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THE COUNT DE PUISAYE.

A Forgotten Page of Canadian History.

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Although the population of our Province of Ontario has been mainly recruited from the Mother Land (after the first settlement of the U. E. Loyalists), there have been, at different times, groups of settlers in particular spots, as of Highlanders in Glengarry under Bishop McDonnell, of English agricultural laborers, of those who fled from the famine and fever in Ireland after the Repeal of the Corn Laws. There was, too, a German settlement in the year 1794 under Berezy, of sixty families settled near Markham; we also read of Governor Simcoe bringing from Russia men to teach the cultivation of hemp, and in the archives is a notice of a letter from the widow of one of these, her husband having died of a broken heart, his services being rejected when he reached London. And in our own day, though not in our province, the settlement at Gimli, Manitoba, of Icelanders, some of whom were remembered by Lord Dufferin, he having met them, described in his inimitable "Letters from High Latitudes"; and, later, the settlement of Doukhobors in the North-west. But it is not generally known that, after that frightful convulsion known as the French Revolution, when heads fell and blood flowed like water, there was an attempt to bring a colony of French refugees to find a home in Upper Canada, not far from this spot. That it failed is certain, and but few traces now remain.

Many years ago, when I heard the phrase used, "near the old French count's house," referring to a building about three miles from Niagara, on the river road to Queenston, the words conveyed nothing definite, little more than a legend or myth, with slight foundation in fact—little imagining that, at a later date, I should be engaged

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in tracing from various sources the history of the leader of this colonizing scheme, and the fate of his company of Frenchmen. The sources of information are fourfold: First, tradition; which, although having a substratum of fact, cannot always be relied upon, as from an unimportant circumstance a wonderful structure of mingled fact and fancy often arises. Second, actual history; references in works of that day relating to it. Third, original letters and documents preserved in the Archives of Canada, or in the possession of private individuals. Fourth, traces left; as of houses built, or pictures of that period.

We find that the Count de Puisaye was an historical character mentioned in Lamartine, Thiers, Carlyle, Allison, the Annual Register, in their account of the French Revolution, but it is from the Dominion Archives in Ottawa that we derive the most complete and accurate information of his connection with the history of our country.

When in Ottawa a few months ago, in that wonderful room, lined from floor to ceiling with bound volumes of original documents, public and private letters, containing the hidden history of our country, I found references to the Count de Puisaye, and since then found, in the voluminous reports of several years, the history of the Count. From all these sources, we see a noble, pathetic and tragic figure, a man who had suffered much—had seen his friends of noble birth and his king and queen perish by the guillotine; in his command of the army in La Vendee had seen his force scattered and defeated; worse than all, was called a traitor by his own party, his name held in execration (unjustly, as we believe), his scheme in a foreign land fail, some of his party blaming him with misrepresentation, his last days in England sad and lonely, embittered with controversy, and he dying in obscurity.

The youngest son of a noble family, Count Joseph de Puisaye was born in 1755, intended for the Church, but entering the army at eighteen, soon had a command in the Swiss Guards. In the Convention of the States General, he was the representative of the nobles of La Perche, and at first took the popular side, advocated reforms, and supported the demands of the Tiers Etats, but, alarmed at the excesses of the ultras, was soon engaged in raising an army to secure the safety of the king in 1791. In 1792 he was obliged to flee, a price being set on his head, but he was the heart and soul of the rising in Brittany, and in 1794 was in communication with the British Government, and urged the landing of 10,000 men, with which he would answer for the re-establishment of the Royalist cause. Accordingly, a French corps of

6,000 *émigrés* in the pay of Great Britain, with a force of artillery from London and arms and clothing for 80,000 men to be raised in France, landed; one corps under command of the Count de Puisaye. From the first this seems to have been an ill-fated expedition. The leaders quarrelled as to which was to have the chief command. On landing at Quiberon Bay, it was found that the force in the interior had received a check, orders were sent from the Royalist Commission in Paris to attempt no movement till the arrival of the fleet.

