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The Founders of New France

By Harvey Wilson Compton

Superintendent of Toledo Public Schools 1886-1897—Died 1916

FIRST PRINTING

For more than two hundred and fifty years after the discovery of this continent, two ambitious and aggressive nations, the French and English, strove with each other for domination, influence, occupancy and ownership in the New World. There was something irreconcilable in the nature, claims and purposes of the two races, and the rivalry and hostility that had existed in Europe only found a new and wider arena in which to become renewed and intensified when the French and English colonists met in the New World.

It was long doubtful whether what is now Ohio would be peopled and governed by the Latin race, speaking the French language, or whether the sturdy Anglo-Saxon would predominate. It was foreseen by the most casual observer of national affairs, and long predicted by European statesmen that an inevitable and decisive conflict between the French and English would ultimately decide which race should rule over the vast area of the Mississippi Valley.

The claims of the Indians were practically disregarded. It was well known that these untutored denizens of the wilderness would eventually be swept away like chaff before the irresistible forces of the so called civilized world.

The English, for a century and a half, found sufficient territory for the founding and expansion of their colonies along the Atlantic slope from Maine to the Carolinas. But toward the middle of the eighteenth century they began to look wistfully across the mountains into the great valley stretching from the Alleghenies to the Rocky Mountains and from the inland seas of the north to the Gulf of Mexico. But, the plodding, home-loving agricultural Englishman found the vivacious and agile Gaul ahead of him and a chain of some sixty forts, with missions and trading posts, extending from Quebec to New Orleans.

FRENCH EXPLORATIONS

The story of French exploration and occupation in North America is one of the most interesting and dramatic known to history. It is elaborately and brilliantly told by Francis Parkman in his eleven volumes upon France in the New World.

As early as 1504, French fishermen, Normans and Bretons, began to penetrate the cold mists and gloomy bogs of Newfoundland waters. They flung their nets into the sea over the great banks and freighted their vessels with the abundant codfish for the French market. Their sailors told strange, weird stories and traditions of two islands north of Newfoundland haunted by demons who in horns, wigs and tails danced wildly about, filling the air with confused shrieks and murmurings.

JOHN VERRAZANO, THE FLORENTINE NAVIGATOR

In 1523, a Florentine navigator, or more accurately, a piratical cruiser by the name of John Verrazano, in the employ of France, set sail from Dieppe with four vessels to seek a westward passage to Cathay. Three of the vessels being driven back by storms, Verrazano arrived off the present site of Wilmington, North Carolina, with but one caravel, the "Dauphine," and thence sailed slowly northward along the rugged shores, trading with the Indians, occasionally kidnapping them and exploring coasts and harbors. Reaching Newfoundland his provisions failed and he sailed homeward to write for the French king the first description of the eastern Atlantic coast.

JACQUES CARTIER

In 1534, Jacques Cartier with a commission from Francis I, King of France, to explore the Western Continent, sailed from St. Malo, that "nurse of hardy mariners," steered across the Altantic to Newfoundland and to the shores of Anticosti Island. He then returned to France and, the following year, with three ships and a body of French adventurers, again entered the mouth of the St Lawrence and sailed slowly up that majestic stream and anchored before a cluster of wigwams which occupied the present site of the City of Quebec. This Indian village bore the name of Stadaconé and was ruled over by a chief called Donnacona. Cartier learned from the Indians of Stadaconé that a far greater town called Hachelaga, was situated upon the bank of the mighty river many days journey abovè. With a part of his crew Cartier sailed up the river to Hachelaga, situated upon the present site of Montreal, and was received with cheers of delight from the throngs of Indians who inhabited the village. They showered gifts of fish, corn, beans and other viands upon the marvelous voyagers who seemed to them rather gods than men. The Indians led Cartier to the top of the mountain in the rear of their village which he named **Mont Royal,** Montreal, whence the name of the great commercial city now built upon the site of the ancient Hachelaga. Cartier returned to Stadaconé, wintered there, and in the spring, after treacherously luring Donnacona and some of his chief men on board the vessels, sailed away with them to France.

CARTIER AND ROBERVAL

Cartier and Roberval made a third voyage in 1541 and attempted to plant a colony on the St. Lawrence at Cap Rouge a little way above Quebec. But the Indians now hostile and suspicious kept aloof. Homesickness and a vigorous climate broke the spirit of his men. Roberval, the commander of the enterprise, failing to come with supplies, Cartier abandoned his fort and returned to France.

Up to this time the French had made little headway in taking actual possession of any part of the North American Continent. But Cartier had explored the St. Lawrence to the first rapids, he had planted the cross, and raised the fleur de lis on the promontory of Quebec and taken possession by process verbal in the name of the king of France. He had fired the French heart with the spirit of discovery, had told marvelous tales of the teeming waters, boundless forests and savage inhabitants of the New World. As a result, merchant, soldier and priest, stirred by the spirit of gain or adventure, or by the desire of rescuing benighted souls from perdition, began to look with renewed interest toward the Continent beyond the sea.

SAMUEL DE CHAMPLAIN

But it was not until the coming of Champlain in 1608 that the French succeeded in making a permanent settlement. Samuel De Champlain was one of the two really great heroes of France in the New World. In any work which involves an account of the territory of the Northwest, his life and deeds deserve extended notice, for he was the father of Canada, the builder of France on the new continent. His dauntless bravery, his roving, adventurous spirit, combined with his religous zeal, his boundless ambition and his scientific curiosity led him through pathless, primeval forests, over the foaming rapids of unknown rivers, across stormy lakes and into the squalid wigwams of remote and savage tribes of red men.

Champlain was born at Brouage, France, in 1567. He was descended from a good family, his father being a captain of the royal navy. He was a devout Catholic and his religious faith and zeal were always prominent elements in his character.

CHAMPLAIN'S FIRST VOYAGE IN 1603

Before he sailed up the St. Lawrence for the first time in 1603, at the age of thirty-six, he was a well-known character in the court circles of France. He had fought under the banners of Henry of Navarre in Brittainy and his chivalrous bravery, his gentle bearing, his polite learning and his romantic love of science and adventure had made him a favorite about the royal palace. He had spent two years in command of a Spanish war ship in the West Indies, had traveled inland to the City of Mexico, had visited Panama and conceived the plan of a ship canal across the isthmus to connect the two oceans. Such a man was Champlain when he first came to the New World to explore the trackless wilds and build the gateway to the modern civilization of the Northwest, a man, young, ardent, brave, tender, an interesting compound of the medieval knight, the chivalrous noble, the zealous proselyte, the restless ambitious explorer and the man of science.

During his first voyage to America, he explored the St. Lawrence as far as the rapids above Montreal.

CHAMPLAIN'S SECOND VOYAGE IN 1604

During his second voyage Champlain spent four years in sailing about the coasts of Acadia and the Gulf of St. Lawrence, in surveying and sounding harbors, in constructing and helping to garrison feeble forts. The spring of 1608 found him again in Paris, but restless and dissatisfied. In the words of Parkman, "His thoughts turned westward. He was enamored of the New World whose rugged charms had seized his fancy and his heart; and as explorers of Arctic seas have pined in their repose for polar ice and snow, so did his restless thoughts revert to the fog wrapped coasts, the piny odors of forests, the noise of waters, the sharp and piercing sunlight, so dear to his remembrance. He longed to unveil the mysteries of that boundless wilderness and plant the Catholic faith and the power of France amid its ancient barbarism."

CHAMPLAIN'S THIRD VOYAGE IN 1608

Impelled by this longing he forsook the pavements of Paris, the chambers of the Louvre and the shades of Fontainebleau, and as commander of a little ship from Honfleur he crossed the wide expanse of ocean, sailed up the majestic bosom of the St. Lawrence, and in the midsummer of 1608, anchored before the scarped and frowning promontory of Quebec. The throngs of savages and the Stadeconé of Cartier's time, seventy years before, had totally disappeared. He ordered his axmen ashore and in a few days a strong wooden wall enclosing some rude buildings stood upon the strand between the height and the shore, and the gateway of France to the Mississippi was built. Here other ships and traders began to come, gardens and fields were cleared and storehouses built. Roving bands of Algonquin and Huron Indians, led by curiosity and the hope of barter, or impelled by starvation, began to flock to this rude beginning of Canada.

