

# The Saturday Reader.

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## CANADIAN BRIGANDS.

A THRILLING NARRATIVE  
Of the exploits of the  
NOTORIOUS GANG OF ROBBERS  
Who infested  
QUEBEC  
In 1834 and 1835.

Translated for the SATURDAY READER from a  
French pamphlet published in 1837.

### CAMBRAY AND HIS ACCOMPLICES.

#### CHAPTER V.

Expedition to Carouge.—Mrs. O.—A practical joke—  
Burglary at Paradis', Charlesbourg.

"Arrived at Quebec, Cambray and I recommenced our visits to Mrs. A.'s, where we found Mathieu and G.—n still residing, with whom we renewed our intimacy, and plotted further depredations. Among other plans, it was proposed that we should visit an old man named Paradis, who lived at Caprouge, so we were told, and who, it was said, possessed a large amount of money. Cambray and myself undertook to make all the necessary enquiries, and be ready by the next day; this we did, but with scarcely any success. On coming to the place, we found that Paradis had left some time before, and that he then lived at Charlesbourg. An old woman, Mrs. O., occupied the house with her daughter, where they kept a sort of tavern. As soon as we got back to the city, we hastened to our rendezvous, and informed our associates of the particulars.

"*A propos,*" said Mathieu, "the old woman you speak of ought to have laid up a little money; she and her daughter have been some time in business. What do you say to try that casket to-night?"

"What would be the use of it?" said I. "I know the poor woman well, and am satisfied there is not a half-penny to be found in the house unless, indeed, the little we may have left."

"Never mind, we can try."

"And try we did. We burst open the door with iron levers, and in we went, without further ceremony.

"The poor women, frightened almost out of their lives, escaped through a window at the back. We pursued, and obliged them to return, though sorely against their will; then, opening the cellar door, we pushed them in, where Cambray and Mathieu followed.

"The cellar is the most valuable room in the house," said Gagnon; "we could never have done without it."

"All this took place in the dark, a most necessary precaution with us, considering we never made use of masks.

"Our birds caged, we struck a light, and whilst our companions were indulging in their interesting *l'été-a-l'été*, we saw no reason why we should not enjoy ourselves too; accordingly, we placed a table over the cellar trap, and having furnished it with edibles and drinkables, down we sat, and enjoyed ourselves heartily. Need I say our friends soon joined us, and we had a roaring time of it.

"Supper over, we loaded the trap-door with everything we could lay our hands on—stove, boxes, pots, stewpans—everything. This completed, we set to work to pillage the house, and having appropriated the best articles of clothing we could find, together with a few pieces of silver, we exhorted our fair prisoners to bear patiently with their lot, and bade them farewell.

"The following day was dedicated to a new excursion.

"Cambray and I went to hunt up old Paradis, whom we found with little difficulty; and Cambray, by way of accounting for his presence, asked him the way to Lake Beauport.

"But we did not, however, succeed in informing ourselves sufficiently with respect to the general arrangements of the premises, and Gagnon and I returned the next day to complete our survey. This time Gagnon pretended he wanted to find *Craig's mill*, showing at the same time the address, which had been written on a piece of paper; for my part, I kept out of the way, fearing he might recognize my figure. Having returned to Cambray's, and acquainted him with our observations, that evening we all started on our expedition. This happened, I believe, on the 3rd February, 1835.

"Crowbars in hand, we threw ourselves all together on the door, which gave way instantaneously to the shock, and in a moment we were in the first room. Judge of our surprise on entering, to find an old grey-headed man on his knees, trembling fearfully, his hands raised to Heaven, to whom he was crying, 'mercy, mercy—a thousand times mercy!'

"This man was an old beggar, who had taken up his lodgings there for the night. His fears and his prayers set us all in a roar of laughter. One of us seized the fellow, another rushed at old Paradis, who was in bed at the time, dragged him out by the neck, and a third opening the cellar trap, they were both hurled in to keep each other company.

"I sought to enter a little sleeping apartment, at the door of which I found myself.

"Don't go in there," said Cambray; "let us do the thing orderly, and divide fairly and brotherly."

"Leave me alone," said I, "there's a pretty girl inside—the niece of the old man."

"Stay with us—stay with us, I tell you, or you're a dead man!"

"I was obliged to obey. On breaking open a box, we found a great quantity of gold coin. This Cambray put in his pocket.

