomew Gaillard the surveyor and made him one of the commissioners with directions for laying out the town lots. Lots 1 to 24 both inclusive were valued at 40 shillings each; 25 to 30 both inclusive, at 60 shillings; 31 to 36 both inclusive at 40 shillings; the rate being proportioned by the proximity to the river, the nearest being highest in price. Jean Guibal, René Ravenel, Bartholomew Gaillard, Pierre Gaillard, Jr., and Henry Bruneau were commissioned to sell lots in town and Thomas Gaillard assisted in the surveying.

In this region the center of religious and political life was the church, situated within the town, less than five yards from the river, overlooking the stream at the north end of the central street on land appropriated for the commons. It was built of wood and stood on a foundation of brick.

Mr. Lawson, Deputy Surveyor General for the British Government, in his tour of South Carolina in January, 1700, visited the Santee settlement and in his account of the trip states that he visited the homes of the Hugers, the Gaillards, and the Gendrons, and met the French at noon emerging from their religious service. Though he makes no mention of a town or of a church building, he states that the French were very friendly and their homes neat and clean. He comments with feeling on the wholesome community



spirit among them and their kindly cooperation in time of need.

Jamestown never prospered. The river was given to freshets and the climate was not salubrious, but the territory surrounding it continued to be inhabited by French Protestants until the nineteenth century. In November, 1708, René Ravenel, a vestryman, relinquished the money belonging to the Jamestown church and prepared to leave. As the years passed he was followed into the more northerly regions of the province by numerous families. In this way St. Stephen's and St. John's Berkeley were replenished with population. This migration, though it did not entirely depopulate the region, continued about twelve years, namely, to about 1720. Today much of the old Santee section is almost a wilderness. Here and there an old ruin marks the spot where once a plantation house stood, but the river flows through miles of waste area, desolate and lonely.

Until the Revolution the principal occupation of the settlers was the culture of rice and indigo. The so-called «long-cane» cotton was introduced into the province about 1770, but before its appearance most of the planters who could do so had removed to the tide lands on the Santee. This was a limited area between the salt water at the mouth of the river, and the head of the tide-water. The site where Jamestown once stood was eventually abandoned and sold as a plantation. Even its name is today but a memory, for the site for decades was known as Mount Moriah. How generally the lots of the village were improved by buildings and other additions is not known. It never became a large town. Its location was unsuited to inland trade and it was too far from Charles Town and too inaccessible to serve as a distributing station for foreign goods. The losses sustained by these emigrations were compensated for in part by accessions from Virginia. In 1712

a portion of the settlers of Manikintown moved to Carolina and settled on the Santee. Many of them had gone to Virginia between 1690 and 1702 and were naturalized by the special Act of 1702. Owing to a church quarrel in which there seems to have been more heat than religious zeal, the colony was split. The Governor and Council were appealed to that the strife might be settled. Part of the colony went to the Trent River, in North Carolina, but the Rev. Philippe De Richebourg, formerly a Roman Catholic, associate-pastor of the Anglicised Huguenot Church, in whose favor the adjudication of the Governor and Council was given, drew most of his sympathizers with him to Carolina. There Dr. Isaac Porcher, a relative of the Rev. Philippe De Richebourg, was one of the foremost planters. De Richebourg was made rector of the French-Anglican Church and served it until his death in 1718.

In spite of adverse circumstances, numerous French Protestants grew rich on the soil in St. James Santee. The advertisements in the *Gazettes* show that many of the planters had acquired large tracts of land. Isaac Mazÿck in 1731-2 advertised the sale of 5,500 acres on the south side of the Santee River. In 1735 he advertised 1,650 acres for sale. Theodore Gaillard, in 1735-6 offered 1,500 acres in Santee, 550 in Winyaw Parish, and 400 on Minion Island. Peter Horry offered 1,900 acres. The year following Daniel and Elias Horry advertised 1,250 acres of rice and pine land, while in 1737 Frederick Gaillard offered 1,400 acres. In 1744 Jane Doux-saint sold 1,000 acres. Benjamin De St. Julien offered 3,400 acres in 1753. Abraham Satur, in 1754 had an estate of 4,300 acres and with it advertises the sale of 50 negroes. The heirs of Abraham Dupont in 1761 disposed of over 3,000 acres of good land that had belonged to him. It is evident that people of French descent continued to reside here far into the eighteenth century, for in 1741,

when the new chapel of Echaw was proposed, all but six of the subscribers to its erection were French. Noah Serre, in 1726, was still a resident of Santee, for he appends to his will: «done at my house at Santee».

These are but a few of many such references found in contemporary records.

#### *Goose Creek*

Early in the life of the colony Goose Creek became a favorite residential resort for Charles Town people and others. English and French settlers were attracted to the rich lands at the «head» of the stream. No enumeration of Huguenots living there has been preserved, except possibly that of Peter Girard, who states that in March 1699, there were thirty-one. Land in this vicinity was granted to Huguenots as early as 1680. The George Gourden (Gourdin) grant of 300 acres, is dated November 15, 1680, and recites that he was then in possession of the land. According to an incomplete enumeration preserved in Mrs. E. A. Poyas' *Peep into the Past*, the following were taxpayers at Goose Creek in 1694. She says:

«I have seen an assessment of the inhabitants of Goose Creek, for January, 1694, which gives property as follows: Peter Villepontoux, Madame Elizabeth Gaillard, £2,234; Peter St. Julien, for Louis Pasquereau £350; Francis Guerin, Peter Guefin, Abraham LePlain, Gideon Fisher (Fouchereau), Benjamin Marion, Mr. Mazÿck, Moses Moreau, Benjamin Godin.»

From various sources we gather that Goose Creek must have been a rather large settlement, and that a number of French families lived there either on cultivated plantations or, in the later period, at fashionable country seats. In 1702 the Rev. Mr. Thomas

wrote to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts that many of the settlers «taking part in the government» lived at Goose Creek, and that some of the members of the Governor's Council and of the Assembly were there. Among the French families prominent in this region were those of Antoine Prudhomme, John Boisseau, Abraham Fleury, Sieur de la Pleine, Peter Bacot, Henry Bruneau, Abraham Du Pont, Pierre Dassau, Isaac Fleury (alias De France), Gideon Faucheraud, Elias Prioleau, Anthony Bonneau, Charles Franchomme, Benjamin Godin, Francis Guerin, Benjamin Marion, John Postell, Dr. Isaac Porcher, J. DuGue, Philip Trouillart, Paul Mazÿck, Isaac Peronneau, Antoine LeBrasseur, Elie Horry, and Zachariah Villepontoux.

By the Act of 1706, as we shall see, the French lost their Huguenot ecclesiastical identity, but they continued to support the Established Church with liberality and took part in the political and ecclesiastical activities.

#### *St. Thomas and St. Denis, and Orange Quarter*

Except for the portion which was closely associated with the life of the local Huguenot church, little is known of the distinctly French settlement called Orange Quarter, or French Quarter. No town was established, but in the first division of the country into parishes, this area was named St. Thomas Parish.

The Parish of St. Thomas was created by an act in 1706 which established religious worship in the province. In later geographical divisions Orange Quarter was part of St. Thomas Parish. St. Thomas was situated northwest of Wandoe and southeast of the Cooper River, extending from the *Silk Hope* plantation to the headwaters of the east branch of the Cooper River. Under provisions of the Act

of 1706, known as «The Church Act», Orange Quarter was constituted a parish for the French under the name of «The Parish of St. Denis». This was separate from the Parish of St. Thomas. In an Act of December 18, 1708, the church of the parish is called the «Church of St. Denis». This was formerly the Huguenot Church of Orange Quarter. Its inhabitants were a colony of unknown number of families the first of whom came to Carolina between 1680 and 1690. Save for the mechanical lists of residents of this portion of Carolina, little can be written concerning it. Advertisements in the *South Carolina Gazette* reveal to us some of the names of the planters who lived there in the period after 1731, while among the names of French families in the early records are many that are familiar in later decades.

#### *St. John's Berkeley*

The Huguenot settlement of St. John's Berkeley, as it became known after 1706, was the child of the Orange Quarter and Santee sections. Located near the fertile banks of the Cooper River thirty miles nearer Charles Town than the Santee region, overgrown with pine forest and containing less swamp land and a better quality of high land, it was a far more favorable place in which to live than was the Santee River district.

This colony is said to have been led by Anthony Cordes, M.D., who had arrived in Charles Town in 1686, with ten families of Huguenots. They were organized into a church by the Rev. Florent Trouillart, colleague of the Rev. Elias Prioleau, of Charles Town. The Huguenot life as an element in the community has continued to the present day. Great plantations were maintained where stock raising became a leading industry and horse breeding one of the most popular activities.

James St. Julien, until 1746, operated a large stock farm, the stock of which was sold at auction after his death. Isaac Mazÿck, René Ravenel, and Joseph St. Julien, probably neighbors, appear as executors of the sale. Joseph De St. Julien's estate was advertised for sale in 1749. It included fifty slaves, most of them country born, horses, sheep, hogs, plantation tools, etc. Mrs. Jane Du Pré lived in the parish until 1750, conducting a plantation of 534 acres of corn, rice, and indigo land. Gabriel Guignard owned Wampee plantation, three miles from Stone Landing, a tract of 870 acres of rice and indigo land. Henry Laurens, famous as statesman prior to and during the American Revolution, lived here on large estates. In 1764 Daniel Huger advertised his intention to return to France and offered for sale his plantation in the parish, 120 slaves, horses of English breed, and all of his cattle, hogs and sheep. John Guerard owned extensive domains. His executors after his death disposed of more than 5,000 acres of land. Isaac Porcher was one of the great planters of his generation, a prominent leader in political activities and a successful stock raiser.

Many of the plantations in this section were known by name: *Somerton*, formerly the home of the Ravenels, was bequeathed to Daniel Ravenel. Here in the burial ground under the trees are the remains of many of those once active in the community, especially members of the Ravenel family. *Wantoot* and *Hanover*, the erstwhile seats of the St. Julien family, were secured by the Ravenels through marriage with the St. Juliens. *Ophir*, *Mexico*, and *Peru* figured prominently in the family of Porchers. Peter Porcher settled one of these plantations on each of his three sons. *Somerset* was the property of the Mazÿcks; *Eutaw*, the residence of the Sinklers, was one of the battlefields of the American Revolution. On it stood a large brick house used as a fortification by the British. *Dawshiee*

was formerly the home of the Gignilliat and was later owned by the Gaillards. *On the sea* is one of the oldest plantations in the parish. It was the home of the Porchers, St. Juliens, and Ravenels. *Pooshee* was originally granted to Pierre de St. Julien, in a grant of 1,000 acres. René Ravenel and Henry Le Noble later made it their home. At *Woodboo* the Mazýcks kept open house for all of their relatives and friends.

The plantation record books and the commissary account books of the Ravenel families are interesting documents to peruse. They contain the names of numerous St. John's planters and merchants and enumerate in some cases the extent of the ownership of stock and negroes. The Ravenel ledger marked «A» covering the years 1750 to 1776, contains the names of the following families of the neighborhood: Daniel Ravenel, Sr., Daniel Ravenel, Jr., Samuel Ravenel, Peter Mazýck, Stephen Mazýck, Catherine Taylor, daughter of Catherine Le Noble, Samuel Richebourg, Peter Greté-lait, Benjamin Marion, and Henry de St. Julien. The Ravenel day-book «A» beginning with 1748, contains the record of the plantation of René Ravenel, Jr., and shows accounts with Susannah Gignilliat, Peter St. Julien, Samuel Richebourg, René Ravenel, Sr., Daniel Ravenel, Jr., Peter Greté-lait, and Thomas Cordes.

The Huguenots of this parish were principally planters; a life of exceptional freedom and comfort was theirs. Their parlors were rich with mirrors, drapery, elegant furniture and silverware. Their libraries contained the best books.

Here amid the gardens, where the primitive trees of the original forest survived in all their natural glory, stood the homes of these rich planters. One can almost see, even at this distance, with the centuries of years intervening, the beautiful landscape presented

by noble houses, clustered closely about with trees and stately terraces and banked behind with skies of beautiful blue.

### *St. Stephen's*

St. Stephen's parish was created by emigration from the parish of St. James Santee. As a parish it was established in 1754, though it was recognized to be the residence of numerous French families long before. Twenty years prior to the emigration from St. James Santee, St. Stephen's was a garden spot of South Carolina. The land was not liable to the sudden and frequent freshets so common along the Santee. Dubose wrote of the region:

The exceeding fertility of the soil rendered labor scarcely necessary to make a wilderness of vegetable luxuriance; the quantity of decomposing matter and the myriad of insects incident thereto with the abundant yield of seeds furnished by the rank weeds and grass caused the poultry yard to teem with a well-fed population and the pastures of crab grass and cane poured into the dairies streams of the richest milk. Nor were swine in abundance and countless fish of the finest quality wanting to fill up the measure of the peoples' comforts. I have never listened to representations of comfort more perfect and exuberant than those often given me of the scenes which I am attempting to describe, by those who had known them and loved them.

Such was the country that attracted French of St. James Santee and induced them to abandon their homes to seek a place more congenial to the growth of indigo, then the chief source of their increasing wealth. In a few years it became the most thickly populated country area in the province. *Malford* plantation, a tract of between 300 and 400 acres of swamp land and 100 acres of high



land, is an example indicative of the wealth of this section of the province. It was purchased before the American Revolution for 6,000 guineas sterling by Samuel Cordes.

Here lived the Porchers on plantation *Mexico*. The Marions lived at *Belle Isle*. Between *Belle Isle* and the river road was the residence of Peter Couturier. The Duboses, the Richebours, the Sinklers, the families of Porcher and Cordes, the Peyres, the Dutarques, the Besseaus, and others, all of Huguenot stock, made this their home.

No Huguenot church was maintained there after 1706, but the vestry book of St. Stephen's Parish, (1754 *et seq.*) and the *South Carolina Gazette*s indicate that the French Protestants lived there and were affiliated as members and officers of the Established Church.

#### *Purrysburg*

A portion of the population of South Carolina, often counted among the Huguenots, were Frenchmen, but inhabitants or natives of Switzerland. Pursued by their oppressors, both after the massacre of St. Bartholomew's and after the repeal of the Edict of Nantes, many had fled from France into the mountains of Switzerland, not far from their estates, which they had temporarily lost and to which they could easily return and claim in case the opportunity should be offered. Emigration to Switzerland continued until far into the eighteenth century. It is estimated that 60,000 French Protestants found refuge in Switzerland. With many thousands of Swiss colonists emigrating to North America during the eighteenth century, directing their course chiefly to Pennsylvania and Carolina, came a sprinkling of French Protestant refugees. Two colonies were established in Carolina under Swiss leadership, one in New Bern, North Carolina, in 1710,

the other at Purrysburg, South Carolina, in 1732. The latter is of special interest to us in this chapter. Among the refugees of this group who went to South Carolina, during the early years of its history were, for example, the families of Laurens, De la Bastie, Gautier (Cottier), May, Leher, Jean François Gignilliat, Pierre Robert, Honore Michaud, Jean Pierre Pele, etc., but much larger numbers went under the alluring and oft repeated solicitation of Jean Peter Purry, of Neufchâtel, Switzerland, formerly Director General of the French East India Company, advertiser and solicitor. The provincial government was fearing the results of a great increase of negro population and was adding greater inducements for settling Carolina in order to counteract the effect of the great number of blacks. In June, 1724, he began his attempts to convince the British authorities that he could transport 600 French and Swiss to Carolina, providing he were offered proper inducements for making the attempt. He asked for «four leagues square of land» located according to his own choice, that he be constituted a colonel and a judge with power to nominate his own officers, and that the emigrants, after being transported to Carolina free of charge by his Majesty, should be regarded there on «the same and equal basis» with Englishmen and that they be organized into a military regiment, whose officers should have brevets from the King of England. The British Government, in 1725, made a contract with Purry in which the former agreed to give passage to 1,200 persons from England to Carolina, 600 of whom were to be transported that autumn, and to grant Purry 24,000 acres of land in the province. The 600 persons, however, after four years, should be required to pay annually a revenue of £300 sterling to the proprietors. This project became a «speculation bubble». The British government, after a large number of people had waited at Neufchâtel for nearly a month for means of transportation to

England, failed to carry out its part of the contract. Vernet, one of the adventurers, disappeared for want of sufficient money to take the people on the journey and Purry absconded to avoid the fury of the people, who had neither food nor shelter, nor money to buy either. Jean Watt wrote on October 31, 1726:

So many people offered themselves on the sight of the vessel, prepared, that I am persuaded if one had money, above 600 volunteers might have been procured.

There was evidently considerable disturbance and possibly riot, for four days later he wrote that the magistrate of the city had quelled the tumult by «giving them each 75 bats of their own country». A band of about forty went to England by way of Holland, not daring to face the reproaches of their friends at home. They were led by Mme. Vallet, who took her four children, aged six to twelve, with her. Mme. Vallet and a few of her company succeeded in making only a part of the journey. Out of this scattered and numerous host of six hundred persons, twenty-four finally reached Charles Town, arriving there December 6, 1726, after a six weeks' voyage.

Defeated in the first undertaking, Mr. Purry waited nearly four years before making another attempt, though meanwhile carrying on his publicity. In 1730 he went again to South Carolina to look over the available territory. He wrote and published a glowing account of the province and then returned to England. In perusing the pamphlet now, one is led to wonder that the statements it contains could have been taken seriously by anyone. Many of the arguments it presents are illusory and chimerical. Nevertheless, it had the desired effect of inducing a good many disheartened foreigners to go to South Carolina. Purry agreed with the English

authorities in return for 120,000 acres of land to transport six hundred emigrants to South Carolina within six years at their own expense. A £6 bonus for each effective person brought over was promised him by the South Carolina legislature.

In 1731, one hundred and fifty colonists were brought over. In addition to other perquisites obtained in America, Mr. Purry received from the British government £4 sterling for each effective person he brought. The assembly appropriated £5,150 for expenses occasioned by Mr. Purry's trip and the laying-out of the new township. In 1732 the town of Purrysburg was laid out. It contained 400 acres on the Savannah River. Besides, 300 acres were set aside for a church and cemetery and 100 acres for a common and a glebe. In a company of 260 that came in 1734, 40 were persecuted and poverty stricken refugees who had temporarily settled in the Piedmont. A collection was taken for them in England, which netted them enough for the purchase of tools, provisions, and cattle on their arrival in South Carolina. Their names are not extant, but the names of those who arrived on the 22nd and 23rd of December, 1732, are preserved, as well as the age of each.

On March 12, 1732-3, Colonel Purry made affidavit in the court house at Charles Town, that he had brought the following consignments of French and Swiss to Charles Town.

- November 1, 1732, in the ship *Peter and James*, 61 men, women and children.
- December 13, 1732, in the ship *Shoreham*, 42 men, women and children.
- December 15, 1732, in the ship *Purryburg*, 49 men, women and children.

To this list should be added 150 who arrived in 1731 and 260 who reached Charles Town in 1734. At least 87 were French.

Mr. Purry died about 1738-39 leaving an estate of personal property valued at about £3,600, in addition to his land holdings. His youngest son who died in Lisbon in 1786 left an immense fortune valued at £800,000 sterling. During his lifetime the latter presented to his native city, Neufchatel, a gift of £50,000 sterling for the erection of a state-house and a hospital. In recognition of the gift he was honored with the title of Baron, by the King of Prussia. In his will he bequeathed £140,000 sterling to his native city.

In 1764, as we shall see, Granville County Frenchmen secured their final additions of countrymen, prior to the American Revolution, by the arrival of thirty-one French Protestants. This was a section of a larger company of about 370 French refugees, who went to South Carolina with the intention of settling in Hillsboro Township, but who separated from the rest in a quarrel. Thereby they lost the protection of the provincial government and the promised bounty. Forced to shift for themselves, they sought land in Granville County.

#### *The Back-Country Movement*

Following the settlement of Granville County, began the movement into the back-country. The entire Atlantic waterfront from North Carolina to Georgia was now occupied. Much of the tide-water area had been appropriated by the large land holders, and the rich-soil sections had been seized by land-hungry settlers of all classes. Prior to 1750 a few outposts were established on the margin of the «up-country» and a few settlers had ventured into the danger-area of the hostile Indian and the wilderness of

swamp and pine-barren or rich back-country districts. Some of these settlers were from the tide-water and from England, but others, following the great valleys and adjoining plateaus that ran in a general south-westerly direction from New England, moved into the Pedee, Hillsboro, and adjoining sections.

John Dubose was among the first of the Huguenots to move into the Pedee region, near the Welch settlement. He came from Santee to Lynch's Creek. Both he and his sons were men of means. Isolated families, rather than large groups of French, first made their appearance in these regions. In 1760 Claudius Pegues went to Pedee and settled on the east side of the river, not far from what later became the state line. He had fled from France after the Revocation and with his wife, a Swiss, settled in London. In South Carolina he was an active citizen in St. David's Parish. He was in 1768 elected to the legislature and in 1770 was a church warden. The tendency found for successive generations among the French Protestant families, to move farther and farther into the back-country, is seen in the family of Bacots. The emigrant, Pierre Bacot, of the vicinity of Tours in France, and his wife, Jacqueline Menesier, together with their two sons, Daniel and Pierre, went to Charles Town, South Carolina, late in the seventeenth century. In 1696 and in 1700 grants of land were made to Pierre Bacot, the elder, in St. Andrew's Parish, lands that are now a part of the well-known *Middleton Place*, near Charleston. He died in 1702. His wife, it seems, died in 1709. The two sons who survived moved over to the Goose Creek section, about twenty miles from Charles Town, not far from what is now Ladson's Station. In 1769, Samuel Bacot, grandson of the emigrant and the eldest son of Peter Bacot by his second wife, moved into the Darlington District, far into the back-country. In 1741 he had married Rebecca Foissin. The family was one of the highly

respected and efficient planter and merchant class, several of whom entered public life. Thomas Wright Bacot, of the Charles Town branch of the family, was appointed Postmaster at Charleston by President George Washington in 1794. He retained the position with increasing honor for more than forty years. In the Darlington District were found also the families of Leonard Dozier and John Prothero. Sometimes driving their animals before them and carrying their possessions in wagons and carts, at other times making their way through unbroken wilderness afoot, they went forth to overcome the difficulties incidental to the frontier.

The back-country movement was not without its French clergymen, one of the best known of whom was Paul Turquand. He was recommended to the Bishop of London by William Bull in February, 1766, after a sojourn of several years in the province. During this time «he kept a grammar school of some reputation» and because he was conducting his life «according to the precepts of Religion and good order», he was invited to accept the leadership of the Established Church in St. Matthew's Parish, and in due course he was recommended to the Bishop of London for ordination.

In St. Matthew's Parish, he continued his abundant and efficient services until his death in 1784. Regardless of the fact that his Anglican rectorship would ordinarily lead him to be loyal to the British government; he became one of the most active patriots in the cause of the American colonies in the Revolution. Elected to the Constitutional Convention of South Carolina and to the State Legislature he continued his work in defense of the American side until the British seized Charles Town and overran South Carolina. It was not until then that, foreseeing the possibility of being apprehended on charges of treason, owing to his Anglican or-

dination, he left his family in charge of friends, and, in company with Tacitus Gaillard, also an ardent patriot, fled to New Orleans. Though eventually both of these men were captured, Turquand was released; his friend Gaillard probably died in prison. When the war closed Turquand returned to Charles Town. Accompanied by a faithful negro servant, who had been his escort on the trip, he threaded his way through the vast Indian wilderness between New Orleans and Georgia afoot. On his return to South Carolina he resumed his duties in St. Matthew's Parish. Paul Turquand represents a tendency, prevalent, as we shall see, several generations prior to this time in young men of French nativity or parentage, resident in England, to turn to Anglican orders rather than continue in Calvinistic circles. The period of polemic discourses and sensitive distinctions had to a large extent passed both in South Carolina and in England, but he carefully considered both sides of the question. He had made a visit to South Carolina as a young man and after seriously weighing the matter he returned to England persuaded that he ought to embrace Anglicanism. He was probably helped into this decision by Pastor Boundillon, of London, an Anglicized Huguenot clergyman, and by the Rector of the Purrysburg Congregation, Mr. Geisendammer, who, together with other influential men, had been addressed by Turquand on the subject. On his return to England, after visiting South Carolina, he had entered the Winchester School, the records of which reveal his residence in 1757, and according to current practice give the date of his baptism as October 25, 1736; at Spitalfields. His family was one of the oldest and most respected of the merchant and professional class of France, who under persecution had gone to London in search of protection and an opportunity to make a living under British rule. Paul Turquand during his rectorship in St. Matthew's Parish projected a plan for the founding of a



college with a faculty composed of educators gathered from England and France. With this in view he had collected a large classical library and a considerable amount of manuscript material as a nucleus, but the approaching Revolution put an end to his contemplation.

With the establishment then, as we shall see, of the Hillsboro district, individual families of French Protestants emigrated thither by way of the back-country. For example, James and Mary Petigru (Petigrew) journeyed from France to Ireland, thence to Pennsylvania, and finally by way of the back-country moved into Abbeville District.

These pioneers were an interesting people; fearless and dauntless. Their heroism made the frontier less dreaded, and their tireless toil made the back-country wilderness smile with generous harvests.

In 1764, shortly after the conclusion of the Peace of Paris, 1763, which ended the Seven Years' War, the last large groups of French Protestants to go to South Carolina, landed at Charles Town. They settled in Hillsboro Township and comprised a total of 371 persons. Like several of the other colonies these people left France «on account of their religion», brought their ministers with them, and established a Protestant Reformed Church, of the Calvinistic faith. The sagacious governor of the Province was not insensible to the value of these newcomers. He wisely wrote to Patrick Calhoun, father of John C. Calhoun, the statesman:

«I expect you will do every friendly office for them which besides discharging your own conscience by doing will most certainly if this colony should thrive and become very populous as it will if properly encouraged now promote the value of all the Neighbouring Lands these being men who fly from the reli-

gious oppressions in France will be followed by many also the account of enjoying Civil and religious Liberty here.»

The Rev. Jean Louis Gibert was the pastor of one of the groups. With him was associated the Rev. Jacques Boutiton.

There was abundant reason for the continued emigration of Protestants from France to South Carolina. Persecution, though at times diminished, had not ceased. Besides, it must have been generally known on the continent of Europe that the poorest classes in South Carolina and even the middle class could live better there than in Europe. Of those intending to go to the Hillsboro section the first group embarked from Plymouth, England, January 2, 1764, after two years of negotiations through their agent, John Lewis Gibert, with the British authorities, and arrived in Charleston, on April 12. Gibert's correspondence with the English authorities shows him to have been a man of unique leadership. He had carefully studied the problems that would confront the new colony and had scrutinized the difficulties of the Georgia and other settlements near by. His frank boldness and characteristic courtesy were outstanding traits. These people were furnished accommodations in Fort Lyttleton, at Beaufort, at a total cost of £12-7-0 for the summer and returned to Charles Town in August, having lost only one of their number. A tract of land, known as Hillsboro Township on Long Cane Creek, immediately north of the settlement made shortly before by Irish immigrants, was allotted to them. Michael Smith undertook the task of transporting them from Charles Town to Hillsboro Township. His remuneration was £840. These people went to South Carolina under written contract between John Lewis Gibert and his colleague, Mr. McNutt, on the one hand, and the English authorities on the other hand. The «undertakers», as they were called, were to transport two hundred French

people to South Carolina and furnish a «proper vessel» for the voyage. Even the details concerning the accommodations are preserved. The passengers should be furnished with berths 6 x 1 1/2 feet each and wholesome provisions in quantities as follows: six pounds of bread; six of beef, and one pound of butter per week, and two quarts of water each day for each passenger. They were to receive land grants at the rate of one hundred acres to each family head and fifty acres to each black or white man, woman or child in the family. The rent rate was fixed at four shillings proclamation money per 100 acres, to begin at the expiration of two years. Both on account of their indigent condition and their value to the province they were allowed ten years' exemption from rent, and the expenses of surveying the township and transporting them from Charles Town to the place of final settlement were paid by the provincial treasury in addition to the bounty of twenty shillings per capita for provisions and tools. They named the village in the center of the township, New Bordeaux, because many of their number had come from Bordeaux, in France.

Immediately after their arrival in August and September, Patrick Calhoun, grandfather of the famous American statesman, John C. Calhoun, with the aid of the Frenchmen, surveyed the township and laid it out in vineyard lots, plantations, and a village on a New England plan. The township embraced 26,000 acres, 24,000 of which were designed to be reserved for the French. For land already occupied in other grants 2,000 acres had been allowed in the survey. The surveyed portion was situated on the two main forks of Long Cane Creek, three and one-half miles from the Savannah River, forty miles above Augusta and nine miles south of Fort Boone. The lot surveys in the village were completed by October 5. In spite of the «distemper» among them, they had built a fort, a mill,

and a number of houses by January, 1765.

A tract of 800 acres, which comprised the village of New Bordeaux, the vineyards, glebelands, and commons, was situated on the spot where the Long Cane Creek and the Northwest Fork meet. These 800 acres were apportioned as follows:

- «1. Lots of 2 1/2 acres each, embracing 100 acres..... 100
  2. A fort, church yard, parsonage, market-place, parade ground, 1 acre for a public mill, and streets 25
  3. A common reserved for the government..... 200
  4. A glebe for the minister and the Church of England..... 300
  5. 175 acres to be divided into 4-acre lots for vineyards and olive gardens..... 175
- Total..... 800»

In 1765 word was sent in the form of a petition, signed by fifty-eight persons, to the Board of Trade, informing them that the subscribed twenty families of destitute French Protestants were in London, that relief had been sought from the French churches in the city; «which already swarmed with poor»; but without avail; and that unless they be transported to some colony they «would starve for want in this land of plenty». They expressed a desire to go to South Carolina and to join the colony under the care of John Pierre Gibert and Mr. Boutiton. Help was given them and they united with the settlers already situated in Hillsboro Township.

At New Bordeaux the inhabitants at once organized a local form of government. It seems to have been a sort of branch political system, making reports to the head of the provincial government in Charles Town and referring disputes to the colonial assembly. Roger (Rogers) took up the duties of Justice of the Peace and was supplied with a

copy of Simpson's *Justices' Guide*. Duc was made Captain of the militia; Leorion was chosen Lieutenant; Le Violette, Ensign; and the Rev. Joseph Boutiton assumed the duties of spiritual guide, associated with the Rev. Mr. Gibert. For each five persons a cow and a calf were purchased. These and the horses were branded so as to distinguish them from those owned by persons outside the French community.

Jacob Anger, one of the Frenchmen of Hillsboro, in 1765 petitioned the Council for a bounty sufficient to enable him to return to Great Britain and France with the purpose of trying to induce many of his relatives to emigrate to South Carolina. He sets forth in his petition that he had come to the province very poor, that he had left about twenty-five relatives in France, among whom were tradesmen who said they would settle in South Carolina in case it would be advantageous for them to do so, and that he believed that he could, by returning, induce them to go to South Carolina. He states that he is «afraid to write» lest his letters be intercepted and be of great detriment to his friends in France. This indicates that as late as 1765 matters were so disturbed in France as to compel Protestants to flee and to make it unsafe for those who remained to declare publicly their Protestant persuasions. The Council ordered that £100 currency be given him out of the township fund.

The last two installments of French Protestants to go to South Carolina before the American Revolution went under the direction of M. Dumese de St. Pierre, who in 1767 was taking a number of French and German Protestants to occupy lands granted them by the government at Cape Sable, in Nova Scotia. St. Pierre and his French followers also left France on account of religious persecution, for St. Pierre states in his petition to the public that he could not live

on his estate in Normandy, because he had been «devoted to death» for his perseverance in religion and his inviolable attachments to the commercial interests of Great Britain.

Owing to severe weather the vessels were driven far from their course and put in at Charles Town after being sea-ridden 138 days and having buried ten of their number overboard. Sick of the sea they decided to remain at Charles Town rather than pursue their journey further and were given the benefit of the bounty ordered by the law of 1761. Accordingly £1,197 was voted by the assembly to M. de St. Pierre. These people settled in Hillsboro Township and St. Pierre immediately entered public life. He became one of the Justices of the Peace and was made captain of the militia of the French colony of New Bordeaux. He was one of the most successful cultivators of the vine in the province. In 1772 he returned to England and France to purchase grape vines and incidentally induced twenty-seven families to return to South Carolina with him. One-third of these bore French names.

These groups, going to America and settling in Hillsboro Township, as we have seen to be the case in the early history of South Carolina, were assembled by brokerage agents in Europe. Direct commissions to the extent of £209 were paid to these brokers for the Hillsboro emigrants alone.

Though most of the settlers in New Bordeaux were distressingly poor, occasionally one can be found who was in good circumstances. Among the latter were Antoine Gabeau and his mother, who went to South Carolina under the guidance of Jean Lewis Gibert. Antoine at the time of his arrival in the province was only seven years of age. His mother, driven out of France by persecution, was the widow of Pierre Antoine Gabeau, the owner and operator of extensive cham-

pagne vineyards near Bordeaux. She brought with her to South Carolina the title deeds of two vineyards, a few personal treasures, and enough money to make herself and her son comfortable. Through her agent in France, into whose charge her property was committed, she received regular remittances, the earnings of her French estates. Though for years they yielded a good return, they were eventually lost to a «squatter». Mme. Gabeau seems to have been more fortunate than most of the refugees, for there are but few hints that they profited by their holdings in France after emigrating to South Carolina.

The Huguenots in the Hillsboro section settled down in comfort and peace, but the storms of the American Revolution were soon to break forth. Like the French of the tide-water section, they mingled freely with persons of other blood and married early into the families of English, Irish, Welsh, and Germans who were numerous in that part of the province.

Coeval with the arrival of the last colonizers among the French Protestants to South Carolina occurred what was perhaps the most extensive exodus among the descendants of the original emigrants. Small companies had gone to other colonies from time to time, but in the 1760's, a large number, principally from the tide-water, emigrated to Georgia, settling to the south of the Altamaha River, or between it and the Savannah River. This land, it was claimed by interpreters of the South Carolina charter, was a part of the tract granted to the province of Carolina. A fort had been built on the Altamaha River before 1721 and in that year accidentally burned. Petitions for grants aggregating nearly 23,000 acres, and grants of land aggregating over 17,000 acres to a list of persons altogether different in personnel from those represented in the petitions, give hints of the extent of the emigration. Wealthy French-

men, such as Cornelius Dupont, sold their large holdings in South Carolina, where the price of land was increasing and the productive power of the land diminishing and moved to the newly opened districts, beyond the Savannah in Georgia. Other familiar names are Henry Laurens, Theodore Gourdin, Joseph Porcher, Benjamin Mazÿck, Michael Bonneau, Jean Sinkler, etc. While it is possible that some of those who received grants remained in South Carolina, no doubt most of them moved to their newly acquired tracts. The scheme had been undertaken in England as well as in America, and a canvass had been made of the continent of Europe for indigent Protestants who would go to Georgia.

With the opening of Georgia as a new province in 1732, came the opportunity for the purchase of virgin soil at a low price. James Oglethorpe, one of the trustees of the new province, sailed in 1732 from England with a company of emigrants bound for Georgia. The citizens of South Carolina made elaborate preparations for their arrival. At the request of Governor Robert Johnson and his Council, James St. Julien, a prominent French Protestant, was sent to wait on His Excellency, the Honorable James Oglethorpe and to assure him of the hearty support of South Carolina in the settlement of the new province. Among the names of the first trustees of the new colony, appointed by George II, is that of John La Roche, a name for decades familiar in South Carolina among the French Protestants. Thomas La Roche appears on the list of councilmen. In order to secure military protection for the new colony by the arrival of able-bodied men, land tenure was at first made easy, but owing to the fact that negroes were excluded from the province except by special license and owing to the fact that the Indian was still in the regions nearby, settlements were made with reluctance by whites other than foreign Protestants.



Georgia was called upon to undergo experiences similar to those of her neighbor province, nearly a century before. In both cases Huguenots became willing settlers, eager to profit by the returns of cheap virgin soil and ready to endure the hardships incident to the life of a thinly settled country. The success of the Georgia settlement was largely dependent on the inhabitants of South Carolina. In 1735 the English Parliament, strongly influenced by a memorial sent to the King by the Governor of South Carolina, gave £26,000 sterling toward settling and colonizing Georgia, and so its trustees at once took steps for settling the region near the Alatomaha (Altamaha) River. The purpose was to raise raw silk. A French silk expert from Piedmont went to Georgia in the first group from England. On reaching America, this company cast anchor at Charles Town, and it is possible took with them to Georgia a number of planters from the southern metropolis, attracted by the added protection given them.

#### THE FRENCH-PROTESTANT CHURCHES

The eager searcher looks in vain for extant church records to furnish information about the French congregations in South Carolina. The fires that consume wherever they may took their accustomed toll of such material, and, where moth and rust did not corrupt, a careless custody of priceless treasures made possible the destruction or loss of all that once existed. Consequently one must turn to other sources, such as reports sent to the British authorities by clergymen and missionaries, the records of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, the parish records, the Council and Assembly minutes, and many similar places to which the investigator is prone to turn, hopeful that they will yield something to reward his search.

Naturally the life of the Huguenots escaping religious persecution abroad was closely associated with their French churches. Wherever they settled, prior to the Church Act of 1706, they established their own worship and built their own meeting houses. We have seen that before the American Revolution there were French Protestants in almost every part of the inhabited area of the province. Nearly every parish having extant records bears testimony to the presence of Huguenots and their descendants in larger or smaller numbers.

The French Protestants are known to have established six Churches of the Reformed and Calvinistic polity and doctrine in South Carolina. They were: The Huguenot Church at Charles Town, the Huguenot Church at Goose Creek, The Huguenot Church at Orange Quarter, the Huguenot Church at Jamestown, French Santee, The Huguenot Church in St. John's Berkeley, and The French Protestant Church at New Bordeaux, in the township of Hillsboro.

The first five were founded before 1706 and of these the one at Jamestown was the first to succumb to the conditions making inevitable the necessity of embracing the polity and doctrines of the Established Church. It was anglicized in April, 1706, at its own request. Those at Goose Creek, Orange Quarter, and St. John's Berkeley were absorbed by the act of 1706. The French Church in New Bordeaux, founded in 1763, remained Presbyterian until the American Revolution.

The Huguenot Church in Charles Town has weathered all of the adversities incident to its long history, maintaining in unbroken form and preserving the Calvinistic worship in singular purity from the time of its foundation to the present day.

The polity of these Huguenot Churches, during their existence as such, was presbyterial, in accordance with the principles laid down and explained in *La discipline Ecclésiastique des Eglises Reformées de France*. This in Carolina was supplemented and adjusted to suit local conditions. The polity of these Churches was thoroughly democratic and representative. It provided for several officers. The minister was ordained in conformity with the Calvinistic tenets and was nominated by the elders of the church to the corporation. With the corporation lay the power of choosing or rejecting the nominee. It also determined the length of his term of service and his salary and had the power to dissolve his connection with the church. The elders or «*anciens*» elected by the corporation at the January meeting of each year, were overseers or «*surveillants*» and were all laymen. They had charge of the common seal and the communion plate. They had the power of appointing the clerk and the sexton and they nominated the minister to the corporation. It was their prerogative to sit with the minister to adjudicate matters of local importance. The fact that the Charles Town Church had elders appears in the will of Anthony Prudhomme. There is no evidence of the existence of deacons in the Carolina French churches, though that office probably existed there. The deacon's function was to collect and distribute, with the advice of the consistory, moneys to the poor, the sick, and the imprisoned, and to visit and take care of them. The provincial officers, vestrymen, and church-wardens functioned in the same capacity. Some cases of aid to needy French refugees are recorded in the St. Philip's vestry and church-warden's records. The corporation was the ruling body as in the Congregational polity. It was dependent on no outside body and consisted of all white members of the church in regular standing. It held two regular meetings each year, and other meetings might be held at the call of

the elders. One-third of the members constituted a quorum, but at least eight were required to be present regardless of the number of members in the church. It elected a president, a secretary, and a treasurer by ballot, each to serve one year. It chose its own minister and stipulated the length of his term and the amount of his salary. The consistory, or session, consisted of the minister and elders, or overseers, of the church.

The body of doctrine of the churches was Calvinistic, according to the tenets contained in the «*Confessions de Foi, faite d'un commun accord par les Eglises reformées du Royaume de France*» and contained forty articles. They were prepared under Calvin's supervision in May, 1559, and taught the total depravity of man's nature, the indispensable necessity of the operations of the Holy Spirit in conversion, the satisfaction of the law in the sacrifice of Christ, and «*justification by faith in His name unto eternal life*».

The worship in the churches was liturgical and in conformity with the Calvinistic service established in 1543 as a basis. The one in use in the Charleston French church was introduced in 1713 by the churches in the principality of Neuchâtel and Velangen, to which several additions have been made since.

There being no records of the Huguenot churches of South Carolina extant, as we have seen, it is impossible to write a history of their detailed activities from primary material contained in such records. There was probably little dissimilarity in the life of the several church organizations. They had been established according to custom as soon as the Huguenots reached their several places of abode and as soon as possible buildings were erected in which to conduct their worship, which prior thereto had been conducted in the homes of the refugees. The Huguenot

ministers traveled circuits in accordance with the time-honored custom of frontier life, dispensing drugs to the sick, giving aid to the poor, distributing books to such as would read, and consoling the spiritually needy.

### *Charles Town*

The little that is known about the Reformed French Protestant Church in Charles Town is gathered from materials collateral to its immediate life and activities. Tradition holds that after war, fire, and floods had done their worst in the devastation of written and printed materials, such records as survived were carried to Cheraw, South Carolina, for safe keeping, during the war for Southern Independence, but they were never recovered after the cessation of hostilities.

It is probable that the church was founded soon after the repeal of the Edict of Nantes, though no building is known to have been erected until later. The will of Caesar Mozé, which for generations has been quoted as proof of the organization of the church as 1687, makes no mention of the Charles Town French Church, but bequeaths £37 to the church near Mozé's plantation. Mozé lived in Orange Quarter.

The Charles Town French Church was an extension, or perhaps better, a transferred reestablishment of the French Protestant Church of Pons, France, whose pastor was Elias Prioleau. He, with his congregation, in April, 1687, witnessed the destruction of their church building in that place by their Catholic enemies. While it was being demolished Mr. Prioleau gathered his congregation about him, and after he had addressed them regarding their plans for the future, they determined to embark for England. How many followed him is not known, but the names of a number of French families denized in England, names that in later years are familiar

in Carolina, indicate reasons for the supposition that at least a number followed their spiritual leader to England and subsequently to South Carolina. Others probably followed as it became possible. Hands ruthless in the destruction of visible buildings were unable to destroy the church organization. It reasserted its life on American soil.

At this distance from the facts and owing to the scarcity of extant material it is uncertain whether the Charles Town Church was founded before Mr. Prioleau reached there or not. The Rev. Florente Trouillard was in Charles Town, according to the Ravenel manuscript, in 1686, and may then have been in charge of the Charles Town French Church. It is possible in that event that the Prioleau congregation united with the church already organized. Mr. Prioleau, his wife Jane, and their two children, Jane and Elias, were denized April 9, 1687, in London. There is a possibility of their having gone to Carolina before that date, for after having taken the oath of allegiance, papers of denization could have been issued to them *in absentia* on the above date. Mr. Prioleau was not naturalized in Carolina until June 14, 1697.

Thus we see the greater part of a congregation, forsaking Pons, in France, emigrating by way of Great Britain, where they were presented with letters of denization, and being transported as a church organization led by its minister, to continue its life in South Carolina. Mr. Prioleau there was associated with the Rev. Philippe Trouillard. This church represents the principles of the Reformed Church of France in its purest period. These people came as the professors of its faith. They brought over and established its worship in Carolina.

A complete and authentic list of the succession of ministers of this church is now impossible. From various sources as indicated

we learn of the following who served the congregation as pastors and readers:

- 1686. Philip Trouillard was in Charles Town. He may have been minister of the French Church.
- 1687. Elias Prioleau takes charge of the church.
- 1700 (December) to (March) 1719. Paul L'Escot served the church.
- 1712-1713. John La Pierre and Mr. Boisseau were associated with Mr. Paul L'Escot.
- 1717. Philip de Richebourg served temporarily.
- 1722. Pierre Stoupe.
- 1728. John La Pierre.
- 1731. Paul L'Escot returns from England and remains with the church until 1734.
- 1734[52]. Francis Guichard. The length of his incumbency is uncertain. *The South Carolina Gazette*, Jan. 24, 1735-6 announces the death of the wife of the Rev. Guichard, Minister of the Charles Town French Church. The will of Mathurin Boigard mentions Guichard as Minister of the French Church.
- 1735-37. David Deléscure, Reader in the French Church.
- 1742. Francis Varambant, «Lecturer».
- 1753-58. Jean Pierre Tetrard.
- 1759-72. Bartholemi Henri Himeli.
- 1774-80. Pierre Levrier.

All through its early years it was difficult to find suitable men to supply this church, but in 1710 the Charles Town Huguenot church must have sunk to the lowest stage of its disappointment. Its history holds no darker days than those which mark these years. Paul L'Escot, ever sagacious, alert, liberal, and affable was still its minister. The British archives, though silent as to the major phases of this era, contain one letter which throws a little light on the situation, not only by what it actually says, but by what it implies. The leaders of Anglicanism had not been indifferent to what had taken

place in the crisis of 1706. After that contest was ended only one French church remained unconquered outside the Anglican fold. Commissary Johnston, forever advancing the interests of his church and government, had suggested to the Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel that L'Escot might be induced to transfer his own allegiance and possibly that of his congregation, then very small and weak, to the Church of England. No doubt the «venerable Society», as was its policy, offered him a living through its regular missionary allotments, so that L'Escot, who then faced the possibility of being without a church in case his congregation should fail, would not be left unprovided for. Johnston had cultivated the friendship of L'Escot from almost the very hour he arrived in Charles Town and in the time of the church's distress made good use of the advantage it afforded. In those numerous conversations which their growing friendship afforded them L'Escot had evidently expressed his favorable attitude toward Anglicanism. Johnston cautiously advancing toward a conclusion based on such a friendship and such remarks wrote to the Secretary of the Society in London what his impressions were and even asked that Paul L'Escot be diplomatically approached on the subject of embracing Anglicanism. In fact the Society's letter to L'Escot was sent through Commissary Johnston, who delivered it in person. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel offered to send him enough Anglican Books of Common Prayer to supply his congregation in their public service, as a beginning toward certain assimilation. L'Escot was not unresponsive to Johnston's attentions. He had examined the confession and creed of the Established church and expressed himself friendly to its tenets.

Furthermore, L'Escot expressed the conviction that his





«duty and his conscience compelled him to make this sincere profession», that «though his Charles Town congregation» was «nonconformist, the majority of its members consider the Anglican Church with respect».

His letter leaves the impression that L'Escot himself looked favorably upon Anglicanism and that if his congregation would not accept conformity it was only because of a lingering attachment which they might still have for the service practiced formerly in the churches of France. Evidently Paul L'Escot was convinced that the time was not yet ripe for a change. His reply to the Society shows this conclusively. He politely declined the offer of Books of Common Prayer because, as he states,

«there might be people among us who must have a certain false zeal, inspired by ignorance, which might lead them to be unwilling to accept them, that this might cause trouble» and even «division in the congregation».

But he adds, as if to reassure the Society of his own personal belief:

«When it shall please God that the situation come I shall take my position there with pleasure and even if I do not dare say openly what my desire would be I could at least make it clear without disguise that it would be extremely agreeable for me that we all have perfect conformity in the service of God, since we have already arrived at it in matters of faith.»

There is no denial of the fact that already the public services of the Charles Town Huguenot Church were experiencing many points of contact with the Anglican formularies. The next step toward complete conformity would, it might seem, have been easy to make.

Whether the conservative element in the congregation prevented its minister from going the full distance may forever be a matter of conjecture, for information on that point is lacking. L'Escot remained at his post, serving his people with entire satisfaction until 1719, but the church held continually to its own forms and practices.

The Charles Town French Church after the death or departure of its first ministers and especially after the departure of Paul L'Escot by 1719 found it increasingly difficult to supply its pulpit with desirable men of Huguenot descent. The Protestant theological schools of France had been closed, while ministers trained in England naturally drifted to the Establishment. L'Escot, though himself inclined to Anglicanism, had somehow succeeded in holding his congregation together until 1719, when he returned to England. The letter of recommendation given by heads of families of the Charles Town Huguenot Church to Mr. L'Escot at the time of his departure is full of interest. It is an expression of the appreciation of a grateful congregation for the services he had rendered. Subscribed to it are the names of twenty-one men, heads of families of the church and probably a complete or near complete list of the heads of households of the Charles Town French Church in 1719. It seems that even Paul L'Escot was unable longer to resist the encroachments of the Established Church and was on that account unwilling longer to continue his service to a Huguenot church, for immediately on his arrival in England, on the recommendation of M. de Guhlen, he was ordained an Anglican priest and became the rector of the French Anglican Church at Dover. Two letters written by Isaac Mazÿck, dated 1724, and addressed to Mr. Godin, in London, manifest the despondency of members of the Charles Town French Church. They complain that owing to the absence of

Huguenot ministers the church «was going over to the Episcopal worship» and show plainly the extreme difficulty in securing desirable clergymen. L'Escot's Charles Town congregation, left without a shepherd, became a weakened, scattered, unsheltered people. That this church weathered the storm and remained unswayed in the midst of such painful circumstances is remarkable. It is not known exactly when, but sometime later than 1728, L'Escot after a sojourn in England was induced to return to his former Charles Town congregation. The author is inclined to place the date about 1731-32, for in 1731 the London Walloon Church received a letter from the Charles Town French Church asking for a minister. A salary of £80 was offered and an additional £25 for passage. The letter is signed by Peter Fillen (Fillieu), Estienne Mounier, Mathew Boigard, Jean le Breton, André de Veaux, Anthoine Bonneau, Jacob Satur, Joel Poinset, Jean Garnier, Jacob le Chantre and C. Birot. It seems that soon after this Paul L'Escot returned to Carolina. He served the Charles Town French Church then until 1734. In the interim of weakness cited above the church was forced to content itself with a French clergyman who had been ordained in the Anglican communion. Alexander Garden's letter to the Bishop of London under date of November 8, 1732, is a commentary, not only on the weakness of the congregation at this time, but also on the subject of conflict over practices and policies. The Anglican authorities held that even though Guichard was the settled minister of the Charles Town French Church, the fact of his ordination in the Church of England made it incumbent upon him to use the Anglican ritual, that all clergymen thus ordained

«were bound by their subscription as a Condition of their Ordina<sup>n</sup>, to use the Liturgy of the Church of Engl<sup>d</sup> in their ministra<sup>n</sup> & no other.»

Guichard, it is clear, made light of this exact interpretation and consequently was cited for criticism by Commissary Garden.

### *Santee*

The French Church of Santee was numerically probably the strongest to be found in the province outside of Charles Town. One hundred families were settled there by 1700. These in all probability, however, would not make a very much larger church affiliation than that of the Charles Town Huguenot Church, whose membership in 1699 was 195. The Church building was situated on the spot that after 1695 was the center of the village of French Jamestown, on the margin of the Santee River, overlooking the stream. The church, however, was erected before the town was laid out. It is not known when it was built nor when the church was organized, but the probabilities are that these things occurred almost as soon as Huguenots settled there. The first French minister known to have preached in Carolina was the Rev. Pierre Robert, a refugee, who went to the province in 1686 with Captain Philip Gendron and settled on the Santee, in St. James Parish. He was a clergyman of Swiss parentage and birth and became minister of the French congregation of St. James Santee. In 1699 the church had 111 members. Pierre Robert was the son of Daniel and Marie Robert. The register of the old Huguenot Church in Basle, Switzerland, bears record of his ordination, February 19, 1682, and the baptism of his son, Pierre, May 9, 1675. His wife's name was Jeanne Broye.

The Huguenot Church on the Santee, as such, had a short existence. In April 1706, seven months before the famous Church Act of 1706 was passed, at the request of the French settlers themselves this was constituted a Church of England parish, in conformity with the doctrines and usages of the

Established Church. Pierre Robert remained its minister until 1710, the year of his death. Being in Anglican orders he was eligible to a rectorship in the Establishment. The change thus accomplished in the church was complete and thorough, for the time being, for the only concession that was made to the Huguenots was that they might conduct their worship in the French language, provided they would use the John Durel translation of the Book of Common Prayer. Was there something unconquerable in the spirit of these people? They yielded to the legal specifications, but for generations they held to the French language and traditions, yielding up only reluctantly the cherished Calvinism for which they had suffered and which they had passed through even the fires of adversity to maintain. There was no delirium of excitement: only a silent, courteous submission to the inevitable. It is clear too that long after the Church Act of 1706 was passed the Church of England provided clergymen of French nativity to supply the pulpit of this place. Philip de Richebourg succeeded Pierre Robert as minister. Albert Pouderos was next in the succession. The date of the beginning of his incumbency is fixed by his own letter, under date of April 25, 1724, in which he says: «it has been three years and Seven Month that j am send a Missionary.» He was a native Frenchman and a convert from Romanism who refueged from France under persecution, preached in London three years and then was sent to South Carolina by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. His broken English did not deter him in his zeal to serve his generation. Like others who preached at Santee, he lived on the main highway to the up-country, and there being no taverns at which travelers could be accommodated, his home became the rendezvous of this class. Here he almost daily dispensed succor to the poor and needy and even medical aid to the sick. The human heart responds with sympathy as one reads

the brief excerpts from his letters to those in London who were his supervisors. Though good sense would counsel against such a location, circumstances seem to have compelled the building of the parsonage on the very banks of the river, where the overflow even in winter annoyed and freshets caused great inconveniences and loss. Albert Pouderos' letter of January 20, 1723 states that he had «above seven foot» of water in his house, «the greater part» of his «Household goods damaged and crops entirely lost». His death occurred February 7, 1731, while still in charge of the Santee Church.

How can the ironies of fate be explained that seem to have directed the next step in the Santee congregation? Though the vestry addressed a letter to the Bishop of London, requesting another minister, but one who had never been a Roman Catholic, Stephen Coulet, a convert from Catholicism, was sent to South Carolina in 1731 and directed to fill the vacancy in the Santee parish. He died in 1733. Joseph Bugnion served in the church after 1733. Coulet was French and Joseph Bugnion was of Swiss extraction. Bugnion brought over a company of French-Swiss families to settle in Carolina. He had embraced Anglicanism in England and was ordained in London to the priesthood of the Established Church. With the families of French-Swiss that he brought over, he settled first at Purrysburg. A quarrel between Purry, the Proprietor, and Bugnion resulted in a division in the Purrysburg Established Church, with which the French-Swiss families had affiliated. Thereupon Bugnion requested the Bishop of London to appoint him to the Santee Church. Coulet had died in 1732 and had been succeeded by Colladon in 1733. His tenure was very short, for Alexander Garden in a letter of December 28, 1733 mentions both his arrival and his death and says that he was acceptable to both the French and the English. He died on the

fourth day of his illness, of ~~ever~~. Bugnion found in the Santee section a more agreeable situation than the Purrysburg section had afforded him.

Almost immediately upon his arrival in South Carolina Bugnion had aroused the Anglican clergymen. He «declined to officiate in the English language and sought wholly to avoid it». This was one of the things that stood against him at Purrysburg. At Santee the same objection to his ministry was raised, and Bugnion, who had not mastered the English language sufficiently to officiate in it, found that the English portion of his parish were opposed to employing him. This fact threatened a split in the Santee church because the French portion refused to apply for any other minister. The French had an advantage in this case in the fact that the vestry consisted

«chiefly of French and their descendants» and, «being that the several vestries here» were then «empowered to employ any lawful minister to supply their cures in case of Vacancy»

they were determined to secure Bugnion, «though contrary to the late law», which provided that the minister must officiate in English. When the English of the parish threatened to withhold the salary provided by law, Mr. Bugnion came to the rescue of his countrymen by expressing his willingness to abandon French entirely, and «learn the English tongue». Owing to his destitute condition, with a family of four small children, the English agreed to be patient under this arrangement. Bugnion struggled on under great distress, but was compelled finally to give up his efforts to satisfy the people. He came to know at what a cost one of alien birth strives to serve a congregation of two languages and two allegiances. He had to contend with carping critics. In 1734 the petulant faultfinders

had their way, for the vestry was no longer able to employ him and hold the church together. A fever of unrest and dissatisfaction was spreading. Though remaining in the parish he withdrew from his ministry and ministered to a few French families who clung to him. It would seem as though Bugnion now turned to farming as a makeshift. At least he became a rich landowner, for in 1739 he advertised for sale 3,900 acres of land and 42 slaves. Had the time passed when even the parishioners of this distinctly French section were no longer willing to suffer the discomforts that must certainly have been their portion, as they listened to their minister trying to expound the scripture in broken English and reveal the mysteries of religion in a language that he understood not?

The London archives still hold a number of letters bearing on the period. The communications that passed between Alexander Garden and the Bishop of London leave the impression that two separate vestries, in the Santee parish, representing the two groups, operated officially and unofficially, each after its kind and in its own behalf. The date of Bugnion's dismissal is fixed by one of the vestry letters, dated April 14, 1735, in which it was set forth that they had been without a minister for eighteen months. Emphasis is placed on the fact that a minister is desired who can speak French, because some in the parish cannot understand English, while others, who can understand English, prefer to hear sermons in French. Probably the portion of the parish that was unfamiliar with the French language and saw no good reason for continuing it in Carolina, who chafed under a public ministration carried on in broken English by one who, though in Anglican orders, was still imbued with a strong Calvinistic and French individualism, were not least among the disturbers of the peace.

The Santee vestry, in April, 1735, re-



newed their request to the Bishop of London for a clergyman. Rev. Mr. Du Plessis arrived in September 1736, to gather the broken pieces of the church together and carry forward the work of the ministry. The transition was in progress. Santee, as the older French people were moving away or dying, was becoming more and more inclined to accept the practices and usages of the majority of the province. This was only natural. The things for which the fathers had suffered were but dim in the minds of the children, except where by daily precept and example the elders impressed upon the youths the over-mastering power of their convictions.

#### *Goose Creek Church*

The earliest mention of a French congregation at Goose Creek is in the will of Anthony Prudhomme dated 1695 in which he bequeathed a cow and two heifers to the people who worshipped there. The church building was located about four miles north-west of the Episcopal Church now known as the Goose Creek Episcopal Church, built in 1711-12, and one and one-half miles from Ladson's Station, about twenty miles from Charles Town. A granite cross erected by the Huguenot Society of South Carolina now marks the spot where the building stood. It was on a tract of land granted to Abraham Fleury de la Pleine in 1696.

The existence of a French Protestant Church organization at Goose Creek is proved by many documents: the Peter Girard enumeration of the membership of the Goose Creek Church, the will of Anthony Prudhomme, the John Purcell map (which indicates the location of the Church), many references in the S.P.G. reports, and the correspondence of the Rev. Mr. Thomas, Missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. This section was «erected into a parish» by the Act of 1706 and its boundaries

defined, but, prior to that time the active life of the French in the settlement had begun. French inhabitants were there as early as 1680. It is evident, however, that by 1702 the French were already pretty completely absorbed by the Established Church, for the Rev. Mr. Thomas, a Missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, wrote to the Society in London that there were only five families there who still retained the Calvinistic belief. There were two churches at Goose Creek, an Anglican and a French Protestant. Thomas was missionary to the Anglican church and Le Jau succeeded him and became the first rector of the parish. The French Protestant Church nearby probably died out and the membership affiliated with the Anglican body after 1706. Benjamin Godin, a prominent French Protestant, was the first donor of the land on which the Episcopal Church of Goose Creek now stands. The tract contained sixteen acres. In 1688-89 the Goose Creek Huguenot Church had thirty-one members. There is no evidence of the Huguenots having had a minister of their own nativity prior to 1706, when Francis Le Jau, born and reared a Huguenot in France and Episcopally ordained in London, came to Carolina to officiate in the Anglican church of Goose Creek. He arrived in Carolina, from Virginia, on October 13, 1706. Le Jau was at this time fully committed to his Anglican allegiance as can be shown by his letter of December 2, 1706, to the Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in London. He asks for four more ministers, several teachers, etc. Then he adds:

If some french minister would come here, there is the same maintenance from the country for two of them & if they could serve an English Parish 'twould be better. I will now and then, as I am able, visit the French plantations, but will chiefly behave my self according to the Commands and receive

from His Grace the President of the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Society.

He was the first clergyman exclusively assigned to this church and with his rectorship the organic life of the parish begins. The nearby Huguenot Church was with others absorbed or anglicized a month after his arrival. Le Jau had been a canon in St. Paul's Cathedral and had been honored with the degree of Doctor of Divinity by his alma mater, Trinity College, Dublin. He was sent to the Goose Creek congregation in conformity with the policy of the English government to cater to the desire of the French portion of the population in the province. His ministry was rewarded by the rapid growth of his church. Doctor Le Jau was a constructive religious statesman, fearless in his convictions, a builder and organizer of rare skill and insight. He was a thoroughly anglicized Frenchman, having served established churches in the British Isles before going to South Carolina. Probably no clergyman in the province left a more voluminous body of correspondence behind. During the early part of the eighteenth century, he was, next to the Commissary, the most influential Anglican clergyman in South Carolina. During the Commissary's absence in England he served St. Philip's Church, Charles Town, and acted as Deputy to the Commissary. The records of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts are replete with evidences from his own hand of his active interest and participation in every movement of public importance in the province. He wrote to the Bishop of London regularly and kept the Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel informed of practically every detail of administration and doctrinal controversy, as well as of events of general interest in South Carolina, during his active life there. Dr. Le Jau took a great interest in the negroes and Indians of his parish. From time to time he reported his activ-

ities in this direction. For example, in 1711-12 he says that from forty to fifty negroes were being catechized in his parish. He urged the people to give them the advantage of Christian instruction and baptism. Herein he was materially helped by the work in the parish mission school, which was established as a result of Le Jau's efforts. The salary of the missionary-teacher was paid by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in London. Le Jau brought Benjamin Dennis over from Virginia, in 1711 to take charge of the school. He devoted all of his time and effort to its work, which consisted not only of giving daily instruction to the children of the parish in secular education, but also of catechizing servants and negroes, instructing them in religion and preparing them for baptism and admission to the church. He says in one of his reports to the London Secretaries:

«I catechize those that are ignorant twice a day and those more perfect twice a week.»

In this school, in 1713 there were two Indians getting regular instruction.

In 1711 Le Jau undertook the construction of a much needed church building, which after anxiety-ridden delays was finished in 1712. The passion and patience of missionary effort in the world are not infrequently recorded in bits of unconscious record and hints dropped with no thought at all of the heroism with which the effort is girt around. The Chamerlayne letter, dated January 4, 1711-12, leaves no doubt that Le Jau

«had been forced to pass his own word for the payment of things necessary for finishing».

the church and house. And Le Jau adds: «else we were like never to see the End of that tedious work». Then, as though he sud-

denly remembered his own indigent condition, he appends this comment: «I hope the Parishioners will not suffer me to loose too much.»

How well the work was done is distinctly manifested in the building itself. It stands today a memorial to his life of service and sacrifice, a monument to his devotion and skill. Built of enduring brick and stone, these more than two centuries of time have not destroyed it and above its altar still repose the emblems of the British authority to which he was ever faithful and of the church in whose verities his faith never faltered. And even as one might suppose Le Jau himself would have it, it occupies its place humbly beside the road, and though bearing the marks of its age, it gives promise of standing another century and then perhaps another. This was in every true sense of the word Francis Le Jau's church.

After Dr. Le Jau's return from a visit to England made necessary by ill health, his activity was focused on creating interest in and erecting a free school at Goose Creek,

«for instructing children in the knowledge and practice of the Christian religion».

The Huguenots were well represented in the subscription list. They promised to pay the amount opposite their names each year for three years as follows:

Zachariah Villepontoux .....	£50
Cornelius Dupré .....	5
Gideon Dupont .....	7
Benjamin Mazÿck .....	15
Gideon Fauchéraud .....	10
James Marion .....	5
Peter Porcher .....	15
Isaac Porcher .....	5
Rachel Porcher .....	5
C. Fauchéraud .....	100
Paul Mazÿck .....	50

Francis Le Jau died September 10, 1717, after a lingering illness of eighteen months, during which, «through an Extreme weakness» he was deprived of the use of his lower limbs and his speech. The destitution of his family after his death is a lamentable fact. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel which Le Jau had so faithfully served, came to the rescue with a gratuity of £30, in addition to the salary due at the time of his death.

With characteristic definiteness Francis Le Jau saw the tendencies of his day. He laments the prevalence of so-called «profane literature», widely read in the province and he publicly denounced other deep-seated evils of the day. To counteract such tendencies he personally undertook the distribution of literature and handled large consignments of books sent over from London for this purpose. In the summer of 1717, then in ill health, he seriously considered moving to Barbadoes, but he died before the arrangements were completed.

On October 25, 1732, the Rev. Timothy Mellichamp, a French Protestant, but also in Anglican orders, arrived, sent over by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. He found there a large and regular congregation. On Christmas day he was formally chosen to be their minister. He is the only rector of French blood, except Dr. Le Jau and Francis Guichard, known to have served the church prior to the American Revolution.

The Rev. Francis Guichard served the church until 1752. He then sold his well improved plantation of 448 acres after advertising for ten years. In the advertisements he expressed a desire to return to his native country.

#### Orange Quarter

The settlement known as Orange Quar-

ter and also as French Quarter was located on the East Branch of the Cooper River, a little south of the intersection of the East Branch and the Cooper Rivers, and was inhabited at first almost exclusively by French Protestants. A creek, known as French Quarter Creek, derives its name from this settlement. On the banks of this creek the French built their church. Probably the main body of the colonists, about thirty families out of forty-five, said to have been brought over by René Petit and John Guerard, settled in this area. Though the year is unknown the organization of the church society was probably accomplished at about the same time as the one on the Santee River, though a church building was probably not erected until after 1687. In his will, dated June 20, 1687, Caesar Mozé bequeathed thirty-seven pounds sterling to the organization «to be used in the construction of a temple for French refugees». A deed of conveyance from Pierre Faure to Pierre de Julien and a grant of land to Nicolas de Longuemar show that the place was occupied as early as January or February, 1684-5. The congregation was served most of the time by ministers of other churches, viz., Francis Trouillart, Elias Prioleau, and Francis Le Jau. St. Denis was included in the boundaries of St. Thomas Parish. In «erection» into a separate parish was for the convenience of the French residents. The Act of 1706 provided that as soon as services should be performed in English the church of St. Denis should become a chapel of ease to the parish of St. Thomas. Elias Prioleau was minister here until the Rev. John La Pierre took charge of the church and many of the French met in their own church (built in 1708) whenever they had a French minister. In 1698-9 the French Church had 101 members.

The reports to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in London show that in 1721 there were thirty families of French refugees and their descendants in Orange

Quarter and that the actual communicants of the Church of England numbered about forty, and that there were about forty families in the parish who professed themselves of the Church of England, exclusive of Orange Quarter. In 1718-19 the St. Denis French families, because of a renewal of their former tribulations, split from the Anglican Church and embarked alone. Little is known of this incident, but La Pierre says in his letter to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in 1719,

«I have made for sometime my practice to extend my care to them when the Inhabitants of the French Parish of St. Denis by their defection and falling from the church of England have rendered my functions ineffectual amongst them.»

La Pierre soon left St. Denis to succeed Richebourg at Santee. By 1726 the French had again all become identified with the Anglican Church, for Thomas Hassel reported then to the London Society that «all y<sup>e</sup> French of St. Denis's profess y<sup>m</sup> selves of y<sup>e</sup> Church of England» and he reported fifty families of the Church of England exclusive of the French of Orange Quarter. In 1732 the settlement had thirty-two families, of whom fifty persons were communicants of the Established Church. In a good account of the parish, rendered to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel under the date of June 4, 1728, the facts are brought out that the parish church, 37 1/2 x 27 1/2 feet, was built in 1708. It was constructed of brick and had a porch. The chapel was built in 1704, but there was in 1728 no parsonage. The glebe consisted of 320 acres. The correspondent states that the parish was then (as in 1724) 20 miles wide and 35 miles long, and that there were 120 families within its bounds, including St. Denis in Orange Quarter in the middle of the parish. There were then about 30 to 35 families



«who have a conformist minister among them who reads divine, and preaches to them in French».

This was Rev. John La Pierre. The French were still worshipping in a wooden church built by their own contributions at the same time that the Anglican Church was built in 1708. He adds:

«The inhabitants both English and French are much improved in their fortunes and manner of living.»

La Pierre preached in South Carolina nearly a quarter of a century, living much of the time in abject poverty. The words that Commissary Garden used in 1711 in writing to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, concerning La Pierre's financial status, were «miserably poor». While the great service that he rendered was in the St. Denis district to the French refugees, he also served other vacant English parishes at convenient intervals. A letter of his, dated January 1, 1725-6; leaves no misgiving about the grim shadows that lay across his way, even on that New Year's day. There is reference to his family, who «are a great charge» to him, for there are «five small children». There is no lament recorded in those words, they are merely a matter-of-fact statement. But there was a wife as well, «who had lost her eyesight before their departure from England». Does not one's fancy naturally linger in that household, where a mother gropes her way amid the manifold duties of her home, or sits helplessly among the cares, with the full weight of her own handicap and of the family's poverty pressing down upon her? Her husband was then, in 1725, «officiating, going on the nineteenth year» in that place.

La Pierre was a college graduate, being in possession of his A. B. degree before his elevation to clerical orders. He was ordained

to the Anglican priesthood in 1708 by Compton, Bishop of London, who in turn recommended him to Johnston, the Governor of South Carolina. He was assigned to the French Church in the St. Denis parish, which according to his instructions, he was

«to serve until the death of the old settlers who did not understand the English Tongue». «So in the time of the new generation, who understood the said tongue in which they were born,»

La Pierre became an assistant to Rev. Hassel in the parish of St. Thomas, next to St. Denis. There he lived, «hoping of the two nations to make but one and the same people».

In one respect at least the Orange Quarter district was unique. Its settlers tenaciously held to the French language until the middle of the eighteenth century. The Huguenots who lived here had come before the repeal of the Edict of Nantes and were not so bitter against the French language and usages as were their French neighbors who had forsaken France under the rigorous persecutions incident to the Revocation. Besides they were removed from immediate and constant English influence by their isolation and stoutly fought against English influence in their activities. They gave up their French Protestant usages with great difficulty and embraced the practices of the Establishment with reluctance. There was an Anglican Church at Pompion Hill, but the French worshipped according to the Reformed faith, unchanged, until 1706. Then poverty forced them to seek financial aid in the support of their ministry by submitting to the encroachments of the Established Church. But they maintained an independent Huguenot Anglican Church, until the original French refugees were all dead. Here the Rev. Mr. La Pierre, their only Huguenot French minister, served the congregation, now Anglican in doctrine

and polity, until his removal to Cape Feare in 1728. He was succeeded by another of French descent, Rev. John James Tissot, an ordained Anglican clergyman. The white population of this settlement continued to be essentially French in composition and life.

The Rev. Mr. Alexander Garden in 1758 wrote to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in London, that the French refugees were now all dead and that their descendants, understanding the English language, had united with the English speaking Anglican church. By the recital of the Act of 1768 we learn that the families of French extraction who formerly worshipped at the French (Anglican) Church, «being then well acquainted with the English language» attend the Church of St. Thomas and St. Denis. This act authorizes the sale of the property.

Grateful for the continued benefactions bestowed by Gabriel Manigault, Alexander Garden on May 6, 1765, when a new church building was under way in St. Thomas Parish wrote the following in a letter to the Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel:

«And have among other Benefactors, Gabriel Manigault, Esquire, of Charles Town merchant deserves notice, who besides his first generous Subscription of £50, sterling for himself and Son, has made a Present of 950 red Tile for flooring the Isles which cost him £10, sterling.»

#### *St. John's Parish*

A small wooden church was constructed by the French a little east of what is now Simpson's Basin, on the Santee Canal, but the extant records are silent as to the date of the organization of the church. This was the first church to be built in the parish. No

church was built for worship in the English language until 1711, two years after Mr. Maule arrived to officiate. By 1707 there was a small congregation of French Protestants there, whose minister was Florente Philippe Trouillard. Like the other Huguenot churches described, it was absorbed by the Act of 1706. Mr. Trouillard, after that date, continued to serve the church, but as an Anglican rector, retaining his congregation, though shifting to another allegiance. The change doubtless was a major factor in the transformation which now took place. The membership of the church dwindled to eight or ten families by 1709. Trouillard preached there once fortnightly, in French, in the Huguenot Church. On other Sundays many of his congregation heard Mr. Maule preach in the same building. Maule had organized another Anglican Church in the area, for the English of the parish, and in response to their invitation used the French house of worship. Maule's new Anglican Church building was completed in 1711. The Rev. Mr. Maule died in the winter of 1716-17 of consumption.

Mr. Trouillard had been one of the first ministers of the Charles Town Huguenot Church, associated with the Rev. Elias Prio-leau. Mr. Trouillard died at St. John's Berkeley in 1712. His will was recorded March 19 and proved April 14, 1712. He must have died between these two dates. His congregation was at that time ready to affiliate with the English-speaking Anglican congregation in the same parish and for two months worshiped with it, but the arrival of Philip de Richebourg from Virginia as pastor of the Santee Church and his willingness to administer the sacraments according to the Huguenot forms turned them from their former decision and drew them back into a long conflict over forms and usages. In 1723 the missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel reported 90 families living in St. John's, most of whom were members of

the Church of England. Brian Hunt was chosen by the vestry of, June 5, 1723, as its rector, and he, in 1724, reported 80 families in the parish. A letter to the Bishop of London, dated May 23, 1727, bearing 38 signatures, has only four French, namely, James Le Bas, John Bettison, Francis Le Jau, and Sam'l Dubordieu. Rev. John La Pierre served this church, among others, in the seventeen hundred and twenties. His report declares that

«Mr. Hazel's [Hassell] parish in ye parish of St. Thomas» consisted of «sixteen families french».

He says that there is one service each Sunday, that most of the members live at a distance, that children are catechized regularly, but that there is neither a public nor a private school in the parish.

During the period just preceding the American Revolution the Rev. Mr. Durand, an Anglican-Huguenot minister, served the church and lived in the district. Letters from Henry Laurens directed to him reveal the fact that his son Levi was Mr. Laurens' clerk, having been recommended to him by Mr. Manigault.

#### *Purrysburg*

Students who are familiar with the history of South Carolina know how many times the claim has been made that a French Protestant church was established at Purrysburg. Occasional mischievous hints are found in the British records, which leave the impression that such statements are not entirely without foundation, in spite of the fact that complete evidence is not available. It is well known that an Established Church flourished there and that many persons of French and Swiss nativity identified themselves with it. In 1731 Joseph Bugnion, a French-Swiss clergyman, who had embraced Anglicanism

in London and was ordained there, brought a colony of his countrymen to South Carolina. They settled at Purrysburg. Bugnion was appointed to the French Anglican Church in that place. All of the services which Bugnion conducted here during his incumbency were French. There is abundant evidence of this. Bugnion was unable for several years to use the English language at all, much less to officiate in it. It seems as though nearly all of his troubles in South Carolina, while in charge of churches, are rooted in this fact. In 1733 a quarrel between Bugnion and Peter Purry terminated in a church schism. Bugnion claimed that he had been mistreated by Purry, the Proprietor of the settlement, and that the promises originally made to him by Purry had not been fulfilled. Evidently much more was said than was written. What was said may be inferred from the malicious lines that are found in letters that passed between Charles Town and London. Purry had prejudiced the people against Bugnion and against the Church of England, and, «obeying a secret design to do away with him» had urged separation, causing a number of people to «attend Divine Worship by the Liturgy of Calvin». Purry, «whose pride pierced his cloak», himself selected a man in the community to officiate at the new service. There being no ordained clergyman available, he selected a layman,

«partly enticing the people and partly overawing them to separation». «The Governor and Mr. Oglethorpe did both interpose in his (Bugnion's) behalf with Mr. Purry, but without success.»

One may not leap to the conclusion, however, that this was the beginning of a French Protestant Church. The division was evidently temporary. We know at least that Bugnion moved to Santee. Purry, satisfied in the accomplishment of his purpose in getting rid of Bugnion, seems to have returned to his

former church allegiance. It is not unlikely that a petition, without date, praying for a new minister for Purrysburg, addressed to the Bishop of London, is the sequel to the unlovely incident described above. This petition contains thirty-five signatures and «Jean Pierre Purry Colonel & *Juge a Paix*» is at the head of the list.

The Bugnion letter of July 15, 1733, addressed to the Bishop of London, makes clear that Bugnion went to the Purrysburg church before the legal requirements for its erection into a parish had been completed. As there were but sixty men in the settlement in 1733 and the required one hundred could not be assured before Mr. Purry could bring another company from abroad, Bugnion had no definite assurance of an income through the channels of the Establishment. Three-fourths of the Santee inhabitants being French, he avers, and the parish established, he expressed the desire to the Bishop of London of becoming the rector of the Santee Church. Schooled in the wisdom of his surroundings he clinched his request with a statement to the effect that he had been studying the language with this in view and hoped in a few months to make the service at Santee English. St. Peter's Parish, of the Purrysburg area, was not established as such until 1746-7. The Anglican Church was nevertheless continuous in its activities there. Upon Bugnion's departure for Santee, Rev. Henry Chiffelle succeeded him at Purrysburg. Chiffelle was a missionary sent by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in London. He was an ordained clergyman of the Anglican Church.

#### *New Bordeaux, Hillsboro*

The Huguenot Church of New Bordeaux was the last to be organized before the American Revolution. The French people in Hillsboro Township reestablished the Protestant

Reformed religion which they had professed in France, and built with their own hands a church of logs cut from the virgin forest. John Pierre Gibert in France and England had been the spiritual guide and business director of the group that arrived in South Carolina in April, 1764. In 1761 Louis Gibert had gone to London to secure the cooperation of the British Crown in his plans to take a colony of Huguenots to America. In his letters to Secker, the Archbishop of Canterbury, he states that the colonists intend to become faithful subjects of the Crown and later asserts that they all intend to conform to the Anglican usages and to have bishops. Their plans in these particulars were not carried out, for, though in the original plat of the town 300 acres out of a total of 800 acres were reserved for a glebe «for the minister and the Church of England», no Anglican Church was founded prior to the American Revolution. In addition to the French Protestant Church at Hillsboro and the German Lutheran Church in Londonburgh there were six meeting-houses in the near vicinity, but not one was Anglican.