But gardening, building and fur trading were not consonant with the restless spirit of Champlain. He longed to penetrate the leafy and boundless wilderness that stretched away for unknown leagues, to mingle with the rush of rapids and the roar of cataracts, and perhaps to find, leading out of the dark forests, that mysterious waterway to China and the riches of the east. But a formidable obstacle barred his path.

CHAMPLAIN JOINS ALGONQUINS AND HURONS AGAINST IROQUOIS

He learned from the Algonquin and Huron tribes, living on the Ottawa river and beyond, that the Iroquois were their deadly enemies, that they guarded the St. Lawrence and carried cruel and unceasing war into the heart of the Canadian tribes. They besought Champlain to aid them against their ferocious enemies, the Iroquois, who dwelt on the other side of the St. Lawrence in north-central New York and who were composed of the five fierce confederated tribes, Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas and Senecas. In order to gain the grati-

tude and helpful alliance of the Canadian tribes in making his intended explorations, and perhaps led also by his love of adventure, Champlain consented to aid them in making war upon the Iroquois.

In the spring of 1609 the painted and yelping throng of savages gathered at Quebec for carrying war into the country of the Five Nations. Champlain embarked in a shallop with eleven Frenchmen, all clad in steel and armed with arquebuses, the carbine or musket of that day. The shallop spread its sails, the Indians plied their paddles and all swept upward against the current. They crossed the expansion of the St. Lawrence, called the Lake of St. Peter, passed through the winding channels leading to the mouth of the Riviere des Iroquois, now called the Richelieu, connecting Lake Champlain with the St. Lawrence Basin.

His Indian allies had told Champlain he could sail all the journey into the country of the Iroquois. After sailing some distance up the Richelieu he noticed that the hurrying waters were flecked with foam. He suspected the presence of rapids and disembarking with some of his men, they made their way by land through the tangled and boggy forest and soon found the whitened stream tumbling over the rocks and ledges and boiling around the trees and drift-wood of an impassable rapid. He returned and rebuked his allied warriors for their faithlessness. They had already quarreled among themselves and three-fourths of the Indians had paddled away homewards. But Champlain told them that he would still keep his pledge and aid them against the Iroquois. He embarked all of his men but two in the shallop and sent them back to Quebec.

CHAMPLAIN ON LAKE CHAMPLAIN

With about sixty Indians and his two Frenchmen Champlain led the way around the rapids, the warriors carrying their canoes upon their shoulders. They reembarked and swept up the smoother stream and into the beautiful lake which now bears the name of their intrepid leader. For the first two or three days they advanced boldly up the widening lake, passed the great green islands slumbering in the hazy air, the forest edged shores, dimly discernible hunting grounds of the Iroquois, stretching away on either hand. Afar on the left were the Green mountains, then as now, piled in cloud and blue haze, on the right the leafy wilderness of the Adirondacks.

The modern tourist cannot today sail through these enchanting scenes upon the deck of a steamer without gravely reflecting upon the historic import of that little flotilla of birch canoes filled with savage warriors and led by a paladin of France. For in the light of subsequent years we can plainly read how the fate of a nation and multitudes of human lives hung upon the incident of that seemingly insignificant enterprise.

Champlain and his allies now began to deem it unsafe to paddle up the lake in daytime, so they dragged their canoes into the forest, where safely embowered, they slept, lounged and smoked during the day and rowed onward toward the Iroquois during the night.

CHAMPLAIN DEFEATS THE IROQUOIS

About ten o'clock in the evening on the twenty-ninth of July, 1609, somewhere between Crown Point and Ticonderoga, Champlain and his warriors saw a fleet of canoes ahead of them. These canoes were filled with Mohawks who saw their foes at the same moment. A chorus of yells arose from both sides. The Iroquois rowed quickly ashore, not wishing to engage in battle on the lake, and the contest was deferred until morning by mutual agreement. The Iroquois spent the night in cutting down trees and building a barricade. Champlain with his Hurons and Algonquins passed the night on the lake, the Indians dancing and singing war songs and threatening and insulting their foes on shore.

At dawn the warriors upon the lake landed unopposed and the tall, strong warriors of the Iroquois, two hundred in number, marched out of their barricade and advanced in perfect order. Champlain's Indians terrified by the steady advance of their brave and cruel foes, began to shout for him and the two Frenchmen to come up and help them. Champlain ran forward, the ranks parted and he stood revealed to the astonished gaze of the Iroquois, a warrior clad in gleam-

ing steel, arquebuse in hand and with a plumed helmet on his head. Champlain had loaded his arquebuse with four balls. When he saw the Iroquois getting ready to shoot their arrows he took aim at one of their three chiefs, killed two of them and wounded the third. The Indians were struck dumb with amazement and fear at the sight of the glittering warrior, the awful report and the fall of their chiefs, but rallying continued to advance, when the two Frenchmen fired upon them from the woods, killing others. This threw them into a panic and the Iroquois fled in the wildest terror, the allies of Champlain pursuing them with exultant yells.

HATRED OF FRENCH BY FIVE NATIONS CONTINUES TWO CENTURIES

The rout and humiliation of the fiercest and bravest warriors of the New World was complete. The proud and invincible braves of the Five Nations had been terrified and put to flight by a handful of their foes. They cared not so much for the few warriors that had fallen as for the irredeemable stain upon their prowess and valor. This incident filled the Five Nations with an unappeasable hatred of the French. It inclined them to be allies and friends of the English. They barred the St. Lawrence, the Niagara and the southern shore of Lake Erie against the French and for one hundred and fifty years lost no opportunity to carry a storm of blood and fire to the very gates of Montreal and Quebec and to the remotest tribes and missions of Canada.

In June of the following year Champlain further intensified the hatred of the Iroquois for the French. He had met warriors of the Canadian tribes near the mouth of the Richelieu at an appointed rendezvous. In consideration of his aid against their enemies the Algonquins had promised to lead him through the northern forests to Hudson's Bay where he hoped to find the way to China and the riches of the Orient. The Hurons were to guide him to the great lakes and show him the rich copper mines along their shores. While waiting at the appointed place for all his warriors and guides to assemble, Champlain received word that a number of his Algonquins had surrounded in the forest nearby a party of Iroquois who were fighting savagely within a barricade. He rushed away to the scene with four Frenchmen and all the warriors of his camp. He found a war party of a hundred Iroquois within a circular breastwork of felled trees. The swarms of Algonquins had been repulsed by the brave and desperate warriors within the inclosure who were vastly outnumbered. The only hope of the Algonquins now lay with the Frenchmen who on their arrival were received with screams of delight. The Iroquois had not yet recovered from their terror of the year before and when they again beheld their awful and mysterious assailants clad in steel and armed with lightning their terror knew no bounds. The Frenchmen threw themselves into the fight, thrusting her guns hrough the branches of the barricade and firing upon the terrified wretches within. The allies of Champlain rushed upon the barricade with renewed courage and vigor, pulled away the trees of which the enclosure was made and hurled themselves upon the frenzied and despairing Iroquois whom they ruthlessly cut down. Only fifteen of the one hundred were left alive and these were reserved for the torture fires that were soon blazing along the shores. The student of history will not fail to see how the bitter hatred of the French thus engendered among the mighty warriors of the Five Nations affected the future exploration and occupation of the entire Mississippi Valley. The vigilant and vengeful Iroquois, armed later with muskets, steel knives and tomahawks by the Dutch traders of Albany practically barred the French missionaries and traders from all the region south of Lake Erie and confined their operations to the territory north of that lake and to the remote regions of lakes Huron, Superior and Michigan.

LAKE ERIE, THE LAST OF THE GREAT LAKES TO BE DISCOVERED AND EXPLORED

As a further result of Iroquois hostility to the French, Lake Erie was the last of the five great lakes to be discovered and explored, and French exploration and settlement of the Ohio region were so retarded that the English had time to people the Atlantic slope with eleven hundred thousand inhabitants, clear their farms, build their towns and become fully awake to the importance of laying claims to the great valley beyond the Alleghenies before the final bloody

contest for possession began. Champlain, however, was not acting blindly, but with a deliberate purpose in view. He saw that an irreconcilable hatred existed between the Canadian tribes and the Five Nations. He knew that he must have the unswerving friendship and helpful alliance of the Indians in order to secure trade and carry out his plan of explorations and missions. He was looking to the North and West and naturally chose the friendship of the Indians who were on his side of the great river and scattered through the regions he wished to explore. This alienating and embittering of the Iroquois by Champlain has been called the gravest political blunder that France ever made in the New World. But it is difficult to see how Champlain could have acted otherwise than he did. We now know that his ultimate plan was to subjugate completely the Iroquois, establish forts and missions in their country and then by a policy of conciliation make them the friends and allies of the French. He did not live to carry out this plan.

