

"From there the Indians enter into a river (the Long Sault), about one league wide and a few leagues long, and then they reach a lake of four or five leagues in length. At the other end of that lake are five rapids, measuring from the first to the last from 25 to 30 leagues: the canoes are carried by land at various places during travel through these rapids, and at two other places the men only disembark and push the vessels in shallow water. None of these are so hard to pass as is Sault St. Louis of Montreal.

"Arriving at a lake, which is about eighty leagues in length, there are a great number of islands, and up to the other end the water is drinkable and the winter mild. Past the lake is seen a rather high fall with a small volume of water. The portage by land is about one-quarter of a league. Then comes another lake, some sixty leagues long, of which the water is drinkable. The upper end of this last lake turns into a detroit or strait of two leagues wide and which goes inland about 15 or 16 leagues; but this is not sure, because the Indians who gave me the above information have not gone further than the detroit, and never saw any man who has seen the big lake from which the water flows towards the strait. That lake is so large that nobody would dare to navigate it, except near the shore. During the summer season the sun sets north of that lake, and in the winter about the middle of it. The water is like that of the ocean, not drinkable."

The reader has certainly recognized Lake St. Francis, the Galops Rapids, Thousand Islands, Lake Ontario, Niagara Falls, Lake Erie, Detroit River and Lake Huron. The salt water of the latter cannot be accounted for, unless the Indians spoke of the nation of Stinking Water, which was inhabited west of the lake. The Indians who explained these matters to Champlain were Algonquins from Quebec and Three Rivers, possibly some from Allumette Island also, but this is doubtful. None of the Hurons of Georgian Bay had any communication with the lower St. Lawrence before 1609. Therefore, those who spoke to Champlain merely expressed what had been told to them, added to their personal experience.

Niagara Falls is said to be sometimes without water, when a strong wind blows against the current of upper Niagara River, but this only happens once in fifty or one hundred years, and cannot be the reason why the Indians stated there was very little water at the famous cataract. I rather think that in using Algonquian language, some misunderstanding was created between Champlain and the good Indians.

They told also, he says, that the St. Lawrence ran from Niagara Falls into the direction of Montreal, Quebec and Gaspé, but that Lake Erie, River Detroit and Lake Huron were somewhat of a standstill, likely because they had a discharge either north or south by which the water escapes the attraction of the Niagara. Champlain asked them whether any river flowed into Lake Erie, and they answered there were several