In the French Protestant Church Mr. Boutiton was associated with Mr. Gibert as the first minister of the congregation after its establishment in New Bordeaux. Immediately after his death, in 1772, Mr. St. Pierre petitioned the Board of Trade in London to provide funds for another minister. Fifty pounds had been given annually by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. An equal amount each year was now asked for from the British government in order that the Rev. Peter Levrier, during the past seven years minister of the church at Pensacola, might be secured to serve the French Church in New Bordeaux. This seems to have been granted, for Mr. Levrier arrived at Charleston, bound for Hillsboro Township, on May 7, 1772. This church remained Calvinistic until the American Revolution.



Naturally in a study of this kind, even though realizing the value of comparative inquiries, one is inclined, as far as possible, to hold rather steadily to the theme of direct discussion. And yet how evident it becomes as one proceeds that none of the churches of South Carolina lived to itself. This is shown again and again in these pages. Probably the best single source of contemporaneous material now in existence, giving in compact form a survey of all of the tide-water churches and congregations, is the report of Mr. Woodmason, covering South Carolina, North Carolina and Georgia. [ . . . ]

#### THE ASSIMILATION OF THE HUGUENOTS

The rapid assimilation of the French in Carolina into the Established Church and their intermarriage with other nationalities are remarkable features of their early history. The absorption into the Anglican church was indirectly coercive, rapid and thorough. The English institutions mastered and overpowered the French. The French became English in language and religion, British in sentiment and policies. The fulcrum by which it was accomplished was economic necessity, the lever was political preferment. We are slow to conclude that the change was made with graceful ease. On the contrary, it must have been accomplished with reluctance and in pain, despite the fact that the French had for centuries made political and social changes with comparative ease. Religious opinions and prejudices are not easily relinquished even now, however honest the purpose and sincere the effort. How much more was this the case in the eighteenth century. Only after a conflict, the temper of which is too remote to be easily understood today, did the French Protestants relinquish their church affiliation and embrace Anglicanism.

Are we to assume that the original

Frenchmen, had they gone directly from France to Carolina, could readily have given up their purely Protestant faith for one almost Roman Catholic in form and practice, for one largely Catholic in doctrine? It was for their religion that they suffered, for their Protestantism they were persecuted. Because they loved it they forsook fatherland and fortune. Because they refused to abjure their Protestant faith they denied themselves their fondest possessions. In South Carolina it was a struggle which, though not bloody, as was many a lesser one, abounded in bitter imprecations in public and private. By excited debate on the common green and in the Assembly and Council it threatened the safety of this infant government. It was a conflict in which those who had been willing to lavish blood and treasure in defense of their convictions were made the subjects of implied and expressed reproach. The sacredness of their religion, the legitimacy of their children and the scriptural authority of their ministry all were challenged. It was a struggle in which mob riot reigned five days. At the close of the struggle their determined state of mind dictated allegiance to the Establishment, not by a voluntary choice, but as a result of economic, social and ecclesiastical necessity. In a period of great public or party distress opinions are sharply and clearly stated. Again and again in wills and other documents, reference, sometimes direct, sometimes deeply submerged, is made to the pain that the change engendered even a decade after it was accomplished. Legacies are bestowed on condition that the Reformed practices continue to be used. Burial services according the Calvinistic religion are demanded in wills, while on the other hand, the struggle may be inferred from such determined statements as that of André Rembert, who states in his will:

«I wish to be buried according to the custom of the Anglican Church, of

which I profess to be and am a member.»

But side by side with these facts we must remember that most of the French who went to South Carolina had lingered in the British Isles long enough to learn the essentials of Anglicanism and had come in contact with its doctrines, liturgy, polity, and practices to an extent sufficient to break down many of their prejudices through long familiarity. There in their private life they were inclined to mingle more with the upper classes, the bishops and gentry of England, than with the dissenting lower classes and they became the willing recipients of the benefactions of the nobility, who in the main were high-churchmen. Persecution in France was the entering wedge to the change; contact with the Anglican Church in England was a second factor; the Dissenter fight in Carolina was the climax. In highly organized society it is difficult to live in disunity. Under primitive conditions, in which people are very dependent on one another, this difficulty is magnified. It is there that their motives become active. In South Carolina such problems took definite form. Should they yield the cardinal principle of their church polity in order to secure a desirable social and political position? Their minister had been a pastor and teacher, but not the mysterious go-between embodied in the Anglican priest. The Established Church held to three orders in the ministry. The French-Protestants had but one. Anglicanism was pro-Catholic, Calvinism anti-Catholic. The Establishment was rigid and fixed; French Protestantism was liberal and elastic. Anglicanism was episcopal; French Protestantism was presbyterial. Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that the Huguenots agreed with the Anglicans in rejecting both the Apocrypha and the observance of Saints' days, in retaining the observance of festivals dedicated to the persons of the Godhead, in the simplicity of their baptismal ritual, and in the fact that the liturgy

of the two polities was quite similar, the change meant that they must surrender the simplicity of their belief regarding the supper, baptism, absolution, and confirmation. In the change they must accept the polity of presiding bishops, a thing against which Calvin had persistently protested and against which Bishop Bossuet had discoursed at length. It was the point of attack on the part of the Catholics, the point which the Huguenots, while in France, were bound not to surrender. Did not Bishop Bossuet in his pastoral letter reproach them by the challenge:

«Let them show the original of their ministry and like Saint Cyprian and other orthodox bishops, let them make us see that they are descended from an apostle.»

All of this in polity, doctrine, ancient practice, precedent, and tradition the Huguenots should relinquish in order to become adherents of the Established Church. Nevertheless, on the other hand there were a number of reasons why the Huguenots should be expected to make the change. As we have seen it was becoming increasingly difficult to supply the pulpits of their French churches with properly trained ministers. Their theological schools had been displaced. The divinity students, fleeing from France, were taking orders in England and Ireland in the Established Church. As a last resort a theological seminary, especially for candidates for the ministry among fleeing French Protestants, was opened at Lausanne, in Switzerland, with Antoine Court, the great preacher and organizer, as its founder. This school, though aided and supported by the rulers of Great Britain, Holland and Sweden, and by many wealthy persons in all parts of central Europe, was not opened until 1792, too late to affect the situation in South Carolina. Its tardy establishment was due largely to the fact that the refugee churches in Switzerland

had degenerated into fanaticism and inspirationalism.

The original ecclesiastical bond thus weakened must break sooner or later. The indigent circumstances of many of the Huguenots, especially before 1706, made it impracticable, if not impossible, to support the Established Church by taxation and their own church by subscription. In spite of the fact that there was a bond that united all Huguenots into one union — that of mutual sympathy because of bitter persecution — dissensions which divided them into factions and weakened their ecclesiastical potency made their appearance as they have in other religious bodies. The Established Church was able to take advantage of these divisions. The Huguenots had been befriended in many ways by subjects of the British Crown. Thereby they became debtors to the constituency of the Established Church, for with many in those days loyalty to the Established Church and allegiance to the Crown went hand in hand. Owing to the very purpose of their flight from the primitive conditions in which they lived, and the absence of convenient means of communication and transportation, they were practically cut off from their native land. The Carolina Huguenots had begged the King of France, Louis XIV, for permission to settle in Louisiana, «for conscience sake». This was denied them. Thereby the last tie that held them in affection to the mother country was apparently cut. After this, though they still hoped to retrieve their lost fortunes in estates and treasures, their faces were turned toward England rather than toward France. The furnishings, books, papers, etc., that have survived the destruction of their institutions, show how closely they followed English thought and action. Their literature came from England. Their children were sent to school in the British Isles. In commerce and trade England was their customer. There seems to have been lit-

tle effort on the part of the Carolina French Protestants to perpetuate the remembrance of a distinct nationality. Their children, except in the isolated sections, were not encouraged to speak French. Frequent interruptions in the conduct of the French churches, caused by the illness, death and resignations of French pastors, constantly afforded reason for their members to attend the services of churches other than their own. Owing to Dissenter antipathies the step to Anglicanism was sometimes made proportionately easy. By 1706, sufficient time had elapsed since the Revocation to give rise to a younger generation unsatisfied with the adherence to old French forms, a generation adverse to a language not in general use in the province, clamoring for the new and the popular. The rising generation could not be expected to feel the bitterness of the Revocation as did their parents. The children of many of the refugees were even ashamed to bear French names. The idea of remaining foreigners in a land in which they were born and reared was alien to their thought. The establishment of the Church of England by law in the colony in 1700 welded these several links into a chain of necessity. The Bishop of London sagaciously supplied the Huguenots with a ministry of French nativity and Anglican ordination, men proficient in both the French language and the ritual of the Establishment.

Not least important of all is the fact that there was no active mother church in France to nurture her child across the sea.

We have no accurate information of the extent to which the Huguenots of the tide-water section were incorporated into the Established Church immediately after 1706, nor how many affiliated with it prior to this important crisis. The extant church registers of St. Philip's date as far back as 1720. Records of death, marriages and births, and ap-

parently even of baptisms prior to that time were voluntary, for it seems that no law requiring such records was enforced in the province before 1719. Besides, the fact that deaths, marriages, births and baptisms of French persons were registered in St. Philip's records even after 1720, is not conclusive evidence that such persons were affiliated with St. Philip's Church. It indicates merely their residence within the limits of the parish, for the parish boundaries were political as well as ecclesiastical. The same pertains to other parishes. The vestry records of St. Philip's Church for the period prior to 1732 are not extant. Mrs. Woolford, in 1748, was blamed for their loss, but the charge was never proved and the records were never returned. The register and vestry records of Christ Church parish reach back into the seventeenth century, their first date being 1694, but the early items are fragmentary. The parish was established in 1706. This was not a Huguenot stronghold. There are no records of St. James Santee parish before 1758. Those of St. John's Colleton and St. John's Berkeley are lost. There are no records of St. Stephen's before 1754. In St. James Goose Creek the situation is no better. On April 7, 1755, Zachariah Villepontoux, who had served as vestryman and as church warden for twenty years, declared under oath, before Alexander Stewart, Esq., Justice of the Peace for Berkeley County, that no public register had been kept in the Parish of St. James Goose Creek for the past eighteen years. When these facts are remembered regarding records that were required by law, one need not marvel that extra-political organizations under no legal pressure did not keep complete accounts of their proceedings.

In 1725, when extant records of St. Philip's Church begin, we find French Protestants active in its life. The record of July 13, 1725, shows that Francis le Brasseur, recently deceased, was a church warden. There is

evidence of very few pews owned or rented in St. Philip's by Huguenots after 1725. This however does not argue against the possibility of large numbers of them being affiliated with the church, for seats in the gallery were free to all and membership in the church did not necessitate the ownership nor the rental of a pew. In the years 1743-6, John Bonnetheau and John Neufville each rented a pew, for which each paid £7-10-0. In 1743 Zachariah Brazier applied for a pew in the choir loft. John Laurens in 1758 bought the pew owned by Mr. Lloyd, of Goose Creek. During the years 1749 and 1750 Peter Timothy, John Neufville and John Bonnetheau are among the pew holders. The former paid £5-0-0 for his pew, the two others paid £7-10-0 each. At the same time Paul Grimke bought the pew which Mr. Welshuysen had owned. After 1751 no French names except those of Peter Timothy, in 1754 and 1767, Daniel Trezvant, in 1767, and Isaac Huger, appear on the records pertaining to pews.

In 1754, when the Rev. Alexander Garden, Rector of St. Philip's, resigned, the names of ten French Protestants appear with sixty-four others, subscribed to a letter that was given him at the time of his departure. These are the names in all probability of the male members of the church who were friendly to his ministry and may be a complete list of the male heads of families connected with the church, for Mr. Garden was a very popular man.

A few French Protestants united with the so-called «Circular Church» of Charles Town, which was founded between 1680 and 1690. Its membership consisted chiefly of Scotch and Irish Presbyterians and Congregationalists. No church records dated prior to 1724 are extant. Those embracing the period from 1724 to 1732 are included in the volume of records dated 1732-1796. In 1724 no less than 43 persons subscribed



their names to a call extended to the Rev. Mr. Bassett, inviting him to become the pastor of the church. This list contains only three French names. The extant minutes of the church date from 1732. In 1734 the list of pew holders included the following French: Solomon Legare, Jr., No. 11; Solomon Legare, Sr., No. 19; Henry Peronneau, Jr., No. 16; Henry Peronneau, Sr., No. 17; Alexander Peronneau, No. 34.

In 1729, when proposals were made for a new church building, a number of French Protestants became subscribers to the project:

«Henry Peronneau, Sr., £70; Henry Peronneau, (for a pew) £100; Solomon Legare, Jr., £40; Jacob Motte, 10m 4d. nails, [i.e.] £10; Gabriel Manigault, £10; Henry Peronneau, [Jr.], £60; Mathurin Boigard, £20; Benjamin d'Harriette, Jr., £20; Solomon Legare, £50, in lime; Peter Benoist, £10; John Laurens, £21; Elisha Prioleau, £10».

The Peronneaus and the Legares seem to be the only ones of French nativity who were members of the church at this time for in the same year, when the pews were assigned, only these names appear in the list. Furthermore they are the only French names on the records designated as members of the church. Then the name of Peter Benoist appears as one of those present at a business meeting of the church members and is later classed among the members. In 1760 the name of Isaac Lesésne, who held pew No. 18, is added. In that year he gave £100 to the church, probably for his pew. Charles Peronneau in his will bequeathed £1500 currency as an endowment fund, the interest of which should be used to support the «Independent Meeting House». Isaac Mazÿck left to the poor of the church the sum of £25. Mathurin Boigard, in his will, left the value of £4 proclamation money as an annual gift to the minister of the French Protestant Church of

Charleston, but provided that during vacancies in the pastorates of the French Church the same amount be paid to the minister of the «New Brick Presbyterian Meeting House», in Charles Town. This was the name sometimes applied to what was known as the Circular Church.

But the absorption of the French was more extensive than a mere change in church forms. It extended to proper names, to language, to customs, and even to blood. It has become evident that for several reasons the Huguenots were regarded with disfavor before they were able to rise socially by the accumulation of wealth. However unreasonable that circumstance may have been regarded it was nevertheless a fact and became very unpleasant. Out of it grew the desire to become anglicized. A French name was constantly a bid to disfavor. Therefore some people changed their names completely, others modified them, still others accepted the English equivalent, Jacque Serrurier easily became Smith; for convenience Pasquereau degenerated into Packerow; Villepontoux became Pontoux; Lewis Janvier, a goldsmith, became Louis Jennings; Timothée was anglicized to Timothy; and Isaac Amyrand, Clerk of the Assembly, abbreviated his name to Amy. La Motte was changed to Mott, De la Pierre to Pierré, and so on through a long list. Thus with their English or German veneer many of the names are today hardly recognizable.

As the French mingled with the English the use of the French language was gradually undermined.

The Orange Quarter was a striking exception to conditions found elsewhere. There the French held rigorously to their own language and forms beyond 1730, due to the diminishing numbers of English inhabitants in the settlement, but the greatest reason for

this was probably their isolation from almost everything French. They were forced to mingle with the English in business and social intercourse as well as in political and industrial life. This made a knowledge of the English language indispensable. In proportion to the extent of their isolation from strictly French influence came the rapidity of the undermining of the French language. Before 1700 a number of wills written in French were left on record. After 1720 there are practically none. There were few if any inducements except sentiment for preserving the French language, but many reasons for

relinquishing it.

The registers of the several churches of the colonial period, the newspaper reports and the original marriage bonds are replete with evidence that the Huguenots began to intermarry with the British almost as soon as they reached Carolina, in fact some of them had married English wives during their short sojourn in the British Isles. This intermarriage continued throughout the colonial period and became so general that by 1776 there was little if any pure French blood in the province.

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## LE CANADIEN-FRANÇAIS ET L'AMÉRINDIEN

by Charles Noyes

Cet essai est une exploration de deux questions essentielles: premièrement, en quoi consistaient les relations entre les Canadiens-Français et les Indiens de l'Amérique du Nord, au commencement de la colonie? Deuxièmement, comment est-ce que ces relations, ou manque de relations, ont-elles influencé la formation, l'évolution culturelle de ces deux peuples—surtout celle des Canadiens-Français au Québec? Ces deux questions ne sont point simples; et par conséquent, des réponses définitives ne seront pas trouvées ici. En essayant de trouver des solutions, j'espère surtout mettre en lumière les sources de la culture canadienne-française. Les relations canadiennes-françaises et amérindiennes seront comparées aux relations anglaises et indiennes en ce qu'elles clarifient ces premières.

Les relations entre les nations indigènes et la colonie française prenaient place sur de diverses avenues et à des stades sociaux différents. Donc, pour les examiner plus clairement, il est nécessaire de les diviser en trois parties:

- 1) Les relations gouvernementales, c'est-à-dire celles qui traitent de sujets militaires et des intérêts commerciaux.
- 2) Les relations entre les missionnaires, les Jésuites et les Indiens, et finalement
- 3) Les relations entre le peuple canadien-français, les habitants et les Indiens.

Avant de décrire les diverses relations particulières, il est essentiel d'établir une «vue à vol d'oiseau» de l'environnement à travers lequel ces relations se déroulaient. Il est nécessaire de décrire la nature des colonies, et par conséquent, de voir quels étaient leurs besoins, leurs désirs, leurs intérêts. La nature des colonies détermine la nature de ces relations avec les Indiens—en même temps que la nature des colonies changeait, la nature de leurs liens avec les Indiens changeait.

Pour généraliser, on peut dire que la politique des deux colonies européennes par rapport aux Indiens—jusqu'en 1763—essayait d'accomplir trois choses: premièrement les Européens voulaient préserver et améliorer la traite des fourrures. Deuxièmement, ils voulaient créer des alliances indiennes pour limiter, le plus possible, le nombre d'attaques indiennes et européennes sur leurs établissements coloniaux. Troisièmement, ils voulaient avoir des alliés indiens pour faire les guerres inter-coloniales.<sup>1</sup> Dans cette politique générale, ils se rassemblaient mais à cause de la nature différente des deux colonies, leurs intérêts, buts et objectifs — à l'exception des trois mentionnés ci-dessus—ne se ressemblaient pas. Et, par conséquent, les Indiens réagirent différemment vis-à-vis des deux colonies.

Valérie Marchant et Toby Ornstein, dans

leur livre *The First Peoples in Québec* précisent la différence fondamentale entre les deux colonies dès le commencement. Les Français au cours du dix-septième siècle étaient concentrés le long des bords du Saint-Laurent. La base économique de la colonie était la traite des fourrures, non l'agriculture<sup>2</sup>. A cause de cette concentration géographique, le but commercial non agricole et par conséquent non colonial (le peuplement du territoire) et leur petite taille numérique; les Canadiens-Français présentaient moins qu'une menace pour les Indigènes et leur vie non sédentaire dans la région<sup>3</sup>. Et, ça se voit dans leurs relations avec les Indiens. Pendant la guerre de sept ans, seulement, les cinq nations iroquoises (alliées, par S.D. Champlain au commencement de la colonie) luttent du côté anglais, tous les autres combattants indiens sont alliés des Canadiens-Français.

Par contre, les Anglais en Nouvelle-Angleterre avaient comme buts principaux, la colonisation et l'agriculturisation de cette région. L'idée que l'intérêt européen, par rapport aux Indiens, commençait avec la traite des fourrures et puis changeait en un désir de se débarrasser d'eux (pour offrir la possibilité aux colons de défricher la terre et de pratiquer l'agriculture) était surtout applicable aux Anglais. A cause de l'émigration en masse des «colons fermiers» la politique d'empoignement de terre pratiquée aux dépens des Indiens (Iroquois, Abenakis), la création de grands établissements permanents — causent la destruction des régions de chasse indiennes. Les Amérindiens étaient plus soupçonneux et plus sceptiques de la politique «discontinue» des Anglais! - Le fait que les Canadiens-Français semblaient avoir de meilleures relations personnelles avec les Indiens, et s'adaptaient plus facilement à leur culture sera expliqué en détail plus tard.

Plusieurs historiens ont remarqué qu'une des plus grandes différences entre la politique

anglaise et la politique canadienne-française était le fait que les Anglais reconnaissaient les droits des Indiens envers leur terre natale, alors que les Canadiens-Français ne les reconnaissaient pas. Mais, il faut se rendre compte comme l'ont fait les auteurs de *The First Peoples in Québec* — que cette reconnaissance de la part des Anglais était une nécessité car dès l'an mille sept cent, les Iroquois s'aperçurent que la protection de leurs territoires était plus importante que leur part de la traite des fourrures. C'est seulement en pratiquant cette politique que les Anglais pouvaient limiter et dissiper la réaction violente chez les Indiens quand ils envahissaient leurs territoires plus tard. A cause de la nature non-agricole de la Nouvelle-France, les Canadiens-Français n'avaient point besoin de faire la même chose.

A cause de la domination anglaise au Canada après mille sept cent soixante-trois, il est important de noter la différence marquée entre les intérêts de Londres et ceux des colons envers les Indiens. En 1670, Charles II, Roi d'Angleterre, envoie des instructions aux gouverneurs de la Nouvelle-Angleterre, pour assurer le traitement honnête des Amérindiens. Il faut que des agents gouvernementaux apprennent leurs langages, et, que leurs territoires soient protégés. Mais en même temps, la prise de terre indienne par les colons continue. Cette différence d'intérêts explique, en partie, la politique discontinue qui aura lieu aux Etats-Unis et au Canada plus tard. E. Palmer Patterson, dans son excellent livre, *The Canadian Indian* le décrit ainsi, en nous donnant un sommaire de la politique traditionnelle du Bureau des Affaires Indiennes des Etats-Unis:

«... at first the Government treated the Indians as members of small nations in treaty relationship with the U. S. but as more and more tribes were subdued and the Indians became less of a threat to white settlers, the Government changed



its attitude towards them. By breaking or amending treaties unilaterally it reduced the Indian Tribal Lands to a fraction of their Former size, regarding the Indians as Federal wards to be assimilated into the general population as soon as possible.»

Selon Patterson, aux cours des XVII, XVIII et XIX<sup>èmes</sup> siècles, le gouvernement, l'église et le peuple trouvent que les Indiens constituent une large portion de leurs inquiétudes. Mais, après 1870 environ, l'Indien, en fait, devient non important à l'histoire canadienne. A cause de la direction est-ouest de l'expansion coloniale, il est probable que l'influence indienne au Québec a diminué considérablement dès la fin du XVIII<sup>ème</sup> siècle. Il y a plusieurs raisons à cette progression. Après la destruction de la Nouvelle-France, les Anglais n'ont plus de compétition commerciale. Les alliances indiennes liées pour faire la guerre intercoloniale deviennent beaucoup moins importantes.

Après la mort de Tecumseh, le chef guerrier algonquien, en 1813, il n'y a plus de grandes révoltes indiennes à l'est des grands lacs. Dès le début du XIX<sup>ème</sup> siècle, l'importance économique du commerce des fourrures diminue considérablement. Le bilan de tous ces événements est que l'indien perd sa position stratégique dans l'économie et dans la situation militaire des Européens. Par conséquent, l'Indien n'est plus vu comme allié-ami ou ennemi de la culture dominante mais vu comme sujet. Il y a un changement psychologique qui accompagne cette progression historique. L'Européen, surtout les Canadiens-Anglais se voient de plus en plus comme natifs et voient «l'Indien» (vu et traité maintenant comme un seul peuple) comme un groupe ethnique minoritaire qui doit être assimilé ou (et c'est ça qui se passe la plupart du temps) isolé quelque part où il ne posera plus de problèmes. Donc, en général, les In-

diens étaient trompés par les Européens (surtout les Anglais-Canadiens et Américains) pour avancer leurs buts économiques et politiques. Une fois qu'ils avaient perdu leur importance par rapport à ces deux buts, les Indiens — comme une matière crue qui est devenue obsolète — sont abandonnés, isolés et oubliés.

Les relations amérindiennes-européennes produisent des changements dramatiques, tragiques et permanentes à travers les systèmes politiques, sociaux, et économiques des tribus canadiennes-indiennes. Dès le début, les liens commerciaux avec les Européens commencent à changer la base économique de l'Indien. En participant à la traite des fourrures, la chasse avec les fusils, et la vente en gros des fourrures aux Européens, les Indiens cessent de vivre dans leur manière traditionnelle. Ils ne produisent plus leurs propres vêtements, outils et armes comme auparavant, et ils cessent de chasser et de travailler la terre comme autrefois. L'importation de la laine, les aliments européens et la traite des fourrures modifient la vie quotidienne de la femme indienne. La tâche la plus importante devient le nettoyage des fourrures pour les trappeurs. L'adaptation du fusil à poudre et à plomb change les méthodes de chasse. L'envie de posséder toutes ces nouvelles importations européennes, pousse l'Amérindien à ne plus laisser repeupler ses régions de chasse.<sup>4</sup> Pour préserver sa part de la traite des fourrures, il est forcé d'étendre ses régions de chasse; en général, aux dépens des tribus voisines. Les Indiens deviennent de plus en plus dépendants des marchandises de traite européenne. En devenant trappeur et mercenaire pour les Européens, l'Indien perd son autonomie économique et par conséquent, son autonomie politique. Il devient inextricablement lié aux Européens. La nouvelle compétition économique entre les tribus détruit l'équilibre politique qui existait autrefois, le remplaçant par un désaccord perpétuel. Ce désaccord inter-

tribale est augmenté par l'empiétement anglais sur les territoires iroquois, qui causent le déplacement des Iroquois et leur propre empiétement sur les territoires illinois, hurons et algonquiens.

Assez tôt, les Indiens se rendent compte de la nécessité d'avoir la paix entre les nations amérindiennes pour négocier forcément avec les Européens. Seulement, par cette unification peuvent-ils tenter d'arrêter la prise de leurs terres et l'exploitation de leurs peuples. En 1701, le chef Wendat (Huron) Kondiaronk essaye d'établir un congrès amérindien, sans avoir de succès. Pontiac et Tecumseh essayeront plus tard d'établir des armées inter-tribales pour faire face à l'invasion européenne. Mais, par la capacité européenne de les diviser et les divers intérêts tribales, ces armées inter-tribales et leurs victoires sont de courtes durées.

La nature ainsi que les motifs pour faire la guerre changent. Autrefois, les Indiens faisaient la guerre inter-tribale pour leur vengeance personnelle ou pour éprouver leurs prouesses et leurs bravoures. Maintenant, ils se battent pour améliorer leur situation économique vis-à-vis des Européens et de la traite des fourrures. Avec l'adoption des fusils, les guerres deviennent beaucoup plus meurtrières. La taille et le nombre de guerres augmentent. La prise de prisonniers est remplacée par la tuerie ou la dissipation de l'ennemi.<sup>5</sup> La destruction de la Huronie par les cinq nations iroquoises est l'exemple le plus sanglant de cette évolution meurtrière de la guerre. La nécessité d'avoir des munitions pour lutter et faire la chasse rend l'Indien, encore plus dépendant de l'Européen. Il ne peut plus réagir sans l'aide militaire (le consentement exprès) de son allié européen.

La venue du christianisme accompagne la création de ce nouvel ordre économique et politique des nations indiennes. Par consé-

quent, à cause de ceci, il y a un changement profond de relations dans les tribus mêmes. En parlant du brisement de liens indiens causé par ce changement, Bernard Assiniwi remarque dans son livre *Histoire des Indiens du Haut et du Bas Canada* Tome 3.

«De communautaires qu'elles étaient, elles sont devenues individualistes.»

Avec la réalisation de leur dépendance envers les Européens et en subséquent par la domination et la destruction de leur culture et de leur peuple (par les guerres et maladies européennes), les sentiments indiens envers les Européens surtout les Anglais, changent. Leurs relations affirmatives sont remplacées par le désir de se débarrasser d'eux mais c'est trop tard. Bernard Assiniwi dans son livre mentionné ci-dessus décrit plusieurs exemples de cette progression. En 1747, le chef Abenaki dit:

«Les disputes entre nations blanches ne vous regardent pas.»<sup>6</sup>

Vers 1700, les cinq nations iroquoises tentent de rester indépendantes. Ils ne veulent plus dépendre des Européens, Français ou Anglais. Ils resteront neutres pendant à peu près treize ans, prêchant la paix et offrant leur médiation entre les colonies européennes en cas de conflit.<sup>7</sup> Vers 1760, un prophète qui était né chez les Delaware prêche l'indépendance des Amérindiens. Selon Bernard Assiniwi:

«Ils les incitent à laisser tomber les habitudes des Européens et toutes leurs importations qui rendent les Indiens dépendants de leur culture.»<sup>8</sup>

La guerre de Pontiac (1763-1766) est l'indice de ce changement de sentiments envers les Européens. En plus, cette guerre montre clairement la différence d'attitude des

Indiens envers les Anglais et les Français. Le point de départ de la guerre est le changement de gouvernements coloniaux à la fin de la guerre de sept ans. Le fort Pontchartin (Détroit) est rendu aux Anglais en 1760. Tout de suite (selon B. Assiniwi), les Indiens s'aperçoivent d'une différence dans leur traitement. M. Assiniwi le décrit ainsi:

«Dans la région de Détroit, les Français cultivent très peu la terre à cette époque, et à peine peut-on parler de grands jardins lorsqu'on désigne leurs champs. Georges Croghan s'étonne de voir que tous les Français peuvent se débrouiller dans au moins un des dialectes algonkiens. Il s'étonne aussi de constater que les Français et Indiens vont à l'église en même temps, jouent, à la crosse ensemble, compétitionnent dans des courses de canots et célèbrent les Fêtes des Saints ensemble en se mêlant sans égard à leur race ou à leur rang respectif.»

Le nouveau commandant du fort anglais le capitaine Campbell s'aperçoit que:

«Les Indiens par contre sont habitués à beaucoup plus de considération de la part des Français . . . »<sup>10</sup>

Il prend peur et écrit qu'il «appréhende des troubles, car les Français avaient une façon bien différente de traiter avec eux . . . »<sup>11</sup> mais les ordres donnés par le général Amherst sont formels:

«Pas de cadeaux aux Indiens, pas d'avances sur les fourrures, pas de réparation d'armes gratuitement, pas de vente de rhum et pas de fraternisation entre soldats et autochtones . . . »<sup>12</sup>

« . . . et de plus, la traite ne devait plus se faire qu'aux forts et devant le commandant. Aucun coureur des bois n'avait la permission de traiter d'individu à

individu.»<sup>13</sup>

Hors tout, c'est un changement qui est assez remarquable, et qui symbolise des différences culturelles de base, les liens canadiens-français sont personnels parce que les Canadiens-Français s'adaptent, en partie, à la culture indienne. Un rapport est établi entre individu et individu. Les rapports anglais et indiens sont par contre, impersonnels. Les liens économiques qui étaient fondés sur les relations personnelles deviennent tout simplement des échanges matériaux. Où les Français traitent les Indiens comme égaux, les Anglais avaient une attitude hautaine et distante, et les Indiens s'en apercevaient. Où il y avait un sens de rapprochement de fraternité entre le Canadien-Français et les Indiens, il n'y en avait point entre l'Anglais et l'Indien. Le prix des marchandises devient beaucoup plus haut:

«Où les Français leur donnaient la poudre à fusil comme marque de gratitude pour leur alliance, les Anglais la leur vendaient tellement chère que le fruit du travail de tout un hiver ne leur procurait de la poudre que pour quatre mois de chasse.»<sup>14</sup>

La hausse du prix des marchandises, la prise des terres,<sup>15</sup> le désir anglais de ne plus donner de munitions aux Indiens et ce manque de relations personnelles, fraternelles sont responsables pour la guerre de Pontiac et son désir de se débarrasser des Anglais. Pour clarifier ses intentions aux Canadiens-Français qui habitaient autour du Fort, Pontiac a dit:

«Mes frères nous n'avons jamais eu l'intention de vous faire du mal et de vous mettre dans une mauvaise posture . . . sachez que je n'assouvis pas une vengeance personnelle en faisant la guerre à l'Anglais: c'est pour vous mes frères

aussi bien que pour nous . . . Nous voulons vous venger et nous venger en exterminant les Anglais qui sont sur nos terres . . . Je ne suis pas sans savoir que cette guerre vous cause des troubles à cause du va-et-vient de nos gens autour de vos maisons, mais si vous êtes molestés, ne croyez pas que je sois responsable . . . Je suis Français de cœur, et veut mourir comme tel et je vous répète que ce sont vos intérêts autant que les miens que je venge actuellement.»<sup>16</sup>

Cette attitude pro-canadienne-française est affirmée par M. Palmer dans son livre *The Canadian Indian*. Selon Pontiac, le Grand Esprit lui a dit:

«As for the English — These dogs dressed in red, who have come to rob you of your hunting grounds, and drive away the game, you must lift the hatchet against them. Wipe them from the face of the earth, and thus you will win my favor back again, and once more be happy and prosperous. The children of your great father, the king of France are not like the English. Never forget they are your brethren. They are very dear to me, for they love the red man, and understand the true make of worshipping me.»<sup>17</sup>

Etant donné que la mentalité à la base des relations européennes sont différentes, examinons maintenant les sources de ces différences.

L'origine et la nature des colons en Nouvelle-Angleterre et en Nouvelle-France ne sont pas du tout les mêmes. Les colons anglais en général sont partis de l'Angleterre à cause de leur incapacité de vivre sous le système gouvernemental, social, judiciaire ou religieux anglais. Ils venaient pour fonder une nouvelle vie; et dès le début ils voyaient l'In-

dien comme menacé à cette nouvelle vie (l'agriculture contre les régions de chasse). Par contre, les Français qui en général, étaient satisfaits avec la vie française et pensaient venir en Amérique du Nord seulement pour une courte durée. Par conséquent, ils n'avaient pas la même psychologie (d'«Imperative Territoriale») qui obsédait l'Anglais. Pour généraliser, on peut dire qu'il y avait deux sortes de personnes en Nouvelle-France. D'un côté, il y avait les officiers français transitoires, les seigneurs-entrepreneurs et le clergé: les ecclésiastiques, l'Eglise. De l'autre côté il y avait le peuple — les habitants. Mason Wade, dans son excellent livre *Les Canadiens-Français de 1760 à Nos Jours* décrit le rôle central que les ecclésiastiques surtout les missionnaires jésuites jouaient dans la vie quotidienne en Nouvelle-France:

«En 1663, il y avait au Québec environ cent cinquante membres de communautés religieuses sur une population totale d'environ cinq cents âmes. Dès les débuts de la colonie, l'éducation, le soin des malades et l'assistance aux nécessiteux furent du domaine de l'église dont les missionnaires remplissaient déjà des fonctions administratives comme agents diplomatiques auprès des Indiens et agents financiers en France. C'est ainsi que s'affirma l'emprise de l'Eglise sur la vie de la colonie et qu'elle s'assura bientôt une véritable suprématie.»<sup>18</sup>

Les Jésuites sont arrivés très tôt au Québec, vers 1635, pour convertir l'Indien. Leurs perceptions et impressions, qui étaient formées pendant qu'ils étaient missionnaires parmi les tribus indiennes, sont préservées dans les volumes *Les Relations Jésuites et Documents Alliés (1632-1673)*. À cause de leur rôle central dans la formation sociale, culturelle, politique et religieuse des Canadiens-Français, la perception jésuite de l'Amérindien devrait être considérée comme à la base de «La perception amérindienne» de la ma-



majorité des Canadiens-Français.

En quoi consiste cette perception? Premièrement il faut se rendre compte que le but principal des Jésuites étaient la conversion des Indiens. Et pour convertir, «il faut connaître la mentalité, les mœurs, les fautes et les vertus du païen».<sup>19</sup> La conversion n'a pas l'air d'être quelque chose qui peut être forcé.<sup>20</sup> Il faut s'avancer doucement. On avance le mieux par la franchise, l'intelligence et surtout en étant sympathique et sensible envers le «non-laïque». Il faut des liens d'amitiés pour convertir. Il fallait que l'Indien ait confiance en cet évangéliste étranger.

Donc, ce sont des relations personnelles qui ont lié le missionnaire aux tribus; et ces types de relations ont servi de modèle aux autres relations qui s'établirent entre Canadien-Français et Indien. Par exemple, lorsque la diplomatie politique et commerciale anglaise était accomplie par un échange matériel ou une distribution des marchandises de traite, les buts politiques et commerciaux des Canadiens-Français étaient gagnés à travers l'influence personnelle des religieux. Selon M. Patterson et son livre sur l'Indien canadien, les Jésuites habitaient parmi les tribus comme chefs spirituels, conseillers politiques et quelquefois comme conseillers militaires.

A mon avis il n'y a presque rien de plus curieux dans l'histoire du Canada que la relation symbolique de la religion, la politique et le commerce. L'idée qu'un chef spirituel soit un représentant commercial en même temps me frappe comme terriblement discontinu. Mais la survivance de l'Eglise catholique en Amérique du Nord a nécessité exactement cela. Et c'est pour ça que Mason Wade, dans son livre *Les Canadiens-Français de 1760 à Nos Jours* nous rappelle que:

«opposer, comme on le fait traditionnellement le spiritualisme de la Nouvelle-

France au matérialisme de la Nouvelle-Angleterre c'est écarter la vérité. Les Français voulurent d'abord explorer et exploiter les ressources naturelles du Nouveau-Monde et le grand effort missionnaire du dix-septième siècle ne fut pas sans relation avec la nécessité de gagner l'appui des Indiens dont la bonne volonté était essentielle au commerce des fourrures.»<sup>21</sup>

Examinons maintenant des exemples spécifiques de cette perception Jésuite de l'Amérindien.

Selon Francesco Bressani (Huronie 1645-1649) le pays était très pauvre mais pas du tout stérile. Comme conclusion, après avoir décrit la mode de vie indienne il dit:

«Wherefore, they are hardly barbarians, save in name. There is no occasion to think of them as half beasts, straggly, black and hideous.»<sup>22</sup>

La relation Huron de Rageneau (1645-1646) est encore plus révélatrice:

«The savages are not so savage as is supposed in France; and I may say with truth that the intelligence of many yields in nothing to ours. I admit that their customs and their natural tendencies are extremely shocking at least to those who are not accustomed to them, and who reject them too quickly, without sufficiently knowing them . . . »<sup>23</sup>

Cette tentative jésuite de comprendre l'Indien est exemplifiée par leur étude et la transcription extensive qu'ils ont fait des langues indiennes. Cela allait donc beaucoup plus loin qu'une étude pour tout simplement améliorer le commerce. C'est preuve d'un vrai intérêt et désir de comprendre l'Indien. Plus tard dans sa *Relation* Rageneau dit;

«It is true that their manner of expression is different from ours; but since the word of the heart is the same in all men, one cannot doubt that their tongue has also its beauties and its graces, as much as ours. Although they live in the woods, they are none the less men.»

L'esprit de fraternité qui est ressenti en lisant ces mots reflète une mentalité qui a comme but, beaucoup plus qu'une conversion tout simplement pour avancer les intérêts commerciaux de la colonie, mais, en fait, l'évangélisation va loin en changeant la culture indienne. Dès 1632, les Jésuites se rendent compte de la nécessité de créer des habitations ou villages indiens permanents. Pour que l'évangélisation puisse réussir, il faut rendre l'Indien sédentaire pour le convertir. La formation des villages chrétiens Caughnawaga (1696), St-Regis (1750), Lorette (1697) et Becancourt (1680-1708), en est le résultat. Ces mêmes villages deviendront des réserves plus tard. Mais des réserves qui sont très différentes que celles créées par les Canadiens-Anglais.

C'est en grande partie à cause de l'influence jésuite que les Indiens sont encouragés à s'assimiler à la société canadienne-française (en Nouvelle-Angleterre, l'Indien est rejeté et par conséquent, reste hors de la société anglaise). L'entremariage des Canadiens-Français avec des Indiennes est la meilleure preuve de ce fait. Les écoles, les églises et les hôpitaux sont ouverts à l'Indien comme à l'Européen. Il y a une école fondée par les Ursulines particulièrement pour les jeunes Indiennes (pour les préparer au mariage avec des Canadiens-Français). Les Canadiens-Français n'avaient pas ce préjugé et racisme que les Anglais ont contre les Indiens; peut-être en partie parce que l'effort missionnaire des Français est énormément plus grand que l'effort Anglais. M. Laval, Evêque de Québec, tente pendant des années de prohiber la vente d'al-

cool aux Indiens et l'utilisation de ces boissons comme marchandises de traite. Il réussit à court terme. C'est indicatif de la politique ecclésiastique qui tâche de réprimer les excès de la traite des fourrures, c'est-à-dire, l'exploitation de l'Indien.<sup>24</sup> En vue de cette exploitation, l'Eglise essaie de protéger l'Indien en construisant les villages chrétiens mentionnés ci-dessus. Là, les Indiens seront protégés et isolés des excès de la culture Européenne.

Pas-encore mentionné est le phénomène du «Coureur des Bois» qui est le résultat de l'influence amérindien sur l'habitant. L'héritage des «coureurs des bois» (l'adaptation du Canadien-Français à la culture indienne) commence en 1610 quand Samuel de Champlain échange un jeune Huron pour un jeune Français, Etienne Brulé. Etienne Brulé qui reste avec un chef Algonkien est traité gentilement. Il s'habille à l'indienne, apprend leur dialecte, et acquit beaucoup d'informations sur la nature du pays. Ainsi une tradition de liens interculturels (non seulement des relations entre représentants) est établit dès le commencement. Au début, les Français ont besoin du «soutien» indien pour survivre, pour explorer le territoire, et comme intermédiaire dans la traite des fourrures. En se montrant débrouillard, l'Indien montre les avantages de l'adaptation à la vie indienne aux colons. A cause de la difficulté d'établir une vie agricole européenne par contraste à la facilité et liberté de la vie indienne, beaucoup de colons quittent cette vie européenne pour traiter, voyager, habiter avec l'Indien et «courir les bois». Le nombre augmente jusqu'au point où le gouvernement, pour «maintenir la colonie», doit empêcher la dispersion des colons à travers le réseau de routes et postes de traite par l'interdiction de la «course des bois». L'influence indienne sur l'habitant est une des raisons primaires pour laquelle Mason Wade remarque dans son livre *The French Canadian Outlook*:

«... not until the English took over the fur trade and the call of the *pays d'en haut* waned, did Quebec become primarily an agricultural region».

A part l'influence jésuite et la traite des fourrures, pourquoi est-ce que l'Indien et le Canadien-Français s'accordaient-ils si bien et fondaient leurs relations sur des liens personnels? Une partie de la réponse se trouve en examinant les traits caractéristiques des deux peuples. Dans l'Etude, *Paysans et Ouvriers Québécois d'Autrefois* par M. Gaudree-Boileau et S.A. Lortie, plusieurs traits des Canadiens-Français sont mentionnés: ils ont des sentiments religieux profonds.

«Les sentiments religieux des Canadiens produisent chez eux une sorte d'indifférence devant la mort.»<sup>25</sup>

L'autorité du curé est respectée.

«C'est au ministre du culte que les habitants s'adressent dans toutes leurs affaires importantes soit civiles soit religieuses.»<sup>26</sup>

Ils ont une moralité exemplaire. Ils sont naturellement hospitaliers et sont généreux à l'aumône et dans les œuvres de charité. Ils ont du respect pour les vieillards et un penchant prononcé pour les boissons échauffantes. Ils montrent une extrême tenacité pour «triompher de la nature et du climat». Et, ils montrent un certain entêtement et obstination dans leur façon de penser.

Selon *Les Relations Jésuites et les Documents Alliés*, l'Indien est extrêmement sensible à son environnement physique. Il peut voir, entendre et sentir extrêmement bien. Il a une attitude admirable en face des privations physiques et des malheurs émotionnels. Il a une mémoire très fine. Il montre de l'amitié et du respect envers son père et les vieillards. Il est très hospitalier et la franchise

pour lui, est très importante. Il a beaucoup de patience et un certain orgueil naturel. A propos de ces observations, on peut dire que ces deux peuples ont des ressemblances fondamentales. Ils ont, tous les deux, un système social hiérarchique, sont tous les deux très hospitaliers, peuvent s'adapter sans trop se plaindre à des situations difficiles et ont une certaine honnêteté, franchise et moralité à la base de leurs cultures. Ces capacités canadiennes-françaises de survivre sans trop se plaindre, de s'adapter et de s'accorder dans cette vie pionnière sont mentionnées par William Warren dans son livre *History of the Ojibway People - Based on the Oral Tradition*. Il dit que les Ojibways «learned to love the French people» parce que les Français avaient:

«a character of great plasticity, easily assimilated themselves to the customs and mode of life of their red brethren.»<sup>27</sup>

Après la Conquête de 1763, les Indiens au Canada semblent disparaître. Selon les auteurs de *The First Peoples in Quebec*:

«During the 200 years following the fall of New France, the Indians seemed to disappear, at least in Eastern Canada. They became invisible, inaudible, forgotten. With the exception of their participation in the American war of independence and the war of 1812 and the final extermination of the Beothuks of Newfoundland in 1829, the Indians of Canada are hardly mentioned in the standard history texts and scholarly works.»<sup>28</sup>

Pourquoi cette invisibilité indienne?

Premièrement, la dépendance économique et politique des Canadiens-Français de l'Indien est brisée soudainement. L'économie

canadienne-française, dans la province de Québec, devient surtout celle de agriculture. La base économique des Indiens non-agricole est détruite, et par conséquent, la région ne peut plus les soutenir. La population résiduelle qui a des liens économiques avec les Canadiens-Français est comprise d'Indiens agriculteurs qui habitent ces villages chrétiens fondés par les Jésuites. A cause de leur croyance chrétienne (au dépens de leurs croyances indiennes) et le fait qu'ils ont abandonné la vie indienne pour la vie sédentaire européenne, il est valable de questionner la mesure ou la profondeur de leur «Indiennisme»; et par conséquent leur influence culturelle sur le peuple canadien-français.

Par contre, l'énormité de l'influence culturelle des Canadiens-Français est telle qu'aujourd'hui, les Indiens de la réserve de Lorette (au Québec) ne parlent plus la langue huron. La langue maternelle est maintenant le français.<sup>29</sup> Le grand nombre de Québécois qui ont du sang indien, et ne s'en rendant même pas compte, est aussi une preuve de cette influence répandue. L'invisibilité de l'Indien et de son culte est due également aux changements psychologiques que l'Indien a ressentis envers lui-même. L'orgueil d'autrefois est remplacé par la honte et un complexe d'infériorité; cette mentalité tragique qui est le résultat de la subordination et de la domination d'une culture par une autre.<sup>30</sup> Afin d'éviter la «citoyenneté de deuxième classe», l'Indien tente ou bien de s'assimiler et de cacher sa culture en devenant autant que possible Européen ou bien il se renferme sur lui-même et tente de s'isoler de cette domination culturelle.

Il est très important de comparer la domination des Indiens et la domination des Canadiens-Français et leurs réactions très différentes en face de la subordination culturelle. Où le peuple canadien-français survit au cours des âges en réagissant violemment contre l'as-

similation et le démembrement de leur culture, les Indiens, après une certaine période comme mentionné ci-dessus, semblent disparaître. Mais il y a une force centrale présente dans la culture canadienne-française qui n'existe point dans celle des Indiens. C'est la force très puissante de l'Eglise catholique qui renforce continuellement les mœurs et l'esprit canadien-français. Par conséquent, où les Canadiens-Français peuvent se réunir en force contre l'assimilation, les Amérindiens restent faibles et divisés, inaudibles et invisibles — c'est-à-dire, jusqu'à maintenant.

Tout comme leur manque d'influence politique et économique après 1763, l'influence des Amérindiens sur la littérature canadienne-française n'est pas tellement grande. Il y a au moins deux raisons par ce fait. Premièrement, la littérature canadienne-française ne commence à se développer qu'après 1840,<sup>31</sup> c'est-à-dire bien après la fin de l'influence indienne au Québec. Deuxièmement la littérature est en grande partie, une reconfirmation de l'unité nationale canadienne-française! En conséquence, le thème de l'Amérindien et son influence sur la culture canadienne-française (qui n'est point un thème nationaliste) n'est pas traité. Peut-être en étudiant le folklore et les chansons populaires anciennes on pourra trouver ces Indiens devenus invisibles.

En 1912, Louis Hémon écrit *Maria Chapdelaine*. Parce que c'est un roman au style réaliste qui décrit la vie quotidienne d'une famille de pionniers (dans les bois de Québec). L'influence de l'Amérindien se fait clairement voir. Dès le début on s'aperçoit d'une division fondamentale des caractères. C'est-à-dire le caractère sédentaire et le caractère de l'esprit indien. Le voyageur, le pionnier et le coureur des bois, Louis Hémon les divise ainsi:

«C'était l'éternel malentendu des deux



racés: les pionniers et les sédentaires, les paysans venus de France qui avaient continué sur le sol nouveau leur idéal d'ordre et de paix immobile, et ces autres paysans, en qui le vaste pays sauvage avait réveillé un atavisme lointain de vagabondage et d'aventure.»<sup>32</sup>

Il y a l'esprit sédentaire de la mère Chapdelaine qui n'aime pas se déplacer ou être isolée des autres gens de la paroisse. Elle ne voit rien de meilleur que:

«De faire tout votre règne tranquillement sur une belle terre, là où il y a des magasins et des maisons. Voyons, un beau morceau de terrain *planche* dans une vieille paroisse, du terrain sans une souche ni un creux, une bonne maison chaude toute tapissée en dedans...»<sup>33</sup>

Par contraste, il y a la perspective de François Paradis, le «Coureur des bois» qui donne comme réponse à la question s'il a vendu la terre de son père:

«Oui, j'ai tout vendu. Je n'ai jamais été bien *bon* de la terre, vous savez. Travailler dans les chantiers, faire la chasse,

gagner un peu d'argent de temps en temps à servir de guide ou à commercer avec les sauvages, ça, c'est mon plaisir, mais gratter toujours le même morceau de terre, d'année en année et rester là, je n'aurais jamais pu faire ça tout mon règne. Il m'aurait semblé être attaché comme un animal à un pieu.»<sup>34</sup>

Pour justifier cette idéologie qui lui semble si étrange, la mère Chapdelaine remarque:

«C'est vrai, il y a des hommes comme cela. Samuel, par exemple, et toi, et encore bien d'autres. On dirait que le bois connaît des magies pour vous faire venir...»<sup>35</sup>

On peut conclure en disant que «ces magies» de la mère Chapdelaine sont en grande partie l'influence résiduelle de l'esprit Amérindien sur l'esprit canadien-français. Cette sensibilité relevée envers la nature et ces changements, cette tenacité et patience envers la dureté de la vie, tout si bien décrit par Louis Hémon, sont des reconnaissances subconscientes de l'influence amérindienne sur le peuple canadien-français au Québec.

1. Valerie Marchant, T. Ornstein, *The First Peoples in Quebec*, p. 35.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
4. Bernard Assiniwi, *Histoire des Indiens du Haut et du Bas Canada*, Tome 3, pp. 153-154.
5. Ornstein, pp. 30-31.
6. Assiniwi, p. 47.
7. Assiniwi, pp. 28-29.
8. Assiniwi, p. 72.
9. Assiniwi, pp. 63-64.
10. Assiniwi, p. 63.
11. Assiniwi, p. 63.
12. Assiniwi, p. 63.
13. Assiniwi, p. 63.
14. Assiniwi, p. 71.
15. Assiniwi, p. 72.
16. Assiniwi, pp. 81-82.
17. P. Patterson, *The Canadian Indian*, p. 80.
18. Mason Wade, *Les Canadiens-Français de 1760 à Nos Jours*, pp. 17-18.
19. E. Kenton, «The Indians of North America, *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*, pp. 491-495.
20. Quand même – selon M. Assiniwi, la conversion peut-être acheter. Il remarque dans son livre que des concessions morales et religieuses de la part des Indiens étaient achetées avec des marchandises de traite.
21. Wade, p. 16.
22. Kenton, pp. 29-34.
23. Kenton, pp. 3-24.
24. Wade, p. 28.
25. S.A. Lortie, Gaudrée-Boileau, *Paysans et Ouvriers Québécois d'Autrefois*; p. 56.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
27. P. Patterson, p. 80.
28. Ornstein, p. 35.
29. Ornstein, p. 81.
30. Assiniwi, p. 154.
31. A.Ch. V. Guttenberg, *Early Canadian Art plus Literature*, p. 15.
32. Louis Hémon, *Marie Chapdelaine*, p. 47.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 47.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

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BELLE-RIVIERE, GRIFFON ET CREVE-COEUR:  
LA TENACE POURSUITE D'UN  
REVE IMPERIAL

by M. Hélène Pauly

Celui qui conçoit les immenses possibilités de l'immense pays neuf est l'homme d'un rêve, le Français que l'on a qualifié d'«aventurier de génie», Robert Cavellier de la Salle. Son extraordinaire don de vision, ses qualités remarquables d'activité, d'organisation, de ténacité, d'endurance, son courage inébranlable, lui permettent de parachever la découverte de Jolliet-Marquette.

S'il ne réalise que partiellement son rêve, c'est que celui-ci est trop grandiose; c'est, surtout, que La Salle, à l'opposé de Champlain, a un génie déséquilibré, possède, à l'extrême, les défauts de ses extrêmes qualités, manque de souplesse dans sa volonté tendue, de conciliation dans son orgueil altier. Il est finalement brisé parce que sa force est trop raide; il rompt car il ne sait pas plier.

#### ROBERT CAVELIER LE VOLONTAIRE

Lorsqu'en septembre 1669, le hasard le fait se rencontrer sur les rives de l'Ontario avec Jolliet, le contraste entre le caractère des deux jeunes hommes est frappant. Ils ont le même âge, à quelques mois près, la même formation au séminaire jésuite, la même ardeur d'exploration; mais autant Louis Jolliet est simple et modéré, autant Robert Cavellier est complexé et violent. Le jeune Normand, issu d'une riche famille rouennaise, écrase de sa forte personnalité

l'humble Québécois. Grand, vigoureux, Robert Cavellier impose par la puissance de volonté que révèlent ses traits marqués et le regard soutenu de ses yeux clairs.

Le masque un peu fixe par tension nerveuse, il ne peut cacher son orgueil dominant que transparaît dans une attitude d'indépendance farouche et qui étonne et intimide Louis Jolliet.

Lui, cependant, s'étonne de la simplicité avec laquelle le Canadien est resté l'ami et le collaborateur des Pères Jésuites après en avoir quitté l'habit. Cavellier est une âme tourmentée qui semble avoir gardé une blessure secrète de sa vocation marquée. Après neuf ans de formation religieuse, ayant même prononcé les vœux perpétuels en domptant une nature rebelle, vers l'âge de vingt-cinq ans, un impérieux besoin d'indépendance et de mouvement l'a séparé des Jésuites, sous le prétexte qu'ils ne répondaient pas assez vite à sa demande de mission en Chine, et l'a jeté au Canada, possédé du désir de gagner la Chine par cette voie.

A Québec, il a évité les Jésuites et est parti retrouver son frère Jean Cavellier, Sulpicien à Ville-Marie sous le mont Royal. Le jeune Normand, doué d'une activité débordante et d'une nature de chef, était une recrue parfaite pour le poste avancé qu'était



alors Ville-Marie, Les Sulpiciens, depuis le répit de la grande paix iroquoise, cherchaient à consolider la petite cité du Mont-Royal en établissant des seigneuries en dehors de la ville, sur les riches terres situées entre fleuve et montagnes. Un fief avait été érigé, en face du Sault-Saint-Louis, en un endroit où le séminaire des Sulpiciens avait résolu d'établir une bourgade, et avait été confié au nouveau-venu, plein de résolution et de courage, avec charge de la défricher et coloniser. Cavelier s'était donné tout entier à l'établissement de sa Seigneurie qu'il avait baptisée Saint-Sulpice. Il avait commencé le défrichement, tracé l'enceinte du futur village, choisi ses colons, partagé les terres entre eux, dirigé leurs travaux de construction, de défrichage et d'établissement, transformé en un fief peuplé et déjà producteur le morceau de forêt sauvage qui lui avait été confié. Il avait montré, par cette première réussite, ce que pouvaient son énergie et sa volonté, tendues vers un but précis.

L'œuvre accomplie, sa soif de changement et d'aventure lui avait fait abandonner l'exploitation de sa Seigneurie, et l'avait lancé dans l'entreprise du projet qui le possédait depuis des années, celui de gagner la Chine. Il avait vendu son domaine pour financer l'expédition. Sa volonté et son imagination, l'assurent du succès: il ne part pas en exploration, il part en Chine. La Colonie se rit de lui et le voyant lâcher la proie pour l'ombre, surnomme son domaine de Saint-Sulpice «La Chine», imprimant à jamais la marque du rêve dont ils se moquent, sur la carte du Canada.

Robert Cavelier, dédaigneux des rieurs, se rend à Québec pour se procurer les marchandises et les compagnons nécessaires à son voyage, pour informer le Gouverneur, Monsieur de Courcelle, de son dessein, et obtenir son autorisation.

La personnalité du jeune homme est si forte, ses discours si pleins d'assurance et de chaleur, que le Gouverneur se laisse convaincre par cet enthousiasme éloquent. Il approuve tous ses projets, l'autorise à explorer bois, rivières et lacs, sans limites aucunes, permet à quatorze soldats des troupes régulières de se joindre à lui et conseille à deux éminents Sulpiciens, François Dollier de Casson, ancien capitaine sous Turenne, et René de Galinée, bon mathématicien et expert cartographe, récemment débarqués de France, de se joindre à l'expédition. C'est ce groupe important que Louis Jolliet vient de rencontrer dans un petit village indien, sur les rives de l'Ontario. Jolliet offre aux explorateurs tout ce qu'il possède: expérience, renseignements, cartes et même son canoë, dont il leur indique la cachette sur le lac Erié. Il leur décrit la route exacte qui mène au Mississippi, celle qu'il prendra lui-même avec Marquette quatre ans plus tard, à partir de la baie Verte. Jolliet conseille aux Sulpiciens cette dernière comme un centre missionnaire tout prêt à les accueillir; il ajoute que les fourrures y sont nombreuses et les castors d'une rare beauté. Il regrette de ne pouvoir retourner sur ses pas pour les conduire à ce qu'ils cherchent; un devoir impérieux, la ratification officielle du rachat d'un prisonnier iroquois qu'il a délivré, l'oblige à continuer son chemin vers Québec.

L'expédition, après sa rencontre avec Louis Jolliet, se partage. Les Sulpiciens décident de suivre les conseils de l'explorateur canadien, de profiter de ses cartes et de son canoë et de remonter jusqu'au Sault-Saint-Marie. Cavelier, trop obstiné et trop orgueilleux pour changer ses plans d'action sur les conseils du premier venu, blâme en silence les missionnaires. Que lui importe d'ailleurs ce Mississippi nordique dont on ignore le cours et la direction? La belle rivière Ohio qu'il cherche est la source du fleuve immense qui le mènera en Chine. Or c'est la Chine

qu'il désire, la Chine qu'il trouvera, tout seul s'il le faut.

La franche cordialité de Jolliet, la manière dont il a su convaincre les Sulpiciens, sa chaude amitié pour le Père Marquette qu'il leur a proposé d'aller voir, ont ravivé la blessure morale de l'ancien jésuite, ont irrité le nerveux Cavalier au point de l'indisposer. Il saisit le prétexte de cette indisposition pour se dire malade et pour se séparer des autres. Le groupe se divise alors.

Cavalier part d'abord avec quelques soldats, puis seul, semble-t-il, à la poursuite de son rêve, vers la belle rivière Ohio dont lui ont parlé les Indiens.

Pendant trois ans il erre. Souvent absent de la Colonie pour de longues périodes, puis, soudain de retour, mystérieusement secret sur ses explorations, se méfiant des Jésuites et de leurs amis, il ne semble s'ouvrir qu'à Monsieur de Courcelle qui le protège et l'encourage, car le Gouverneur a pressenti le génie de cet indépendant.

Qu'a-t-il vu, parcouru, découvert, en ces années 1669 à 1673? A-t-il atteint l'Ohio et, par cet affluent, le Mississippi même, avant l'expédition Jolliet-Marquette? Nul ne le saura jamais! Un mystère plane sur cette période de la vie du grand explorateur.

Mais de ce mystérieux vagabondage jaillit une illumination dans l'esprit de Robert Cavalier: le rêve qu'il poursuit à travers forêts, lacs et rivières, ne serait-il pas là, magnifique de réalité, devant lui? Il cherchait la Chine, pays immense, fabuleux d'inconnu et de richesses. Il a trouvé un pays immense, merveilleux d'inconnu et de possible richesse et, mieux que la Chine, libre, ouvert, s'offrant à qui voudra le prendre et le transformer en ce qu'il promet...

Tout en parcourant les forêts et les grasses prairies, à la recherche de l'Ohio, puis le long de ce fleuve, sans doute, et, peut-être jusqu'au Mississippi, il évalue la fertilité du sol vierge, compare le climat à celui, si rude, de la vallée du Saint-Laurent, s'émerveille de ne trouver aucunes limites, montagnes arides ou sables stériles, aux plaines vallonnées couvertes de céréales sauvages; admire le foisonnement et la diversité du gibier. Déjà naît en lui l'image, non d'un domaine arraché à une rebelle nature comme son fief de Saint-Sulpice, mais d'un vaste empire favorisé par une riche nature qui s'offre et qui bientôt pourrait rivaliser avec la Chine même, en fécondité heureuse. Au sobriquet moqueur de «La Chine» dont on a rebaptisé son fief seigneurial en ce dur Canada, il répondra en créant cette Chine d'Amérique, plus vaste, plus riche d'activité agricole et commerciale que la Colonie du Saint-Laurent le pourra jamais devenir!

Lorsqu'en 1673, l'exploration Jolliet-Marquette apporte la preuve que le Mississippi ne mène pas vers l'Orient, comme on l'avait si longtemps cru, et déçoit tous ceux qui, à la Colonie, rêvaient encore du fameux passage vers la Chine, Cavalier ne peut plus être atteint par la déception. La réalité a touché du doigt son rêve.

Qu'il ait, avant Jolliet et Marquette, vu rouler les eaux du Mississippi, ou non, peu importe, ce que les deux explorateurs n'ont pas su voir, lui, Cavalier, l'a compris: le vaste Père-des-Eaux traverse une future Nouvelle-Chine et les Français ont vraiment trouvé ce qu'ils cherchaient.

Le visionnaire se double d'un réaliste, le fils de paysans et de commerçants. Il adapte à l'échelle du Nouveau-Monde l'expérience qu'il tient d'une longue lignée d'ancêtres: fermiers normands aux champs fructueux et gros marchands rouennais aux entreprises

florissantes.

La sécurité et la facilité de circulation sont, il le sait, les premiers facteurs nécessaires à toute prospérité, agricole, manufacturière ou commerciale. Son rêve de Nouvelle-Chine ne peut se réaliser sans une grande route; voie large, libre, praticable, comme celle de Rouen à Paris. Une route comportant relais et villes ou bourgades, tout au long, pour activer le commerce et entretenir une perpétuelle et facile circulation. Or, cette artère vitale, indispensable au développement de toute région fertile, elle s'offre à lui, don de la nature américaine, voie plus large, plus longue, plus belle que jamais hommes n'en pourraient construire: le royal Mississipi lui-même.

A partir de cette illumination, Robert Cavellier n'est plus l'homme d'un rêve qu'il poursuivait avec ténacité. Il devient l'homme d'un projet grandiose qui s'élabore et se réalise lentement par étapes progressives, atteintes grâce à une volonté de fer au service d'une vast intelligence.

#### PREMIERS JALONS DE LA SALLE

Août 1678. Sur le navire qui le ramène de France au Canada, Robert Cavellier, désormais Sieur de la Salle, met au courant de la situation et de ses projets, le Chevalier Henri de Tonti. Ce jeune officier de la marine royale, mis hors de service parce que mutilé de la main droite, lui a été présenté, à Paris, par le Prince de Conti, comme une aide possible pour ses entreprises lointaines. Il l'a accepté. Le fin visage latin, aux traits réguliers, aux profonds yeux noirs reflète déjà l'enthousiasme et l'affection qui, jusqu'à la tombe, feront de Tonti l'ami parfait, le second au dévouement à toute épreuve, l'héritier du rêve, non entièrement réalisé, de Robert de La Salle.

Tonti a vingt-huit ans. La Salle en a trente-cinq. A l'écart des matelots et des hommes qu'il emmène au Canada, il expose brièvement à Tonti les premières étapes qu'il a franchies et qui lui permettent, maintenant, d'entreprendre la grande tâche envisagée depuis cinq ans.

Avant de s'y lancer, il avait voulu affirmer sa force aux yeux de tous: sauvages, coloniaux et Français. Ne point partir, comme le naïf Jolliet, avec le seul appui du Gouverneur pour se voir refuser le droit de coloniser une fois l'exploration menée à bien. Ne point négliger les «établissements» qui soutiennent toute pénétration profonde et la stabilisent.

Son premier travail avait été l'érection d'un fort à un point stratégique, essentiel pour le commerce entre Indiens et Français, là où le lac Ontario se déverse dans le Saint-Laurent. L'érection d'un tel fort s'imposait. En effet, les colons de la Nouvelle-Angleterre mettaient à profit la paix iroquoise avec les tribus de l'Ouest (paix obtenue à un grand prix par les Français), pour attirer à eux le trafic des pelleteries, seule branche, ou peu s'en faut, de commerce de la Nouvelle-France. Ils se servaient des Iroquois comme d'intermédiaires entre les chasseurs des forêts du Nord-Ouest et leurs comptoirs d'Albany et de la Nouvelle-Amsterdam. La concurrence des Anglais et des Hollandais se faisait de plus en plus dangereuse. Ils offraient des marchandises à bas prix comparés à ceux que maintenait le monopole gouvernemental dans la Colonie Française; leurs troqueurs étaient largement payés et attiraient les sauvages en leur offrant de l'eau-de-vie contre leurs castors. Frontenac s'était vu obligé d'autoriser ce troc néfaste, malgré les lois précédentes et la ferme opposition du clergé, afin d'empêcher que toutes les fourrures ne passassent aux mains des étrangers.

Il fallait absolument séparer les nations indiennes de l'Ouest des intermédiaires Iroquois, en surveillant la route Ontario-Erié, ouverte par la paix. Un poste militaire et commercial assurerait la suprématie de la France sur le lac Ontario, tiendrait en respect les Iroquois et deviendrait un gros centre d'échanges aussi bien qu'une base d'exploration.

L'érection d'un tel fort était une délicate entreprise si l'on voulait ne pas irriter les Iroquois. Il fallait, habilement, les détacher des Anglais et leur prouver l'avantage qu'ils auraient à détourner vers la Nouvelle-France leur commerce de pelleteries.

Pendant ses pérégrinations vers l'Ohio, entre 1670 et 1673, Cavelier avait appris la langue des Iroquois et était devenu leur ami. Sa forte personnalité, sa méfiance à l'égard des Jésuites, avaient plu au Comte de Frontenac, qui le protégeait ouvertement. Le Gouverneur l'avait donc chargé de la difficile mission. Cavelier avait réussi à convaincre les Iroquois et à les faire consentir à l'érection du fort par les Français, sous les ordres. La construction en avait été si rapide et si habile que son prestige aux yeux des Indiens aussi bien que des colons en avait grandi. Un tel succès n'était que le premier pas dans la réalisation de son grand projet.

Cavelier voulait, avant de franchir le second, le soutien d'une puissance plus haute que le Gouverneur du Canada. Vivement recommandé à Colbert par ce dernier, il était parti pour la France en 1674 et avait si bien mené ses affaires à la Cour qu'il en était rentré nanti d'un titre de noblesse, de l'approbation de ses projets par le roi, de la seigneurie du fort érigé et des terres avoisinantes, avec concession du privilège de commerce avec les Indiens de l'Ouest, d'une dotation gouvernementale importante que grossissait une forte somme prêtée par sa riche famille com-

mercante, fière de l'anoblissement de leur membre aventureux.

Chaque réussite le tendait vers un nouveau but. A peine rentré de France, Robert Cavelier de la Salle, Sieur de Cataracoui, était parti pour son nouveau domaine. Il avait fait reconstruire, en pierre et six fois plus vaste, le fort, rebaptisé Frontenac en l'honneur de son patron, il y avait ajouté une chapelle, des magasins bientôt remplis de marchandises, puis de fourrures. Il y avait attiré des Français en leur distribuant des concessions, s'était vu à la tête d'une cinquantaine de personnes, soldats, ouvriers, familles de colons, sous la direction spirituelle de trois Pères Récollets. Actif et exigeant, il avait fait cultiver blé et légumes, élever volailles et bêtes à cornes autour du fort et s'était montré satisfait des récoltes, abondantes en cette terre fertile, au climat favorable. Bâisseur de colonie, il avait recommencé, sur une plus vaste échelle, et plus loin vers l'ouest, ce qu'il avait si bien réussi près de Montréal, dans son fief de Saint-Sulpice-La Chine.

Il aurait pu vivre sur sa nouvelle seigneurie, en châtelain et en riche marchand, mais tel n'était pas son but. La Seigneurie du fort Frontenac n'était qu'une étape. Il y travaillait à la fondation d'un futur empire, par des expériences préparatoires. Il avait fait construire quatre barques pontées pour naviguer sur le lac Ontario et exercé ses gens à se servir des canoës dans les rapides, à supporter de longues marches en toutes saisons. De son fort qui lui servait d'avant-poste, il s'était lancé en voyages de reconnaissance et d'exploration sur les Grands Lacs du Nord-Ouest et les rivières qui s'y jettent. En 1676, il avait examiné d'un œil de colonisateur les pays baignés par le lac Michigan, le Ouisconsin, dont la fertilité naturelle l'avait retenu, surtout la région sud, qu'arrose la rivière Illinoise. Après en avoir reconnu le chemin,



noté les points stratégiques, considéré les possibilités agricoles et commerciales, il en était revenu certain de pouvoir convaincre Colbert du solide fondement de ses vastes projets, et, à la fin de l'année 1677, avait regagné la France afin d'y recevoir un nouvel appui officiel, une nouvelle licence royale, et des moyens plus larges pour réaliser son plan.

### UNE GRANDIOSE VISION D'AVENIR

Ce qu'il avait offert à Louis XIV n'était rien moins que la fondation d'une nouvelle colonie en plein centre d'Amérique, colonie susceptible de devenir plus grande, plus riche, plus prospère que celle du Saint-Laurent. Il avait dit au monarque, au cœur du Nouveau-Monde, une fortune royale et une voie tout aussi royale qui permettrait de l'amener jusqu'en France. Le premier, il avait deviné les vastes possibilités du Middle West et en avait projeté l'exploitation sur une grande échelle.

Les avantages de son plan reposaient sur la supériorité du Mississippi sur le Saint-Laurent. La vallée en était plus riche, plus large, plus fertile, déjà fort peuplée et éminemment colonisable; le climat y était meilleur, davantage favorable à l'agriculture et au commerce, aucune glace n'arrêtant la circulation en hiver; le fleuve lui-même, profond et large, ne présentant ni sauts ni rapides comme le Saint-Laurent, ni tempêtes effroyables comme les Grands Lacs, était navigable par de grandes barques pontées.

Tant que les fourrures pouvaient s'obtenir près du Saint-Laurent, comme au temps de Champlain, la colonie de Québec en était le débouché indiqué, mais la situation avait changé. Le commerce des fourrures avait reculé jusqu'au sein des forêts du Nord-Ouest, au-delà des Grands Lacs, le Ouïconsin était désormais le centre des échanges,

et le Mississippi la voie naturelle d'écoulement, la route de l'avenir. Car il fallait prévoir, considérer que le commerce des peaux de castor voyait ses plus beaux jours; mais qu'il irait ensuite vers un déclin fatal. Or, rien n'obligeait la Colonie à dépendre essentiellement de ce commerce; la vallée du Mississippi offrait bien d'autres richesses, faciles à exploiter.

Les troupeaux de buffles, qui erraient par milliers dans les prairies de céréales sauvages, fourniraient d'abord un commerce au moins aussi fructueux que celui des fourrures. Le Normand connaissait l'origine de la prospérité de Rouen: tissage de laine, cuir et viande de bétail. Les buffles avaient une laine douce et abondante, un cuir épais, une viande excellente, même boucanée. Tout un commerce, puis une industrie pourraient être créés. Mais cela n'était qu'un premier pas vers l'exploitation de la riche vallée dont les terres fertiles nourriraient de nombreux colons; céréales, fruits, élevage, minerais sans doute, rien ne manquerait à l'établissement d'une colonie puissante, nombreuse et riche, en contact constant avec la France par le grand fleuve et la mer.

Il ne demandait au roi que le privilège de le laisser commencer, en lui accordant la «commission» pour faire la descente jusqu'à l'embouchure du Mississippi, et le monopole du commerce des peaux de buffle. Il établirait une chaîne de forts servant de postes d'échanges et qui fourniraient un grand entrepôt sur le Golfe du Mexique, d'où les fourrures, les cuirs, la laine, les viandes, puis les grains pourraient être envoyés en France par bateau, tout au long de l'année. Ce commerce attirerait bien vite une véritable colonie, où des comptoirs grouperaient des colons français; près de grands villages indiens unis par des traités de paix et soustraits à l'influence anglaise. Il rêvait d'une vallée immense, riche, d'une population paisible,

chassant, cultivant, fabriquant, commerçant avec la France, tous sujets du Roi, et dont il serait le Gouverneur.

Henri de Tonti est captivé par ce rêve ambitieux que lui fait partager Cavelier de la Salle. Le roi a bien voulu accorder à ce dernier les privilèges demandés. La Salle rentre avec l'appui royal plus fort que jamais, et des moyens assez puissants pour lui faire réaliser son plan. Sur le navire qui le ramène au Canada, il n'a pas seulement des armes, des marchandises et des instruments, des ancres et des agrès mais des ouvriers spécialisés, menuisiers, charpentiers, constructeurs armateurs qui lui bâtiront un grand navire au-dessus des chutes du Niagara. Ce navire ira jusqu'au fond de la baie Verte chercher toute une cargaison de fourrures de castors qui défraieront l'entreprise. Un fort servira d'entrepôt au sud du lac Michigan, là où la petite rivière Chicago s'y jette, lieu qui semble naturellement situé comme futur centre commercial. Le navire reviendra chargé de provisions et d'outils qui seront transportés sur la rivière Illinoise. Là, un autre navire sera construit qui les descendra jusqu'aux bouches du Mississippi. On prendra possession du tout au nom du Roi. On s'alliera toutes les tribus qu'on civilisera et francisera. Plus tard, on unira le sud du lac Michigan à la rivière Illinoise, en élargissant la rivière Chicago et en la rendant navigable aux grandes barques qui pourront ainsi circuler librement des chutes du Niagara au golfe du Mexique.

Le plan est grandiose. Le pays aussi. L'homme qui cherche à réaliser ce plan dans ce pays sera-t-il assez fort pour n'être pas écrasé par la tâche? La réalité se dresse devant lui, hérissée de difficultés constamment renaissantes. Volontaire, tenace, inébranlable, implacable, Cavelier de la Salle les surmonte les unes après les autres, dans une lutte titanique pour la réalisation de son rêve. Le sort semble s'acharner sur lui. A

chacun de ses coups, il se redresse, plus résolu que jamais et recommence. Il ne sera terrassé que par une mort tragique.

Le Ouisconsin, alors grand centre de la population indienne alliée aux Français, et centre du marché aux fourrures, lien entre les Grands Lacs et le Mississippi, est la scène où se joue la partie essentielle de ce drame.

Le détroit de Mackinac où reposent les ossements du saint Père Marquette, la vaste baie Verte, le lac Michigan, véritable mer qui baigne le Ouisconsin, la rivière Illinoise qui est sa limite naturelle au sud, sont les témoins de l'activité infatigable et de l'indomptable énergie du héros de ce drame.

Son arrivée même, en Ouisconsin, est plus spectaculaire encore que celle de Jean Nicolet. Elle le révèle, dès l'abord, plus génial dans son esprit d'entreprise qu'aucun de ceux qui, depuis Brûlé, ont parcouru lacs, rivières ou forêts du Nord-Ouest. Ce n'est pas en canoë indien, mais sur un véritable navire européen de quarante-cinq tonnes, qu'il franchit la Porte-de-la-Mort et pénètre dans la longue baie Verte, en septembre 1679. Le «Griffon», premier navire qui ait jamais vogué sur les Grands Lacs, remplit de stupeur les Indiens, interdit à la vue de la «maison qui marche sur l'eau», plus interdits encore aux détonations des sept canons du bord.

Plus stupéfaits que les Indiens eux-mêmes sont les quinze Français envoyés à la baie Verte par La Salle, la saison précédente, pour y trafiquer avec les tribus de Ouisconsin et y amasser des fourrures. Ces troqueurs malhonnêtes n'avaient pas hésité à dissiper, à leur profit, les marchandises confiées par leur chef, certains que le navire projeté était une chimère et que, s'il existait jamais, il ne pourrait certes pas les rejoindre si loin. Leur stupeur à la vue du Griffon qui entre, voiles

gonflés, pavillons déployés, dans la Grande-Baie, n'a d'égale que la colère froide dont les cingle La Salle, au débarqué. Ils ne peuvent savoir quelle volonté de fer se cache derrière la construction et le premier voyage du Griffon. Cette construction, au-dessus des chutes du Niagara, avait constamment été mise en question par les révoltés des ouvriers amenés de France, en butte aux avanies des rusés Iroquois. Seule l'impérieuse présence de Cavelier de la Salle avait pu maintenir les Iroquois en respect et les ouvriers au travail. Seul, son impérieux commandement avait pu faire remonter au Griffon la dangereuse rivière Niagara. Seule, son énergie tendue était venue à bout du difficile passage du détroit, à l'entrée du lac Huron, fermé d'une barre, infranchissable aux yeux de son équipage. Seul, il avait maîtrisé les tempêtes terribles du lac, sondant des nuits entières, debout, à la proue du Griffon. Le Ouisconsin n'a jamais encore vu figure si énergique.

Subjugués, Indiens et Coureurs-de-Bois lui présentent un monceau de pelleteries: douze mille livres de castors de haut prix. La Salle en charge le Griffon et le renvoie au sud du lac Erié où il a fait bâtir un magasin. Ses hommes y laisseront les fourrures, y prendront marchandises et outils et reviendront à Mackinac où ils recevront, de Tonti, des instructions pour l'hivernage du navire. Cependant, lui, continuera en canoë avec quelques hommes.