CHAMPLAIN'S FOURTH VOYAGE IN 1611

After his battle with the Iroquois warriors of the forest barricade, Champlain might have claimed guidance and escort from his allies to the distant interior. But instead of doing this he returned to France to make arrangements with De Monts and his associates for a new settlement. He soon returned in the spring of 1611, sailed past Quebec and proceeded up the river to the site of the vanished Hachelaga where he cleared and surveyed the ground for a permanent post. The great commercial center of Canada now occupies this spot and the Victoria Bridge and the towers of Notre Dame overlook the rushing tide of waters then thronged with hungry adventurers and fur traders who eagerly followed in the wake of Champlain. He must fight the battles, explore the rivers and forests, win the trade of the great Indian communities of the interior and found the fortified posts, yet but little of the commercial advantage of it all was ever to accrue to him.

CHAMPLAIN EXPLORES THE OTTAWA RIVER

In the spring of 1613 Champlain set out with four Frenchmen and one Indian to explore the Ottawa River flowing into the St. Lawrence a little way above Montreal. It was down this stream flowing from the northwest of Canada, that great hordes of Hurons and Algonquins came annually in their canoes to barter their furs at Montreal and Quebec. Champlain hoped not only to explore the Ottawa and visit the Indian tribes near its upper waters, but he confidently expected to find near the sources of the Ottawa the waters of a sea through which he might set sail to the long dreamed of riches of China and Japan. His reasons for this belief were founded upon a tale told him by one of the Frenchmen who now accompanied him, one Nicholas de Vignau. This Vignau had spent the previous year among the Indians about the head waters of the Ottawa. He told Champlain that he had there found a great river flowing northward into a vast sea upon the shores of which he had seen the wreck of an English ship whose crew had been killed by Indians. On hearing this tale Champlain's imagination was fired and his hopes of reaching the Orient kindled afresh. He at once began the long journey up the Ottawa. The story of that toilsome and dangerous ascent cannot be given in detail. The little party toiled upward for many weary days, paddling their canoes through the rushing waters, sometimes trailing them along the shore, and again shouldering them through the dense and tangled forest around innumerable rapids and foaming cataracts. After suffering countless hardships and dangers Champlain reached the Indian village where Vignau had passed the previous year. He there learned that Vignau had not been beyond the village in which they now found themselves, and that he was the dupe of an impudent liar. The Indians themselves were so enraged at Vignau for his falsehood and audacity that Champlain could scarcely restrain them from killing him on the spot. But on Vignau's confessing his imposture Champlain saved his life and brought him back unpunished to Montreal.

CHAMPLAIN BRINGS RECOLLET PRIESTS TO AMERICA

In 1616 on his return from one of his annual trips to France, Champlain brought back with him from Brouage four Recollet priests, for he ever had in mind the spiritual welfare of his Indians.

These mendicant friars presented a strange picture to the staring savages on the rock of Quebec. They were clad in the long cassock of their order made of coarse gray cloth and girt at the waist with a knotted cord. This garment was furnished with a peaked hood which covered their heads, and on their feet they wore thick soled wooden sandals. The savages of the Canadian wilderness were apportioned to these worthy friars for conversion. The Hurons fell to the lot of Joseph le Caron. He immediately set out upon his long journey with a party of Hurons by the usual route of the Ottawa. No bodily suffering could cool his zeal or deter him from his purpose of saving the benighted savages. He paddled his canoe up the rushing current, toiled through the forest around countless rapids, was torn by briars and brambles, lashed by recoiling boughs and tortured by mosquitos, yet after all this he could write to a friend, "I must needs tell you what abundant consolation I found under all my troubles; for when one sees so many infidels needing but a drop of water to make them children of God, one feels an inexpressible ardor to labor for their conversion, and sacrifice to it one's repose and life."

CHAMPLAIN REACHES LAKE HURON VIA OTTAWA RIVER

Soon after the departure of Le Caron to the far off scene of his apostolic labors, Champlain with his faithful and heroic interpreter, Etienne Brulé and a party of Indians, set out upon his track. This proved to be one of the most momentous expeditions of the restless explorer. He again ascended the Ottawa, reached the Algonquin village, the scene of Vignau's perfidy and exposure, passed the two lakes of the Allumettes, entered the tributary waters of the Mattawan, crossed the portage at its source and reached Lake Nipissing. Sailing across this lake he reached its outlet, French River, and steering his canoes down its current, entered for the first time the waters of Lake Huron, being the first white man except Le Caron to behold the vast waters of this inland sea. He steered for more than a hundred miles along the eastern coasts of Georgian Bay, entered the Bay of Matchedash and penetrating the woods and thickets reached at last the maize and pumpkin fields of the great Huron nation, consisting of about thirty thousand souls, who a few years later were swept out of existence in a tempest of blood by the ferocious Iroquois. Here Champlain found the devoted Le Caron preaching, praying and baptizing.

CHAMPLAIN LEADS HURONS IN AN UNSUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN AGAINST IROQUOIS

The friendly Hurons gathered about Champlain and hailed him as the invincible warrior who could lead them to victory against the Iroquois. He spent some time visiting their villages and worshipping with Le Caron while the Huron warriors were assembling for the expedition against the Five Nations. All having assembled at the appointed rendezvous, the warlike host filed southeastward through the forest, carrying their canoes upon their shoulders. They crossed Lake Simcoe and the chain of lakes which form the sources of the Trent and descended that river to Lake Ontario, hunting and fishing on the way for their subsistence. They launched their canoes upon Lake Ontario, now seen by Champlain for the first time, and paddled boldly across and landed upon the shore of northern New York. Hiding their canoes in the forest, a few days of stealthy marching brought them to a fortified town of the Onondagas. Deaf to the orders and entreaties of Champlain a squad of impetuous Huron warriors rushed upon some of the Iroquois who were at work in their fields and were driven back with serious loss. Champlain now tried to instruct them in the art of war. He aided them in building in the forest near by, a huge wooden tower which could overlook the lofty palisaded walls. Two hundred warriors dragged it forward and Champlain's arquebusiers mounted to the top to pick off the defenders within the walls. The undisciplined and foolhardy Hurons rushed into the open fields and swarmed about the palisades, shooting their arrows and trying to set fire to

the walls. They were met with a storm of arrows and stones from the valiant Onondagas and floods of water from the gutters of the palisades extinguished the fires. The voice of Champlain was lost in the horrible din of yells and screeches and no order of battle was observed. Seventeen Huron warriors were severely wounded and Champlain himself received an arrow in the knee and another in the leg. The attack lasted three hours when the Hurons became discouraged and fell back to their camp in the forest. After attempting a few more vain assaults the Hurons began a hasty retreat, carrying their wounded warriors on their backs. Champlain could not walk so he was doubled up and bundled into a basket made on the spot, and strapped on the back of a strong warrior who carried him for several days. Champlain says, "I was never in such torment in my life, for the pain of the wound was nothing to that of being bound and pinioned on the back of one of our savages. I lost patience and as soon as I could bear my weight I got out of this prison, or rather out of hell."

Champlain's prestige as a warrior was sadly dimmed and through no fault of his own. The discouraged and ungrateful Hurons even refused to escort him to Montreal and he was obliged to spend the winter in the wigwam of one of their hospitable chiefs. When he reached Quebec the following summer he had been given up for dead and solemn mass and thanksgiving celebrated his return. But he found his infant colony in a state of discord and disorder. Jesuits, Recollets, Calvinists and merchants were bickering and striving for ascendency.

