

The Great Week

THE FEAST OF THE TERCENTENARY OF THE DISCOVERY OF LAKE CHAMPLAIN

Edited by J. Arthur Favereau
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SAMUEL CHAMPLAIN

THE FRENCH FESTIVAL AT BURLINGTON

French-Canadian citizens of Burlington have paid on 6 July 1909 a just tribute to the memory of their compatriot, Samuel Champlain. This day of the week of celebration of the tercentenary of the discovery of the lake, which bears the name of the brave explorer, was devoted to French societies who have amply used the opportunity offered to them. Distinguished speakers from outside were heard in the park of the town hall during the morning, and the various societies were formed into a long procession through the streets, after which they had a reception.

The literary exercises, which were set for 10 am in the park of the town hall, were delayed for almost an hour because two of the keynote speakers had not yet arrived. Mister Adélar J. Caron, of Woonsocket, R. I., Dr. Georges-A. Boucher, of Brockton, Massachusetts, and their friends did not arrive in town until 11 o'clock, while the exercises were started since some time. They were, however, a time to take their share as provided in the program.

Shortly before 11 o'clock of receiving the reception committee, speakers, guests and the Sherman military band took their places on stage. The full choir of the Church of St. Joseph, under the direction of Mister C. Beaupré, was also present. The reception committee was composed of, Mister. A.-H. Duhamel, President. Jules Simay, Secretary, Zotique Gravel. C. Beaupré. Louis Boivin. A.-R. Saint-Pierre. F.-X. Joachim. J.-N. Lemieux and U. Beauregard.

After a lively piece executed by the band, Mister Zotique Gravel, who acted as master of ceremonies, presented the Mayor Burke, who spoke a little about these terms:

SPEECH FROM THE MAYOR

"It is not out of place to repeat what was said yesterday in connection with the pleasant duty to welcome so many guests in this city. In drawing up the program one day someone suggested one entire day apart for French societies and French citizens of Burlington. There was not a dissenting voice.

"The two major events that now take our time and attention, Independence Day and the anniversary of the discovery of Champlain, are as important for the French as for the others, since the first commemorates the birth of the country that they adopted, and the other marks the action of a great Frenchman. Champlain was truly a great man and all French people should honor him. His work has immense significance for the country and Christianity and it is almost a duty to celebrate in a dignified manner.

"The French Canadians make up nearly a third of the population of Burlington and a few men of this blood are among the leading citizens of the city. Therefore it is a pleasant duty for me to welcome visitors and to offer them the freedom of the city so they can take home a souvenir and some favorable impression."

At this moment the delegation of Saint-Hyacinthe, accompanied by the band of the Philharmonic Society of St. Hyacinthe, arrived and the new music took place on the stage which was occupied by the Sherman band, followed then by the choir of St. Joseph, singing "O Canada!" The choir was accompanied by the Music Corps of Saint-Hyacinthe and the whole effect was really enchanting. Not only does this band play with great strength and capacity, but the choir sings with an expression and a truly marvellous soul.

The next speaker was Mister Aimé Amyot, president of the Saint-Joseph de Saint-Hyacinthe. He said he was not prepared to talk and he could briefly express his appreciation for the cordial reception which had been made not only for himself but also for the five hundred people who had come from Saint-Hyacinthe to Burlington. Mister Amyot, in his speech, has shown that he was a capable and experienced. Mister Father J.-T. Barré, Stanbridge, also expressed pleasure that he had to take part in the exercises of the day and he gave assurance of the profound interest that it carried there.

The band then played a march during which Mister J. Adélar Caron, of Woonsocket, R.I., secretary General of Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste of America, Dr. Georges A. Boucher, of Brockton, Mass., and friends came to Plattsburgh. They took their places on stage and Dr. Boucher gave his speech and read his poem. The poem and the speech had as its theme the history of the valley of Lake Champlain, the trials and the courage of first voyagers and the glorious accomplishment of their work in these primitive days. Dr. Boucher described with realism, the difficulties that Samuel Champlain had to overcome and his wonderful character, he mentioned the hardships of the first settlers, and he compared the natural beauty of our valley with that of the St. Lawrence.

Dr. Boucher is not only a refined speaker and full of fire, but he has some little capacity for ordinary poetry. His poem has the amplitude and some rythm and ease of expression that has earned him thunderous applause when he finished. Mister J. Adélar Caron spoke next. After having spoken rather long enough of the difficulties which drew on the road to Champlain's voyage of discovery and the strength of his character by overcoming obstacles, Mister Caron said in substance:

SPEECH BY MR CARON

"We are truly the spiritual children of Samuel Champlain, as well as men of his blood, and we inherit the problems and difficulties which they confronted. The only way that we have to cope with the task entrusted to us is to put our trust in God and then do our best. This celebration is a very excellent thing for the French and Americans also because it serves to unite them and to promote respect and trust.