Le 18 septembre, Cavelier de la Salle voit le Griffon, lourdement chargé de marchandises, de matériaux, d'outils et de la précieuse cargaison de castors, tourner sa proue vers l'est et, toutes voiles dehors, gonflées par un petit vent d'ouest très favorable, glisser rapidement vers la Porte-de-la-Mort.

Sa pensée suit le navire tandis qu'il pagaie vers le sud en compagnie du Père Récollet

Gabriel et d'une dizaine de charpentiers en quatre canoës surchargés d'outils. A mi-chemin, un violent orage s'élève soudain et l'inquiète plus encore pour le sort du Griffon que pour le sien, bien qu'ils ne gagnent la côte qu'à grande peine. Pendant quatre jours, l'orage soulève le lac Michigan avec une furie pareille aux plus fortes tempêtes de l'océan. L'inquiétude de La Salle grandit. Il la dissimule et mène durement ses compagnons... si durement que le Père Gabriel, qui a près de 70 ans, tombe en faiblesse plusieurs fois.

Non sans mal, ils côtoient le Wisconsin actuel. Tout octobre, la lutte est violente entre les quatre frères canoës et les brusques tempêtes. La faim tenaille les voyageurs. La Salle ne leur laisse pas le temps de chasser. Ils se procurent un peu de maïs dans les villages indiens près desquels ils campent, la nuit, parfois sur l'emplacement même des futures grandes villes industrielles et commerçantes du Wisconsin américain: Sheboygan, Milwaukee, Racine.

Le premier novembre, ils arrivent au sud du lac Michigan, à l'embouchure de la rivière Saint-Joseph des Miamis. La Salle est satisfait de trouver au rendez-vous vingt de ses hommes et leurs canoës chargés, arrivés de Fort Frontenac, selon ses ordres préalables. Il est mécontent de n'y point trouver Tonti, qui devrait être descendu de Mackinac, porteur de nouvelles du navire. La pensée de La Salle ne quitte pas le Griffon, indispensable au succès de son entreprise. En attendant son retour, il fait construire un fort et un magasin pour y entreposer les marchandises, puis un vaste hangar pour le navire lui-même. Il sonde et balise l'entrée de la rivière Saint-Joseph, y marque un chenal navigable pour le bâtiment. Tonti n'arrivant toujours pas, La Salle, impatient d'action, expédie deux hommes à Mackinac pour servir de guides au pilote.

Fin novembre Tonti est là, mais il n'a aucune nouvelle du Griffon. De plus en plus inquiet, Cavelier décide de forcer le sort: il poursuivra son plan. Il laisse quatre hommes au fort Saint-Joseph pour y recevoir le navire et part avec trente hommes et huit canoës. De la rivière des Miamis, ils passent à celle des Illinois, large et profonde comme la Marne, puis comme la Seine. Le 1<sup>er</sup> janvier 1680, ils traversent la capitale des Illinois, vide de ses milliers d'habitants, car c'est la saison des chasses. Le 4 janvier, trente lieues plus, ils découvrent les Indiens campés des deux côtés de la rivière, à un rétrécissement où le courant est violent. La Salle se méfie des sauvages et décide de leur en imposer par son audace. Il fait ranger ses huit grands canoës en une seule ligne de front barrant la rivière, tous ses hommes armés. Lui et Tonti sont aux deux flancs, le plus près des rives, à une demi-portée de pistolet. La Salle possède un calument de paix, mais il dédaigne de le montrer, craignant que ce geste ne soit interprété comme un signe de faiblesse. Des rives, les Illinois crient: «Qui êtes-vous?» «Français», répondent-ils d'une seule voix sans déposer les armes, sans ralentir la course de leurs canoës emportés par le fort courant, sans rompre leur alignement, jusqu'à la sortie du rétrécissement où ils trouvent une plage d'atterrissage, en aval du camp des Illindis. Les Indiens, intimidés par tant d'audace, bien qu'étant des milliers en face d'une poignée d'hommes, leur présentent trois calumets. La Salle présente alors le sien. La terreur se change en joie. Les Français sont reçus, fêtés comme le furent par eux Jolliet et Marquette:

Au Grand Conseil, La Salle continue à éblouir les Illinois par l'audace de ses projets. Il leur expose son plan de commerce avec la France, par le Mississipi et l'Océan. Les timides Illinois redisent aux Blancs les affreux dangers qui les attendent: monstres, tourbillons, tribus hostiles, climat torride. Leur

terreur gagne les ouvriers français, six d'entre eux s'enfuient, la nuit suivante. La Salle reprend ses hommes en main, les rassure et, pour les occuper et les soustraire aux racontars indiens, il leur fait construire un nouveau fort, puis une grande barque de quarante-deux pieds de quille. La Salle lui-même fait les planches de bordage, les scieurs de long étant parmi les déserteurs, pour donner l'exemple et pour endormir, par un dur travail manuel, l'affreuse inquiétude qui le tenaille au sujet du Griffon. Aucune nouvelle depuis son départ de la baie Verte, en mi-septembre... il y a donc six grands mois. La nouvelle embarcation est sur le chantier, mais il n'a ni fer, ni cordages, ni voiles pour l'achever. Les Indiens, à la vue de la coque immense, redoublent d'imagination dans leurs récits effrayants, les ouvriers en sont ébranlés. Leur chef ne reçoit pas même de nouvelles par le fort Saint-Joseph, sur le lac Michigan. Dans un moment d'amer découragement, Robert de La Salle baptise le nouveau fort «Crève-Cœur».

Sa volonté s'affermir aussitôt, son courage rebondit de plus belle. Une fois encore, il tient tête à l'adversité par l'action audacieuse: il envoie deux hommes et le Récollet Hennepin en expédition de reconnaissance sur la rivière Illinoise, jusqu'au Mississipi; il laisse le fort Crève-Cœur, le chantier naval et les ouvriers sous la garde fidèle de Tonti, et part chercher des nouvelles à Fort Frontenac, à cinq cents lieues de là. Deux visions soutiennent La Salle pendant cet héroïque voyage en brousse inconnue, la terrible saison des fontes où canoës, aussi bien que raquettes, sont inutilisables, où l'on enfonce jusqu'aux cuisses dans les borbiers gelés, où l'on doit traverser les rivières gonflées sur des radeaux improvisés. Sa première vision est celle du Griffon, toutes voiles dehors, lourd de cargaison, fendant les vagues de lac Michigan jusqu'au havre qui l'attend. La seconde est celle du commerce sur le Mississipi qui



s'annonce fructueux. Déjà les messagers indiens sont venus à Fort Crève-Cœur, des rives du Grand Fleuve, et ont assuré à La Salle que de nombreuses tribus attendaient sa venue, pour échanger leurs produits contre des objets de fer. La Salle brûle de commencer la descente du Mississippi, mais il veut faire de cette expédition une définitive démonstration de puissance, donc, comme pour son voyage sur les Grands Lacs, ce ne sera point sur un petit canoë indien, ce sera sur un navire européen qu'il le descendra.

Insensible à la fatigue, au froid, à la faim, insouciant des dangers multiples, il se hâte vers le Griffon. Il poursuit vers l'Ontario et le Fort Frontenac, il y arrive le 6 mai, après un voyage de plus de mille kilomètres, fait à pied. Là, il apprend que le Griffon est perdu, corps et biens, sans aucun espoir, quoique personne n'ait été témoin du mystérieux naufrage. Les Indiens font circuler la légende que le Grand Esprit des Lacs s'est élevé contre le sacrilège des hommes blancs et a englouti cargaison et équipage, à leur passage près de l'île sacrée de Michilimackinac. Une affreuse tempête a-t-elle coulé le navire, les Indiens l'ont-ils pillé? Quand? Où? Le mystère demeure.

#### A CREVE-COEUR: INVINCIBLE COURAGE

Ce malheur est le premier dans la série de calamités qui s'abat sur La Salle. Coup sur coup, il apprend que ses créanciers, à la Colonie, l'ayant cru mort, ont saisi tous ses biens et propriétés, à commencer par son domaine de Fort Frontenac; ses troqueurs, à la nouvelle, ont fait tout le commerce du Ouisconsin à leur profit et restent introuvables, cachés dans les vastes forêts du Nord-Ouest; les ouvriers qu'il a fait venir de France, laissés trop longtemps en chômage, lui ont échappé, certains se sont enfuis jusqu'à la Nouvelle-Amsterdam avec leurs outils; enfin le vaisseau «Le Saint-Pierre», arrivant de France

avec une riche cargaison de vivres, de munitions, de marchandises, qui devaient soutenir son entreprise, a fait naufrage dans le golfe du Saint-Laurent...

L'adversité galvanise La Salle. Il est complètement ruiné, poursuivi, abandonné; il serre les mâchoires et se prépare à recommencer, immédiatement. Il part à Montréal et, en huit jours, se fait rendre justice, règle ses affaires, trouve des créanciers et monte une nouvelle expédition. Le destin, devant cet invincible courage, semble s'acharner. Deux envoyés de Tonti arrivent de Fort Crève-Cœur: les Indiens ont fait circuler la nouvelle de la mort de La Salle, les ouvriers se sont aussitôt mutinés contre Tonti, les charpentiers du navire, le forgeron, le menuisier, entre autres, ont pillé le magasin, emporté les fourrures, les marchandises, les munitions, ont à demi démolé le fort et ont déserté, laissant Tonti avec le vieux Père Gabriel, un autre moine Récollet, trois seuls hommes fidèles, et si peu de munitions qu'il leur reste trois coups à tirer par mousquet. De plus, les déserteurs ont démolé, au passage, le fort, le magasin et le hangar qui attendait le Griffon à Saint-Joseph; une bande est remontée au nord et a pillé le dépôt de Mackinac; une autre bande a pillé le magasin et le chantier naval des chutes du Niagara. Enfin, craignant des représailles, ils se proposent de tuer La Salle: partout des embuscades le guettent.

Sans hésiter, Robert Cavellier de La Salle cherche à les prévenir, se poste lui-même en embuscade, rattrape la plupart des déserteurs, les emprisonne dans son fort et attend l'arrivée de Frontenac qui doit venir les juger.

Impatient d'action; inquiet sur le sort de Tonti, le Gouverneur tardant, il part sans l'attendre, le 10 août, avec vingt-cinq ouvriers et des agès pour terminer le petit navire en chantier à Fort Crève-Cœur. Il traverse le lac

Huron. A la mi-septembre, au détroit de Mackinac, son inquiétude au sujet de Tonti se charge en angoisse: les seules nouvelles que l'on ait de lui sont qu'il était demeuré, presque seul dans le fort démantelé, dépourvu de tout, alors que les Iroquois étaient partis en guerre contre les Illinois.

En toute hâte, La Salle redescend le lac Michigan avec douze compagnons et fait force de pagaies, tout octobre et novembre, luttant contre les vagues et les tempêtes, comme il l'avait fait l'automne précédent, sur le même trajet. A la rivière des Miamis, il laisse la moitié de ses hommes pour reconstruire le fort Saint-Joseph et recevoir le gros de ses forces: ouvriers, forge, outils et agrès qui le suivent, plus lentement, de Mackinac. Avec les six autres hommes, il continue vers le Fort Crève-Cœur, de plus en plus angoissé, car les nouvelles d'une guerre entre Iroquois et Illinois, au début de cet automne même, se confirment.

Le 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1680, ils arrivent à la capitale des Illinois; tout y est brûlé, ravagé, laissant deviner d'effroyables carnages. Sur des perches carbonisées, des têtes de morts sont la proie des vautours. Ils sont assourdis par les hurlements des loups et le croassement des corbeaux. Parmi les ossements et les charognes, ils reconnaissent des habits à la française... La Salle, surmontant son dégoût, va de crâne en crâne examiner les cheveux pour savoir si son ami et ses hommes ont été massacrés, eux aussi. Il ne les trouve pas, mais arrivé, par hasard, au jardin du fort, il y découvre six pieux plantés, peints de rouge et noircis du dessin grossier d'un homme aux yeux bandés, symbole dont les Iroquois signent leur massacre d'importants ennemis. Désormais certain du sort du Tonti, des moines et de leurs quelques fidèles, il passe une nuit d'insomnie et d'horreur au milieu des restes du carnage, pleurant le seul ami qu'il ait eu en ce monde hostile, le seul être qu'il ait aimé, avec un dévouement sans

limite, qui ait partagé son rêve immense, qui ait compris que sa dureté était voulue et nécessaire, le seul qui ait connu un Cavalier de la Salle humain.

Le lendemain matin, il est résolu à poursuivre sa marche. Il laisse la moitié de ses hommes déblayer l'abominable charnier et part avec les trois autres Français et un Indien. Les traces du carnage iroquois suivent la rivière Illinoise jusqu'au Mississipi.

A Crève-Cœur, il trouve la grande embarcation en bon état, facile à achever. Il tressaille soudain; sur un bordage rompu, il voit ces mots: «Nous sommes tous sauvages. Ce 15 A... 1680». «Ce 15 A...» si ces mots ont été écrits le 15 août, Tonti est en vie! L'espoir renaît au cœur de Robert Cavalier. Il se lance à la recherche de son ami, suivant les traces à la piste comme un Indien. Arrivé au Mississipi, le roulement régulier et puissant du fleuve est une violente tentation pour l'explorateur, il brûle de s'y jeter en canoë. Mais l'amitié prévaut, il se refuse de poursuivre ses découvertes avant d'avoir des certitudes sur le sort de Henri de Tonti. Il laisse un message et retourne à Crève-Cœur, puis au lac Michigan. Malgré un hiver des plus rigoureux, il erre sur le territoire sud du Ouisconsin, cherchant sans répit des traces de son ami. Rien ne semble pouvoir l'arrêter; le soleil, radieux sur la neige éblouissante, y suffit. La Salle, Normand aux clairs yeux bleus, devient aveugle. Il souffre intensément de ses pupilles brûlées et de son inaction forcée. Tout est noir pour lui et en lui.

Le sort semble enfin avoir pitié de lui. Une bande d'Indiens Renards, descendus dans leurs chasses des rives de la Grande Baie Verte, le rencontre. Ils sont porteurs de nouvelles inespérées: Tonti est sain et sauf à la mission des Rapides-des-Pères. Là se trouvent aussi le Père Récollet Hennepin et deux autres Français. La Salle, ranimé,

n'attend pas la fin de sa cécité accidentelle pour agir. Il envoie des ordres divers à tout son monde, expédie messagers français et indiens aux quatre coins d'un territoire vaste comme dix royaumes de France: ordre à Tonti d'aller l'attendre à Mackinac; ordres aux hommes laissés à Saint-Joseph-des-Miamis d'aller au Fort Frontenac, d'y prendre ouvriers, forge, instruments, marchandises et de rallier dans les plus brefs délais Mackinac, nœud vital et centre de l'entreprise; ordres aux divers groupes de Coureurs-de-Bois d'apporter les peaux de castors troquées pendant l'hiver. Puisque Tonti est sauf, l'amitié passe au second plan des préoccupations de La Salle. A peine a-t-il recouvré la vue qu'il réunit, sur le futur emplacement de Chicago sans doute, une vaste confédération des Indiens de l'Ouest et de ceux de l'Est, où il établit une solide paix entre Illinois, Miamis, Renards et Iroquois. La paix entre tribus indiennes est la première condition, indispensable au succès de son projet de commerce et de colonisation. Alors seulement, il remonte le lac Michigan, aussi splendidement calme en ce radieux mois de mai qu'il l'a connu splendidement violent en ses fureurs d'automne.

A Mackinac, les deux hommes se retrouvent, qui s'étaient crus morts et avaient pleuré l'un sur l'autre. La Salle est bouleversé d'intense bonheur à revoir, vivant, son unique ami. Nature entière, ses sentiments sont violents, mais il cache une sensibilité aiguë, sous une apparence de dureté. Tonti, qui a toute la finesse latine, connaît la pudeur de cœur de son ami, et cache sa propre émotion sous un récit exact de ses aventures, depuis leur séparation, en mars 1680, à Crève-Cœur, il y a quinze mois.

Tandis que La Salle remontait vers les Grands Lacs en quête du Griffon, Tonti était donc resté commandant du Fort Crève-Cœur. Les ouvriers amenés de France étaient de

fortes têtes qui se mutinaient dès qu'ils n'étaient plus absorbés par le travail. C'était ce qui était arrivé, la grande barque n'attendant plus que ses ferres et ses agrès. La chasse devenue impraticable à la fonte des neiges, la disette s'en était suivie. Tonti était parti à la capitale des Illinois pour leur acheter du maïs. Pendant son absence, deux hommes arrivés de Mackinac assurèrent à ceux de Crève-Cœur que le Griffon était perdu, La Salle ruiné, son projet de navire inutile désormais. Ils leur montrèrent si bien la tête que les gens de Crève-Cœur pillèrent le fort, le démantelèrent et désertèrent, emportant marchandises et munitions.

Resté avec les deux pères Récollets et trois seuls hommes fidèles, sans armes, dans le fort détruit, Tonti avait décidé d'y demeurer pour surveiller le vaisseau en chantier et attendre les ordres de La Salle. Le petit groupe de Français avait été recueilli et hébergé amicalement par les Illinois. Cependant, à la mi-septembre, les Iroquois attaquèrent ces derniers.

Voyant les forces extrêmement inégales entre les sauvages Iroquois et les doux Illinois, et voulant éviter l'effroyable boucherie qu'il prévoyait, Tonti s'était avancé, seul, pour parlementer avec les Iroquois alors alliés des Français. Un jeune guerrier, bondissant vers le parlementaire, lui avait asséné un violent coup de couteau en pleine poitrine. Par miracle, la lame avait dévié sur une côte et le cœur n'avait pas été percé. Les Iroquois, craignant les représailles des Français, avaient, soi-disant, accepté aussitôt l'offre de paix de Tonti, mais étaient demeurés, espérant le voir ou mourir ou s'éloigner. Les Illinois avaient rapidement fait partir en secret femmes et enfants. Prétextant cette mesure hostile, les Iroquois avaient cherché à provoquer les Illinois sans paraître briser le traité de paix; ils avaient ravagé les récoltes et, insulte suprême, déterré les os des morts. Les

Illinois, incapables de résister par les armes mais excellents coureurs, s'étaient enfuis, dispersés dans les forêts. Les Iroquois avaient massacré les vieillards et les malades abandonnés, pillé, ruiné, incendié bourg et champs. Ils n'avaient pas osé toucher aux six Français.

Ces derniers, incapables de subvenir à leur existence par eux-mêmes, avaient décidé de regagner Mackinac. Ils avaient remonté le lac Michigan, en octobre, juste comme La Salle le descendait se hâtant vers eux. La malchance avait voulu qu'ils se soient croisés sans se rencontrer sur le lac déchaîné ou dans les havres de la côte du Ouisconsin. Sans munitions pour chasser, sans marchandises à troquer, montés sur un vieux canoë qui fut brisé à jamais par une violente tempête au nord de Milwaukee, ils avaient continué à pied et cent fois cru mourir. C'est ce qui était arrivé au vieux Père Gabriel, percé par la flèche d'un Renard, alors qu'il priait à l'écart. A demi-morts de faim, les cinq survivants avaient dévoré la robe de fourrure du mort... Ils avaient survécu grâce aux Gardiens-du-Feu, qui les avaient nourris et conduits à la mission de Saint-François-Xavier. Les Pères Jésuites avaient tout fait pour ranimer Tonti, le Père Membré et leurs trois compagnons. Ils avaient passé tout l'hiver à la mission.

La Salle, toujours irrité lorsque l'on mentionne ses anciens frères en religion et leur charité, demande à Tonti ce qu'il est advenu du troisième Récollet de Crève-Cœur, le Père Hennepin, qu'il avait envoyé explorer le Mississippi au printemps 1680. Tonti a entendu les rumeurs les plus contradictoires à son sujet. Hennepin aurait remonté le Mississippi au lieu de le descendre, il aurait été pris par les Sioux, puis serait devenu leur chef; il aurait rencontré le Sieur Duluth à la rivière Ouisconsine, serait redescendu avec lui jusqu'à Mackinac puis à la Colonie, en évitant

de rencontrer Tonti à la baie Verte.

Cavelier de la Salle pense retrouver Hennepin; il fera rendre compte de sa mission mal remplie au grand moine flamand, hâbleur, qui faisait la mouche de coche au chantier naval du Niagara, lors de la construction du Griffon, et qui geignait constamment en voyage et à Crève-Cœur.

Quels que soient les renseignements fournis par le Récollet, La Salle fera la descente du Mississippi sans plus attendre. Maintenant qu'il a retrouvé Tonti, rallié ses gens, il est, plus que jamais, résolu à continuer malgré les déboires, les difficultés et les malheurs qui l'ont assailli sans répit jusqu'alors.

#### DU OUISCONSIN AU GOLFE DU MEXIQUE

Ils rentrent donc tous au Fort Frontenac pour y organiser du nouveau l'expédition de découverte et de colonisation. La Salle presse les préparatifs, se multiplie, avec tant d'efficacité que l'expédition quitte la Colonie à la fin de l'été 1680. Elle comprend plus de cinquante personnes, Français et Indiens. Le Père Membré, fidèle compagnon de Cavelier et de Tonti dans toutes leurs entreprises et difficultés, depuis 1678, en est l'aumônier. C'est une véritable flottille de canoës surchargés qui se lance sur l'Ontario. Les Indiens, que La Salle a pris comme guides, n'ont accepté qu'à l'expresse condition que dix de leurs femmes les accompagneraient comme cuisinières; trois enfants sont avec les femmes. La Salle a besoin de ces Indiens. Il s'efforce de cacher l'impatience dont il bout devant la lenteur d'un tel convoi, tout le long du voyage qui, selon la route désormais familière, remonte le lac Huron, passe Mackinac et descend le lac Michigan. Quand ils atteignent la rivière Chicago, c'est déjà janvier et les rivières sont prises. Des traîneaux doivent remplacer les canoës. Nouvelle perte de temps. A Crève-Cœur, la barque et toujours



sur le chantier, si abîmée que La Salle renonce à la faire terminer pour son exploration. Trop de fois cette dernière a été remise. Maintenant, la volonté de La Salle est tendue vers la descente immédiate du Grand Fleuve, en canoës il est vrai, mais en nombre et équipage suffisant pour en imposer à toutes les tribus riveraines. Ils partent. La rivière Illinoise, toujours libre en aval de Crève-Cœur, les porte jusqu'au Mississipi. Le fleuve pulsant charrie les glaçons du nord, avec un fracas de tonnerre.

Du 6 au 13 février, force est à La Salle d'attendre des eaux moins périlleuses. La descente du grand fleuve, de plus en plus gonflé par les eaux printanières, transformé en un vif courant de boue tumultueuse après le confluent du Missouri, s'effectue rapidement et sans obstacle sérieux. Cavalier de La Salle, se méfiant toujours des tribus inconnues et prudent à l'extrême malgré son courage, ne manque jamais de se retrancher avant d'entrer en relations avec les Indiens, ni de les intimider en faisant montre de sa force. Sa personnalité les impressionne vivement. Ils sentent un chef dans ce Normand de haute stature, au regard dur, au masque ferme, au ton d'impérial commandement, au comportement décidé. Ils assistent avec une crainte admirative à la rapide fondation de forts, à l'érection de croix monumentales et de poteaux aux armes du roi, dont il jalonne sa route.

Le 6 avril 1681, l'expédition se trouve devant les trois branches du delta du Mississipi. La Salle suit la première, Tonti et le Père Membré la seconde, un autre groupe la troisième. Trois jours plus tard, ils sont tous réunis, devant le golfe du Mexique, en une prise de possession solennelle de tous les pays par eux explorés, Robert Cavalier de La Salle, assisté du Chevalier Henri de Tonti et du Père Récollet Membré, ajoute à la couronne de France toute la vallée du Mississipi,

comme François Daumont de Saint-Lusson, assisté de Nicolas Perrot et du Père Jésuite Allouez, y avait adjoint tout le pays des Grands Lacs et de l'Ouest, dix ans auparavant. Louis XIV devient officiellement souverain d'une immensité allant du Canada au Golfe du Mexique. La Salle lui a offert la Louisiane.

Car c'est bien là la Nouvelle-Chine qu'il veut créer. La ténacité lui a fait franchir la première étape; le pays est reconnu, pris, jaloné, relié à la déjà ancienne colonie du Saint-Laurent. Il reste maintenant à le développer, l'exploiter, le relier à la France, directement.

C'est la deuxième étape que La Salle se propose de franchir. Il remonte le Mississipi non sans d'extrêmes difficultés et dangers. A cent lieues en aval de la rivière Illinoise, la réussite relâchant quelque peu la tension extrême de sa volonté, il succombe au surmenage et tombe malade. Il envoie Tonti prendre le commandement des forts et demeure avec le Père Membré qui le soigne. Pendant quarante jours, il est entre vie et mort. La vie a le dessus et, en fin de juillet, il est capable de remonter lentement vers les Illinois, puis à Mackinac.

L'année suivante il entreprend la fondation d'un fort qui sera le point stratégique au nord de la Louisiane; le fort Saint-Louis, situé sur le Rocher-de-la-Faim, haute falaise surplombant la rivière Illinoise, en amont de Crève-Cœur, assure la voie libre pour le commerce franco-indien entre le lac Michigan et le Mississipi. Il sera le poste intermédiaire entre Mackinac, où s'accumulent les fourrures du Ouisconsin, et le port d'exportation que La Salle se propose de créer aux bouches du Mississipi.

Fort Saint-Louis fondé, attirant déjà des milliers d'Illinois qui s'y fixent, La Salle retourne au Saint-Laurent y chercher colons

français, ouvriers et renforts promis et qui n'arrivent pas de Québec. Épuisé, il tombe de nouveau malade et passe tout l'hiver 1682-1683 à Mackinac. La nouvelle lui parvient du départ pour la France du gouverneur Frontenac, son ami, remplacé par un certain La Barre, hostile a priori à tous ceux que le Comte avait protégés. Une fois encore, l'adversité galvanise La Salle. Guéri par la lutte qu'il prévoit, il descend vers la Colonie. A mi-chemin, il rencontre l'officier, envoyé par le nouveau gouverneur pour le remplacer dans le commandement des forts qu'il a fondés. Tous ses biens ont été saisis, y compris sa seigneurie de Fort-Frontenac. Ses découvertes sont traitées d'imaginaires et mensongères, lui-même de Coureur-de-Bois. Révolté, nullement prêt à céder sans résistance, Robert de La Salle part directement pour la France s'y faire rendre justice par le roi.

Le projet de La Salle concorde avec l'ambition du Roi-Soleil. Le Souverain reconnaît le génie réalisateur de l'aventurier, lui donne raison contre le Gouverneur La Barre, lui fournit vaisseaux, hommes, argent, et le nomme commandant en chef d'une importante expédition aux bouches du Mississipi, avec mission d'y établir une colonie et de tenir ainsi la possession du terminus de cette immense voie au sein de l'Amérique. Louis XIV lui décerne le titre de Vice-Roi de l'Amérique septentrionale. En plein succès, à la veille de la réalisation de son rêve grandiose, le destin frappe de nouveau La Salle et, cette fois, le coup est mortel.

L'embouchure multiple du Fleuve Royal se dérobe à ses recherches. L'espace, les sauvages, la maladie, déciment ses futurs colons que l'insuccès irrite et déprime. Comme à fort Crève-Cœur, La Salle essaie, désespérément, de tout sauver, et part, presque seul, à pied, vers le Canada pour ramener du secours de Québec.

Raidi dans sa volonté absolue, dur aux autres comme à lui-même, il tombe en pleine brousse américaine, assassiné par un de ses compagnons parce qu'il a su se faire craindre mais non se faire aimer.

Une seule exception suffit, pourtant, à protéger la survie du rêve de La Salle.

Henri de Tonti, héritier des projets de son ami, les reprend après sa mort et en fait lentement progresser la réalisation.

Demeuré au Fort Saint-Louis sur le Rocher-de-la-Faim de la rivière Illinoise, poste qu'il devait commander tandis que La Salle se chargeait de la colonie aux Bouches du Mississipi, Tonti a longuement attendu des nouvelles. De contradictoires rumeurs courant parmi les Indiens, il part espérant sauver son ami et la colonie et redescend le grand fleuve en 1686. Il ignore que Cavelier a péri plus d'un an auparavant, le 19 mars 1685. Si souvent déjà, Tonti a retrouvé vivant son ami déclaré mort, qu'il espère malgré tout. Il érige un petit fort sur une île dans le Golfe, près de l'embouchure du Mississipi, le Fort de l'Île Saint-Henri où commencera, pense-t-il, la colonisation de la Louisiane sud par La Salle. Ses compagnons, non soutenus par la même foi, perdent courage, l'abandonnent, et Tonti doit renoncer à sa vaine recherche.

Il ne renonce pas à son fol espoir de voir soudain réapparaître l'indomptable aventurier et, pendant des années, il l'attend. Il ne renonce jamais au plan de La Salle et, jusqu'à sa mort, vingt ans plus tard, n'a de cesse d'y travailler lui-même, et de presser le gouvernement français de réaliser la colonisation de la Louisiane, reliée au pays des Grands Lacs. Tonti sait les possibilités de ce vaste empire, la nécessité de le maintenir et de le protéger. Pendant dix ans, il commande et développe le Fort Saint-Louis, en fait un grand centre de commerce des pelleteries, en

relation constante avec celui de Mackinac. Il s'unit aux commandants du nord du Ouisconsin, Perrot, Duluth, pour maintenir puis développer le commerce et l'influence française dans ces régions et multiplie les alliances avec toutes les tribus indiennes du sud du Ouisconsin et au-delà. La relation des découvertes de La Salle qu'il rédige entre 1678 et 1684, a pour fin d'attirer des colons français dans la riche vallée. Bientôt un poste d'échanges commerciaux est fondé par ses soins sur l'Arkansas, région très riche en peaux et fourrures, les terres distribuées à des colons français, les Jésuites pressentis pour venir y fonder une mission. Henri de Tonti cherche à étendre la Colonie française du nord des Grands Lacs au golfe du Mexique, étendre le Ouisconsin jusqu'en Louisiane.

En 1693, il propose la construction d'un navire sur l'Arkansas pour le commerce direct avec la France; il insiste sur la qualité et l'abondance des cuirs et de la laine de buffle; ajoutant au plan de commerce du Rouennais des projets de culture de vers à soie et de plantation de canne à sucre, il cherche à réaliser le programme que La Salle lui confiait sur le navire qui les amenait tous deux au Canada en 1678.

Enfin, lorsque d'Iberville hérite de la mission confiée à Robert Cavelier de La Salle et, nommé Vice-Roy de l'Amérique septentrionale, fonde à Biloxi la première colonie de la Louisiane sud, Tonti se rallie à cette dernière et aide à son développement, fidèle jusqu'à la tombe au rêve de son ami.

Jolliet et Marquette ont découvert le grand fleuve, montré le chemin pour y parvenir par la rivière Ouisconsine; La Salle et Tonti, grâce à leur esprit d'entreprise et à leur courage persévérant, parachèvent cette découverte; ils en signalent les merveilleuses possibilités et en commencent la mise en valeur que d'autres poursuivront à travers les siècles.

Des plus, ils montrent un autre chemin entre les Grands Lacs et la vallée du Mississippi par le sud du lac Michigan et la rivière Illinoise, comme si, dans sa vision géniale, Robert Cavelier de La Salle avait prévu Chicago, immense métropole de commerce et d'industrie, capitale du Middle West, lequel continue l'historique pays des Ottawas, le vieux Ouisconsin français.

DE NORMANDIE EN MONGOLIE?  
NICOLET CHEZ LES ETRANGES WINEBAGOS

by M. Hélène Pauly

Un jour radieux de mai, en 1635, le canon du fort de Québec tonne pour saluer Champlain, enfin de retour. Le bonheur du Gouverneur n'a d'égal que celui des Indiens et des quelques colons demeurés au Canada depuis 1629, soutenus par la foi et l'espoir.

Aussitôt la Colonie réinstallée et réorganisée, le grand découvreur pense à la reprise et à la poursuite de ses explorations. Mais sa santé a été ruinée par le choc douloureux causé par la perte de sa colonie bien-aimée. Depuis il sent le poids des ans: il est plus que sexagénaire maintenant et sa constitution, si robuste jadis, commence à chanceler.

Il ne serait plus sage pour lui de se risquer, comme il le fit avec Etienne Brûlé, il y a une quinzaine d'années, en une expédition dangereuse. La simple prudence demande qu'un de ses jeunes collaborateurs reconnaisse la route avant qu'il ne s'y engage, et prépare à sa venue les tribus rencontrées.

Lequel de ses interprètes choisir? Son ancien guide Brûlé n'est plus: dans une querelle avec un sauvage il a été tué, puis rôti et dévoré... Dieu ait son âme audacieuse, impulsive!

Cette expédition sera la dernière que Champlain pourra jamais entreprendre; si elle n'est pas soigneusement préparée, la route de la Chine lui échappe à jamais! Il lui faut

un homme audacieux et brave, comme Brûlé, mais sage et instruit... Qui donc choisir? Qui?... Mais le meilleur et le plus cher de ses élèves: Jean Nicolet! Celui qu'il eût aimé avoir pour fils si la Providence avait voulu lui accorder des enfants; celui en qui il a la plus grande confiance, celui qui comprendra le mieux ce qu'il désire, tant l'élève ressemble au maître.

Il se souvient, comme si c'était d'hier, de leur première rencontre à Cherbourg, sur les quais du grand port, déjà transatlantique. Il y a plus de quinze ans de cela: Jean avait vingt ans. Il questionnait avec avidité les matelots, retour du Canada. Sa figure ouverte et expressive avait intéressé Champlain qui cherchait des jeunes gens, pour en faire ses collaborateurs dans la colonie naissante. Celui-là semblait robuste et intelligent. Doué pour les subtiles langues sauvages: avec quelle facilité il saisissait les inflections des marins citant des mots hurons, avec quelle promptitude il semblait les retenir! Nanti d'un bon caractère aussi; comme il riait des grosses vantardises des matelots gascons et normands! Le moral de ce beau gars répondrait-il à ses qualités physiques et mentales? Il fallait être de la plus grande prudence sur ce point depuis que les interprètes du Directeur commercial de la Colonie, Emery de Caen, le Huguenot, avaient, par leur conduite déréglée, causé grand tort à la conversion des indigènes.



Champlain se souvient encore de la satisfaction que lui donnèrent les renseignements fournis par les moines de la paroisse de Nicolet: santé morale appuyée sur une foi simple et profonde, bonne famille, nombreuse, plusieurs autres fils à la maison... les parents laisseraient sans doute Jean partir au loin. D'ailleurs le goût de l'inconnu et l'attrait d'un métier aventureux étaient dans le sang, le père, messenger de la Malle entre Cherbourg et Paris, avait traversé, sans faillir à son dangereux devoir, les pires années de guerre civile; du côté maternel, les Delamer naissaient marins.

Et sa première conversation avec le jeune homme! Champlain sourit encore au souvenir de la joie émerveillée qui avait illuminé les yeux bleus du Normand, quand il lui offrit de l'accompagner dans le Nouveau-Monde.

#### Nicolet à l'école de la vie sauvage

Sa bonne humeur et son entrain pendant la rude traversée, sa piété vraie, son respect pour les deux missionnaires Récollets qui traversaient l'Océan avec lui, avaient confirmé le Gouverneur dans sa bonne opinion sur Nicolet. Aussi Champlain n'avait-il pas hésité: à peine débarqué à Québec, il avait expédié sa jeune recrue en pleine école sauvage, tout seul, à plusieurs semaines de voyage en canoë et dans une tribu qui venait de se rendre coupable du meurtre de deux Français: chez les Algonquins. Il n'avait pas hésité, jugeant Nicolet capable de surmonter l'épreuve, et, au surplus il l'avait solennellement confié à son ami le chef Le Borgne.

«Ce bon vieux capitaine», comme l'appelle Champlain, est le Grand Chef de la plus puissante tribu Algonquine: celle de l'Île Allumette. Située en plein milieu de la rivière Ottawa, et protégée à chaque extrémité par des sauts dangereux, elle est, à cause de sa

situation stratégique, la capitale des Algonquins. Le Borgne, orateur éloquent, fier et orgueilleux, à la tête d'une armée de quatre cents redoutables guerriers, y règle, selon son bon plaisir, toute la circulation sur l'Ottawa et s'arroge un droit de péage sur tout canoë montant ou descendant de la Colonie française. Le choix de l'Île Allumette par Champlain, pour son futur interprète-exploreur, est excellent. Nicolet s'y trouve à la meilleure école des langues sauvages par la méthode directe et au centre des informations sur toutes les tribus de l'intérieur qui passent par l'Ottawa.

Pour l'atteindre, Jean Nicolet doit remonter en canoë, avec les Indiens qui sont descendus à la foire aux fourrures sur le Saint-Laurent. Il doit s'embarquer seul, avec des sauvages qu'il sait cruels, dont il ne comprend pas la langue, et qu'il n'est pas long à découvrir moqueurs, inconstants, primitifs et nauséabonds. Pendant le long et pénible voyage de quatre cents kilomètres il justifie le choix de Champlain par ses solides qualités d'endurance physique et morale: malgré son manque d'expérience, il revendique sa part dans tous les travaux, à l'égal des plus robustes sauvages, avec un bel esprit sportif.

A son arrivée à l'Île Allumette Jean Nicolet a déjà gagné le respect et l'amitié de ses compagnons de voyage. Il est alors, et selon la coutume indienne, adopté par le Chef Le Borgne exactement comme un membre de la famille. Il apprend leur langue, partage leur vie nomade et incertaine, il les suit en hiver dans leurs chasses à travers les forêts. Comme eux, tour à tour, il se gorge de gibier, puis jeûne sévèrement; comme eux, il se creuse un refuge contre les tempêtes de neige et s'y terre jusqu'à ce que la tourmente soit passée. Vaillant et gai, Nicolet se fait vite à cette vie des bois, s'y montre bientôt plus alerte que les sauvages eux-mêmes. Tandis que ses amis

Algonquins se reposent, lui fait bouillir la marmite et bricole pour améliorer le « confort » de leur camp ou de leur hutte enfumée. Cependant il ne s'ensauvage pas à cette vie primitive, mais il se donne sérieusement à l'étude des langues huronne et algonquine, très complexes, et grâce à la finesse de son oreille, à son excellente mémoire et à sa ténacité, il les possède bientôt.

Il s'assimile si bien les langues et les coutumes indiennes tout en conservant sa raison et sa logique française, qu'au bout de deux ans la tribu l'élit Capitaine et le charge de la délicate mission d'aller négocier la paix avec les Iroquois.

Champlain se remémore sa fierté satisfaite à la nouvelle du succès de cette mission. Il avait alors décidé, en 1622, de nommer Jean Nicolet interprète officiel et de l'envoyer dans un poste fort important mais dangereux, au Nord-Ouest de l'Ottawa, dans la tribu Algonquine des Nipissings, tribu puissante, plus nombreuse que celle de l'Île Allumette, et campée sur le chemin du Lac Huron qui devenait le grand centre des missions et du troc des fourrures.

Il fallait du courage pour se risquer dans cette tribu éloignée, très primitive, réputée dangereuse et que les troqueurs avaient baptisée tribu des « Sorciers », car, disaient-ils, nuit et jour on y entend rouler, sur les lacs et dans les forêts, le tambour monotone de l'homme-médecin qui cherche à conjurer les mauvais esprits.

L'envoyé de Champlain non seulement s'y risque, mais s'y installe. Pendant dix ans il y mène la vie pleine et noble du civilisateur parmi les sauvages. Traité en demi-dieu, dès son arrivée, non seulement il conserve son prestige d'homme blanc après la période d'étonnement émerveillé des Indiens, mais il voit son ascendant sur eux augmenter avec les

années. Il est admiré, respecté et aimé des Nipissings. Il partage leurs travaux et leurs amusements, leurs difficultés et leurs joies, sans se familiariser au point d'en perdre sa dignité de chrétien et de civilisé. Il a sa cabane et son foyer à lui; se réserve quelques heures pour tenir le journal de sa vie d'interprète, pour noter ce qu'il remarque; il évangélise avec une douce patience ses frères « sorciers » et prépare ainsi la voie aux missionnaires; enfin, il a un rôle prépondérant dans les Grands Conseils, malgré sa jeunesse.

En effet, chez les sauvages les Capitaines sont rarement jeunes car il sont choisis pour leur expérience et leur sagesse. Bien que respectés, ils n'ont pas d'autorité absolue et gouvernent le peuple plus par leurs exhortations et leur exemple que par leur pouvoir. Le gouvernement s'exerce à l'aide de Conseils. Les Anciens et les Principaux du bourg s'assemblent et décident des affaires de leur République, après discussion, par un vote à la majorité des voix comptées à l'aide de petits fétus de jonc. Or, quand ils tiennent Conseil, c'est ordinairement dans la cabane du Capitaine. Un crieur public ayant parcouru le bourg et annoncé la réunion, un grand feu est allumé au centre de la cabane autour duquel les Conseillers prennent place sur des nattes, le Capitaine ou Grand Chef, isolé, face à l'assistance. Les femmes, les jeunes gens assistent à la réunion. La foule n'est absente que si le Conseil est secret, comme, par exemple, pour y mettre au point quelque surprise de guerre. Il se tient alors la nuit, entre les principaux conseillers seulement, et rien ne transpire avant que la résolution votée ne soit mise à exécution.

En cas de Conseil général, tous les Indiens étant assemblés et assis, les portes de la cabane sont fermées, le calumet est allumé et passe de bouche en bouche. Ils font tous une longue pause silencieuse avant de parler, pour se recueillir et réunir leurs arguments.

Puis le Capitaine, toujours assis, commence à exposer longuement le sujet à traiter. Quand son discours est achevé, un moment de silence permet aux conseillers de le méditer; puis, ceux qui ont quelque chose à dire, donnent leurs raisons et leurs avis les uns après les autres, sans interruptions et en peu de mots, réservant leur éloquence fleurie aux cas d'une importance spéciale.

Etranges conseils parlementaires, songe le Gouverneur du Canada, où personne n'a de prérogatives; où chacun peut exposer, en toute liberté, son opinion, au milieu du silence complet de l'assistance; où les discussions pour longues qu'elles soient, ne dégènerent jamais en querelles violentes, et où les résolutions sont prises à la majorité des voix, toutes égales! Etranges conseils, songe le bon serviteur du puissant Monarque Louis...! Etrange pouvoir que celui de l'éloquence! Celle de Jean Nicolet développée par son père adoptif le Chef Le Borgne, a une grande puissance sur les Indiens. Pouvoir bienfaiteur, quand il sert la cause de la paix! Que de querelles entre tribus, l'interprète n'a-t-il pas apaisées, que de folles et meurtrières guerres n'a-t-il pas arrêtées! Les missionnaires qui redescendaient de temps à autre de Huronie à Québec ne tarissaient pas d'éloges sur Nicolet. Ce jeune gars de Cherbourg, quel excellent représentant de la France il était devenu en pleine sauvagerie!

Quel excellent explorateur aussi! Champlain a eu en main certaines pages de son journal, remplies de précieux renseignements sur les pays et les peuples du Nord-Ouest. Qu'est devenu Nicolet pendant les trois années où Québec a été sous le joug anglais? L'explorateur se trouve-t-il dans la vaste Huronie, ou plus loin encore? A-t-il subi le sort cruel d'Etienne Brûlé?

Le grand vieillard n'y peut croire. Nicolet est trop sage pour jamais avoir une dangereuse

querelle, trop prudent pour risquer sa vie en téméraire, trop instruit des choses de la forêt, trop fort, trop jeune, et, par dessus tout, trop utile encore à son maître vieillissant pour être mort!

Champlain questionne le fidèle Hébert, resté à la colonie avec une poignée de Français tenaces. A-t-on eu des nouvelles de Jean? Hébert ne l'a pas vu depuis quatre ans, ni personne à Québec. Les missionnaires, qui ont été rapatriés par les Anglais avec le Gouverneur lui-même, en 1629, sont les derniers qui aient donné de ses nouvelles: Nicolet était alors chez les Nipissings et comptait y demeurer.

Champlain fait immédiatement venir un messager Huron et l'expédie en hâte vers l'Ouest, à la recherche du collaborateur tant désiré.

A peine une lune plus tard, une grande flottille indienne apparaît en amont de Québec, bien rangée, hurlante de joie. Qui sont-ils? Les Hurons sont déjà arrivés, plus de cinq cents dans cent cinquante grands canoës, il y a quelques semaines... Ce sont les Sorciers, bariolés de couleurs vives, leur Grand Capitaine Jean Nicolet au milieu d'eux. Quel beau chef! Bronzé et musclé, en pleine force virile: trente-cinq ans sonnés. Quelle ferme autorité dans sa manière d'être envers les sauvages; quel beau regard, franc, et affectueux, pour le Maître vénéré!

Champlain pose la main sur l'épaule de son interprète préféré:

—La bienvenue, Jean! Comment avez-vous pu descendre si vite, de si loin? Il n'y a pas même une lune que mon messager est parti!

Nicolet sourit:

—Pensez-vous qu'il faille un messager pour annoncer votre retour à vos amis? La

nouvelle en court les bois et les rivières depuis le premier coup de canon. Voyez leur bonheur!

Les Sorciers, en effet, se pressent pour voir le Grand Capitaine, pour toucher un pan du vêtement de leur Père, pour se bien prouver à eux-mêmes que ce n'est pas un rêve, un fantôme: le Grand Homme est de retour parmi eux, en chair et en os. Son puissant Manitou l'a ramené à ses enfants rouges. Un chef s'avance, éloquent: «Lorsque les Français n'étaient pas ici la terre n'était plus la terre, la rivière n'était plus la rivière, le ciel n'était plus le ciel... Mais, au retour du Sieur de Champlain, tout est retourné à son être, la terre est redevenue terre, la rivière est redevenue rivière et le ciel a été de nouveau ciel.»

—Il est vrai, commente Nicolet, les Indiens étaient malheureux sans vous. Ils n'ont rien voulu avoir à faire avec les nouveaux venus. La chasse a été bonne, ces derniers hivers, et les pelleteries s'accumulaient; pas un seul canoë n'est descendu au troc sur le Saint-Laurent. Et Dieu sait si les Anglais les ont flattés, comblés de présents et de promesses! Regardez cette fortune de fourrures qui sort des canoës!

Champlain sourit à son tour:

—L'influence de certains interprètes français n'y serait-elle pas pour quelque chose?

—C'est bien pour cela que nous sommes restés dans les forêts avec nos sauvages! Ne fallait-il pas aussi entretenir chez eux les germes de chrétienté jusqu'au retour des missionnaires? Car pas l'un de nous, Français ou Indien, n'a douté de votre retour! Nous en étions si certains que j'ai commencé à préparer notre expédition vers l'Ouest. Rien ne nous empêche plus de la mettre à exécution. Pendant l'occupation anglaise de Québec, une grande paix générale s'est établie

parmi toutes les tribus du Nord-Ouest: les routes nous sont ouvertes. Vous savez que les Ottawas, qui demeurent dans les grandes îles du Lac Huron, sont les plus voyageurs de tous les Algonquins. Ils ont le don du commerce et vont trafiquer à des distances considérables avec les tribus les plus diverses. Ils traversent la Mer Douce Huronne comme nos marins normands l'Atlantique.

Je n'ai pas encore eu l'occasion de les y suivre, mais ce qu'ils en content fait bondir d'espoir: il paraît que les peuples, de l'autre côté des Grandes Mers Douces, sont aussi différents des Indiens que nous autres; ils n'ont pas un poil de barbe, leur crâne entièrement rasé s'orne d'une seule longue touffe de cheveux, leurs vêtements sont faits de tissus et non pas de peaux, leur langue est incompréhensible aux Hurons comme aux Algonquins. Qui mieux est, ils auraient un immense et riche pays vers l'ouest, recelant des mines d'or et d'argent. Ils voyagent sur de très grands bateaux de bois et l'une de leur tribu, celle qui est le plus proche des Grands Lacs, est celle des Winébagos ou «Gens-de-la-Mer».

Je crois que nous touchons au but: ne sont-ce point là des Orientaux et leur mer ne serait-elle pas la Mer Vermeille ou Pacifique?

Champlain croit rêver: le passage vers la Chine! Son disciple lui apporte-t-il la réalisation du plus cher de ses désirs, la clef du secret qui l'a attiré dans le Nouveau-Monde, il y a un demi-siècle? ...

Ambassadeur en robe de brocard

Certes, ils vont partir ensemble vers ces «Gens de Mer», ces Winébagos, en une expédition finale, préparée à loisir pendant les mois d'hiver qui les séparent du temps des voyages. Aux présents qu'il conviendra d'offrir en gage d'amitié aux nouveaux peuples



découverts; Champlain ajoute une resplendissante robe orientale, toute de brocard d'or brodé de fleurs et d'oiseaux rutilants, en soies multicolores. Richelieu lui en a fait présent pour qu'il s'en revête le jour où il aborderait en Chine par le chemin occidental.

Le printemps arrive; les neiges et les glaces fondent, les rivières s'ouvrent, l'expédition peut partir.

Hélas! Champlain est âgé de près de soixante-dix années! Soixante-dix ans de travaux et de difficultés qui l'ont usé: la souffrance l'immobilise. Deux ans avant Le Cid, un vieillard perclus se tourne vers son jeune second: «Va, mon fils!» Et Nicolet part vers les mystérieux Winébagos. C'est lui qui offrira les présents au nom du Puissant Monarque de France, c'est lui qui revêtira la magnifique robe orientale quand les Mandarins le recevront; Champlain lui lègue la suprême mission.

Le 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1634, l'explorateur se met en route avec deux convois de canoës; l'un d'eux doit remonter jusqu'en Huronnie avec des missionnaires, l'autre s'arrêtera à mi-chemin entre Québec et le Mont Royal, au lieu dit des Trois-Rivières, qu'il s'agit de fortifier. Depuis l'union des Iroquois en Confédération, les canoës Algonquins n'osent s'aventurer plus bas dans le fleuve; une foire aux fourrures s'y est établie; des concessions y ont déjà été octroyées à plusieurs interprètes; le Gouverneur veut protéger le tout, au moins par des palissades et quelques canons.

Pendant un court arrêt au bord du fleuve, en attendant que les Indiens aient achevé leur négoce et soient prêts à remonter, Nicolet aide à bâtir les fortifications de Trois-Rivières sans se douter qu'il deviendra l'un des citoyens les plus éminents de cette ville canadienne.

Onze canoës hurons sont prêts à partir, dix-huit Français désirent s'y embarquer avec les sauvages qui refusent de les prendre, malgré tous les présents qu'on leur offre. Mais, pour plaire à Nicolet, ils acceptent enfin les deux Pères et leurs deux acolytes. L'interprète lui-même s'embarque avec les Algonquins et met au service des voyageurs novices sa longue expérience et son dévouement respectueux, pendant les cent lieues de leur pénible voyage. Il leur conseille même de laisser, sans mot dire, leurs guides sauvages offrir du tabac aux «esprits» qui demeurent dans les tourbillons de la Chaudière, passage sacré et périlleux dans l'Ottawa.

Nicolet quitte les missionnaires à l'Île Allumette, et de là seul avec ses Indiens, il remonte jusqu'au Lac Nipissing et à la Rivière des Sorciers, qui relie la rivière Ottawa au Lac Huron. Il s'arrête dans «sa» tribu, convoque un grand Conseil, fait part de son projet de rendre visite au «Gens de Mer» et demande des compagnons de voyage. Les Algonquins usent de toute leur éloquence pour essayer de le dissuader d'une telle entreprise: les Winébagos sont terribles, ils sont si féroces et si cruels qu'on les surnomme «les Iroquois de l'Ouest», leur langue comme leurs coutumes sont étranges et incompréhensibles; ils accomplissent de terrifiantes cérémonies sanglantes sur des cumulus aux effigies d'animaux. Il arrachent et dévorent le cœur des étrangers, assez téméraires pour s'aventurer chez eux, croyant ainsi s'assimiler leurs vertus. Pleins de morgue et de hauteur, ils se croient la nation la plus puissante du monde et déclarent la guerre à tous, bien que n'ayant comme armes que haches et couteaux de pierre. Ils sont si fiers de leurs mœurs primitives qu'ils n'en veulent rien changer, se refusent à tout rapport avec les commerçants Ottawa et méprisent les objets de fer que ceux-ci leur proposent. A deux reprises, dans les mois derniers, ils ont même tué et dévoré ceux qui ont osé se risquer à

leur en offrir; d'où est né un état de guerre permanent entre la cruelle nation Winébagos et toutes les tribus Algonquines, au nord-ouest de la Huronnie. Si le Capitaine Nicolet veut aller chez les «Gens de Mer», ce devra être en homme de guerre.

Le Français leur réplique que la paix obtient plus que la guerre, qu'il est bon d'essayer d'adoucir les plus cruels par des présents, et juste de faire connaître aux plus primitifs le vrai Manitou, le grand Dieu des Chrétiens, qu'eux-mêmes connaissent déjà. Il se propose donc pour aller de leur part chez les Winébagos, en ambassadeur de paix. Il n'a jamais encore rencontré tribu sauvage qui reçoive les envoyés de paix avec des menaces de mort. (Plût à Dieu qu'il en fût toujours ainsi chez les civilisés! pense Nicolet.) Son éloquence, la profonde sagesse de ses raisons, convainquent les Algonquins: l'ambassade de paix est décidée.

Il part avec sept députés, dont l'un connaît quelques mots essentiels de l'étrange langue Winébagos; en un frêle canoë d'écorce de bouleau, pour une exploration de plus de mille kilomètres, à travers deux tempétueuses mers intérieures. La robe orientale et deux pistolets d'argent sont soigneusement placés à l'avant du canoë.

C'est la mi-août. Le lac Huron miroite au soleil, les pagayeurs le plissent à peine au long de ses bords ombragés de luxuriantes forêts remplies d'oiseaux et de gibier. Ils atteignent les grandes îles du Lac Huron et horrifient les commerçants Ottawas à l'annonce de leur visite aux antropophages. Nicolet rassure ses compagnons ébranlés et met le cap vers le nord pour pénétrer dans les eaux du long-détroit bordé de pins noirs, qui aboutit à une chute d'eau si bleue et si blanche qu'elle sera à jamais le Sault-Sainte-Marie. Une tribu huronne, qui y harponne

d'énormes esturgeons, prévient les voyageurs qu'ils se trompent de direction. Au delà du Sault se trouve le Grand Lac Supérieur. Celui des Winébagos est situé au sud-ouest; un autre détroit, moins long et sans chute, y mène, partant du Lac Huron.

Le canoë vire, retrouve la Mer Douce Huronne, pointe droit vers le soleil couchant. Au loin, se détachant en noir sur le ciel orange, apparaît comme une géanté tortue endormie dans le bercement des eaux.

Le Sorcière connaît de réputation cette île sacrée, berceau de la race indienne, demeure des magiciens les plus savants, qui y perpétuent le culte du Dieu-Soleil, sur l'arc de roc d'une arche naturelle parfaite où s'encadre l'Astre Radieux à son lever.

Michilimackinac, île sacrée, mystérieuse et belle! Tortue géante qui semble garder la porte du Ouisconsin! Nicolet, premier blanc, y pose ses regards admiratifs et prie le Christ, soleil des âmes, de la transformer en un berceau de chrétienté.

Aux détroits de Mackinac, la tribu Algonquine sacrée, les Potowatomis ou «Gardiens-du-feu», laisse passer le canoë explorateur dans la plus occidentale des Mers Douces, le redoutable Lac Michigan ou Grand Lac du Ouisconsin, aux colères soudaines et violentes. Une vaste et longue baie attire les voyageurs par ses eaux calmes d'émeraude mordorée. L'entrée en est gardée par des îles si rocheuses, par des courants et contre-courants si forts et si traîtres, qu'elle en a mérité, pour la suite des âges le surnom de «Porte de la Mort». Ils y échappent par miracle et glissent le long de la rive nord de la Baie Verte.

A leur vif étournement, toute cette côte est peuplée de tribus dont ils comprennent la

langue. Leurs beaux guerriers semblent à Nicolet plus grands, plus clairs de teint, plus délicats dans leur politesse qu'aucuns Indiens jamais rencontrés dans sa longue carrière d'interprète. De gracieuses «squaws» leur offrent des plats de riz sauvage et de poisson. Ils apprennent aux «Sorciers» qu'ils sont Algonquins comme eux, mais détachés du tronc familial depuis si longtemps qu'ils en ont oublié leur premier nom; depuis qu'ils sont établis le long de la Baie Verte, on les nomme «Mangeurs de riz sauvage» ou de «folles avoines».

Ils rassurent les explorateurs au sujet des Winébagos: certes, ces derniers sont primitifs et brutaux, mais non point de mauvaises gens si on sait les prendre et les traiter avec amitié! Ils ne leur ont jamais cherché querelle et s'allient à eux par mariage. La bienveillante tribu des beaux et pâles «Folles-Avoines» conseille cependant une attitude prudente aux explorateurs, puis guide leur chemin: tout droit au fond de la Baie Verte ils trouveront les Winébagos.

Malgré leur courage et les propos rassurants des Folles-Avoines, maintenant qu'ils se savent tout proches du mystérieux pays des cumulus à effigies et de leurs étranges habitants, les Sorciers suivent à contre-cœur leur Capitaine Jean Nicolet.

Prudent dans sa calme audace, ce dernier avance lentement, de jour, naviguant au large. A chaque nouveau village, il débarque à quelque distance des huttes, bien en vue, et, aussitôt, fiche en terre deux bâtons auxquels il pend des présents, afin d'ôter aux peuplades inconnues et méfiantes la pensée de les prendre pour ennemis et de les massacrer. Il apprend bientôt qu'il n'est plus distant des Winébagos qu'à deux journées de facile pagayage. Il s'arrête donc et députe un de leurs voisins les prévenir de l'arrivée de l'ambassade de paix.

Pendant les quelques jours d'attente Nicolet brûle d'impatiente curiosité. A-t-il vraiment atteint une province reculée de la Chine ou des Indes? Cette magnifique Baie qui étire ses lieues de jade entre des collines non moins verdoyantes, serait-ce le fameux Passage, tant cherché, vers l'Orient? ... Les Winébagos sont-ils des Tartares? ...

Nicolet a bien deviné, par les rapports que lui en ont fait les Ottawas et les aimables Folles-Avoines, qu'il ne s'agit pas encore de Mongols ou de Chinois hautement civilisés, mais l'Asie est vaste et les Indes diverses ...

Le messenger revient, annonçant que les hautains «Gens de Mer» ont appris qu'un Homme Merveilleux, un Manitouriniou, accompagnait la députation; ils condescendent donc, à cause de cette marque d'attention, à entrer en pourparlers de paix avec les Sorciers. Ils ont même offert deux de leurs jeunes guerriers pour servir de guides. Des Winébagos! Les Algonquins reculent instinctivement. L'explorateur français au contraire approche aussitôt des inconnus et les scrute avidement de ses yeux clairs: sont-ce des Orientaux?

Leur type est très différent de celui de deux importants groupes que connaît l'interprète: les Iroquois-Hurons et les Algonquins. Le visage des guides Winébagos est rond, aplati comme un disque, le nez court, les yeux légèrement obliques, le teint mat plutôt jaune que cuivré. Habile linguiste, Nicolet essaie, tour à tour, tous les dialectes Hurons ou Algonquins qu'il possède, sans pouvoir se faire comprendre de ces nouveaux sauvages, d'ailleurs graves et réticents; il tend son oreille; fine et exercée, aux sons étranges des mots winébagos: aucun doute, cette langue est d'une origine toute différente de celles des Indiens de l'Est. Ces hommes ne sont pas des Chinois, mais sont-ils encore des Indiens? Ils semblent une race intermédiaire, tenant

des uns et des autres!

La déception de Nicolet n'est pas entière: s'il n'a pas encore découvert le passage même de la Chine, il lui semble permis de croire qu'il en a trouvé le chemin. Les Winébagos seraient le lien entre l'Orient et l'Occident. . . Il ira chez eux, les interrogera, examinera leurs cours d'eau et cherchera, toujours plus avant! . . .

Cet Ouest américain est infini! Quelles surprises réserve-t-il encore à l'homme blanc? Mais le mystère en sera percé, tôt ou tard, et Jean Nicolet, soulevé par un renouveau d'espoir et d'enthousiasme, remonté dans son canoë.

Les nouveaux guides selon l'étiquette sauvage, sont chargés de tous les colis des voyageurs. Les deux meilleurs payeurs encadrent le Manitouriniou Blanc. Il a revêtu la magnifique et rutilante robe de soie, brodée si admirablement que les sauvages croient sentir le parfum ambré des fleurs merveilleuses et entendre bruissier les oiseaux de soie aux yeux de rubis et d'opales. Il se tient debout, le long vêtement faisant valoir sa haute stature, le large chapeau à plumes ajoutant à sa dignité naturelle. Dans chaque poing il tient un pistolet d'argent chargé à blanc. Il songe cependant que tout cet appareil va peut-être lui coûter la vie: n'est-ce point un devoir religieux des plus sacrés, dans certaines tribus, de sacrifier tout être extraordinaire pour le dévorer et en assimiler les qualités? Finir dans la marmite d'un sauvage est une mort naturelle pour un explorateur, pense Nicolet en souriant, se fiant en la Providence.

#### Méprise sacrée et festins diplomatiques

Les guides ont traversé la Baie Verte à angle droit, ils se dirigent vers de hautes falaises rouges, sur le sommet desquelles on distingue une citadelle fortifiée, qui semble

importante. Au pied de la falaise, sur une étroite grève sableuse, la population entière du bourg s'est assemblée pour recevoir le Grand Homme Blanc merveilleux et son ambassade de paix. Les vieillards sont au centre, les guerriers les encadrent, les femmes et les enfants sont à l'arrière. Les deux payeurs Winébagos portent à terre le resplendissant Manitouriniou. Sans mot dire, le visage grave, Nicolet s'immobilise, regarde face à face le plus digne des vieillards, puis il étend les bras en croix et fait feu de ses pistolets d'argent.

L'effet est foudroyant: femmes et enfants, voyant un homme porter le tonnerre en ses mains, hurlent et s'enfuient. Les guerriers pensent avoir affaire à un dieu: ils se voilent la face par respect, et se jettent à terre.

Un des compagnons de Nicolet qui sait quelques mots de la langue Winébagos, leur fait comprendre que l'ambassadeur est un homme merveilleux, mais un homme comme eux, et qu'il refuse les honneurs dus à la divinité! Le vieillard principal s'avance alors et, par signes (presqu'aussi éloquents que les mots chez les sauvages) explique la raison de leur méprise: s'ils ont pris le Manitouriniou, non pour un homme mais un dieu, c'est que la tradition des Winébagos place à cet endroit même, à la Falaise-Rouge, la descente sur terre des dieux indiens, les géants Oiseaux-de-Tonnerre que le Grand Dieu Créateur y a jetés du Ciel. Les Oiseaux-de-Tonnerre sont les premières créatures qui aient jamais peuplé le monde et les Winébagos en descendent directement: c'est pourquoi ils vénèrent la Falaise-Rouge comme le lieu de l'origine des hommes. Le fait que l'étrange visiteur blanc les a abordés en cet endroit sacré entre tous, leur semble un très heureux présage.

Les Français et ses sept compagnons Algonquins sont donc reçus avec la plus grande cordialité à la citadelle de la Falaise-Rouge.



Ils s'y reposent, et Nicolet s'efforce d'y apprendre rapidement quelques éléments de la langue Winébagos, afin de pouvoir mener à bien sa double mission de paix et d'exploration.

La nouvelle de sa venue se répand incontinent et atteint la capitale de la nation, sise sur une île du lac Winébagos, à quelque cent kilomètres à l'intérieur des terres. Un député annonce à l'Homme Blanc qu'une grande réception officielle l'y attend, puis un Conseil Général dans lequel sera discutée et décidée la question de guerre ou de paix avec les peuples qui vivent à l'est du Lac Huron.

Nicolet se rend à la capitale Winébagos, suivi de ses nouveaux amis des rivages de la Baie Verte. Celle-ci se resserre soudain, continuée par une large rivière dont les rapides tumultueux de l'estuaire oblige à faire un portage, puis qui coule, régulière et profonde, jusqu'au beau lac Winébagos, long de douze lieues sur trois de large. Sur ses rives doucement ondulées, couvertes de bouquets d'arbres et de grasses prairies une population sédentaire vit de culture autant que de pêche et de chasse. L'aspect du bourg est tout autre que celui d'un bourg huron ou algonquin: les huttes sont couvertes de cuir et de nattes de paille de riz au lieu d'être construites de branches en berceau recouvertes de plaques d'écorce; il y a davantage d'espace défriché à l'entour des habitations; d'ailleurs la forêt y est moins épaisse, la campagne plus herbue et fleurie. La nouvelle de la venue du Manitouriniou et de son ambassade a attiré à la capitale les principaux guerriers de la nation: il s'y fait une assemblée de quatre à cinq mille hommes.

Tout d'abord ils traitent leurs hôtes de festins et de fêtes, chaque Capitaine rivalisant avec les autres pour offrir une réception plus copieuse en gibier, plus magnifique en rejoissances. Quelques jours de répit nécessaires

à la chasse (et à la digestion); séparent les agapes. Les dates en sont fixées à l'avance ainsi que leur préséance. Lorsqu'un festin est prêt, un coureur va prévenir les invités de porte en porte. Chacun se hâte lentement et dignement, vers la cabane où se fait le banquet, apportant son écuelle et sa cuiller d'écorce. On entre, on s'assied en rond sur les nattes et l'on attend en silence que tous les invités soient arrivés. Alors les portes sont fermées. L'hôte, debout près des chaudrons fumants remplis de victuailles, annonce, d'une voix haute, que le festin est donné en l'honneur du Grand Homme Blanc, venu de l'autre bout du monde pour leur rendre visite; il loue longuement ses titres et ses qualités; puis il nomme les mets contenus dans les marmites de terre, en décrit l'origine et la recette.

Les invités poussent en chœur, par trois fois, un long soupir d'admiration se terminant en une clameur: «âah!» L'hôte reçoit les écuelles des mains de son fils aîné, les remplit lui-même, choisissant les morceaux selon l'honneur qu'il veut rendre à l'invité servi. Il ne mange rien, non plus qu'aucun membre de sa famille, mais reste debout, au centre, à régler le repas et les divertissements. Ces derniers sont considérés par les sauvages comme aussi importants que la nourriture, en un festin d'honneur. Nicolet remarque que les danses, les mimiques de chasse ou de combats, les chants héroïques ne sont pas essentiellement différents de ceux des tribus qu'il connaît déjà. Il est d'ailleurs distrait par une affreuse inquiétude: lui faudra-t-il manger de la chair humaine? Il sait qu'on ne peut faire plus grand honneur à un distingué visiteur que de tuer et rôtir pour lui un prisonnier de guerre... Il sait aussi que refuser un tel mets est une insulte mortelle qui déclanche inévitablement la guerre.

Très maître de lui, il avale d'abord une écuelle de «sagamité», épaisse crème de maïs dans laquelle les femmes Winébagos, qui sont

excellentes cuisinières aussi bien que jardinières, ajoutent des haricots, des morceaux de topinabours et de courges. Les Algonquins n'ont jamais goûté à si riche mélange. Nicolet pense que si le «sagamité» était salé, ce potage serait digne d'être servi à la table du Roi. Mais les Indiens mangent sans sel. Lui, comme tous les Français, n'a jamais pu s'y habituer complètement.

Le second service consiste en poissons rôtis, accompagnés de riz sauvage bouilli. L'hôte explique aux étrangers que la recette de ce plat a été donnée aux Winébagos par leurs voisins amis les Folles-Avoines; il ajoute, avec diplomatie, que ces voisins appartiennent à la grande famille des nobles invités Algonquins. Nicolet en augure favorablement pour le traité de paix.

Le moment affreux approche: le gibier, rôti dehors sur des charbons, est apporté dans la salle du festin. Une sueur d'angoisse glace le Français, il scrute les viandes d'un regard aigu . . . : cerf, élan, dindons et castors. Il sent la vie renâître en lui! Mais l'hôte annonce que, l'occasion étant unique, leur invité d'honneur étant un Manitouriniou, il a cru bon d'ajouter au menu un plat rare et recherché . . . Nicolet ferme les yeux et fait un héroïque acte d'abnégation. Quand il les ouvre, un gros chien rôti doré, au centre de la salle, provoque un renouveau de triples soupirs d'admiration . . . Jamais l'explorateur n'a trouvé meilleur goût à joue rôtie de chien! Jamais hôtesse ne lui a semblée aussi délicate et charmante, que la vieille Winébagos, à face plate et jaune, aux petits yeux bridés, qui, le festin achevé, lui tend une poignée de bois pourri, bien broyé, en l'invitant à s'en servir. C'est, chez les sauvages, la serviette d'honneur, réservée aux hôtes trop délicats pour essuyer leurs doigts gras en se les passant dans leurs cheveux ou dans le poil des chiens.

Cependant, Nicolet est récompensé de

son courage. Au Grand Conseil, sa prestance, la robe orientale revêtue pour la cérémonie, ses yeux bleus, sa belle voix sonore et grave, son éloquence fleurie à l'indienne, logique à la française, arrachent aux Winébagos un traité de paix avec les Français, comprenant tous les alliés indiens des Français.

L'explorateur peut maintenant vaquer à la plus importante de ses missions. Il questionne les «Gens de Mer» sur ces hommes tondu, vêtus de tissus et non de peaux, dont on lui a parlé. Les Winébagos les connaissent bien: ce sont leurs cousins. Leurs langues sont apparentées. Il se nomment Sioux. Ils vivent dans d'immenses plaines au delà d'un fleuve majestueux, si long qu'il mène à l'autre bout du monde, où se trouvent des hommes qui ressemblent, dit-on, au Manitouriniou: peut-être est-ce la France? L'homme blanc veut-il savoir le chemin de ce fleuve, nommé le «Père des Eaux»?

Les Winébagos conduisent Nicolet à travers le lac compliqué de la rivière qui, sortie de leur lac, serpente et se perd dans les marais couverts de riz sauvage. Bientôt ils s'arrêtent, craintifs: leur Manitou leur défend d'aller plus loin; mais si le puissant Manitou du Français lui permet de continuer, à trois jours de voyage en canoë il trouvera les eaux du Fleuve sans limite.

Nicolet presse ses sept compagnons algonquins de poursuivre avec lui. Ils refusent obstinément: la saison avance, l'hiver va les trouver sur des chasses qui ne sont pas celles de leur tribu; ils veulent rentrer chez eux immédiatement. Force est à l'explorateur de revenir au lac Winébagos sans percer le mystère des «trois jours qui le mèneraient aux eaux du Fleuve sans limite».

Il en est peut-être mieux ainsi, pense Nicolet plein de sagesse et d'optimisme, j'ai trouvé la porte de l'Ouest, ce beau pays des

Winébagos et des Folles-Avoines, si je vais plus loin, seul, je risque de n'en pas revenir et tout sera perdu. Allons conter cette découverte à Monsieur le Gouverneur puis nous irons ensemble, jusqu'à ce «Père des Eaux» qui mène sans doute en Chine!

Ses compagnons font hâte et atteignent la Huronnie aux premières glaces. Nicolet doit patienter jusqu'au dégel pour aller rendre compte à Champlain du succès de sa mission.

Hélas! C'est un grand malade qu'il retrouve. Dès le premier regard sur la face amaigrie, douloureuse, il sait que le Découvreur ne l'accompagnera pas jusqu'au «Père des Eaux» dont les Winébagos lui ont parlé. En un pieux demi-mensonge il exagère les traits mongols de «Gens de Mer», affirme ce qui n'est que probabilité, et Champlain meurt, le jour de la naissance du Christ, le 25 décembre 1635, bercé par la douce illusion que, par le truchement de son disciple, il a enfin réalisé son rêve, trouvé pour les Chrétiens le passage de l'Orient par l'Occident. Gesta Dei per Francos! Le Ouisconsin a donné au grand homme sa dernière grande joie!

Le mystère demeure non percé.

Avec son maître vénéré, il semble que Nicolet perde sa propre âme: poursuivre seul la découverte lui paraît sacrilège. Quelque chose s'est éteint en lui: le reflet de l'esprit, le génie de Champlain qui l'animait de son propre feu. Il demande un poste fixe à la colonie, épouse la petite fille d'Hébert, s'établit à la ville naissante de Trois-Rivières, principal poste d'échange avec les Indiens de l'Ouest, dont il est nommé interprète officiel.

Là, il essaie d'imiter son maître dans l'observance parfaite de tous ses devoirs et devient un agent si compréhensif, si dévoué, si courageux et si pieux, que les Indiens le vénèrent et l'aiment plus que tout autre Fran-

çais, et que les Pères le citent en exemple de perfection chrétienne à leurs propres missionnaires.

Il sert hardiment de parlementaire dans les ambassades les plus risquées, s'y rend seul quand les interprètes pensent qu'on veut les attirer dans une embuscade; et refuse fermement des arquebuses aux vindicatifs Iroquois qui les demandent au Gouverneur en échange d'une rusée offre de paix. On le voit donner sans compter son temps et ses forces pour aider les Jésuites dans leurs travaux apostoliques; se faire le parrain de nombreux convertis; aider à placer de jeunes Hurons dans des familles françaises pour fortifier les liens d'amitié entre sauvages et colons. En un mot, Nicolet applique à la lettre les leçons du grand civilisateur, père de la Colonie et de ses «Enfants Rouges», Samuel de Champlain.

Les Jésuites, cependant, incitent leur ami à reprendre ses explorations. S'il ne veut pas les pousser plus avant, à tout le moins qu'il serve de guide aux missionnaires jusqu'à la nation Winébagos: c'est le devoir d'un bon chrétien. Monseigneur Champlain n'aimerait pas savoir son œuvre abandonnée à mi-chemin. Ce fleuve sans limite, ce «Père des Eaux» qu'on peut atteindre en trois jours de pagayage à partir de la rivière au riz sauvage, les intrigue merveilleusement. S'il s'agissait vraiment du «Passage»? Si les Jésuites pouvaient ajouter à leurs titres de gloire celle de découvrir la route occidentale des Indes! Leur éminent Patron, Saint-François-Xavier, l'apôtre et le martyr des Indes, les y aiderait! . . .

Les attaques iroquoises fréquemment renouvelées depuis la mort du Fondateur de la Colonie, rendent l'entreprise dangereuse et d'autant plus méritoire; il rêvent le martyr, mais un guide expérimenté et courageux comme Nicolet leur serait inestimable. Que Nicolet y songe sérieusement; ses deux pre-

miers nés, deux fils, lui ont été repris par Dieu dès le berceau: ne serait-ce point là un signe de la Providence qu'il n'accomplit pas tout son devoir de Chrétien? Le Seigneur exige beaucoup de ceux qu'il aime . . .

Nicolet est ébranlé en son âme profondément religieuse, touché en son cœur de père: sa dernière née, sa fragile petite Marguerite, lui sera-t-elle enlevée à son tour s'il n'ouvre pas à la parole de l'Évangile, le pays qu'il a découvert? . . . Il promet.

Que Dieu l'ait voulu ou non, cet engagement semble lui suffire: Nicolet meurt au début de l'hiver suivant, en 1642, chaviré et noyé dans le Saint-Laurent glacial, alors qu'il se hâtait pour aller faire rendre justice à un Indien. Sa plus belle oraison funèbre sont les plaintes de ses amis Hurons, Algonquins, Ottawas et Sorciers qui cherchent son corps le long du Grand Fleuve démonté, en l'appelant du mystérieux nom qu'ils lui ont donné: «Achirra! Achirra! Te reverrons-nous jamais?»

Hurons, Ottawas, Sorciers, Gardiens-du-Feu, Folles-Avoines, ni antiques Winébagos ne reverront le grand Français, si beau dans sa robe orientale, qui, le premier, a touché aux rives fleuries du Ouisconsin. Les Jésuites ont perdu en lui le seul guide avec lequel ils auraient pu se risquer à l'Ouest, malgré les Iroquois. Ils ne renoncent pas à leur projet cependant. Ils envoient en France un rapport détaillé sur les nouvelles découvertes, faites, au delà des Grands Lacs, par Jean Nicolet.

La Cour et la Ville lisent avidement ces «Relations des Pères Jésuites». Dévots de Paris et de la Province s'entretiennent du lointain pays des mystérieux «Gens de Mer», au fond de la Baie Verte, au delà de la Seconde Mer Douce, et souhaitent que l'évangélisation y suive de près la découverte.

Sous ses forêts épaisses et ses prairies fleuries, le Ouisconsin, charmé du premier hommage que lui a rendu l'Homme Blanc, attend curieusement son retour.



## THE FUR TRADE IN WISCONSIN

by Larry Gara

The recorded history of Wisconsin begins with the arrival in 1634 of Jean Nicolet, the first European known to have visited the region. For more than a century after, Wisconsin was a frontier province of New France which had its political center in Canada. The land of Wisconsin became a pawn in the lengthy power struggle for world leadership between France and England, a struggle which had culminated by 1763 in final British victory.

British title to Wisconsin lasted only until the end of the American Revolutionary War, but British occupancy continued until 1796. However, it was not until the end of America's second war with Great Britain that the destiny of the region was fixed as a part of the total development of the United States, rather than a province of Europe. Until the final settlement of the Treaty of Ghent in 1814, the trade in furs and peltry supplied the main thread of Wisconsin history.

When the French arrived they found northern Wisconsin to be a land of numerous lakes and streams and great forests of pine with some mixed hardwoods. The southern portion was partly prairie in the east and a country of deeply eroded gullies and high ridges in the western or driftless area, untouched by the great glacier which appeared about 25,000 years ago. Parts of the Wis-

consin glacier advanced and receded across much of the present state for more than 15,000 years. The last glacier to cover most of Wisconsin carried soil from distant places, destroyed vegetation, crushed native rocks into soil, transformed the high ridges of old, weathered mountains into hilly slopes, and left lakes, ponds, and swamplands in its wake. The hills provided good drainage and the mixture of soils was to prove excellent for crops, but the French in Wisconsin did nothing to exploit the agricultural resources of the region.