CHAMPLAIN ENLISTS SUPPORT OF CARDINAL RICHELIEU

Champlain went every year to France and finally enlisted the strong arm and brain of Richelieu who furnished the war ships, the money, the colonists and the laws that put the work of the hardy explorer upon a prosperous and enduring basis. And now the work of Champlain was done.

DEATH OF CHAMPLAIN

For twenty-seven years he had endured indescribable hardships and perils to found and perpetuate the power of France in the New World. But the end had come. On Christmas day, 1635, the weary frame, worn and wasted by war, the wilderness and the sea, breathed its last in the Fort of St. Louis on the rock of Quebec, and amid the tears and eulogies of his people, Champlain was borne to his grave in the land he had explored and colonized.

The Exploration of the Northwest

By Harvey Wilson Compton

Superintendent of Toledo Public Schools, 1886-1891—Died 1916

FIRST PRINTING

Champlain laid the foundations of Quebec, the fortress, and of Montreal, the trading post of New France. During the twenty-seven years of his life spent in the New World he published in France four books which gave detailed accounts of his explorations and adventures, with minute descriptions of the savages, wild animals, birds, trees, flowers and rugged scenery of the new lands beyond the sea.

He secured the trade and friendship of the Canadian Indians, discovered Lakes Huron and Ontario and made known the two routes by way of the Ottawa and Lake Simcoe to the far Northwest. He brought over with him Recollet friars and Jesuit fathers, bush-rangers and fur-traders, who, stimulated by the hope of saving souls and securing beaver skins, paddled up lonely rivers, penetrated the vast wilderness, crossed the great lakes and fraternized with savages in the smoke and squalor of noisy, filthy wigwams.

The narratives and achievements of Champlain aroused and inflamed the priests, the merchants and adventurers of France. During the forty years that succeeded his death, eager and daring Frenchmen trudged through the remotest forests and paddled their birch canoes across the great lakes and along every river of the Northwest. They established missions, built forts, named and mapped the great lakes and rivers, discovered the Mississippi and the different routes leading to it and proclaimed possession of all in the name of France and Louis XIV.

ROBERT CAVELIER, SIEUR DE LA SALLE

Among all the explorers who contributed to the discovery of the Northwest, La Salle stands in lonely pre-eminence. He possessed the elements of true greatness, high moral purpose, indomitable will and courage, and great intellect. He is the central figure in that enthusiastic army of adventurous spirits whom no peril of flood, famine, cold, interminable distance or cruel death could deter from making known to civilization the vast riches and the vast extent of the great Northwest Territory, now comprising the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. Let us follow the work of La Salle, for closely interwoven with it is the early history of Ohio.

Robert Cavelier, better known as La Salle, from the name of one of the family estates, was born at Rouen, France, in 1643, eight years after the death of Champlain. He belonged to a wealthy and honorable family, was well educated, probably in a Jesuit institution, and in early youth displayed remarkable traits of mind and character. As a boy he read of the courage and daring of Columbus, he mused over the exploits and achievements of Champlain, and thus was his imagination kindled, his ambition aroused and his purposes formed.

LA SALLE'S FIRST VOYAGE IN 1666

In the spring of 1666, with a few hundred francs in his pocket, he sailed for Canada to seek fame and fortune in the New World. From the Sulpitian fathers at Montreal he obtained the free grant of a large tract of land near the rapids of La Chine, where he began at once to erect buildings and clear away the forest. In the meantime he studied diligently the various Indian languages and mastered seven or eight of their dialects. He listened with intense eagerness to the Seneca Indians who told him of a mighty river far away in the forests which flowed southwest into a great sea. He began to indulge in that old dream of all the early explorers, a way to the riches of China and Japan.

He sold his seigniory, obtained the sanction of Courcelle, the governor, and investing his little fortune in the canoes and accoutrements of an exploring expedition, he embarked upon the St. Lawrence in July of 1669 with the purpose of discovering the Ohio river, of which he had heard through the vague tales of wandering Indians. This expedition of La Salle's was unfortunately merged with one projected by the Sulpitian priests of Montreal, who wished to compete with their formidable rivals, the Jesuits, in the conversion of the Indian tribes of the Great Lakes. The priests had been urged by Courcelle to unite with La Salle in exploring the mysteries of the great, unknown river of the West.

La Salle submitted to this union of the two expeditions, though his haughty and dominant nature was ill-suited to share the authority of an enterprise of which he desired to be the acknowledged chief. The combined parties, consisting of seven canoes and twenty-four men, in thirty-five days reached the south shore of Lake Ontario where they fell in with a party of Seneca Indians whose village, La Salle visited in the hope of obtaining guides to the Ohio river. La Salle and his companions, failing to secure guides and disgusted with the filth, gluttony, drunkenness and cannibalism of the Senecas, left the Indian village and returned to the rest of his party on the shore of the lake.

LA SALLE MEETS LOUIS JOLIET

The voyagers now coasted along the shore, passed the mouth of the Niagara and encamped at an Indian town on the site of the present city of Hamilton. Here they met two Frenchmen returning from the upper lakes, one of whom, Louis Joliet, is famous in the annals of discovery. Joliet had been sent to discover the copper mines of Lake Superior, but failing in this was returning to Montreal. He showed to the Sulpitians a map he had made of the lakes and told them of the savage tribes of those regions who needed conversion.

The information given by Joliet changed the plan of the expedition. The Sulpitian party of which Galineé was the leader determined to follow the route Joliet had suggested and give spiritual succor to the Indians. La Salle advised them against this course, telling them that the Jesuits who had already occupied the field, would receive them coldly. La Salle who had been attacked by a fever made this an excuse for abandoning the Sulpitians. His goal was the Ohio river, and there can be little doubt that he was glad to be free from the priests of St. Sulpice, to pursue his own plans in his own way.

The priests went toward Lake Erie but found its waters tossing in angry billows. They built themselves a log cabin in the forest near Long Point and encamped for the winter. Early in the following spring they sailed their canoes along the northern shore of Lake Erie, entered the Detroit river and paddled upward against the current, crossed Lake St. Clair, ascended the St. Clair river and sailed along the eastern and northern shores of Lake Huron. They reached the St. Mary's river and ascended to the Sault St. Marie where they found the Jesuit mission with the two priests Dablon and Marquette in charge. Finding they were not wanted as La Salle had foretold them, they crossed to Lake Nipissing, and descending the Ottawa, returned to Montreal, having made no discoveries and no converts.

THE MISSING RECORDS OF LA SALLE'S EXPLORATIONS

But what had become of La Salle? Where did he go after the priests left him? It is certain that he was busily engaged for the next two years in important explorations but precise and authentic accounts of these are not in existence. The maps and journals of La Salle made by him during this period were in existence as late as 1756, but since that time they have been lost to the most diligent search.

The only distinct record of La Salle's movement during the two years following his parting with the Sulpitian priests is a paper entitled, "A History of Monsieur La Salle," written by some intelligent person who claims to have had ten or twelve conversations with La Salle in Paris. According to this account, La Salle after parting with the priests, went to the village of Onondaga, (one of the Iroquois towns), secured an Indian guide, reached a branch of the Ohio and

floated down that stream to the Ohio. He descended the Ohio to the falls at Louisville, or as some have claimed, to its union with the Mississippi. His men and guides then deserted him, going to the English and Dutch colonists, and La Salle was compelled to find his way back alone.

This discovery and exploration of the Ohio must have occupied the winter and spring of 1669-70.

The next year, so the same history recites, La Salle embarked upon Lake Erie, ascended the straits connecting Lakes Erie and Huron, coasted the shore of Lake Huron, passed the straits of Mackinaw, sailed across Lake Michigan and entered a river flowing southwest. Down this river he descended until it was crossed by another river flowing from the north. On this authority it is claimed that La Salle had already reached the Mississippi before Joliet and Marquette discovered it in June of 1673. But the evidence that La Salle reached the Mississippi in 1671 is insufficient and is not accepted by the best historians. It is generally accepted as beyond question that he discovered the Ohio and probably the Illinois.

THE FRENCH TAKE FORMAL POSSESSION OF THE NORTHWEST

We may at this point interrupt the story of La Salle to narrate two important events,—the taking formal possession of the whole of the Northwest by the French and the discovery of the Mississippi river. The French leaders in Canada, and especially Talon, the intendant at Quebec, had now become convinced that they must take some vigorous measures to confine the English to the Atlantic seaboard and secure for themselves the vast interior of the continent, with full control of its trade and its lakes and rivers.