Notwithstanding the heroic bravery of the emigrants, the royal cause sustained a crushing defeat, and, after the capitulation at Quiberon, the Convention ordered a massacre of the prisoners, which inhuman order was carried out, as told most vividly in Allison's history of Europe. For this defeat De Puisaye was blamed, the absurd charge being believed that he had acted in complicity with the British Government and betrayed the cause of France, and his influence was completely destroyed, and, after attempting unsuccessfully to form another force, we find that in 1797 he applied to the British Government to form a Royalist settlement in Canada. For the description of the part he took in France, we are chiefly indebted to the lucid summary of our accomplished archivist, Dr. Brymner, but a few quotations may be made from European historians. Carlyle speaks of the Count in sneering terms, but we know that the strenuous Chelsea sage was sometimes unjust and intolerant. First, in 1793, when "he was roused from his bed and galloped away without his boots"; "and second, in 1795, at Quiberon, where "war thunder mingled with the war of the mighty main, and such a morning light as has seldom dawned, debarkation hurled back into its boats, or into the devouring billows with wreck and wail; in one word, a *ci-devant* Pusesaye as totally ineffectual here as at Calvados." Lamartine, too, does scant justice, ranking De Puisaye as an adventurer rather than a hero, yet acknowledges that he was at once an orator, a diplomatist, and a soldier, but says that "he spent a whole year concealed in a cavern in the midst of the forests of Brittany," but we recall that many heroes of ancient and modern days have been compelled to hide in caves, whence they sometimes issued to the dismay and loss of their pursuers. Thiers, however, in his history of the French Revolution, does him more justice, as "with great intelligence and extraordinary skill in uniting the elements of a party, he combined extreme activity of mind and vast ambition," and "it was certain that Puisaye had done all that lay in his power." Allison says

in his "History of Europe": "Puisaye, whose courage rose with the difficulties with which he was surrounded, resolved to make an effort to raise the blockade. Full of joy and hope, he gave the signal for the assault, and the emigrant battalions advanced with the utmost intrepidity to the foot of the redoubts." And in a letter, 30th July, 1798, from Right Hon. Mr. Windham to President Russell, the first part of it is devoted to defending the character of the Count de Puisaye. This he does in the strongest terms, as he had known him through all the transactions: "On the whole of his conduct I can speak with a degree of knowledge that does not admit of the possibility of my being mistaken, and I would vindicate him from every shadow of imputation attempted to be fixed upon him, but in the strongest manner assert his merits, knowing the calumnies circulated against him are unfounded, and incurred by conduct which we must feel to be highly meritorious."

Bonnechose, in "Lazare Hoche," refers to De Puisaye, and defends his conduct at Quiberon: "Few men have shown more indefatigable activity, as much adaptability, as persevering a purpose, as great firmness, or were as well fitted to triumph over all obstacles. . . The most skilful was the Count, who, in London, where he had been for six months, held in his hands all the threads of the web woven so skilfully. . . His flight should not be considered as an act of treachery."

All this evidence must surely vindicate the Count, and show that he was innocent and, like many others, suffered the fate of the unsuccessful—to be blamed.

But we come now to his connection with Canada, and the history of his abortive attempt to found a military colony, which is little known.

Britain, that asylum of the exiles of all lands, was generous in material help, and we find this given as a reason for the colonizing scheme, that the country would thus be relieved of heavy payments to support the poor among the *émigrés*. In the archives there is a sketch, "political and financial," of the proposed settlement, undated and unsigned, but it is believed that it was drawn up by De Puisaye. It is a well-written, business-like document, giving reasons for the formation, of what to consist, how denominated, when and by what means carried into execution, on what fund are first advances taken, how is the land to be cleared, how are requisite buildings to be constructed, where are the workmen to be found, of what number is the force to consist. "British generosity has already shown itself in a conspicuous light by

providing, in a temporary manner, for the relief of those unfortunate victims of the French Revolution, to whom the British Government has granted an asylum. I am ignorant of the precise number of emigrants now living on the generosity of Britain. I only know the sum allotted for their existence. The outline of the plan was to form in the southern part of Canada a settlement for French emigrants, sufficient means of subsistence granted them, and sufficient land to provide for their maintenance distributed among them, all expenses for the first three years advanced by Government, after that the proprietors to pay to the Governor of Canada one-seventh of their crops till full payment of the advance was made. The fund for the maintenance of the emigrants in Britain to be called on for the first advance of fifteen thousand pounds. The work of clearing the land to be done by soldiers, the force was to consist of two battalions, two hundred men to do military service, and the rest to clear the land and construct buildings, part of the force to be sent on ahead to construct barracks. Two hundred pounds to be provided for each farm for building, tools, furniture, clearing land (twenty acres), the priests under forty years might assist in their own buildings, and in the labor least fatiguing of husbandry. The emigrants were the first year not to exceed three or four hundred. The colonel of the regiment to be at the head of the colony under the Governor-General."