In the colonial period the land and its geographic position lent peculiar significance to Wisconsin. It was the lakes and rivers bordering and crisscrossing Wisconsin that made it a key highway for Indians, fur traders, missionaries, and settlers. Fronting on Lakes Superior and Michigan on the north and east and bounded by the Mississippi River on the west, Wisconsin with its navigable rivers provided a natural waterway for travel to the west and the south. The Fox and Wisconsin River path with a short, easy portage became a main-traveled route from Canada through the Great Lakes to the Mississippi. For the French, and the Indians before them, this system of water highways proved to be a valuable asset. A major link in the system gave the state its name. The French called it the Ouisconsin, and the British the Wisconsin.

Wisconsin's first human inhabitants used other natural resources besides the lakes and rivers. At least five distinct Indian peoples lived in Wisconsin before the Europeans arrived. In primitive fashion the Indians farmed its rich, productive soil, fished in the numerous lakes and rivers, mined its copper and lead, and hunted the birds and animals which frequented its woods and streams. Although these people had widely different ways of life, all of them found adequate resources for their needs in the region which they made their home. Some of them found time to dot the area with the symbolic effigy mounds which later puzzled students of Indian life.

Representatives of three major Indian language groups lived in Wisconsin when it was a European colonial province. The great majority were Algonquian, who included the Chippewa, Ottawa, Potawatomi, Mascoutin, Kickapoo, Sauk, Fox and Menominee. The Sioux in northwestern Wisconsin were gradually being driven westward by the Chippewa; their kinsmen, the Winnebago, were found first in northeastern Wisconsin but were pushed southwestward. During the course of the French régime the Iroquoian Hurons (as well as the Ottawa) also moved in from the East.

With the arrival of the Europeans, Indian life underwent sudden and thorough changes. Previously trade had played a subordinate role in tribal relations; it soon became a primary interest. The French wanted furs and the Indians came to depend upon the products they traded for them. Wisconsin Indians set aside their chipped stone implements for iron axes and knives brought in by the French traders. European-manufactured metal kettles replaced bulky earthenware or wooden cooking pots. The Indians acquired a taste for French wines and brandies as well as a preference for European cloth and imported,

brightly-colored blankets. And they quickly saw the advantages of muskets for hunting and war. In time the Indians lost many of the skills inherent in their traditional past. Eventually many of them became completely dependent on the Europeans. The European's diseases, too, affected Indian life. Smallpox was especially serious; at times entire villages fell victim to sudden epidemics of the fatal disease.

Contact with the white men also set the Indians against one another in numerous trade wars, for there was no unity in the Indian world. The vast region of Wisconsin became a place of refuge during the extensive wars and migrations of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The eastern Iroquois succeeded in organizing a temporary wartime confederacy of their Five Nations, and in the early seventeenth century they undertook a series of military campaigns in an attempt to break the fur trade monopoly of the Hurons. As a result the Hurons moved into Wisconsin and caused the Indians already there to shift about. The Winnebago, who fought the Hurons, the Iroquois, the Illinois, and the Chippewa, were finally driven southward. The Ottawa also fought the Iroquois and moved into Wisconsin from the northeast. Neither the Ottawa nor the Hurons remained in Wisconsin more than a dozen years. The Potawatomi of eastern Wisconsin moved south and then migrated into Ohio, as did the Kickapoo. The Mascoutin of the upper Fox River valley were partly absorbed by the Fox; others moved south into Illinois. The Sauk and the Fox, who consistently fought the French, eventually migrated to Iowa. Only the Menominee near the Menominee River and in the Fox River valley did not move about.

In the frequent clashes between English and French, the Iroquois usually sided with the British with whom they traded, while their enemies and blood relatives, the Hurons,

sided and traded with the French. However, Indian alliances shifted and various tribes would sometimes ally with the French and at other times with the British. No Indian leader succeeded in uniting all the Indians against the Europeans. The Indian world lacked both the concept of unity and the necessary governmental machinery for such an effort.

For more than fifty years the Fox Indians carried on desperate warfare with the French but they could not rely upon their Indian allies. In the early eighteenth century Kiala, a Fox chief from Wisconsin, attempted to build up an anti-French coalition including tribes as remote as the Abenaki in the East and the Sioux of the West. The coalition collapsed when the Sioux defected. In the summer of 1733 the Fox accepted defeat and surrendered at La Baye (Green Bay). The French sold Chief Kiala into West Indian slavery and chased the remnant of the Fox into Iowa.

The Europeans made good use of inter-tribal rivalry for their own purposes. The Indians, after all, played a vital role in the fur trade, and in all their dealings in the New World the French officials were always conscious of that trade. It made Wisconsin one of their valuable holdings and attracted the jealous attention of the British to the north and the east. Woods surrounded Wisconsin's rivers and lakes, and the forests swarmed with fur-bearing animals. Deer, elk, marten, lynx, bear, and above all, beaver lived in the region. The French failed to find new supplies of precious metals as the Spanish had located in their colonies, but they came upon an abundance of furs at the very time when beaver hats were all the rage in Europe, and high officials of church and state wore magnificent fur coats. Paris was the center of the European trade, but merchants shipped furs and fur products to places as far away as

Russia. The international fur trade played an important part in commerce and contributed to French national development in an era when each European ruler hoped to make his nation supreme by exporting more goods than it imported.

At first the fur trade was a simple affair. A *bourgeois* or owner of a canoe and trading outfit purchased the necessary goods and supplies and hired six or seven *voyageurs* who navigated and paddled the bulky canoe, carried the supplies when it was necessary to travel overland to reach another water route, repaired the canoe, and provided the manual labor needed on the journey. Some *voyageurs* contracted for a single short trip while others agreed to work in the woods for a year or longer. The entire trade rested on a system of credit which the Montreal merchants used to purchase European goods and the *bourgeois* used to hire his *voyageurs*. Some traders gave goods in advance to the Indians in order to win their friendship and their business.

It was the fur trade that first attracted the French to Wisconsin. In 1634 Jean Nicolet left Lake Huron for parts unknown, his mission to make peace among the Indians and to seal an alliance with them. Robed in a colorful garment of China damask and carrying a pistol in each hand Nicolet landed in the Green Bay area. He succeeded in making a pact with the Winnebago and other nearby Indians, and he opened new areas for the French fur trade. Two decades later Medart Chouart, Sieur de Grosseilliers and a French companion led a trading expedition into the Green Bay area. In 1659, without the permission of French officials, he returned with his brother-in-law, Pierre Esprit Radisson. On this trip Radisson and Grosseilliers constructed a building for the fur trade supplies on the shores of Chequamegon Bay, visited and talked with the Ottawa at the village in

Lac Court Oreilles (in present-day Sawyer County), and held a great council with the Indians at Superior. After three years in the Wisconsin forests, the two traders returned to Canada with sixty canoes loaded with furs. The French governor confiscated the furs because the traders were not licensed, but their voyage helped establish the Ottawa as the middlemen for the Wisconsin fur trade. Other French traders visited the Ottawa in the Lake Superior area periodically until 1667 when a temporary Iroquois peace treaty made it possible to shift the center of the Wisconsin trade to Green Bay.

At Green Bay the Pötawatomi replaced the Ottawa as the middlemen of the French trade. The trading arrangement was worked out by Nicolas Perrot who lived in the west as a trader and explorer from 1667 to 1698. Perrot, a highly skilled Indian trader, had considerable influence with the Indians around Fox River and extended the trade into that part of Wisconsin. His important work paved the way for French control of the Northwest. When new Iroquois wars broke out in 1680 Perrot succeeded in keeping some of the Wisconsin tribes loyal to the French and even led a group of Winnebago, Sauk, Fox and Menominee eastward to fight them.

Nicolas Perrot was but one of many leaders of New France who became involved in the Wisconsin fur trade. Very few farmers or *habitants* settled in the region during the French régime as they did in the Illinois country to the south. A harsh climate, the long-drawn-out Fox wars of the early eighteenth century and the presence of numerous varieties of fur-bearing animals in Wisconsin all contributed to an emphasis on trade rather than settlement. The adventuresome Daniel Greysolon, Sieur Duluth, traveled through northern Wisconsin and other parts of the West from 1678 to 1689, negotiating

Indian treaties and opening new areas to the traders. Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle, planned to establish a great French colonial empire in the New World, with centers in the northern and southern ends of the Mississippi River, and with the fur trade as an economic basis. He also wanted to expand the trade using improved and larger ships to replace the canoes of the *voyageurs*. His sailing vessel the *Griffon* was the first on the Great Lakes. It left Green Bay with a full cargo of furs in 1679 but never reached its destination. Although La Salle's empire never came into being, his claiming the lower Mississippi Valley for France made possible the founding of New Orleans, which soon became an important fur trading station and export center.

Even the missionaries became involved in the fur trade. The French people in America were devout Catholics, and Jesuit and Recollet missionaries served them and entered the Wisconsin forests along with the traders. After the decline of Spanish power, France inherited the role of Europe's most powerful Catholic nation, and its government, for reasons both spiritual and material, encouraged these laborers for God in the New World. They worked alongside the fur traders and accompanied them on trips of exploration.

Wisconsin's first missionary was Father Rene Ménard, a fifty-six-year-old Jesuit of poor health but great spiritual strength. Father Ménard left Quebec in 1660 to establish missions among the Ottawa Indians, who earlier had been in contact with Christian missionaries in western Ontario. Chosen because of his expert knowledge of the Indians and their language, Ménard accepted his assignment cheerfully, even though he realized it would probably lead to his death. His difficult trip was made worse by abusive Indian guides who stinted on his rations and forced the aging priest to carry heavy loads of supplies over frequent portages. At the small



Ottawa camp he faced an insolent chief who forced him to build his own crude hut for a winter shelter. In the spring Father Ménard and several fur traders pushed on to the main Ottawa village on Lake Superior. There he learned that a group of Hurons along the Black River faced starvation because the hostile Iroquois surrounded them and refused to permit them to hunt. Father Ménard decided to visit the besieged Hurons and baptizé them before they perished. The traders could not dissuade him. «God calls me thither and I must go,» he said, «although it should cost me my life.» He set out with some guides and traders, all but one of whom abandoned him. At one point he stepped out of the canoe to lighten its load at a place of rough rapids. The canoeman tried in vain to find the courageous priest, but Father Ménard was never seen again.

Other pioneering priests followed through on Father Ménard's sacrificial efforts. Father Claude Allouez, who worked among the Indians from 1665 until his death in 1689, was considerably more successful than his predecessor, Father Ménard. After a very difficult trip from Montreal, Father Allouez reached the Ottawa Indian villages at La Pointe du St. Esprit, on the western tip of Lake Superior, and re-established the missionary activities which Father Ménard had begun. Father Allouez brought Christian teaching to a number of western Indians, including the Huron and Sioux who lived west of Lake Superior. In 1669 Allouez traveled to the Potawatomi village on Green Bay and established new missions in the Fox River area, including St. Francis Xavier, at the site of present-day De Pere, which became the focal point for Jesuit activity in the area.

After 1675 Father Allouez left the Wisconsin area, first to continue the work begun by Father Jacques Marquette with the Illinois Indians to the south, and later to minister to

the Miami of southern Michigan. His contacts with numerous Indian peoples enabled Father Allouez to make valuable observations on their manner of living. He baptized and instructed thousands during his years in Wisconsin and the West. Another Jesuit reported:

«We would need here almost as much time for following Father Claude Allouez in an account of his apostolic journeys, as he took in making them; for he has not visited a single Nation without performing deeds for the glory of God, that would be very long to relate»

The Jesuit fathers continued to work along with the fur traders but their interests sometimes conflicted. The Jesuits favored a policy of restricting the influence of the traders as much as possible and keeping a close eye on their activities. In 1698 the French monarch, Louis XIV, responded to Jesuit pressure and forbade the traders to enter Indian country. The Indians were to carry their furs to certain French posts instead. By the time of Louis XIV's death in 1715 the policy had clearly failed, and a system of licensing fur traders was substituted for it.

Because of widespread Jesuit influence at the French court and their influence on New World governmental policy, the Jesuits played another role in early Wisconsin history. The priests were French as well as Catholic, and they participated in most official events in French North America. Father Allouez took part in the ceremony at Sault St. Marie in June, 1671, when France officially annexed all of North America in the presence of representatives of more than a dozen Indian tribes. Father Jacques Marquette, a skilled map maker and scholar of Indian tongues, accompanied the Louis Jolliet expedition of 1673, which was probably the first to travel much of the length of the Mississippi River. The presence of priests

with traders, French military forces, and exploratory parties lent support to the claim that France represented Christian truth as well as political power. Missionary activity gradually declined in the face of continued failure to convert the Indians. The most lasting contributions of the Jesuit fathers were not what they had hoped for. Rather than great numbers of Christian converts, the priests left detailed and accurate descriptions of the land, sympathetic accounts of the Indian inhabitants, and scholarly studies of the various Indian languages.

Just as they had failed to Christianize the Indians, the priests had little success in their efforts to promote the idea of a centrally-controlled fur trade. The fur trade of Wisconsin and the West, by its very nature, defied regulation by the authorities of New France. The traders consistently ignored French laws and regulations which conflicted with their interests. In 1717, at the end of the first Fox war, Louis de la Porte de Louvigny, the French military commander, forbade traders to visit the Fox villages but sadly admitted that «prohibitions of this sort have not been very well enforced». The great majority of fur traders were *coureurs de bois*, illegal, unlicensed traders as distinct from those who accepted a modicum of control over their trading pursuits. One French official estimated that of ten thousand inhabitants in New France, eight hundred men had gone into the woods as illegal traders. These individualists of the woods could make bargains on their own terms. They often lived with Indian women. They sold their furs and pelts wherever they could get the most for them, sometimes at stipulated trading posts, sometimes in Louisiana to the south, and not infrequently to the British merchants in the East who often paid better prices than the French.

Meanwhile, both French and British co-

lonials maneuvered for position in their competition for the Indian trade. Charles de Langlade, the son of a French fur trader and his Ottawa Indian wife, played a significant role in the rivalry. The Langlades moved to Green Bay from Mackinac just before Charles took up arms in the French cause. He was devoutly loyal and especially interested in keeping Wisconsin's fur trade in French hands. In 1724 British-American merchants had established a trading post at Oswego, New York. Other traders, backed by merchants from Pennsylvania and Virginia, entered the Ohio valley and the region south of the Great Lakes. In 1748 the British-Americans built a post named Pickawillany (Piqua, Ohio) on the Big Miami River. Despite the eight hundred miles to Philadelphia, large numbers of Indian traders transported goods to the post and for four years the Pickawillany merchants carried on a profitable business. George Croghan, a skilled trader and Indian scout, by shrewd negotiating won the friendship of a number of the Miami tribes whom he alienated from the French.

When officials of New France became alarmed over developments in the Ohio valley they chose Wisconsin's Charles de Langlade to lead an Indian force against the Pickawillany post. His Indian followers from the Mackinac area attacked the fort, captured the British there, and killed fourteen of the Miami and Shawnee Indians who had helped defend it. In a cannibalistic rite the victorious Indians ate Old Briton, the chief of the pro-British Miamis. Langlade's victory temporarily thwarted the British threat to the western fur trade and put the Northwest once again under French control. The fight at Pickawillany was the first incident in the French and Indian War, the last of four Anglo-French conflicts which were fought in part in America. Langlade served under the French flag throughout the conflict and helped bring Wisconsin Indians into the field

of battle. He took some Indians eastward to help defend Fort Duquesne, and it was Langlade who advised attacking the British General Edward Braddock before he reached the fort. With more Wisconsin Indians he later fought under Marquis de Montcalm on the Plains of Abraham in defense of Quebec, and also at the subsequent battle of Ste. Foy.

Although the French and Indian War began in America, it soon merged into the Seven Years' War which broke out in Europe in 1756. England and her ally Prussia fought against France, Russia, and Austria. A series of defeats from Canada to India brought a sudden end to the French colonial empire. In 1763, with the signing of the Treaty of Paris, France ceded all of Canada and her lands east of the Mississippi River to the British. At the same time Spain secured title to the vast Louisiana Territory stretching west from the Mississippi to the Rockies.

To the British, as to the French, Wisconsin continued to have significance mainly because of the fur trade. Except for the Indians and the traders, it was still a largely unsettled wilderness. The British stationed no governmental officials in Wisconsin; there was no civil government. During the French and Indian War they established one military post at Green Bay and for nearly two years after October, 1761, Lieutenant James Gorrell commanded the small garrison. He rebuilt the fort and named it Fort Edward Augustus. It was primarily a trading center, and Gorrell's major task was to quiet the Indians who longed for a return of French rule and who were quick to believe rumors of such a development.

In 1763 what began as an Indian alliance to oust the British from Detroit developed into more serious Indian troubles under the leadership of the Ottawa chief, Pontiac. In Wisconsin the only direct re-

sult of the general Indian uprising was the murder of two traders at English Prairie (Muscodia). The Sauk, Fox, Winnebago and Menominee of Wisconsin did not join Pontiac, but Gorrell and his men left Green Bay in June, 1763, to rescue some Indian captives. After that date no British military forces were stationed in Wisconsin.

Shortly afterwards, the British government drew a line along the crest of the Allegheny Mountains and forbade settlers to enter territory west of the line. The Proclamation Line was a temporary expedient to regulate Indian affairs and prevent outbursts like the one led by Pontiac. For a while at least the western region was to be Indian country traversed only by traders or soldiers sent out to regulate the trade. Meanwhile British officials made plans and negotiated some Indian treaties for the orderly and peaceful settlement of the West. But Parliament reversed this policy with the Quebec Act of 1774, which placed the whole of the Northwest between the Ohio and the Mississippi in the colony of Quebec, and forbade further settlement by the British-Americans. The outbreak of war between the American colonies and England prevented the Quebec Act from going into effect.

Under the British, changes took place in the direction and control of the fur trade. Montreal continued to be the American center of the trade, but the furs now went to London instead of Paris. English investors replaced the French capitalists, and the traders used more English manufactured goods than they had previously. French and Spanish traders, operating from St. Louis, competed with the British for the furs in the Illinois country, along the Wabash River, and even in Wisconsin. A number of rival British traders and trading firms combined to form larger companies and eventually a few giant concerns carried on the bulk of the trade, dividing the

fur-bearing country among themselves. Traders also penetrated the far Northwest to the Pacific after keen competition and the partial depletion of the beaver supply in Wisconsin and the neighboring region made such expansion necessary. The long route west required several years and considerably more investment capital for larger consignments of goods and bigger boats to transport them. Powerful merchants also demanded more strict control over their workers and traders when involved in the distant trade. All of these factors further encouraged the growth of large trading companies.

In the forests of Wisconsin, however, there was very little change with the coming of the British regime. Most of the *voyageurs* were still the same French-Canadians who had been hard at work before the arrival of the British. English traders learned what they knew from the French and continued to hire them for the trade in the woods. The Indians preferred dealing with the French, whom they knew and with whom they were often related. As before, the trader's life was a free one. Regulation of the trade proved as difficult under the British as it had under the French. The independent life of the trader attracted some fugitives and criminals, and the disreputable element frequently contributed to Indian troubles.

Even the early years of the American Revolution had little noticeable effect on the Wisconsin fur trade. During the first phase of the war the British controlled the entire Northwest and the traders went about their business without interruption. But things changed rapidly after George Rogers Clark, acting under authorization from Virginia, carried the war westward with his invasion of the Illinois country in 1778. From then until the close of the conflict most fur trading in Wisconsin and the land south of the Great Lakes ceased, although traders

continued large-scale activity in the area to the north and west of Lake Superior.

Both Indians and traders participated in the Revolutionary War. The Wisconsin Indians and French-Canadian *voyageurs* tended to sympathize more with the Americans than with the British. Yet the latter gained half-hearted support from both groups at various times by promising trade and distributing much needed goods and supplies. Traders often sold their manufactured items to the British military officers for high prices, and the British gave the goods to the Indians in return for military service. The Indian market for such goods was endless, and after every raid on a western settlement the red men demanded more. By the use of such «trinket diplomacy» the upper part of the Northwest, including Wisconsin, remained nominally British until the end of the war.

After the Revolution there was little immediate change in Wisconsin. The handful of French settlers lived much as they had before. The fur trade continued to dominate economic life. Technically the region was American, but actually the British continued to control the fur trade from the various posts they had established earlier. The Treaty of Paris of 1763 provided that these posts should be turned over to the Americans «with all convenient speed», but the British found numerous excuses to delay the transfer. Another Anglo-American agreement, Jay's Treaty of 1794, made more definite provision for the removal of British forces from the Northwest. By 1796 all the northwestern posts were in American hands. The British, however, continued to monopolize the fur trade from the Canadian side of the border. Jay's Treaty gave British traders the same privileges as Americans and with such an advantage they dominated the American



trade until after the War of 1812.

America's second war with Great Britain was also a phase of a greater European conflict. The British considered the French, whom they again began fighting in 1793, to be their chief enemy. Among the grievances which helped prepare the new American nation for war was the alleged British stirring up of the Indians against the Americans in the West. Before the United States declared war on Great Britain, William Henry Harrison, governor of Indiana Territory, had fought the Indians at the indecisive battle of Tippecanoe. Tecumseh, a Shawnee chief, and his brother, a religious leader called the Prophet, endeavored to unite all of the Indians against the oncoming white men. This time some Wisconsin Indians, conscious of their eventual fate should westward expansion continue, took active part in the Indian wars. Winnebago from Wisconsin fought at the battle of Tippecanoe and also at the battle of the Thames in 1813, where the Americans defeated the combined Indian forces and killed Tecumseh. Robert Dickson, a red-haired Scotsman and Indian trader, organized some of the Wisconsin Indians and fur traders for the British cause.

During the early part of the War of 1812, the British took the posts at Detroit, Mackinac, and Fort Dearborn. The Northwest was in British hands during most of the war, though Americans occupied Prairie du Chien briefly. William Clark, a Superintendent for Indian Affairs stationed at St. Louis, traveled up the Mississippi with a small force in June, 1814. He built a garrison called Fort Shelby at Prairie du Chien, and for the first time an American flag flew over a building in Wisconsin. It was not there long, however, for a month later the British took the fort.

The Treaty of Ghent which ended the

War of 1812 settled none of the problems over which the war had been fought, but it did restore boundaries to their prewar status. It was the last European treaty to deal directly with Wisconsin as a part of the American West, and its result was to break the British stranglehold on the fur trade and to pave the way for eventual American occupancy.

The Americans were interested in Wisconsin for more than the trade in furs. American settlers constantly sought new land. They founded villages, farmed the land, and developed small industries. A westward movement of farmer settlers headed slowly but steadily across the Ohio Valley and towards Wisconsin. The Americans saw in Wisconsin a place to live and colonize rather than just a region in which to obtain furs or trade with the Indians.

The conflict between those who favored setting aside the Northwest as an Indian buffer state supported by the fur trade, and those who wished to see the area opened to white settlement had been building up for many years. Great Britain had promoted the buffer region idea with the Proclamation Line of 1763 and the short-lived Quebec Act of 1774. At the close of the American Revolution British diplomats in Paris had tried to persuade the Americans to set up such an Indian territory, and British fur traders had promoted the plan when it came up for discussion during the negotiations preceding Jay's Treaty. Finally, at Ghent, the British demanded acceptance of a buffer region as a condition to ending the War of 1812. When the Americans refused, the British then proposed a boundary based on military possession. This, too, would have placed Wisconsin in the British Empire and probably would have relegated it to the status of an Indian territory. But eventually the British diplomats agreed to accept the prewar boundaries and on this basis the Northwest was clearly part of the

United States.

Even during the British regime there were some in both England and America who did not favor setting aside the entire region for the Indians and the traders. In America, Robert Rogers, who gained fame as the leader of Rogers' Rangers during the French and Indian War, made extensive plans for establishing a colony in the interior of the Mississippi Valley. Rogers' plan included all of Wisconsin. A number of influential colonial land speculators, including Benjamin Franklin and the Philadelphia firm of Baynton, Wharton and Morgan, also envisioned settling the Northwest with British-Americans. While he was Prime Minister, William Petty-Fitzmaurice, Lord Shelburne, favored setting up a number of interior colonies after the Indians had agreed and had gradually moved elsewhere. To Shelburne this was a natural follow-up to the temporary policy of restriction adopted in 1763. He also suggested deporting the French settlers from the Illinois country just as the Acadians had been deported earlier from Nova Scotia. But Shelburne lost power and Parliament turned to a different program with the ill-fated Quebec Act of 1774.

The writings of Jonathan Carver also popularized the idea of Wisconsin as a place for settlement. Carver was a New England soldier, explorer, map maker and draftsman who traveled through much of Wisconsin searching for a water route to the western sea. Major Robert Rogers, British commander at Mackinac, had planned the expedition of which Carver was only a subordinate member. They found no northwest passage, but Carver made careful and detailed notes of what he saw along the way. He later moved to England where in 1778 he published his *Travels through the Interior Parts of North-America, in the Years 1766, 1767, and 1768*. This first description of Wisconsin penned by an English writer quickly became a best-seller, run-

ning into numerous editions in England as well as on the Continent. Many Europeans got their impressions of North America from Carver's book. He pilfered some of his material from earlier French writers, but much of it was based on his own personal observations. Stories concerning an Indian deed which granted Carver ten thousand acres of land now in Minnesota and Wisconsin circulated after his death led to a century of futile court litigation by his heirs.

Carver exaggerated his role in planning and carrying on the expedition, but he furnished a valuable, detailed account of Wisconsin, its Indian inhabitants, and its natural resources. He especially emphasized its fertile soil and called attention to its advantages for agricultural pursuits. Carver's travel account described Wisconsin as an ideal location for English settlers. It helped promote the idea that the land in the Northwest had far more potential than those interested only in the fur trade had dreamed. Jonathan Carver prophesied that in the American West of some future time «mighty kingdoms will emerge from these wildernesses, and stately palaces and solemn temples, with gilded spires reaching the skies, supplant the Indian huts, whose only decorations are the barbarous trophies of their vanquished enemies.»

Carver published the first edition of his book during the American Revolution when the Northwestern country and the fur trade were still under British control. At the time no one knew that the Americans would get the land and that as a result the fur trade would gradually move out and the settlers move in. In 1816 the United States Congress passed a law excluding aliens from the American fur trade. By that year John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company had nearly monopolized the fur trade of Wisconsin. But Astor and the other fur magnates were seeking richer fields of operation in the Far West. The

partial depletion of Wisconsin's animal population along with competition from government owned and operated trading posts or factories stimulated the westward movement of the fur trade. The traders continued their work in the less thickly settled parts of Wis-

consin but the trade dwindled steadily in importance. In the territorial period which followed the War of 1812 Americans began to find new – and in the long run far more valuable – assets in Wisconsin.

From Larry Gara, *A Short History of Wisconsin* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1962). Reprinted by permission of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

## THE FRENCH RESIDENTS OF WISCONSIN

by Louise Phelps Kellogg

One of the most eminent of Wisconsin historians has given this title to his narrative: *Wisconsin: The Americanization of a French Settlement*.<sup>1</sup> It is the object of the present volume to describe how there came to be a French settlement in Wisconsin, its origins, vicissitudes, changes, and destiny. We have seen that it was the result of the fur trade, and that aside from the officers and garrison that were sent for temporary occupation, all the settlers were present or past traders. The unit of settlement was the military post, and around the forts were clustered all the permanent French dwellers in Wisconsin. The French forts were located at strategic places, to control either the water routes or some important tribe. The chief post of the Northwest was at Mackinac. That place was to the early inhabitants of Wisconsin a metropolis and an entrepôt. A visit to Mackinac was an event of importance. The fort at this place during the first three quarters of the eighteenth century was on the southern side of the straits, at what is now called Old Mackinaw. Its commandant ranked all the other French officers in the Northwest, and its garrison was the strongest on the upper lakes. Its population varied with the season. In summer it was at its height, being the rendezvous of all the traders in the West, and visited by merchants from the colony; in winter the number of inhabitants dwindled, but there were residents the year round, including the

clerks and agents of the principal merchant dealers in provision supplies, unemployed voyageurs, and those retired for age or infirmities. At Mackinac was a permanent missionary, who cared for the spiritual welfare of the entire Northwest, christened and married the western Frenchmen who came thither from places hundreds of miles distant. He also said mass for the outgoing companies of traders, heard their confessions when they returned to this place, and exercised supervision over the small number of savages who had accepted the white men's faith.<sup>2</sup> At Mackinac also was a royal notary, who placed the official seal upon all contracts, from a voyageur's engagement to a contract of marriage. The last French notary was François Louis Cardin, who in the British period held the office also of justice of the peace; but in the French era all judicial functions rested in the commandant, whose decisions the notary merely registered.<sup>3</sup>

The largest settlement in Wisconsin was around Fort La Baye, and occupied both sides of the Fox River from near its mouth up the stream for two or three miles. At the Fox-Wisconsin portage, a few Frenchmen dwelt, employed in transporting canoes and goods from one stream to another.<sup>4</sup> How large the French settlement was on the Prairie du Chien, just above the mouth of the Wisconsin, we do not know. Some think the white settle-



ment was not begun until after the French period, but in all probability there were some permanent dwellers before 1761. The upper Mississippi forts also seem to have had no permanent group of French settlers such as made homes at La Baye. At Chequamegon Bay there was the nucleus of a French village, but this did not survive the evacuation of the post in the last years of the French régime, its dwellers retiring either to the Saùlt or to Mackinac.

If what we have described were the extent of the French settlement in Wisconsin, it could hardly be dignified by the name of settlement, so little knowledge have we of the number or the permanence of the French residents of this region during the period of French sovereignty. But from this small group developed during the succeeding seventy-five years a considerable Canadian-French population, homogeneous in character, and similar in type to the earlier settlers, and clearly an outgrowth of the occupancy of Wisconsin by the French. It was this relic of the French régime that the American immigrants found upon their arrival in Wisconsin, and it is the habits and manners of these settlers that we propose to describe irrespective of the date of their advent in Wisconsin.

The economic basis of the French colony in Wisconsin was the trade with the natives, who were an ever-present factor in the life of the community. Indeed, it is difficult to speak of the French without including some at least of the Indians, since intermarriage was so frequent and affinities so close, that the aborigines played an important part in the life of the settlement. Near Green Bay was a Menominee village with which relations were very intimate, while Prairie du Chien was the resort of several tribes who kept in touch with the village people. Yet there was no real commingling of the two races, each of which maintained its exclusiveness, the

half-breeds gravitating to one or the other race according to education and environment.

In addition to the fur trade there was a beginning of agriculture, especially at the two settlements of Green Bay and Prairie du Chien. Farming was first begun to supply the traders and as a means of individual support; its products never were used for export, except during wars or in distant trading operations. The farms were opened like those of Canada, in long strips back from the river front. As far as was ever ascertained there were no legal titles, but each cultivator occupied as much land as he could use, and after a few seasons custom confirmed him in his occupancy. When in 1820 the United States sent a commissioner to examine these land claims, he found farms from four arpents to a little more than half a mile in breadth.<sup>5</sup> In depth these farms had no limit but the activity of the farmer; in reality they did not extend more than a half-mile back from the river; and it was estimated in 1831 that the area of cultivation in the Green Bay settlement did not exceed two thousand five hundred acres.<sup>6</sup>

Their farming implements were very primitive, being local adaptations of those in use in Canada. An early American pioneer thus describes the method of preparing the land for crops:

«Most of them had teams of native oxen, and a kind of implement claimed to be a plow, with which they broke the soil. This plow went on wheels, one of which was twice the size of the other, the larger one going in the furrow, the smaller one going on the land. The plow beam was fourteen feet in length; the chip, on which the share was fastened, was four feet long, and altogether, when in motion was drawn by six or eight bulls, it was a formidable object, and answered

well the end of its construction. The furrows were nearly two feet in width, but quite shallow. The style of plowing was what is known as 'back furrowing', and only two each way, to a land, forming ridges about eight feet wide, with a deep furrow between, which ensured thorough drainage. The breaking was commonly done in June; then leaving it till the next spring, when as soon as the farmer could get at it, it was thoroughly harrowed, and if for wheat, the seed put in without waiting for warm weather.

«These bull-teams were a curiosity to a raw American. The animals were unblemished — the yoke was a straight stick of hickory, worked off smooth, and bound to the bulls' necks just back of the horns, with a strip of raw hide, to which stick was fastened the pole of the cart, on which rested the plow beam.»

The extreme fertility of the virgin soil made good crops a certainty. The grains raised were wheat, oats, rye, and barley. Indian corn or maize was common and much hay was made. Vegetables were produced in great abundance — potatoes, peas, cabbages, melons, onions, and squashes. The householders were very careful about their gardens, and one of the frequent requests in their letters is for good garden seeds.

The citation above speaks of «native oxen» but that does not mean that they were indigenous. The first cattle may have been brought from Canada, but more probably were obtained from Detroit, where they were imported at the foundation of the post. Horses were a common possession, bred from farm horses imported with the cattle, crossed frequently with Indian ponies. Cows and hogs were also numerous, the latter running

at large.<sup>8</sup>

The houses were of two kinds, all built of logs, but in quite a different fashion from that of the early American settlers. The simpler houses were built of upright posts planted in the ground, and grooved at the sides, then filled in with small timber or poles, and the whole plastered over with clay and whitewashed; the roofs were usually of bark, and sometimes the entire house was covered with bark. The use of whitewash made the villages appear gay and clean. The better sort of dwellings were built of squared logs, either oak or pine, laid horizontally. These were carefully hewn with the ax, the corners neatly dovetailed, and frequently a second story was added with huge beams to support it. Carpenters were sometimes imported from Canada in order to build edifices for the gentry. They frequently made the furniture of the houses, and employed considerable skill, carving the cupboards and chests, and even the woodwork of the interior of the house.<sup>9</sup>

The oldest house now standing in Wisconsin was one built at Green Bay during the latter part of the eighteenth century. This was not built of logs but of sawed timbers, probably prepared by hand with a whip-saw. It was at a later time boarded over. The Green Bay Historical Society has preserved this old house for the benefit of future generations. It has a great chimney of rubble, and originally its small windows were protected by heavy wooden shutters. It is an eloquent survival of the old French days in our commonwealth.<sup>10</sup>

As we have indicated, the settlers were divided into classes, based on the sharp distinctions in the fur trade. The *bourgeois*, or chief trader, became the aristocrat of the settlement, where his former *voyageurs* rendered him the same honor and obedience that he was accorded when at the head of a trading expedition. He lived the life of an ancient patriarch, surrounded by dependents for

whose welfare he held himself responsible. The Indians also, his former customers, hung about his residence, expecting doles of food and clothing. Several of the leading men of the Green Bay settlement impoverished themselves because of the great number of those who depended upon their bounty, and because they had not the heart to refuse aid to the indolent and unfortunate. There was much poverty in the French settlements, but no actual suffering or starvation.

One of the servants employed by every one of the gentry was a hunter. Frequently he was an Indian or a half-breed, and an expert with the gun. His duty was to keep his master's table supplied with the products of the chase — venison and other game, for deer were plentiful in the forests, and wild fowl abounded in the wild-rice stretches on the rivers and marshes. This hunter frequently had a small lodge near the gateway of the garden; his duties sometimes included supplying firewood for the great hearths built into every room of the larger houses. Domestic servants were usually half-breeds or Indians. There was a species of Indian slavery in Canada and in the West. These slaves were called «panis»; because the earlier ones were captured from the Pawnee and kindred tribes in the far West. As a rule they were kindly treated, were members of the household; occasionally one such slave would escape to the woods, but he was usually returned to his master by the tribesmen, they themselves holding captives in bondage.

Food was abundant and varied, and some of the better class of inhabitants were almost epicures. All the early travelers speak of the great variety of game, fish, and vegetables, and the skill with which they were prepared for the table. «It would be impossible,» says one of the first Americans at Green Bay,

«to do justice to the courses of the dinner; suffice it to say that for variety or rarity of dishes, it equalled any of a similar character in more civilized climes. The dishes were largely made up of game. There was venison, bear meat, and porcupine; a dozen varieties of the feathered tribes from the waters, as geese and ducks; and of fishes, an almost endless list, headed by that king of all the fish tribe, the sturgeon.»<sup>11</sup>

Wine was made from wild grapes, and a kind of beer was brewed in the larger settlements. Good wines were also imported from Canada and France, and brought forth to grace every social occasion. There was a great deal of drinking among all classes, but one observer reports that it was considered a disgrace to be drunk. Excessive indulgence, however, was condoned, and proved to be the ruin of some of the more promising young men of the upper class.

The dress of the common people was nondescript, and portions of it, like that of the Indians, were frequently made of deer skin; the rest of the costume was fashioned from stuffs procured from the traders. The ordinary habitant wore a cotton or calico shirt, deerskin *culottes*, fastened by a bright sash, a colored neckerchief, and a cap, either of an animal's skin or of parti-colored cloth. The universal footwear was moccasins made by Indian women. In winter, or on a journey, the useful *capot* was utilized — a kind of cape of heavy material, with a hood to be drawn over the head in storms. The gentry dressed very differently. In the earlier times they were usually in uniform. Later, when settled on the land, they imported fine costumes of silks and velvets, and on festal occasions, and when on visits to Mackinac or Montreal, appeared like gentlemen of fashion. The women, as a rule, were less well supplied, and since many of them were of Indian ori-

gin, they dressed more like the natives, usually cherishing some pieces of finery brought them as presents.

Traveling was almost entirely by water, in the birch-bark canoe or stouter Mackinac boat. When land carriage was desired, it was on horseback, as there were no wagons or carriages, and the common carts were without springs. In winter the French *traîne*, a kind of carriole, was used, drawn by one horse or a tandem team. There were practically no roads, except Indian trails. Contact with the outer world was to be had only in summer; when once frozen in for the winter, the communities were isolated and had to be self-sufficing. Then the social season began. Among the amusements horse racing was very popular, races were usually run on long stretches of ice. Boxing and wrestling were common, especially among the lower classes. Dancing was a universal pastime, and the fiddler was one of the most popular members of the community. Balls were conducted with much dignity and propriety, older persons being present and insisting on deportment and decorum. Politeness and good breeding were the rule, and all rudeness of manners was frowned upon and considered a disgrace. The feasts and festivals of the Catholic church were observed. Christmas was an especially merry season; presents, however, were reserved for the New Year. Lent was also kept with some strictness, especially in the matter of abstinence from meat.

The happiest time in the year was one that combined both work and pleasure; that was the sugar-making season. Almost every family owned or appropriated a sugar bush—a grove of maples near the settlement. When the time came early in spring to begin collecting the sweet sap, the whole community entered upon a prolonged picnic, moved out into cabins built for the purpose, and spent several weeks in the woods. It was a time of

hard work and much gayety. The actual preparation of the stores of maple sugar, which were to last the household a year and which were frequently an object of sale, involved considerable labor, and much care for cleanliness (the Indian methods were so unclean that the better class of French would not use sugar made by the natives). Feasting and merriment helped to lighten the labors of the sugar camp. There was frequent visiting from one camp to another, and much sport over the turning of *crêpes*, as the French called the pancakes made to be eaten with the syrup.<sup>12</sup>

Courtship often took place at these sugar camps. Marriage was early on the part of the women, and the families were large. Here was one of the flaws in the civilization of the western French settlers. In the early days, when there were no women of their own race in the country, Frenchmen were wont to mate with the Indian women, and adopted the Indian habit of easy divorce. Moreover, there were no priests to give religious sanction to the union, which often became one of mere convenience. Most of the gentry took occasion on visits to Mackinac to take along at some time their Indian women and their children, and to have the ceremonies of marriage and christening performed all at the same time. The finer natures among the Frenchmen remained monogamous and true to the mother of their children. As for the Indian women so circumstanced, they were not only models of conduct, but frequently grew into beautiful, dignified matrons, fit consorts for their educated white husbands, excellent housekeepers, able managers of servants, respected and revered by their families and their community. The chief drawback to this condition was the swarm of Indian relatives that claimed kinship and consideration, and made the homes of the white men not far removed from the wigwam.<sup>13</sup>



The lack of religious instruction and an opportunity for education were the most serious drawbacks to residence in the western country. There were no priests nearer than Mackinac, and their duties were too arduous to enable them to travel to the western settlements. As for education, there were only two possible means by which the children could acquire it — by having a private tutor, or by being sent from home. Both methods were employed. Jacques Porlier, one of the most influential of the French settlers of Green Bay, came there when but eighteen years of age to be a tutor to the younger Grignon children, the grandsons of Charles de Langlade. Pierre and Charles, the two oldest Grignon sons, were educated at Montreal. Porlier in his turn sent his son and daughter, children of a half-breed mother, to be educated among their relatives in Canada. Marguerite, the daughter, never returned to her native village, marrying in Canada and making her permanent home there. When, however, she first left her parents and family to live with aunts who were strangers to her, not only was the little girl desperately homesick, and filled her epistles with prayers to be allowed to go home, but her aunts found her a little savage in demeanor, and complained in their letters of the difficulty of taming her.<sup>14</sup>

Men such as Porlier, educated and well-mannered, were of great importance to the Wisconsin French. He insisted upon care in the use of the language by his pupils, children, and dependents, and it was remarked by no less a visitor than the Prince de Joinville, that the French spoken at Green Bay was remarkable for purity and excellence of accent. The example of the courtesy and charm of manner of this worthy gentleman, who became in later days a judge and who then acted as magistrate for the settlement, had a restraining and elevating influence upon the young half-breeds who were growing up in Wisconsin, and made them emulous

of the name and attributes of a French gentleman.

The patriarchal life at Green Bay, an oasis of civilization in the midst of barbarism, was lived under three flags, and was subjected to three modes of governance. During the French régime proper all government was in the hands of the military officers, who had discretionary jurisdiction in all matters relating to the French traders as well as the Indian allies. All disputes between the two races, or between the different classes of traders, were settled by the commandants. If any reference to law was required, the code used was the *coutume de Paris*, which governed all of New France. The only check upon the commandant, aside from this somewhat shadowy code, was the detailed report he was obliged to make to his superior officer, the governor, who could recall him for misconduct. In truth, the term of the commandant had usually expired before an order for his recall could become effective. The result was that the rule of the chief officer of the post was arbitrary, and the inhabitants became accustomed to autocratic government. In fact the French never became interested in self-government, and after the opening of the American epoch could hardly be induced to vote, and when they did, voted from the personal standpoint, giving their voice always for one of the leaders of the community, irrespective of his qualifications or candidacy.<sup>15</sup>

Under the British, conditions changed only in so far that the chief trader acted as magistrate or ruler, while a kind of traders' code developed, unwritten but powerful, according to which life in the Indian country was regulated and misdeeds punished. As far as it had any legal foundation this code was based upon the sacredness of contract, and rested upon the engagement bonds made by the *voyageurs* when entering the employ of the *bourgeois* or of one of the great compa-

nies. There were always magistrates at Mackinac before whom offenders might be brought, and at Green Bay a retired trader by the name of Charles Reaume held some kind of commission of magistracy. Many are the amusing stories told of the manner in which Judge Reaume exercised his authority, which seemed purely arbitrary and dependent upon his personal will.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless it is probable that substantial justice was done by the seeming autocrat; he knew his community and all the persons with whom he had to deal, and his primitive methods were suited to the primitive conditions under which the French lived.

The climate of Green Bay and of the other parts of central Wisconsin was held by French writers to be excellent; nevertheless, the health of Wisconsin residents was not good. The traders were usually worn by the hardships of their wintering in the Indian villages and by the long journeys in tiny craft, where a cramped position was a necessity. Although they were much in the open the *bourgeois* took little exercise, and when settled on the land lived a somewhat indolent life, eating and drinking heartily. The result was that they complained of many ailments, and only a few lived to a «good old age». There were no physicians in the settlements except those connected with the posts. These usually were permitted to engage in general practice and to alleviate the sufferings of the settlers. Many of the Indian women had considerable empirical skill with herbs and medicinal poultices, and they were often called upon to serve as midwives. In Prairie du Chien was a notable woman of this sort, who had some negro antecedents and probably came there from the Illinois.<sup>17</sup>

Relations with the Indians were of vital concern to the French dwellers in their territory. Two of the functionaries of each settlement were there because of the Indian needs—the blacksmith and the interpreter. The first

of these tradesmen came west at a very early day, since the Indians, once having discarded their native implements and weapons for the white men's, had no knowledge or skill in repairing these. The Jesuit missionaries at De Père had a blacksmith attached to the mission, as a means of winning the tribesmen's favor. When the posts were re-established early in the eighteenth century, a smith was sent to every fort. The earliest smith of whom we have the name was François Campeau, who accompanied the Sioux expedition of 1727 and helped to build Fort Beauharnois. He appears to have lived in the West for several years, and may have been the artificer with Linctot at Trempealeau, the products of whose forge have been found.<sup>18</sup> The blacksmith at Mackinac for many years was a son of Madame Augustin de Langlade by her first husband, Villeneuve. The first smith we have record of at La Baye was Charles Personne *dit* La Fond, who was married at Mackinac in 1747 to Susanne Reaume, of Green Bay.<sup>19</sup> Another sister of the Reaume family married about this same time Jean Baptiste Jourdain, from whom descended Joseph Jourdain, the blacksmith in the early nineteenth century.<sup>20</sup> Thus these two families of Jourdain and Reaume are known to have been among the earliest French at La Baye.

The founder of the Reaume family in Wisconsin was Pierre, an early interpreter, who was in the West before 1718.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, several of the early explorers, such as Perrot and Duluth, were utilized as interpreters. The interpreter was an official at every post, and his salary was paid by the government. His influence with the natives was great, and he usually had opportunity to profit by the fur trade, although he was not supposed to use his influence for that purpose. In later years nearly all the interpreters were half-breeds, who knew their mother's language as well as their father's. Scions of the Grignon and Porlier families were so employed by the Ameri-

cans in their dealings with Wisconsin Indians; and at Portage, the Winnebago half-breed Pierre Pauquette was a valued and trusty interpreter.

The social status of these functionaries was between the aristocrats and the common people, for on trading voyages they ate with the *voyageurs*, but had trusted duties connected with the *bourgeois*. When Indian negotiations took place at the forts, or when delegations of Indians came to visit the commandant, both the blacksmith and the interpreter were of great importance. It was they who detected any incipient dissatisfaction among the tribesmen that might lead to hostilities. A skillful interpreter could often allay misunderstandings with the natives, without appeal to the officers. An evil-minded interpreter, bent upon mischief, could arouse feelings of distrust that might have disastrous consequences.

For the little groups of French in the Indian country were never allowed to throw off all guard. They were always so much in the minority that the whims and prejudices of the natives had seriously to be considered. An Indian uprising was as much feared by the French of Wisconsin as a slave insurrection was dreaded by the Southerners before the Civil War. Ordinarily the tribesmen were satisfied with their yearly presents, and with doles of food when they appeared at the French houses. When their women were mistresses of the house, it increased their demands but lessened the dangers of an unexpected attack. They were always fond of the half-breeds of their tribes, and at Indian treaties provided a liberal share of either land or annuity for these relatives. After the uprising of the Menominee in 1758 the French of Green Bay always lived on good terms with their Indian neighbors, and were never molested. This was due in large measure to the half-breed descendants of Claude Carron, an

early trader with this tribe.<sup>22</sup> At Prairie du Chien the danger from hostiles was greater, and was manifested at several times, notably in what was known as the Winnebago War of 1827. While on the whole the relations of the French in the West with the tribesmen were stronger and safer than those of either British or Americans, the tradition that the French understood the management of the North American aborigines better than other European peoples seems to have been somewhat overstressed.

The French of Wisconsin maintained close relations with Canada during all their sojourn in the West. Montreal was their metropolis, and a visit to that place was the ambition of every resident. Social and business contacts were cherished, and the arrival of the yearly messages from the St. Lawrence was the event of the season. All luxury goods were imported from the Canadian merchants, and craftsmen were sent for, to build homes and improve conditions at the western villages. All the leaders of the western communities came originally from Canada, and their civilization was an adaptation of that of the St. Lawrence valley.<sup>23</sup> Communication was also maintained with the other French settlements in the West — those of Detroit and the Illinois, and later with St. Louis. Merchants going through Green Bay from the Mississippi River settlements, to and from Mackinac or Canada, were cordially, even lavishly, entertained; in some cases marriages occurred between the youth of the different French settlements, and close intimacies were maintained. Next to Mackinac the Green Bay settlement seems to have been the center of western activities, due to its situation on the chief trade route, and also to the high character and fine hospitality of its principal men. The social life at this place was most enjoyable. All travelers speak of the genuine cordiality with which they were received and of the lively interest the community exercised

in making their stay pleasant. It was typical French hospitality, merry and gay, good-tempered and untiring, yet not coarse or rude, or lacking the elements of a well-mannered group.

These were the main features of the life in the French settlements in Wisconsin and the Northwest — isolated communities as they were, with lands cleared from the surrounding forests, the rivers running past their doors their only means of communication. Their little villages with the clean white houses, their green fields, and their horses and cattle, made a pleasing picture to the eye; and the cordial hospitality of their homes made an enduring memory for the mind of the visitor. Because of their French traditions they maintained somewhat more grace of life and manner than the average American pioneer; but their constant contact with the savages, and their commingling with the lower race, tended to coarsen and degrade the lives of the youth and to drag them down to the level of their mothers' people. The lack of educational opportunities was a serious drawback, and the few educated men of the communities had to bear the burdens of keeping up the standard of living. The moral and religious traditions were maintained with difficulty; drinking habits were especially prevalent, and the gay and mercurial temperament of the average *voyageur* led to an irresponsibility of conduct that told heavily against progress.

Progressive these French settlements never were in the American sense of the word; planted in a distant region, the residuum of the fur trade, with little contact with the larger world, they tended to a static rather than to a developing condition. They, however, kept burning the torch of civilization in the far West for over a century, and proved to be a link in the history of the West that cannot be ignored. In several cases these

small French western settlements became the nuclei of new American centers and the bases of their social life. In Detroit and St. Louis strong traces still exist of the early French founders, and many of the leading families derive descent from French pioneers. In Wisconsin the French element has had a smaller share in social history, due to the accident of location rather than to an inherent difference in the nature of the social group. The French of Michigan and Missouri grew wealthy by the enhancement in value of their lands placed in the midst of a great American city. The French of Green Bay and Prairie du Chien had no such good fortune. Unused to competitive methods of business, they stayed in the fur trade long after it ceased to be profitable, and lost their lands for the most part by mortgages to John Jacob Astor and the other magnates of the great fur companies. Thus the Wisconsin French sank rather than rose in the social scale; many of their children, in default of profitable occupations, joined the Indian tribe to which they belonged by affinity, and removed with the tribesmen to reservations. Others remained in the settlements, affiliated with the Americans, and lost their distinctive characteristics as Frenchmen. Thus the influence of the French inhabitants of Wisconsin has not been lasting. None the less they did preserve in early Wisconsin some of the charm of gracious living that characterizes French people in every part of the world, and their institutions and mode of life made an impression on the first Americans that has never been effaced.

Nor should it be forgotten that the founder of Wisconsin's largest city was a Frenchman — Solomon Juneau — and that his post at Milwaukee was a direct outgrowth of the French settlement at Green Bay. Several of our other large communities find their first history in trading posts of French origin, notably Sheboygan and Manitowoc; while



the first trader known to have visited the site of Madison was Oliver Armel, an immigrant directly from old France, without intermediary Canadian ancestors. Fond du Lac, Oshkosh, Appleton, and the other Fox River cities had their beginnings in French trading posts and settlers; while the upper Wisconsin River was first peopled by men of French origin from Green Bay. The French residents

of Wisconsin, few in number and small in influence, must be remembered when counting the origins of civilization in the Northwest; and had the armies of New France not been defeated on the Plains of Abraham, there might have grown up in the Mississippi valley a culture as notable, if not as strenuous, as that which has superseded the beginnings of the French settlement of Wisconsin.

## Notes

1. Reuben Gold Thwaites, in the volume published in the American Commonwealth Series (Boston, 1908).
2. See entries in the register of the priests at Mackinac, printed in *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, xviii, 469-513; xix, 1-162. See also letter of Father Gibault, written from Mackinac in 1768, in *Illinois Catholic Historical Review*, iv, 197-198.
3. *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, xviii, 140, note 83.
4. The earliest French settler at Portage whose name we know was one P. . . . who was said to be a deserter from the garrison in Illinois. *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, xviii, 282, note 95.
5. *American State Papers: Public Lands*, 852-865. An arpent is an old French measure equal to 192.5 feet.
6. *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, xv, 403.
7. *Ibid.*, vii, 218-219.
8. See list of animals furnished for provisions to the British in the War of 1812, *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, xii, 126-131.
9. *Ibid.*, ii, 119; *Wis. Hist. Soc., Proc.*, 1912, 181-182.
10. *Wis. Hist. Soc., Proc.*, 1908, 120-121. The wood in this old cottage is still in an excellent state of preservation. See *ibid.*, 1906, 46.
11. *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, vii, 263-264.
12. *Ibid.*, xiv, 28-33.
13. See entries in the Mackinac register — for example, those recording the marriage and the baptism of the Grignons — in *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, xviii, 493; xix, 88-91.
14. Many of the letters that passed between Porlier and his sisters and daughter are in the manuscripts in the Wisconsin Historical Library.
15. *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, ii, 141.
16. *Ibid.*, i, 59-61; ii, 87-90, 105-107.
17. *Ibid.*, ii, 125-126.
18. *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, xvii, 135; *Wis. Hist. Soc., Proc.*, 1915, 114.
19. *Wis. Hist. Colls.*; xviii, 474; xix, 25.
20. *Ibid.*, xviii, 473; xix, 20.
21. *Ibid.*, xvi, 377.
22. *Wis. MSS*, 54B106, in Wisconsin Historical Library.
23. In *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, ii, 122, is a list of the principal French pioneers of Prairie du Chiën; and *ibid.*, viii, 242; the same for Green Bay.

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## MINNESOTA — A HISTORY OF THE STATE

by Theodore C. Blegen

### THE FRENCH LOOK WEST

The water route from Montreal to Lake Superior and beyond was long and toilsome in times when paddles and muscles furnished the motive power for transportation. The wonder is, not that it took much time for white men to establish control over the wilderness, but that they made their way into the «savage country» as early as they did. Only a decade after the initial settlement of Quebec in 1608, and before the *Mayflower* landed at Plymouth Rock in 1620, Frenchmen reached the waters of Lake Superior, westernmost of the inland seas.

Fourteen years after the *Mayflower*, Frenchmen stepped onto the western shore of Lake Michigan. By the 1650s they were lifting the curtain of mystery on the Middle West and tapping its wealth of furs. And by the 1670s and 1680s the French, with only some nine thousand people in the St. Lawrence Valley, had discovered the Upper Mississippi. They had pushed expeditions into Minnesota and proclaimed a mid-American empire for Louis XIV. They had carried on far-reaching missionary enterprises, exploited a trade in furs international in scope, and trained a corps of *voyageurs*. They had mapped much of the hitherto uncharted wilderness, and written books about the new country which piqued their curiosity and tried their courage.

The French opened the gateways to the American West in the first half of the seventeenth century and passed through them in the second half. In the first half they explored the domain of the Great Lakes and in the second, the imperial Mississippi Valley.

A buoyant, confident, adventurous people, the French! And the seventeenth century — the age of Richelieu and of Louis XIV and Colbert — was one of exuberance and magnificence, particularly during the reign of the Grand Monarch. Far in the interior of America, French explorers, traders, and missionaries never forgot the might of France, to their minds the greatest power on earth. They constantly sought ways to impress that might on the minds of natives who had no conception of the French homeland across the Atlantic.

«What shall I say of his wealth?» exclaimed the missionary Father Claude Allouez at Sault Ste. Marie in 1671, speaking of Louis XIV to Indians. «You count yourselves rich when you have ten or twelve sacks of corn, some hatchets, glass beads, kettles, or things of that sort. He has towns of his own, more in number than you have people in all these countries five hundred leagues around; while in each town there are warehouses containing enough hatchets to cut down all your forests, kettles to cook all your

moose, and glass beads to fill all your cabins.»

The missionary's interpretation of French power to the Indians in terms they could understand is a reminder that the early Minnesota story echoes bold and far-reaching international ambitions. The impact of events a long way from the lakes and rivers of the north country was decisive for Minnesota's political destiny. England and France, stirring with expansive energy, were competing in the seventeenth century — and the eighteenth, too — for nothing less than the North American continent. Spain, also, though its imperial power was on the decline after the defeat of its proud Armada, was important in the New World picture, drawing wealth from Central and South America, and concerned with the West Indian centers to which Columbus had sailed on the great discovery, and with the southern area where DeSoto and other Spaniards early planted their flag. Here, too, both the French and the English were interested.

The English colonists after Jamestown and Plymouth Rock were moving by many approaches into the rich interior of the land. And the seventeenth century would also witness English advances and claims from Hudson Bay to the south. France made its major approach by way of the St. Lawrence, to which Jacques Cartier had come in the first half of the sixteenth century, and to which Samuel de Champlain, typifying French discovery and exploration at its most magnificent, followed early in the seventeenth century. Thus on a continental stage national interests moved toward clash and decision over great stakes, with the rumble of recurring European wars in the background.

In this setting Minnesota must be viewed as a region that has been ruled under four flags — French, English, Spanish, American —

at times with two or three claims extending concurrently over the same areas. The wars and treaties of European powers, as well as colonial controversies and struggles, played major roles in the fate of the hinterland west of the Great Lakes. The drama ran across the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and even into the nineteenth. Climaxes came in the Treaty of Utrecht (1713), when France lost Hudson Bay to the English; in the Treaty of Paris (1763), when New France itself bowed to the British; and in the War of Independence, with the emergence of the United States (1783). Still later was President Jefferson's purchase from France of Louisiana in 1803 — after a lapse of nearly forty years (1762-1800) during which the little-known empire between the Mississippi and the Far West had been under the sovereignty of Spain.

If national ambitions and the clash of arms in Europe had far-reaching effects on the political future of the wilderness country, it is no less true that the Minnesota story was influenced by leadership and the progress of events in eastern Canada. It was also touched by dreams of the silks and spices of Cathay, by curiosity about what lay beyond the inland seas, and, as realistic Frenchmen learned of sleek inland treasures, by their avid hunt for furs. Frenchmen were early aware of the potential wealth the New World might open for them — not in jewels and gold, but in fishing and trapping. Their own sailors from Brittany, unfamed to history, were in Labrador waters fishing cod in the fifteenth century; and Champlain, on his first trip to New France, was backed by a hobleman and a group of merchants who had secured a monopoly on the trade in furs. Furs and daring men are the very stuff of early Canadian history.

The sixteenth-century voyages of Cartier were two generations in the past when Champlain, soldier, sailor, geographer, and explorer, emerged as the creator of Canada



and as a major figure in the backgrounds of the American West. His achievements, despite repeated discouragements, were monumental. He founded Quebec, explored the St. Lawrence, and discovered Lake Champlain and Lakes Huron and Ontario. In a grand sense Champlain was the discoverer of the Great Lakes, though his own eyes did not see the greatest of them at the west. But he trained and inspired others to carry forward his ideas and aims. Evidence is convincing that he knew of a «Grand Lac» beyond Ontario and Huron. Geographer by training, he even ventured to map it roughly in 1632, probably on the basis of information supplied by Etienne Brulé who, it is believed, saw Lake Superior before 1620, perhaps as early as 1618. Champlain even heard vague reports about a great river out in the western country whose waters ran to some sea — and these suggested the possibility that the unknown river was a path to the fabulous lands Marco Polo had visited in the days of Kublai Khan.

School textbooks bewail the misfortune or blunder of Champlain in making enemies of the Iroquois Indians. As early as 1609 he made war on these fierce natives, and he did so in alliance with the Algonkians and Hurons, the latter from the Georgian Bay region. As the historian A. L. Burt writes,

«The Iroquois had never seen a musket, but now they saw it spit fire and kill by magic.»

The time came when the Iroquois, who were later supplied arms by the English and Dutch, took grim revenge on both the French and the Algonkians and Hurons. Their revenge proved a dreadful check to the French and it was one factor in driving the Algonkians to the west. But it is easy to judge men in the light of events of a later time. Champlain was trying to protect the fur trade and the waterway westward, and it seemed natural

to him to make friends with the Indians who lived along that way and to fight the natives who threatened its use. Whatever the troubles of later years, Champlain never abandoned his interest in furs and the western country. From 1627 to his death in 1635, except for a short period when the British took and held Quebec, he was governor of New France. This position deepened his natural authority over the colony he had fathered. And he gave aid and encouragement to younger men.

One of these was Jean Nicolet, brought to New France from Cherbourg and trained for fifteen years in wilderness lore by living among Indians — a hard schooling that prepared him for a major assignment. Champlain had heard rumors not only of vast lakes and a great river, but also of the «People of the Sea» somewhere toward the west. And the minds of Europeans were still captivated by the thought that the way to Cathay might be open to them. They wanted to find out who the «People of the Sea» really were. In 1634 a new stage in the westward advance was heralded by Nicolet's journey by way of the Ottawa River, Lake Huron, and the Straits of Mackinac.

This journey led to the discovery of Lake Michigan and Nicolet's dramatic landing at Green Bay clad in a robe of damask and carrying «thunder in both hands», as the frightened natives described his pistols. Whatever the Indians were (actually they were a Winnebago tribe), they were not men of Cathay, though certainly «people of the inland sea». A modern reader finds it difficult to escape the impression that Nicolet, notwithstanding his gorgeous Oriental costume, harbored no illusion that he was landing in China. He made an alliance with the natives and returned to the East, and he seems to have told his story firsthand to Champlain. What Nicolet accomplished was a major discovery that would open the way

to the Mississippi Valley and lands beyond, though he himself evidently did not go much farther than the Wisconsin shores. It is likely that he heard reports from the natives of a great river somewhere in the interior.

In the period after Nicolet was one of inactivity in French exploration of the West, it saw great missionary enterprise that reached as far as Sault Ste. Marie by 1641, with the Jesuits Isaac Jogues and Charles Raymbault. Meanwhile Montreal was becoming a busy mart, receiving Indian fur fleets each spring from Ottawa tribesmen, and bartering kettles, blankets, and supplies of many kinds for the furs. One senses an increasing French awareness of a kingdom of furs that might surpass the imagined riches of the Orient.

When Iroquois-Huron hostilities cut down the native traffic to Montreal, Frenchmen more and more pushed westward by themselves to collect furs. Some were duly licensed, some were without official authorization. The class of wood rangers — *coureurs de bois* — emerged. They were daring and vigorous young Frenchmen who, as independent traders, blithely risked the hazards of Indian attack and of hardships for the rich profits from furs. And it is in the period of the 1650s that the story moves toward the Minnesota region with the travels, adventures, and observations of two Frenchmen, Pierre Radisson and his brother-in-law the Sieur des Groseilliers.

It is Radisson's name that has the most familiar ring to Minnesotans, but the two men were closely associated. The fame of the one has been enhanced because he told of his adventures in a priceless account written as early as 1669 but unknown to historians until late in the nineteenth century. Originally penned in French, it was translated into curious English in Radisson's own day, and the translation has survived in the Bod-

leian Library at Oxford University. In 1885 it was published for the first time. Through many decades scholars have been quarreling more or less amiably about the «voyages» the Frenchmen made to the West — just where they went, and how to interpret the language of the manuscript:

The autobiography unfolded by Radisson tells of the incredible experiences and hardships of a Frenchman who went out to Three Rivers in New France as a boy. He was captured by the Iroquois, tortured, and had adventure after adventure. After a time he fell in with Groseilliers, who had married his sister. But the great and dramatic importance of the narrative for western history lies in its account of two journeys to the Great Lakes region and beyond, between 1654 and 1660. We now know that Radisson could not have gone on the first, in 1654, though he describes that journey, taken by Groseilliers and a companion, as if he himself had been the companion. He and Groseilliers certainly went together on the second trip, probably begun in 1659.

On the 1654 journey Groseilliers went to Lake Michigan, and then he traveled into Wisconsin beyond Green Bay, possibly reached the Mississippi, and he may even have penetrated into Minnesota. The language of Radisson's narrative is too obscure to permit conclusive identifications of places, but the evidence leaves no doubt that Groseilliers was in the western country, lived among the Indians, and engaged in trade. With a fleet of fifty canoes loaded with furs and paddled by Indians, he returned in triumph to Quebec. He received a welcome that celebrated the success and the daring of his enterprise, and his highly prized furs — in a period of fur famine in eastern Canada — were shipped off to European markets.

The next expedition to western waters,

in 1659, was furtive. Radisson and Groseilliers could not get official authorization without pledging a very large share of their fur profits to the governor of New France. This they would not do, and so, secretly, they slipped away from Three Rivers and made their way to Sault Ste. Marie. Having arrived there, instead of pushing south to Lake Michigan, they entered Lake Superior and went along its southern shores.

At Chequamegon Bay (near present Ashland) they built what some have surmised was the first white man's house in the Middle West. Then they made their way inland in Wisconsin to an Ottawa Indian village, where they spent a hard winter. This miserable village was a scene of starvation among the Indians, and their strange white visitors suffered, too. «Good God, have mercy on so many poore innocent people!» exclaimed Radisson. After agonizing months, deer were caught on melting lakes and the famine came to an end. The Frenchmen met with the Sioux Indians — «the nation of the beefe» — in the spring, and Radisson described the Indian dress and the ceremony of a council, to which the white men added excitement by tossing gunpowder on a fire and discharging what they called their artillery. They gave gifts to the Sioux and told of their interest in the Indian country. Such primitive scenes inspired one of Radisson's most famous utterances: «We weare Cesars, being nobody to contradict us». Radisson and Groseilliers were indeed like some visiting royalty. Precisely where and how far the Frenchmen went in the western country before their return in 1660 to Quebec is difficult to say, but it is probable that they canoed up along the north shore of «the delightfulest lake of the world», and from the lips of Indians learned about Hudson Bay as a water route to the unknown lands beyond Lake Superior.

Escorted by a fleet of Indian canoes

packed with furs, the Frenchmen returned to the East and were greeted with a salute of cannon at Montreal. Soon they were disappointed and bitter, for they were arrested for illicit trading, and their profits were largely confiscated. «Was not he a Tyrant», wrote Radisson of the governor, «to deal so with us after wee had so hazarded our lives?» The resentment of these fur-gathering explorers led them to turn to the English, and after sundry adventures that reinforced their desire to exploit the fur trade via Hudson Bay, they reached England in 1666. There they were given an audience by Charles II and interested both the king and his cousin Prince Rupert, as well as various noblemen, in the potential riches of furs from the far north. This interest led to an expedition of two ships, one under Radisson and the other under Groseilliers, to Hudson Bay in 1668. Radisson's vessel was battered by storms and barely managed to return to England, but his brother-in-law reached the bay of the north, collected furs, and brought them back to England as proof of the claims advanced. This success led to the founding of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1670. «The Governor and Company of Adventurers of England Trading into Hudson's Bay» — a fur company that has survived to the present day and has been important in Minnesota as well as in Canadian history.

It is difficult to exaggerate the historical importance of Radisson and Groseilliers. They added much to geographical knowledge. Apart from what they saw with their own eyes, it was their representations that caused men of business to open the region between Lake Superior and Hudson Bay. The two Frenchmen were quick to understand the key to the fur trade. It was the idea of going north for the choicest beaver skins. The direction is foreshadowed by their own travels — Wisconsin, Lake Superior and especially its north shore, then Hudson Bay. Theirs





is no simply local story. It is international not only in their travels but in long-flowing consequences, especially in the great fur-trading company of nearly three hundred years of enterprise. The international importance is underlined by the fact that these men strengthened the British in the race of nations for the domination of the continent. They were not unaware of the European interest in finding a Northwest Passage, and they used this theme in their efforts to enlist English support. But the records they left emphasize furs and the wilderness that could produce them. Explorers they were indeed, but implicit in their exploring was the drive of trade.

There are other ways, too, in which their story is of historical interest. Radisson was a prophet of the coming glories of middle America, though his prophecies did not reach the ears of the European world of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The vast lands that he and his brother-in-law saw were, to him, a potential «labyrinth of pleasure» for millions of people in old Europe, for the poor and miserable folk of many countries that engaged in wars over a mere «rock in the sea». Finally, the story Radisson told, though as tortured in translation as he was by the Iroquois, is still an original and vivid description of primitive life and pristine nature, of white men in contact with the stone age, of things seen and heard in interior America more than a century before the American Revolution and the birth of the United States.

It was no coincidence that only a few years after the Radisson journey of 1659-60 Father Claude Allouez, a celebrated Jesuit missionary, built a mission station on Madeline Island, not far from the place where Radisson and Grosseilliers had landed on Chequamegon Bay. Allouez typifies the Jesuits of the seventeenth century and later. They were educated men of infinite curiosity about

the new lands and their people, careful observers and recorders, explorers and map makers, servants of the Society of Jesus who faced the perils of wilderness and even cruel martyrdom with courage. If Allouez had small success in Christianizing the natives, he played an important role in the advance of geographical knowledge and the expansion of New France. His work contributed to the Jesuit map of 1670 on which Lake Superior (also called Lake Tracy) appeared with a detail quite lacking in earlier maps. And he himself explored the western and northern shores of that great lake.

Gradually, with the efforts of many contributing to the sum total of knowledge, the French familiarized themselves with the newer New France. Their mapping and advance on several lines of approach were forerunners of occupation and high claims of possession. Expanding geographic knowledge as disclosed in a long succession of French maps, from Champlain on to Franquelin (1688) and still later, often seems to outrun the information written in diaries, books and other sources. This testifies to a kind of pooling of verbal information as travelers returned and told about what they had seen. The makers of maps, if not explorers themselves, talked with explorers and probably with obscure traders who left no diaries or books. Often items appear that pique one's curiosity, as instanced by a note on a French map of Lake Superior in 1658 with the words:

«Some people have told me of having gone for 20 days about Lake Superior without having circumnavigated half of it.»

What people? And when?

There is a pageantry of events in the story of the French envelopment of the West. One finds a line here, a thrust there — new



discoveries, new knowledge, adventurers, fur-laden canoes, martyrs, narratives, maps. And there is actual pageantry of a kind dear to French hearts, such as the scene enacted on a June day in 1671 at Sault Ste. Marie.

Louis XIV in 1663, abetted by his chief minister Colbert, had set out to strengthen New France by making it a royal province and building its population and military resources. Two years later he sent out Jean Talon as «*Intendant*», a high official having authority over commerce, finance, and justice, to serve alongside the governor, the king's representative in matters of state. Talon soon struck down the hostile Iroquois and cleared the path for renewed Indian trade. He reached out toward continental empire for the glory of Louis XIV. At some strategic spot, closing his eyes to Spanish and English claims, Talon wished to take formal possession of interior America. The spot he chose was Sault Ste. Marie, Great Lakes junction, crossroads of white and Indian travel, site of a Jesuit mission established in 1668 by Father Jacques Marquette, a village of the Chippewa (called the Saulteurs). He acted through the nobleman Daumont St. Luson and Redmen were invited from the far interior. Salutes were given and speeches were delivered, one by Father Allouez. There were prayers and hymns, a bonfire, and shouts of «*Vive le Roi!*» Then St. Luson made formal claim, in the name of Louis XIV, to

«all these lakes, straits, rivers, islands, and regions lying adjacent thereto, whether as yet visited by my subjects or unvisited, in all their length and breadth, stretching to the sea at the north and at the west, or on the opposite side extending to the South Sea.»

In later years similar ceremonies were enacted. They were pageants, but underlying the pageantry — the gold and braid and flashing swords of officers — was the ambition of the

master in faraway Versailles. His dream was one of annexation and sovereignty from ocean to ocean of a royal domain including the mysterious lands one day to be known as Minnesota. Great claims and exciting dreams! But the Grand Monarch and his ministers would soon have to think more of European mastery than of control in the New World. Wars at home would dim French aspirations in the West.

Those aspirations for a time were at high tide. The energetic Talon would not rest content with far-reaching claims. In maps and reports the French were answering questions about the lakes and lands to the west, but they had not yet found their way to the great river. The time had come to test rumors current since the days of Champlain. Before Talon returned to France in 1672 he had selected a young man named Louis Joliet to find the Mississippi. His commission came not from Talon, however, but from that greatest governor of New France after Champlain, Count Frontenac, just arrived from France. Frontenac directed him to

«discover the south sea... and the great river Mississippi, which is believed to empty in the California sea».

Joliet, the Canadian-born son of a French cartwright, was a skilled cartographer. He had hunted for copper in the Lake Superior country, had witnessed the Sault Ste. Marie pageant, and known at first hand the Great Lakes region. Trained and daring, he was qualified for a great assignment.

The story of the journey in 1673 has been told and re-told, notably and dramatically by Francis Parkman. It need not be reviewed here except to emphasize the significance of the route from Green Bay by way of the Fox and Wisconsin rivers to the Father of Waters. This opened another gateway to Minnesota, though Joliet pushed far south-

ward on the great river, settling once and for all the direction of its flow. The search for elusive Cathay was not lost sight of by the French, but Jolliet's achievement pointed to empire and wealth in the vast valley to which he had come, and his successors would soon strike both north and south in that valley.

A dramatic part of the traditional accounts of Jolliet relates to Father Marquette, who is believed by most historians to have been Jolliet's companion on the famous journey and whose role has been thrillingly described by Parkman. Recent research has cast doubt, however, on the authenticity of the much-used narratives ascribed to Marquette which in turn have been the chief basis for the traditional tale. This doubt has even extended to the claim that Father Marquette was a participant and partner in the enterprise. It seems not unlikely that further research will throw new light on the question, and it is possible that the traditional view of Marquette will be re-established. Meanwhile one thing is certain. The French, with Jolliet in the van, proved the truth of the rumors of a great river in the West beyond the Great Lakes. The river was the Mississippi, a majestic stream running down through the continent as in fact it runs through the course of American history.

Pity that Jolliet, returning to Québec to report to Frontenac, had a canoe accident not far from Montreal and lost his precious papers and maps in the swirling Lachine rapids. Like the French original of Radisson's *Voyages*, his records are among the lost manuscripts of history. Luckily he saved his own life, later met the governor, and told his story. Before his career came to an end he was the royal cartographer of New France. This was an accolade, but his fame does not rest on position. It rests on his own hard-wrought achievement.

## MINNESOTA AND NEW FRANCE

The vibrant leadership of Frontenac, the curiosity of traders and missionaries, the gaudy proclamation of the aims of Louis XIV at Sault Ste. Marie, and the discovery by Jolliet of the upper waters of the great river gave impetus to the westward advance of the French in the 1670s and 1680s. This brought Minnesota within the orbit of French exploration and royal control.

Other forces also made themselves felt. The great company sponsored by England's Prince Rupert, chartered only a year before the Sault Ste. Marie ceremonies, served notice of coming competition reaching downward from the north. And the French in the next decade would challenge the claims of the British by capturing their trading posts on James Bay. From the Atlantic side the English, with spreading settlements and increasing populations, were sensitive to trade and lands and to the strategic importance of the inland chain of lakes. By the 1680s their trading interests had touched the crossroads post of Michilimackinac. The Iroquois were friendly to the English, ready at an instant to contest with the French on and near the waterways to the West, as they did when France and England went to war in 1689. But, whatever the rumblings of trouble and challenge, New France was in a mood of achievement inspired by good leadership.

Some part of that achievement is recorded in maps. There was unending curiosity about Lake Superior by the great and the humble. Again and again it was mapped — remarkably well by the Jesuits in 1670, and a few years later by an engineer, Hugues Randin, commissioned to explore the vast lake in 1676 and to win Indian friendship and trade. Others added maps in the 1680s, each usually filling in new details, including more and more of the country beyond Supe-

rior's western shores.

That country in 1679 and 1680 was entered by explorers who approached it both by way of Lake Superior and up against current on the Mississippi. One of the dramatic episodes of western history is the meeting of the two French groups in the heart of the Minnesota country, at a Sioux village on the shores of Mille Lacs.

In view of the early French interest in Lake Superior it seems historically appropriate that the first of these expeditions to reach Minnesota made use of the lake approach. Its leader was Daniel Greysolon, Sieur du Luth, a native of Lyons, a French soldier of an old family of the lesser nobility, and a member of the select King's Guard. He went to Canada when he was thirty-six and returned to France to fight in the battle of Seneffe, in Flanders, under the Prince of Condé. Then he struck out again for the New World with a younger brother known as the Sieur de la Tourette. Thirsting for adventure and the glory of blazing a way to the Pacific, he left Montreal for the West in 1678, with seven companions. This move opened a career that marks Duluth, to use the more common form of his name, as one of the most helpful lieutenants of Count Frontenac and New France. A singular frustration characterized Duluth's career. Time and again when about to set out for the «Sea of the West», he found himself obliged to return to deal with crises in Indian and civil affairs. Thus he did not win for himself the transcontinental glory of Alexander Mackenzie or of Lewis and Clark.

With others, Duluth wintered (1678-79) near Sault Ste. Marie, seeking to strengthen the friendly relations of New France with the Chippewa. Then, fearing «not death, only cowardice or dishonor», he set out for the western shores of Superior to urge the

fierce Sioux to keep peace with the Chippewa. A council was held not far from the site of the city that now honors Duluth in its name, after which he and his men pushed into the interior, to the Mille Lacs Sioux village. There Duluth asked for friendship for the French and named the sacred lake «Buade», the family name of Count Frontenac. This was material for a stirring narrative recording a visit by the first white man known to have entered the Sioux central village on the shores of that beautiful inland lake. Duluth, a man of few words, told it all in a laconic sentence:

«On the second of July, 1679, I had the honor to set up the arms of his Majesty in the great village of Nadoucioux called Izatys, where no Frenchman had ever been, nor to the Songakitons and Ouetbatons, distant 26 leagues from the first, where also I set up the arms of his Majesty in the same year 1679.»

Thus he referred to the Sioux, the Sisseton, and the Wahpeton Indians. The ceremony of affixing the royal emblem to a tree was a claim of possession for Louis XIV.

Duluth sent three of his men farther to the interior beyond Mille Lacs. Later they reported that «it was only twenty days' journey from where they were» to the «great lake whose water is not good to drink». Was this a hint of Great Salt Lake? Or perhaps of the western ocean? How far the men actually went is not known. Perhaps it was not beyond western Minnesota, but their information may account for the appearance on later maps of the edge of the Teton country. In the absence of a specified record from Duluth, it is impossible to say what he thought the report of salt water meant. He had no knowledge of the Great Salt Lake or of the appalling breadth of the continent — and it is a fair conjecture that to him the water «not good

to drink» was the western ocean, the goal of French dreams of continental exploration. Meanwhile he set aside dreams, retraced his steps, arranged a peace council of Sioux and Assiniboin, and wintered at Kaministikwia. The next summer, June 1680, he set out upon a new adventure.