In 1670, Talon sent Daumont Saint Lusson to search for the copper mines of Lake Superior and to take possession by process verbal of the whole interior for the king of France. Nicholas Perrot acted as the interpreter of Lusson. Perrot was a capable and courageous voyageur who understood well the Indian character and the various Indian dialects. Perrot sent messages to all the tribes of the Northwest, inviting them to meet Lusson, the deputy of the governor, at the Sault Ste Marie.

On the morning of the fourteenth of June, 1671, Saint Lusson and his followers and four Jesuit priests met a great throng of Indians from seventeen tribes of the North and West on a hill above the village of Sault Ste. Marie. The pompous ceremony of taking possession of the entire Mississippi valley was there enacted. A huge cross of wood, upon which the Jesuit, Dablon, had pronounced his blessing, was planted. A cedar post was erected beside it to which was attached a metal plate engraved with the royal arms of France. The Jesuits prayed, the Frenchmen with uncovered heads, sang sacred songs. Saint Lusson then advanced sword in hand and in a loud voice, "In the name of the Most High, Mighty and Redoubted Monarch, Louis, Fourteenth of the name, Most Christian King of France and of Navarre," proclaimed possession of the northern lakes and islands and all adjacent countries, lakes, rivers and islands, "both those which had been discovered and those which may be discovered hereafter, in all their length and breadth, bounded on the one side by the seas of the North and West, and on the other by the South Sea."

The impressive ceremonies closed amid the firing of guns and the yells of the assembled Indians. Thousands of lives were sacrified and rivers of blood were shed in the century that followed to maintain the sovereignty thus pompously proclaimed but naught now remains of it save the miserable patois, jabbered from the lips of a few French half-breeds that linger around the lakes and islands of the north.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER

The French now determined to push actively their exploration and occupation of the interior. They knew of the existence and location of the "Father of Waters" from the Indian tribes who lived near it and if La Salle had not discovered it he had at least, pointed out two ways of reaching it. Louis Joliet was chosen by the authorities at Quebec to discover the Mississippi and visit tribes along its shores. Jacques Marquette was selected to accompany him on this important mission.

Joliet was born at Quebec in 1645, had been educated by the Jesuits for the priesthood, but had become simply a fur merchant. He was intelligent, courageous and interprising.

Jacques Marquette was born at Laon, France in 1637. He belonged to the noblest type of the French Jesuits. He was of a devout, brave and loving nature and knew no fear. He had remarkable intellectual qualities and spoke with ease six of the Indian languages.

Joliet passed up the lakes and joined Marquette at Point St. Ignace, where he had been laboring for two years to convert the Hurons and Ottawas. The explorers provided themselves with two birch canoes and five men and on the seventeenth of May, 1673, plied their paddles, passing through the Straits of Mackinaw and along the northern shore of Lake Michigan. They visited the mission at the head of Green Bay, entered Fox river, dragged their canoes up the long rapids, crossed Lake Winnebago and followed the windings of the stream beyond. They enjoyed the great natural beauty everywhere spread before them, paddled their way through the thick growth of wild rice and the flocks of birds that fed upon it, passed along the verdant shores where they saw groves of waving trees and innumerable herds of browsing deer and elk. They reached the villages of the Mascoutins and Miamis who had been already visited by the Jesuits Dablon and Allouez.

These Indians hailed them with joy and readily consented to guide them to the waters of the Wisconsin. The Indians led them on by the channel of the Fox river, twisting among marshes and lakes choked with wild rice until they came to the portage. They carried their canoes a mile and a half across the prairie and launched them upon the Wisconsin and floated down that stream adorned with all the wildest and most picturesque beauty of nature. They passed the beautiful glens and coves, the frowning rocks, the vast, dark forests, the vine wreathed wooded islands slumbering in the haze, and at last on the nineteenth of June steered forth upon the mighty current of the Mississippi, which no white man had seen since one hundred and thirty years before the body of Ferdinand DeSoto had been sunk beneath its turbid waters.

Joliet and Marquette descended the Mississippi as far as the mouth of the Arkansas, and returned to Green Bay by way of the Illinois and Lake Michigan, a journey of twenty-five hundred miles.

DEATH OF MARQUETTE

Joliet went to Montreal to report his discoveries to Frontenac, and Marquette remained to labor among the Indians. Patient, gentle, fearless, devoted Marquette! Consecrated, unselfish pioneer of the new world, his life a benediction, his heart a well spring of tenderness and love! Worn and wasted by toil, self-sacrifice and disease, he died in solitude May 18, 1765, upon the lonely shore of Lake Michigan and was buried in its sands. His remains were later removed to Mackinaw, where they still repose. His name will forever be inscribed upon the roll of the world's true heroes.

Let us return to La Salle. His explorations in the Ohio valley and the great lakes had revealed to him the richness and vastness of the West. He abandoned the dream of finding a way to the Orient and conceived the vast design of carrying French dominion throughout the valley of the Mississippi, even to the gulf of Mexico. The able, resolute and fiery Frontenac who had succeeded Courcelle as governor of Canada was the firm friend and ally of La Salle in his design to bar out the English and secure the entire regions of the Ohio and the Mississippi for France.

As a preliminary step to the complete control of the west and the great lakes, Frontenac ascended the St. Lawrence from Montreal with an armed force embarked upon a flotilla of canoes and flat boats. Where the city of Kingston now stands he built a palisaded fort and by a show of power and by mingled threats and cajolery he awed and conciliated the assembled Iroquois into a semblance of peace and friendship. As a further means of establishing their power over the upper lakes and the great valley south of them and for the purpose of excluding the English, Frontenac and La Salle determined to build a vessel to command Lake Ontario, to erect a fort at the mouth of the Niagara and to construct a vessel to control Lake Erie and its connecting waters.

LA SALLE APPOINTED GOVERNOR OF FORT FRONTENAC

Armed with letters and reports of warmest approval and commendation from Frontenac, La Salle crossed the ocean and repaired to the French court. He there offered to repay to the king the ten thousand francs which it had cost to build Fort Frontenac, also to erect a church near the fort, establish a colony there and maintain a garrison at his own expense if the King (Louis XIV) on his part would make him a grant in seigniory of the fort, (1674). His offer was accepted and a large tract of surrounding land was added to the grant and he was raised to the rank of an untitled noble in consideration of his services as an explorer. La Salle's wealthy relatives in France were pleased with his success and readily advanced the money to pay the king for his seigniory of Fort Frontenac.

From this time forth La Salle was pursued by the bitter enmity of the merchants of Montreal and by the unrelenting but more concealed hatred of the Jesuits. His cold and imperious manners together with the fact that in his valuable seigniory of Fort Frontenac he had the power of a feudal noble and the practical monopoly of the fur trade, was enough to embitter the merchants. La Salle had already disliked and distrusted the Jesuits and now when they saw their own favorite scheme of occupying and dominating the Mississippi valley in danger they bitterly assailed him with secret detraction and misrepresentation. These enemies of La Salle throughout his subsequent career caused him untold loss and trouble and greatly hampered him in the execution of his great designs. It was only by reason of his iron will, indomitable energy and great capacity that he triumphed over many of the obstacles which they threw in his pathway. Had he chosen to remain in his seigniory, cultivate his lands, cherish his colony and engage in trade, he might have heaped up vast riches for himself.

But his restless and ambitious spirit burned to explore the mysteries of the great west, to gather all the tribes under the strong arm of France, to build a cordon of forts from the Niagara to the Gulf of Mexico and bar the English forever beyond the Alleghenies.

LA SALLE SECURES FINANCIAL AID IN FRANCE

In 1678, La Salle went again to France to secure financial means to aid him in carrying out his vast design. By the help of influential friends he succeeded in gaining the sanction of Louis XIV for his enterprise and in raising a large sum of money for building vessels and equipping his expedition. He returned to Fort Frontenac with a supply of ship building material and a number of ship carpenters.