This plan reads well on paper, but like many such, the realization fell far short of the anticipation, as instead of three or four hundred, only forty-four embarked, and several of these soon dropped out, and many returned the next year.

In a letter from the Duke of Portland to President Russell, July 5th, 1798, is mentioned that M. de Puisaye, with about forty French Royalists, is about to embark, land is to be given them in the proportions granted to the American Loyalists, M. de Puisaye to be ranked as a field officer, others in proportion, and the rest as privates, they were to be furnished in Britain with the necessary funds. Another paper gives the regulations for the colony, the corps to consist of major, commandant, two captains, two lieutenants, four sub-lieutenants, one adjutant. All to have been field officers previous to 1798; one Q.M., one chaplain, one surgeon, one surgeon's mate, six sergeants, eight corporals, one hundred privates; the term of service to be three years. Two days' work for the officers in the colony, four days for each individual, one day for religious and military duty. The grant of lands speci-

fied for each, also for relatives, as father, mother, wife, child, sister, niece, nephew. The government to furnish tools, clothing, rations. Those who had served in the Royalist army to be chosen first. One object to be aimed at was to keep the settlement separate from any other body of French.

In a letter from Russell to the Duke of Portland, York, November 3rd, 1798: "Have this day received a letter from M. Puisaye, telling of his arrival in Quebec on 7th ult., with some general, field, and subaltern officers, a few soldiers, and two ladies, in all forty persons; have despatched a letter to meet him in Kingston, warning him of the impossibility of providing accommodation in this town for so large a number of respectable personages, requesting him to stop at Kingston, or send part to Newark, which, being older settlements, may lodge them better. I shall be happy to meet him here for consultation." In a letter from President Russell to the Duke of Portland, 21st November, 1798: "Have selected the vacant land, with De Puisaye's approbation, between this town and Lake Simcoe, as a situation equally distant from Lower Canada and the French settlements at the Detroit River. Have directed the Surveyor-General to lay out four townships north of Markham, Pickering and Whitby." This region, a continuation of Yonge Street, was called Oak Ridges.

In the Archives is given:

"A list of the Royalists gone from London with Count Joseph de Puisaye for Canada: Lt-Gen. Joseph de Puisaye; Count de Chalus, Major-General; D'Allegre, Col.; Marquis de Beaupoil, Col.; Viscount de Chalus, Col.; Coster de St. Victor, Col.; De Marseuil, Lt-Col.; Bouton, Capt.; De Farey, Capt.; De Poret, Capt.; Guy de Beaupoil, Lieut.; Lambert de la Richerie, Lieut.; Hippolyte de Beaupoil, Lieut.; Champagne, Nathaniel Thompson, John Thompson, John Ficcerel (lost in Montreal), Thomas Jones (lost in Quebec), Joseph Donavant, Abraham Berne, Pardeveux, Fauchard, Renoux, Segent, Bugle, Auguste (dead at Quebec), Polard, Letourneux, Langel, Bagot, Rene Fouquet (lost at Plymouth), Marchand, William Smithers (of the latter we shall hear hereafter). Women: Madam Marquise de Beaupoil, Viscountess de Chalus, Mrs. Smithers, Mary Donavant (lost at Quebec, replaced by Saly Robinson), Catharine Donavant (lost in Quebec, replaced by Catharina), Betsy (lost in Plymouth, replaced by Barbe), Francoise Letourneux (lost). Total, 44. Lost 10, leaving 34. Put in place of lost men, 4. Total, 38."