"As citizens of the United States we have a duty to perform to our country, we also have an equal duty as Catholic and French. But the American flag is large enough to accommodate everyone, and duty that I just mentioned can be accomplished as needed and nobly by each man.

"It is the duty of French Canadians to keep their language and traditions, but it can be done without prejudice to their duty as Americans and not neglecting the language of that country. It is the duty of every French Canadian citizen to defend the flag, if necessary, and to show his loyalty by offering his life if its adopted country so requests. "

The Parade

The grand procession through the streets of local and foreign organizations was the main event of the celebration. The procession formed a long and splendid column and the line of march, which was very wide, was surrounded by a multitude of showing their admiration. The floats were particularly beautiful. In their number was particularly remarkable a allegorical representation of the discovery of the lake and the Champlain Valley. Although there was no price available for the floats, the popular vote would have given first place in the chariot of Champlain, which had been built and decorated under the auspices of the Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Burlington.

Here is the order of the parade:

Chief Organizing Officer Napoleon L'Heureux; his aides, Olivier Martin, John G. Bacon, Frank Robillard; a Platoon of police; the Sherman Band, Saint Joseph of Burlington with float; a Delegation of Canadian Artisans of Hochelaga; Canadian Delegation of Artisans No. 50 of Montreal, Canadian Delegation of Artisans No. 350 of Montreal, Canadian delegation of Artisans de Lévis. P. Q.; Delegation of Canadian Artisans No. 144, Quebec City; Knights of Columbus Burlington, Knights of Columbus of Saint-Jean, P. Q.; the Eagle Band "Eagles", Aerie No. 793 Burlington, Saint-Jean-Baptiste of Burlington, with float; Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Montpelier, Vermont; Alfa Camp, M.W.A., with float; delegation of the Alliance Nationale de Montréal; Association delegation Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Montreal; delegation of the French Chamber of Commerce in Montreal; Delegation of Union Saint-Pierre, Montreal; Court St. Joseph, Catholic Foresters, of Burlington, with float; Court Champlain, Catholic Foresters, Essex Junction; Court Fanny Allen, Catholic Foresters, Winooski, Vermont; delegation of the Saint-Lambert Court, Montreal; and the Guard of Foresters of America, Nashua, N.-H.; industrial float of Swift & Company; Philharmonic Band of Saint-Hyacinthe; Union Saint-Joseph de Saint-Hyacinthe; Honor Guard St. Jean-Baptiste, Central Falls, R.I; the St. Lawrence Council, Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste, of Winooski; de Goësbriand Council; Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Burlington delegation of Councils following the Union St. Jean-Baptiste of America: No. 1, Lowell Mass., No. 135, Pittsfield, Mass., No. 135, Holyoke, Mass., No. 216, Woonsocket, RI; No. 1, Holyoke, Mass.; No. 63, New Haven, Conn.; and Ware, Mass.; members of the clergy, the mayor, city council, the speakers of the day and other distinguished personages in cars.

AT BURLINGTON

THE FESTIVAL IN BURLINGTON

At Burlington, the third centenary celebrations were opened by imposing religious ceremonies. Monsignor Cloarec, Administrator of the Diocese of Burlington, vacant following the death of Bishop Michaud, celebrated Mass at Saint-Joseph (Franco-American parish) in the presence of numerous clergy and a great attendance of the faithful.

The Reverend Father Aubin preached the sermon of the occasion on Champlain. Monsignor Racicot, Auxiliary Bishop of Montreal, administered the sacrament of confirmation to one hundred children. At the St. Mary Cathedral, Monsignor Walsh, of Troy, NY, delivered a sermon on "Champlain and his voyages of exploration in the New World. " At four o'clock, in the afternoon, on a platform erected at the lakeside near the train station, the great religious ceremony of the day took place, attended by four thousand people. On a high platform, facing bleachers, Monsignor Cloarec, Administrator of the Diocese of Burlington, Monsignor Racicot, titular Bishop of Pogle, Monsignor Burke of Albany, Monsignor Conroy of Ogdensburg, Monsignor Riley of Schenectady, and several high ranking members of the clergy, took their places with great pomp in roman-crimson robes trimmed in red, black robes trimmed in crimson, etc..

The Cathedral choir and Saint-Joseph's choir, accompanied by harmonium, sang two psalms of Vespers, after which Monsignor Cloarec speaking in French, gave a lecture on Champlain. Then Monsignor Burke spoke, in English, praising the discoverer of the lake that bears his name. The pretty town of Burlington was all decorated with patriotic banners and light displays which were illuminated in the evening.

AT ISLE LA MOTTE

It is without contradiction that at Isle La Motte, situated almost at the entrance of Lake Champlain, a ceremony took place of which religious Franco-Americans will retain the most touching memories. Isle La Motte, which is about seven miles long, is located some distance from Vermont, and belongs to that state. It bears the name of the brave Captain La Motte, of the famous regiment of Carignan, who came to establish a station in 1665 and built a fort dedicated to Sainte-Anne, to be able to protect themselves against the fierce Iroquois and the Mohawks; this fort was finally abandoned in 1670.