He brought with him on this voyage Henry de Tonti, a brave and faithful man who became famous in the annals of western discovery and who was a most loyal and energetic lieutenant of La Salle's throughout his stormy and adventurous career. Tonti was an Italian officer who had lost one hand in the Sicilian wars. He was amiable and skillful in his dealing with both white men and Indians, possessed a bold adventurous spirit and a heart that knew no fear and quailed under no blows of adverse fortune.

LOUIS HENNEPIN, THE FRANCISCAN

La Salle had also closely associated with him in this new enterprise a Recollet friar by the name of Louis Hennepin, who is a unique and interesting character in the history of western exploration. He was born and educated in France, and, as he says, because of his "strong inclination to fly from the world and live according to the rules of a pure and severe virtue," he had allied himself with the order of St. Francis. He had been sent by the Franciscans to beg alms in the seaports of France where he had made the acquaintance of sailors and had lingered with delight around the taverns to hear their tales of adventure in strange lands. The truth is, he was far more possessed of the love of travel and adventure than of spiritual tendencies. He writes of himself, concerning his rovings in Holland, "I was present at the bloody fight of Seneff, where so many persons perished by fire and sword," and further says that after "running extreme dangers" in various sieges and battles, ministering to the wounded, his greatest wish was gratified and he was permitted to go to Canada and engage in the most adventurous mission work of his order.

This vain, garrulous and withal, simple-hearted, good-natured friar trudged through snows and piercing cold of American forests in mid-winter, clad in his coarse, gray capote, with peaked hood, girt with the cord of St. Francis, a portable altar strapped upon his back, the rosary and crucifix suspended at his waist. Hennepin was conceited and unveracious to the last degree, but he was absolutely without fear. He wrote the first known description of Niagara Falls, and the northern shore and islands of Lake Erie. He published two books concerning his travels and adventures in Canada and the Northwest, and though his writings are studded with brazen falsehoods and inconsistencies, they have a certain value, as he is believed to have told the truth when self-interest and prejudice did not sway him and where he had no motive for self-glorification.

THE FIRST VESSEL FOR LAKE ERIE AND THE UPPER LAKES

In November of 1678, Hennepin and sixteen of La Salle's men in a little vessel of ten tons, after narrowly escaping shipwreck, landed at the mouth of the Niagara river for the purpose of building a palisaded house and preparing for constructing the vessel which was to navigate the upper lakes. The Iroquois had long barred the Niagara, the key to the lakes, against the French. This advance guard of La Salle's now feared interference from the Indians so they made an excursion to one of the Seneca villages to gain permission from the chiefs for building the house and vessel. But the persuasion of Hennepin and the numerous gifts of beads, hatchets and scarlet cloth were all in vain. The Senecas remained forbidding, moody and silent. La Salle himself with Tonti, arrived soon after and succeeded in persuading the Senecas to permit him to build a fortified warehouse, carry arms and ammunition across the Niagara portage and build a vessel above the cataract.

Sails, cordage, anchors and other material for the construction of the vessel had now to be dragged up the steep height of Lewiston and carried across the portage a distance of twelve miles to the water above the cataract. Burdened with this material a file of about thirty men toiled through the snow drifts of the gloomy forests accompanied by Hennepin with his altar lashed to his back. They followed the eastern cliffs to Niagara with the mighty torrent boiling far below them and came at last to a point six miles above the falls where the Cayuga Creek enters the river. This place was selected for the building of the vessel. The ground was cleared, trees felled, and the pit sawyers, carpenters and blacksmiths began the construction of the first vessel that ever parted the waves of Lake Erie.

ENEMIES HARASS LA SALLE

The Senecas watched the progress of the construction with extreme jealousy and it required great vigilance to prevent them from attacking the builders and burning the vessel on the stocks. When spring opened the vessel was launched, towed out and anchored in the stream safe at last from the firebrands and hostility of the Iroquois.

To prevent the expedition and foil the plans of La Salle, his enemies at Quebec and Montreal had announced that he was entering upon a visionary, harebrained enterprise from which he would never return. His alarmed creditors had seized upon all his property and he had been obliged to return to Canada to endeavor to save something from the financial wreck. He returned to Niagara in August of 1679 with three more priests when all made ready to embark.

The vessel was named the "Griffin," from the fabulous monster engraved upon the escutcheon of Count Frontenac. She was a trim craft of forty-five tons with white canvas, five cannon at her port holes and the "Griffin" carved upon her prow.

THE "GRIFFIN" BEGINS HER FIRST VOYAGE ON LAKE ERIE

On the seventh of August (1679), all embarked, spread their canvas and steered southwest over the tossing waves of Lake Erie, the first mariners who had ever parted those billows with the keel of civilization. They sailed prosperously along, passed the now familiar landmarks of Long Point and Point Peleè, and steered their way among the green islands that stud the western end of Lake Erie. To the south lay the great region of Ohio, an unknown wilder-

ness, the hunting ground of the Senecas. On the fourth day they entered the Detroit river whose shore, according to Hennepin, abounded with luscious fruits, wild turkeys, bears and deer. They passed up the river and entered the little lake now bearing the perverted name of St. Clair, but which was originally named after the Franciscan nun, Sainte Claire.

The little vessel plunged on her way across the foaming surges of Lake Huron and at last anchored in calm water behind the point of St. Ignace, near the palisaded chapel of the Jesuits, the houses of the French traders and the clustered wigwams of Huron and Ottawa Indians.

THE "GRIFFIN" RETURNS, LA SALLE CONTINUES EXPLORATIONS

La Salle now found that an advance party of fifteen men whom he had sent ahead the preceding autumn, loaded with goods to trade with the Indians, and collect furs and make preparations for his coming to the Illinois, had disobeyed his orders and squandered most of the goods in trading for themselves. Some of them had scattered in the woods. He captured others with their plunder and now resolved to send the "Griffin" back to Niagara loaded with furs to satisfy his creditors.

Eager to explore the Illinois and Mississippi, he embarked with fourteen men in four canoes and resumed his voyage. They followed the eastern shore of Lake Michigan and after many weary days of storms on the lake, floods of cold rain, threatened starvation on shore and combats with hostile Indians, they arrived at the mouth of the St. Joseph river where Tonti was to meet them with twenty men from Mackinaw. Tonti had not arrived and La Salle's men were mutinous and discouraged. Nor had the "Griffin" returned from her voyage to Niagara with the precious cargo of furs.

LA SALLE BUILDS FORT MIAMI AT MOUTH OF ST. JOSEPH RIVER

La Salle set his discontended men to work at building a fort near the mouth of the St. Joseph to divert their thoughts. He paced the shore day after day, watching for the coming of Tonti, and straining his eyes across the leaden waves of Lake Michigan in the vain hope of catching the gleam of the "Griffin's" approaching sail. But that ill-starred vessel was never heard of more. Whether she was engulfed in the tempestuous waters of the lakes or was robbed and scuttled by her treacherous crew will never be known. Tonti and his men soon arrived, lifting a heavy load from the burdened heart of La Salle who now resolved to press on to the Illinois.

They launched their canoes and ascended the icy current of the St. Joseph. Near where the city of South Bend now stands they shouldered their canoes and carried them across the quaggy prairie and embarked upon the dark and winding current of the Kankakee, one of the sources of the Illinois, twisting among fens and marshes. They made their beds at night on the frozen bogs and pursued their journey by day. They came to one of the deserted villages of the Illinois Indians who were away on their winter hunt, and, famishing for food, took some corn from one of the covered pits and continued their downward voyage. Hennepin was cheerful and courageous, constantly exhorting the men to patience, endurance and fidelity.

LA SALLE AND HENNEPIN VISIT THE ILLINOIS INDIANS

On New Year's day, 1680, they landed and heard mass and Hennepin made a speech to the men which he says was "most touching." They then pushed on down the stream, passed the broad expansion of the river known as Peoria Lake, and entered the river proper, when they saw immediately ahead of them a great Indian village with numerous wigwams on either side. La Salle and his men ranged their canoes abreast, seized their muskets and floated swiftly into the midst of the astounded savages. Amid the noise and howling and brandishing of war clubs, La Salle leaped boldly ashore followed by Hennepin and all the men. La Salle knew how to deal with Indians and seldom if ever was the first to make overtures of friendship knowing that they would be taken as signs of fear. The Indians soon displayed the calumet when La Salle responded to their friendly advances. Hennepin consoled and caressed some of the frightened children and the uproar ceased.

