

From these forts, de Courcelles and Le Moyne started on their expedition against the Mohawks in 1666 and 1690, and from them poor Father Bressani went forward to be tortured by the savages and to be rescued by the Lutheran Dutch.

Schuyler in 1690 and again in 1691, swept the surrounding country with fire and sword; Nicholson pushed back the weaker numbers of de Ramesay in 1709 from the fort de Chambly, and Haviland came down the Richelieu the year following the taking of Quebec, captured the forts, and hastened forward to the surrender at Montreal of all that remained of French dominion in Canada.

Here again came Montgomery to take fort de Chambly in 1775 on his way to Montreal, and to his early death before the walls of Quebec.

It was during a raid by the Iroquois, in 1692, that Madeleine de Vercheres, a girl of 14 years, took charge of the fort of that name which was built on the seigniory adjoining that of de Chambly, her father being absent. Her garrison consisted of two terrified soldiers, one man servant, one refugee settler, an old man of 80 years, and two small boys, her brothers. She gave the command, placed each at his post and misled the savages by a show of imaginary force, and watching day and night, held them at bay until relieved the following week by troops from Montreal.

A similar instance of bravery occurred during the patriotic uprising in 1837, when the feeble and old Monsieur de Bartzeh and his daughter Caroline, defied the rebel horde alone and unaided until their rescue came. Her son, Mr. F. de Bartzeh Monk, is today one of the distinguished leaders of His Majesty's loyal opposition in our House of Commons.

It was in the neighborhood of the Richelieu that the rebellion of 1837 was hatched, and developed its greatest fury, at St. Denis and St. Charles, and it was from the fort of Chambly and of St. John that the loyal troops went forth to crush the ill-formed array of misguided and deserted farmers.

The war of 1812 had demonstrated the necessity of improving the navigation of the Richelieu, and the paths which led on flood and field to gory victory, were also found to be the ways of progress and commerce. Sorel is distant 400 miles from the harbor of New York as the crow flies. It is also 400 miles from the mouth of the St. Lawrence. The route along the Richelieu, and up Lake Champlain and down the Hudson River, is almost a straight line. The Champlain canal unites the two latter bodies of water, and the only impediment along the way consists of a shoal at St. Ours and the rapids of Chambly.