This time he traveled with several companions down the lake shore to the Bois Brule River, paddled up that Wisconsin stream, then portaged to the St. Croix, and canoed to its junction with the Mississippi. This trip opened a new route deep into Minnesota. At the Mississippi Duluth received the surprising news that somewhere down river the Sioux, who only the summer before had pledged friendship with the French, held three white men as prisoners. Without any delay, taking an interpreter and two companions with him, he set out to find them and uphold the authority of France. On July 25 he came upon the three captives of the Sioux. They turned out to be Michel Accault, Antoine Auguelle, and Louis Hennepin.

They were emissaries of La Salle. Earlier in the year they had been sent north on the Mississippi from Fort Crèvecoeur on the Illinois River. Thus Minnesota enters the saga of the imperious Frenchman whose aim was to bind the Mississippi Valley to New France. The Minnesota journey was collateral to La Salle's larger plans. Though Accault, an obscure *voyageur*, was the leader of this expedition, it is Father Hennepin, Recollet friar, traveler, and adventurer, whose fame has reached down to our day.

Hennepin, native of Ath, Belgium, and army chaplain under the Prince of Orange, had been intrigued by tales of the New World, and in 1675 had sailed for Canada with La Salle and Bishop Laval. He acquired schooling in frontier ways at the newly established Frontenac seignory, where La Salle was the

commandant. La Salle himself shared some of the great ambitions of Frontenac, and by 1678 he was ready for a novel venture. La Salle invited Hennepin to accompany him, first across Lake Ontario to Niagara. There La Salle's chief lieutenant, the Italian-born Henri de Tonti, a cousin of Duluth, built a sailing vessel, the *Griffon*, for navigating the lakes. And there Hennepin saw and described, for the first time, the greatest waterfall in America. To him Niagara was «a vast and prodigious Cadence of Water».

La Salle's expedition is famed in history. The explorer voyaged through Erie, Huron, and Michigan. He landed at Green Bay and there the *Griffon* was loaded with furs to be carried back to the East. It sailed away to unknown disaster and has never been heard of since. La Salle went on to Illinois and there built a fort, early in 1680, on the shores of Lake Peoria. Leaving a lieutenant in command, he made his way east once more. Later he returned to the Mississippi country, traversed the great river to the Gulf, and was murdered in 1687 in the lower valley.

The ambitions of La Salle furnish the background for the journey northward of Hennepin and his companions. Starting at the end of February 1680, they went down the Illinois River and then turned north on the Mississippi, struggling against current and ice. On April 11 they were captured by a war party of Sioux Indians, who spared their lives but took them up to the Minnesota country as prisoners. With the Sioux they had a series of remarkable adventures before the stern-faced Duluth came on the scene to rescue them.

It is one of the extraordinary facts of western history that only three years later a book ascribed to Father Hennepin appeared in Paris. This was his *Descriptions de la Louisiane* (1683), in which he related his ad-



ventures in detail. The work won wide fame, became a best seller, and was translated from French into many other languages. With its successors, the *Nouveau Voyage* of 1696 and the *Nouvelle Découverte* of 1697, it is a classic of American western history and in fact of greater importance historically than the Hennepin travels themselves. Hennepin's writings were a novel disclosure about the interior New World, and they were read with lively curiosity by people in Europe. The significance of Hennepin is not much lessened even though modern research indicates that he himself wrote only a part of his famous *Description*. Much of the book apparently was drafted by someone else to forward La Salle's efforts to secure royal support for a great expedition across the Atlantic to build a colony in the lower Mississippi country and thus solidify Louis XIV's expanding empire.

Whatever the mysteries of authorship, the experiences revealed by Hennepin were manifestly his own. In vivid phrase one reads of his journey up river, his capture by Indians sweeping down in a flotilla of thirty-three canoes, the naming of the «Lake of Tears» (now known as Lake Pepin), and the nature of Indian life at Mille Lacs, where Hennepin was given «a robe made of ten large dressed beaver skins, trimmed with porcupine quills» and adopted into the family of a chief. After an overland journey the weary Hennepin was treated to a steam bath and massaged with wildcat oil. He baptized a sick child, and he tried to work out a dictionary of Sioux words. In a kind of flexible captivity Hennepin and his companions accompanied the Sioux on a hunting party. With Auguelle, the friar discovered and named for his patron saint the Falls of St. Anthony. His *Description* contains a map showing the Mississippi — he calls it the «Meschasipi» — from the Illinois fort to Mille Lacs and the region farther north to Lake of the Woods, with many familiar places

indicated and even a drawing of the arms of the king affixed to a tree at Mille Lacs.

Possibly Hennepin has had «a fame beyond his deserts». In his books claims are advanced that have not been corroborated. Charges of exaggeration and falsification have been made against him, and he has been called an imposter. How much weight can be attached to such aspersions and to inconsistencies in his writings is difficult to say. One must remember that the very authorship of the drafts as printed is open to question and Hennepin's own part uncertain. Certain conclusions are undeniable, however. Hennepin did make the Minnesota journey in 1680. His own record of it somehow got into the narratives published under his name. The record bears the marks of truth, not of plagiarism or fiction, though it is ungenerous both to Accault, the leader, and to Duluth, the rescuer.

Meanwhile, on that summer day in 1680, an indignant Duluth took Hennepin and his companions under his protection, forced the Sioux to return to their Mille Lacs village, there scorned the pipe of peace, and gave the Indians a tongue lashing. He well knew that if a single Frenchman received unfriendly treatment from the Sioux, all French visitors might expect similar hostility. He demanded the release of the three prisoners, and he postponed his plans for finding the salt sea of the West. He then guided the little party to the Straits of Mackinac, following the route by way of the Mississippi, the Wisconsin and Fox rivers, and Lake Michigan. Hennepin himself got back to France by 1682 and soon found himself famous with the publication of his book — the first about Minnesota.

Duluth, after troubles over securing a license to trade, journeyed to Minnesota again in 1683. He used the Fox-Wisconsin-

Mississippi route, secured a new pact of friendship from the Sioux, then pushed up the St. Croix to the Brule River (the Bois Brule) and Lake Superior. He built forts or posts in the St. Croix region and at Kaministikwia (Fort William of today) and instructed his brother, the Sieur de la Tourette, to build one farther north, at Lake Nipigon. Recalled to enforce French authority at Mackinac, he set out yet again, in 1688, for Minnesota and beyond to challenge the British in the Hudson Bay area. This might have been the occasion for a great expedition to the West, but the Iroquois were on the warpath in the East, and a disastrous attack on the French settlement of Lachine near Montreal brought him east once again. Later for a while he was commandant of Fort Frontenac. He died in 1710, and of him a historian writes,

«He had added to New France an empire in the Northwest, had explored the routes from Lake Superior to the Mississippi, had ventured farther west than any of his confreres, and had made French alliances with the greatest and most populous of the northwestern tribesmen.»

Truly he was a «nobleman of Old and New France».

French enterprise in the final decades of the seventeenth century seemed headed for occupation and settlement of the Mississippi Valley from north to south. Explorers and traders were filling out the map, correcting errors, expanding knowledge, and the stage was ready for a colonization which, had it not been for wars in Europe, the vigor of the English, and the thinness of population in the Canadian East, might greatly have altered the history of the continent.

Valiant efforts were indeed made. Nicolas Perrot, a trader experienced in wilderness

life, was named commandant of the West in 1685. He led an expedition to the Upper Mississippi country and established posts on the Wisconsin side of the river. At the second of these, Fort St. Antoine, on May 8, 1689, he took formal possession of the Sioux country—the Upper Mississippi—in the name of Louis XIV, with ceremonies not unlike those at Sault Ste. Marie eighteen years earlier, which he had witnessed. These outposts, far up the river from the spot where Jolliet first saw the Mississippi, gave promise of establishments still farther north, and another trader, present at the 1689 ceremonies, carried the *fleur-de-lis* to posts built on Minnesota territory.

This was Pierre Charles le Sueur, a native of Artois, who already knew the Superior region and had traded with the Sioux. After the events at Fort St. Antoine, he ranged the western country to forward trade along the Superior-Mississippi route and in 1693 established a post on Madeline Island. He evidently made use of the Brule-St. Croix water paths, and seems to have built a post, perhaps in 1694 or 1695, on Prairie Island at the mouth of the St. Croix. A restless, ambitious man, Le Sueur went back to Montreal with a chief of the Sioux and arranged an audience with Frontenac. Then he was off to Paris to apply to the king for a ten-year monopoly of the fur trade of the Upper Mississippi and also for a mining authorization. A skeptical view of Le Sueur's mining intentions was expressed by a French official, who said, «The only mines that he seeks in those regions are mines of beaver skins». After various adventures Le Sueur succeeded in his errand, but he was instructed to make his approach, not from eastern Canada, but from Louisiana. He sailed for America with the Sieur d'Iberville, the founder of the French colony at Biloxi, in 1699.

This was a prelude to a curious chapter

in Minnesota's early history — and a commentary on the lure of trade. Le Sueur, with nineteen men, a small sailing vessel (a «shallop»), and two canoes, set out in April 1700 to ascend the Mississippi from its mouth very nearly to its source. The journey took until the following September. A boat builder named Jean Pénicaut, one of the party, told of the trip in a letter. After long and hard months the Frenchmen reached the Falls of St. Anthony, which Pénicaut described as «the entire Mississippi falling suddenly from a height of sixty feet, making a noise like that of thunder rolling in the air». They then went up the St. Peter's, or Minnesota, River to the mouth of the «Makato», now called the Blue Earth. Not far from it they built a small post called Fort L'Huillier. Indicative of the fact that many men unknown to history roamed the West was the sudden appearance at the fort one day of seven French traders, doubtless *voueurs de bois*, who stayed on through the winter.

From writings of Le Sueur and Pénicaut the experiences of the men at the fort can be pieced together: the killing of four hundred buffaloes as winter provisions, gifts of guns and powder and balls as well as axes, tobacco, and ~~beaver~~ to the Sioux, and the mining of alleged copper ore. What Le Sueur mined was not copper but only colored clay, yet when he left in the spring of 1701 on the long return journey he loaded two tons of this «ore» into his boat and the next year carried it off to France. Is this some joke across the ages? Was it a mere nominal fulfillment of the commission to work mines? Were the «mines» originally just a pretext? We do not know, but we do know that Le Sueur also carried out furs, and they were far more precious than the «ore». On a single occasion the Sioux brought in for trade «more than four hundred beaver robes, each robe being made of nine skins sewed together». Le Sueur left a dozen men at the fort, and they held it un-

til 1702, when they abandoned it as a consequence of a surprise attack by Fox Indians, then on the warpath against the Sioux. Before the Frenchmen left they buried their trade goods, a cache that, so far as is known, has never been found by archaeologists. In 1702, a map, probably drawn by Le Sueur, added still more to known knowledge of Minnesota. The Brule-St. Croix route is there, lands and streams west of Lake Superior, the approximate source of the great river, Lake of the Woods, and not a few names of places, chiefly Sioux.

With this forest drama, the curtain drops on French Minnesota for a time. New France was in decline and western occupation was delayed. Louis XIV in his later years was embroiled in great wars. The Iroquois were a continuing menace to eastern Canada and the western trade. Frontenac died in 1698. The English were competing for the Ohio Valley, and the licensed trade out of Canada was thwarted by that of the wood rangers. So the passing of Fort L'Huillier marks a transition from the era of hope and achievement. The challenge of the French to the Hudson's Bay Company had given them control of the major part of that great area by treaty at the end of King William's War (1697), but the peace between France and England was only a breathing space. Sixteen years later, when Queen Anne's War ended in the Treaty of Utrecht, Hudson Bay went back to Britain (Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, too) — portent, perhaps, of things to come. And yet New France still had a half century of existence before it bowed to British supremacy.

Decline there assuredly was, but in due time there came a swing. Mackinac was recaptured within a year or two after Utrecht, Kaministikwia in 1717, and La Pointe the next year. Three years later Father Charlevoix, the early Jesuit historian of New France,

went on a quest that had persistently intrigued and frustrated the French. This was the finding of a northern way to the Sea of the West. He learned no more than Duluth had known, that there were two ways of heading toward the far Pacific. One was the route of the Great Lakes, to Superior and then by stream and portage westward. The other was to ascend the great river to the Sioux country and then turn west, probably by way of the Minnesota River. This was the route that Lamothe Cadillac, commandant at Mackinac in the 1690s and founder of Detroit, had advocated in a famous *Memoir*.

It is possible that Cadillac in turn had been influenced by the Baron Armand Lahontan, one-time associate of Duluth and the genial author of a book of travels entitled *New Voyages to America*. This work, published in France in 1703, contained an elaborate description of the «Long River», a mighty western arm of the Mississippi which he claimed to have discovered. Some writers have contended that the Long River was in fact the Minnesota and that the baron did explore it, but most historians regard it as fictitious, the airy product of an ingenious imagination. An interesting defender of Lahontan was the Canadian scholar and humorist Stephen Leacock, who ranked the clever Frenchman with La Salle and other great explorers. Lahontan, he wrote, was «a man of honor» who «would not lie, and could not lie».

Charlevoix made a concrete and practical suggestion: that of seeking again the friendship of the Sioux and of building somewhere on the Mississippi a strong fort to serve as a wedge between the Sioux and their enemies to the south, the Fox Indians. The French government in 1723 countenanced an expedition with such purposes, but the problem of financing, combined with continued Fox hostilities, delayed it. It was not

until 1727 that, with financial support from Montreal merchants who were given a three-year monopoly of the fur trade, a new expedition set out from Montreal for the Indian country of the Upper Mississippi.

Its leader was René Boucher, Sieur de la Perrière. The Sioux had indicated that they would welcome «blackrobes», and La Perrière took with him two Jesuit missionaries, Michel Guignas and Nicolas de Gonnor. With a flotilla of canoes he set out in June 1727 from Montreal, spent about five weeks before reaching Mackinac, reloaded supplies in large canoes, then paddled along the Michigan shores to Green Bay. He had a pleasant welcome from the Winnebago, and then made his way to the Mississippi, there turning northward. In September the party reached Lake Pepin and landed at its upper end on the Minnesota side.

Here they established Fort Beauharnois, a palisaded enclosure one hundred feet square, with several large buildings and also small cabins, its name honoring the governor of New France, Charles de Beauharnois. The missionaries built a small chapel and called it the Mission of St. Michael the Archangel. Like the Jesuits generally, they had both Christian and scientific purposes. They were soul seekers and map makers, and their equipment included, alongside the Bible, a quadrant, a telescope, and other instruments. In November a celebration was held in honor of the governor's birthday. Rockets were fired and the air resounded with shouts of «Long live the king!» One of the Jesuits, telling of this glamorous event, writes that when the stars fell from the sky, «women and children took flight». The visiting Sioux Indians asked for an end to the play of «this terrible medicine».

The fort, strategic in its location, might have served as a base for an expedition to the Pacific, but this dream faded out. La Per-



rière returned to Montreal in 1728 with one of the missionaries. Some twenty soldiers and traders left at the fort were in a precarious situation because the Fox were again on the warpath, attacking French outposts in Illinois. Beauharnois, determined to administer a severe lesson, sent a little army of four hundred men out from Montreal in 1728 to carry war to the Fox, but the wily natives retreated and avoided pitched battles. The French soldiers, after destroying abandoned villages and burning fields of corn, went back to the East. The garrison on Lake Pepin was advised to give up Fort Beauharnois, and some of its men tried to slip away. They were captured by allies of the Fox, held prisoners, and ultimately released. Off and on, in troubled times, the fort was maintained for a decade. It was abandoned in 1737 after the Sioux who had struck a blow at Frenchmen on the international waterways, appeared at the Lake Pepin post to brandish before the garrison the bloody trophies of their sally against white intrusion in the north. Beauharnois was then left unoccupied until the 1750s, when under new leadership it had another period of activity before the final curtain fell on the French regime.

The French had by no means lost their interest in the waterways and furs of the hinterland beyond Lake Superior. Nor had they put aside their ideas of a northern passage to the western rim of a continent whose vast width was hidden from their understanding. From Radisson to Duluth and later, the north country had stirred French imaginations. Stray bits of information on maps and little items in other records point unmistakably to the early presence of Frenchmen on the international waterways. A *voyageur*, Jacques de Noyon, seems to have spent a winter on the «Ouchichiq River», or Rainy Lake, as early as about 1688. Lake of the Woods appears on early maps; and some evidence indicates that French traders, perhaps including

De Noyon, had in fact been at that western lake before 1717. There is reason to believe that *voyageurs*, including Zacharie Robutel, Sieur de la Noue, had occupied a post at Rainy Lake about the same time (the dates are around 1717 and 1720). La Noue, a soldier of the colonial wars, had been sent as commandant at Kaministikwia in 1717. He served there for four years and was notably successful in drawing in furs from the north country in competition with the Hudson's Bay Company. A shadowy figure in Minnesota history, he deserves a larger place than has been accorded him.

Casual glimpses of little-known Frenchmen in the «savage country» recall the sudden appearance at Le Sueur's lonely post on the Minnesota river of wandering French traders in 1700. The desire for beaver skins and the spirit of adventure may well have drawn many Frenchmen far into the interior with only faint traces in surviving records. The fact that a post at Kaministikwia on the Superior shore was occupied makes it a fair inference that Frenchmen made their way into the regions from which their precious furs came. They were not a breed of men content to sit at water's edge, and they knew how to handle canoes on streams and inland lakes.

While Frenchmen were struggling for a foothold on the Upper Mississippi, a Canadian-born Frenchman, Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, Sieur de la Vérendrye, was maturing plans for an expedition beyond Lake Superior. He was interested in exploration, trade, and the finding of a route to the Sea of the West. La Vérendrye, born at Trois Rivières in 1685, was the son of the governor of that community. As a youth he went to France and fought and was wounded in the battle of Malplaquet (1709). He returned to New France, became an officer in a colonial regiment, married, and had four sons — Jean

Baptiste, Pierre, François, and Louis Joseph— all of whom were to figure in the western saga.

La Vérendrye was made commander of the French post at Lake Nipigon, and there listened to tales told by Indians, notably by a certain Auchagah, of a western river that flowed into a salt sea, of strange mounted men clad in armor, far to the west. Auchagah drew a crude map on birchbark that embodied such ideas and rumors, and La Vérendrye was fired with ambition to head a move westward. He carried his plans to Beauharnois in 1730, with a request for supplies and funds and a hundred men. The governor approved and asked for official authorization from Louis XV. The response from Versailles was affirmative, but no grant was forthcoming, save that both king and governor pledged a monopoly of the fur trade to La Vérendrye.

Once again, as in the case of La Perrière, the motive of trade and the financial support of Montreal merchants turned plans into actuality. In June 1731, La Vérendrye set out from Montreal with three of his sons, a nephew (La Jemeraye), and fifty soldiers and *voyageurs*. Guiding the party was the Nipigon Indian, Auchagah, and at Michilimackinac a Jesuit priest joined the expedition. On August 26 the flotilla of canoes came into the sheltered and picturesque bay at Grand Portage, landing on Minnesota soil at a spot destined for historical fame in fur-trading annals.

Larger plans were deferred until the next year, and La Vérendrye took most of his men north to spend the winter at Kaministikwia. La Jemeraye, however, with one of the La Vérendrye sons, a *voyageur*, and a guide, crossed the portage of some eight or nine miles to the Pigeon River, then went on to the western end of Rainy Lake and built a post called Fort St. Pierre. Here, the next summer, La Vérendrye and his followers

joined La Jemeraye. With a brigade of canoes, they pushed westward to Lake of the Woods, where they established Fort St. Charles in what later became known as Minnesota's Northwest Angle. This fort of 1732 was palisaded, an enclosure one hundred feet by sixty, with two gates, a watchtower, four main buildings, powder magazine and storehouse, chapel, and houses for the commandant and the missionary.

One might imagine such a post as buried in the deep wilderness, without human contacts. The truth, however, is that it was a busy place on an open water route. In the spring of 1733 La Jemeraye departed with furs and made his way the long distance to Montreal and Quebec — and was back by August. In a single day as many as 150 canoes arrived at the fort, Indians bringing foods for trading. One day some 300 Sioux dropped in on their way to attack the Chippewa at Madeline Island, and the next day about 500 other Sioux paused there on a foray against the prairie Sioux. There was incessant trading. Councils were held, one with Cree and Assiniboin Indians, and there were volleys of salutes, speeches and replies, and gifts to the Indians of tobacco, knives, ramrods, powder and shot, awls, beads, needles, vermilion, axes, cloaks.

La Vérendrye, trader and negotiator, was also a farmer and hunter. Corn and peas were planted, wild rice was gathered, and his men fished and hunted. That there was danger from forest fires in the north country, then as now, is known because a Jesuit priest, Father Aulneau, coming out in 1735 to replace the first priest at the fort, wrote,

«I journeyed nearly all the way through fire and a thick stifling smoke, which prevented us from even once catching a glimpse of the sun».

La Vérendrye himself made several jour-

neys back to the East, for he was deeply concerned about his mounting debts and was seeking further support. Meanwhile the fort was held, notwithstanding danger of attack by wandering Sioux war parties, one of which in 1736 massacred a group of Frenchmen sent out from the fort to meet an incoming brigade of canoes loaded with provisions and trade goods. The explorer's son Jean, the missionary Aulneau, and nineteen *voyageurs* were surprised on an island in Lake of the Woods by Sioux seeking revenge because the French were friendly with their own enemies the Cree and Assiniboin. To the last man the French were killed and beheaded. When La Vérendrye learned of this dreadful tragedy, he said,

«I have lost my son, the Reverend Father, and my Frenchmen, misfortunes which I shall lament all my life.»

But he did not give up the fort. Instead he rebuilt and strengthened it, though it was this roving assault that led, as we have seen, to the abandonment of Fort Beauharnois on Lake Pepin in 1737.

Fort St. Charles, however interesting, colorful, and heroic on its own immediate account, is important historically as a base for further exploration westward and for a veritable chain of forts built far beyond Lake of the Woods. Back at Montreal in 1737 the governor, himself under pressure from the colonial minister in France, insistently urged La Vérendrye to carry his explorations farther into the interior. If the merchants were interested in furs, the high officials were concerned about power and expansion. So, too, was La Vérendrye, but trade was his financial foundation and he could not neglect it. Yet he and his sons used Fort St. Charles as a kind of western capital for an empire of the Northwest. La Vérendrye journeyed in 1738 to the Mandan country of the Missouri and

wrote a detailed and fascinating account of the relatively advanced culture of that strange tribe of Indians. A more ambitious expedition headed by two of his sons went still farther west in 1742 toward the lake or sea whose water «is not good to drink». How far they got is uncertain. «On January 1st 1743,» wrote one of the sons «we were in sight of the mountains.» They pushed on to the foothills — but did they reach the Rockies or the Black Hills? No one seems to have a final answer, though the problem has invited much conjecture. What is known is that when they returned to the Missouri they inscribed and buried a lead plaque as a record, and this was found a hundred and seventy years later by a schoolgirl playing on a hill above Fort Pierre, South Dakota.

These pioneering thrusts westward are only a part of the French exploits, for new forts were built in the Canadian Northwest — one near Lake Winnipeg, one where the city of Winnipeg now stands, one up the Assiniboine River, and yet others in the Saskatchewan country. The chain of establishments gave promise of greater achievements to come — save for the impact of events in the East and across the Atlantic. In the late 1740s, La Vérendrye himself, once more in eastern Canada, had every intention of pursuing his explorations and of raising up still more posts in the western country. But his dreams were closed by death in 1749.

The time would come when the very site of old Fort St. Charles, deep in the north country, would be forgotten. More than a century and a half after the fort was built a party of Canadians discovered its site and excavated it. Under the chapel they unearthed the skeletons of La Vérendrye's son and Father Aulneau and the skulls of the *voyageurs* who were massacred with them in 1736.

La Vérendrye is remembered and hon-

ored as a major figure in the history of the continent. His death, however, by no means marked the end of French trade, forts, and occupation in the upper western country. His surviving sons continued their interest and activity. The posts stretching westward from Lake Superior seem to have been maintained, and there was a new spurt of trade and exploration in the Upper Mississippi country. Paul Marin had long been active in the western trade and had been on the Upper Mississippi as early as 1729. He was there again at mid-century and built a Minnesota fort on Lake Pepin, evidently not far from the older Fort Beauharnois. His son Joseph succeeded him at this post after a long journey among Indian tribes in the West, including those in the Sioux country. Recent research has disclosed the interesting fact that in the 1750s there were three important posts in or near Minnesota as well as several lesser establishments. The major posts were La Jonquière, the one built by the elder Marin on Lake Pepin; Duquesne, somewhere near the present site of Brainerd, Minnesota; and Vaudreuil, in Iowa, opposite the point where the Wisconsin joins the Mississippi. The minor posts were on the St. Croix and at or near the junction of the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers.

Several collateral expeditions were sent west and north; efforts were made to learn more about the Sea of the West; and the Marins carried on a vigorous trade in furs. Mercenary clashes in claims and authority took place between the younger Marin and the youngest son of La Vérendrye, Joseph — the «Chevalier» who participated in the exploring expedition that buried the lead plate of 1743. The competition for trading advantages was not just between the two men. It was a contest between the Wisconsin and Fox river route and that of Grand Portage and Lake Superior. In the period of spreading Chippewa occupation of northern Minnesota,

Joseph La Vérendrye was making a bid for the Sioux trade, while Marin was trying to control that trade by promoting peace between the Sioux and Chippewa.

The full detail of the posts both on the Upper Mississippi and in the border country of the north is not clearly revealed for the final years of French dominance, but it appears that they were held longer than was once supposed. If the final chapter of the western French regime has its heroic aspects, there is also evidence of no little venality among higher officials and on the part of some of the traders who employed dishonest means of profiting under the French grants of monopoly.

As the French and Indian War neared its climax on the Plains of Abraham above Quebec, the talent and daring of French officers trained in the rigors of life beyond the Great Lakes were tapped by New France to bolster defense in the East. This obviously meant a loss of leadership in the western areas remote from the St. Lawrence and Ohio valleys. The drama at Quebec in 1759 was greater than that of the two heroic generals who died, the one in victory, James Wolfe, only thirty-two years old, reciting Gray's «Elegy» and remarking that he would rather have written its lines than have taken Quebec; the other Louis Joseph de Montcalm, veteran of Fort Ontario and Ticonderoga, killed with his British conqueror. The historic drama, capped the next year by the English triumph at Montreal, was the climax of nearly three-quarters of a century of what has been called «a single war with interruption». This was the series of French-Indian-British colonial wars and their European counterparts from 1689 to the 1760s. The Treaty of Paris in 1763, by which France gave up all its claims to North America east of the Mississippi (except for the island of New Orleans), marked the end of a prolonged



struggle in the Old and New worlds for domination. Its prize was in effect the North American continent, though France in 1762 had secretly ceded to Spain its possessions west of the great river. Behind the colonial wars there were those of Britain and France and various coalitions: King William's War (the War of the Grand Alliance), Queen Anne's War (the War of the Spanish Succession), King George's War (the War of the Austrian Succession), and the French and Indian War (the Seven Years' War). All these wars on the colonial side had in fact been French and Indian wars, with interludes of semi-peace. The record is one of conflict and treaties — a closing in on New France as Britain, with commanding sea power, and its New World colonies fought for the seaboard and interior valleys and lakes of America, English settlements of more than a million people were matched against thinly occupied New France, much of its vigor routed to trade.

The lilies of France were hauled down on a regime that reached back to Cartier and Champlain, and the Union Jack was raised up over the western posts. The French never achieved their dream of reaching the beckoning Sea of the West, but they accomplished much. They opened routes to the West. They explored mid-America. They made new discoveries, enlarged the map, and reported their findings to the people of the Old World. They expanded the empire whose brilliant center was Versailles, and pioneered the trade in beaver skins and other furs. They learned the ways of the wilderness and trained the gay *voyageurs* who would play a skillful, important, and colorful part in the new regime to come. They scattered French names on the maps of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and other states — names that have lingered to the present day. Through all their regime, they produced leaders of courage, imagination, and hardihood. They left a legacy of buoyancy and curiosity in mid-America and on a state

whose official seal designates Minnesota as *L'Etoile du Nord*.

## THE BRITISH AND A LAKESIDE EMPORIUM

British control of the lands given up by the French was not achieved by any easy transition. The French, it is true, readily abandoned their western posts, but the change of regimes was no simple matter of the French stepping out and the British stepping in.

Even before peace was proclaimed, British troops and traders tried to occupy posts in the frontier region. Their purposes centered particularly in Mackinac and Green Bay, with Detroit as a strategic point of defense. The brilliant Robert Rogers, a «ranger» of distinguished exploits, was sent to take over these establishments, but he encountered the bloody obstacle of Indian war at its worst.

A storm of native protest against the British broke out in the spring of 1763. This was the Pontiac War whose fury extended the long way from Niagara to Mackinac. Some places were captured by the Indians, including Mackinac, but certain key posts, among them Detroit, withstood Pontiac's guile, siege, and assault. In the end the natives were forced to accept the sovereign authority of George III.

The British dominion over the Minnesota region lasted well over a half century after 1763. Wars were fought and treaties negotiated, but they were remote from the beaver country. The British held on despite the Treaty of Paris in 1783 at the end of the Revolutionary War. They clung to the West in the face of Jay's Treaty of 1794. And they ignored the Spanish claim to Minnesota West from 1762 to 1800. Indeed, even the Louisi-

ana Purchase in 1803 did not immediately change the picture of British control. British occupation, British management of the fur trade, British operating posts, British enterprise — these were carried forward decade after decade.

That the British clung to some of their western fur-trading posts after the achievement of American independence is understandable in the light of the circumstances of the time. For one thing, they had reason to believe that a quick release of the posts might foment Indian troubles. They had ample incentive to protect as long as possible their big and long-cycled financial interest in the trade. Moreover there were uncertainties and developing disputes about the precise lines of the international boundary. And the British were well aware of the fact that diplomatic maneuvers followed every war and every treaty. With respect to the Minnesota country, it is also true that Americans did not contest British control until the early 1800s and even then only in a tentative fashion. Not until after the War of 1812 did the United States enforce with troops and a strategic fort the rights which, in its view, had been legally American ever since the Treaty of 1783.

The British regime carried forward the French tradition of Indian trade, without the planting of agricultural settlement. Obviously the time was not ripe for farming in a region so remote from the eastern agricultural frontiers as Minnesota. And Britain recognized realities in its statesmanlike Proclamation of 1763. This organized Quebec and other provinces, but forbade grants of lands in the West or private purchases of such lands from the Indians. In effect it created a vast interior reservation that white settlement could not encroach upon. Though issued while Pontiac's forces were raging, it was no suddenly improvised plan but a considered

policy to conciliate natives and control abuses that had long fed Indian antagonism. Eleven years later, in 1774, the Quebec Act extended the province to the Mississippi, and the Ohio at the south, shutting off the interior from the spread of institutions from the Atlantic colonies. This has been described as the «first constitution nominally in effect in Minnesota», but actually it was not in operation in this region:

Exploration under the British went hand in hand with trade. The old dream of finding a route to the Pacific, if not a Northwest Passage, was turned into reality. The barter for furs and the drive of exploration were continental in scope, but the British did not overlook the potentialities of Minnesota. Before their domination came to an end, they had literally dotted this region with trading posts. The period also witnessed a resumption of competition between trading interests centered in Montreal and those reaching down from Hudson Bay. This was not a French-English struggle, but one almost equally sharp and fierce between rival groups of British merchants.

As the British initially exploited the lucrative trade of the Great Lakes and beyond, they issued licenses, under the Proclamation of 1763, and they centered the trade in large posts, with awards to traders of exclusive rights, not unlike the monopolies of the French. One of these traders, Alexander Henry, only two years after the Treaty of 1763 was granted broad rights in the Superior country. Working out from Chequamegon Bay and the Sault, this native of New Jersey, who had miraculously escaped butchery at Mackinac when it was captured by Indians in 1763, developed trade that reached the Chippewa beyond Lake Superior, hunted for ores, and made himself familiar with the lake region. Other traders, too, journeyed in that region, even on the waterways westward

from Grand Portage.

Western trade in 1767 was released from the rigidities of exclusive grants, and from that time onward many expensive consignments of trade goods went out to Lake Superior and to trading posts far to the west. Small partnerships emerged, and as increasing competition pointed to larger organization, it took form, by several stages, in the North West Company, famous in Minnesota and western business history.

Meanwhile Robert Rogers, commanding the garrison at Mackinac, a man of action and imagination, conceived the idea of sending an expedition to the Pacific Coast to search for the river «Ourigan» and to discover a Northwest Passage from the Pacific to Hudson Bay. Everybody now knew that Cathay was not within easy reach, but the British government, alert to national glory, had offered a prize equivalent to a hundred thousand dollars to the man who should discover a Northwest Passage. Rogers believed that an expedition might cross the continent and then go northward until it found a water passage that would lead back to Hudson Bay. The facts of geography, as later ascertained, did not sustain his hypothesis, but Rogers' willingness to give it a trial accounts for the adventures and writings of a major figure in the colonial history of Minnesota, Jonathan Carver.

A Massachusetts-born colonial, Carver had served as an officer in the French and Indian War. In the spring of 1766 he made his way from Boston to Mackinac, where Rogers commissioned him to go to the Sioux country. His assignment was to win over the friendship of the natives and to invite them to send representatives to a great peace council at Mackinac. Then he was to join, as surveyor, a planned expedition to the Pacific and the «Ourigan» under the leadership of

Captain James Tute, with James Stanley Goddard second in command. So Carver set out to the Northwest, using the Green Bay-Fox Wisconsin route to the Mississippi. He stopped at Prairie du Chien, a trading village that he found thronged with some two hundred Indian warriors. Then, with a Frenchman and an Indian, he went north on the river, paused in November 1766 at a great Minnesota cave now known by his name, proceeded to the Falls of St. Anthony, and wintered some distance up the Minnesota River. The next spring he started southward, held a council near the cave he had visited in the autumn, invited the Sioux to send tribesmen to the Mackinac council, and went down river to meet Tute.

On May 21, 1767, Tute, Goddard, and Carver, with a Chippewa guide and a crew of workers and interpreters, started north on the Mississippi. Originally they intended to push across Minnesota to the Red River and then make their way to the distant Canadian Fort La Prairie, where they expected to find supplies sent by Rogers via Grand Portage. This plan Captain Tute changed, perhaps because his Chippewa guide was apprehensive of Sioux attacks. Instead the explorers journeyed to Lake Superior, paddled to Fond du Lac, the Chippewa village at the mouth of the St. Louis River, and then moved up the north shore to Grand Portage. Here to their bitter disappointment they learned that Rogers had not sent any supplies. The party returned to Mackinac, where Carver dolefully recorded the end of this attempt «to find out a Northwest Passage».

These travels, prosaic and marking no real advance on Duluth and Hennepin, afford scarcely a hint of the historical importance of Carver. This rests instead on his book, *Travels of Jonathan Carver through the Interior Parts of North America in the Years 1766, 1767, and 1768*, published in

London in 1778. Containing a narrative of his travels and an account of American Indian life and customs, this was the first book of travel in this region by an English writer. It was a lively, interesting, and informing account that won wide and long-continued popularity. Through nearly two centuries it has been reprinted forty times in English, French, German, Dutch, even Greek, and its story therefore has reached readers in many lands.

Carver's descriptions are vivid and his outlook is broad. Lake Radisson, he had the vision of a prophet. When he saw the Minnesota country he let himself go in soaring prophecy:

«There is no doubt that at some future period, mighty kingdoms will emerge from these wildernesses, and stately and solemn temples, with gilded spires reaching the skies, supplant the Indian huts, whose only decorations are the barbarous trophies of their vanquished enemies.»

As Hennepin was the first of Europeans to make a drawing of Niagara Falls, so Carver for the first time in history pictured the Falls of St. Anthony, which Hennepin himself had discovered nearly a century earlier.

Carver and his book have been the subject of controversy in modern times. Carver's narrative is alleged to be ungenerous, egotistic, exaggerated. It omits Major Rogers, the inspiring mind behind the expedition. Some critics have believed that even Carver's personal narrative was penned by another. And the second half of his book is largely plagiarism. But Carver's fame has not been much dimmed. New light on his veracity has been shed by his diaries, preserved in the British Museum and not yet published. Scholars know that the reason for the failure of the

Tute expedition to receive supplies to sustain it on a westward trek was that Rogers was in disgrace. He had been imprisoned on trumped-up charges that led to a military trial for treason — and his acquittal. Carver, after the expedition, was in England seeking support for another effort to find the Northwest Passage. One may reasonably assume that he suppressed the name of Rogers and detail on the Tute expedition to avoid prejudicing his case.

The unprinted Carver diaries tell about Rogers and Tute and attest the truthfulness, in the main, of the Carver story. The book does indeed have exaggerations. And at times it departs from details as set down in the diaries, but here again history is friendly to the man. It is probable that when he wrote the manuscript of the book, he did not have his own diaries at hand, and so it seems likely that he wrote his narrative from memory. If so, it was a good achievement even if, like Homer, he occasionally nodded. The second part of his book — really a separate work — drew much upon Charlevoix and other writers without acknowledgment, but modern critics sometimes forget that borrowings from other writers were common in the travel literature of the eighteenth century. The custom of the time, as a noted historian has remarked, was to quote without quotation marks. Carver was one of many who indulged in the practice.

Controversy of a more malodorous kind trailed Carver after his death in 1780. A new edition of his book included a fantastic account of a vast grant of lands alleged to have been made to him at the spring conference in 1767. He himself had made no mention of any such grant in his book or diaries, and he had advanced no claims in relation to it. Later claimants produced a document intended to substantiate their petitions for great stretches of land. The document was patent-



ly forged. Had there been such a transaction, it would have been an impudent violation of the Proclamation of 1763. Many years later the claim was rejected by Congress, but even in the twentieth century it has reared its absurd and spurious head many times in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

As to Carver, if he merits no high place in the galaxy of western explorers, yet the travels narrated were his own. And his book was a readable contribution to the literature that revealed the Middle West to the minds of curious Europeans.

Early and late in Minnesota history, Yankee influence has been important. It was another colonial Yankee, colorful and shrewd, who came up the Mississippi and spent two years in Minnesota trading with the Indians just before the American Revolution. This was Peter Pond, whose diary for those years was miraculously rescued from a Connecticut kitchen stove long after Pond's death. The diarist recorded his adventures in words spelled by him exactly as he pronounced them, and the result is a quaintness that does not mask the clarity and acuteness of a good writer and remarkable man. Before his journeys to the West, he was a soldier in the French and Indian War, having enlisted when he was only sixteen.

«One Evening in April,» he wrote, «the Drums an Instaments of Musick were all Employed to that Degrea that thay Charmed me.» At Detroit he had a duel with a man who had abused him in a «Shameful manner». This episode came to a quick end: «We met the Next Morning Fairley & Discharged Pistels in which the Pore Fellowe was unfortenat.»

Pond engaged in a partnership for trade on the Upper Mississippi, loaded his trading goods into twelve large canoes, and set out from Mackinac in 1773. At Prairie du Chien,

by this time a lively center, he delegated nine agents to trade on different streams flowing into the Mississippi, while he himself went to the mouth of the Minnesota and built a cabin some distance up that river. Here Indians brought in beavers and other skins and furs, and Pond said, «Thay ware Welcom, and we Did our bisnes to advantage.»

In the spring Pond returned to Prairie du Chien to find that his agents had been highly successful. He records the sight of 130 canoes at the Prairie du Chien water front, from Mackinac and even from as far away as New Orleans, and the village was crowded with traders and Indians. He then went back to Minnesota for another year (1774-75) and collected furs valued at close to \$20,000. His adventures on the Upper Mississippi attest the colonial and British exploitation of its wealth of furs, but for Pond they were a minor episode in a career that won him lasting fame. Like Radisson he sensed that the essential clue to the best beaver skins was «north». He journeyed to Grand Portage and in later years went far into the Canadian Northwest, to the Athabasca region and even as far as Great Slave Lake. Skilled as a trader, he became one of the founders of the North West Company, and he also figures in western history as a clever map maker.

As the British regime established itself west of the Great Lakes, the name of «Grand Portage» appeared with increasing frequency in the contemporary records. The place was strategically located at the Lake Superior edge of the trail to the Pigeon River and the water road to the vast interior. It fronted on a picturesque bay guarded by an island which has been likened to «an emerald on a lady's hand mirror». A beautiful spot, Grand Portage was a meeting place for trade and travel from Montreal and from the rivers and lakes of northern America. That the French had occupied a post at this «great carrying

place» seems certain. It is equally certain that from La Vérendrye's day onward they had made much use of the portage. The British were not slow in exploiting Grand Portage. Carver, referring to his visit in 1767, hoped to meet the traders «that annually go from Michilimackinac to the northwest», a clear confirmation that the British were sending traders and canoes packed with trade goods to the place of rendezvous. Carver in fact reported that several hundreds of Indians were there awaiting the arrival of traders. He makes no mention of buildings or a stockade, but evidence indicates that beginnings were made the following year on a major post that grew progressively in importance during the next decade and blossomed into its great period of the 1780s and 1790s. This was the era of the North West Company, an alignment of copartnerships formed at Montreal in 1779 and reorganized under a new agreement in 1784. It changed in the constituency of its partners from time to time and dominated the trade via Grand Portage as it expanded in its capital and power.

Grand Portage was an emporium for an international trade based on capital and credit. The cycle of this trade was one of three or more years between the placing of orders for goods in London by Montreal merchants and the return of profits from sales in the markets of England. The business was potentially big — but slow. Orders sent from Montreal in the fall were filled and the goods dispatched from England the next spring. Then came the laborious task of making up packs at Montreal (of ninety pounds each) before they were sent, after the following winter, to the post on Lake Superior. Here in the summer, after repacking, the goods were taken up by traders who went off to the interior for a year of trading. Then furs were brought to Grand Portage, shipped on to Montreal and to London, where, after further delays, they were marketed. No wonder that such

procedures led first to combinations and then to a kind of organized monopoly, fashioned by businessmen, not, as with the French, by governmental assignment.

How rapidly the Grand Portage post was built up by the British after beginnings in the 1760s is not clear, but its trade in 1778 was measured at 40,000 pounds sterling, and 500 persons took part in it. By that time there were buildings enclosed in a stockade. A small military fort was erected to accommodate a few British troops (a dozen soldiers) sent out for protection — the only military operation during the American Revolution that touched Minnesota soil. By the 1790s the stockaded (and bastioned) post, nestling near the bay and in the lee of a high hill called Mount Rose, had sixteen buildings, including a great mess hall where a hundred men could foregather for meals, storerooms, and houses for partners and clerks.

Outside the enclosure was a canoe yard where each year as many as seventy «north canoes» were built. Wharves for landing were on the lake shore — at some time also an L-shaped dock — and in the gala period the company even had a schooner (of ninety-five tons) to facilitate transportation to and from the Sault. The tents of Indians and of *voyageurs*, ground for a few cattle, a vegetable garden, and the dark opening of the portage path were features in the Grand Portage scene. At the terminus of the portage, some nine miles away on the Pigeon River, was another post, Fort Charlotte — a travel station for arrivals and departures, where canoes of the northern rivers and lakes were loaded and unloaded.

The West was not untouched by the American Revolution. George Rogers Clark in the Illinois country, with his captures of Kaskaskia and Cahokia in 1778 and his defeat of General Hamilton, menaced the west-

ern trade of the British, but throughout the war years they kept their hold on Mackinac and Detroit, essential to the trade from Montreal. Thus, though a new nation was rising in the storm of war, and portentous events were happening in the outer world, Grand Portage, summer after summer from the 1770s through the next two decades, was crowded with people concerned solely with furs and the exploitation of the wilderness.

Life at Grand Portage was especially exciting in July, that busiest of months for the traders. At the lakeside emporium, when organization of the trade gradually took shape, the magnates of the business, «the Gentlemen of the North West Company», met to assign tasks and to consider the problems and policies of an enterprise that had a commercial sweep from Grand Portage to the Rockies and beyond, and eastward to the Montreal center and across the waters to London.

Grand Portage was the Great Lakes base from which Alexander Mackenzie and his *voyageurs* pushed out to Lake Athabasca (over streams and a hundred portages) and then (in 1789) to the great northwestern river that bears his name and on to the rim of the Arctic Ocean. And from Grand Portage in 1792 he once more set out for the distant West, this time making his way up the Peace River, finally crossing the Rockies and catching a thrilling view of the Pacific Ocean. Not indeed the Northwest Passage that Rogers sought, but a dream come true — an overland expedition across America to the Salt Sea of the West!

Mackenzie was a man of iron will and resolute courage, but he was only one of many in the Grand Portage chronicle whose names and careers are well remembered in Canadian and American history. There are David Thompson, Simon Fraser (Vermont in origin), the phonetic Peter Pond, the Al-

exander Henrys, the Jean Baptiste Cadottes, and Dr. John McLoughlin, who knew Grand Portage and Vermilion and Rainy lakes long before he won renown in the pioneer history of Oregon. And there were able traders and organizers who bore such Scottish names as McLeod, McKay, McGillivray, and McDonald, as well as other Mackenzies, and the great Simon McTavish himself, partner of Benjamin and Joseph Frobisher and a founding magnate, with them and others, of the North West Company.

Alexander Henry the Elder continued his activity in the Superior and western region for many years. In 1775, accompanied by the experienced French-Canadian Jean Baptiste Cadotte as a partner, he left Sault Ste. Marie with a fleet of sixteen canoes loaded with goods worth about \$15,000 and manned by *voyageurs*. They paddled around Lake Superior to Grand Portage, then carried their goods across the trail to the Pigeon River, and were off for Lake of the Woods and the Canadian Northwest to trade for furs and hunt with the Indians. Some idea of the wealth of the trade is suggested by the fact that during the winter twenty to thirty Indians arrived at the white men's camp every day bringing in packs of skins and furs. From a single group Henry and Cadotte bartered for «twelve thousand beaver skins, besides large numbers of otter and marten».

Cadotte's son, also Jean Baptiste, *voyageur* and trader like his father, made a daring expedition into the Minnesota Sioux country in 1792, with a party of sixty men, including his brother Michel. They ascended the St. Louis River and made their way by stream and portage to Sandy Lake and the Mississippi, built a winter camp in the interior, and the next spring reached the Red River. They then went north to the border waters and traveled east to Grand Portage. Cadotte urged the North West Company to develop trade

with the Sioux by building new trading posts, and soon several such establishments were set up, based on one built in 1793 at Fond du-Lac, not far from the site of the later city of Duluth, by Jean Baptiste Perrault, a French-Canadian who had traded in the region for several years.

In developing the trade with Chippewa, Sioux, and other Indians, the North West Company planted many trading posts at strategic spots on Minnesota rivers and lakes and in areas far to the west and northwest of Minnesota. There were such posts at Vermilion, Sandy, Leech, Cass, Red, and Rainy lakes, and on the St. Croix and other rivers — and in fact at a score of other Minnesota places. Some were large and substantial, such as that at Sandy Lake, others more modest. Usually the buildings erected — storehouse, shop, powder magazine, houses for the clerk in charge and for the men — were given the protection of a stockade. Ordinarily the flag-decked posts were called «posts», as in fact they were, serving both as trading centers and as defense against attack, if any, by hostile natives. A survey made some years ago of the fur trade in the Minnesota area for the French, British, and American periods listed more than 130 trading posts, and researches have since brought to light still others. For the British period Grand Portage was central to the trade of the border waters and beyond, but it was only one of many business stations exploiting the riches of woods and waters for the world of fashion.

The cartography of the Northwest advanced as trade intensified, for not a few traders were skillful at map-making. In 1797 at Grand Portage Mackenzie — by then Sir Alexander — and other officials appointed David Thompson as surveyor and astronomer for the North West Company.

No choice could have been happier, for

Thompson was a self-taught master of sextant, compass, and telescope. He was a meticulous recorder of travels and a map maker extraordinary. As a boy he had been apprenticed from England to the Hudson's Bay Company, which he served for thirteen or fourteen years, learning trading techniques and perfecting his knowledge of instruments and skill as an observer in uncharted regions. Indians nicknamed him the «Star Man» before he offered his services to the rival of the Hudson's Bay Company; and he was quickly commissioned to join a brigade of traders heading west in August 1797. His assignment was to survey the forty-ninth parallel and a route to the headwaters of the Missouri, and also to map the trading posts of the North West Company. He journeyed to Lake of the Woods, northwest to Lake Winnipeg, then southwest across the Dakota plains to the Mandan villages on the Missouri. He faced peril from storm and Sioux attack with self-reliance and courage. He recorded carefully the unusual level of culture of the Mandan community and then trekked eastward, passing through northern Minnesota. He came close to discovering the source of the Mississippi, reached Lake Superior at the mouth of the St. Louis, followed the south shore of the lake to the Sault, and journeyed back to Grand Portage along the north shore. When he arrived at its friendly harbor, he had been gone ten months and had surveyed four thousand miles of wilderness. He made detailed notes of his travels then as later when, in 1809, he crossed the Rockies and went down the Columbia to the sea. After the War of 1812 he helped to mark out the boundary between the United States and Canada. He lived to be a very old man, his lifework culminating in a map of the West on such a prodigious scale that he could not get it published. But his achievements won for him a recognized place in the history of the two neighboring countries as a «land geographer».



Another engaging figure of Grand Portage and the West is Alexander Henry the Younger, a nephew of the Alexander Henry whose exploits touch the earlier history of the region. The fame of the younger Henry rests both on his adventures and on one of the most vivid and detailed diaries ever kept in the western country. In 1800, after crossing the portage, he started with a fleet of canoes for the Red River Valley, where he had already spent a year and was to devote eight more seasons trading for the North West Company. Into his canoes were packed sugar, flour, tobacco, knives, tools, guns, powder, cloth, looking glasses — and firewater (ten kegs of liquor in each canoe). In the Red River country Henry first built a post at the junction of the Park and the Red rivers, then moved to the mouth of the Pembina. Here he built a stockade enclosing a few buildings and raised a flagpole seventy-five feet high. He was ready for business, and business developed. One year he sent back to Grand Portage furs and pelts in these numbers: 1621 beavers, 125 black bears, 49 brown bears, 4 grizzly bears, 862 wolves, 509 foxes, 152 raccoons, 322 fishers, 214 otters, 1456 martens, 507 minks, 45 wolverines, 469 moose, and 12,470 muskrats.

Henry's diary tells of buffalo hunts, prairie fires, a journey to the Mandans and Cheyennes, and annual returns to Grand Portage. He also records the degrading effects of liquor on the natives, «the root of all evil,» as he wrote, «in the North West» — but still he dispensed it in appalling quantities. Henry traveled by canoe, cart, dog sled, and horseback in his many journeys. Toward the end of his career he went out to Astoria, famed trading post on the Columbia River. There in 1814 he was drowned, along with Donald McTavish and a group of *voyageurs* when their boat capsized. Fortunately his diary was not lost in the swirling waters of the Columbia.

In a typical summer in the 1780s and 1790s Grand Portage, especially in July, was swarming with people — as many as a thousand white men, and hundreds of Indian braves, squaws, children — and dogs. Noise, excitement, feasting, fun, news and gossip were crammed into the precious days when hard-bitten men from lonely winter posts met friends from other wilderness places and also traders and *voyageurs* newly arrived from Montreal.

There was much hard work to do. The trade goods brought in great canoes from the East had to be repacked in accordance with varying needs at the interior posts, and the skins and furs had to be sorted and baled for shipment east. Many kinds of furs came to Grand Portage, as Alexander Henry's list for one season illustrates, but prime beaver pelts were the very basis of the trade — pelts from which felt could be made and then turned into the great (and expensive) beaver hats that were immensely popular in the European world.

The trade had an even greater international sweep than that from wilderness posts to London by way of Montreal. Great fur auctions were held every year in London and also in Germany, at Leipzig, with fur buyers from far and near. There are records of furs out of the north country bought by Russians, transported across Siberia, and marketed in Canton and other Chinese cities. The beaver not only supplied the demands of fashion but, for special reasons, contributed hugely to the high success of the North West Company. These reasons were that the company exploited northern areas which produced the finest pelts and it pushed relentlessly its search for new territory that had not been raided by other ruthless fur hunters. With large capital and assured credit, the company had the resources for big business. It also received from England trade goods, including

blankets, of superior quality. The full western trade of the British involved furs valued annually at considerably more than a million dollars.

Beavers were so highly prized, it may be noted incidentally, that the social organization of the North West Company magnates in Montreal was called «The Beaver Club». It was founded in 1785 and its membership was restricted to men who had wintered in the north country.

Grand Portage in summer dress, at the heyday of the trade, was colorful. Here assembled many of the partners, the overlords of the trade; clerks from distant posts; interpreters and guides; and the dashing French-Canadian *voyageurs*. These French-speaking *voyageurs*, celebrated in western lore, were the canoemen of lakes and rivers, tough, hardy, gay; insouciant, skilled in wilderness travel. They were basic contributors to the success of the trade. There were two classes, the «pork eaters» (*mangeurs du lard*) and the «winterers» (*hivernants*). The pork eaters were the canoemen of the Great Lakes, *voyageurs* who had not been toughened and experienced by life in the interior but who nonetheless were splendid canoemen capable of paddling the long way out from Montreal and back. They also helped to carry the ninety-pound packs of traders' goods across the portage to Fort Charlotte, not infrequently loading two or even more at a time on their backs. Their customary food was hominy boiled in pork fat. The winterers, or «Nor'westers» (as they were called if their careers had taken them over the Height of Land beyond Superior), were men of the interior, experienced in every kind of travel from canoe to dog sled, workers in the trade under the clerks through the long winters, adventurers ready to face any hazard.

The *voyageur* was as colorful in dress as

he was individual in speech and custom. He wore a bright capote, brilliant in blue, and often a red cap. He had a braided sash, leggings and deerskin moccasins, and, if he had achieved the proud status of a «Nor'wester», a plume. He was gay, tough, voluble, and a great smoker (equipped with clay pipe and a beaded pouch). He had strength and endurance for strenuous portages, long stints of paddling, and life in the open amid every condition of weather. The historian of the *voyageurs* quotes one French-Canadian who for twenty-four years had been a canoeman, could sing fifty songs, had saved ten lives, and had twelve wives. To him no life was «so happy as a *voyageur's* life».

Not the least interesting aspect of the life of the *voyageurs* who had wintered in wilderness posts was their food supply. One of the major items was pemmican. This remarkable food, made of pounded buffalo meat, was vital to survival through the long winter months. It was so important, in fact, that its production and distribution became an organized and big business. Forts far out in the buffalo country served as manufacturing centers, and other posts, including Grand Portage, were used as distributing places. Some posts stored supplies of pemmican in hundreds of packs of the customary size.

At Grand Portage the partners, or *bourgeois*, and clerks (*commis*) in charge of distant posts were housed within the stockade and ate their meals in the great dining hall. The *voyageurs* were outside the enclosure. The pork eaters usually slept under their overturned canoes and the winterers in tents. The latter were given rations of meat and bread and wine instead of the hominy of the pork eaters.

Sometimes long-protracted balls were held in the big mess room inside the palisades, to which the *voyageurs* might be invited —

violins, flutes, and bagpipes furnishing the music for squares and reels, Indian girls and women the dancing partners. But perhaps the most dramatic moments were those when great Montreal canoes (the *canoës du maître*), thirty-five feet to forty feet long, propelled by fourteen paddles, came sweeping in brigades into the harbor from the curving Point de Chapeau, red-bladed paddles flashing in rhythm with spirited *voyageur* songs, the men dressed in their very best finery. Then came the graceful landing, shouts of welcome, and quick interchange of news from the faraway world and from forts deep in the wilderness. The «north canoe» (*canot nord*) was smaller than the craft from Montreal, perhaps twenty-five feet in length, yet it could carry some three thousand pounds of baggage in addition to its crew, usually eight men.

These men out of French Canada were people who worked, played, and laughed, and they were also singing men. Their songs were many, but their favorite was «*A la claire fontaine*», a chanson of a love lost all for an undelivered bunch of roses. Many of the songs were drawn from the folk melodies and verse of the valley of the Loire, brought to Canada by the French in the seventeenth century. Not a few were plaintive, but many were vigorous and rollicking. One of these was «*En roulant ma boule*», «A-rolling my ball», which runs on for a dozen or more stanzas about ponds, three bonnie ducks, and a prince «on hunting bound» who carried a gun «with silver crown'd».

The *voyageur* songs were adapted to singing in rhythm with the strokes of paddles on lakes and rivers. They were also used on trudges across winter trails behind dog sleds or in camps or sheltered posts. Not many songs seem to have been created out of the wilderness experience. The *voyageurs* loved ballads of nightingales, cavaliers, springtime,

rosebuds, fair ladies, and gallant captains. A collection of *voyageur* songs made in the early 1800s in the far north by a North West Company clerk who played the fiddle has disappeared. It is believed that the songs he collected were destroyed because many of them were offensive to good taste, even obscene. One wonders if they were inventions, possibly parodies, produced by the *voyageurs* themselves, who were not precisely averse to indecorous ways.

The expanding trade of the North West Company in the 1790s was not without competition. To what extent independent traders or other partnerships were active is not entirely clear, but in 1791 the British abandoned the traditional system of governmental licenses for traders and trade goods sent from Montreal to the interior. This action encouraged greater freedom for the fur trade. Not a few traders and groups of traders, working out from Mackinac, explored the Wisconsin and Upper Mississippi trade. For instance, Robert Dickson, Scottish in background and a member of the elite Beaver Club of Montreal, formed a partnership, including French traders, that operated northward on the Mississippi from Prairie du Chien, with posts on the Rum River, at Sauk Rapids, at the mouth of the Minnesota, and even as far north as Leech Lake, in the 1800s. This was British trade carried on with both Sioux and Chippewa. And a dissenting group of traders, about 1797-98, formed the competing XY Company, which also built a post at Grand Portage and one on the Pigeon River, but after much rivalry was absorbed by the North West Company, some seven years later.

More serious was the developing competition of the Hudson's Bay Company which had found it impossible to sustain its old policy of drawing the Indians and their furs up to the posts on or near the Bay. Even before the 1790s the older company was build-

ing posts toward the south, some, but not many, in or close to the Minnesota country. This competition would flare into bloodshed and veritable war after the Earl of Selkirk in 1811 obtained a vast grant of land from the Hudson's Bay Company for a colonization plan that threatened the fur domain of the North West Company.

Meanwhile, however, the western headquarters of the company were removed from Grand Portage to Fort William, about 1804. Jay's Treaty in 1794 had specified that the British were to give up their western posts on American territory in 1796, and as a result many important ones were relinquished, including Detroit, Oswego, Mackinac, and Green Bay. Although the agreement was not observed in the Minnesota country, the treaty was a sign of transition that the North West Company took under careful consideration. A change, if not imminent, was inevitable. The treaty did indeed permit foreign traders to do business on American territory, but this did not mean British forts and posts flying the Union Jack.

The removal from Grand Portage to Fort William was more than a precaution spurred by Anglo-American diplomacy. It developed in part from a British rediscovery of the Kaministikwia water route to Dog Lake and the international channel that traders had approached by way of the Pigeon River. This rediscovery of a way familiar to the French meant an all-British approach to the boundary waters. The removal was also, in some sense, an anticipation of American legal action that actually did not come until after the War of 1812 — the rescinding in 1816 by the American Congress of the privilege agreed upon in Jay's Treaty. No one yet knew, when the company was planning its move north, precisely where the international boundary line would be drawn, but the partners were clear that a new depot was called for. In fact

Simon McTavish clearly saw the advantages of Fort William over Grand Portage as early as 1799, when he was apprised of the Kaministikwia route by its rediscoverer, Roderick McKenzie.

Perhaps the definitive mark of transition in the northern hinterland was the merging of the North West Company into the Hudson's Bay in 1821 — two years after the American flag was raised over a military fort at the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers. The saga of Grand Portage and the British regime had run its course through more than five decades, a trading prelude to the American regime. The record is one of trading posts, the collecting and marketing of furs in a wide-ranging business, diplomatic maneuvers, a succession of forceful personalities of British (to a great degree Scottish), French, and Yankee backgrounds, and the lives and services of the *voyageurs*, who enlivened the period with their vivacity and color. The British regime in Minnesota forms an interlude between the French and the American regimes. Louise Phelps Kellogg has said of the British in Wisconsin that they «developed no institutions, assumed no governmental functions, built up no settlements». Theirs was certainly a «wilderness regime» devoted to the fur business. It must fairly be added that their business was one of extraordinary efficiency in organization and method. The British contributed to the expansion of geographical knowledge of Minnesota and the West, leaving a rich legacy of maps, diaries, narratives, and other records.

Grand Portage subsided into a quiet little village of Indians and a few whites, including in later times fishermen and missionaries. The buildings and palisades of the once flourishing emporium crumbled and disappeared, although even today the portage trail on which thousands of feet trudged in the eighteenth century is still clearly marked. The is-



land emerald shines at the outer edge of the harbor; and a few decades ago the L-shaped dock, the palisades, and the central building of the old trading post were reconstructed. In 1958 Grand Portage was accorded historical recognition by Congress as a national monument, and a new fur-trade museum is being planned for the old center.

A modern and dramatic sequel to the story is the Underwater Research Program of the Minnesota Historical Society. This institution has sent skin-divers to certain spots in the north country — on the water trail of the *voyageurs* — where, because of dangerous rapids, canoes laden with trade goods were suspected of having capsized in early days. The idea resulted in the recovery in 1960, on Saganaga Lake, of a nest of seventeen copper and brass kettles, and in 1961, on the Bass-

wood River, of thirty-five trade axes and twenty-four spears and chisels, along with buttons, beads, musket balls, knives, and even a small piece of Indian face paint. The discoveries, made after studies of journals and other records of early traders and travelers, are of interest intrinsically and as evidence of the perils faced by men on the turbulent streams of the interior in the gala period of the wilderness trade. The *voyageurs* were expert canoemen, but now and then they struck rocks as they dared dangerous waters and, with their canoes broken, their cargoes went to the bottom. Now, by methods of which they never dreamed, their lost goods are being recovered as artifacts of a vanished era, that of the 1780s or 1790s, when Grand Portage was the capital of an industrial western empire.

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## THE HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF DETROIT

by Almon Ernest Parkins

### DETROIT UNDER CADILLAC

The first authentic description of a visit to the Detroit region by white men is by Father Hennepin, who in 1679 accompanied La Salle on his way to Green Bay in the *Griffon*, the first vessel on the Upper Lakes. Few Indians lived on the banks of the river before 1701, and consequently the region attracted neither trader nor missionary, both of whom sought the Indians around their camp fires. Moreover, the Detroit region lay on the war-path of the Iroquois, who made frequent excursions to the west, even to the prairies of Illinois.

Father Hennepin describes the Detroit region as follows:

«The country between the two lakes is well situated and the soil is fertile. The banks of the Streight [Strait] are vast meadows and the prospect is terminated with some hills covered with vineyards. Trees bear good fruit. Groves and forests are so well disposed that one would think Nature alone could not make, without the help of art, so charming a prospect. That country is stocked with stags, wild goats [?], and bear, which are good for food and not so fierce as in other countries. Turkey-cocks and swans are also common . . . The forests are chiefly made up of walnut trees, chestnut trees, plum trees and pear trees [?]

loaded with their own fruits and vines. There is also abundant timber fit for building; so those that shall be so happy as to inhabit that noble country, cannot but remember with gratitude those who have discovered the way by venturing to sail upon an unknown lake for 100 (one hundred) leagues.»

On a map of unknown authorship, published about 1690, is printed the following, concerning the Detroit region:

«All this country which is in the region of Lake Terocharronting [Lake Erie] is discovered and explored. The winters are moderate and short. Grapes are in abundance. Savage oxen [buffalo], fowls, and all sorts of game are found in abundance and there is still much beaver.»

To the explorer accustomed to the thin soils and rigorous climate of the lower St. Lawrence, Detroit must have seemed a fruitful region, especially when visited in the summer. Hennepin's description doubtless is overdrawn, but the locality had a strong attraction for the French trader, voyager, and settler apart from its strategic importance. Hennepin writes that he tried to persuade La Salle to make a settlement on the «charming streight».

Cadillac was in command at Michillimackinac from 1694 to 1697. It was while stationed there that he witnessed the ready

access of the Iroquois traders to the Upper Lakes along the connecting waterways, and conceived the idea of building a post on the Straits which should be a stronghold of French power, a check to the westward advance of British commercial interests, and a barrier to the Iroquois on their western raids. Trading in furs without a license was prohibited in New France, but the English had no such restrictions, and drew many of the French traders to them. A post on the Straits would also check these *coureurs de bois* from carrying their furs to Albany. His final conception was that it should be a colony, a settlement with a garrison, traders, and farmers, all working together for the advancement of the glory of France. About it he would collect the Indian tribes, and teach them the ways of civilized man. There should be schools for the Indian and white youths, in which methods of agriculture could be taught. A regiment of Indian soldiers might be organized.

Many of the French officials both in Canada and France opposed the building of a post so far inland. The king pointed out that with the establishment of so remote a post, traffic would be drawn from the settled portions of the colony and those engaged in the trade would move to the newly established center. This would tend to weaken the colony on the lower St. Lawrence. He thought the expense for the upkeep of the fort and the pay of the soldiers would be great. Cadillac had anticipated such an objection by stating in his plea that it would not be necessary «to grant any concessions at that place for fear of weakening the colony by extending it too much», and he hoped to conduct affairs such that the post would not be an expense to the Crown.

The project was much debated at the French court. The real question to be answered was, whether the Indians then and ul-

timately were to be made subjects of the English or the French monarch. The extension of the fur trade constantly was bringing new tribes of Indians into trade relations. Whether the French or the English would find friends among these new tribes depended on which party was the more accessible. This fact decided the issue. A post at Detroit would facilitate the trade with the western Indians and lay the foundations for a friendship that would make them the allies of the French.

The effectiveness of the cheaper goods of the English in winning the friendship of the Indians must have been discussed, for Cadillac and the Company of the Colony of Canada, which for a time held the monopoly of trade at Detroit, asked His Majesty to supply them

«with powder, lead and arms for trading with the savages, at the same price as he got them from the contractor, so that by supplying them to the savages cheaper than the English, they [the French] might take away from them [the savages] all incentive to take their furs to that nation».

At length after much discussion, Cadillac was given power to establish his post. On October 16, 1700, Callières, then Governor of Canada, wrote to Pontchartrain as follows:

«I shall send Sieur de la Mott [Cadillac] and Sieur de Tonty in the spring to construct a fort at Detroit. My design is that they shall go by the Outaouacs River [Ottawa River] in order to take possession of that post from the Lake Huron side, by that means avoid the Niagara passage, so as not to give umbrage to the Iroquois through fear of disturbing the peace, until I can speak to them to prevent any alarm that they might feel at such proceedings, and un-

til I adopt some measure to facilitate the communication and conveyance of necessaries from this to that, through Lake Ontario.»

Peace having been made with the Iroquois on September 8, 1700, the French were careful not to do anything that would give them offense. The Iroquois heard of the intentions of the French to establish a post at Detroit, and complained grievously to the Governor of New France and also to the Governor of New York. Later they insisted that His Britannic Majesty apply to the French king for redress. In August, 1701, about one month after the arrival of Cadillac and his party at Detroit, De Callières met the assembled tribes of Abenaks, Algonquians, Hurons, Ottawas, Illinois, Miamis, and Iroquois. He pleaded for peace; explained the establishment of the fort at Detroit, and stated that it was his policy to exclude the English from proceeding thither.

The party of Cadillac arrived in the Detroit River on July 24, and after examining the river up and down for a suitable spot on which to erect the fort, they chose a site on the first terrace. Though the ground behind was higher, it was too far from the river; the location selected gave the fort a commanding position. Palisades were constructed enclosing about three acres of land. On July 26 the foundation of a church was laid, and log houses soon were constructed.

In the *Paris Documents*, it is claimed that the party considered the building of the fort and settlement on Grosse Isle, some fifteen miles down the river.

«Grand Island,» they say, «is very fine and fertile and extensive. It is estimated from six to seven leagues in circumference. There is an extraordinary quantity of apple trees on the island. . . . Abundance of excellent mill-stones are

found . . . All around are found fine prairies. It was for a long time doubtful whether Detroit should not be founded there. The cause of the hesitation was the apprehension that timber might some day fail.»

Cadillac brought with him provisions for only three months. Having arrived too late for the planting of corn and the sowing of wheat, the party had to depend on the Indians and the chase for food. They got land ready for sowing fall wheat, which was grown with great success. Next spring soldiers and civilians were urged to plant and cultivate as much land as possible. Supplies for the Indian trade were brought from Montreal, and the little settlement was fairly established by the second winter. Burton says,

«What on July 23, 1701, was a wilderness, on the next day was a houseless city of a hundred souls, and in eight months' time was a rival of Montreal and Quebec in trade.»

Cadillac did his best to gather many Indian tribes about him. His experience with Indian life at Michillimackinac had taught him how to win the confidence of the savages, and many came. Burton says that during the winter of 1701 and 1702 about six thousand Indians wintered at Detroit.

On one of his early trips to Montreal and Quebec, Cadillac brought back two canoe-loads of wheat (five to ten tons) to be used as seed, together with many other kinds of grain, and the materials for a mill. The difficulties of getting horses and cattle to Detroit were great. They could not be brought in the small boats commonly used, and to bring them by land along the shores of the Lakes through the pathless forest and underbrush, across rivers too deep to be forded, was an almost superhuman task. However, Cadillac brought three horses at an early date, two of



which soon died; for many years the survivor was the only horse in the settlement. From the Paris Archives it is learned that in 1707

«Sieur de la Motte had horses and cattle taken overland.» «There are,» the report says, «already a small number of pigs there and a quantity of poultry. Still larger numbers are to be taken this year together with some sheep.»

The first large migration of people took place in the summer of 1706. Cadillac the year before had taken steps to have more complete control of the settlement. To encourage thrift, make the settlers more contented, and insure the permanence of the settlement, Cadillac granted land to actual settlers. The first grant was made March 10, 1707, to Jean Fofard, an interpreter; others followed. Such grants, however, were not in fee simple; they remained in possession of the owner only as long as the land granted was cultivated. In reality all the land belonged to the Crown or to the seignorage. The feudal system was in vogue in New France, and Cadillac was virtually a feudal lord. He owned the fort, the church, the gristmill, the brewery, the warehouse, the barn, and the very fruit trees brought from France. He was the court of last resort in all civil matters. After 1707 he controlled the privileges of fur trading and the granting of licenses at the post.

In 1707 it was reported that there were two hundred seventy persons in the settlement, including twenty-five families, and it was expected that fully one hundred more families would come the following summer. More than one hundred and fifty persons came in the three years 1707, 1708, and 1709; and by 1710 the cultivated farms extended for six miles along the river. But the growth of the settlement was relatively slow, largely because there were few people in New France with which a settlement could be built. It is

estimated that all New France had less than fifteen thousand settlers in 1700. Detroit was in many respects a premature settlement. It was not the logical outgrowth of a migrating people as were all later American settlements of the interior. It was settled chiefly to aid the French to control the trade in furs. When this trade declined in importance, the settlement naturally would decline. The oncoming tide of American settlers reached it before the fur trade ceased to sustain it. Its real significant growth came when the American settlers gave it a surer basis for existence.

The early growth of the settlement was retarded by other factors. Ecclesiastical, civil, and military officials for many years opposed it in various ways. The establishment of a post at Detroit meant the abandonment of Michillimackinac as the Indians near the latter post were to be brought to Detroit, and the trade which had developed there would be centered at Detroit. Many of the officials were interested in the trade at Michillimackinac and, therefore, opposed the post at Detroit. The Jesuits who had the mission at Michillimackinac opposed the founding of Detroit because it involved the loss of their Indian converts and friends, and also because they were debarred by Cadillac from settling there.

When the post was first proposed it was understood that Cadillac would have the monopoly of the trade; that, undoubtedly, was one of the motives that actuated him in proposing a post. But in 1700 some of the merchants at Montreal asked for the exclusive privilege of trade at Detroit. Cadillac, singularly enough, was one of the applicants. The petition was granted, and a corporation called the Company of the Colony of Canada was formed. Within five years the company became insolvent and in 1705 or 1706 surrendered the monopoly of trade to Cadillac.

To the Company of the Colony a fort was not objectionable, for that would aid in collecting furs, but no revenue could be derived from the farms. Farming in the Detroit region, until cheap transportation to the seaboard was provided, was unprofitable. The company therefore opposed the latter in every way. They placed restrictions upon the number of beaver and other fur bearing animals to be killed about Detroit. This

«materially affected every hunter and trapper in the settlement and necessarily disturbed trade and made the maintenance of a comfortable life uncertain and precarious.»

Cadillac says of their attitude,

«You may believe that the Company has no other object but to make money at this post and not at all to contribute to its settlement. It has no other aim but to have a warehouse and clerks, with no officers, troops, nor settlers, caring little for what concerns the King's glory and his service.»

In order to deter families from wishing to go to Detroit, the report was spread in Lower Canada that the post would be abandoned at any early date.

The idea of forming agricultural settlements in the interior was often discouraged by the clergy, the civil authorities, and the fur traders. The clergy discouraged agricultural settlements because such settlements might drive the savages away from the missions. Moreover, they knew that the savages probably would learn the vices but not the virtues of civilization. Their teaching, thereby, would come to naught. The civil authorities desired compact settlements in the St. Lawrence region. They wished to concentrate the people about the forts and posts, in order the better to defend themselves. Stringent

laws were passed to keep the traders from the woods and to make the settlements compact. The trader, and all interested in the trade in furs, discouraged agricultural development, for that meant the destruction of the forests and the dispersion of the fur-bearing animals. Partly because of these things most of New France was kept a great game preserve.

Enemies outside New France were even more active in their endeavors to defeat the purpose of the French at Detroit. English envoys tried to induce the Indians to remove from Detroit, telling them that they would «furnish them goods at a cheaper rate [than the French] and do them every sort of kindness». They requested them to remove their villages to the shores of Lake Erie and offered «physical aid in case the French showed any opposition».

Vaudreuil, now the Governor of New France, had formed a strong prejudice against the post at Detroit, and wrote to Pontchartrain that the general consensus of opinion, even of the Indians, was that the post was untenable. In 1704 he pointed out that it had not prevented the Lakes Indians from trading with the English at Albany; «for five canoes belonging to Detroit,» he writes, «have this year been trading at Albany».

The opposition became so strong and the statements regarding the settlement so conflicting, that Cadillac was asked to come to Quebec (1704) to answer certain charges against him, and an investigation of the post was ordered by the King. Pontchartrain reviewed both sides of the controversy somewhat as follows:

«Sieur de la Motte continues to be persuaded that . . . . this establishment will have all the effect expected from it. Others pretend that the land there is

good for nothing. That it will never produce anything there to feed its inhabitants; that the only thing there is very poor fishing; and that the hunting is between thirty and forty leagues off; and finally it is to be feared that the Iroquois will attack that post without its being in our power to assist it and war will recommence in consequence. The Company of the Colony complain likewise that it involves them in an exorbitant expense which is out of their power to sustain, if it continually requires them to convey to that post the supplies necessary for the support of the people there.»

It was contended also that the route by way of Lakes Ontario and Erie, which now was used more or less, could not be kept open. De Aigremont was sent to make the investigation in July 1708. He strongly advised the discontinuance of the post, as being prejudicial to Canada. He reported that the soil was not productive — this of course was untrue. He also reported that even if the land were productive, there was no market for the produce raised, and the trade would never be useful to France; that therefore the post was a burden on the colony and the kingdom.

Detroit was experiencing the troubles common to most Canadian undertakings; for greed, jealousy, and prejudice were rampant throughout all New France. Pontchartrain, always a firm friend of Cadillac, considered the report strongly prejudicial to the latter. He censured the author severely, but at the same time accused Cadillac of having sordid motives. He wrote to De Aigremont as follows:

«It seems to me that your sojourn there was not long enough to obtain a thorough understanding of it. Besides Sieur de la Motte complains that you did not confer a sufficient length of time with

him to appreciate the reasons why he acted . . . In a country like that, new maxims are sometimes necessary which may appear censurable on their face, and be intrinsically good. Nevertheless I find too great cupidity in Sieur de la Motte, and that his private interests in establishing that post may have engaged him to prefer his special advantage to the general good of the Colony . . . His Majesty has thought best to withdraw his troops from that place, and to leave it to de la Motte to do what he pleases with it, without any other privilege over the other inhabitants of Canada.»

The reasons he gave for withdrawing the troops were, (1) the great expense incurred in the support of the garrison, (2) the difficulty of assisting the post, should it be attacked by the Iroquois, (3) the bad quality of the soil, (4) the disappearance of the game-hunting, and (5) the dispersion of the people of Canada.

The troops were not withdrawn, however, and Bonnacamp, with less rancor and pessimism than De Aigremont, says of the settlement in 1710,

«Its situation appears to me to be charming. The beautiful river runs at the foot of the fort; vast plains which only ask to be cultivated extend beyond the sight. There is nothing milder than the climate, which scarcely counts two months of winter. The products of Europe and especially the grains grow much better than in any of the Cantons of France . . . We should regard Detroit as one of the most important outposts of the colony. It is conveniently situated for furnishing aid to Michillimackinac, to the St. Joseph, to the Bay [Green Bay], to the Miamis, Ouitanen, and to the Beautiful River, supposing a settlement be made thereon. Accordingly we cannot send too many there; but where

„shall we find men therefor, certainly not in Canada.»

In 1710 Cadillac was ordered to proceed to Louisiana as governor of that province. After ten years the little colony was still a mere outpost, far in advance of the civilization it proclaimed, in spite of the aspirations and hard work of Cadillac. The fur trade nominally had its headquarters here, but was not important enough to make the colony grow. Cadillac had done everything he could to advance agriculture, but the chief occupations of the people were fishing and hunting, tendencies handed down to the French *habitant* far into the nineteenth century. The farmer had only a local market, and so there was little object in raising products much beyond his own needs. In 1714, however, Detroit was furnishing the Indians at Michillimackinac with corn, because the soil at the latter place was too thin to raise this staple of the frontier. Between the opening of navigation and October, eight hundred minots (2400 bushels) had been sent up.