Soon after the arrival of La Salle and his men, an emissary of his enemies arrived in the village and succeeded in poisoning the minds of the Illinois against La Salle, telling them that he was a spy and partisan of the Iroquois and was also endeavoring to stir up the tribes of the Mississippi to make war against the Illinois; that their only hope lay in causing his men to desert him and in preventing him from reaching the Mississippi. The Illinois suddenly becoming cold and sullen, called a council at which La Salle and his men were present. They tried to dissuade him from building his great wooden canoe to go to the Mississippi. They told him the banks of that stream were infested with cruel savage tribes who would certainly destroy him and his men, that the river itself was filled with horrible monsters and yawning whirlpools and terminated in a dreadful abyss.

La Salle reassured the Indians the best he could, told them that he knew his enemies had lied to them, that he was their friend and would protect them from the Iroquois. But what the Illinois said had a disastrous effect upon his men, six of them deserting that night, among them his pit sawyers and blacksmiths. La Salle selected a place a few miles below the Indian village where he built a strongly palisaded fort which he named Fort Crevecoer, (Heartbreak), a name which tells of his suffering and misfortune but reveals nothing of the dauntless courage and iron will of the great explorer.

Had the "Griffin" returned she would have brought anchors, cables and rigging for the new vessel in which he was to descend the Mississippi, but that she was lost he now regarded as certain. He saw but one way to proceed if he would build his vessel and carry out his original enterprise. He must return on foot to Fort Frontenac and bring the needed supplies. Before setting out he resolved to see the new vessel on the stocks and he himself took the place of one of the deserted pit sawyers and helped to saw the boards. It seemed that nothing could daunt the resolution or shake the courage of this inflexible man. In six weeks the new vessel of forty tons burden lay on the stocks.

LA SALLE RETURNS TO MONTREAL, WHILE HENNEPIN EXPLORES THE MISSISSIPPI

Despatching Hennepin on a tour of exploration down the Mississippi, La Salle was ready to start through the frozen and gloomy wilds on his thousand mile journey to Fort Frontenac. On the first of March, with five men, four Frenchmen and his favorite Mohegan hunter, he set out, leaving his wavering, disheartened men and the brave and faithful Tonti to finish the vessel and await his return. Mind cannot imagine nor pen describe the perils and hardships of that long journey to the far distant goal of Fort Frontenac. Through frozen marshes, icy streams and drifts of snow, through pathless wilds, interminable forests, desolate prairies and regions of treachery, famine and death for sixty-five days they struggled on until on the sixth of May they saw looming through rain and mist the familiar bastions of Fort Frontenac. Through such courage and peril as this was founded the French claim to the valley of the Mississippi.

La Salle went to Montreal and with his accustomed energy soon succeeded in raising a company of twenty-five men, ship carpenters, joiners and masons. Gathering the needed supplies for the vessel he set out on his return to the Illinois country. During his absence most of the men whom he had left at Fort Crevecoer had mutinied, demolished the fort, stolen the goods and were cruising on the lakes in hope of waylaying and murdering La Salle on his return. But he heard of their purpose, succeeded in surprising and capturing most of them and sent them in chains to Count Frontenac to be punished. The brave Tonti with a few faithful men had taken refuge among the Illinois in their great village near Fort Crevecoer.

THE IROQUOIS SLAUGHTER ILLINOIS INDIANS

When La Salle reached the village of the Illinois on his return he found it had been attacked during his absence by that dreadful scourge, the Iroquois, and only charred and desolate ruins were visible. He could find no trace of Tonti and the few Frenchmen who had remained true. The fiendish Iroquois, instigated by La Salle's enemies, had massacred and scattered the Illinois. They

had even vented their fury upon the buried relatives of the Illinois, and had dragged their dead bodies from graves and scaffolds and scattered them over the prairie, a prey to buzzards and wolves. La Salle went to Fort Crevecoer but found it in ruins, though the vessel was still unharmed upon the stocks. After making a fruitless search for Tonti he repaired with his men to Fort Miami at the mouth of the St. Joseph and spent the winter.

LA SALLE'S THIRD ATTEMPT TO EXPLORE THE MISSISSIPPI

Even in such a crisis as this, his resolute and heroic spirit rose triumphant over all his crushing disasters. Two of La Salle's attempts to explore the Mississippi to its mouth and establish forts and missions along its shores had failed, the first through the loss of the "Griffin" and the second through the perfidy and desertion of his men and the destruction of the Illinois village by the Iroquois. But he had no thought of yielding to the adverse blows of fate, though loaded with debts and relentlessly pursued by intriguing enemies. He resolved to make a third attempt. He spent the winter among the Miamis and the tribes of the Illinois, making alliances and forming them into a league for defense against the Iroquois. In the spring he repaired to Mackinaw where to his great joy he found Tonti who with his little party had escaped the Iroquois. He and Tonti then set out for Montreal, paddled their canoes a thousand miles and reached their distant goal in safety.

By the help of Frontenac and some faithful friends he again equipped an expedition of fifty-four persons, Indians and Frenchmen. They passed up the lakes, paddling their heavily freighted canoes over the tumbling waters and along the dreary, forest clad shores, and late in November drew up on the beach at Fort Miami near the mouth of the St. Joseph. In the dead of winter they crossed from the Chicago river to the Illinois, following in a long line the course of the frozen streams on sledges.

La Salle abandoned the plan of building a large vessel to navigate the Mississippi and convey his furs to Europe and determined to explore the river first by means of canoes. They passed on down the frozen Illinois and reached the mighty current of the Mississippi filled with floating ice. Down, down the dark bosom of the majestic stream they drifted swiftly on, passed the mouths of the Missouri and Ohio, built and garrisoned Fort Prudhomme on the high bluffs and again embarked, passing on to regions where flowers bloomed and warm airs dispelled the chill of winter. They visited the Indian tribes along the shores, showered presents upon them, won their friendship and took possession of the country for France by process verbal.

LA SALLE REACHES GULF OF MEXICO

Day by day they drifted down the stream, fresh water changed to brine and on the sixth of April, 1682, the broad and heaving waters of the Gulf of Mexico lay before the eyes of the intrepid explorer. He assembled his followers on a dry spot of ground, planted a column bearing the arms of France, erected a huge cross, buried a leaden plate engraved with an inscription and the fleur-de-lis and in a loud voice proclaimed the discovery and ownership of the entire Mississippi basin for Louis XIV. His followers responded with national hymns, sacred anthems and volleys of musketry.

The whole region was named Louisiana, after Louis XIV and extended from the Alleghenies to the Rocky mountains and from the frozen lakes of the north to the lonely billows of the great Gulf that lay tossing before the eyes of La Salle. A vast realm was that day added to the dominion of France, but La Salle well knew that it was a realm on paper, and that forts and military power alone could hold it.

LA SALLE RETURNS UP THE MISSISSIPPI, AND BUILDS FORT ST. LOUIS

He returned up the Mississippi, paddling his fleet of canoes against the current. On the bank of the Illinois river near the present town of Utica, a vast rock one hundred and twenty-five feet high rises sheer from the water's edge.

It is known as Starved Rock and has a surface of more than one acre. On this lofty and impregnable rock La Salle built a palisaded fort which he called St. Louis and gathered about him on the green and undulating meadows an Indian population of twenty thousand. This was his bulwark against the Iroquois, and his purpose was to introduce among these Indians, by means of a French colony, the arts and arms of civilization, to fortify and garrison the mouth of the Mississippi, extend the trade of France throughout its whole basin and use the Mississippi as a commercial outlet to Europe. His scheme was a vast but rational one and would have succeeded had he had proper support.

But his enemies triumphed at Quebec. The French court was poisoned against Frontenac, the friend of La Salle. He was removed as governor of Canada and the weak, corrupt and inefficient La Barre was put in his place. La Barre was an enemy to La Salle and immediately withdrew all support and encouraged the Iroquois to murder and pillage throughout the region of the Illinois.

La Salle, seeing his cherished design upon which he had staked so much, in imminent peril, resolved to appeal to Louis XIV in person. He crossed the ocean and appeared at Versailles and so well did he succeed that Louis granted him more than he asked for and ordered La Barre to restore all La Salle's property which he had seized and to send men and supplies immediately to Fort Louis on the Illinois.