"Having made the stove red hot, we determined upon taking Paradis out of the cellar, and seating him upon it. This was to induce a speedy confession on his part with regard to his places of concealment.

"It was an operation we had frequently to resort to in the cases of the unruly—the naughty—children who did not submit gracefully to our persuasiveness; but we were startled by the discovery that some one had escaped by the window of the room which I had intended entering; the girl, doubtless.

"This gave us so much alarm that we made our escape as hastily as possible. When we were at some distance, Gagnon shewed us a pistol he had wrenched from Paradis.

"On the road home, Cambray, coming close to me, said softly, almost in a whisper, 'Let us try and humbug Gagnon and Mathieu; here, hide this,' and he threw me eighteen doubloons and fifteen dollars. The remainder he slipped adroitly into the linings of his trousers and into his boots.

"Arrived at his residence, he drew forth a few dollars; he gave sixteen to Gagnon and Mathieu as their share. For my part, I received forty-eight, and he retained the balance, which must have been upwards of six hundred dollars, seeing that we had laid Paradis under a contribution of one hundred and seventy pounds.

"Matters continued pretty much in this way; when we were in humour, we went on with our work. On one occasion we broke into the office of a Mr. Parke, a merchant in the Lower Town, and there we found little silver and a telescope,

which Cambray appropriated, 'to gratify a whim,' he said.

"Up to this time we lived in the greatest hardihood. We were suspected by nobody, and we had the pleasure each day of listening to the details of our brigandage, and of moralizing thereon, Cambray and I mixing with the most respectable society. When suspicion became aroused, and we were incarcerated, the telescope, of which I have spoken, was found and identified. Nevertheless Cambray escaped punishment in this instance.

"Emboldened by these successes, we did not stop, but pushed our robberies even into the Chapel of the Congregation, the details of which audacious attempt may be found in the trial of Gagnon."

#### CHAPTER VI.

Sacrilegious Robbery of the Chapel of "La Congregation"—Trial of Gagnon—Verdict.

So far we have taken our narrative from the lips of the witness. We will now, for the moment, adopt another form, as being suited to our purpose, and obtain our details from the trial itself, namely, the sacrilegious robbery of the R. O. Chapel of the Congregation.

During the night of the 9th and 10th February, 1835, the R. C. Chapel of the Congregation of Quebec, was forcibly entered, and value stolen therefrom to the amount of £92 10s., namely: a silver lamp, £20; a crucifix, £10; a statue of the Virgin, £50; four sconces, £10; and two candlesticks, £2 10s.

On the 29th March, 1837, Pierre Gagnon was arraigned before the Criminal Court, charged with having been an accomplice in the robbery of the Congregational Chapel, together with Charles Cambray and George Waterworth.

The accused was a man young in years, but aged in crime; nor was this his first appearance at the criminal bar. Repulsive in appearance, and possessed of a harsh and disagreeable voice, it was evident his career had been nursed within the walls of a prison, and was likely to be expiated only on the gallows.

Messrs. Cazault, chaplain; Joseph Dubois, sexton; Joseph Peticlerc, syndic; and Etienne Metivier, watchman, were held as witnesses to testify, both to the robbery and the value of the effects stolen; and in addition to these, was George Waterworth, an accomplice in the crime, who had turned king's evidence, in the hope of pardon.

In the month of February, 1835, the witness, Waterworth, resided with Cambray.

At about eight o'clock on the evening of the robbery, they went to Mrs. Anderson's, where they found Mathieu and Gagnon, who still lived in the same place. Having drunk together, Cambray entered into conversation with Gagnon and Mathieu, but in a very low tone of voice; taking an opportunity, when Mrs. Anderson was absent for a moment, the two last named slipped out and returned shortly afterwards with a crowbar. They then left the premises, and walked through St. Louis Gate towards the Esplanade; it was not, however, until they arrived at the chapel that they fully resolved upon entering it. But there were difficulties in the way—people were seen to remain near it for some time—so, to avoid suspicion, the robbers continued their walk towards St. John's Gate, and then returned to the spot in question by a different route. The people had gone. Mathieu and Gagnon then approached the door of the building, and worked some time to effect an entrance. As soon as they had succeeded in forcing it open, one of them returned to where Cambray was, and said to him: "Now that the door is open, you may walk in." The witness