Burton describes the settlement of 1710 substantially as follows. The land within the palisade was two city blocks in length, and one block deep. This area was divided into lots and garden plots. The streets were not more than ten or fifteen feet wide, except St. Anne's which was about twenty-five feet in width for most of its length. The houses were built of logs eight or ten inches in diameter, driven into the ground, and cut off six or seven feet above the earth. The roofs were made of small logs flattened by an adz. Brick and mortar also were used in building. Some houses had brick floors, and these were considered so valuable that they were inventoried in the household effects of their owners. For windows, skins scraped as thin as possible were used. No mention is made of glass. About the fort only a short distance away were the villages of the Indians.

Hunting was a pastime as well as a means of getting a living. Fishing also must have been a pastime, for the river was rich in fish; this could not have been an industry because everyone had both time and the disposition to catch his own fish.

At an early date a mill was built to grind corn and wheat, and probably it was propelled by wind. A brewery was built a short time after the founding of the settlement, and a brewer was brought to the colony. The people lived within the palisades and went out daily to work their farms, some of which were three miles from the fort. Farming was a precarious occupation, for the farmer did not dare live on his property, and at nightfall when he returned to the fort he left his fields, garden, and orchard to the ravages of beasts and savages. About 1710 the village that had grown up around the fort began to be called Detroit.

#### THE DETROIT SETTLEMENT AFTER CADILLAC (1710-1760)

In 1710 De la Forest was appointed to succeed Cadillac as commander of the fort at Detroit, but on account of business affairs at Quebec he was unable to take charge of his post until 1712. Dubuisson was placed in temporary command, and was in charge when the Fox Indians attacked Detroit in 1712.

Unfortunately, for the early growth of the Detroit settlement, there were open hostilities between the French and English from 1702 to 1713 (Queen Anne's War). Though the strife was confined mainly to the eastern provinces, the Lakes region was kept in turmoil. Through Iroquois emissaries the English made very uncertain the hold of the French on many of the tribes about the Lakes, especially the Fox Indians. For many years the latter had been enemies of the French, and



their position along the Fox-Wisconsin trade route was a serious menace to French commerce in the region to the west of Lake Michigan. The *Jesuit Relations* represent these Indians as maltreating the French

«in deed and word, pillaging and robbing them of their goods in spite of their resistance and subjecting them to unbearable insolence and indignity.»

Through the Iroquois the Fox Indians had learned of the cheaper goods of the English at Albany and they desired to see the English trader enter their country. To make this possible the fort at Detroit first must be destroyed.

Early in the summer of 1712 one thousand Fox, Sauk, and Missauka Indians, three hundred warriors with their women and children, appeared at Detroit and built a stockade a few rods from the post. In preparation for the Indian attack, Dubuisson ordered all the livestock, grain, and other stores taken into the fort. Near-by buildings were destroyed lest they should give shelter to the enemy, or endanger the post if fired. The little garrison of thirty men determined to make the best defense possible. Fortunately the Indian allies of the French arrived before an attack was made and the besiegers became the besieged. After a siege of nineteen days, the Fox, Sauk and Missauka Indians made overtures to surrender, and on the refusal of the French to treat with them, fled to Grosse Pointe. The French and their allies followed, and after a siege of four days the Green Bay Indians surrendered.

Ever since the founding of the post at Detroit, the size of the garrison had been decreasing. For the privilege of exclusive trade the commandant was charged with the expense of provisions, the pay of officers, privates, and others associated with the garrison,

and with the up-keep of the mission. This obligation Cadillac had assumed in 1707, and it was borne by his successors for many years. Residents within the palisades were required to pay a rent, and also a small tax on the lands they tilled. The various artisans were allowed to ply their trade only providing they held a license from the commandant. These were sold for about two hundred fifty *livres* per year.

The larger part of the revenues of the commandant was derived from licenses sold to *voyageurs*, and traders resident at the settlement, amounting in all to more than five thousand *livres* per year. The King also gave the powder for the post each year, and the commandant sold much of this to the French and Indians. The revenue from this latter source amounted to about fifteen hundred *livres* per year. The commandant, it seems, also had a well-stocked «Bureau», from which he sold wines and brandy required by the Frenchmen. This brought him about two thousand *livres* yearly, and in addition to these sources of income, which in all amounted to about 8500 *livres*, he engaged in trade with the residents about the post and with the Indians. His profits in this trade were greater than those of others at the settlement, for each trader's canoe brought free of freight-charges one hundred pounds of provisions, implements, and tools. The profits of the commandants were never large, however, and it is probable that these officials were obliged to keep a small garrison because of their small income. At any rate, De la Forest in 1714 sent a memorial to the Government in which he asked that the forces be increased; and to enable the commandant to meet the added expense, he suggested that the sale of trading licenses to the settlers be abolished and a complete monopoly given to the commandant. At a much later date, 1736, Governor Beauharnois doubted whether any officer would be willing to take the command

of the post if the garrison exceeded thirty men, because of the great expense.

In the memorial referred to in the preceding paragraph, De la Forest expressed the opinion that the plan of Cadillac to make Detroit a place for settlers as well as traders was impracticable, and asked that any further increase to the settlement be prohibited, and the whole converted into a military and trading post. With the garrison as small as it was the settlement could not increase, for settlers would not be able to improve land far from the fort because of the prowling Iroquois. Should any houses be built outside the stockade walls «they would be exposed to be burnt and their occupants killed». Even the Potawatomi, who had no palisade «often [had] alarms which oblig[e]d them to put their wives and children into the French fort». Nevertheless, he considered that it was to the «King's glory and the interest of the colony to preserve the post», because of its strategic importance. If it were abandoned, the English soon would render themselves masters, and would carry on the whole trade with all the Indian allies of France. The post was necessary to prevent the Iroquois from making attacks on the western tribes, for such attacks meant the disturbance of the trade in furs. It was also necessary to preserve Detroit as a source of food supply for the post at Michillimackinac. To provide such food, the Indians should be prevailed on to remain at Detroit to cultivate the soil. Besides providing food for Michillimackinac, the post was also an advantageous point at which troops and provisions could be assembled in a war on the Iroquois. Throughout the memorial the strong influence of the commercial spirit that permeated New France is shown. No changes in the management of the fort and no changes in the original plan of Cadillac were made.

In 1717 Tonty was sent to Detroit as

successor to De la Forest. Tonty also was an able officer but «avaricious and unscrupulous in trade matters». In 1726 he granted the exclusive right of traffic in furs to four of his associates. This was a violation of the rights of the settlers; for, since the founding of the post, they had been allowed to buy licenses to trade in furs. Accordingly, they drew up articles of remonstrance, which were sent to the Intendant. They stated that they had been done a great wrong because they were

«deprived of the douceurs [comforts] and articles [they] were in the habit of receiving from the savages for the subsistence of [their] families».

Being at such a distance from the base of supplies at Montreal and Quebec, they could not as individuals make the long journey to supply the needs of their families, and they could not attempt to purchase goods of those who had the exclusive trade because of the «extreme dearness and high prices put upon the goods when they arrived».

In reply Gatineau, one of the associates, accused the settlers of being idle and lazy and to this alone could they «impute the want of grain and provisions». The lands were able to produce abundantly, yet grain was scarce. Wheat was sold at twenty to twenty-five *livres* the *minot*, and corn at fifteen to eighteen *livres*. These should be considered good prices, and were the people inclined to cultivate their lands they would be in a condition to give provisions to the *voyageurs* and Indians at a more reasonable rate than they had done and yet make money. As for the right to trade with the Indians; he suggested that if the settlers had the trade they asked for, they would neglect the soil, and the Crown, then, would be obliged to abandon the post and all would leave for want of provisions.

The remonstrance of the settlers seems to have had no effect on Tonty. The accusations of Tonty's associate in regard to the character of the settlers undoubtedly had some basis of truth, at any rate they agree in part with the characterization of the French settler made by later writers for a later date.

In 1728 Tonty was relieved of his command, and Boishébert was put in charge of the post and settlement. A new era now seemed to be dawning for Detroit. Beauharnois, the Governor General, wrote in 1730 that the new commandant «had nothing more at heart than to induce the French to till the soil». In the report of the commandant in 1730, it was stated that the settlers had «sown much more than usual» and it was expected «the harvest would be at least double what it had been in former years». In many respects he found the

«establishment but little advanced considering that it was commenced over [nearly] thirty years ago».

The soil and climate were good. Anything that grew in France could be produced there. Clearly, Nature was not at fault. The Crown should send more settlers. He thought that if soldiers were sent, and farms granted them, they might be induced to stay and become good settlers.

About 1734 Beauharnois obtained permission from the Crown to make concessions to farmers, in addition to those granted in 1722, as

«an inducement to the *Habitants* to till the land better than they had hitherto done».

These grants were so hedged about by requirements and specifications, however, that when compared to the system under which the American Government later disposed of

its lands, they seem foreign indeed. In some of the grants

«the grantee was bound to pay to the crown forever a rent of fifteen *livres* per year in peltries; to assist in planting a May-pole on each May-day before the door of the mansion-house. He was forbidden to buy or sell merchandise carried to or from Montreal through servants, clerks, or foreigners, to work at the business of blacksmith, to sell brandy to the Indians, or to mortgage the land without the consent of the government. The Crown reserved all the rights of minerals and timber... All the grain raised was to be ground at the manor windmill where toll was to be given in the same way as in France».

All grants had to be confirmed by the king. Under so many restrictions it is not surprising that few took up land. Only six of these concessions were sent to France for confirmation.

In 1736, however, Beauharnois was able to report that the

«concessions granted to various inhabitants for several years past have induced them to work more assiduously than they had hitherto done in cultivating the soil», and that «in 1735 thirteen to fourteen hundred minots of wheat were harvested», which, it was expected, «would be worth three *livres* a minot».

The post and settlement in 1736 consisted of seventeen soldiers, forty families, and eighty men capable of bearing arms. Sixteen more concessions had been granted to inhabitants who had made requests.

In the report for 1737 an appeal again was made for more troops,

«for the Crown,» it states; «could expect no marked progress until the garrison was made stronger».

The fort needed sixty men and officers, for that was the only way to make the French and the fort

«respected by the Indians [who were] turned away by the cheap goods of the English and by brandy».

The writer thought the soldiers would be more likely to remain permanently than the *voyageurs*, because, he says,

«the *voyageurs* are too busy and too fond of trading to allow us to hope of their settling there and devoting themselves to the cultivation of the soil».

The efforts of Governor Beauharnois and the able commandants at Detroit resulted in enlarging the settlement and increasing trade. De Noyan, the commandant in charge in 1740, reported that one hundred families could be counted in both town and country, «i.e., to say, about as many traders as farmers». Agriculture was not well developed, for the small market the farmers found for their produce compelled them «to be content with harvesting what suffic[ed] for their needs».

About this time the Detroit trade amounted to from one hundred and fifty thousand to two hundred thousand *livres* of fur per year. In most years ten or twelve licenses were issued to traders, though in some years fourteen or fifteen canoes came. The cost of a license was five hundred *livres*. There were many free licenses. The missionaries, chaplains, interpreters, surgeons, and sub-delegates were given free permits for one and one-half canoes. It appears that there were too many traders and competition was so severe that the traders sold much of their goods too cheap and many were not able to pay the Montreal merchants. The report states, «the latter have more mortgages in Detroit than Detroit is worth».

The account books kept at the Jesuit Mission by Father de la Richardie throw much light on the business transactions at the Detroit settlement during the late decades of the French regime. In 1735 La Richardie collected near Detroit some of the dispersed Hurons, to the number of six hundred, «all of whom he converted», and founded the Huron mission on the site of Sandwich, then called Point de Montreal. He

«chose that side to avoid conflict of ecclesiastical jurisdiction with the Récollets in charge of Detroit».

Here, according to Hubbard, he built a mission-house and a church, which stood until about 1850. About 1736 he built a store and warehouse. The account books of La Richardie show the business dealings the mission had with the French *habitants* of Detroit and vicinity, and with the Indians.

These dealings seem to support the statement made by Cadillac that «the priests while occupied in saving souls were most thrifty withall».

The mission soon came to own a well-stocked farm, a store, a sawmill (probably a «hand» mill), a gristmill, and a blacksmith's shop. The mission farm furnished poultry, eggs, butter, beef, and corn to the *habitants*. To the mission store the small trader brought his peltry and venison and took in return beads, vermilion, lead, awls, and other goods that he could use in the Indian trade. Most of the trade was by barter. At this store also were kept kettles, tacks, files, steels, window-glass, knives, awls, lead, pig lead, bullets, porcelain beads, blankets, vermilion, brandy and Portuguese wine, mitasses, leggings, shirts, hats, porton thread, Renes thread, cotton, cheese, salt, pork, venison, beef, cow hides, boards, sawn plank, and other articles.



Goods came from Montreal by way of Lake Ontario and Lake Erie in *bateaux* and canoes, escorted by one hundred or more soldiers. One trip a year was made. The arrival of the convoy was a great occasion, and served to close one fiscal year and start the next.

The rate of wage for the ordinary laborer seems to have been about one hundred and fifty to one hundred and sixty *livres* per year. In comparison with the present, few occupations were carried on at the Detroit settlement in the middle of the eighteenth century. Father la Richardie had transactions with Parent, the joiner; Sieur Delatti, the interpreter; Campau, the farmer; Cauvin, the blacksmith; Meloche, the mill operator; Sieur Varte, the armorer; Sieur Roy, the *voyageur*; and others.

In 1744 the third of the Colonial Wars (King George's) began, and for four years Britain and France were engaged in open hostilities. The fort built at Niagara by the French in 1726, the second at this place, had much to do, perhaps, in checking the advance of the English to the west.

But now the English traders appeared in the Ohio Valley in greater numbers and began to compete more actively for the Indian trade in the territory immediately south of the Great Lakes. It is reported that in 1740 over three hundred crossed the mountains of Pennsylvania with pack-horses loaded with goods for the Indian trade. For several years their center of trade was Pickawillany (Pichtown, Piqua) on the Great Miami River. Here they carried on their trade with the Ohio and Wabash Indians until about 1750, when the post was destroyed by a body of French and Indians from Detroit. Nevertheless they continued to bring their pack-horses over the mountains. A few went as far west as the country of the Miamis. They so undermined

French influence that at times the latter nation had hardly a tribe in which it could place confidence. The English were particularly friendly with Nicholas, a Huron chief, who lived near the marshes of Sandusky Bay. The Sandusky Indians were especially insolent to the French and unceasing in their efforts to gain allies for the English.

In 1747 five Frenchmen who were on their way from White River to Detroit were killed by some of the bands of Nicholas. Shortly afterward a plot to destroy the French at Detroit was discovered. The arrival of the Montreal convoy on September 22, 1747, escorted by about one hundred fifty men, including the merchants and their servants, gave the little colony much peace of mind. The long distance from Montreal, the possibility of delays in the frequent handling of the goods en route, the danger of shipwreck, or of capture by English or Iroquois gave the commandant at Detroit much worry. By good management the Indians were kept in ignorance of the real state of affairs, and by diplomacy and show of force they were kept from making their attack.

In 1748 the Ohio Company was formed, to settle a tract of 500,000 acres on the south side of the Ohio River. One hundred families were to be sent within seven years, and a fort was to be built. The westward advance of the English settlers stirred the officials of New France to promote emigration to Detroit. About 1748 the Government began to offer financial aid to settlers. Any settler was offered gratuitously one spade, one axe, one plough, one large and one small wagon. Advances were to be made for other tools, to be paid for within two years. Seed would be given, to be returned at a third harvest. The settlers would be given a cow and a pig. Women and children were to be supported one year. It was to be understood, however, that any who would give themselves up to

trade instead of agriculture» should be «deprived of the liberality of the King». These efforts of the Government greatly promoted emigration; but it was complained that some

«contented themselves with eating the rations that the King provided. Some of them even by their natural levity have left the country and gone to seek their fortunes elsewhere».

About 1749 many emigrants from France came, and the settlement was extended rapidly. The farms of the newcomers soon began to show appearances of neatness and comfort. Orchards were set out, the trees having been brought from France. Currant, apple, pear, cherry, and plum orchards extended for miles along the river front, and the settlement became noted for its excellent fruit.

Governor la Galissonnière in 1750, in his *Memoir on the French Colonies in North America*, again called the attention of the king to the importance of the post and settlement at Detroit. He writes,

«This last mentioned place now demands the greatest attention. Did it once contain a farming population of a thousand, 'twould feed and defend all the rest. Throughout the whole interior of Canada it is the best adapted locality for a town where all the trade of the lakes would concentrate; were it provided with a good garrison and surrounded by a goodly number of settlers it would be able to overawe all the Indians of the continent. It is sufficient to see its position on the map to understand its utility.»

As a result of the endeavors of Governor Galissonnière more settlers came in 1750 and 1751, advances having been made them by the Government. They seem presently to have prospered, for in 1759 Bigot, the Intendant, reported that the settlers of 1750

and 1751 had taken care of themselves and had been selling wheat since 1754, from which time they had entailed no expense on the Crown. During the French and Indian War much of the supplies of the French forces operating along the Ohio and in Pennsylvania came from Detroit.

Between 1749 and 1755 the Detroit settlement grew so rapidly under the Government bounty act that it was thought necessary to enlarge and strengthen the fort. This was done especially to prepare Detroit for defense against the British and their Indian allies in the struggle that seemed certain soon to come.

The French and Indian War began with the seizure of the Ohio Company's post at the forks of the Ohio by a French force in the spring of 1754. This war was the last of the Colonial Wars and the last armed struggle between the English and French for the control of the Lakes region and supremacy in North America. The English won, and Major Rogers was sent in November, 1760, to receive the surrender of Detroit. Major Rogers estimated that there were in Detroit at that time from eighty to one hundred families, that six hundred persons lived within the palisades, and that the population of the settlement on both sides of the river was two thousand five hundred. Croghan estimated that there were three hundred families in the settlement in 1764, and that within the stockade there were eighty houses. After a century and a half of occupation, all New France could boast of less than eighty thousand whites, and these were scattered over a vast territory. Kingsford says that the settled territory ended near the island of Montreal, and that with the exception of a few small hamlets about Fort Frontenac and Fort Niagara, the country was a wilderness to Detroit. There was not a French Canadian in what constitutes the province of Ontario. From Montreal, a wearisome journey of nearly six

hundred miles along the St. Lawrence and through Lakes Ontario and Erie was necessary to reach the next center of civilization at Detroit. During four or five months of the winter, travel was possible only on snowshoes. Some settlers were gathered at the Wabash Portage (later Fort Wayne), Ouiatanon, Vincennes, Kaskaskia, Fort Chartres, Cahokia, Michillimackinac, and Sault Ste. Marie. These, however, were separated from Detroit by scores and in some cases by hundreds of miles.

«A few thousand souls were gathered (in these places) without schools, removed from the world, nursing their prejudices, forming their convictions with their hopes and their material wants.»

A half century of occupation at Detroit had made little impression on the wide-spreading forests. Clearings were confined to lands bordering the streams. Here, for eight miles along the Detroit River, the colonists had erected their little whitewashed cottages so close together as to give the appearance of a nearly continuous village. The east side of the river presented a similar appearance.

Near the center of the settlement stood Fort Frontenac. It formed a parallelogram, with a river frontage of about half a mile, enclosed by a picket fence about twenty-five feet high, with a bastion of light artillery at each corner and a block-house over the main gateway. It contained a barricade, quarters for officers, a council house, and a church, and also enclosed about one hundred small houses.

A single road led along the river following all the windings of the shore, avoiding the marshes and usurping the higher lands. This highway met all the needs of the times for land communication between the parts of the settlement. Only a few Indian trails

led into the wilderness, one to the Indian villages on the Saginaw River near its mouth, another westward across the Rouge and Huron rivers beyond the site of Ypsilanti. These were the more important trails.

The river formed the main highway of travel — in summer for the canoe, in winter for the sleigh. Roads could not be built in a heavily wooded country except at great expense and labor, and when built they were out of use for several months each year. Most of the farmers had birch-bark canoes or dugouts. All the houses were built near the river bank in order to be near the main line of communication. The farms were long and narrow, in most cases extending two miles back from the river, but only twenty or twenty-five rods along its course. The need of mutual protection, together with the desire of all settlers to be near the river highways, determined the shape of the farms. With the houses close together, alarms could be sent easily from house to house. The houses were of hewn logs. Nails were hand-made and expensive, consequently few were used. Many parts of the house were held together by wooden pins. For lath, small poles were used.

The house in most cases was surrounded by a garden, enclosed by a whitewashed picket fence. In most yards, near the house was an oven in which the family baking was done. It resembled a large beehive, and like the chimney to the house, was made of sticks plastered with clay. The household utensils were simple. Wooden churns, wooden buckets, a few copper kettles and earthen jars made up the larger part of the list. Water was brought from the river in buckets hung from a wooden yoke. In the summer, drinking water was kept cool by pouring it into jars partly buried in the ground. The washing was done in the river. The clothes were dipped in the water, rubbed with soap (prob-

ably soft soap), and pounded with a small paddle called a «*battois*».

Like the houses, the barns were built of logs, but they were constructed much more roughly. Much of the livestock was unsheltered in winter. Hubbard says the ponies

«roamed at large beyond the enclosure, picking up an independent living by browsing. Even in the winter they seldom received aid, except what was stolen from the barns or stacks of their masters».

Behind the barns stretched the fields of corn, wheat, beans, barley, oats, potatoes, and buckwheat. A small part of the farm was devoted to a well-kept orchard, and the back part commonly was given over to pastures or a wood lot. Since grain could not be exported profitably, only enough was produced to meet local needs.

Ferris, speaking of the French farmers at Detroit, says,

«They were extremely ignorant and most miserable cultivators of the soil. The French Canadian seemed to have no idea of improvement in agriculture. They continued to plow, sow, and reap just as their fathers had done time out of mind. Whenever a field had become exhausted it was abandoned. Instead of striving to enrich the land the people trusted to the efficacy of prayer and threw the manure into the river.»

Industries were mainly in the «household stage» of development. As the settle-

ment increased in size, however, skilled artisans came. Before 1749 the quarry on Stoney Island was worked. The settlers probably burned lime. The waters of the Savoyard River furnished power for gristmills. One ingenious Frenchman devised a mill to be run by the current of the Detroit River, but it is said not to have been a success. There were windmills on every point and headland.

An English official says of the educational attainments of the settlers of this time,

«They were wholly illiterate, and if we except five or six Canadian farmers . . . there will not be found twenty persons, nor perhaps one-half that number, who have the least pretensions to education or can even write their name or know the letters of a book.»

The easy conditions of existence, isolation from the markets of the world, lack of schools, a paternal government, and devotion to the Church helped to develop distinctive characteristics among the people. In many ways the French at the Illinois settlements had the same traits, for their heredity and environment were very similar. Many of the French at Detroit and in the Illinois region were of a different class from most of those at Montréal and Québec. Many peasants from Normandy and Picardy had come to the inland settlements. At Montreal and Québec many were of the «*noblesse*»; they were in general dissolute, lazy, and shiftless, and had come to New France to retrieve their fortunes or to win glory that should place them in the court's favor.



## THE STORY OF DETROIT

by George B. Catlin

### THE CAUSE OF DETROIT'S FOUNDING

Who founded Detroit? Every child of the fifth grade in Detroit public schools answers at once and in chorus: «Cadillac.» The founder's full name was Antoine Laumet de la Mothe Cadillac, but life is short and there is so much to learn and so much that should be learned that we will introduce the founder of our city as plain Cadillac, for that is the name that is blazoned upon its history, the name of an avenue, a square, a hotel and several monumental tablets.

When did Cadillac arrive? On July 23, 1701, which should be a date fixed in the mind of every native and inhabitant of the city. But back of every action lies a cause, and back of the founding of Detroit lies a train of curious causes. Spain, Portugal, France and Great Britain, all thrilled by the discovery of a new world of unknown extent, rushed across the ocean to grab as much of it as possible. Exploration costs money. Settlement must be encouraged by a show of personal as well as national profit. How could France induce her people to migrate to the New World and make it a profitable possession and a producer of revenue for the King?

Spain sought gold and robbed the treasures of Mexico, Central and South America. Great Britain promoted tobacco-growing in Virginia. France explored in search of gold,

silver and copper, but she found a more immediate source of wealth in a very different natural product, the skins of the beaver. It was the beaver which led to the founding of Detroit.

And the skin of the beaver was sought chiefly as a material for making fashionable headgear or hats for both men and women. Up to the time of Louis XII, at the beginning of the Sixteenth Century, the men of Europe had worn caps of velvet and other soft fabrics. Then they began to wear fine fur caps. Louis XII one day made a public appearance wearing the first high hat of record, a lofty-crowned, narrow-brimmed conical affair made of the fine inner fur of the beaver, and immediately a new fashion in hats and hat materials was established.

The supply of beaver in the old world was very limited, but the early explorers of Canada, New England and, particularly, of the Great Lakes region found beaver colonies in every stream, and the harvest began. Traders established local markets and the Indians of the Iroquois and Algonquin tribes began trapping beaver and bringing their pelts to these centers to trade for blankets, knives, hatchets, kettles and also for French brandy distilled from the wines produced by the vineyards of France.

Brandy had a magnetic attraction for

the Indians. They would bring their packs of fur 500 miles or more to trade for a few urgent necessities and then enjoy a drunken debauch. Mackinac at the tip of the southern peninsula of Michigan became a trading center to which the Chippewa Indians, the Sacs and Foxes, the Sioux from Minnesota and Dakota, the Winnebagoes from Wisconsin and the Crees from the Hudson Bay country came to trade their peltry for goods and brandy.

The fashion in hats spread from France to England, so the English traders set up a post on the Hudson River where Albany now stands and called it Fort Orange. English traders began coming up Lake Erie to Detroit River to buy beaver skins. The region about Detroit was known as *Teuchsa Grondie*, the «country of the beaver». French brandy was rather expensive and the English had a cheaper liquor distilled from molasses. It was called rum. The English traders could afford to give twice as much in trade for beaver skins.

Suddenly the fur trade at Mackinac began to fall off rapidly and it was discovered that the Indians were making the longer journey to Detroit in order to get more «firewater» for their peltry. The traders complained to their government and their government directed that a strong military post be established at the best site on the Detroit River or Strait to prevent the English traders from coming up the lake to buy fur from the Indians. This order came direct from Count Pontchartrain, minister of marine in the cabinet of Louis XIV, to Gov. Frontenac, of New France.

Cadillac had been for several years commandant of the French fort at Mackinac. He was called to Montreal to fit out an expedition which was authorized to found a settlement on Detroit River, build a fort, garrison it and hold it as a barrier against the invasion

of the English traders from Fort Orange.

The French language has two words signifying «straight». The adjective word is «*droit*», but the noun is «*Detroit*». Therefore the name of Detroit signifies that it is the «city of the strait».

### THE COMING OF CADILLAC

It was an imposing flotilla which set out from Montreal, June 5, in the summer of 1701, for the founding of Detroit. There were 25 large canoes manned by 100 Frenchmen and carrying bundles of supplies. As an escort there were many more small canoes manned by Indians, who were to act as a convoy and as ambassadors to explain the purpose of the expedition to the Indians of the Straits district and make themselves useful at the portages. Up the Ottawa River, across to Lake Nipissing, down French River to Georgian Bay, across the great bay to Lake Huron and, then, skirting the eastern shore, they came to St. Clair River and thence through Lake St. Clair to Detroit River.

There were 50 soldiers, in blue uniforms faced with white, 50 hardy Canadian *voyageurs* of iron constitution who paddled two hours at a stretch at racing speed. Then the flotilla would stop for a smoke and rest and a new set of paddlers would hurl the canoes along through the clear water. The strokes were timed to the cadence of many boating songs in which the soldiers soon learned to join. Distances were rated by smokes rather than by miles. At night they camped at some convenient place along the shore. On this route they spent 49 days, for the distance was 300 leagues and there were more than 30 portages to be made. Each morning the two Catholic priests who accompanied the expedition celebrated the mass at sunrise.

In the head canoe sat Cadillac, leader of

the expedition. As they passed densely wooded Belle Isle he began to study the shore on both sides, looking for a site for his fort. They paddled down as far as Grosse Ile and spent the night there. Cadillac discussed the lay of the land with the soldiers and they agreed that the narrowest part of the river was the place for the fort, and on the highest ground that offered a strongly defensible location. Back up the river they came, hugging the shore and battling with the strong current. Cadillac noted that the narrowest part of the river was faced on either side by a bluff about 40 feet high.

«On which side shall I plant the fortified town that is to guard this strait; which place offers the best defensive conditions?»

he asked himself and his soldier associates.

On the north side of the river he saw that the bluff ended rather abruptly at its western end in a round-topped hill and around the foot of this hill poured the waters of a small river about 25 feet wide and 10 feet deep. That hill stood near the present foot of First Street and that little river, later known as the Savoyard, emptied into Detroit River near the present line of Third Street. For some distance above its mouth, it ran parallel to Detroit River along the present lines of Larned and Congress streets, crossing the present Woodward Avenue where Congress now intersects. A little to the eastward of that point its course turned north, crossing the site of the present County Building. This parallel course of the two rivers created a narrow tongue or peninsula of high ground which was fairly level at the top and heavily wooded.

«There,» said Cadillac, «is the place for the fort and the new town. It is defended on three sides by a water front.

It commands a fine view up and down the river. Our little brass cannon can send a shot clear across the big river and we can hold the fort against either English invaders or hostile Indians. Here we land and set to work.»

Within two hours the canoes were unloaded and a camp was made in the woods on the bluff. A hasty meal had been eaten and the axes of 50 expert woodsmen were soon breaking a silence that had brooded over the site since time immemorial. The crash of falling trees scattered wild animals in alarm. The trunks were rapidly shaped into logs and the larger of the logs were set aside for the building of a church — the Church of Ste-Anne — which still endures after being twice destroyed by fire and undergoing two removals. The more slender saplings were cut into 20-foot lengths and sharpened at the smaller end for a palisade. Cadillac laid out the line of the stockade with the assistance of Capt. Alphonse de Tonty — who had previously traveled with La Salle — and Lieutenants Chacornacle and Dugne. As soon as the line of the stockade was marked Father Nicholas Constantine del Halle, the Recollet priest, and Father Francis Valliant de Gueslis, a Jesuit, marked out the ground for the church at the eastern end of the stockade.

The logs for the church were set on end side by side and inserted four feet deep in the ground. All the early houses of Detroit for a period of about 100 years were built in this fashion, instead of being built log upon log and mortised at the ends. The walls of Ste-Anne's Church were raised in place on that first day, and mass was celebrated within them on the green sod next morning.

The streets of the first town of Detroit were laid out due north and south and east and west, as was the stockade of log pickets 16 feet high that inclosed them. Therefore

the old street plan does not coincide with the present plan, in which the streets nearest the river run parallel with the shore regardless of the points of the compass, and the north and south streets stand at right angles to these. The original stockade extended east and west from about the line of Griswold Street to a point near Wayne Street. The south side ran east and west a little below Jefferson Avenue near the edge of the bluff and the parallel north side ran along the top of the south bank of the little Savoyard River.

Next morning the men of the new settlement were awakened at daybreak by the shrill call of wild turkeys marshaling their broods to feed upon the wild grapes which hung in festoons from the trees. The work of setting the stockade was rushed so as to afford a defense against possible enemies. Curious Indians of the neighborhood gathered about the camp at a distance wondering what the invasion of white men and strange Canadian Indians might mean. The Indian interpreters, Jean and François Fafard, went out to them giving the sign of peace with open, outspread hands and assured the natives that theirs was a mission of peace and commerce, and that there was no intention of driving them away. On the contrary, they were urged to establish their villages near the town for mutual protection and advantage. The people of the walled town would be glad to buy their furs and their wild game and fish.

This satisfied the Indians. Some of them took to their canoes seeking sturgeon and other fish which then swarmed the waters. Partridge drummed in the woods and in the reedy marsh of a deep cove which then lay below the line of Third Street, wild ducks quacked and clamored and led their young to their feeding places. All that cove was afterward filled in and the old Michigan Central depot and railway yard were established near-

ly 150 years later on made ground which had been gradually filled in by the leveling of bluffs and small hills. Farther back from the river in the openings of the woods small herds of buffalo grazed, and occasionally a bull elk was to be seen threshing his antlers against the brush to tear away the «velvet» covering from his hardening horns.

The stockade finished and the brass cannon mounted on a platform overlooking the Detroit River, Cadillac gave the new fort the name Fort Pontchartrain, in honor of the French minister of marine, who had sent him to found the new settlement in the wilds of Michigan territory. By September 1 the site of the first settlement was all enclosed. The enclosure had an area less than 37 acres and during the next century of its history it expanded to less than a square mile.

Some of the remains of that first planting are still in the soil of modern Detroit. In 1894, or 193 years after they were set up, an excavation at Larned and Wayne streets turned up many relics, and in 1922 an excavation in Jefferson Avenue disclosed the mouldering bones of 30 people who had given their bodies to the ground of the city they had founded.

The original stockade had three massive gates of timber, one toward the east, one toward the west and one toward Detroit River. The Indians gathered from a wide district and established their little villages near the white man's town. These were Ottawas, Hurons, Pottawatomies, Miamis and Wyandottes. In the summer of 1702 the first white women of the settlement came from Montreal by way of Lakes Ontario and Erie. But preparation had to be made for their advent because Detroit lay hundreds of miles from the nearest settlement and with out any connecting roads.



Where women live, bread is made; so the first settlers planted a little patch of wheat in October of 1701, which they reaped in disappointment in the following July, for the soil of Detroit right about the town was not favorable to wheat. There were no horses, oxen or plows that first year, so the ground was spaded. In 1704 Cadillac brought three horses and ten head of oxen to Detroit and these made it possible to attempt crop-growing under more favorable conditions.

### CADILLAC'S VILLAGE

Cadillac had a plan for building up a populous settlement which involved the marrying of the men settlers to women of the friendly Huron tribe imported from Mackinaw, where many of them had acquired the ways of civilization. Fr. Valliant, the Jesuit priest, opposed this plan because it would attract Indians from the established Jesuit mission at Mackinac. The disagreement caused Fr. Valliant to leave Detroit on the day of his arrival.

The new town had one main street extending from end to end of the stockade east and west. It was named Ste-Anne Street. This was paralleled on the north by St-Joachim Street, which ran more than half the distance to a short offset west of Shelby Street, and from that point the offset street was continued under the same name. There were two narrow cross streets, St-François and St-Antoine, and a short alley known as Rencontre, which was only wide enough for a footway between houses. Ste-Anne Street was 20 feet wide and the others 15 feet or less. The houses were all but one story high, but most of them had a loft under the roof and some had a dormer window in the roof, but there was not a pane of glass in the town for many years. The windows were merely square holes closed by solid wooden shutters which were opened in fair weather. The doors were of

ten «Dutch» doors, of which the upper half was kept open for light and ventilation in pleasant weather. The first chimneys were of the «clay and wattle» fashion, consisting of a crib of sticks heavily smeared with wet clay inside and outside. There was little stone near the town.

Many of the houses had no floor except hard-packed clay, but a few floors were made of basswood or pine «puncheons», which were slabs of log made fairly smooth one side with an ax or adz. The furniture was such as could be made on the ground by rude workmen equipped with a few simple tools of pioneer life.

Cadillac was not in the favor of the Jesuit mission priests of the north and he seemed to delight in annoying them. It was his plan to build up a prosperous trading center regardless of the welfare of the Indians, so he started outbidding the English traders in bartering brandy for furs. The missionary priests opposed this because it meant the demoralization and destruction of the Indians. They were bent upon evangelizing the Indians and saving their souls, while Cadillac wanted to exploit them for money profits. He presently bribed 30 Indians to leave the mission at Mackinac and come to Detroit, but this momentary triumph led to activities on the part of the Jesuits by which Cadillac was discredited with the government and removed to a new post in Louisiana after ten stormy years of plotting and counter-plotting.

For four years after the settlement, Detroit remained at peace with the Indians. During the summer of 1705 Cadillac went to Montreal, and Lieutenant Bourgmont was sent to act as commandant in his absence. Bourgmont was a man of violent temper. One day a curious Indian was seen peering into his open window. Bourgmont's dog dashed out and bit the Indian in the leg. The

Indian kicked the dog, which ran howling into the house, whereupon Bourgmont rushed out and beat the Indian senseless. This created bad feeling. A few days later Bourgmont interfered in a quarrel between some Ottawa and Miami Indians. He ordered his men to fire on the Ottawas and several were killed. The Indians fled, but as they passed the garden of Fr. Del Halle, near Ste-Anne's Church, they stopped long enough to kill him. They also killed a soldier named Rivière, who was walking some distance from the fort.

Fr. Del Halle was the first Christian martyr of Detroit — on June 6, 1706. It was his hand which wrote the first records of Ste-Anne's Church and he was buried in the churchyard.

A town without women is a sorry sort of place, because without the influence of wives and mothers, morality, respect for law and human rights, and even the natural sense of thrift, seem to dwindle and die. The early colonists of Virginia were forced to rather strenuous methods in order to obtain wives for the settlers. They resorted to purchase, with stipulated prices in tobacco, then a bounty system; and later plain kidnaping was practiced in the populous centers of Great Britain and Ireland. Arrived at the Virginia coast the women were sometimes put up at auction and sold to the highest bidder, but with the consent of the purchased one held in respect.

The first two white women to arrive in Detroit were Madame Cadillac and Madame Tonty, wives respectively of the commandant and his lieutenant. Mme. Cadillac brought her son, James, aged 7 years, but left her two daughters in the Ursuline Convent in Québec. They left Québec, September 10, 1701, with an escort of Canadian *voyageurs* in birch canoes and made the journey via the St. Lawrence River, Lake Ontario and Lake

Erie. They stopped over the winter at Frontenac, now Kingston, and arrived in Detroit late in the following spring.

The first women were given a grand reception as they came up the river. The cannon was fired from the parapet of the fort, the soldiers discharged their muskets in a salvo, and all the white men and a horde of Indians made as much noise as possible while the ladies were helped ashore and conducted to the fort on the bluff.

Cadillac's enemies, after many failures to oust him from his post, triumphed in the end. He was shifted to Louisiana with the title of governor but even there he encountered opposition and finally he returned to France having lost all that he had gained during 30 years of labor and hardship in the wilds of America.

For many years after Cadillac's departure Detroit was forced to fight for its existence. Cadillac had attracted enough Huron Indians to establish a little village on the river front near the beginning of the present Third Avenue. A large village of Ottawas sprang up on the present site of Walkerville and there was a smaller band of them on the Detroit side opposite Walkerville. Farther away to the west and south were villages of Miamis and Pottawatomies. These tribes were jealous of one another and it required a good deal of diplomacy to keep them peaceful.

Far to the north about the Straits of Mackinac lived the large and warlike tribe of Chippewas or Ojibways, as the Frenchmen called them.

Their name was so difficult to pronounce that both French and English settlers could only make a rude attempt at the phonetic spelling. The Chippewas often came down the lakes to trade in Detroit, and they pres-

ently established a sort of halting place on Harsen's Island, at St. Clair Flats. Their visits and introduction to the white man's «fire-water» added another element of discord. The Ottawas were a numerous people and divided with the Pottawatomies the dominion over Lower Michigan, but living between the Ottawas and the Chippewas was another sort of twin tribe, domiciled in the Saginaw Valley, around Saginaw Bay, and holding the territory between Saginaw Bay and Thunder Bay.

This twin tribe was termed by the French the «Sakis and Reynards», while the English afterward termed them the Sacs and Foxes. These were a semi-civilized people, somewhat after the Iroquois of New York. They felt themselves superior to their neighboring tribes, and did not hesitate to show it. As a result they were generally hated by the other Indians, but not one of the tribes cared to make war upon them unassisted. The Sacs and Foxes looked with suspicion and hatred upon the invasion of the whites. They despised the other tribes for making peace with them, and awaited opportunity to attack the fort at Detroit and destroy it together with all the invaders. They planned their attack for the spring of 1712, when the unwary Joseph Guyon du Buisson was commandant and when the Ottawa warriors would be absent on the warpath among the Indians of the Mississippi Valley.

#### EARLY TROUBLE WITH INDIANS

The spring of 1712 dawned brightly in Detroit. The wild tribesmen about the settlement were at peace with one another and with the French. Necessity is a grim mistress and the necessity of the Indian was a plentiful supply of game. When game was scarce or there were too many mouths to be fed, the primitive remedy was for each tribe to go upon the warpath every spring and take as

many scalps as possible from some hereditary enemy tribe and, incidentally, to lose a few scalps of their own. Thus population was kept within the bounds of subsistence by the chase.

But the French government opposed these tribal wars. The traders found that they affected the fur trade and the missionaries deplored them because so many souls were lost. The governor-general of Canada ordered a cessation of this strife.

«But,» protested the Indians, «if we do not make war we shall become weak and timid; our young men will lose their manhood; our women will hold us in contempt if we bring home no scalps. We must make war.»

«Very well, then,» answered the government, «if you must make war, make it against the tribes far away who bring us no fur. There are the *Têtes Plattes* of the Mississippi Valley who are of little use to us. Scalp them, if you must take scalps.»

So each spring a body of young warriors left Detroit to prey upon the *Têtes Plattes* (Flat Heads) of the Mississippi Valley. They left at a stated time which was well known to the Sacs and Foxes, and when that time came in 1712 long lines of tall, fierce Indians from about Saginaw Bay came stealing through the forest toward Detroit. They came via the «grand crossing», which is now in the heart of the city of Flint, and thence by Grand Blanc, Pontiac and Royal Oak, all then virgin forest, and spread out so as completely to encompass the stockade at Detroit.

But word of their approach had reached the settlement through friendly Indians who had remained at home, and swift runners were sent out to recall the Ottawas and Hurons who had left for the West. Out of the

surrounding forest, closing in on the little fort, came a formidable band of Sacs and Foxes, accompanied by their kindred, the Mascoutins and Outagamies, from the Traverse Bay district. The gates were closed in time, but the enemy acted with deliberation and system. They knew the capture of Detroit would be no one-day task and that there was no chance for immediate scalps, so they made their camp and sat down to a systematic siege, knowing that the fort was short of food after the long winter and must soon be starved into surrender if it could not be intimidated or stormed.

Ste-Anne's Church was a vulnerable point which might be fired by blazing arrows while every man would be busy with defense on the parapet, so the commandant burned it while the men could stand by to save the other buildings. Within arrowshot of the fort all around, the enemy threw up trenches and from that shelter they began shooting flaming arrows into the roofs of the settlement. The defenders were kept busy extinguishing a hundred small blazes. The great store of peltry in the warehouse was brought out and laid over the roofs and kept wet with water.

When the case began to look desperate the settlers were cheered when from far off out Michigan Avenue way came the shrill war cry of the returning Ottawas and Hurons. The besiegers at once lost heart and hope, and hurriedly retired to the vicinity of Windmill Point. There they made a new camp where, if they were attacked, they would have protected flanks and the attackers must come to them in the open.

Du Buisson sent M. Vincennes with all the men he could spare, reinforced by the Indians who had returned and others who were gathered for the fray. They attacked the invaders with fury and the odds of powder and ball proved too much for the Sacs

and Foxes. Cowed, they held their ground behind breastworks. The French built platforms from which they could kill the men in the trenches and presently the Sacs and Foxes broke and fled along the shore of the lake and the siege was over. The early chroniclers declared that about 1,000 of them were killed but the number is probably exaggerated. The victorious French and local Indians maintained the pursuit for several days, taking more scalps. There was never another menace to Detroit from those tribesmen.

Among the French names that have been commemorated geographically in the State of Michigan that of Pierre François de Charlesvoix is prominent. Charlesvoix was a learned man who made his first visit to America in 1705. He taught four years in a college at Québec, then returned to France and came back in 1720 to write a history of Canada. In 1721 he arrived in Detroit to establish a mission for the Huron Indians.

James Fenimore Cooper has given us some weird and wonderful relations regarding the deadly feud between the Iroquois of New York and the Hurons of Canada. It was an old feud when Champlain arrived and Champlain intensified the hatred of the Iroquois by taking the side of the Hurons with his arquebus men in a battle with the Iroquois. The arquebus was a rude and very heavy musket which required two men to operate it. One carried the gun weighing about 30 pounds and another a tripod on which to rest the muzzle. It had no lock but was fired like the old cannon by means of a small torch or linstock.

Year after year the Iroquois raided the Huron villages of Canada until the Hurons were utterly crushed as a warlike tribe. Then, being of a «humble and a contrite heart» they were the first tribe to accept Christianity. Charlesvoix came to gather the Detroit



Hurons into the pale of the church. The hastily built tepees about the mouth of the Savoyard River near the foot of Third Street had given place to a village of community houses built with pole frames, and covered, roof and sides, with sheets of elm bark. These houses were 40 to 60 feet long and about 20 feet wide. Sections were allotted to particular families, four or five families living in one house.

Even then the Hurons felt none too secure, for they surrounded their village with a strong stockade. On the higher ground where Jefferson and Michigan avenues lie they had gardens where they grew corn, peas, beans and some wheat. They also had a community storehouse for their products. The women tilled the soil while the men hunted and trapped. Charlesvoix gives a detailed description of their life and that of the Ottawa village on the site of Walkerville, which was also a stockaded village. He describes the Ottawas as the finest formed and most athletic Indians of the neighborhood, but all the tribes seemed to live in a state of armed and watchful neutrality.

On the recommendation of Charlesvoix the Jesuits at Québec sent Fr. Armand de la Richardie to Detroit in 1728. The Récollet Fathers governed the parish of Detroit and so, to avoid any possible conflict of jurisdiction, Fr. Richardie obtained permission to found a Huron mission on the Canadian shore. This mission house was erected near the waterfront directly north of the present site of Assumption College. It was built partly of hewed pine and partly of sawed lumber, 30 by 45 feet on the ground. It remained standing until about the beginning of the Twentieth Century. Afterward a church was built and a priest's residence, a storehouse for furs, another for provisions and a blacksmith shop were established nearby.

There the Hurons could store their foods and furs, and trade with fur buyers where they could not be tempted with strong liquors or cheated by unscrupulous traders. Everything was done under the eyes of the Jesuit father and his assistants, and this proved such an advantage to the Indians that other tribes often went to Sandwich to trade. This rivalry was anything but pleasing to the Detroit trading post, and the feeling intensified as time passed until only a spark was needed to explode trouble between the Indian tribes on both sides of the river. The explosion came in 1738, but that is another story.

It was an act of mercy and a reciprocity in kindness that came near causing a war of extermination between the Huron and Ottawa tribes at Detroit in 1738. It appeared that a Huron warrior had been badly wounded in one of those annual forays into the Mississippi Valley. He was captured, but instead of burning him at the stake in the approved fashion, his captors treated him with kindness, nursed him back to health and sent him home to his own people at the Detroit Huron village.

The Detroit Hurons held a council and decided that they would make no more war upon such a people. More than that, they would try to discourage the Ottawas from raiding the *Têtes Plattes* by giving warnings of their attacks in some mutually understood fashion.

Next spring the Hurons told the Ottawas they would not go on the warpath. They also told them why and urged the Ottawas to give up their annual raid. But the Ottawas scoffed at this policy of pacifism and went away breathing threatenings and slaughter. But a few Huron runners stole through the woods at some distance and gave warnings to the *Têtes Plattes*. Then they slipped back

and spied upon the Ottawas.

One night the Ottawas crept noiselessly upon a sleeping camp of their enemies and lay down to await an opportune moment for their rush. Just then the cry of an owl sounded through the woods. Immediately the sleeping camp was aroused. A moment later the cry was repeated and the camp hurriedly sprang to its arms. Then the warriors scattered through the woods in a wide semicircle to close in on the bewildered band of Ottawas and as they outnumbered the invaders two to one they killed several and drove the others away.

On their way back to Detroit the survivors of the raid began discussing the affair in its various phases, the refusal of the Hurons to join the raid, their plea for its abandonment; and they came to the opinion that those owl cries had been excellent imitations given by Huron spies, as a prearranged signal to the *Têtes Plattes*. When they reached their Ottawa village the whole matter was laid before the tribal council and it was decided that the Hurons must be punished severely for this betrayal.

Information regarding the impending outbreak was brought to the priests, who tried to quiet the Ottawas, but without success. The matter was finally compromised by an arrangement which involved the removal of the Hurons to Sandusky, Ohio. After four years' residence there, the old feud had cooled somewhat and the Jesuit fathers at Sandwich planned to bring the Hurons back to Detroit. Here another compromise was arranged. The Ottawas did not want the Hurons near them and the Hurons were afraid to come back, so it was arranged to bring the Hurons from Sandusky to Bois Blanc Island at the mouth of the Detroit River. They remained on the island for five years and Fr. Peter Potier was sent to conduct a mission

there. In 1747 good feeling was sufficiently restored to attempt a return up the river, so the Bois Blanc Mission was abandoned and Fr. Potier brought the Hurons to Sandwich Point and settled them about the mission house.

In 1755 Fr. Richardie went back to Québec, leaving Fr. Potier in charge of the mission. He remained faithfully at his post and grew old in the service. On the night of July 16, 1781, he was standing near the big fireplace in the mission house reading, when he was attacked by vertigo. He fell to the floor so heavily that his skull was fractured against the andiron and he died a few hours later at the age of 72 years. His remains were buried beneath the altar of the old church. In 1851 the present Church of the Assumption was built and the remains of Fr. Potier were re-interred beneath the altar of that edifice, which still stands. Two other priests had in the meantime been interred beneath the altar of the old church, but the remains of Fr. Potier were easily identified by his tall stature and by the hole in his skull where it had been punctured by the point of the andiron.

#### DETROIT TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO

Far-flung battle lines are apt to get out of alignment and far-flung trading posts tend toward corruption. Most of the Indian wars of the United States have been the direct or indirect results of corrupt practice in remote trading posts. Commandant Alphonse Tonty at Detroit adopted a get-rich-quick policy. The Indians were plied with liquor and badly cheated. Trade began to fall off and furs from Detroit began to find their way to Fort Orange or Albany, N. Y. The Indians became angry: Settlers became nervous and began to leave. Presently there were less than 30 left.

The Indians had taken to agriculture under instruction, and for a time raised wheat

and other cereals enough to supply Detroit and other trading posts, but the cheating discouraged them and then they raised only enough for their own needs. Tonty died in office, leaving the affairs of Detroit in bad condition. The government of New France decided that a thoroughly competent and honest business man was needed to take charge of civil affairs here. Once again by a fortuitous combination of circumstances, the man, the issue and the job made fortunate conjunction.

In 1730 Robert Navarre, a native of Villeroy, Brittany, came out from France with strong recommendations to the governmental authorities. As his name would imply, he was a scion of nobility, being a direct descendant of the eighth generation of Henry IV of Navarre, King of France. Robert Navarre was sent to Detroit as intendant of the post and he took charge that same year. In 1734 he married Mary Lootman, commonly called Barrois, and they reared a large family. He held his post steadily until the French possession was surrendered to the English in 1760 and for some time thereafter he was in the employ of the English government in the same capacity, serving as magistrate, notary, interpreter and controller of fiscal affairs, to the complete satisfaction of all parties concerned.

His family continued in honorable esteem through every change of sovereignty. They were loyal to the English during the English régime and loyal to the Americans later on. When the War of 1812 came, there were 36 Navarres in military service on the American side, and their descendants are now scattered all over the country.

In early days the area now covered by Detroit contained a number of large creeks besides the Savoyard River. One of these flowed down from the northwest through a

deep ravine which crossed Michigan Avenue just north of the present Michigan Central station. The banks of the ravine were afterward graded down and the Michigan Central railroad tracks were laid on the filled-in bed of the stream down to Third Street in 1848.

That old stream disappeared long, long ago, but in 1730 it was known as Cabacier's Creek. In 1734 a dam was built across the creek and a grist mill was built which ground all the flour and meal of the settlement for several years. After the American occupation the name was changed to May's Creek. A number of settlers who lived at some distance from the fort erected windmills for their own and their neighbors' use. One of these, known as Knagg's Mill, stood for many years where the western boulevard now ends at the river front. Another old landmark windmill gave the name to Windmill Point where Lake St. Clair joins Detroit River.

In the early days the commandants of Detroit were supposed to enjoy a rich perquisite but were required to pay their own expenses and maintain the post without government aid. This policy made the commandants greedy and most of them engaged in corrupt practice for private gain while they reduced their military force as much as they dared in order to curtail their expenses. In 1737 Sieur de Noyelle kept but 17 soldiers to defend Detroit. The trade in beaver fur experienced a boom in consequence of an unusual foreign demand in the 1730's. In 1735 178,000 pounds of beaver were shipped abroad from Québec. This condition led to a petition to Count Maurepas, who had succeeded Count Pontchartrain as minister of marine, asking that more troops be sent at government expense and that the commandant be placed on a salary.

Old Detroit was a quaint sort of place in early days. The stockade of unpainted

timber soon began to show signs of decay and occasionally rotten palings had to be replaced with sound timber. The houses, all unpainted and rudely constructed, took on a weather-beaten and rather dilapidated appearance. Some of the roofs sagged and walls became out of plumb, giving the older buildings a staggering effect, but the happy-go-lucky Frenchmen cared little for appearances as long as they were kept dry and warm within.

A hardy breed of rough-coated ponies had been developed in the St. Lawrence Valley and the more prosperous residents of Detroit imported these, and also a curious style of two-wheeled vehicle with very long thills and without springs. The caleches which are still used in Québec fairly represent the type. The settlers made their own rude sleighs which were shod with straps of iron at the blacksmith shop.

Most of these ponies were pacers and some of them were very speedy. They were to be found at every one of the French farms which, having a narrow frontage on the river front above and below the town, were supposed to extend into the wilderness indefinitely. The length of these farms was finally settled at three miles. When these farmers drove into town they wanted to make an impression, so it was a common thing to see a pony driven down Ste-Anne Street at breakneck speed with the vehicle behind bouncing perilously and the wild-looking driver with long floating hair, covered by a conical fur cap, and a face full of whiskers, swinging a long gad and giving utterance to wild yells, as a warning for all pedestrians to look out for their lives.

When two or more of these would meet in the street there would be a challenge for a race and as the ponies came tearing through the street only 20 feet wide, pedestrians

sprang into the nearest door without ceremony. All the houses faced flush on the log sidewalk which was only two feet wide. It was in the winter that the «days of real sport» came. The favorite racing places were on the ice of the River Rouge and at Ecorse, and, in midwinter, on the ice of the big river.

There were no newspapers in the town and few people who could read one, even in the French language, so Ste-Anne's Church fulfilled the double function of supplying the souls of the inhabitants with grace, and their minds with the news of the day. After morning mass the leading acolyte would hastily doff his robe and take his stand on the little platform at the church door, where he would relate to the assembly gathered in the street all the news of the town and shore; giving notice of dances that were to be held during the week and of the horse races to be held after dinner Sunday afternoon. They were mostly a carefree, jovial lot. The streets of the town were noisy day and night with the folksongs of the old homes across the ocean. The sound of violins could be heard from many houses and dancing was the popular amusement in which young and old joined with equal zest.

The Indians loved to gather on the common, east of the fort, to play lacrosse and football and often there were contests between the reds and the whites. After Detroit began to pick up again and show renewed prosperity, French taste was manifested by the whitewashing of houses and palings. The more prosperous citizens painted their front doors a vivid apple-green. The homes were kept very clean. The fare, though simple, was well cooked. Many houses had small looms in which the women wove coarse linens and woolens. Over their beds they hung pictures of the Madonna and a lead crucifix always adorned the wall of the main room.



All along the river front, before each house, was a tiny landing wharf with a birch canoe tied to it and sometimes a larger bateau for freighting goods. The waterways were the only highways for many years. Along the ridge now marked by the course of Jefferson Avenue was a rude trail by which the farmers came to the fort. It was interrupted near where the Michigan Stove Works now stands by a narrow but deep ravine through which flowed a stream called Parent's Creek. This was spanned by a log bridge which was destined to be a scene of bloody massacre in 1763, and which was to change Parent's Creek to «Bloody Run». The only remnant of any of those ancient waterways now remaining is a section of old Bloody Run which is still preserved in Elmwood Cemetery.

#### FRANCE AND GREAT BRITAIN IN RIVALRY

It is the fate of empires to have their rise and fall, and it is the custom of colonizing nations to rob one another of their distant possessions and to exchange them in trades. Occasionally, the colonists themselves chafe and fret under outside control and then assert their independence of the mother country, either partial or complete.

The decade of the 1740's was a period of gathering storm in North America but for a time the menace was barely suggested by whisperings in the court circles of England and France. The more North America was explored the better were the vastness of its area and the wealth of its national resources appreciated. With feeble, struggling colonies domiciled in a continent in which both the mother countries could easily be lost, the French and the English began to feel crowded. Each longed to dispossess the other. Each seemed to feel that conflict loomed in the distance and both began active preparation for it.

Entrance from the ocean to New France was by way of the St. Lawrence River. Access to it was by ships, and both nations began building more ships. The French decided to make a safe refuge for their ships and a strong defense of the mouth of the St. Lawrence by building an enormous fortification at Louisburg on the seaward side of Cape Breton Island. For 25 years a large number of workmen toiled at this task under direction of the best military engineers of France and, when finished, it was regarded as impregnable.

There the ships of France gathered and made it their cruising center while they sailed up and down the New England coast apparently in aimless fashion. But the fishermen and the coast settlers of New England had their suspicions that a descent upon them was being contemplated. Many years before the French had begun spying out the coast. One of the first preferments gained by Cadillac, before he founded Detroit, was through his service as a surveyor of New England harbors and his recommendation of a plan of conquest. For this he was given title to the island of Mt. Desert on the coast of Maine.

By 1745 the menace became so ominous that Gov. Shirley of Massachusetts adopted the maxim: «Thrice is he armed who has his quarrel just, and four times he who gets his blow in fust.» He planned an attack upon Louisburg with a force of 3,600 hardy New Englanders escorted in 100 New England ships in command of Col. William Pepperell; this to be joined on the way by the British squadron under Commodore Warren. This formidable force took station before Louisburg, April 30, 1745, and after 10 weeks of siege they forced a surrender.

Three years later the peace of Aix la Chapelle was signed which restored the hard-won fort to France. This was a mere tempo-

rizing measure, for the menace remained and in 1758 the place was surrounded again by 14,000 men under Gen. Amherst, for whom Amherstburg was afterward named, and Admiral Boscawen. Louisburg was taken again and has ever since remained in British possession. It is now a place of no importance.

At the same time, far in the interior of the continent, there were other manifestations of the rising storm. An Indian raid was organized by the Chippewa chief Mackinac — whose name is translated «Turtle» — in 1746, and curiously enough a brilliant young chief named Pontiac came to the rescue of the Detroit settlement, raised the siege and drove the Chippewas away.

In the following year the Iroquois tribes of New York induced the Hurons of Detroit to join them in a conspiracy for the destruction of Detroit. The conspiracy was revealed to the French commandant and so came to naught, but the situation was regarded as so perilous that the settlers dared not work far from the fort, and the consequence was a small crop of foodstuffs and a near-famine in the following winter.

The French began planting a chain of fortified settlements in Pennsylvania and Ohio. The British retaliated by offering 500,000 acres of Ohio land to colonists who would build a fort and maintain it there. The French sent an expedition through that part of the country in 1749, placing lead plates here and there on blazed trees, giving notice that the territory was the property of the King of France.

An irrepressible conflict was slowly developing out of an unrepressed national greed for North American territory. French possession really extended from the mouth of the St. Lawrence River through Canada, the Great Lakes region and the Mississippi Val-

ley. West of the Mississippi lay their claimed territory of Louisiana of unknown area.

The English having established settlements in New England, Virginia and other parts of the Atlantic coast, claimed possession from sea to sea, and the colonies followed this assertion of right by extending their individual claims from sea to sea. In western Pennsylvania and the Ohio Valley the two nations came into collision. The Virginians had pushed a settlement up the Monongahela River and discovered that the Ohio was formed by a junction of the Monongahela with the Allegheny, which came from the north. This junction, they saw, was a very important place for a town and fort.

But the French were well aware of the same fact, for they had already penetrated the region and established a chain of forts between the Niagara River and the head waters of the Ohio. The Virginia government sought a peaceable arrangement with the French and sent a special commissioner to treat with them in 1753. That special commissioner happened to be a rising young surveyor and militiaman named George Washington. St. Pierre, the French commandant at the junction of the rivers, received Washington courteously, but flatly refused to make any concessions to the English in general, or to the Ohio Company in particular, that company having been formed to conduct colonization in the Ohio Valley.

In 1754 Washington was sent with a force of militia to build a fort where Pittsburgh now stands. They encountered Col. Jumonville with a force of 32 men on a similar mission. In the fight that followed 10 Frenchmen were killed, 21 were taken prisoners and one escaped. But Col. Contrecoeur with a force of 1,000 French was approaching from the north, so Washington returned to Virginia. In the following year Gen. Brad-

dock led a force into the same region and met with memorable disaster. Such was the beginning of the old «French and Indian War», which lasted until 1760 and ended with the surrender of all New France to Great Britain. This included Detroit, but during all those bloody years of scalp-taking and mutual slaughter the conflict did not come near Detroit.

In 1749 several hundred French settlers were sent to Detroit from Canada and during the following years the military post was materially strengthened. Soldiers and Indians were occasionally sent down to Niagara to aid in the defense of the chain of Ohio forts, but the residents of the town heard little more than vague rumors about the war. When the stronghold of Québec fell before the attack of Gen. James Wolfe, September 13, 1759, the power of France was broken. Montreal soon surrendered, but it was not until September 8, 1760, that the entire territory was ceded.

No information was sent to Detroit and the peaceful community assumed that no news was good news. Maj. Rogers was sent with a British force from Niagara to take over the fort at Detroit. The expedition traveled in bateaux along the south shore of Lake Erie. They camped one night at the mouth of the Cuyahoga River, where Cleveland now stands, and a bold Indian warrior visited the camp. He told Maj. Rogers that his name was Pontiac; that he was head chief of the Indian nations of the lake country:

«Why have you come into my country without permission or invitation?» Do you come in peace or in war?» he asked.

«I have come in the name of the great King of England to take possession of Detroit,» answered Rogers.

«This country does not belong to your great king; it is my country and my people control it; all the country of the lakes,» said Pontiac.

«We come only to trade; we do not want your lands. We will give you better trade than the French. We will not cheat you as the French have done.»

Pontiac eyed Rogers suspiciously and said:

«I will stand in your path until morning and will protect you from harm. At daylight you may proceed safely on your way.»

Pontiac was a dignified, commanding figure, then in the prime of life. He had his summer camp on Pêche Island, off the Canadian shore of Lake St. Clair immediately above Belle Isle. He was a man of medium height, strongly built and rather simply dressed, but his face, with strong, regular features, large nose and flaming eyes, showed strong character and his air was that of one accustomed to be obeyed in all his commands and of a man who demanded respect from white men as well as Indians.

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ANNALS OF ST. LOUIS IN ITS EARLY DAYS  
UNDER THE FRENCH AND SPANISH DOMINATIONS

by Frederic L. Billon

INTRODUCTORY CHRONOLOGY

*DISCOVERY AND DESCENT  
OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER*

*(From Father Marquette's Journal,  
published by Theyenot, Paris, 1682.)*

Prior to the year 1668, Michilimackinac was the extreme point of trade of the Canadians with the Indian tribes of the Northwest. In that year the Jesuit Missionaries, Fathers Claude Allouez, Claude Dablon and James Marquette, reached the western extremity of Lake Superior.

1673, May 13th. — The Sieur Joliet of Quebec, a Canadian trader, and Father Marquette, a missionary priest, with five French hands, seven in the party, embarked in two bark canoes at Mackinaw, to seek the great river of the west, of which they had frequently heard through the Indians of that region. The first nation they met was the Folle Avoinnes (Menominees). They next arrived at the Pottawatomies at Green Bay. Entering Fox River they arrived on June 7th at the villages of the Maskoutens and Miamies. June 10th, taking with them two Indian guides, they ascended the Fox River, crossed the portage of one and a half miles, carrying their canoes, which they launched in the Meskonsing (Ouisconsin), dismissed their guides and descended that river.

June 17th, they entered the Mississippi River at about the forty-second degree of north latitude, and commenced its descent 25th. Found tracks of men which led to their village, two leagues inland; they were of the Indians called the Illinois.

Passed the mouth of the Pekitanoui (Missouri) on their right, then the Ouabouskigou (Ouabache), Indian name of the Ohio, coming in from the east in latitude north about thirty-six. Below here they met Indians, the Chicachas (Chicasaws), descended to near the thirty-third degree and passed on their right the village of the Michigamias, and ten leagues below the large village called Akamsca (Arkansas).

Here, being within one and a half degrees, or two or three days' journey to the Gulf of Florida, after a day's rest, they left this village of Akamsca on July 17th, on their return up the Mississippi, being one month in descending that river from the forty-second degree to below the thirty-fourth. On arriving at the thirty-ninth degree they left the Mississippi to enter another river of the east side (the Illinois) which shortened their return to the lake of the Illinois Indians (Lake Michigan), and reached Green Bay at the close of September, having been over four months on their voyage.

1675, May 13. — Louis, the fourteenth



king of France, made to Robert Cavalier de La Salle a grant of lands at Frontenac, Canada.

1678, May 12. — Another grant from the king, confirming and extending the first, with instructions to prosecute the discoveries in New France — the name given the country on the Mississippi.

1681, December. — La Salle and Lieut. Tonty left Chekagou, on Lake Michigan, with twenty-two Frenchmen and eighteen Indians, Hurons, etc., descended the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers, and on April 6, 1682, arrived at the three outlets of the river into the Gulf, and having selected a suitable spot they, on the 9th, planted a column with a cross bearing the Arms of France and this inscription:

LOUIS THE GRAND,  
KING OF FRANCE AND NAVARRE.  
APRIL 9, 1682.

The *Te Deum*, *Exaudiat* and the *Domine Salvum fac Regem* were chanted by the whole party, and after a salute of fire-arms and shouts of «Long live the king», M. de La Salle delivered an address and proclaimed the country taken possession of in the name of the king of France, and then buried at the foot of the cross a metallic plate on which was engraved the arms of France and an appropriate inscription.

A verbal process was drawn up by Jacques La Metairie, and signatures affixed: —

De La Salle,  
Father Zenobé Membré, recollet missionary,  
Henri de Tonty,  
François de Boisrondet,  
Jean Bourdon,  
Sieur d'Autray,  
Jacques Cauchois,  
Pierre You,  
Gilles Meucret,

Jean Michel, surgeon,  
Jean Mas,  
Jean Dulignon,  
Nicholas De La Salle,  
La Metairie, notary.

1683. — Further instructions were issued to La Salle to open a communication to New France by the Gulf of Mexico.

*FROM CAPT. D'IBERVILLE'S REPORT,  
JULY 3, 1699.*

1698, Oct. 24. — M. Capt. d'Iberville sailed from Brest in his flagship *La Badine*, with the frigate *Le Marin*, Capt. de Surgères, to take possession of Louisiana, cast anchor at the Chandeleur Islands early in February, 1699, and on the 21st, with his brothers, Sauvolle and Bienville and others, and fifty-three men, left the vessels in two boats and some canoes, found the mouth of the Mississippi, and entered the river on March 2d, which he ascended as far up as the Natchez tribe of Indians, then returned down the river to the Bayou Manchac. Here leaving the large boats to descend the river, he passed in a canoe through the Bayou, the Amitié River and the lakes Maurepas, Pontchartrain and Borgne, which he so named, and reached his ships on the 31st.

1699, April. — Commenced the erection of a fort (Maurepas) at Biloxi, on the main land, and on its completion he sailed for France May 3, 1699, leaving M. De Sauvolle in command with Lieut. De Bienville of the navy, a chaplain, a major, two captains, two cannoniers, four sailors, eighteen filibusters, ten mechanics, six masons, thirteen Canadians and twenty sub-officers and privates—eighty in all—to commence the colony.

1699, December 7. — The second arrival of Iberville from France. Sauvolle had been appointed by the king the first gover-

nor of Louisiana.

1700, Jan. 17. — Iberville and Bienville went up the Mississippi and selected a site for a fort fifty-four miles from the mouth. On May 3d, Iberville sailed again for France.

1701, July 22. — Death of Sauvolle, the first governor.

1702, March 18. — Capt. Iberville's third arrival with two ships from France and return there in June.

1703. — War declared between Great Britain and France and Spain. August 15, arrival of Chateaugay, another brother of Bienville.

1707. — Death of Iberville at San Domingo. Bienville acting governor *ad interim*.

1708. — Population 279 French and 60 Canadians.

1712, Sept. 14. — The king granted to M. Crozat a charter of the colony.

1713, May 17. — Arrival of Lamothe Cadillac, new governor for Crozat.

1716. — Recall of Cadillac and resumption by Bienville.

1717, March 9. — Arrival of the new governor M. De L'Epiney. August 13, Crozat surrendered his charter to the King, and Jno. Laws' India Company was established to succeed him in the proprietorship.

1718. — De l'Epiney recalled to France and Bienville reappointed governor; Bienville selected a site for a new capital on the Mississippi, and New Orleans was commenced.

1723. — Seat of government transferred

to the new city of New Orleans.

1724, Jan. 16. — Gov. Bienville was called to France; he sailed in 1725 — And Boisbriant succeeded him *ad interim*.

1726, Aug. 9. — M. Perier appointed governor.

1731, Jan. 23. — The India Company surrendered their charter to the king.

1733. — Gov. Bienville reappointed and returned after eight years' absence.

1742. — Gov. Bienville requested to be recalled.

1743, May 10. — ~~The~~ Marquis De Vaudreuil, his successor, arrived, and Bienville left the country for France forever.

1753. — The Marquis De Vaudreuil was appointed governor-general of Canada. February 9, he was succeeded in Louisiana by Capt. Kerlerrec of the navy.

1760, Dec. 21. — The fortifications of New Orleans were completed.

1762, Nov. 3. — By a treaty at Fontainebleau France ceded to Spain all of Louisiana, which was accepted by the Spanish king November 13. This treaty was kept secret for a time.

1763, Feb. 10. — Final treaty of peace at Paris between France and Spain and Great Britain, by which France ceded to Great Britain all her possessions east of the Mississippi River and north of the Iberville, which excluded the Island of New Orleans, also her pretensions to Nova Scotia and the Canadas, and Spain her claims to Florida.

*All North America then belonged only*

to Spain and Great Britain.

Arrival at Pensacola of M. George Johnson, the new English governor of Florida, who received possession, accompanied by the British Major Loftus to ascend the Mississippi and take command of the Illinois country.

June 29. — Arrival at New Orleans of Mr. D'Abadie from Paris, appointed by the king of France Director General, to relieve Gov. Kerlerrec, *ad interim*, and turn over the country to the Spanish authorities when they would arrive to receive it.

In October the British Capt. Farmer was in possession of Mobile, and Capt. Ford at Tombeckbee.

Capt. Kerlerrec was the last French governor of Louisiana, which he had been for the ten years preceding the arrival of Mr. D'Abadie in June, 1763, when Kerlerrec was recalled to France to render an account of the mal-administration of the affairs of the colony under his governorship, consequently the license to Maxent, Laclede & Co., to establish Indian trade on the upper Missouri, if issued in 1762, as Chouteau states in his narrative, came from Kerlerrec, the then governor, but called director-general, appointed by Louis XV. after the country was no longer his own, but belonged to England and Spain, between whom he had divided it, consequently could no longer appoint a governor for it.

He named D'Abadie «director-general» and sent him over from France as soon as he had parted with the country, to relieve Kerlerrec, gather together the French troops scattered at the various posts throughout the country, and send them all back to France but four companies, which he was to retain with him until he should turn over the coun-

try to the new owners so soon as they would arrive to receive possession. This the English did without delay, they being already at hand in Florida, but the Spanish were so dilatory in the matter that poor D'Abadie was compelled to remain until he fell a victim to the effects of the climate.

Letter of Louis XV. to Mr. D'Abadie.  
(From State Papers, Vol. 17, page 240):

«By a special act executed at Fontainebleau November 13, 1762, having ceded of my own free will to my well beloved cousin, the King of Spain, and to his successors and heirs, without any reservation, all the country known under the name of Louisiana, including New Orleans, and the island on which that city is situated, and by another act executed at the Escorial, signed by the King of Spain the 13th of November of the same year, his Catholic Majesty having accepted the cession of the said country of Louisiana and the city and island of New Orleans, in conformity with the said cession which you will find herewith, I make you this letter to say to you that my intention is at the receipt of the present, let it come to you by officers of his Catholic Majesty, or directly by French vessels charged with it, you will at once place in the hands of the governor, or the officer appointed for the purpose by the King of Spain, the said country and colony of Louisiana and dependant posts, with the city and island of New Orleans, as it was on the day of the cession, so that in the future it may belong to his Catholic Majesty, to be governed by his officers as belonging to him in full right, without any reservation. I therefore direct you, that so soon as the Governor and troops of his Catholic Majesty will have arrived in said colonies, you will place them in possession, and withdraw all the officers, soldiers and employes in my service that may yet be there in garrison, to be

sent to France, or to my other colonies in America, those who may not think proper to remain under the Spanish domination.

I desire further that after the complete evacuation of said posts and city of New Orleans, you gather all the papers and documents relating to the finances and administration of the colony of Louisiana and come to France to settle them; my intention is, nevertheless, that you hand over to said Governor, or his proper officer, all the papers and documents that especially concern the government of said colony in relation to the country and its boundaries, to the Indians and various posts, taking proper receipts for them for your safety; and that you give said governor all the information in your power to enable him to govern said colony to the satisfaction of his Catholic Majesty; to the end that said cession be reciprocally satisfactory to the two nations, my will is that an inventory be made in duplicate between you and the commissioner of his Catholic Majesty of all artillery, arms, munitions, effects, stores, buildings, vessels, etc., which belong to me in said colony, and duly appraised, so that after having put the Spanish commissioner in possession of the buildings, etc., an appraisement be made of the value of what may be left to be paid for by his Catholic Majesty.

I hope, for the advantage and tranquility of the inhabitants of the colony of Louisiana, and I promise in consequence of the friendship and affection of his Catholic Majesty that he will give orders to his Governor, and all others in his service in said city and colony, that the clergy and religious establishments who deserve protection, may continue their functions, and enjoy the rights, privileges and exceptions now enjoyed by them; that the civil magistrates be continued, as also the Superior Council, to

render justice according to the laws, forms and usages of the colony, that the inhabitants be protected and maintained in their possessions, and their lands be confirmed according to the concessions that have been made them by the former governors, etc., of the colony — that said concessions be confirmed by his Catholic Majesty, although they have not yet been so by myself, hoping above all things that his Catholic Majesty will give to his new subjects of Louisiana the same marks of good will and protection that they had found under my domination, and which the misfortunes of war alone prevented them enjoying to a greater extent.

«You will have these letters made of record in the Superior Council of New Orleans, so that the various districts of the colony be informed of its contents, and if necessary can have recourse to them, having no other object.

«I pray God, Mr. D'Abadie, to have you in his holy keeping.

«[Signed]

«Louis,

«The Duc de Choiseul.»

«Versailles, April 21, 1764.»

#### *CONDENSATION OF PRECEDING FACTS*

In 1762, Maxent, Laclede & Co., merchants at New Orleans, obtained from Gov. Kerlerec a license to trade with the Indians on the Upper Mississippi and Missouri, and commenced making their preparations for that trade by procuring their goods from Cuba at once.

On November 13 of that year, 1762, France ceded to Spain by a secret treaty at Fontainebleau all her possessions on the Mississippi River, and by another treaty at Paris, February 10, 1763, France and Spain conjointly conceded to Great Britain all the country on the east bank with the Canadas.



1763. — The king of France then appointed Mons. D'Abadie, not to be governor but director-general, to come over to Louisiana to relieve Gov. Kerlerec, who was recalled to France to give an account of his ten years' administration, to collect the French troops in Louisiana at New Orleans, to be sent to France, all but four companies, and to remain there in charge *ad interim*, until the Spanish should arrive to receive possession of the country. Mr. D'Abadie arrived in New Orleans June 29th, five weeks before Laclède's departure for the Upper Mississippi on August 3, 1763. Of course the fact of the cession of the country to Spain could hardly have been a secret then, although the king's official letter proclaiming the cession was not promulgated until the following year, 1764. Consequently, when Laclède arrived and established himself here, the country no longer belonged to France, and he was in some sense, perhaps unwittingly, a trespasser on the soil of another sovereignty, as were also all those who followed him from the other side, until after the establishment of the Spanish authority; they became subjects of that power by remaining in the country and taking the oath of allegiance to the new authorities.

And here let us take a retrospective glance and look back in our history to some of the remote causes that led to the cession of the Louisianas to Spain and England. We gather from Charles Gayarre's works on Louisiana, that down to the treaty of cession to Spain, November 3, 1762, the long continued efforts of France to colonize the lower province, so far from proving a source of great revenue to the French exchequer, as had been fondly anticipated from the exaggerated misrepresentations of its early enthusiastic and sanguine explorers of the unlimited richness of the country, even in the precious metals, etc., had not only caused the bankruptcy of the early companies of adventurers, but had also been a constant drain on the fi-

nances of France, to so great an extent that she herself was on the verge of bankruptcy and would willingly have parted with it before this period had she known in what manner to get rid of it.

The treaty between the three powers which put an end to the seven years' war, afforded the French king an excellent occasion to part with his «elephant», by generously bestowing it upon his royal cousin of Spain, who, it appears, not appreciating it so highly as the generous donor of the princely gift, was in no hurry to take immediate possession of it, as he suffered seven years to elapse before he sent O'Reilly to enforce his authority in his new acquisition.

1763, Aug. 3. — Laclède left New Orleans with his boat, arrived at Ste. Genevieve, and proceeded on to Fort Chartres where he arrived November 3. In December with a small party he proceeded by land as far as the mouth of the Missouri River, selected and marked the spot for his trading post and returned to Fort Chartres, where he passed the winter of 1763-64, awaiting the opening of the river in the spring to come up and establish his new trading post at the point selected. During this period orders were received by Lieut.-Gov. Neyon de Villiers, the French commandant at that fort, from Mr. D'Abadie at New Orleans to

«collect his men together from the few French posts then in this upper country, turn over possession to the British, then daily expected, when they should appear, and with his men come down to New Orleans».