LA SALLE HEADS AN EXPEDITION FROM FRANCE TO MOUTH OF MISSISSIPPI

La Salle set sail with four vessels amply equipped with colonists, soldiers and supplies for the mouth of the Mississippi. But the Gulf of Mexico was absolutely unknown to the French pilots. On his visit to the mouth of the Mississippi, La Salle had taken the latitude but for some reason had failed to get the longitude. The vessels got separated and in the fogs, mists and storms that prevailed, they missed the mouth of the Mississippi and passed on to Matagorda Bay four hundred miles beyond. Two of the vessels were wrecked near the coast and the others sailed away to France leaving La Salle with but few men and supplies landed amid the morasses of the Texan shore. He built a fort and endeavored to make his colonists comfortable and secure until he could locate the mouth of the Mississippi and remove them thither, for without the Mississippi nothing could be done.

ASSASSINATION OF LA SALLE

Many months of misery were passed in the little fort on the shore of the Texan Bay. Starvation and certain death at last stared in the face the few that remained alive, so La Salle still unconquered and unconquerable started on foot to Canada, three thousand miles away for aid. Three mutinous wretches of his party conspired against him as they were encampeed near the Trinity river in the present state of Texas. As he approached them in the tall grass and bushes hunting for two of his relatives whom they had already murdered the miscreants fired upon him and he fell dead pierced through the brain, March 20, 1687.

Thus ended the fate-haunted career of a most remarkable man and one of the greatest explorers of whom the world has any record. Through hardships and dangers that cannot be imagined or described he led the way and blazed out the path for the teeming millions who now occupy in peace and plenty the vast areas where he toiled and suffered. He left to the world a great discovery and a great design and a rare example of unconquerable energy. Others followed in his footsteps and reaped where he had sown and built up for France a great though transient dominion. The story of La Salle is a painful and pathetic record, relieved only by the grandeur of his scheme and the dauntless heroism with which he breasted the recurrent blows of an evil destiny which shadowed his whole career. In the seventy-five years that followed his death, the ships and the long chain of forts of which he dreamed were built, the missions, the colonies and the trading posts were established. "No work begun will ever pause for death"

To La Salle, invincible, resolute, heroic La Salle, modern civilization owes a debt it can never pay.

MIDWEST HISTORICAL NOTES

Anthony Wayne's Original Trail can still be plainly seen at the crossing of a stream on the Ludwig farm, on the left bank of the Maumee river, one-half mile below the Village of Grand Rapids. The field has never been plowed and the trail is plainly indicated at this point. It should be properly and permanently marked, while its route is distinctly visible.

The Turkey Foot Rock property has recently been conveyed to the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society, which will hereafter maintain it in connection with the nearby **Fallen Timbers** monument and battlefield property.

A Replica of Mt. Vernon is proposed for the Highland Park branch of the Toledo Public Library, and a seedling from the original Washington Elm at Alexandria will be dedicated at that point on May Day of this year by the Anthony Wayne Chapter, Sons of The American Revolution.

Manuscript Collection of Dr. C. E. Rice. The Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society has recently received a manuscript collection from the estate of Dr. C. E. Rice of Alliance, containing among other valuable documents, letters and signatures of all the members of the Ohio Constitutional Convention of 1802, and the members of the Supreme Court of Ohio and the Northwest Territory, 1787 to 1851.

The Indiana History Bulletin is prolific in historic notes of great interest, such as the following from recent issues, viz:

Indiana Historical Societies—Including state, county and regional institutions, the State of Indiana has 70 Historical Societies.

The Indiana State Flower—Though the Tulip Tree or the Yellow Poplar as it is often called with its graceful blossoms has the honor of being Indiana's official state flower, and is a tree of comparatively rapid and luxuriant growth, it has not received the popularity it deserves. Its broad, shining leaves and satin-like flowers should be familiar to every Indianian.

250th Anniversary of La Salle's Discovery of The St. Joseph-Kankakee Portage. The anniversary of the landing of Robert Cavelier, Sieur De La Salle and his party at the Portage from the St. Joseph to the Kankakee rivers was appropriately celebrated December 5, 1929, under the auspices of the Lion's Club at South Bend. On the following day an historical tour included the site of Fort St. Joseph, (a little north of South Bend in Michigan) and Fort Miami at St. Joseph, Michigan, where a boulder marker commemorates the first Fort of La Salle in the West. (1679.) The Lion's Club is also sponsoring the movement for the erection of a permanent memorial to La Salle at the St. Joseph-Kankakee Portage.

Chief Little Turtle—The Columbia City Commercial-Mail of June 9, 1930, contained an interesting article by Charles More of Fort Wayne on Chief Little Turtle who was born in what is now Union Township, Whitley County, 1751, and later become the noted War Chief of the Miami Tribe.

Fifteen Indians in Pilgrimage. The Allen County-Ft. Wayne Historical Society made a pilgrimage in September, 1929, to the Historic Indian sites of Whitley County, including the scene of Harmar's defeat by Chief Little Turtle, October 17, 1793; the spot where LeBalme's massacre occurred; the fort built by British General Hamilton en route Detroit to Vincennes, 1778; the site of Little Turtle's Village, and the Indian Village on the Eel River. In the party were 15 native Indians now living near Ft. Wayne.

The Vincennes Memorial—51 architects sent drawings to Vincennes in the competition for the choice of the design for the Memorial to be erected on the site of Fort Sackville, which is expected to cost over two million dollars.

The jury of award met in Vincennes, Monday, February 3, 1930, and on February 14, the National Commission of Fine Arts at Washington approved the

plans of Frederick C. Hirons and F. W. Meller, New York City, for the Memorial structure. William E. Parsons will continue as architect of the grounds in the Memorial Plaza.

The Editor of the Indiana History Bulletin of May, 1930, referring to the name for the Vincennes Memorial, says: "While Clark is a central figure the Memorial is not intended to be personal to him. It is erected in honor of the first decisive step in the westward movement of the United States, commemorating the patriots who won the West in the Revolution, the pioneers who occupied the region West of the Ohio River and all who contributed to the conquest and to the development of the old Northwest."

Indiana Historical Society Celebrates Its 100th Birthday. This Society was organized December 11, 1830, and on December 11, 1930, the Centennial of the Society was celebrated in an all-day-meeting at Indianapolis. The late Delavan Smith of Indianapolis, recognizing the good work and the greater possibilities of the society, left it in his will $150,000 for a memorial library in honor of his father, William Henry Smith. The Trustees of the World War Memorial at Indianapolis have invited the Society to establish its library in the Main Building of the Memorial Plaza where plenty of space is available.

Kentucky and Tennessee to Rebuild Old Forts. The erection of the stockade and log houses at Harrodsburg, Kentucky, which so successfully reproduced the appearance and the atmosphere of Harrod's Fort of Revolutionary days, is proving an incentive to the rebuilding of other forts and stockades. The Tennessee Monument and Memorial Commission, the Tennessee Historical Society, and the Daughters of the American Revolution will erect a replica of a Fort of Nashboro, at Nashville in the near future.

D. A. R. Marks Ohio-Indiana Line. At the Ohio-Indiana state line on the Lawrenceburg-Elizabethtown Road, was recently unveiled a bronze tablet on the original monument, erected 1838. The tablet bore the following inscription: "This stone marks the boundary line between Indiana and Ohio, which was established as the first principal meridian October 11, 1798, by the U. S. Government Survey. Stone erected by Indiana and Ohio, November 27, 1838. Tablet erected by the Colonel Archibald Lochry Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, October 11, 1929."

Fort Wayne Has a Triple Anniversary. On the 22nd of October, 1790, General Harmar was defeated at Ke-ki-on-ga; October 22, 1794, General Wayne's Fort was named and dedicated; October 22, 1823, the Government land office at Fort Wayne was opened. These events were celebrated by the Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society in October, 1929.

Morgan Raid. July 8, 1930, the Southeastern Indiana Historical Society dedicated two bronze markers, the one at Mauckport where General Morgan crossed the Ohio river into Indiana, and the other just South of Corydon, bearing the inscription: "General John Morgan marched North along this road on Thursday, July 9, 1863, in his raid across Southern Indiana."