

## OLD ST. MALO AND JACQUES CARTIER'S MANOR HOUSE.

In looking over a book full of cuttings from old French newspapers, I have found a description of St. Malo and Limoilon, written nearly twenty years ago by a gentleman of Montreal, and which in an English garb will, I trust, be of interest to some of the history-loving readers of the REVIEW.

I write from St. Malo; candidly, I regret not having come here first. So many things recall my own country. I cannot go out of the hotel without thinking of Canada, the names of the streets, the names on the signs, in fact, everything here speaks to me of Quebec and Montreal. Take, for instance, *Rue de la Paroisse*:—A. Laconte, bookseller; Melle Aubert, lacemaker; opposite, Morin, pastry-cook, a little farther on Papin, shoemaker Madame Levesque, milliner. In another street I read on the signs these familiar names; Martin, Germain, Lavigne, St. Denis, Lemoine, Lenormant, Renaud, Hamel, Frottier, La Chapelle, Gauthier, Sylvestre, Lesperance, Lament, Deschamps, Guilbault, Lemay, Delorme Roy, Auger, Lesage. Could anything be more Canadian than these names?

I notice the absence of others such as Archambault, Senecal, Hudon, etc. I suppose they are Norman.

The little town of St. Malo, with a population of ten thousand souls, has the dignity of having been the birth-place of many great men. Of Duguay-Trouin, the celebrated mariner, of Surcouf, the legendary sea-wolf, of Lammeuais, who, though a great man for years, afterwards fell so low, of Dr. Broussais, of Chateaubriand, the beloved writer of our collegiate years, and finally of him so deeply cherished in all our hearts—Jacques Cartier.

Thanks to the politeness and amiability of the librarian of St. Malo, Monsieur Fleury, I have seen all that the town and its environs contain in the way of souvenirs of Jacques Cartier.

Here in the town is the site of the house wherein he was born; the house itself was less fortunate than the homes of those other men I have mentioned, as they still stand, whereas it has disappeared. Jacques Cartier street recalls the fact that here the discoverer of Canada first saw the day.

It was in the town museum that I found the most interesting souvenir of Jacques Cartier.

You know that during a voyage he was obliged to abandon "La Petite Hermine," one of his vessels, in the River St. Charles, and you are doubtless sufficiently well up in contemporary history to remember that three hundred years after its abandonment, the remains of "La Petite Hermine," were discovered in the St. Charles at the mouth of the little river Laitet. They were divided into two parts, one remained at Quebec and was burned in the fire which consumed the Parliament buildings, the other was sent to St. Malo, and there has been arranged as a sort of trophy or monument, in the shape of a pyramid. At the top is a block with some nails, below are the debris of the knees of the vessel and its ribs. The body of the pyramid consists of pieces of side planks and iron.

I copied the inscription upon the principal piece, which is as follows:

TO THE MEMORY OF JACQUES CARTIER AND THE BRAVE MARINERS, HIS COMPANIONS.

Underneath we read:

Remains of the vessel *Petite Hermine*, of St. Malo, which Jacques Cartier was obliged to abandon in Canada, April 1556.

The skeleton of this vessel, which was only sixty tons, was recovered after a lapse of three hundred years. It was buried in five feet of mud.

These relics (souvenirs), were presented by the Historical Society of Quebec to the town of St. Malo, in 1845.

I have also seen the portrait of Jacques Cartier by Riss, it is evidently the original of the engravings so well known to us in Canada.

And I have made the acquaintance of an Anglican parson at St. Malo. He belongs to the High Church and wears a habit resembling a *soutane*, and a silk sash knotted at one side. He told me that the office of his church greatly resembles that of ours:—"It is the one which the

English Church adopted at the time of the Reformation," said he.

I would like to give you a description of this old town, with its walls twenty feet wide, its narrow, crooked streets, and its tranquil air of antiquity, it reminds me greatly of Quebec—but that must wait for another day.

In the meantime I enclose a plan of the town, a photograph of its fortifications, the work of Vauban, which were regarded as impregnable until the invention of Krupp's cannon, and also a photograph of the fine harbour of St. Malo, and of the Cathedral.

Just arrived from Limoilon.\* I have visited Jacques Cartier's house from attic to cellar, and am enchanted to have seen it. It was yesterday that I enjoyed the pleasure. At an early hour I set off, after having, according to custom, taken a dip in the domain of Neptune. (St. Malo is a magnificent bathing-place.)

I went to St. Ideux to pick up my friend Mr. Fleury, the librarian. On the threshold of his home, surrounded by his family, he received me with open arms. After partaking of an excellent breakfast, enlivened by witty conversation, and washed down with some capital Bordeaux, we entered the carriage which I had hired at St. Malo. It was a strong old coach, one that might almost have carried Jacques Cartier from his residence to the quay when he set sail from St. Malo, to take, in the name of Francis I., his share in the heritage of Father Adam, which, he said, should not be left altogether to the rival sovereign, Charles V.

In the course of time we arrived at Limoilon. It is a good sized building and in perfect preservation, although the proprietor apparently does not go to much expense in keeping it up. I send you the plan of it which I hastily sketched in my note-book. It is, I think, correct.

The present caretaker, a farmer named Mace, occupies the basement, the other flats are used as store-houses. In the tower, which you will notice to the right, is a winding staircase leading to the garret, and giving access to each storey.

The reception-room, or *salon*, is on the first floor; in it is a superb fire-place quite six feet in height by eight in width. It is about four feet deep and is indeed a monument. It is in stone and artistically carved.

Upon the wall we see the arms of the former master of the house, they are chipped in all directions—the hand of the Vandals of 93 has been here. These arms are supported by two kneeling female figures—I hold that they are mermaids and Mr. Fleury is of my opinion; it seems to me that mermaids would be suitable for a mariner.

In the garret the beams and rafters are of oak and in perfect preservation, although more than three hundred years old. The frame of the roof is so constructed as to defy the ravages of time for three centuries to come. I broke a little morsel of oak from a rafter and send it to you so that you may say that you possess a fragment of the roof which sheltered Jacques Cartier.

Mr. Mace tells me that a Mr. Tarouilly is the proprietor. Mr. Mace has been caretaker of the house for thirty-eight years. To my question as to whether he often had visitors, he answered: "You are the second, the first came here, perhaps eighteen years ago. He was a minister of the Canadian Government, he went all over the house just as you did, and took the greatest interest in every detail." I presume he referred to Sir George Cartier.

I wish I could send the REVIEW a picture of the honoured spot above described. It is not unknown down here in Lower Canada. The square courtyard, the solid grey stone house, with a wing almost as large as the main building, the turret with its hooded roof, the small deep window openings, the thickset chimneys, and in the foreground the quaint old Breton well. Then all around the prim, trim out-buildings, and over the boundary wall of loosely piled stones, the level roadway with its great shade trees, the road that leads "à St. Malo, beau Port de Mer!"

LORRAINE.

\* Limoilon is distant ten kilometres from St. Malo.