The receipt of the news of the transfer to Great Britain, produced great excitement and indignation in the minds of the inhabitants of the Upper Illinois. To be thus transferred body and soul, without their consent,

and compelled to live as the subjects of a nation that for long ages back they had regarded in the light of hereditary enemies and heretics in religion, was an outrage on their feelings not to be silently acquiesced in. So, as in the case of their fellow-countrymen below, they gave free expression to their discontent and disgust, many resolving not to remain in the country.

From this circumstance Laclède imbibed the idea of establishing a village immediately around his contemplated «trading post», and cordially invited all those dissatisfied with the transfer of that side of the country to the British, to come over with him and establish themselves on this side. Hence, the almost immediate springing up of the new village.

(In the meantime the British being detained by unforeseen circumstances, from appearing at Fort Chartres as early as expected, to be placed in possession, De Villiers, disgusted with the turn in affairs, became impatient to be gone. So after waiting until the 15th of June, and still no appearance of the British; his patience being completely exhausted, he left on that day and arrived at New Orleans on July 2d, with six officers and sixty-three men in his command — seventy in all — accompanied by eighty inhabitants, including women and children, whom he had induced to go below with assurances that they would receive land there from the authorities in lieu of that they had abandoned up here.

He left at Fort Chartres Capt. St. Ange De Bellerive with some twenty officers and men expecting to follow him in a few days, but who were detained there for sixteen months longer. The British Highlanders, under Capt. Sterling, finally reached there, October 10, 1765, when Capt. St. Ange delivered him possession of the fort, and with it the

country, and crossed over to St. Louis, then all life and bustle in building up.)

On the opening of navigation in the spring, Laclède dispatched his boat in charge of Chouteau, on which were thirty men and boys, with the following instructions to C.:

«You will proceed and land where we marked the trees, commence to have the place cleared, build a large shed to protect the provisions and tools, and some cabins to shelter the men. I give you two men on whom you can depend to aid you, and I will join you before long.»

Chouteau then proceeds:

«I landed at the place designated on the 14th of March, and on the morning of the next day (March 15th) I put the men to work.»

## THE FRENCH DOMINATION

### EARLY FRENCH MERCHANTS

Much of the early emigration to lower Louisiana came from the southwest part of France, bordering on Spain and along the shores of the Atlantic and Mediterranean, many of them well educated business men of the best families, from the principal towns throughout this region of country, quite a number of them finding their way up to St. Louis: —

Laclède Liguist, Pierre  
Bidet, Jno. B. Langoumois  
Butaud, Jno. B. Brind'amour  
Eloi, Francis  
Dubreuil, Louis Chauvet  
Barsalou, Nicholas  
Thoulouse, Jno. M.  
Hubert, Antoine  
Durcy, Francis

Lambert, Louis  
 Fouche, Pierre  
 Dutillet, M.  
 Berard, Antoine, Bordeaux  
 Lepage, François  
 Peri, Pierre  
 August Conde, Surgeon  
 Valeau, Jno. B., Sur.  
 Motard, J. A. J., Avignon  
 Sarpy, Jno. B., Funel  
 Segond, Joseph  
 Labbadie, Silvestre, Tarbes  
 Duralde, M. M.  
 Conand, Joseph  
 Duclos, Jno.  
 Barré, Etienne  
 Largarcinière.  
 Papin, Jos. M.  
 Roubieux, Gaspard  
 Yosti, Emelien  
 Vigo, Francis  
 Bargas, Domingo  
 Pourcelly, John P.  
 Gratiot, Charles  
 Clamorgan, Jacques  
 Bouis, A. V., Marseilles  
 Sorin, Joseph, Larochele  
 Collel, Bonaventura, Barcelona  
 Sarpy, Gregoire, Funel  
 Sarpy, Pierre Silvestre, Funel  
 Sarpy, Pierre Berald, Funel  
 Reilhe, Antoine  
 Marmillon, François  
 Fusilier de la Claire, Gabriel  
 Delorier, Louis Merlet  
 Barrouelle, François, St. Domingo.  
 Coignard, Louis, Chatillon  
 Cabanné, John P., Pau  
 Rutgers, Arend  
 Delaunay, David

[ . . . ], St. Louis contained in the year 1770, at the conclusion of her first and French administration, one hundred and fifteen houses — one hundred of wood and fifteen of stone — of which number seventy-five, about two-thirds of the whole, had been put up in her two first years — 1765 and 1766 — with a population of about 500 souls. And

at the transfer of the country to the United States in 1804 they had increased to one hundred and thirty of wood and fifty-one of stone — one hundred and eighty-one in all; an increase in the thirty-four years under Spanish rule of sixty-six buildings; an average of barely two per annum; and this included stores, warehouses, kitchens and other buildings, etc., some twenty or so. The dwellings being about one hundred and sixty, and the population 925 souls — an average of less than six to a house.

St. Louis in her first five years of existence, with her one hundred and fifteen houses, had become larger than Kaskaskia ever had been in her best days, drawing the largest portion of her new comers from the Illinois side of the river, reducing somewhat the populations of Kaskaskia, Cahokia and Prairie du Rocher, and completely depopulating and annihilating the two villages of Fort Chartres and St. Phillippe, which ceased to exist.

During the thirty-four years of Spanish authority succeeding the first six years of French rule, the place continued to be French in every essential but the partial use of Spanish in a few official documents; the intercourse of the people with each other, and their governors, their commerce, trade, habits, customs, manners, amusements, marriages, funerals, services in church, parish registers, everything was French; the governors and officers all spoke French, it was a *sine qua non* in their appointment; the few Spaniards that settled in the country soon became Frenchmen, and all married French wives; no Frenchman became a Spaniard; two or three of the governors were Frenchmen by birth; the wives of Gov. Piernas and Trudeau were French ladies. Outside of the Spanish officials and soldiers not more than a dozen Spaniards came to the place during the domination of Spain; Governor Delassus

was born in France and Trudeau of French stock, and nearly all the papers in the archives were in the French language. The country was only Spanish by possession, but practically French in all else.

### THE EARLY PRIESTS

Father I. L. Meurin, parish curate of our Lady of Cahokia, was the first, and after him Father Gibault, curate of the Immaculate Conception at Kaskaskia, and Vicar General of my Lord Bishop of Québec, the second who came over occasionally from the other side, and officiated for a few years in a tent, and from the summer of 1768 in a small log chapel put up for temporary use on the north-east corner of the church square, which served until the erection of the first church in 1776.

The first public sale at the door of the chapel took place on Sunday, September 12, 1768, by Cottin, the first constable.

During the French period prior to 1770, the churches in this province were under the ecclesiastical authority of the Bishopric of Quebec, after the establishment of the Spanish authority by Don Pedro Piernas May 20, 1770, they came under that of the Bishopric of Cuba.

The first book in which were registered the baptisms, marriages and deaths of this parish of St. Louis, was commenced on October 4, 1770, by René Kiersereau, the sexton of the church, there being then no parish priest as yet, who on that date interred the body of Gregory, a free negro man, and who continued, as sexton, to inter until March 25, 1772, up to which date he had interred thirty-four bodies, when Father Valentin, who had just been appointed the first curate of the parish of St. Louis, entered upon his duties, and took charge of the church register.

The first baptism in St. Louis was by Father Meurin in May, 1766, of Marie Deschamps, born in September, 1765, and his last one, of Marie Joseph Kiersereau, February 7, 1769 — numbering twenty-nine by him and three by Kiersereau — thirty-two in the three years. They were noted down at the time on loose sheets of paper, and afterwards, when the first register book was procured by Governor Piernas, copied therein, several of them imperfect, torn and mice-eaten.

1. Marie Deschamps, 1765, 1766.
  2. Veronica Ride, May 9.
  3. Antoine, a half-breed Panis, May 9.
  4. Catherine Bissonnet, May 7, 1767.
  5. Helen Hebert, May 7, 1767.
  6. Pelagie Kiersereau, May 7, 1767.
  7. Marie Langevin, May 7, 1767.
  8. Henry François Leroy, May 7, 1767.
  9. Joseph Guion, June 21, 1767.
  10. Gabriel Dodier, Aug. 10, 1767.
  11. Claude ———, Sept. 1, 1767.
  12. Pad, a slave, Sept. 1, 1767.
  13. Paul Gregory, a free negro, Sept. 1, 1767.
  14. Catherine Rollet, Sept. 1, 1767.
  15. Jno. B. Gamache, May 3, 1768.
  16. Angelica Bissonnet, May 3, 1768.
  17. Peter Berger, May 3, 1768.
  18. Louis Denoyer, May 3, 1768.
  19. Angelica Grammont, May 3, 1768.
  20. Elizabeth Hunand, May 3, 1768.
  21. Constance Labuscière, May 3, 1768.
  22. Marie M. Robert, May 3, 1768.
  23. Louis Denoyer's daughter, 1769.
  24. Marie Josa. Kiersereau, Feb. 7, 1769.
- The last by Father Meurin, and eight others, slaves and Indians.

So, also, with the deaths during these five years, no register of them was kept, but through the archives, wills and inventories we have ascertained the most prominent of the men to the extent of ten or twelve.

1766. — Mr. Legrain, who came in the



- boat with Chouteau.  
 1767, April 3d. — Judge Joseph Lefebvre, Debruisseau.  
 1767, April 3d. — Mr. Francis Eloy, at New Orleans.  
 1768, Nov. 25. — Doc. Jno. B. Valleau, army surgeon.  
 1769, May. — Mr. Thos. Blondeau, son of Joseph Blondeau.  
 1769, Aug. — Paul Sigle, tanner, from the Island of Malta.  
 1769, Aug. — John Ante. D'Aunis, *alias* St. Vincent, merchant.  
 1769, Aug. — Mrs. Nicholas H. Beau-genou.  
 1769 or 1770. — Mr. Constantine Quirigou Phillip.  
 1770, Aug. 12. — Mr. Louis Deshetres, Indian interpreter.  
 1770. — Lieut. P. F. B. I. Debruisseau, son of Judge Lefebvre, at New Orleans.  
 1770, Sept. — Nicholas Marechal, native of France.  
 1771, Oct. 25. — Mr. Joseph Detailly, Indian interpreter.

As to the marriages, they are all preserved in the archives, as the law required all contracts to be executed in presence of the governor, for which a fee was exacted.

This first church register served for fifteen years, from 1766 to 1781, after which a separate book was used for marriages, baptisms and deaths.

### EARLY HOUSES

Until some years after the transfer in 1804, the houses were of but two materials, stone and timber. The stone was quarried with a crow-bar and sledge-hammer, from along the river bluffs in front of the village, and much of the timber for the first houses was cut on the ground and in the near vicinity.

The houses were uniformly of one style,

such as prevails in the South, one story in height, with a loft above and a steep roof, the largest and best with galleries all around, some with galleries in front and sides, and a few of the poorer sort only in front, generally covered with clapboards, the best shingled.

About four-fifths of the houses were of posts set in the ground, the best of them hewed about nine inches square, the others of round posts set about three feet deep; a few of the best of these houses were of hewed posts set on a stone wall from four to five feet high above ground. The largest portion of these houses were from twenty to thirty feet in size, divided usually into two and some of them three rooms; some smaller, of fifteen to twenty feet square, a single room, which had to serve as parlor, bed and dining-room and kitchen; a few had a shed attached to the house for the latter purpose. A few of the larger houses were divided into three rooms, with a stone chimney in the center and a fire-place in each room; they were mostly floored with hewed puncheons, the ceilings from eight to ten feet high.

A few of the largest stone houses were divided into five rooms, a large one in the center extending from front to rear, and two small ones on each side, opening into the large center room; the floor some ten feet above ground, the lower part used for cellar or store-rooms; the flooring sawed with whip-saws, there being no saw-mill in the country, with ceilings about ten feet high, with from one to two windows in a room, opening, in the French style, on hinges, and glazed with 8 by 10 lights, a few with 10 by 12, the largest size used in the country for many years.

### HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE

It is plainly evident that in houses of the sizes as described there was but little room for furniture, however desirable it

might have been to possess it; with many, a bedstead and bedding, table, a few chairs, with a cupboard for their few articles of table ware, and a chest or trunk for their apparel, constituted the sum total of their possessions in that line, with some few in larger houses, a bureau or clothes-press, with other necessary articles. Of course the few comparatively wealthy ones with larger houses had more and better furniture, and some of them a little silverware and plate, but floor carpets were not introduced into the country for many long years thereafter.

#### WATER

For some years after the commencement of the village settlement there were no wells sunk, the underlying formation being limestone but a few feet below the surface and cropping out at various points, particularly on the edge of the bluffs, where the rock was bare along the whole front. With the exception of two or three springs, the inhabitants used the river water for all purposes, and for this reason the lots along the river front were first sought and built upon.

The water was hauled up from the river in a barrel laid across two sappling poles which served for shafts, called a «drag». After a time a few wells were sunk, back on the second and third streets, but as they had to bore through the limestone bed-rock of the village in their excavation they cost much money and but few undertook them.

Col. Chouteau, who lived on his block almost sixty-five years, had made two attempts on different parts of the same; one of them was unsuccessful, the other, after going to the depth of one hundred feet, at great cost, procured a little water, but a very inadequate supply.

Besides, it was only in the summer time

that a little cold water was needed for drinking purposes, there being then no ice put up, but the river water was universally preferred, as being more wholesome and palatable.

#### FUEL

Stone coal, if even then discovered, was not made use of generally until long after the American days. There was no need of it, wood being abundant and cheap all over the country. Even as late as 1825, when the supply in the near vicinity began to grow short, it was brought on rafts from the upper rivers, and sold at from \$1.25 to \$1.50 per cord. The little fuel used by blacksmiths was charcoal burnt near the villages.

#### AGRICULTURE

The agricultural operations in the early development of the settlement were on a very limited scale, confined at first mainly to corn for their bread; potatoes and turnips, pumpkins and melons in their common fields, and no more of these than were necessary for their own consumption, as there would have been no market for any surplus, and each one his little garden patch contiguous to his residence, where he raised his little supply of kitchen truck.

In a few years, after the erection of Laclede's water mill, they added wheat to their bread stuffs. The cultivation of these products constituted the whole of their agricultural labors during these early years. They needed no meadows, the wild prairie grass abounding all over the country affording abundance of nutritious hay for their animals, upon which they thrived and kept in the best of condition throughout the year, grain seldom being given, except occasionally to a working animal, they had no need of oats. Their gardens furnished them peas, beans, cabbages, beets, carrots, etc., the woods and

prairies plenty of wild game, the streams plenty of fish, and with their beef, poultry, eggs, milk and butter there was abundance in the land, because the consumers were but few.

The only article in the country on wheels for long years was a charrette, a primitive cart, constructed of two pieces of scantling some ten or twelve feet long framed together by two or more cross pieces, upon one end of which the body, of wicker-work, was placed, and the front ends rounded to serve as the shafts, and the whole set on the axle-tree of the wheels.

Almost the only use they had for it was to haul in their corn and hay to their barns back of the village. It was sometimes used to take ladies and children out on a ride. All the males and most of the females made their riding on horse-back. Laclède brought up his family from Fort Chartres in 1764 in one of these carts, and the writer rode up in one from Ste. Genevieve in 1818 — rather rough.

Their agricultural implements were very limited in variety and of the most primitive construction, such as ploughs, hoes, spades and shovels, grubbing hoes, rakes, etc.; occasionally, a harrow, a joint-stock concern serving a neighborhood.

### AMUSEMENTS

For the men, the amusements were billiards, cards and pony races, for amusement only — rarely anything staked. For the females, fiddling and dancing and the usual amount of gossiping and small-talk. In 1767, the village hardly two years old, there were two billiard establishments, and a year or two later, a third. Their horses for many years being exclusively a small breed of Indian ponies peculiar to the country, mostly natural

pacers, their races were seldom more than a few hundred yards in length, or at most, a quarter of a mile to the extent, usually in the prairie back of the village, there being then no race track.

After the Americans became possessed of the country on the other side, larger horses were introduced here from Kentucky for work and draft only. And in 1818, when I came to the place, a horse of fifteen hands high was considered a large horse, and when the first Conestoga from Pennsylvania was seen here he created quite a sensation. They had no idea that there could be any such horses in existence.

Their dancing parties were sometimes on a Saturday evening, after the labors of the week were ended, and were always kept up until daylight the next morning. But more frequently on Sundays, afternoons and evenings, the Sabbath being considered over by most of the people at the conclusion of the High Mass at twelve o'clock noon, — the afternoons were devoted to amusement, a few only of the most devout, largely females, would attend the evening vespers.

Their judgment sales, by decree of the governor, always took place on Sundays at the church door, at the close of the Mass at twelve o'clock noon, that being the only idle day of the week when a small crowd could be gathered together for such a purpose, the most of the people being engaged during the other days in their various avocations, and with the majority of the people the religious duties of the day being discharged at that hour, and as all made it a special duty to attend the Mass, usually all the inhabitants of the place were there assembled.

Previous notice having been given of the sale, the property was cried out for three successive Sundays, and then awarded to the

highest bidder on the third day; as there were usually no other bidders than the two or three who might desire the house for a residence, the sale required but little time, the property was generally knocked off at the value of the improvements, the lot generally considered as part of the appurtenances of the improvements.

(No speculation in town-lots at that day.)

### MARRIAGE CONTRACTS

The laws and customs relating to marriages were those of Paris and Castile, designated «a community of interest», — that is to say, unless otherwise specified in the civil contract, whatever property either party possessed before marriage made a common fund to be equally enjoyed by both. On the death of either party intestate; the survivor was entitled to one-half of the estate, and the children of the marriage, if any, the other half; if no children, then the legal heirs of the deceased party, — such as parents, brothers and sisters, etc., — hence it was customary upon the death of a married person to proceed at once to take an inventory of his or her effects. If so specified in the contract, the survivor could elect to «renounce» the community of interest, and withdraw whatever amount he or she may have put in. This did not prevent either party from leaving to the survivor the whole of the property where there were no children, which was the usual course, but in all cases where there were children they were to have one-half collectively. This was the civil marriage, the parties being afterwards united with the rites of the church by the parish priest.

Inventories being required in nearly all cases of death, where the deceased person possessed any property, it was the duty of the governor or commandant, on receiving

notice of the death of any one, to repair to the residence of the deceased with his clerks and witnesses, and there take an inventory of the effects of said deceased, which being done, might remain in the custody of the survivor, or, if a single person, in charge of some responsible person appointed by the governor.

In the case of wills, where the party, from sickness or other disability, could not appear before him in his office, it was made his duty to repair to the bedside of the sick person and there have the will executed and attested in his presence.

All papers, to give them validity, had to be executed in presence of the governor.

The French word «*Livre*» signifies in English a *book*, a *pound weight*, and down to the date of the French Republican Constitution of 1792, was the name of a *coin* of the value of 18 1/2 cents of our currency, which for long centuries back under the ancient monarchy of France, was established as the unit of that nation in which all their money calculations were figured up and their account-books kept.

The French Revolutionists, in their zeal to do away with every thing that savored in the slightest of the «*ancien régime*», abolished the «*Livre*», and substituted therefor their new coin the «*franc*», which they made one mill or one-tenth of a cent heavier than the «*livre*», otherwise it would have been merely the «*same old thing*» with a new name; since which day the word «*livre*», as applied to a «*money-coin*», has become obsolete, and is known to but few of the present age. The par value of five *livres* by act of Congress was 92 1/2 cents U.S. currency, and that of five *francs* 93 cents.



As this term «*livre*» occurs in every French document on record in our archives relating to money matters, the persons who were employed to translate these papers into English some years back, being doubtless ignorant that there ever had been a coin of that designation, have almost invariably translated it into «*pound*», thereby making the document translated meaningless in its most essential particular, the consideration.

Let it be understood that the above remarks in relation to the «*livre*» apply solely to the mode of «*keeping*» their accounts, there being but little, if any, coin seen in the country, the circulating medium being furs and peltries at a fixed price per pound—40 cents the finest, 30 for medium, and 20 cents inferior, whether established by law or custom does not appear; but unless otherwise stipulated by contract all transactions were understood to be in the above medium. After the transfer to Spain, the coin of that kingdom began to appear, but in limited amounts, as we find a few transactions for «*hard dollars*», in contradistinction no doubt to the soft, or «*fur*» dollars. As to *paper* money, none had ever been seen in the country at that early day, and even had there been any, but few could have made out the denomination.

#### COMMONS AND COMMON-FIELDS

Of those who were the first to come over to this from the other side, far the largest portion were tillers of the soil, who, by their labors in the field, produced their own subsistence and that of their stock. Some of them, in seasons when not engaged in their agricultural avocations, exercised the calling of rough artisans, such as blacksmiths, carpenters, stone masons, hewers, etc., employed in building. Others, procuring small outfits of merchandise spent the winters trading with Indians and trapping, consequently it was a matter of prime necessity with them,

so soon as they had erected their domicile in the village, to proceed at once to the production of their bread-stuffs. For this purpose the land immediately adjoining the village on the northwest, being the most suitable, was set aside for cultivation, and conceded in strips of one arpent in front by forty in depth, and each applicant allotted one or more, according to his ability to cultivate it. This was called the common-field lots, and the tract extended from a little below Market Street on the south, to opposite the big mound on the north, and from Broadway to Jefferson Avenue, east to west. The land lying southwest of the village being well watered with numerous springs and well covered with timber, was set aside for the village commons, in which the cattle and stock of the inhabitants were kept for safety and convenience.

These two tracts of land were at once enclosed by the people in 1764 and 1765, and their eastern fence formed the western boundary of the village for many years.

The idea that St. Louis was named in honor of the then king of France, Louis XV., first appears in print in Jno. A. Paxton's brief sketch of the place in his Directory of 1821, and has since been accepted by others in default of more reliable information on that head. This idea, to say the least, is preposterous, as can be clearly demonstrated.

At the time St. Louis received its appellation, its people had just been driven from the other side, where many of them were born, abandoning their little property, their homes, all the little comforts a lifelong laborious avocation had enabled them to acquire, by the act of this very man who was the cause of all their troubles and misfortunes, in transferring them and their country to a nation that they had always regarded as their natural enemies, compelling them either to live under a detested government or fly to

another, and this latter alternative was their choice as the least of the two evils. Is it not more likely that, instead of honoring this man by naming their new location after him, they would unite in execrations on his head? A man who so far from being a saint was the very antipodes of one, leading a depraved and dissolute life, and who, had he lived at a later period in our history, would have doubtless perished on the scaffold, instead of his grandson and successor, the virtuous but unfortunate Louis XVI.

It received its name from King Louis IX., who, centuries back, had sacrificed his life in his zeal for the cause of religion and Christianity in the prosecution of the holy wars in the East, and was subsequently canonized by the head of the church. It always was and is yet, I believe, to some extent, the custom of devout Catholics in all places named after a saint to consider him or her the patron saint of the place so named, and for that reason the «Fete St. Louis», St. Louis' day, August 25th, was, in the early days of St. Louis, and for a number of years after my advent to the place, always observed with appropriate religious ceremonies and processions of the clergy and others through the cemetery and grounds of the church.

We conclude the first book of our annals, being its early French history, with a full catalogue of all the documents found in the archives, all written by, or in presence of, Joseph Labuscière, from April, 1766, to May 20, 1770, the day on which the French domination terminated in St. Louis, and that of Spain commenced, under the administration of Governor Pedro Piernas.

Copied from the original in the handwriting of Labuscière: —

Deeds for sales of lots and lands.....61  
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Bonds and obligations.....	30
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All the above enumerated papers were executed by Labuscière, as notary, and *ex-officio* secretary of the temporary government, in whose custody they were kept until handed over by him to Governor Piernas, May 20, 1770, on which day our infant village had grown to contain 100 wooden and 15 stone houses, a total of 115, with a population of about five hundred souls, in the six years since its commencement in the year 1764.

[...] house of upright posts, 35 feet front by 25 deep, built by Nicholas Beaugenou, Sr., at the south-west corner of Almond and Main streets, in the year 1765, was one of the first built in St. Louis, and in which the first marriage on record in the archives of St. Louis took place, on April 20, 1766, that of Beaugenou's eldest daughter, Maria Josepha, then in her eighteenth year, to Toussaint Hunaut, a young Canadian trader.

The house was occupied by the Beaugenou family for some years. Subsequently by others until 1815, when it was purchased by Gen. Wm. Clark. It was occupied by Major Mackey Wherry, our first Town Register, for a number of years from about that period, and was removed not many years back to give place to the present brick structure.

### VILLAGE LAWS

In the year 1782, the village having been enclosed by the palisades erected after the attack of May 26, 1780, it was deemed expedient to adopt a more perfect code of laws for the government of the inhabitants of the village.

#### «DECREE.

«The undersigned ~~sindics~~ nominated by the assembly of the inhabitants, which was held in the government hall on the 22nd September of this year, 1782, by Mr. Don Francisco Cruzat, lieutenant-colonel by brevet of infanterie, commandant-in-chief, and lieutenant-governor of the western part and district of Illinois, for the purpose of establishing fixed and unalterable rules for the construction and repair of streets, bridges and drains of this village, and vested with the authority of the public who elected us to that effect, have in the said government hall, and in the presence of the aforesaid Don Francis Cruzat, on this day, the 29th of the same month, agreed upon what follows, and to which every one shall regularly conform in future: —

«1. — On the first day in every year an assembly of all the inhabitants of this post shall be held in the government hall, and in the presence of the lieutenant-governor, in which there shall be nominated by the plurality of their votes, two ~~sindics~~) to watch together the re-

pairs to streets, bridges and drains of this village, whose duty it shall be to cause the following regulations to be observed exactly: —

«2. — The first duty of the ~~sindics~~, as soon after their election, must be to examine by themselves the interior of the village, and to cause to repair, without delay, the streets, drains and bridges by the persons that are bound thereto, and whom we shall indicate hereafter; and should any body refuse to do the same, they shall have recourse to justice to compel them to fulfill a duty so indispensable for the public convenience.

«3. — All the inhabitants whose lots face a street through which passes a rivulet shall be obliged, to give a current to that water to the Mississippi river, to make the necessary drains and bridges; to repair the same, and put at all times the street practicable for the circulation of public vehicles.

«4. — Besides the cases explained in the foregoing articles, the streets in general shall be repaired and kept in a proper condition by the owners of the lots fronting on them, it being well understood that their neighbors opposite shall co-operate therein by equal portion should the case require it.

«5. — Lastly, the bridge on the little river, as well as all roads which are without the village, shall be made and kept in repairs by the public.

«Done and passed in the government hall, and in the presence of the lieutenant-governor who has signed with us the same day and year as above.

«Perrault, Brazeau, Cerré, Rene Kiercereau.

his his  
Joseph X Mainville, Joseph X Taillon,  
mark mark

«Aug't Chouteau, Chauvi, Fran'co Cruzat.

«We the undersigned, the sindics appointed by the assembly of the inhabitants which was held in the government hall on the 22nd of the month of September of this year, 1782, by Mr. Francisco Cruzat, lieutenant-colonel by brevet of infantry, commander-in-chief and lieutenant-governor of the western part and district of Illinois, for the purpose of establishing fixed and unalterable rules for the construction and keeping of the fences of the common of this village, being vested with the authority of the public who elected us to that effect, have in the said government hall, and in presence of the aforesaid Don Francisco Cruzat, on this 29th of the same month, agreed upon what follows, and to which every one shall regularly conform hereafter: —

«1st. — On the first day of every year there shall be publicly appointed in the government hall, in the presence of the lieutenant-governor, one sindic, and immediately after eight umpires, who shall make the first inspection of the fences of the common.

«2d. — The fences of the said common shall every year be made and perfected by the 15th day of April at farthest, and received the first Sunday after this date, by the eight umpires appointed as aforesaid.

«3rd. — The aforesaid umpires shall not receive the fences unless they are constructed in such a way that cattle shall not be able to get out of the common and go into the townfield of the inhabitants to injure them.

«4th. — It shall be the duty of the said eight umpires to render an account of their inspection of the enclosure to the sindic, who shall immediately name

eight other umpires for the purpose of verifying the exactness or the negligence of the first ones, and should fences be found not to be in the condition requisite for their reception, and the first umpires had not reported them as such to the said sindic, each of them shall be condemned to pay a fine of ten *livres*.

«5th. — When it shall come to the knowledge of the sindic that any fence is not in the condition described in the third article of these regulations, it shall be his duty to inform thereof the owner of it; in order that without delay, he may make suitable repairs thereto; and should this latter, through caprice or otherwise neglect this just duty, the sindic shall cause it be repaired at his expense.

«6th. — If the last one that shall have made the inspection of the fences, had not informed the sindic of the state in which he found them, and that within the interval of his inspection and that which is to follow, it was found that animals had got out and made some damage, he shall be bound to pay therefor; and should it happen that the sindic having been informed of the bad condition of the fences, had neglected to advise the owners thereof, then he shall be held accountable for the damage, and obliged to pay for it himself; likewise in the case the owners have been warned by the sindic to go and repair them, and they had not done it immediately, they shall be subjected to the same penalty.

«7th. — If during the time that animals had got out and done damage many fences were defective; in order to remedy the bad consequences that commonly result from such facts, it is enacted, that said damage shall be made good by those whose fences shall be defective; however, should it happen in



the time between two inspections, the fences having (in the first inspection) been found in good order by the syndic or the persons appointed for those purposes, that animals had passed through some opening made by unknown malefactors, or through some unexpected event, then the damage shall remain to him who has sustained it.

«8th. — If animals let loose are found in the fields without their owners having aided their egress from the commons, they shall not be obliged to pay for their arrest, nor held responsible for the damage, in case any has been done.

«9th. — When it shall be proven that the keeper of the fence-gate, has by his neglect or otherwise, let pass through it animals of any kind, whatever, he shall be obliged to pay for the damage thus done.

«10th. — So soon as the fences are received, it shall not be allowed to any one to cross over them, under penalty of a fine of ten *livres* for the first time, and of twenty-four for the second, with twenty-four hours imprisonment in the jail.

«11th. — Malefactors caught in the act of making breaches in the fences, either to pass through themselves, or to cause animals to cross them, whatever may be their motive, shall be condemned, besides the damage done thereby, to pay a fine of fifty *livres*, and be imprisoned 15 days in the jail.

«12th. — It is ordered to all who shall find any person committing the offense specified in the preceding article, to give most prompt information thereof to the lieutenant-governor, and to lead himself the offender to jail, if able to arrest him. But if any one through a mistaken indulgence or particular interest should not fulfill this duty, and it

were proven that he told other persons of his having surprised somebody in this offense, he shall be reputed an abettor of the crime, condemned to pay the same fine and damage, and be subjected to the same penalty above mentioned.

«13th. — The owners of fences shall be required to stamp them with their names in full, under the penalty of a fine of 15 *livres*.

«14th. — The person who shall take a horse tied in the prairie to use it without the consent of the owner, shall be fined 25 *livres*, and imprisoned 24 hours; and should any accident befall the horse, he shall pay therefor according to the appraisement which shall be made.

«15th. — If horses or animals tied in the prairie, breaking their ropes, should be taken in the fields, those who take them up shall require five 5 *livres* for each head, and the owner of the land upon which they are arrested, shall require the payment of the damages to be valued by umpires.

«16th. — When it shall be proven that any person has taken away the rope of an animal tied in the prairie, he shall pay ten *livres* for it, besides the damages caused thereby according to the appraisement thereof by umpires.

«17th. — It is forbidden to any person to tie horses or other animals upon the land of another person, without his special consent; should it be otherwise, the owner of the land may seize the animals and require from those to whom they belong five *livres* per head, and it shall be lawful for him to claim the damage in case any had been done.

«18th. — When slaves shall be found to transgress any of the foregoing articles,

their masters shall pay the fines, arrests and damages prescribed, and the above said slaves shall be punished by whipping, according to the gravity of the case.

«19th. — All the fines shall be deposited with the syndic appointed by the lieutenant-governor from the two that are to be nominated yearly for the police and keeping of the village, and they shall revert to the public works of the community.

«Done and passed in the government hall in the presence of the aforesaid lieutenant-governor, who has signed with us the same day and year as above.

«Perrault,	Cerré,	René Kiercereaux,
		Brazeau,
mark of		mark of
Mr. Joseph X Tayon	Mr. Joseph X Main-	ville.
Chauvin,	Aug'te Chouteau,	Fran'co
		Cruzat.

## GULF COAST COUNTRY

by Hodding Carter  
and  
Anthony Ragusin

Even in bare outline the story has a certain grandeur.

The Treaty of Ryswick in 1697 had brought peace to war-torn Europe. But the resting gladiators, France, Spain, and England, set covetous eyes upon the lower Mississippi Valley; for the wilderness basin, about which so little was known, might contain wealth enough to pay for old wars and to finance new ones.

The Spanish were already in the New World in force. For nearly one hundred and fifty years their gaudy galleons had brought to the blood-guilty homeland the gold of Mexico and Peru. The strategic wilderness basin could be a buffer and a shield for the golden lands to the southwest where the enslaved Indian toiled in the mines.

Far to the north, above the source of the mighty river, France was securely lodged, or seemingly so, in her great colony of Canada. And the English masters of the sea, pirates and slavers and traders, scourges of the treasure ships and the dignity of Their Catholic Majesties of Spain and France, held on the eastern seaboard a precarious tenure.

Neither Englishman nor Spaniard could rival the French as colonists and explorers. Neither had the Frenchman's ability to live with and like the people among whom he

found himself, treating them with the tolerance and equality that everywhere identified the French in the New World. Neither Spain nor England produced woodsmen to match the Canadian *voyageurs* and *courcours de bois*, who ranged the Great Lakes and down the valley of the Mississippi to return their furs to the St. Lawrence and the cities of Quebec and Montreal. The woodsmen had found the great river that flowed southward; and the brave René Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle even ventured to its mouth in 1682 and had taken tenuous possession of this whole valley under the golden lilies of France.

The ritual of possession was one thing. To occupy and hold was another. And so it was that in 1698 Louis XIV, the Grand Monarch of France, determined to beat the English to the river's mouth and to the colonization of the territory which La Salle had discovered. He had read the annals of the fateful expedition of La Salle, murdered by mutineers; and suspecting with good reason the English had designs on the fabled valley, Louis determined to transport a colony to the shores of the Gulf Coast for the glory and the enrichment of France. He directed his farsighted Minister of Marine, Louis Phéliepeaux de Pontchartrain, to proceed with the settlement of the valley. Pontchartrain and his brilliant son and assistant, Jérôme de Maurepas, turned to France's Canadian dominion for the man to lead the expedition;

and so it was that Pierre le Moyne d'Iberville of Quebec was selected to plant the *fleur-de-lis* upon a territory that would extend from the Gulf to Canada.

Certainly no other nation in the eighteenth century, and possibly no nation in all history, could command the services of a family as suited to the tasks of exploration, colonization, and defense as were the remarkable le Moynes of Canada, sons of a Norman innkeeper of Dieppe who had become the head of the most powerful household of the New World. Of twelve sons of the Dieppe trader and interpreter, nine served France, seven as colonial governors, three to die in battle; and of them all the ablest were Pierre le Moyne, the Sieur d'Iberville, and his younger brother, Jean Baptiste le Moyné, the Sieur de Bienville. It was to Iberville that Pontchartrain entrusted the colonization.

Iberville was an explorer and warrior born. He was a man of large frame, at home in the wilderness and on the seas and in the inland waters of the New World, blond and blue-eyed like his Norse ancestors who had once ravaged and then settled on the coast of France. At thirty-five he had already become fabulous as a leader of the French in America and scourge of the English rivals. When only twenty-five he had captured an English vessel of twelve cannons with a force of two bark canoes and eleven men. Two years later, as commandant of Hudson Bay, with only fourteen men, he repulsed an attack of three English vessels, killing or capturing one hundred and twenty men. Again, in mid-winter he captured all of the English settlements of Newfoundland; and in 1687 he had made history for the French navy when, surrounded by three English warships, his frigate sank one of the enemy boats, captured another, and forced the third to flee. Between his campaigns against the hated English, Iberville urged that France take possession of that

vast area known as Louisiana. He predicted that if France did not move quickly to follow up LaSalle's endeavors, England would become strong enough within a hundred years to be mistress of the whole of North America.

In the summer of 1698 Iberville acted to forestall the English. At Rochefort, he superintended the loading of two frigates, the *Badin* and the *Marin*, each of thirty guns, and two freight ships, the latter converted from Norman fishing boats. A picked crew was selected, among them a company of independent freebooters. Two hundred colonists, mostly Canadians, including a few women and children, were also members of the expedition.

On the twenty-fourth day of October the little fleet set sail. In late December, after one of the freight ships had disappeared in a gale and had been given up as lost, the expedition put into Cape François, Santo Domingo, for fresh water and food. There the lost boat appeared with a broken mast. A good omen. The hospitality of the governor of Santo Domingo was lavish; but the need to continue was urgent, especially so when the news came that English vessels had been sighted under full sail. The first day of the New Year, 1699, found the fleet headed for the Gulf of Mexico under the pilotage of Lawrence de Graff, a noted buccaneer who knew the route to be covered.

The blue waters of the Yucatan Channel passed in the wake of the vessel. The west coast of Florida was reached on January 23, 1699. Cruising farther westward, Iberville came to a deep-water bay in what is now extreme northwest Florida. There he found five Spanish ships at anchor, an expedition of several hundred men who had sailed north from Vera Cruz. The unwanted French sailed on.



Some twenty leagues after their brief encounter with the Spanish, the expedition sighted another large bay. Soon afterward the vessels reached the first of a chain of subtropic islands. On February 13 the fleet sailed through a pass between two heavily wooded islands. The larger of the two was chosen for harbor. In accordance with the usual custom of the French to name immediately everything they discovered, this land was called Ship Island. A party of sailors exploring the island to the west of the pass found it inhabited with many small fur-bearing animals, sharp of nose and keen of eye, with the fastidious habit of washing their food before eating it. The explorers had never seen raccoons before and, since they were reminded by their appearance and behavior of cats, they named the place Cat Island. So it remains to this day.

The cattle which they had brought along were set loose on Ship Island. The swine were taken to Cat Island. Iberville and Bienville, with an escort of Canadian woodsmen, some of whom had accompanied LaSalle years before and who knew the Indian customs and dialects, set out for the mainland in a small sloop. Landing on the mainland, they followed the tracks of Indians until they saw a number of canoes crossing from a small island close to the eastern point of the shore. These they hailed. The Indians fled in terror, leaving their canoes. But with the aid of tobacco, paint, beads, and knives, Iberville won their confidence. They were Biloxians, who called themselves the First People and who were a dwindling and pacific remnant of the northern Sioux, perhaps descendants of an expeditionary party cut off long ago by a fiercer tribe and dwelling here where the waters and the forests gave them all that they needed.

Iberville induced several of them to return with him to Ship Island, leaving Bienville and two Canadians behind as hostages. On the islands, cannons were fired for the edifi-

cation of the savages, and there was great feasting, together with unfamiliar liquor and the wonders of a spyglass and many presents, among them a beautiful, metal calumet, shaped like a ship and embossed with a vessel flying the *fleur-de-lis*. The Coast had been occupied without resentment or resistance.

But the important objective was the discovery of the mouth of the Mississippi. And so on February 27, Iberville set sail again with a force of Canadians and freebooters in two small boats, the rest of the fleet remaining at anchor in the harbor on the north side of Ship Island.

Slowly passing through the labyrinth of low, sandy isles running southward — Iberville called them the Chandeleur Islands because of their discovery on Candlemas Day — the explorers reached the mouth of the Mississippi in early March. Here a tangle of mud flats and almost impenetrable marshes, and great masses of trees wedged together in great piles of drift, discouraged them. Father Douay, a Franciscan who had accompanied LaSalle here in 1682, assured them that this was the river of their search. On the third of March, Shrove Tuesday, the Holy Sacrifice of Mass was performed and a *Te Deum* was sung. Iberville reaffirmed possession of this land for France.

Further expeditions followed up-river. But it was on the Gulf and not the Mississippi that Iberville determined to establish his colony. The safe haven of the Bay of Biloxi near the deep-water pass and Ship Island appealed to him as a proper site. He selected a high place on the northeast side of the bay, that today is called Ocean Springs. On April 7, 1699, the site was marked out. The next day construction of the fort and village was begun beneath the gigantic moss-draped oaks and magnolias. The fort proper was named for Maurepas and the colony Biloxi in honor

of the Indians who had received the French with friendship.

By the first of May the fort was practically completed. Beans, peas, and Indian corn were sown in the adjoining clearance. And from the ramparts of Fort Maurepas, French soldiers looked down upon a new land, a new colony of France. Above them in the sunshine fluttered the *fleur-de-lis*. France was mistress of an empire that extended from the Gulf to Canada, as far west as the Rockies and as far east as the Alleghenies. But it was to be a troubled empire.

Even the greatest are shadows now — Father Marquette, the zealous Jesuit; Joliet, the Canadian trader; the chivalrous LaSalle; the Chevalier de Tonti, a noble Italian in service of France; Father Hennepin, the Récollet friar; the warrior LeMoynes. And even the greatest of leaders fail where there is not the will to follow. These men were fortunate in their followers; and so one would like to know more of the lesser shadows, the obscure little men who cleared the forest and manned the ships, who died in the ambushade and starved on the beaches, and who failed France only because France failed them and destroyed finally their will to hold a continent.

What of Nicholas LaVoye, the Coast pilot? And Philipes Ley, the mastergunner of the *Badin*? Were they worth the 237 *livres* which were owed them when they were mustered out on the beach at Biloxi that first May? Was Pierre Hardouin, the ship carpenter, as skilled in building cabins from the tall pines as in calking and rigging? Did the Canadian bushrangers, Jacque Bellair and Pierre Pot, the hunter listed only as *Le Pollonais*, and Jean Cabuteau grouse to their fellows that this heat of the far south was not to their liking? What was the work of a freebooter? We were engaged to fight, not to labor, Pierre Desmarsz might have muttered to his com-

rade Michel Chesse, when the axe and the spade became more familiar than the musket. Perhaps they whispered together with Nicholas de Garde and Jean DeMimoneau and Jacque Demerit and Andre Regnaux that it would be better to set out overland, or even in a small boat, than to remain in this hell hole of all work and no play. Did Espienne Duguay, the baker, Jacque Gourdon, the edge-tool maker, and Jean LaPorte, the gunsmith, nudge each other at the sight of the Indian girl smiling from the woods, and forget then the ones to whom they bade good-bye with the promise of return? Did the little cabin boys, Pierre Huet, Jean Joly, and Jacques Charon, grow homesick for their mothers so far away in Dieppe? And the soldiers, the unpaid and harshly disciplined, did they envy the free Canadians and the filibusters and even the laborers? What held them together besides common fear? It could not have been discipline alone, for here on a distant continent the wilderness beckoned the mutineer. Was it ambition, patriotism, boredom at home, the lure of whispered treasure?

Each and all of these, perhaps. But additionally, and as complement to their fidelity, was leadership. The first French had magnificent leaders. When they died or were destroyed by the enemy England, or were forgotten by a fickle and heavily involved mother country, the colonies fell apart. The rank and file, the unsung ones, became hardy through survival of the fittest. But the men whom they followed were already hardy and more. With the most primitive of navigational aids, in ships that were almost cockleshells, never adequately provisioned, beset by unfriendly tribesmen and their rivals among the English and Spaniards, and plagued by diseases which their medicinal stores and medical knowledge could not halt, these men of New France did conquer most of a continent. They conquered partly for personal gain, but more for glory and adventure and the honor of their country.

They suffered with their small forces, and in the end few of them profited any more than did the men with them. The LeMoynes, who deserved the most, fared as badly as any. Iberville died five years after the founding of the colony on the Coast. Bienville went virtually unrequited and was mistreated before and after his forced return to France. One younger brother, the ensign DeSauvolle, died of fever; and another, more frolicsome than the rest, Saint Hélène, lost his life when he was shot by Frenchmen, believing him to be an Englishman, in a Chickasaw village.

DeSauvolle left a sad record of the suffering of the men who followed the LeMoynes: the sickness from the fevers, the perils of the alligators and snakes, the unwanted visits from Canadian *voyageurs* and Indians who expected as their right a share of the colony's meager provisions. Sauvolle despaired that the colony on the Gulf would ever prove fruitful for «unless a gold mine is discovered the King will not be compensated for his services». Already he had discovered in the first dark year what other settlers before and after him would know also, namely that instructions from home were not as easily performed as ordered. It was to be the duty of the settlers of Biloxi «to breed Buffalo, to seek pearls, to examine the wild mulberries for silk, to fell timber for ship building and to seek for mines».

Things didn't turn out that way. But the colonists tried.

There were heroic stories of the trying, and none more courageous than the exploration of Pierre Charles LeSueur, who had accompanied Iberville to Biloxi in 1700 on his return from France. A geologist who had led expeditions seeking mineral wealth in Canada, LeSueur determined to ascend the Mississippi soon after his arrival to obtain copper and precious metals which the king desired.

So in April of 1700, the geologist LeSueur and twenty-five men set out in a felucca for the Sioux country hundreds of miles to the north. By June, almost too weak from lack of food to keep going, they reached the mouth of the Ohio River. They were eating the buds and leaves of the burgeoning trees, because wild game kept out of their way. At the Ohio's mouth they killed a bear. Soon after, a Jesuit missionary from the nearby mission to the Illinois chanced upon them and gave them a canoe-load of provisions. On then they went, past the mouth of the Missouri in July, to the land of warring Indian tribesmen. Eventually LeSueur reached the mouth of the St. Peter River in September. From there he pushed on to the Blue Earth River. There, near where the city of Minneapolis now stands, he built a fort and cabins for his men and named it Fort L'Huillier. Soon thereafter the new little fort sheltered a group of Canadian traders who had been plundered and stripped to the skin by Sioux warriors.

The winter set in and the small band, unable to search for minerals, turned to hunting which providentially was excellent. They slaughtered four hundred buffalo which provided their main subsistence as well as robes against the deadly cold. The geologist turned trader. Throughout the winter months when snow lay deep everywhere, Sioux Indians kept calling at the fort to trade. LeSueur secured from them a great number of beaver pelts in exchange for trade goods, and there were no hostilities. In the spring LeSueur began looking for his minerals; and near Fort L'Huillier he found beds of blue and green earth which he was convinced held copper. He stored earth samples in his felucca together with the treasure of beaver skins and set out for the Gulf, this was the first commercial cargo to descend the Mississippi.

By early summer LeSueur and his men

reached the Bay of Biloxi after an incredible round trip of more than two thousand miles. The pelts were counted and the four thousand pounds of blue and green ore were loaded into the hold of a boat bound for France. The young ensign DeSauvolle, acting governor of the colony during the absence of Iberville in France and the exploration of Bienville upriver, noted with delight the trove: «LeSueur has come from the Sioux country in a felucca and that d'Iberville had lent him to ascend the Mississippi,» he wrote in his journal. «He has brought it back loaded with green earth suitable for paints and dyes, together with some copper and other metals that are of considerable importance.»

But when the ore was assayed in France, it was found to be worthless. This was not pleasing to the king who dreamed of the vast wealth that lay everywhere above it. The new colony was not to be in the good graces of France . . .

#### TRIAL BY ORDEAL

It would be difficult to determine whether France was more disappointed in her Louisiana colony or her Louisiana colonies more disappointed in France during the sixty-four years of French domination of the Louisiana territory.

Certainly both colony and homeland had good reason for misgiving. But it was the settlers who paid through the nose for the errors and neglect of the succession of exploiters. Even taking into account the unending struggles of Europe, England's mastery of the sea, and the vicissitudes of settling a wilderness country, the conclusion is still inescapable that the rivalries and the petty conspiracies and the favoritism at home and in the colonies were the principal factors contributing to ruin.

What must be remembered is that the all-important objective was trade and the wealth which traffic with the Indians would bring to France. So it was that Iberville, who saw his colony only three times before his death from yellow fever in 1706, reconnoitered carefully all of the land from Pensacola westward to find the most favorable site for French trade.

Tenacious Biloxi was the first settlement, and the first capital of Louisiana. But it was Mobile, founded on January 16, 1702, which was to become the brief center of Indian trade and French diplomacy in the South just as Biloxi was the focal point of the colonial beginnings and the mother-settlement of New Orleans. There was more than one reason for the selection of the site of Mobile. The Alabama-Tombigbee River basin was bitterly contested ground upon which France and England contended for the Indians' peltries; a vast area stretching from the Mississippi to the coastal waters draining into the Atlantic and from the Gulf to the Ohio Valley. A port at Mobile with its water and overland communications would be in closer touch with this wilderness trading region than would the British in Virginia and the Carolinas. In the basin dwelt the principal tribes, the Chickasaws and the Choctaws near the mouth of the Tombigbee, the Muskogees or Creeks on the upper Alabama, and the Cherokees in the mountains to the northeast.

Moreover, on the lower Mobile River lived a small tribe, descended from the Mavila whom DeSoto had all but wiped out in 1540. The language of the Mavila — from whom Mobile got its name — was the trading jargon used by all the Indians from the Atlantic to the Mississippi. It was in the tongue of the Mavila that deals were made, with deerskins as the standard of exchange by which everything was measured. The deerskins and other peltries were brought to Mo-



bile in the spring and fall by canoes and pack horse. In return the Indians received blue and red cotton goods, ribbons, blankets, kettles, axes and hatchets, and eventually, guns and ammunition.

The Mobile settlement blocked the English who had traded all the way from their coastal colonies to the Mississippi. Mobile was founded as a trading center and not a fort as such. It was never protected by the kind of fortifications that surrounded Jamestown and Charleston; instead the settlement was from the beginning open to the world; the small forts were erected to protect themselves from other Europeans, not from Indians.

The first Mobile was sixteen leagues from the Gulf on the Mobile River, which was formed by the conjunction of the Alabama and the Tombigbee. But the first settlement up-river was a mistake, for higher water and fever plagued the colony after its removal from Biloxi. And so, in 1711, Bienville removed the colony to the present site of Mobile, a plateau near the mouth of the river where the river was narrow and a slight slope led to higher land. The long bluff overlooking the river made an excellent situation for a front street and the mouth of the river to the west provided a strategic location for a fort which could command the sea and the approach from inland. Just beyond was Dauphin Island, the settlement's first port, initially named Massacre by the French because it was piled high with bones of human beings when they first discovered it. After leaving Biloxi Bay the French maintained posts at Dauphin Island, and they returned there and to Biloxi before moving to New Orleans.

It was to this advantageous site that the less than two hundred colonists were removed from the original settlement up-river.

By 1704, just before a yellow-fever epidemic, the first Mobile had grown to a town of 190 arpents — an arpent is little less than an acre — boasted eighty one-story white-washed houses of cedar and cypress and pine frame, filled with clay and shell masonry. The settlement had begun to take on a civilized look. There were twenty-seven families in addition to the soldiers, the *voyageurs*, the *coureurs de bois*, and the traders and buccaneers; and in October 1704 was born François, the son of Jean de Camp and Magdeline Robert, the first child born in the colony, and so the first Creole of the Louisiana country. Besides the white families there were eleven Indian slaves and 180 soldiers, and in the fall of that year twenty-three marriageable girls came the *Pelican*, the first New World brides, «reared in piety, drawn from sources above suspicion and who know how to work».

Later a colonist, perhaps a rejected suitor, was to implore the governor to select women next time with more regard for their looks and less for their virtue. These twenty-three damsels were the forerunners of the Casket girls. They were the predecessors, too, of a group of prostitutes from a house of correction, in Paris, willing to come to Louisiana in exchange for freedom. The woodsmen were not concerned with their antecedents.

In the beginning the colony was in desperate straits. There was constant need of soldiers, and France could spare but few for her New World garrisons. There was need for women, too, and no order and no edict of religious or military could keep the men from the Indian girls. The women came slowly. In 1713, after removal to the new site, another twenty-five girls arrived from the province of Brittany. But it was not until Crozat and John Law that the colonists' need for wives was even partly met.

Bienville, who was Louisiana's control-

ling spirit, could get few concessions from distant friends who were interested only in trade and not in the welfare of the settlers. Nor was Bienville a good subordinate. He never got on with any of the men whom France sent to check on him; but most of them came to approve of his policies and grudgingly or otherwise to rely on his leadership. But not even Bienville's ability as a leader could avert the hard times. In 1707, a particularly difficult year, his younger brother Chateauguey lost by accidental sinking his *traversier*, a little boat which ferried supplies from Dauphin Island to the city. The colony's small food crops failed too that year, so that even vegetables had to be brought from France. Flood and famine and fever plagued them. Moreover, the French had difficulty with the British, Bienville reporting to Pontchartrain that «we are not able to sustain ourselves any longer against the flood of presents which the British make to the Indians in which they offer them for abandoning our side. It is two years since we have given the Indians anything, and during that time we have kept them hoping from month to month». But in time the French caught up with and sometimes surpassed the British in the Indian trade. Early in the rivalry the French ruled that merchandise which was sold at Biloxi, Mobile, and New Orleans and among the Alabamas and elsewhere in the basin, was to be marked up only fifty per cent whereas goods sold at points distant from the British could be marked up from seventy to one hundred per cent.

The little towns did not thrive in the first three periods of their history; the first settlement, royal and military, under the Ministry of Marine; the second period of new Mobile and Louisiana under the empire merchant Antoine de Crozat, who leased Louisiana and who dictated that no ships but his could trade at Mobile; and the third, under John Law and his Mississippi company.

The great leaders had been carried away. Tonti died of fever brought by boat from the West Indies. Iberville succumbed in Havana in 1706 at the age of forty-five. Bienville was being hounded. By 1712 Louisiana was the victim of reckless exploitation and neglect and Europe's strife. The merchant capitalist and favorite of Louis XIV, Crozat, had been persuaded to lease the colony in return for all the profits which he might extract from it. Crozat proceeded to try to bleed Louisiana dry. His governor, Lamothe de Cadillac, was harsh to soldiers and civilians alike. Food prices rose. Bienville was twice disciplined, and Cadillac, angered at the protests of the colonists, forbade all but the few members of the aristocracy to bear swords. And the British were swarming nearby because the French were at each other's throats instead of at the throats of the enemy.

In 1717, John Law, a genius and without conscience, organized his Company of the West, took over the Crozat grant and the Canadian fur-trade rights, and thereupon began a spurious land boom of a sort that would have made him the dominant figure in Florida two hundred years later. Law also obtained the East Indies Company and a franchise for African trade, and put the three organizations on the market as the Indian Company. According to the Scotsman, investors at three hundred dollars a share could not help becoming millionaires, for his operations held exclusive rights to French trade in America, Asia, and Africa, as well as trade control of the Mississippi Valley. However, the would-be purchaser of shares in this mammoth company had to own four shares in the original Company of the West for every single share which he could have in the new venture. And so the wild rush for Company of the West shares precipitated eventually the bursting of the Mississippi Bubble.

Law went even further. The French gov-

ernment was in debt to the tune of one billion, six hundred million francs. Law simply offered to lend the government the money which he would raise through selling shares in the company, and the government would pay three-per-cent interest on the loan, which was a lower rate than it had been paying heretofore. The company would collect revenue and taxes for customary service fees.

Long before the company's share soared from five hundred francs to eight thousand and then crashed with the unloading, the Mississippi Bubble reflected tragedy in French Louisiana.

The promoter wanted colonists for the Company of the West. Truth could not stand in the way of the necessary migration. And so stories, unbelievable except that they were believed, circulated through Europe. The Indians would gladly consent to act as slaves for the white men, they related. Gold and silver were everywhere in abundance. The Mississippi Valley was a glittering El Dorado. The seal of the company depicted an old river god leaning upon a cornucopia from which tumbled golden coins. The Biloxi shore was the gateway to plenty.

The people of Europe, and especially the downtrodden peasants of the German Palatinate, were hungry for the lure. Europe's famines, war and tyranny would make any other place seem a heaven. And so they answered the call of John Law by the thousands, and by the thousands they died on the European continent and on the crowded, fever-laden ships before they even reached the shores of the new land. Fewer than two thousand of these hopeful men and women reached Louisiana and even they were too many. They died at Biloxi and Mobile, at Ship Island and Dauphin Island. But those who survived added their peasant stability and their love of the land to the assets of the settlers

of the New World.

Altogether, more than seven thousand people, a majority of them Negro slaves, were brought in during the blowing of the bubble. If the deaths of the white immigrants were many, those of the Negro slaves were more. They were dumped on the beach like human ballast. They died in fires at sea and horribly in the crowded holds. The bones of hundreds of Africans were found atop mounds of oyster shells along the coast. And the mockery of it all was that people died from hunger because agriculture had not yet been developed in this land so adapted to fruit and vegetables, a land whose waters abounded in seafood and whose forest held a profusion of wild game.

But under Law the colony of Mobile did grow, its population rising to seven hundred in 1717; and no matter who the ruler and no matter what war in Europe, the people of Mobile never lived inside the fort. The defensive walls held only the governor's house, the *Magasin* where the king's stores and ammunition were stored, and a guardhouse.

And the colonists could at least take joy in the vista around them. Old Mobile must have been a beautiful place beside the bay, its little houses on their narrow lots having the tended trimness characteristic of French villages everywhere, their roofs sloping Creole-wise to the front and rear, the doors abutting the very street itself so that there were no front yards but only back gardens. The houses rose from wooden piling, a foot or more, because of the threat of inundations. Some of the houses were supported by soft stone that was brought from the river bank a hundred miles above the settlement, but only the more energetic or well-to-do used the stones because of scarcity of water transportation to bring them down-river.

Surely these first citizens lived in the hope that each succeeding owner or director would come to understand their needs. They were simple folks, Canadian and French *habitants*, peasants, and artisans, drawn to the New World by hope and gaudy promises, Canadian *voyageurs* and *coureurs de bois*, untamed wilder citizens not given to living overlong in town; the inevitable roster of civil servants sent over by France; the brave Jesuits and representatives of the seminary at Quebec; and soldiers, though never enough of these. Sometimes the soldiers drilled the *habitants*, but just as often the Canadians, more accustomed to the methods of wilderness warfare, instructed both. Many of the soldiers stayed on in Mobile, after their service was up, as did quite a few sailors. But Bienville refused to allow a group of freebooters, more familiar with piracy than commerce, to settle.

The colonists lacked sufficient clothing because of war and the policy of France to keep her colonies dependent on the home country — and on the court — for all their needs. War with England made it difficult in the early years to ship supplies to America; and an important contribution to the shortage was the expulsion of the Huguenots twenty-six years before the settlement of Mobile, after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The Huguenots were the skilled weavers of France and they took their skills and knowledge to Holland, Germany, and England; it was not France's policy to permit even friends to supply the needs of settlers. Out from Mobile went furs and beaver skins and naval stores and some timber. But to Mobile in return came little that the colonists could put on their backs or in their stomachs.

And always there was bickering among the officials and the representatives of France.

It is not often that we can surprise dominant men in their peevish, unrehearsed moments. Here is such an eavesdropping, a record of a dispute between the strong-willed Bienville, and Cadillac, Crozat's cunning and dictatorial representative, with whom Bienville could not get along. Remove their names from the dialogue and one would think that here were two silly popinjays quarreling over nothing. Instead, it is the first and second in command of the colony who are speaking:

BIENVILLE: You told Mr. LeBart that I had told you that it was he who wrote the letter to Monsieur Duclos which involved you in a quarrel with each other.

CADILLAC: Yes, you told me that.

BIENVILLE: No, I did not tell you that.

CADILLAC: Yes, indeed, you told me that and I am not inventing it.

BIENVILLE: I did not tell you that at all.

CADILLAC: How are you speaking to me, Sir?

BIENVILLE: I am speaking very politely, and you are the one who is speaking badly.

CADILLAC: What, by God, I am speaking badly! You are an impertinent fellow and I order you to keep silence.

BIENVILLE: I care very little and I am very little embarrassed that you should order me to keep silence.

CADILLAC: Go away under arrest immediately.

BIENVILLE: I shall not go under arrest.

CADILLAC: We shall see about that. *(Speaking to his son)* Go and tell the Major to come.

BIENVILLE: Where do you wish me to go under arrest?

CADILLAC: To your house, Sir.

BIENVILLE: That is good enough. *(And in a bantering tone)* It is still too early. *(In the meanwhile the Major having arrived.)* There is the Major, Sir. What do



you wish to do about it?

CADILLAC: Sir, take Mr. de Bienville to his house under arrest.

BIENVILLE: So much the better. That will refresh me if I am there long, for we are now in the hot season.

To make matters worse, the daughter of Cadillac, educated in France and herself charming, fell in love with Bienville. Cadillac considered himself superior to the Canadian-born LeMoynes, reconciled himself to having Bienville for a son-in-law since it would strengthen his own position in the colony; and so one day he called Bienville into his presence and offered him condescendingly his daughter's hand. To Cadillac's surprise and anger Bienville affected both surprise and indifference, finally declaring that he did not intend to marry anyone. The furious Cadillac made plans to send Bienville to his death. He ordered him into the Natchez country with only a handful of men. The Natchez had killed four Canadians and it was to punish them — and Bienville, too — that Cadillac ordered Bienville to proceed with only thirty-four men. But Bienville captured the several tribal leaders by treachery and made peace with the Natchez.

The indomitable colonists could smile despite misgovernment and their own difficulties. Out of the wilderness in 1722 came a plea from Thierry Chassin, assistant keeper of the warehouse at the Illinois post, to the Biloxi authorities.

«You see, sir,» he wrote, «that the only thing that I now lack in order to make a strong establishment in Louisiana is a certain article of furniture that one often repents having got and which I shall do without like the others as I have already had the honor of informing you, unless the company sends us girls who have at least the appearance of virtue. If by chance there should be some

girl with whom you are acquainted who would be willing to make this journey for love of me, I should be very much obliged to her and I should certainly do my best to give her evidence of my gratitude.»

There is no record that Monsieur Chassin's requirements were any better filled than those of his neglected compatriots.

### MERCENARIES AND MUTINY

If you should puzzle over the disintegration of empires, or the reason why peoples come to fear or shun or grow contemptuous of authority, the answer can sometimes be found in small incidents, unimportant in themselves, but adding up to a foreboding totality.

So with the story of a monstrous martinet named Duroux and the giant woodsman, Beaudrot, who died horribly and without good cause. The names of each are but tiny footnotes to the history of the Gulf Coast. Yet the chance crossing of their paths illustrates much more than a tyrant's sadism. It spells out the reason for many a revolution, successful or doomed to failure.

In 1757, French Louisiana was suffering the cumulative results of long neglect and the smallness of great figures. The colony personified the moral disintegration that almost always precedes political or material catastrophe. Isolated, squeezed dry, their unrequited leader Bienville brooding away his life in France, the people of the lower valley and the Gulf had no love for their rulers or for being distantly ruled at all.

Inside them stirred a New World concept of man's individual worth, translated here too often into a cynical anarchy of spirit, an anarchy understandable in that it was the outgrowth of tyranny. The settlers had

no reason to respect or to follow most of those who had been sent here to rule them. In turn, the professionals of the army, the handful of aristocratic appointees and adventurers, the favorites who sought fortunes in Louisiana, were contemptuous of the lesser citizenry, the little men and women, the *canaille*, the wild Canadians, the dregs of Paris, the hopeful peasant stock of Europe.

But these humble folk were no longer so ready to accept their inferior status. A meaningful wind rustled across the New World, whispering heady temptations of freedom. The hungry survivors of misgovernment on the Gulf Coast were in 1757 neither servile nor overly loyal. France they might love, but not the tawdry spokesman of France. They would bear watching. So it was that the garrisons of the king kept the truculent colonists under surveillance hardly less close than that exercised over the weakened Indian tribesmen and the threatening neighbors of England and Spain. And tempers being what they were, the soldiers deemed safest for pacification were not Frenchmen, who might become sympathetic, but mercenaries, tall, blond men of Switzerland whose discipline was a byword.

Swiss mercenaries, and a small detachment of French marines, garrisoned strategic Ship Island, ten miles off the Coast, during the restless year of 1757. No one else was seemingly to be trusted. The king's officials, petty and great, snarled at one another and joined in denouncing the naval disciplinarian, Louis Bellimonte de Kerlerrec, who had just assumed the governorship of the unhappy province. Money was scarce, dishonesty abundant. The soldiers never knew when they would receive their pay or what it could buy. The Indian allies were making trouble. Even the Capuchins and the Jesuits were waging a religious war for spiritual control of the colony.

Among the disgruntled and the hopeless colonists the name of Achille Beaudrot was one of the few to be spoken of with affection or admiration. This Beaudrot, a gigantic woodsman, and no immigrant but a native Louisianian, was a stalwart if unassuming figure. He was loved by the Choctaws whose language and customs he knew as well as his own and who had taken him into their tribe as a blood brother. Beaudrot was a true *habitant*. Additionally he was a good husband and the father of two grown sons. Sometimes he lived on Ship Island, sometimes on the mainland, and always he could be found where danger lurked or where a mission for the colony required services of a brave man. Once he had rescued a young Frenchman near Mobile from a party of hostile Chickasaws. At another time he overtook three Creek Indians who were abducting a Frenchman captured on an Alabama plantation. Beaudrot killed all three and, escaping pursuing Creek warriors, brought his compatriot to Mobile. He was a new kind of citizen, a free man of the American frontier, a self-reliant brother to many another who spoke in different tongues but who understood with him the language of freedom. They were not a breed given to doffing the cap or asking permission.

It was Beaudrot's tragedy that he ran afoul of Duroux, the commandant of Ship's Island, and over so small a thing. From the wreck of a Spanish ship Beaudrot had removed some salvaged goods, a copper pot perhaps, or a few water-stained bolts of cloth, a keg of nails or wine; and knowing himself a free man, he neglected to give the commandant the share which Duroux demanded from all as his right. And so he was shackled and imprisoned on the island.

Beaudrot was not alone in his confinement, and those who lay in chains were not the least fortunate of Duroux's victims. The

commandant was not only a despot, he was a thief. Thirty leagues away from New Orleans, he was secure in his tyranny. He forced his soldiers to work in charcoal kilns which he operated for his own profit, to maintain his garden, to make lime from shells, and to cut timber. But he paid them nothing and he stole their rations. The Spanish ship from which the unfortunate Beaudrot had removed his little horde had on it a consignment of flour. The soldiers were forced to make their bread from this ruined flour, while Duroux sold their rations to the hungry people of the Coast.

If any of his Swiss or French troops objected or shirked or otherwise incurred displeasure, he had them tied naked to trees as prey to the sun and gnats and mosquitoes. Men died from his brutality. Finally several members of the garrison escaped and made their way to New Orleans where they complained to Kerlèrec of their mistreatment. But, despite the reputation of the Swiss and the apparent truthfulness of their story, Kerlèrec treated them as mutineers and returned them in irons to Ship Island.

Duroux interpreted Kerlèrec's action as giving him divine right to rule as he so chose. Beautiful Ship Island became a tyrant's hell.

Shortly after the return of the protesting Swiss from New Orleans, Duroux, who fancied himself a great huntsman, journeyed one day to nearby Deer Island. The Ship Island garrison determined upon mutiny. They were sick of seeing mutilated bodies and of being forced to slaves' work at no pay. Their remonstrations had been in vain.

So it was that, as Duroux's boat approached Ship Island, the sentinel at the fort hoisted the flag as was customary, upon which signal the garrison went to the wharf to receive the commander. At their head was

a corporal who had plotted the mutiny. The corporal hailed the boat by means of a speaking trumpet, which also was the custom, asking its identity. Duroux answered, «Your commander».

The garrison presented arms. Then as the leader set foot on the island, the corporal gave a signal. The plotters fired with the precision of an execution squad. Duroux dropped dead. A soldier stripped his body and threw it into the Gulf.

Now, no longer disciplined soldiers but frightened men seeking to escape vengeance, the soldiers sought out Beaudrot. He knew the forest of the mainland better than any other. He could take them to the safety of the English colonies. They plundered the fort of its stores and filled their stomachs with food long unfamiliar. Beaudrot knew that he himself would be held liable if he joined the mutineers. He offered to give them directions but asked that he not be forced to accompany them. But the demoralized Swiss took him along forcibly.

They reached the mainland in the garrison's boats which they abandoned near Mobile. Beaudrot guided the mutineers around the growing city, and, obtaining canoes from friendly Choctaws, ascended the Alabama River. Striking eastward, they reached the Chatahoochee, and here the fugitives bade Beaudrot goodbye, giving him a written certificate which declared that he was innocent of the mutiny of Ship Island and that he had been forced to act as their guide.

Secure with this statement in his pocket Beaudrot returned to Mobile. The Swiss divided into two groups. One reached the safety of the English colonies. But the other group lingered too long among the Indians. The mutiny of Ship Island had become known to the commandant at Fort Toulouse,

who had ascertained the whereabouts of the escaped soldiers. The commandant sent a detachment of his garrison and some Indians to capture them. This they did, and the prisoners were taken to New Orleans.

At New Orleans an order was issued for the arrest of Beaudrot. Beaudrot's two sons, who were returning to Mobile from New Orleans, were entrusted with the order, whose contents were unknown to them. But Beaudrot was confident. He went to his martial assured that the certificate of the Swiss soldiers would win his freedom.

But the thoroughly frightened council, aghast at the murder of a commandant and determined upon making an example of all with a sentence of hideous death. The sentence was approved by Kerlerec. And so Beaudrot, loyal son of New France, was placed on a giant wheel. Iron spikes rose from the floor below. The wheel was turned. Slowly Beaudrot's body was broken. The mutilated body was declared unfit for decent burial and was contemptuously thrown into the Mississippi River.

The Swiss mutineers fared no better. The corporal who had plotted the uprising committed suicide with a knife which he wore suspended around his neck, Indian fashion. But his fellows were nailed alive in coffins. Then black slaves manned crosscut saws and cut the coffins through the centers.

If the temper of the colony was dangerous before the execution of Beaudrot, it became worse afterward. The execution of the woodsman was chief among the wrongdoings which caused the recall of Kerlerec and his arrest and imprisonment in the Bastille.

It was too late, in 1757, to save French Louisiana by the recall of one governor and

the dispatch of another. In 1762 France secretly surrendered her mistreated colony to Spain. In March 1766 the representative of Spain arrived in Louisiana. But the Spanish government did not end the tyranny inherent in the rule of distant kings. Not for nearly forty years did the people of the Gulf know freedom.

Before then, the eighteenth century ended, with its hundred interminable years of European conflict and intrigue, of indecisive warfare that continued well into the nineteenth century. France lost to England, on Quebec's Plains of Abraham, her American empire, and the tenacious English held all Canada against the rebellious colonists of the eastern seaboard.

But Louisiana and the Coast were to pass into other hands. During the American Revolution, Spain joined forces with the Americans to seize from the British the lower Mississippi Valley. France, which had ceded to Spain all of the Louisiana territory west of the Mississippi and her burgeoning city of New Orleans, regained it in turn when a man named Napoleon Bonaparte began to lift high again the sword of France. But Napoleon, needing money, sold to the infant United States the vast Louisiana territory, laughing at England and perhaps secretly determining to retake it some day. Spain was left with a narrow strip of coast jutting thinly westward to the banks of the Mississippi above New Orleans and having as its eastward extremity the long peninsula of present-day Florida. But even Spanish Florida could not withstand the onrush of Americans. By treaty, by violation of treaty, and by outright conquests, all of Spanish Florida had fallen to the Americans by 1820.

But a region does not change its complexion with the coming of new rulers. The Gulf Coast had survived sixty-four years of



French misrule, nearly another half century of Spanish indifference. The Biloxians had listened to the bagpipes of Scottish Highlanders and to the crackling rifles of American frontiersmen. But the sea and the sun and the forest were the same and the people of the Coast were accustomed to whatever came their way. Accustomed, that is, to everything but self-government. This the Americans brought.

### TRANSITION — AND WAR

In January 1807, Dr. William Flood embarked by sloop from New Orleans for the Gulf Coast, bearing a commission from Governor Claiborne of Louisiana to organize it as an American district. Only six months before, under orders of President Madison, the governor had annexed the independent state of West Florida, created by rebellious Americans who seized control of the territory from Spain in a short-lived triumph. The United States had refused to recognize the tiny republic created by the Americans. And so the followers of the blue flag with a white star, the emblem of the republic of West Florida, gave way willingly to the Stars and Stripes.

Dr. Flood's task was not difficult. The physician appointed a venerable citizen of Bay St. Louis, Phillip Saucier, as justice of the peace in that village, and Jacques Ladnier, justice of the peace in Biloxi. Then he raised the flag of the United States.

The doctor from New Orleans, who was an observant man, was favorably impressed with the people of the Coast country. They were friendly, if generally illiterate; a primitive people of mixed origin, he noted, who retained the gaiety and politeness of the French and blended these virtues with the abstemiousness and indolence of the Indian, planting a little rice and a few roots and vegetables and depending for subsistence chiefly

on abundant game and fish. Dr. Flood did not believe there would be much need for the copies of the laws and ordinances of the United States government which he left with the justices, for he found the people to be universally honest. They rarely resorted to court procedure, calling instead upon the father of the family or the oldest inhabitant to settle all disputes.

«A more inoffensive and innocent people may not be found,» he concluded. «They seem to desire only the simple necessities of life and to be left alone in their tranquillity.»

But the tranquillity of the Gulf was not to be uninterrupted, even under the mild rule of the Americans who insisted that their new citizens had the right to govern themselves. Only a year after annexation, the United States was at war for a second time with England.

The war did not touch the Gulf shores until just before its end. In December of 1814, Jean Baptiste Ladnier looked anxiously from Ship Island toward the southerly waters of the Gulf. On the horizon rose great white sails. Ladnier pondered their presence. Never before had such gigantic ships been seen in the Gulf. Finally he drew his own conclusions. He had heard sometime before on the mainland that the country of which he was newly a citizen was at war. This must be the enemy!

Inside his cabin his wife lay desperately ill. They were the sole occupants of Ship Island. He did not know what to tell her or what to do. Certain that the enemy would anchor at Ship Island before proceeding to the ultimate destination, he feared that they would force him to act as a pilot through the back passage to New Orleans. Ladnier climbed the highest sand hill on Ship Island to get a better view of the approaching fleet. He determined to flee, but his great concern was

for his wife.

As he pondered his predicament, he was hailed from the lee side of the island. His visitor was a friend, a young Choctaw Indian from the mainland named Lapoucha. Lapoucha too had sighted the fleet and had come to help Jean Baptiste Ladnier, who had adopted him when he had been left an orphan in an Indian camp.

Together they carried a mattress to a cypress pierogue. On it they placed the sick woman, and even as the English were preparing to drop anchor and send a scouting expedition to the island, Lapoucha and Ladnier set out for Biloxi to warn of the arrival of the British fleet.

On December 11 the entire British expeditionary force anchored in Ship Island harbor. Riding at anchor were fifty British men-of-war. Never before or since had such an armada appeared in the Gulf of Mexico. In addition to the ships of the line there were scores of schooners, sloops, transports, and auxiliary vessels, as well as merchant vessels to carry home the spoils. Twenty thousand soldiers were aboard. So certain were the English that New Orleans and the Mississippi Valley would be annexed to His Majesty's colonies that a complete roster of civil officers had accompanied the fleet from Jamaica. The auxiliaries carried office fixtures and printing equipment. Custom collectors and clerks were ready to follow up the conquest. A considerable number of wives of officers were also aboard the vessels at Ship Island. Many of them would return to England as widows. Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane commanded from the famous two-decker, the *Tennant*, a fleet of more than one thousand guns. It pleased none of the French Americans of the Coast to be told that the flagship had been captured from the French at the Battle of the Nile. Second only to the

*Tennant* were the seventy-four-gun frigates, the *Royal Oak*, the *Ramillies*, the *Norge*, the *Bedford*, the *Asia* and the *Sea Horse*. Truly Britannia ruled the waves.

Here also were the most noted regiments of England's mighty army, commanded by Sir Edward Pakenham who had fought with Wellington throughout the peninsula and who at Badajoz commanded the storming party. He was a knight by virtue of the victorious charge he led at Salamanca. For Sir Edward the conquest of the lower Mississippi would surely be child's play. At his back were three thousand troops who had shared in the destruction of Washington and the raid upon Baltimore. The King's Own and the Bucks Volunteers, the North British Fusiliers and the East Essex Foot, chafed at inaction. In the holds of the transport neighed the horses of the Duchess of York's Light Dragoons. And above them all towered the giants of the mighty Third Highlanders, clad in tartan and kilts, and selected for their height and strength.

While the generals and admirals conferred over the final plans for the capture of New Orleans, scouting expeditions scoured the island and mainland for fresh vegetables and meats. But they were under strict orders to pay for everything they took. Since all available American armed forces were in New Orleans, there was no one to hinder them — that is, no one but Jean Cuevas who dwelt on Cat Island and there had raised not only a large family of children but many head of cattle. Several thousand English soldiers were encamped on Ship Island. They were under strict orders not to molest the residents.

The day after the arrival of the English, Cuevas, who was out hunting, heard the firing of guns. Soon he came upon three British soldiers and a Chinese cook who were killing his cattle. Up to now it had not been Jean

Cuevas' war. He shot at the marauders and two of them fell. One of them, the Chinese, died later. The British returned his fire and Cuevas dropped with a slight wound in his leg. Two of his daughters, hearing the firing, came to his aid with guns. Their father urged them not to fire.

Jean Cuevas was taken aboard one of the warships at Ship Island and held prisoner. But he was not punished. The Britishers upheld his right to defend his possessions. Then they urged Cuevas to show them the best route through the lakes and bayous and marshes to New Orleans. The new American refused. He was kept aboard.

There was no one to resist the British along the shores of the Gulf, but there were gaffies to harass them at sea. The United States Navy in Gulf waters consisted only of five gunboats, one tender, and one dispatch boat, manned by 180 men under the command of Captain Thomas A.P. Catesby Jones. It had been ordered from New Orleans to destroy first the stores at Bay St. Louis, and then to interfere as much as possible with the enemy's entry into Lake Borgne for the passage to New Orleans.

On the thirteenth of December the Americans observed the British fleet to be moving to the entrance of the lake. Attempting a short cut to the entrance into Lake Pontchartrain from Lake Borgne, most of the American fleet was grounded in low water. Against them, in this hopeless position moved fifty English launches and barges, their crews totaling twelve hundred men. Captain Jones ordered his craft anchored as closely together as possible. The one-sided battle got under way at nine o'clock. The Americans, unable to maneuver and vastly outnumbered,

sunk more than their number of barges, but at noon their fleet surrendered. The American loss was sixty dead and wounded. The British loss was three hundred dead and wounded. Had the Americans had a stronger naval force in the vicinity, the British would have been unable to land their troops for the march on New Orleans. Their huge men-of-war were unable to penetrate the shallower lakes and passes, so that barges and launches had to be employed. These could have been halted by a stronger fleet of gunboats.