Before Captain La Motte, Samuel Champlain came to plant a cross on this corner of earth, which can be rightly called the cradle of Franco-American history. Indeed, it is this island which first struck the eyes of the great discoverer, when he broached the mouth of the Richelieu River, in early July 1609. It is on the Isle La Motte that, fifty-seven years later, in 1666, that the chaplain of the regiment of Carignan celebrated Mass for the first time on New England soil. Isle La Motte is served by and entrusted to the pastor of Alburg, Vermont, but the fathers of St. Edmond have a monastery and a chapel where many pilgrimages occur. The location of the former Fort Sainte-Anne is marked by a cedar hedge. A Way of the Cross marks the location of each of its bastions. A few steps away, on the shore, stands a large cross at the place where Champlain had likely planted the first. It was on a beautiful day, that a Pontifical Mass was celebrated outdoors. About fifteen hundred people attended this beautiful event.

Before the modest chapel which was erected in honor of good St. Anne, by the Fathers of Saint-Edmond, the crowd of faithful stood in pious recollection for nearly four hours. In the front row, kneeling on a priedieu we could see the Governor of the State of Vermont, Mr. Prouty, a broad-minded Protestant who had already given another proof, the day before, of his liking for Catholics by attending the centenary of the Church of Swanton.

Monsignor Roy, Auxiliary Bishop of Quebec, officiated in the absence of Monsignor Begin, who had originally accepted the invitation of the Catholics of the states of New York and Vermont, but at the last hour, had been detained by a sudden indisposition. Monsignor Cloarec, Administrator of the Diocese of Burlington, was also present at the ceremony, as well as the Most Reverend Abbot-Bishop of Oka, Dom Antoine, who attended the celebration. Monsignor Lindsey, arch-deacon of Quebec, and Rev. C. E. Laramée, pastor of Redford, New York, acted as deacon and sub-deacon. Father Marion, pastor of Sainte-Anne in Ottawa, was master of ceremonies. The choir of St Peter's Church, of Plattsburgh, New York, made up of men and young boys, under the leadership of Mr. Wilfred Tremblay, sang in a wonderful fashion the 'Mass of Bartholomeus' with orchestral accompaniment. The honor guard of St. John Baptiste of Plattsburgh, lead by Mr. J. A. Gingras, rendered military honors at the most holy sacrament.

It was already past eleven o'clock in the morning when the ceremony began. First there was a reading of an address by R. P. Prével, superior-general of the Congregation of the Fathers of Saint-Edmond. This dignified religious person came from England for this solemn occasion. He read in a vibrant voice a magnificent address, where after paying tribute to Monsignor Roy, and also to governor Prouty of Vermont, he retraced in happy words the sublime epic of Champlain. Monsignor Roy responded to the Welcome speech of R. P. Prével. In a beautiful improvisation, he relived the main events which always are the illustrious history of Isle La Motte, first discovered by Champlain in 1609, then the first Mass in 1666, and finally the visit made in 1668 by Monsignor Laval in a frail canoe, to confirm the sixty soldiers of Fort Sainte-Anne. Monsignor Roy found it providential that 241 years after this first visit of Bishop Laval in a wild place, he, his successor, presided at such an imposing religious ceremony, before a crowd of so many faithful.

"The tree of Christ," he says, " is never a sterile tree, it always bears fruit." The prelate then greeted the government representatives, especially the governor of Vermont, stating that he was pleased that their breadth of vision allowed them to join forces in this French and Catholic celebration.

“OURS” AT BURLINGTON

Burlington was incorporated on 7 June 1763. The city is spread out over 36 square miles and is divided into 72 sections of 320 acres each. The population in 1791 was 332, and it was 18,640 in 1900. The War of 1812-15 gave Americans the opportunity to prove their valor against England. Three English ships had in fact to beat a retreat before the fire of American cannons placed at Battery Park.

One of the main institutions of Burlington is the orphanage run by the Sisters of Charity, founded on 3 May 1854 by Bishop de Goës Briand. In 1830 there was one Catholic Church in Burlington, the first priest who came to settle here was Rev. J. O'Callaghan; today there are two French Canadian churches. The first bishop, Louis de Goës Briand was consecrated on 29 July 1853. The first Canadian church, St. Joseph parish, was founded in 1850. The current pastor, Msgr Cloarec, is also administrator of the diocese, since the death of Bishop Michaud. The other Canadian church, the parish of Saint-Anthony, was founded in 1902; Rev. Plamondon is the dedicated pastor.

The Burlington schools are: St. Mary Academy, opened in 1889, and led by the Sisters of Mercy, the Cathedral school; the Saint Joseph School, directed by the sisters of Sacred Heart; Nazareth school. Burlington has a number of fraternal benefit societies, academic institutions, and houses of refuge. The fact is that it is surprising to find in a city where a relatively small population has erected such a large number of schools. It is because we find dozens of Americans who are as generous as they are wealthy.