

A SIMCOE RELIC.

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Copy of short journal contained in a letter addressed by Mrs. Simcoe to her husband, the Lieutenant-Governor, in 1796, when on her way in a covered boat from Kingston to Montreal and Quebec.

Mrs. Jameson in her well-known work "Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada," informs us that for "performing the bold feat of descending the rapids of the Sault Ste. Marie in a canoe, she received the Otchipway name Wah-sah-ge-wah-no-qua—the woman of the bright foam, by which title she was afterwards known among the Chippewas."

This was in 1837.

Many years previously, viz., in 1796, a lady in Canada earned without receiving a title like this, for a similar but much more audacious exploit, by the descent in an ordinary bateau of the rapids of the River St. Lawrence, from Kingston to Cornwall, and thence onward to Montreal and Quebec. These are the same swift and turbulent waters that drew from the poet Moore, whose fortune it was to traverse them in 1806, his graphic allusions to "Cadaraqui's lordly tide" as it flows through "mossy woods, through islets flowering fair," on which occasion also he rescued from obscurity and made popular for ever amongst us the air and words of the "Canadian Boat Song."

The "woman of the bright foam" who so bravely performed the descent of the St. Lawrence in a small boat was, in this instance, the wife of the first Lieutenant-Governor of the Province, Mrs. Simcoe, of whom the Duke de Liancourt, in his published Travels in America, spoke so admiringly, as rendering such valuable assistance to her husband in the execution of his duties.

Mr. D. B. Read, in his Life and Times of Governor Simcoe, page 138, observes of her that she "could draw and paint well, was a good maker of maps, and was an accomplished and accurate artist." Some proofs of the last mentioned fact are to be found in a journal which I possess, kept during this very descent of the waters of the St. Lawrence in 1796, the text of the Journal being interspersed here and there with slight sketches of objects in the surrounding scenery.

As this Journal must possess an interest for persons who concern themselves in our Canadian past I here transcribe it, regretting that after all it is but fragmentary.

The lady appears to have been sent forward with the expectation that the Governor and his suite would follow in due time, *en route* to Quebec for his final departure from Canada. The Journal is in fact a letter to her husband giving an account of her progress from day to day as far as Cornwall, whence the document seems to have been sent back to York or Niagara by a returning messenger. The next letter, were