But the British assault upon New Orleans was fruitless. Here on January 8 was fought on the fields of Chalmette the last battle of the war. It was a battle that need not have been waged. Peace had been made more than a month before, but word had not reached Sir Edward Packingham or Andrew Jackson in time to prevent the slaughter and defeat of the British. Sir Edward died and with him seven hundred of his men. Another fourteen hundred were wounded and five hundred captured. Sir Edward's body was placed in a barrel of rum, at Ship Island, for preservation, before being shipped to England. The strange conglomerate that made up the American forces — Tennessee riflemen, Creole gentry from New Orleans, pirates, free Negroes, Choctaws, and American regulars — lost only eight killed and thirteen wounded.

Before the British sailed away from Ship Island the governor of Mississippi, fearing that a second attempt would be made to capture New Orleans by landing troops on the Mississippi Gulf Coast for a long march overland, stationed troops at vulnerable points on the Coast. But the British had no stomach for further fighting. They released Jean Cuevas, the islander who protected his holdings, and

in March the English armada disappeared. Today the tomb of Jean Cadmus in the Biloxi cemetery is proudly pointed out as a minor patriotic shrine. Not until the

war of the brothers, the long civil strife, would an enemy fleet again molest the people of the Gulf. And that fleet would fly the flag of the United States.

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## SKETCHES OF EARLY TEXAS AND LOUISIANA

by Frédéric Gaillardet

translated by James L. Shepherd, III

### FRENCH MEMORIES OF TEXAS: CHAMP D'ASILE

*Le Constitutionnel*, Paris, August 22, 1841—  
Texas is a land discovered by the Spanish; two facts, however, spaced apart by more than a century in the annals of French history, link this land to France by melancholy memories.

It was in Texas that the first colonization effort, directed to Louisiana, went astray and foundered, after having been placed by Louis XIV under the command of heroic, ill-fated La Salle. It was at Saint Bernard Bay (today Matagorda Bay) that La Salle landed with his disoriented colonizers; it was by La Salle that many streams were discovered: the Caney, the Lavaca, the Rio Colorado (which he named the Rivière Rouge), the Sablonnière, the Maligne, the Trinity, and others; some of which have retained their original names in present-day Texas; it was on the banks of the Trinity, finally, near its western branch, that this man of wisdom and valor was killed by the hand of a Frenchman. There lie the bones of the sublime adventurer, lost in the wilderness; there strewn round him are those of his companions who fell beneath the savage tomahawk.

In 1815 the events before and after the date of March 20 had thrown the Imperial army into confusion and disunity. Numbers

of officers and soldiers, their reputations ruined by their support of the defeated cause, foresaw a bleak future stretching before them. Their worst forebodings were soon realized, by the order of proscription: on July 24 they were declared forever banished from their native soil. Thus hit by a law from which there was no appeal, the banished men determined to unite abroad and to seek a common refuge in their common misfortune. Thus was born the idea of the famous Champ d'Asile [literally, Field of Asylum]. It became a mecca not only for those struck by the political ban but also for many ex-soldiers, who suddenly found themselves jobless after an army career. Their only wealth was their bodily strength, their only activity was the display of courage; they resolved to seek out in the New World a subsistence and a home for their indigent glory.

Texas was chosen as the new home; yet by a strange oversight these exiles did not consult Spain to obtain a sanction for their settlement, although the place was one of its far-flung possessions. Spain's rule was, it is true, purely nominal and even contested to a certain degree by the United States; its own settlements were far from the intended site of the French colony and were swallowed up in the immense wilderness, where the actual sovereignty belonged to the savage Indians. However, despite Spain's apparent unconcern for its claim to these regions, as evi-

denced by their abandonment, it was not disposed to let them be usurped, as it later proved.

Texas had a well-deserved reputation for fertile soil and a healthy climate; it was the country closest to the United States, that new land of liberty, and to Louisiana, the former French territory. Here the remnants of the Empire might bask in their memories with a friendly power close at hand; here the glorious exiles might find a sanctuary for their unsettled lares and penates; a depository for their tattered banners.

Undeniably, there was something grandiose and at the same time rather poignant in this plan for a Champ d'Asile. It was to be a colony of unprecedented origin and background, a family of the proscribed emerging from the great Imperial family and transporting itself with all its military aura onto American soil! A tomb for the mighty and a cradle of glory, this plot of ground called Champ d'Asile might become a nursery of future strength. Who could say what might spring from the ruins of such an illustrious past? If fortune had smiled upon the first efforts of our soldier-colorists, no flag anywhere on earth would have waved more hospitably to those thousands of emigrants who, for the past twenty years, have poured out of an overcrowded Europe. Thanks to a handful of its rejected children, France would thus have recovered a share of the vast American continent, of which its rivals, the English and Spanish races, today have exclusive possession. The consequences of a successful colonization would have been incalculable.

In the hands of France, Texas would today be the arbiter of America. As a close neighbor of Louisiana, the former French possession, where memories of the mother

country might have been revived and fostered through neighborly contacts; rising like a column between that multi-armed giant the United States on the one hand, embracing more than two-thirds of North America, and, on the other, Mexico, already old while still in its infancy, weakened by its instability at a time when it should be at its strongest: Texas would have become a barrier for the one and a bulwark for the other. Its hands outstretched toward its two neighbors, it would have maintained an equilibrium between two unequal forces and would have arbitrated their rivalries. Such might have been the role of Texas, whose prosperous development under different auspices has survived the failure of Champ d'Asile, an ephemeral enterprise which hardly amounted to more than a daydream.

Let us add that, whereas the conception of Champ d'Asile may have been a noble and even fruitful idea when viewed in the broad perspective of French interests, it was also a kind of folly when viewed in the narrow perspective of the interests of the party which sponsored it. Indeed, to remove so far from France the idle soldiers of the Empire, at a time when opposition to the Restoration government was mounting in the national consciousness, and to push to the opposite end of the earth these men accustomed to the use of force, restless veterans whose hands one might expect to need from one day to the next: this must be termed an egregious blunder on the part of the liberals and the Bonapartists. The Restoration sensed this, and therefore raised no objection to the emigration, which simply removed a thorn from its side. As for the liberals, their leaders soon realized their mistake in sacrificing a positive advantage to an adventurous gamble. If the founding of Champ d'Asile was, poetically speaking, a glorious thing, it was an untimely thing politically. This fact accounts for the sudden slackening of recruitment and

fund raising that brought about the collapse of the colony, for it was built on too small a scale and was left exposed with few or no resources to withstand even the more ordinary tribulations with which its fragile foundation was soon undermined.

General Lallemand had been designated by the emigrants as commander in chief of the expedition; General Rigau was second in command. Assembly points in New York and Philadelphia were set for the participants. From these two ports the colonizers sailed to Texas, they were united on Galveston Island toward the middle of March, 1818, after suffering the loss of four men, who were swept away in a storm when within sight of the island of their destination. The center of the Champ d'Asile colony was established at approximately twenty leagues inland from the Gulf of Mexico on the banks of the Trinity River.

As soon as the supplies, munitions, and all other objects to be used by the colony were set ashore [state Hartmann and Millard, who were among the settlers of Champ d'Asile], we set to work building a temporary encampment and providing shelter against bad weather. Next, we were organized into platoons, Generals Lallemand and Rigau named the leaders of each. Once this organization was completed, plans were drawn up for four forts. One located to the right of our central camp was named Fort Charles in honor of the General in Chief; a second was named the Middle Fort; a third, Fort Henri, was located to the left and was to be connected by a covered walk to two guard posts placed within the camp. The fourth, located to the right of the camp enclosure and on the edge of the Trinity River, defended the shore and dominated the other three forts. It was named the Fort of the Stockade; it was to be fortified by three pieces of cannon; Fort Charles was to

have two; the Middle Fort, one; and Fort Henri, two: a total of eight pieces of cannon to form our artillery.

These four forts were erected in short order, as if by magic. They were astonishingly well-built. The Fort of the Stockade was made of large tree trunks and was solid enough to have withstood any attack. The powder supply and tools of the colony were stored in it. Farther up from the forts and covering a rather wide area our dwellings were constructed in a circular formation. They were of large logs joined together in the form of bullet-proof blockhouses with loopholes to have permitted house-to-house fighting if attacked. To the rear of center was General Lallemand's house; a short distance from it was the supply house; General Rigau's residence was located behind Fort Henri near the two guard houses. The total effect of the camp was very pleasing; this rude, frontier scene had a kind of charm that was hard to imagine.

In one direction outside the camp was an enormous plain. In the opposite direction were evergreen trees, the tops of which were practically lost in the clouds. The right-hand boundary of the camp was formed by the Trinity River, which flowed on from our camp down to the Gulf of Mexico. On the opposite side of the river, forests stretched out as far as the eye could see. To the left and rear of the camp were also vast forests to protect us against storm.

During the periods of the day when work was not required, the colonists engaged in gardening; the very fertile land rewarded our labors beyond our expectations. Vegetation was very rapid; the area was soon covered with plants and fruit.

The colony was made up of four hundred persons, among whom numbered some

foreigners, in particular some Spanish officers who had volunteered to join our emigrants.

The Indian tribes in the vicinity of the colonization area had greeted the palefaces with equanimity. Those of gentler character and more peaceable instincts even sent representatives to proffer the calumet of peace. These Indian delegates viewed the fortified camp with a mixture of curiosity and naïve admiration; an alliance was formed, cemented by an exchange of gifts, between General Lallemand and the Choctaws, Alabamas, Coushattas, and Tonkawas.

Everything thus seemed to point to the prosperity and development of the budding colony. The consequences of the initial error in the arrangements, however, were not long in manifesting themselves. It was learned that the Spanish garrisons of San Antonio and La Bahía, augmented by some Indian tribesmen, were advancing with the announced intention of forcing the withdrawal of the venturesome colony from land which it occupied without the authorization of the owners. This unexpected news caused General Lallemand to call a council meeting. The council was fearful that prolonged hostility might totally exhaust the limited supplies that the colony had on hand and therefore concluded that the wisest policy was to abandon the fortified camp, to remove from it the artillery and ammunition, and to retreat to the island of Galveston, which was the only point at which provisions could be obtained, since it was the only access to the sea.

As a result, no attempt was made to reach a peaceful settlement with the Spanish; the loss of such extensive work was no sooner resolved than consummated. The hapless, imprudent band of colonists took their place on the low, desert island, which possessed neither wood nor water supply. To obtain

the latter, it was necessary first to dig deep cisterns; for food they could depend only upon their own stock of provisions with no hope of crops, no possibility of gardening. The consequence of this foolhardy, fatal move was soon evident: shortages began to appear. General Lallemand made up his mind to sail to New Orleans, there to seek help. He embarked, leaving the henceforth hopeless colony under the command of the elderly General Rigau, then close to his eightieth year.

A few days after the departure of General Lallemand, a spokesman arrived from the Spanish commander who had taken possession of the abandoned Champ d'Asile. He delivered an order that the colonists withdraw from the island of Galveston. They replied that in the absence of their general in chief they could take no action and that they intended to await his return and to obey whatever orders he might issue. The spokesman departed, and the colonists, although stranded on this island, believed that they were at least free from external harassment. Cruel misfortune intervened, however, to add its blows to the ineffectual ones of the Spanish.

Here I need only quote from the account by the witnesses of, and sufferers from, the catastrophe, Messrs. Hartmann and Millard.

Throughout our second stop at Galveston, the weather had been uniformly calm and mild, the temperature cool. It would have been an added misfortune had turbulent weather occurred along with the forerunners of hunger and want which we faced. We had said as much from time to time, reasoning that fate was not entirely against us. We regarded our luck in this respect as a favorable omen, pointing to the eventual cessation of our present troubles which we felt so powerless to combat. We little dreamed that the storm was brew-



ing overhead and that our previous misfortunes were as nothing compared to the blows which destiny was preparing to deliver, as if intent upon our utter destruction.

We were grouped at various points about our camp; the day was drawing to its close, the atmosphere was darkening, clouds accumulated, a wind rose, the seagulls were flying in to take shelter on land; in fact, every indication of an approaching storm was present before our eyes, yet far from being alarmed, we did not feel the slightest uneasiness. We believed that while inside our camp we were safe from any danger. Our entrenchments kept us out of the wind, and besides, our buildings were not tall enough to offer much chance of being swept away. As we had gone through similar perturbances before, we did not expect that this one would get any more violent. We were content to hammer down the stakes that seemed somewhat unsteady and to check the anchorage of our boats. Night soon shrouded the place in darkness; we all retired to our modest and humble abodes for our night's rest. We had already fallen into blissful slumber when suddenly we were aroused by the most startling noise. The wind blowing at its fiercest, the roar of the waves dashing against our entrenchments, and the lightning cracking through the clouds told us that nature was on the rampage. We were all the more terrified because the extraordinary darkness all about prevented us from making anything out; although the real danger was bad enough, it seemed to be a thousand times worse than it really was.

At last the swollen sea rolled its waves furiously over the entire island of Galveston. It penetrated our camp and our houses and flooded the whole. Soon we were surrounded by water four feet deep. Our excitement could not have

been more intense. Cries of despair and suffering rang out to heighten the horror of this scene, but then they were drowned out by the unrestrained winds and waters, which sounded like the strongest cannon fire or the explosion of a mine. One may easily imagine how impatiently and anxiously we awaited the daylight through this eternal and terrible night; the immense disaster of which was magnified in our imaginations.

Day broke to reveal the extent of our losses and the abyss of waters about to swallow us up. We glanced about with fear and terror. We dreaded to discover what our eyes would behold, yet we were overcome with curiosity. How painful was the sight! It was a picture of chaos, of destruction and of a disruption of nature whose laws seemed to have reversed themselves. The waves lashed at one another from opposite directions and hoisily tossed the wreckage of shattered walls, posts, beams and barrels. The town of Galveston was like a fort after its defenses had been broken through, leaving it exposed to imminent assault. As we viewed the plight of our friends, we were powerless to take a step to help them, for the currents were so strong that it was impossible to brave them.

With the light of day the wind appeared to be diminishing, the storm not quite so violent, we thought — a vain illusion! Of all the buildings located at Galveston, only six had withstood the onslaught of the waves. We saw the breakers against the walls of the hospital where we kept our sick; then the water entered the building. We could no longer stand idle; we dashed into the flood, staying on the highest elevation of ground, managed to reach the hospital, and with untold difficulties conducted the patients to the house of Monsieur Laffite, which was the best constructed of all on the island. If we had delayed, the sea would

soon have taken them off and become their tomb.

The waters still rose. Ships and boats could not resist the constantly repeated shocks of the waves. They dragged their anchors and soon were carried off to the open sea. A cry of pain and despair which all of us uttered simultaneously began the worst phase of our anguish. We still had stocks of food on several of those vessels; how could we ever recover them? . . . Each of us felt death drawing nearer. Several went to the places of highest elevation, others climbed upon the strongest of the huts to escape drowning. . . . We spent two days in this cruel predicament; the third brought us some relief. The wind let up, the sea returned to its bed, the sky brightened, and toward evening we could reassemble, although there was still a great deal of water which had not yet receded and which formed lakes in various places.

We were truly a touching sight to see. Whenever one of our hapless companions returned to our midst, he was embraced by each in turn and was asked to tell of the dangers he had encountered and of the hopes and fears he had experienced therewith.

Although they survived the flood, the colonists were still beset with troubles. The shortages that previously had loomed ominously over them gradually became more acute and alarming. A part of their already scanty provisions had been lost in the flood, and as an added misfortune their cisterns were now all full of salt water. They could hope to find drinking water only on the mainland, but a bay separated them from it. All their boats without exception had been carried away by the hurricane. One of the colonists fortunately had happened to fill a few barrels with fresh water, by some miraculous forethought, before the cistern had

been inundated with sea water. These precious drops of water were divided equally among them all. Two days later a few men went out to explore the island in search of any salvageable debris which might have been cast up after the storm. They came upon two of their boats, which had been abandoned by the waves at some six leagues inland. This was a valuable discovery. From then on they could travel from the island to the mainland and bring a supply of water to last until the cisterns on the island should again become full of drinking water.

As for food, hunting and fishing were the only ways to supply it; the Indian settlements from which they might have obtained something were between thirty and forty leagues away.

Meanwhile, the pitifully hard-pressed colony received not a word from General Lallemand. It was decided to dispatch the son of General Rigau in search of him. Thirty-two days then passed without any news of either one.

The colony was overcome with discouragement and decided upon a general exodus, with New Orleans named as a future meeting place. Some set out on foot and lived only upon game during a trek of 150 leagues, toward the end of which they received a minimum of help from the sparsely settled population. The elderly, the women and children, and a few officers got passage aboard a schooner that the pirate Laffite's unflinching generosity placed at the disposal of these wretched castaways.

Thus ended the short history of Champ d'Asile. Thus ignominiously died, fraught with ignominious obstacles, a noble and worthy cause, whose realization might have offered to the world a spectacle of highest interest and achievement. Texas, the Imperial

colony, the refuge of many glorious old soldiers, would have occupied in future histories a place alongside the rock of Saint Helena. Its name would have been nobly linked with that great name. For on the one would have lain the remains of the Emperor, on the other, the remains of the Empire, but living, productive remains rising from their ashes to cast seeds of future glory on a land of liberty.

I traveled over a large part of Texas seeking with infinite pains to determine whether any vestige remained of the short-lived settlement of Champ d'Asile. For this purpose I questioned the inhabitants of both town and country, but I could find no one who knew the site of the forgotten field where our Frenchmen made their home for a day. There is such ignorance prevalent among the new population concerning the colony that it is as though a century had passed instead of the short space of time that separates us from it. The few people who seemed to have a faint idea of it recommended that I explore the region around Matagorda Bay, near which is a small settlement with the Spanish name of Refugio. Spanish-settled countries are full of such *refugios*, which bear no connection whatever with the Champ d'Asile of the French colonizers.

Led only by the book of Hartmann and Millard, I went inland along the banks of the Trinity River as far as the town of Liberty. A French-speaking settler in this pleasant new city proved to be, at last, someone to offer help and guidance in my exploration. This good man is a native of Canada who left home to go to New York state. Later he left that state to go to Ohio. After Ohio, he settled in Saint Louis, Missouri, where he developed a thriving fur-trading business with the

Indians. As the Indians of that region were no longer savage enough to suit him, he went down to Arkansas, crossed the Red River, and set up his tent right in the midst of the pure-blooded Indians of North Texas. There he lived with his wife and small child for ten years. His home became quite a focal point for the Indians, who either defended or attacked it according to their particular interests at the time. Our Canadian stuck it out and carried on with his unfriendly friends a business punctuated with alerts and rifle fire.

«Throughout those ten years,» he told me, «I was constantly on my guard, ready for an attack; I kept both by day and by night two horses saddled and bridled in my stable.»

In 1832 he bid adieu to the Indians of Texas as he had done to those of Missouri. He went down to the banks of the Trinity, where the colonization had progressed with rapid strides. Today, desirous of ending his days as he began them, by the sea, the old frontiersman is planning to move to the island of Galveston, the mouth of Texas. This location will probably be his last. Once there, he will have described through North America a semicircle of several thousand leagues from north to west and from west to south, with Galveston and Québec at the two extremities.

My guide was this wandering American who remained French at heart, a man who, having lived in so many places, is nostalgic for only one, France, the one he has never seen except in his mind's eye. Not far from this very town of Liberty, I was at last privileged to rediscover the location of Champ d'Asile. Of the buildings erected by the military colony,

there remains not a trace, and I was on the point of turning back with some disappointment when my Canadian friend conducted me opposite some old trees that he pointed to with his finger. I viewed them for a time from top to bottom without noticing anything in particular to warrant our attention. Then my guide showed me some hieroglyphic incisions carved into the trunks and bark of these trees. I went closer, and after studying

and deciphering these letters, deformed by sap and by the passage of time, I was able with the help of my guide to make out the words, not with ease but at least with reasonable certainty:

*HONNEUR ET PATRIE*

This motto is all that remains today of Champ d'Asile, Texas.

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FOUR CENTS AN ACRE

by Georges Oudard

translated by Margery Bianco

### THE CROZAT AFFAIR

Just what did this gentleman from Toulouse, a crafty money-lender rather than a profound financier, already engaged in a number of sound business enterprises and possessing one of the largest fortunes in France, intend to do in Louisiana? He was already past the age when one usually embarks on those kind of speculations which yield future rather than immediate profits. This was the question that interested certain circles in Paris. The general opinion was that his Majesty had forced his hand.

The reign of the great king was ending in reverses, ruin, and general poverty. Peace had not yet been signed. But negotiations had been begun, interrupted, partially resumed. Louis XIV knew that he would have to give up Acadia, Hudson Bay and its straits and Newfoundland to the English; this was already almost a death-blow for Canada. Did he believe that in relieving himself temporarily of the burden of his North American colony, at the moment when the exhausted Treasury had proved itself unable to support it, lay the last chance of preventing it from falling into decadence, and of bequeathing it in better condition to his successor? The individual who took the place of the failing State, whether acting of his own free will or under compulsion, had not in spite of his sixty years given up those great projects

which under a chimerical appearance are often the source of fruitful profit, and on which the financier's mind naturally feeds.

On September 12, 1712, were signed at Fontainebleau the letters patent conferring upon Antoine Crozat, already director of the companies of San Domingo and Assiente, the privilege for fifteen years of exclusive commerce in the entire country situated between New Mexico and Carolina, and watered by the Mississippi and its affluents. The frontiers of Louisiana, which it now became necessary to define, touched on the east, according to Iberville's proposition, the region now called Detroit between Lake Erie and Lake Huron. On the west they extended as far as the Madeleine river, beyond the Bay of St. Bernard, doubtless discovered by La Salle but of which no one as yet knew the exact position.

The lease holder had the right of possession and exploitation of the mines, on the condition of paying to the king one quarter of their produce. He must send to the colony every year two ships with contingents of colonists. He had authority to treat with the negroes in Guinea. The government would be entrusted to a council identical with that functioning at San Domingo. His Majesty, who was to pay the grantee fifty thousand *livres* for the expenses of the garrison, reserved the right of appointing the officers,

both military and clerical.

In spite of these terms it was evident that the choice of the new governor, appointed two years ago, and also a native of Toulouse, had been approved by Crozat.

It would have been difficult to find a worse one.

This Lamothe-Cadillac had not always been as stupid as he certainly appeared today. Had age weakened his faculties? They were so well concealed that it would have been hard to say. At times he appeared rejuvenated, as when he married at Quebec a youthful pupil of the Ursulines who both hated and despised him, and made no secret of the fact; at other times he seemed to age, as when it was to his interest to complain of his tasks. He came from a good family. His father was councillor in the parliament of Languedoc. He had fought bravely in Europe before coming to America. But he seemed to have been born under an unlucky star.

In Acadia, where he possessed some property, he had met with great misfortunes. Ordered to make an attack by sea on the coast of New York, he was driven back by unfavorable winds as far as France. For seven months he lived by borrowing at Court. Meantime the English looted his houses, and did not leave him so much as the value of thirty *sous*. He was sent back to Canada. The ship that was bringing his belongings foundered on the voyage.

He received the governorship of Michilimackinac. There he displayed a rare intellectual curiosity. He studied the customs of the savages and made careful research concerning their ethnological origin. But he attracted, more than anyone before or after him, the violent hostility of the Jesuits. The priests accused this honest and pious father of a

family of the most infamous debauchery, and represented his fort as a combined cabaret, gambling-den and place which they would blush to describe by its proper name, where women learned to regard their bodies as merchandise. Irritated and annoyed, he moved to Detroit where he had some success and established a good reputation. But as soon as he appeared in Louisiana, accompanied by his wife, his daughters and his sons the good man's character soured and he became stupid.

There landed with him on the same day, May 17, 1713, the director general Durigoin and twenty-five prospective brides from Brittany, so ugly that no one could be found to marry them. Everyone made fun of their arrival. Lamothe-Cadillac took it as a personal affront. He retired to Ile Dauphine to sulk, and declared that he would never budge from there again.

He spent his time in counting up one by one the riches it contained: a dozen fig-trees, three wild pears, three plum trees with seven bad plums on them, thirty feet of grape-vine with five bunches of grapes, dried up and half decayed, a few pumpkins. «And this is the fortunate isle, the terrestrial paradise of M. de Remonville!» he exclaimed ironically, furious yet at the same time delighted to have something on which to pour out his wrath. This country which he as yet knew nothing of, yet refused to so much as look at, revolted and exasperated him. He lost no occasion of saying what he thought about it. Such occasions are never lacking to persons of his agreeable character.

Meanwhile the governor fulfilled the instructions he had received. Crozat, who meant to extract all the profit he could from his concession, knew very well that the only advantage of the colony was to enable him to establish commercial relations with the

Spanish. Lamothe-Cadillac therefore immediately despatched the captain of the ship which had brought him hither to Vera Cruz to see how the land lay. With the same intent he sent Juchereau de St. Denis to the Natchitoches on the shores of the Red River with orders to make his way towards New Mexico.

The sailor failed in his attempt. The representative of the viceroy turned his back on him; England had just forbidden Madrid to allow the French any licence of permission to trade or navigate among her American colonies. As for the traveller, risking his life in the midst of unknown country, it would be some months before they learned the results of his mission, the difficulties and perils of which the governor seemed entirely to ignore.

The settlers had already learned the wretched fate that the company reserved for them. They were now forbidden to buy or sell anything without its intermediation. The decision infuriated them. Thus they could no longer deliver their planks to the small vessels from San Domingo or Martinique, nor carry, as had been their custom at the risk of dying of hunger, their poultry and vegetables to Pensacola. Crozat's agents gave so little for buffalo hides or furs that the Illinois traders preferred to go back with their cargoes.

The anger of the colonists increased still more when they presented themselves at the solitary store, at which they were obliged to purchase their supplies. The goods were sold at exaggerated prices. A pair of stockings or a hat cost forty *livres*, a barrel of flour ninety *livres*, linen seven *livres* an ell. The employees, with their tongue in their cheek, told the buyers that if they didn't like it they could leave it. They even had the impertinence to refuse the drafts of those of-

ficers who had been there the longest, Boisbriant, Richebourg, Tisny. They must pay in cash. They were forced to sell their slaves and their personal articles of furniture in order to procure ready money. Many of them contemplated flying from this inferno. The breath of ruin and despair swept through the country. No one had ever felt so poor.

Bienville declared himself exasperated. This M. Lamothe-Cadillac had positively lost his head at finding himself governor of the charming province of Louisiana. He was a terrible miser; during the five months he, Bienville, had lived there he had not offered him so much as a glass of water. He was a rogue, too; he misappropriated for his own profit the gifts intended for the savages.

The other, as soon as he was accused, begged the minister to let him keep them as belonging to the expenses; the Sieur Duclos with whom he was naturally on the worst terms having had the impertinence to try and stick his nose into his accounts. And not without good reason, growled the commissioner general who accused him of embezzlement. The old soldier turned up his nose; the insinuation came excellently from the mouth of a rascal who stole the flour belonging to the troops.

Disaccord was rife, and the intrigues grew. Perhaps the beautiful eyes of the eldest *demoiselle* Lamothe-Cadillac might help to arrange matters? Bienville admired the young lady and thought of marrying her. He confessed his plan in a letter to his brother Longueil, but without concealing the fact that he was a bit dismayed at the prospect of having such a crafty and fantastic man for his father-in-law. The marriage did not take place. Later the two enemies seized upon this ephemeral project to fling in each other's faces.

«He hates me,» the governor said, «because I refused him my daughter's hand.» «Refused!» corrected the gallant lieutenant of the king; «It was I who didn't want her!»

Crozat, now enlightened by the ship captain returning to France, and who moreover had read the Treaty of Utrecht, gave up his plans of trading with the Spanish. His new idea was to divide his energies between the fur trade and the cultivation of tobacco and indigo. He proposed to the government to take out five hundred colonists at one stroke, provided he was authorized to organize a lottery with which to raise the necessary funds. The minister refused this expedient. The financier decided all the same to found two posts, one at Natchez, the other on the Wabash.

But Lamothe-Cadillac, who persisted in clinging to Ile Dauphine, where he awaited impatiently the return of Juchereau de St. Denis, considered these ideas impracticable. As well try to reach the moon as to send ships as far as that. He discouraged the La Loire brothers, who had received orders to establish a trading-post with the Natchez Indians.

There is not, he wrote to his chief, either tobacco or indigo or barley or maize in this colony. He turned the page and admitted that they could very well produce tobacco indigo and sugar. His ill-humor getting the better of him he went on to affirm just as categorically that none of these products would grow in this beast of a country. What did amuse, delight and refresh him was the formation of the famous council provided for by the letters patent, on the model of San Domingo. There had been proposed to him as attorney-general a store-keeper who had just learned to sign his name four months ago, as councillor a surgeon-major whose

function already rendered him incompatible; as usher, registrar and notary, a soldier. Well, if the worst came to the worst, he would constitute it with these three shining lights!

While the governor occupied himself in this way the English were creeping into the colony, among them several officers disguised as traders. The Chickasaws, the Alibamus and even the Choctaws had sent word to them to come. One, named Young, was already installed among the Natchez. It took all the adroitness of Bienville, so expert in dealing with the savages, to put matters right and to strengthen the French alliances.

This success, coming, necessary as it was, from a man of whom he was so intensely jealous, only irritated Lamothe-Cadillac, now bitterly at feud with the director-general Durigoin, an incapable individual whom he was anxious to see replaced. He bent his energies to that end, and succeeded. But the impossible man had no time to enjoy his victory, before he had a riot on his hands. Crozat had obtained a new ordinance forbidding the import of any merchandise into Louisiana except that of the Company. The indignant settlers drew up a petition claiming free trade. The governor simply threatened to hang the bearer of it.

«Positively,» he wrote to Paris, «this colony is not worth a straw, and as the proverb says, bad country, bad people. Everyone carries out his duties according to his own idea; the soldiers are undisciplined; the entire population are just sweepings from the dregs of Canada or thieving rogues without honor or subordination, as M. de Vente describes them.»

«M. Lamothe-Cadillac,» declared the curé of Mobile, returning his politeness, «is a very ordered and well-intentioned man. As for the colonists,» he repeated



incessantly, «they are demons. They live in the most scandalous concubinage with the native women and smother the children that are born from them. It wouldn't be so bad if the young victims were only baptized first! But one cannot even demand this from these blasphemous drunkards who mock at the priests, never go to mass and stay away from the sacraments. Those in the highest position give the worst example. Bienville, Boisbriant and Serigny have not performed their Easter duties for seven years. How can one expect to convert the Indians under such conditions!»

The return of Juchereau de St. Denis was the last blow to the governor, who had had some hope on first seeing him arrive, accompanied by Señor Don Juan de Velesca and three Spaniards. The traveller had presented this gentleman as his new uncle. He had in fact married during his journey. It would under ordinary circumstances have appeared a happy embassy. The unfolding of his tale proved the contrary.

St. Denis had been very well received at the Preside du Nord by Captain Pedro de Velesca, father of a charming daughter, Dona Maria, to whom he became betrothed during his stay. The officer had furnished his future son-in-law with an escort to go to Mexico, where affairs were in bad shape. The viceroy, the Duc de Linarès, threw him into prison and ordered the confiscation of his merchandise. After the Frenchman had languished in jail for several months the viceroy offered him the choice of entering the service of his Spanish Majesty. The young man refused, and was put in irons. One fine day the Duc, his heart softened, gave him freedom to walk about the city. After this he invited him on several occasions to dine. What a palace! The dishes, the furniture, the cupboards and tables, everything, down to the very andirons, were made of solid silver. The viceroy finally

gave him a farewell audience and let him depart. The gift of a fine horse and a purse of a thousand *piastres*, for the wedding expenses, as he said laughingly, ended the interview. The wedding took place at the Preside du Nord, where Madame his wife, now enceinte, was at present staying. But St. Denis had promised to return and fetch her at the earliest opportunity.

The description of the Duc de Linarès establishment filled Lamothe-Cadillac with envy. Who knows but before long he might possess such a palace himself! He had been told of the existence of mines in the Illinois; he had even been shown a sample of ore containing a large proportion of silver, brought from the Kaskaskias. He determined to go there in person. For the first time he prepared to emerge from his island and ascend this mysterious Mississippi of which as yet he knew nothing. This did not deter him from stating confidently:

«This river is a torrent during six months and for the rest of the year its waters are so low that canoes can hardly find a passage.»

The governor navigated with ease some ten or eleven leagues through open sandy country, and then found upon either shore a forest so dense as to intercept the breeze entirely. This profound calm annoyed him. Luckily the woods ceased at the *détour des Anglais*. Cursing everything — the discomfort of the canoe, the heat of the sun, the mosquito bites — he finally reached the Illinois, where he was doomed to scour the country for eight months on the trail of chimerical mines.

The poor man had no luck; they had played a trick on him unintentionally. The sample of ore that he had been shown came from Kaskaskia all right, but the inhabitants

of the village had received it as a gift from a Spaniard who came from Mexico.

Lamothe-Cadillac was furious. He shouted:

«This country is a monster that has neither head nor tail! Everything that has been written about it is fable and romance!»

To console himself for his disappointment he signed an ordinance forbidding anyone to carry a sword unless they had produced their titles of nobility before the registrar. The simpleton ignored the fact that everyone here was a nobleman; those that already were, those that were about to be and those that could be. And now he shut himself up once more, grumbling and raging, in his Ile Dauphine. He was on the best of terms with the curé, M. le Maire, formerly vicar of St. Jacques le Boucher, and on the worst of terms with the successor of the mediocre Durigoin, a certain Raujon whose behavior was a public scandal.

This individual had made the acquaintance, either on board the vessel or before leaving France, of a woman who had first taken the name of Frojet, then that of Quantin, and who claimed to be married to a young man of quality, formerly captain in the Champagne regiment, Avril de la Varenne, who arrived in Louisiana the same time they did. It had been ascertained from various sources that this was false, and that she was a woman of loose morals who had been expelled from Angers and had retired to Nantes, where they tried to have her locked up.

The director-general, who refused to be enlightened on the matter, none the less dodged this woman within fifteen paces of his store, as soon as Sieur la Varenne had set out with the La Loire brothers to trade with

the Illinois. He had even gone so far as to entrust her with the sales on a five per cent. commission. The lady knowing nothing of arithmetic it was said that he devoted every evening, behind closed doors and windows, to teaching her the multiplication table. M. Le Maire had written to both of them in great indignation. The Company's representative replied in strong language, at the same time heaping insults, including the terms of knave and rogue, upon an officer, M. de Mandeville, who had also shared their voyage and who knew a great deal about their goings on.

Lamothe-Cadillac had at last found an occupation to his taste. This tale of intrigue excited and tormented him. The so-called Quantin or Frojet had filed a petition against the curé of Ile Dauphine, in which she maintained that she was the legal wife of La Varenne. But she was not, as was proved by the fact that the said La Varenne asked permission to remarry under the proper forms, the first union having been, by his own admission, only clandestine. «This colony has become a positive Babylon!» cried M. Le Maire, who himself was now at loggerheads also with the governor, whose whole thoughts were occupied with this scandalous lady of many names. She bore others beside, but was to be known to future generations by one only: Manon Lescaut.

While Lamothe-Cadillac crouched at his desk blackening endless sheets of paper and, unwittingly, preparing many surprises for future historians, Bienville spent his time repairing the stupidities of his superior. One of these, his latest, was notable. In returning from his visit to the Illinois this incredible man had the mad imprudence to refuse the calumet which the Natchez presented to him. This was equivalent to a declaration of war. Several Canadians descending the river paid with their lives for his impatient gesture, whereupon the governor ordered the king's

lieutenant to bring the natives to order. But he refused to give him the necessary troops.

Bienville, deprived of force, had to fall back upon strategy; the maniac of Ile Dauphine, always ready to criticize others, considered his conduct execrable. Once more Bienville, patient and coldly courageous, managed to save the situation. He obtained the punishment of the murderers, who were summarily executed, and the submission of all the tribes. He then decided to build a fort in the midst of these restless nations. The stronghold was to be called Rosalie, after Madame de Pontchartrain, whose husband was no longer in power. Bienville was as yet unaware of this detail, or of the fact that Louis XIV had died the year before and that the Duc d'Orleans had been appointed Regent of the realm, and that Councils had been substituted for the old Ministries. He learned this news all at once on his return in October 1716, after a long absence, to Mobile, where he found despatches from the Marine Council appointing him commander-in-chief pending the arrival of the new governor.

Crozat, losing patience with his protégé's methods had, in fact, asked for his replacement.

«I am of opinion,» he wrote at the foot of one of the last reports received from Ile Dauphine, «that all the disorder in the colony of which M. Lamothe-Cadillac complains is due to the bad administration of M. Lamothe-Cadillac himself.»

The Marine Council approved the financier's proposal. The commissioner also was changed. The country had need of wise men who were sincerely devoted to the public good, and not of crazy people continually quarrelling with one another. If differences should exist, declared the Council, let the authorities decide these among themselves in

a reasonable and dignified way. It did not escape the mind of either the Comte de Toulouse or the Marechal d'Estrées, the heads of this assembly, that Louisiana was worth more than gold or silver. It constituted an advance guard over the English colonies, which it was in a position to check and restrain if need arose. Since the loss of Acadia Louisiana alone could protect Canada and prevent her threatening neighbors from pushing as far as New Mexico and securing the advantages that such a conquest would bring them. It was therefore decided to send out four companies of infantry and to build certain indispensable forts. Crozat obtained on his side the authority to send out every year one hundred *faux sauniers*; i. e., convicted salt smugglers, and one hundred prostitutes from the public hospitals to augment the population.

In May 1717 the governor Lespinay, the commissioner general Hubert, soldiers and colonists were landed at Ile Dauphine by the *Ludlow* and the *Paon*.

To lessen the bitterness of Bienville, who had hoped to succeed Lamothe-Cadillac, his Majesty made him landed proprietor of the island of La Corné, near the mouth of the Mobile River, and gave him the Cross of St. Louis which he had more than once requested, not through vanity but in the general interest. The natives had often expressed surprise that he did not possess this distinction, already accorded to officers below him in rank. It was evident that the government was taking steps to satisfy the various desires of the Le Moyne brothers. Serigny would continue to sound the coasts, Chateauguay was made commander of Mobile, and the three brothers were finally rid of their terrible enemy the *curé de Vente*.

But dissension broke out anew between everyone. Lespinay rapidly made himself un-

popular by forbidding the sale of brandy, and the savages called him a mangy dog. Hubert could not stand Bienville, whom he accused of being paid by the Spanish to wreck the best enterprises of the colony. Bienville was in total disagreement with both governor and commissioner. Confusion and disorder reigned. Owing to lack of funds it was impossible to construct the proposed posts. They only built one — Fort Toulouse — in the Alibamu territory. The arrival of the *Dauphine* and of the *Neptune*, a small ship intended to remain in the colony; met with a bad reception. The prostitutes and the salt smugglers did not impress anyone as very desirable reinforcements.

Meanwhile Crozat, whom the Chamber of Justice established under the Regency had taxed at 6,600,000 *livres*, and to whom Louisiana had already cost what he considered enormous sums, confessed that he was unable to sustain such an onerous enterprise any longer, and remitted his privilege to the king.

The Marine Council did not insist. Someone had already projected taking over the colony and creating, for its exploitation, a powerful company which would be the keystone of the vast financial edifice with which he dreamed of endowing France,

This man, said to be a genius, was a Scotchman of the name of John Law, at that moment the subject of much discussion in the capital.

Lespinay left on the morrow after having, in accordance with his instructions, formally resigned the governorship to Bienville.

That evening the grandson of the Dieppe tavern-keeper walked alone on the shore near Mobile. Fatigue had altered his appearance; he looked now double his age. But his

eye still kept its old fire. The satisfaction of knowing himself once more master of the colony gave him renewed strength.

Yonder, invisible in the distance, flowed the majestic river whose name all Paris, all France, even the whole of Europe, would be repeating tomorrow with ecstasy.

Who among these new order of Mississippians would deign to remember gentle Father Marquette, his fine feathered calumet in hand, gliding down the current with Jolliet in their birch-bark canoe; Cavelier de la Salle, headstrong and untiring, on his restless marches; Iberville, calm and wise, or the young Bienville of bygone days exploring the rivers so joyously, paddle in hand?

Of what was the re-appointed governor dreaming, on his solitary walk? Of Mademoiselle Lamothe-Cadillac, whom he would have married but for her terrible father? Or perhaps of the new perruque which was to be brought him by the next ship from France? His present one was far too large. In Paris, where he had not set foot for thirty years, they were wearing them much shorter. He had appeared ridiculous beside the naval officers who came to fetch Lespinay. So, *ma foi*, he had ordered one for himself. One must follow the fashion!

The sky was full of rose-colored clouds. It must be getting late. He looked at the time by his big watch and hastened his steps toward his habitation, as it was called here. And the name would survive. The successor of that devil De Vente often dropped in to share his soup with him, and this very evening he had invited to dinner the curé of Mobile.

LAW

In August 1717 when Law received the



letters patent authorizing him to found the West India Company with the principal object of exploiting Louisiana, the General Bank in Paris, under his direction, had already been established eighteen months, and its notes were beginning to have wide circulation among the public.

Law was then forty-six years old, and still extraordinarily handsome. Before coming to Paris, and making his success there, for even his adversaries admitted that nothing could be of greater public usefulness than his banking house, he had led an adventurous existence throughout Europe.

Coming from a wealthy family — his father was a money-changer in Edinburgh — he went to London when he was twenty. There he frequented the clubs and gaming-houses of St. James's, dividing his time between gallantry and cards. A born mathematician, he was convinced — and proved his theory later on, at least by example — that gambling was an actual science and that one should win with certainty. All that was necessary was a knowledge of the mysterious laws which rule the game and which the ignorant term «luck». He ruined himself in the research. But no sooner had he been thus plucked than he immediately ceased to lose and to a degree that seemed almost miraculous.

His eager and brilliant mind was next attracted to the Bank of England, then about to be formed, and the topic of all serious conversation at the moment. He studied the question, and falling in with the current trend developed a passion for political arithmetic, reading Locke and Petty. Nor did he hesitate to criticize the decisions that were taken; modesty was not then nor at any time his strong point.

An unfortunate incident — he happened

to kill a prominent gentleman in a duel — brought him to prison and he was condemned to death. But a certain lady of rank who had great influential power and was well disposed towards him arranged to have his cell door opened one evening. He fled to Amsterdam, where the British Resident had received orders to employ him in his office and keep him under surveillance. While in this city Law took the opportunity of studying the operations of the famous bank of Amsterdam. This was a permanent cash deposit for those merchants obliged to put their money in and leave it there, because drafts and wholesale contracts above a certain sum were payable only in bank money, that is to say, by a simple transfer from the account of the creditor to that of the debtor.

Law asked himself the question to which no author had been able to give a definite reply:

«Does the bank, as is believed here as an article of faith, keep the moneys entrusted to it? For each florin that circulates in bank money is there a corresponding florin in gold or silver locked in its treasury? Or does it employ these funds to draw profits considerably larger than those brought in by the mere rental of its premises?»

The second opinion seemed the most probable. The Scotchman, who had the gambler's temperament, inclined to bold solutions, accepted it as the true one. Had he found the secret of the Bank? He had in any case discovered the essential part played by confidence in financial affairs. If he was still very far from defining a theory, it was clear upon what base that theory would be founded.

Some unfortunate speculations procured him the means of leaving Holland, where he had lived nearly four years deprived of the

gallantries so much to his taste. He went first of all in search of pleasure to Venice, to pass the carnival. There he played for enormous stakes, and naturally won. He also studied the operations of the *Banco del Giro* and the national methods of commerce. After this he travelled all through Italy. Combining enjoyment with business he visited houses of pleasure and gambling dens, studied the banks and Bourses. When at the close of the year 1700 he returned to Edinburgh his head was full of ideas which only needed putting in order.

His native land was in the throes of a very severe financial and economic crisis. Money had disappeared, factories were closed and poverty was everywhere abundant. He offered himself as a universal savior, and with this idea published a work entitled: «Money and Trade Considered». In it he gave wise advice to his fellow-countrymen and demonstrated the value of his first invention, which he discreetly qualified as marvelous: the Land-Bank. The theorist was born.

«What is the piece of money you hold in your hand?» he asked. «It consists of metal and an imprint. What do you want to obtain? Specie. I cannot create metal but I can multiply the imprint on paper. Nothing prevents me, for it is the imprint which is the true money.»

He based his security for the new money on land. He would have based it just as soon on the bottom of the sea. The dream would have been to base it on nothing at all. He thought of this but dared not write it, since mankind was not yet sufficiently enlightened. Make no mistake; he was not a madman. He realized that labor and commerce are values more real than metal and can serve equally well as security. But how could one determine the importance of the latter? He

soon formulated this principle, in which he remained unshaken: specie must always be equal to the demand. He now possessed the principal elements of what was one day to constitute the *system*.

The Scottish Parliament rejected his ingenious proposition. London welcomed it still more coldly. How stupid people were! He went to the continent and in 1708 arrived in Paris. France had no conception either of credit or exchange. This ignorance, above all during the wars that were being carried on in foreign countries, cost the Treasury an enormous amount. Law undertook to correct these errors and to fill the empty coffers. The ministers listened to this unknown chatter-box who vaunted the «true principles» of which he claimed to be the unique possessor. They were attracted by this charlatan side of his character but the solid basis of his discourse escaped them entirely. The lieutenant of police ended by enjoining the traveller to leave the realm within twenty-four hours on the pretext that he knew too much about the games of chance that he had introduced to the capital. Chance! Law shrugged his shoulders and hastened to embark at Le Havre.

During seven years he wandered here and there. He was seen in Italy, in Germany. He showed himself at Vienna. By this time all Europe knew this attractive person who travelled with his wife and two children, lived in style and continually revolved the same hobby in his mind. Everywhere he lived by gambling; everywhere he offered his services and everywhere he was politely refused. Indefatigable, obstinate, sure of himself, his talent and his genius, cursing circumstances or the incorrigible stupidity of the human race; too proud on the one hand for discouragement and still sincerely convinced that the country which should decide to welcome him would speedily become, thanks to him, the most glorious, the richest and happiest in

the world, he turned and re-turned his system, developed and perfected it. The future bank would be doubled by a powerful company capable of monopolizing the entire commerce of the nation for the benefit of the monarch and to the advantage of the private individual. His ideas were definitely focussed. He itched more and more for action.

At the close of the reign of Louis XIV France was financially at its last gasp. Full of hope, Law hastened to the scene, and miracle! being ready to clutch at any straw they accepted his services. Mad with joy he dashed to Genoa, then to London, and when he returned, having conciliated himself with those who were informed of certain particulars of his secret, his Majesty was at the point of death and he found himself once more set aside. All the same he decided to stay.

The Duc d'Orleans, his patron, had been appointed Regent of the Realm, and he advised him to wait. Wait! Law pressed him, fretted, and presented to the Council of Finance, of which the Duc de Noailles was president, his project for a Royal Bank which should introduce, with the utmost prudence, the use of bank notes, hitherto unknown in France. The proposition was rejected by a majority of voices.

The Scotchman was not discouraged. He continued to move heaven and earth and after six months gained his end. On May 2, 1716, he was permitted to found at his own expense a bank similar to the other, but which was to be a general bank only. Honestly and capably conducted, it gave astonishing results in a very short time. It only remained for the financier to maintain the credit he had created. The West India Company would, according to him fulfill this need. He intended in a manner of speaking, to bring the entire country into it. His capital, for he had large ideas, was fixed at one hundred millions, di-

vided into shares of five hundred *livres*, which were the first bearer certificates circulated in

It was here that the Duc de Noailles lay in wait for him. This nobleman cared nothing either for Louisiana or for trade. He was encumbered with a gigantic mass of worthless paper issued under the preceding reign, and of which he sought desperately to get rid. He therefore insisted that the new shares should be entirely subscribed in State notes. Now these were fetching only seventy per cent of their face value. The capital then would represent only thirty million. Nor was this enough. The president of the Council of Finance further required that the said State notes be annulled by the Treasury and converted into public funds at four per cent. The Company would in the long run possess only the over-due dividends, the subsequent ones being payable to the shareholders. Law wanted a hundred millions; in all they only accorded him four. He protested, begged, threatened to renounce his scheme. His reasoning was correct and he here revealed himself as the impeccable financier that he was at heart. He gave in, however. The fact was that his easy gambler's spirit, his boundless pride and over-blind confidence in his own genius spoiled his real qualities. The affair began badly.

In the beginning of 1718 Law won a moral victory of which the consequences were however disastrous. The Regent suppressed the Council of Finance and replaced it by a minister, d'Argenson, who was reputedly pliant. No sooner was this person in office than he hastened to ally himself secretly with the Scotchman's most formidable adversaries, the brothers Paris, to whom he accorded the lease of the revenues, or *Farmers General*, which these gentlemen had the intention of exploiting by means of a company similar to the West India Company.

The public were bound to prefer it to the latter because the returns were surer than the problematic profits which they might draw from far-off Louisiana. But before the *anti-system*, as it was to be called, came into opposition with the *system*, Law received a second terrible blow. This time it did not come from the ignorantly envious. It was dealt by the Duc d'Orleans, his faithful patron.

France, anxious for peace, had allied herself with her ancient enemies England and Holland, with whom the Emperor soon joined. War broke out none the less. But it was between France and Spain. Philip V claimed, under the title of Duc d'Anjou, the succession to the throne in case of the death of young Louis XV, and his ambassador Cellamare was carrying on dangerous intrigues in Paris. The government resolved to expel this unscrupulous diplomat. It was not long before hostilities opened. Money was needed immediately. There was none. The Regent bethought himself of the General Bank, and proposed to its founder to make it royal beginning from January 1719. Law strove courageously to safeguard his creation. He knew that to deliver it into the hands of the prince, whose pliancy terrified him as much as the avidity of the Court, was to condemn it to certain ruin. He debated, turned a deaf ear. But how could he oppose a point-blank order from his Royal Highness? He gave in, with death in his heart. From that instant he was lost. Always the same, he tried notwithstanding, during two years, to succeed.

The hour of inflation had arrived; the *system* was in full swing. In May Law obtained possession of the greater part of the existing maritime companies and founded the great East India Company which was united with the Western Company. He already had the Tobacco Farm; he seized that of the superintendence of the Mint. In order to control the emission of paper money he

must have the control also of metal. He fought the *anti-system* which threatened him by boldly inflating current prices and even by misrepresenting his own financial statements. He overcame his adversaries definitely by snatching from them the *Farmers General*. He multiplied the shares and also the notes, he sought for new revenues. At a certain moment everything was concentrated in his hands. He seemed the reeking of France, gorged with fictitious riches. Was he inwardly as sure of himself as he appeared? He was, in any case, at the height of his glory. His enemies bowed before him, reduced to impotence. But others were preparing to arise who would overthrow his castle in Spain. These were first the speculators, whose greed could no longer be moderated, and later the investors, anxious to realize, who laid siege to his coffers.

The man was in that moment admirable. The apparently crazy measures which they dared to take were perfectly sensible. But they were too late to stem the danger. In trying to save what could still possibly be saved, they at the same time definitely destroyed the public confidence. The disaster loomed, grew, and the financier was borne down in the final crash. He was forced to capitulate, to resign and ultimately, in the last two days of 1720, to flee to Brussels. Law was in everything decidedly a pioneer. But he did not escape like a common fraudulent bankrupt. His pride forbade that. He had entered the realm wealthy; he left it poor and was to die destitute.

This formidable adventure had lasted just three years, from the foundation of the West India Company to Law's downfall. During those three years this indefatigable worker, who had committed unpardonable mistakes but who had also accomplished great things in every field of national activity, never for one day forgot to think of his be-



loved Louisiana. The colony owed him a great deal. He had many true ideas concerning it, though their execution was often faulty. He acted too quickly, and was moreover forced to do so. Circumstances were against him. To form any true judgment of his prodigious effort one must compare what others had accomplished with what he achieved in so short a space of time, and surrounded by a fantastic atmosphere of fever and nightmare. He sowed in the whirlwind. But all the grain was not lost. Some seeds quickened and bore fruit after him.

Of all the men who, under the old régime, were engaged in transforming this virgin soil into a true civilized country Law was perhaps, in his capacity as director of the Western Company and the Indian Company in turn, the one who did most to mould it.

#### THE FIRST GREAT COLONISATION

The charter obtained by the West India Company and later transferred to the Indian Company conceded the exclusive rights of trading in Louisiana and of the beaver-fur trade in Canada for twenty-five years. It also accorded to it in perpetuity the free possession, in all propriety and justice, of the coasts, ports and harbors composing the colony. It gave the Company ownership of the mines and authority to sell or transfer the lands of the concession. It relinquished to it the forts, stores, houses, guns, ships and other effects in the country belonging to the king and the ships and merchandise remitted to his Majesty by Crozat. It gave it the right to contract alliances, to make war or truce with the native tribes, to build forts, raise garrisons, and have recourse to arms in the defence of its complete liberty of commerce. The Company was to appoint the governors, general officers and officers of the troops nominally in the king's service, and the judges who would carry out in the colony the customs

of the jurisdiction of Paris. The Company had its own arms: a natural river couchant on a field of green and silver, leaning on a golden horn of plenty, the upper part of azure sown with golden *fleur-de-lys*, with a device also in gold, supported by two savages and a crown *tréflée*.

The Company was, in fact, a sort of merchant prince, taking entire place of the crown, to which it owed only fidelity and liege homage. Unity of command was thus realized, but it would be, alas! only in Paris.

Law, after having appointed Bienville governor general, had the less happy idea in the spring of 1718 of adding a council of administration, which comprised the two general managers, Hubert, former general commissioner, and de Larcebault, the special director of Ile Dauphine, Le Gac, the two new lieutenants of the king, Boisbriant and Chateauguay and the managers of the different stores.

The Scotchman was better inspired in first of all claiming the fur-trade of Canada and secondly in enforcing the return to the colony of the rich province of Illinois which had become temporarily detached.

The Jesuits had, in fact, met with masterly success among the Kaskaskias, who had now migrated to the shore of the Mississippi at the junction of the river bearing their name. These savages had become very hard-working and adroit in the cultivation of the soil, which they worked with plows, although these had not yet been seen in the lower regions of the river. The corn they harvested was as fine as that of France; they had horses, cattle and poultry. They were soon to have a fine church and a mill. Their wives made dresses from the dyed wool of their cattle which equalled the robes of the French ladies.

It is curious to note that while Law laid great stress on the mines in his prospectus, so as to attract his clientele, his real intention was to make Louisiana a colony of settlement and cultivation. He had very sane ideas on the subject of tobacco, indigo, silk-worms and — what was then a novelty — cotton.

He also busied himself in accumulating a considerable number of vessels. His Company ended by possessing a hundred and sixty-five ships, transports and sloops of war, without counting the frigates and brigantines. He seemed at one moment to have carried off the entire merchant fleet of France and to have emptied all the arsenals of the realm to arm them, the seas being at that time very unsafe.

This naval material was on the whole mediocre. Since Colbert's day there had been little progress in the art of ship-building. The vessels were of small tonnage, badly fitted out, insufficient both in speed and safety. Many were lost on the way; some foundered, others were continually being laid up for repairs.

Another difficulty was in finding competent officers. Though the red officers of the Royal Navy were wrong in showing their extreme contempt for the blue officers of the Indian Company, who were often excellent men, there were nevertheless among the latter several captains who, having no experience in navigation, lost their bearings and displayed a culpable incapacity.

The first sailings were from La Rochelle, others from Le Havre. But Lorient, or rather Port-Louis, situated at one league from this city tended, from 1719, to become the Company's sole port in France. The *Comte de Toulouse*, the *Rénomée*, the *Duchess de Noailles*, the *Badine*, the *Marie*, the *Dromé-*

*daire*, the *Eléphant*, the *Chameau*, the *Baleine*, the *Gironde*, the *Seine*, the *Loire*, the *Deux Frères*, and the *Vénus* were consigned especially to the Louisiana service.

Law was obliged by the terms of his charter to import during the period of his concession 6,000 white people and 3,000 negroes into the colony. He planned to transport many more, and in less time. A foreigner, he had no idea of the extreme reluctance of the French toward emigration. In vain did the journalists in his pay sing the praises of this enchanted land where the crops brought forth a hundredfold, this new Eldorado rich in mines of gold, silver, copper and lead, where was found also a precious rock from which the savages detached certain green stones of extreme hardness and brilliancy that resembled emeralds. Law insisted. He ransacked the work of father Hennepin for false information. He distributed among the mob prints specially designed to seduce naïve imaginations. In the midst of a marvellous landscape modelled on the earthly paradise of the popular holy tales clean neat Indians knelt at the feet of enchanted Frenchmen. The squaws, for the benefit of the younger men, had languorous eyes and, since everyone must be satisfied, the pious-minded were shown pictures of savages receiving baptism. The Scotchman even invented the legend that ten thousand Natchez women were already employed in weaving silk in one enormous factory.

Someone, indignant at these lies, rose up against him. This was Lamothe-Cadillac, now retired to Paris but still increasingly enraged against this land of misery. His Royal Highness hurried the disturber and his son to the Bastille. And they again began offering concessions to everyone, noblemen, workmen and artisans. It was no use promising prospective emigrants that they would furnish them with horses, oxen, cows, pigs,

sheep and hens, with furniture and household utensils; useless to vaunt the eight hundred beautiful houses in New Orleans, existent only on paper: No one came forward. Were there any who dreaded the voyage? Let them reassure themselves. The food on the Company's ships was of the best, and lodging spacious and the life on board a round of ease and pleasure.

At the end of 1717 the elder of the Paris brothers, financiers, forced by the Regent, was the first to send some men to Louisiana. In the month of May following three hundred grantees risked themselves on the adventure. On November 18, 1718 the *Comte de Toulouse*, commanded by the Chevalier de Grioux, set sail with another hundred colonists. These contingents, compared with previous embarkations, marked a considerable progress. But the Scotchman considered them as trifling. He was in a hurry. He wanted thousands of settlers. He would get them by fair means or foul: It was easy enough provided one was not too particular about the choice of passengers.

He had been asked for brides. He produced them immediately by appropriating a convy of female convicts destined for Guiana. The contingent comprised — beyond such small-fry as a few drunkards, confirmed blasphemers, dangerous intriguers and procuresses — chiefly murderesses, prostitutes, thieves, knife experts, and female criminals branded on the shoulder with the *fleur-de-lys*, associates of coiners or of the bands of brigands infesting the forest of St. Germain. The herd screamed, scratched the faces of the soldiers in charge of them and escaped among the fields along the way. Law searched the jails for others. At St. Martin-des-Champs he married male and female prisoners to one another and despatched them in chains to the port. Among the lot there might be some who would mend their ways!

In the beginning of the *system* he had obtained the passing of a new order by which lackeys were obliged to receive a certificate from their master on the day of quitting his service and to find another position within the four following days, failing which they would be considered as vagrants under the law and were liable to be transported to the Mississippi. An edict authorized the Courts of Justice to pronounce the same sentence against vagabonds, those previously condemned to the galleys who had violated their ban and against the newly condemned also. The North and the East were infested with multitudes of beggars. Send them out immediately! Bicêtre was in turn emptied of its charming pensioners. This time the ball was set rolling. Parents generously offered incorrigible children. A libertine had killed his mother. Send him out to the Mississippi! A day-laborer of port St. Paul has a dissolute daughter; an honest bourgeoise widow has another who roves the country with the first comer. Dry your tears, good people; they shall both be conducted immediately to Lorient. A shopkeeper's wife complains of her rival, a former maid-servant who incites her husband to beat her until she is black and blue. Thanks to this beneficent Louisiana her skin can now regain its natural color.

Do you know of any real scoundrels, or persons of admittedly scandalous life, master thieves, rascals, crooks, pickpockets, notable infidels or declared sodomites? Write to the lieutenant of police. The worse their record the more certain will your protégés be of going on a trip to the Mississippi.

The Bishop of Beauvais recommended his own valet, a frank rogue. Gentlemen's sons who would have been sent to the Bastille or to Port L'Evêque would establish pleasant relations during the voyage with a barber convicted of manslaughter or a murderer for some reason commuted.

In 1720 the movement assumed formidable proportions. There were loosed on the trail certain military nicknamed by the crowd «the Mississippi bandits». Numerous, well-armed and fierce of aspect, they gathered in anyone they found wandering the streets of Paris. Their heavy hands fell at hazard. They would seize the son of some wealthy grocer in the Rue St. Honoré, heedless of his shrieks, or the daughter of a lieutenant of the watch, despite her father's protests. There were those who approved their easy manners. Pleasant and accommodating providing they were well enough rewarded for the job, they would operate in favor of ladies who were tired of their husbands or seducers who dreaded the revenge of some shp-girl. There were cases in which persons of high rank, including even a famous minister, had recourse to their assistance.

Who was the powerful person that wanted to get rid of the and-daughter of Baron, the famous pupil of [redacted], who was seized one day by the guard. This young queen of beauty, who on her return to Paris became a celebrated comedy actress, remained only a short time in Louisiana. Had he had a virtuous wife the good cookshop keeper Quoniam would never have known the glory of being commemorated in song.

*O vous tous messieurs les maris  
Si vos femmes ont des favoris,  
Ne vous mettez martel en tête;  
Vous auriez fort mècheante fête.  
Si vous vous en fâchez tant pis;  
• Vous irez à Mississippi!*

These arbitrary arrests aroused such indignation among the public that the Regent decided to suspend them, to the great satisfaction of Bienville, more and more hampered by these «King's exiles» unfitted for any useful work. The colonists on their side complained bitterly of the collections of prosti-

tutes, infected with disease, sent out to them as wives. One settler wrote flippantly to the Naval Council that he lacked a «certain commodity», but would manage to do without it until the Company should send them young women who had at least some appearance of virtue. They deigned to listen to this advice, and the *Baleine* brought to Louisiana eighty-eight honest and well-behaved orphans, each furnished with a trousseau packed in a little trunk, for which reason they became known as «*les demoiselles aux cassettes*». This merchandise did not lack bidders. A competent midwife, Mme. Doville, accompanied the contingent. They anticipated that she would have more work than the first matron sent to Biloxi, the «*Sans Regret*». Births were in fact very few. Some even naïvely asked whether the climate did not make one sterile. The more observing traced the cause to the excesses indulged in by the women sent out before, the greater number of whom had died of scurvy.

Law's dream would have been to have only fine people as colonists. In 1718 he had witnessed the hopeful departure of an honest and understanding man like M. Dubuisson, manager of the concession of Paris-Duverney, who took with him his brother, his two sisters and twenty-five employees; the sieurs Picart and Tisserand, partners of La Houssaye, the brothers Delaire, charged with the interest of M. de Moevre, the messieurs Brossard, merchants from Lyon who intended to develop their own lands themselves; Bénard de la Harpe, a bold and enterprising native of the Falkland Isles, Legros and Le Page of Pratz, who, having taken the enthusiastic descriptions in the *Mercure* seriously, declared themselves delighted at the prospect of living in this fabulous city of New Orleans.

But after this first exodus the enthusiasm decreased, then almost died out. The only person responsible for this was undoubt-



edly. Law himself. The exaggerated rise of the shares destroyed the effect of his extravagant advertising. Why cross the sea to acquire wealth when one could get rich with just as much certainty, and with less danger and fatigue, simply by speculating in Rue Quincampoix?

A master stroke was needed. His ingenious mind realized this, and he made himself a grantee in May 1719. He apportioned himself three properties; the first and the most important in Arkansas, at the junction of this river with the Mississippi, the second one at the *détour des Anglais* and the last near Biloxi. He engaged his friends and those under obligation to him to follow his example, promised to raise the properties to duchies, comtes and marquisates. And, this time, numerous societies were formed having at their head authentic noblemen, men of position and several of the principal speculators. There were among others the ducs de Guiche and de Charost, the Marquis d'Ansfeld, d'Ancenis and de Mézières, the Comte d'Artagnan and the Comte de Belle-Isle; M. de Villemont, de Guenatte, de Préfontaine and du Breuil, the director d'Artignette, the Secretary of State for war, Le Blanc, and Madame de Chaumont, a stout lady from the Meuse who owned many shares in the Company. A prominent foreigner figured also among them: Jean Daniel Kolly, former financial councillor to the Elector of Bavaria, whom the Scotchman had met some time before in the course of his travels and who had rejoined him in Paris.

The greater number of these people did not go themselves to Louisiana. But they each sent fifty to two hundred dependants under the orders of an intendant. Law sent about fifteen hundred Germans out to his own estates.

In 1717 Purry, a citizen of Neufchatel, had offered the Regent to send out Swiss,

Rhinelanders, Wurtembergians, people from Souabe and also Alsations, all of the catholic religion, to the colony. The proposition had been at the time rejected. Law, who in 1718 had sent for this active individual, took up the idea again on his own account. Propagandist pamphlets printed at Leipsic and broadcast by the bale extolled the charms of fair Louisiana to the German population. The results were wonderful. Purry enrolled his recruits by entire parishes at a time, mayor and provost included.

The Jew Elias Stultheus was in charge of the first convoy and Karl Frederic, so-called Chevalier of Arensborg, of the second. This worthy son of the Baltic preferred to exile himself rather than submit to the muscovite tyranny of Pierre-le-Grand, conqueror of his fatherland. By a singular coincidence the patriot had in his convoy a lady suspected of being a princess, who soon passed herself off as the actual daughter-in-law of the Czar, Charlotte de Wolfenbuttel, the unhappy spouse of Alexis, deceased in 1715. The tale seemed a little far-fetched. She found however some persons later on who believed her, among them the Empress Marie-Therèse and the Maréchal de Saxe. The mysterious adventuress, who was married in Louisiana to a Chevalier d'Auban and later at Ile Bourbon to Urbain de Maldagne, a major, died at Vitry near Paris in 1771, twice widowed. The Austrian Ambassador attended her funeral, at which Abbé Sauvestre, the Court chaplain, officiated by order of the king. Some ten years later an inquisitive person examined the parish records and read that the lady was buried under the name of Dortie Marie Elisabeth Danielson. But no one will ever know who she really was.

1719! 1720! Famous and memorable years. The *system* was nearing its downfall. An enormous motley crowd pressed solidly towards the ports. The highways were

blocked with carriages piled with luggage; footmen ran behind and the drivers whipped their horses. The quays of La Rochelle and Port Louis were black with people looking for one another and asking questions. Has everyone his papers? They crowded round the offices, signing invoices. The directors lost their heads, the employees were insolent, the captains spat and grumbled. One wanted provisions, another cannon balls, for the pirates were always on the watch. They hastily nailed missing planks to the half-tottering ships. They must set sail, set sail at once. The chaloupes were assaulted by a crazed mob. «And my baggage?» someone cries. «Get along! Get along!» shout the sailors, and punctuate their orders with blows of their fists. As if anyone had time for these idle questions! The top-gallant sails are already hoisted.

The vessels were filled to bursting. Certain privileged persons lodged three or four together in tiny cabins with a loophole for window. But the mass of passengers were huddled in the *Saint-Barbe* where were carried the cartridges and implements of artillery. There they stifled. The greater part of them therefore slept on deck or on the poop, at the mercy of wind and rain, their head thrust into a laundry basket. If the peevish dared complain to the officers, who were by nature sombre and given to outbreaks of temper, spoke rarely and never enunciated their words like ordinary men, the captain would call the grumblers together and propose a solution: he would throw half the emigrants into the sea and then the rest would have more room for themselves!

Then, his pipe between his teeth, he would return calmly to the chart-room on the second floor of the poop-castle, just above the big room where meals were served.

The food was wretched and scanty. One breakfasted on a scrap of biscuit with Dutch cheese, followed by a tot of brandy. For dinner and supper there was given a plate of soup, badly made and slopping over the tablecloth, and four or five spoonfuls of some horrible mess of the consistency of mortar. Were these the delightful repasts advertised in the prospectus!

The life on board, despite these same promises, was far from amusing. If anything, it resembled that of a seminary! There were prayers, in which all the passengers joined, at four and at eight in the morning, at five and at eight o'clock at night. On feast-days there was a procession around the capstan. Those whose head and stomach allowed them — for the vessel tossed incessantly — might walk on the quarterdeck. If there were many of the crew disabled by sickness the passengers did their work, climbing the rigging in terror.

To make matters pleasanter the wind often failed. Then the vessel would lie for a week at a time motionless in mid-ocean. If a pirate sail appeared everyone took up arms, and even the women, with the exception of the nuns, dressed themselves as men so that the combatants might appear as numerous as possible. Once a French corsair attacked a transport carrying sixty prospective brides. Here was a harvest for the pirates! One damsel only, Lucretia, resisted them with a pistol in either hand. If one of the brutes touched her she threatened to kill him and herself too!

Such encounters were quite frequent; shipwrecks were not uncommon; storms an everyday occurrence. The passengers had but one desire: land! land! They had heard enough of the famous delights of travel. They saw nothing of interest beyond an occasional flying-fish. Water, water, nothing

but water! With what joy they hailed the first faint line of the coast! It lay flat and white under a fiery sky, with here and there a tree in the distance.

The crowd jostled on the quarter-deck, and one or two among them felt already a faint suspicion. Where was this New Orleans? And the famous Mississippi? It would be many days before they gazed on its majestic bosom! The captain yelled through his speaking-trumpet, the officers were nervous; the sailors juggled with the sails. The scene of that landing would remain long in their memory.

The Company had excellent ideas. It wanted the colonists to settle in the fertile districts near the Mississippi. Before leaving they received the best of advice. They were recommended to cultivate tobacco, indigo, rice and maize, to raise silk-worms, following the example of M. Hubert, the former general commissioner. But the actual foundation for all these industries, that is to say a good port, was lacking.

Vessels arriving from France were unable to ascend the river on account of the bar. Emigrants were therefore landed at Ile Dauphine and sent to their concessions by way of Lake Pontchartrain, Lake Maurepas and the smaller rivers. It was here that the difficulties began, only to grow worse and worse with the increasing numbers of new arrivals. There were neither boats nor the workmen to build them; even the nails were lacking.

M. Dubuisson, the intendant of Paris-Duverney, and his people had no difficulty in being transported to Bayagoulas, where they immediately set about the planting of mulberry trees. But when the second contingent arrived, including M. Brössard of Lyon, the Delaire brothers, Picart, the Tisserands,

Legros, Bénard de la Harpe, Le Page of Pratz, with all their retinue and others besides, disorder began to spread. Contrary to the formal clause in their contract which provided that they should not remain more than four days at the landing station, they were kept for four months on Ile Dauphine, lodged in huts made of a few stones stuck in the earth and roofed over with cane. Here they were sheltered from the rain, but not from the wind. There were gaps everywhere between the stones, so that the huts were more like cages. Meanwhile seven or eight incompetent carpenters began the hasty construction of boats.

It was not until January 1719 that Le Page of Pratz finally gazed on the New Orleans of his dreams. Instead of the five parishes described by the *Mercur* he saw only one miserable hovel, set in the middle of a badly cleared space of ground. This disillusionment slightly affected his good spirits.

Bénard de la Harpe for his part made up his mind courageously to explore the Red River and try to establish commercial relations with the Spanish. The bold Falklander followed the tracks of Juchereau de St. Denis, now in command of the old fort at Biloxi, where he was reposing from his latest adventures. True to his promise, he had returned to Mexico and had been again imprisoned. But this time they gave him back his merchandise, which he had sold at a good price. He had also stayed at the Preside du Nord where he spent a marvellous year hidden in Dona Maria's apartment and only venturing out at night to walk in the secluded alleys of the garden. The viceroy had in fact given an order for his arrest. Someone must have gossiped, for horsemen suddenly appeared, surrounded the house and questioned the servants. Don Pedro de Velezca, whose position was an embarrassing one, smuggled his son-in-law out one night. And now St. Denis

was again separated from his wife, who was for the second time pregnant.

Bénard de la Harpe reached the Natchitoches and from there made his way towards the Nassonites in great haste, having heard that the governor of Texas, Don Martin de Alacorne, intended to establish a post there. He preceded the Spaniard, and found a fertile country producing maize, beans, corn, very excellent tobacco and cotton finer than that of the Levant. Grapes were abundant, and he made several casks of good wine. He had the polite inspiration of paying his addresses to Don Martin de Alacorne, who had formerly been annoyed that St. Denis appeared to ignore his existence. The governor, none the less graciously, intimated an order to the Frenchman to leave, maintaining that this territory belonged to his Catholic Majesty. Bénard de la Harpe retained his calmness, replying that M. de la Salle had taken possession of the country in 1684, and that in any case all territories watered by the tributaries of the Mississippi belonged to Louisiana. The hardy Falklander advanced still further across the vast plains which led to outermost spurs of the Rocky Mountains, then entirely unknown. On his way he discovered some mines of pit-coal, made friends with the savages, and at Touacaras planted a stake with the arms of the King and the Company. The declaration of war with Spain decided him to return to New Orleans in the beginning of 1720.

During this same year, 1719, the Canadian officer Tisé, armed with the only compass of the colony, bought by Bienville from Le Page of Pratz, ascended the Mississippi, visited the brutal Pawnees, managed to establish an alliance with them, and would have made his way still further west as far as the Padoucas, in the neighborhood of the Rocky Mountains, had not his new friends obliged him in a kindly way to abandon his project. He then went to Illinois, recently placed un-

der the command of Boisbriant. The king's lieutenant had brought from France, where he recently passed several months, mining engineers deputed to discover lead and silver mines, and had already established the fort of Chartres near Kaskaskia, on the left bank of the Mississippi.

Bénard de la Harpe and the accommodating Le Page of Pratz, imitating such veterans as Tisé and Boisbriant, kept up their courage. The Brossards from Lyon, the two Tisserands and the Delaires showed less enthusiasm. It is true that the two latter brothers had very bad luck. At Ile Dauphine the Company's agents, who were a rough, stupid and thoroughly rascally lot, had begun by corrupting their employees, and afterwards stole their entire provision of flour. When after many difficulties they finally reached their concession the Delaires had to wait another ten months for the delivery of their belongings, which finally arrived damaged. In the end they gave up in disgust.

The disorder was partly the fault of Bienville, who was no born organizer, but chiefly that of the Company. The latter increased the numbers of colonists sent out but forgot to send the food necessary for their subsistence at a time when the colony was still unable to produce it in sufficient quantity. The situation went from bad to worse. There were terrible scenes. The honest immigrants had to look on in anger while their provisions were seized and the stores emptied for the sole benefit of the gang of criminals and good-for-nothings «exiled by order of the King», usually joined at such times by the soldiers themselves, who, recruited chiefly from among the old deserters of the realm, were of the worst morale. The governor, fearing riots and pillaging, crushed the more dangerous characters first. He was perhaps right. But this did not reawake the enthusiasm of those remaining.



The Company was destined to commit another and very serious mistake. When the channel of Ile Dauphine became impassable from accumulation of sand it was decided from Paris to make Biloxi the landing-station. Bienville opposed this deplorable choice with all his efforts, but in vain. Vessels could not approach within a hundred leagues! Before reaching the coast passengers and goods had to be trans-shipped into smaller and smaller boats. Quite often even the most experienced pilots would upset a short distance from the shore.

It was a frightful spot; an arid sandy beach surrounded by evil-smelling marshes. The new arrivals, badly lodged or often with no shelter at all, were left here for weeks and months, since the *voitures*, as the boats were called, were still few and far between. There was a continual state of famine. The immigrants died, fell ill, or languished in a fatal inaction.

Complaints grew. The Regent blamed Bienville and proposed that he be replaced. Law, who had never seen the governor and was destined never to see him, defended him vehemently. This officer had at least the merit of being able to maintain peace with the savages. His Royal Highness consented to excuse him. They changed the agents, whose ill-will had probably paralysed his efforts, and gave him the assistance of an intelligent intendant, the general commissioner Duvergier. They had already sent him an able chief engineer, Le Blond de la Tour, and other engineers as well. Let Bienville co-operate with all these gentlemen and prove his ability, and he should be rewarded. The Regent still dangled the rank of brigadier and the broad ribbon of the Order of St. Louis, which was his ambition.

Action was decided upon. Biloxi was abandoned and in 1720, a New Biloxi rose

with amazing rapidity a few leagues further west, on dry healthy ground with a good water supply. It was marvellous to see these men, exhausted and without implements — those that they had in hand they had made themselves — clearing the land and erecting buildings. They constructed forges, brick-yards, barracks, store-houses, a hospital and a chapel; they marked out roads, made bridges. If only they had had provisions!

At the close of 1720 and in 1721 there were landed at New Biloxi, in the midst of an indescribable confusion, not only the negroes from Guinea, already numbering six hundred, but also the hundred men belonging to the Marquis d'Anceny, the forty-five of d'Artiguet, the seventy of Kolly, those of d'Artagnan, de Villemont, Le Blanc, the Marquis de Mezières and de Chaumont, M. du Breuil and his family and the Germans brought by the Jew Elias Stultheus, who arrived with one million in merchandise and a wheeled chair in which to visit his concessions. It was the first carriage ever seen in the country.

All these people, brought together by their future directors for the purpose of developing the country, by the D'umanoirs, the Epinays, the d'Artinquières, the Maries, the La Tours, were to be sent to Natchez, to Yazoo, to Baton Rouge, to Ecorces Blancs, to Cannes Brulées, to the Black River, to Illinois, to the Red River, to Taensas, to the Paskas Ogoulas. The poor wretches were not there yet. Where could one find the necessary boats? Stultheus demanded thirty for himself alone; another wanted ten. M. du Breuil would be contented with two or three. Bienville came and went in the midst of all these groups, keeping peace, giving orders and advice, amiable but slightly satirical at heart. He had never been in favor of either Biloxi or New Biloxi. For over three years it had been his desire that New Orleans should be at the same time the seat of government

and the port of the colony. His idea was the right one and he was later to put it into execution.

By this time Law had left France, from which he had fled on the order of the Regent.

It was the pseudo-chevalier d'Arensbourg, landing in June 1721 with the last

contingent of Germans, who brought this great news. By the efforts of the Scotchman nearly seven thousand five hundred people had been brought to Louisiana. A good third of these had doubtless either perished or returned. But when Law had first taken over the colony there had been only four hundred inhabitants, including the troops.

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