From a letter in de Puisaye's own hand we find that he reached Montreal in October, 1798, Kingston, October 29th. They had fine weather for travelling and orders had been given that every attention was to be paid to the emigrants on their arrival. Left Montreal on the 18th, and Lachine on the 20th of October, with twelve bateaux loaded with furniture. They were, says Commissary-Gen. Clarke, as comfortably provided as possible, and went off, to all appearances, in good spirits and well satisfied, but they had been tampered with on their way from Quebec, being told they had better stay there, as they were going to a sickly, bad country. Some stayed at Kingston, but others sailed from there on November 16th, and a letter 17th January, 1799, dated Windham, near York, from de Puisaye, says "the land is every day being cleared of the trees and that in the course of a month a village has been built," which he hoped would become a considerable town, and asks the General's leave to name it Hunter. Permission was also asked to use the name Windham in honor of these officials. In a postscript he acknowledged the receipt of a letter from Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, the father of our late lamented Queen. Meanwhile, for those who had been left at Kingston, application for boats to carry them to York was made in March, and De Chalus reports the progress made by de Puisaye more fully than he himself had done: "On 14th February eighteen houses were built in Windham, but not finished inside. It was hoped twenty-five would be ready by spring, and enough land cleared to give a small crop of wheat, potatoes, etc. De Puisaye had undertaken another settlement at the head of Lake Ontario at the mouth of a small river, navigable for boats, called the Rivière de Niagara." This was put in charge of De Chalus and all de Puisaye's letters after this are so dated. In a letter from Gen. Hunter to the Duke of Portland, 16th of October, 1799, is another reference to Niagara. "The Count de Puisaye does not remain with the emigrants, but has purchased a farm near Niagara, where he, his housekeeper, the Count de Chalus, John Thompson and Marchand, their servant, reside. The Marquis de Beaupoil, having some misunderstanding with the Count de Puisaye, or not finding the enterprise suitable to his expectations, has decided to return to England with M. St. Victor. I enclose a statement from Mr. Angus McDonnell, their friend and agent at York, from this it may be seen that only twenty-five men remain in Upper Canada, viz., five at Niagara, and twenty at Windham. The latter have cleared forty or fifty acres, but are totally

destitute of funds, and have asked wheat and barley to sow the land, which I have given. There are also twenty-one Canadian artificers, laborers, etc., employed by them, to whom rations are given."

A statement of the actual situation of the French *émigrés*:— Residing at Niagara, 5, to wit, Count de Puisaye, Lt.-General; Count de Chalus, Major-General; Marchand, a private; Mrs. Smithers, house-keeper to Count de Puisaye; John Thompson, servant to Count de Puisaye.

Settled at Markham, M. d'Allegre, and Nos. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 13 of first list and Madame Viscountess de Chalus. Abandoned the enterprise, 16, among whom are Marquis de Beaupoil and Madame la Marquise de Beaupoil. Betsy, the servant girl, and William Smithers, it is said, also returned, but we find their names again as still in Canada.

Notwithstanding the cheerful prospects in the letter of De Chalus, we see all were not satisfied, as a letter from the Marquis de Beaupoil asks permission to leave and come to Lower Canada, asking leave to go to Riviere du Loup, till he would exchange his wild land for a small piece of cleared land, or obtain money to take him to Europe. A letter from Coster St. Victor, 12th May, 1799, contained similar statements, which explain the reference by Gen. Hunter to a misunderstanding, but it appears from the plan laid down for the settlement, that de Puisaye was not to blame. The letter is rebucly frank in tone: "You are fully aware, General, that in this country the man brought up and inured to the labors of the field is assured of obtaining his subsistence by his labors; that the rich man who brings capital may even, by paid labor, find means of support in agriculture; but he who has neither strength nor money, if he borrow to clear the land, certain of never repaying, has no other prospect than that of losing his time, his land, his liberty, his family, and his probity. When the Count de Puisaye proposed to me to come with him to Canada, he told me that there would be a military corps in which I should command the gentlemen emigrants who were to come there; that the Royalists who would arrive to form it would labor in common for their officers as for themselves; and he required from me only a letter of request to be his authority in applying to the Minister. But the military corps in which I should have found a salary, those peasants of Brittany whose arms were to assist me, are but a chimerical hope; it is only here I have obtained proof of this. This deception places me, with my family,

in the most heartrending situation that we have experienced since we have been emigrants." We find from the Archives that passports were applied for by Hon. Richard Cartwright for Marquis de Beau-poil, St. Aulaire, and M. Coster de St. Victor to return to Europe.

The grants of land in Windham were: Count de Puisaye, 850 acres; Count de Chalus, 650; D'Allegre, 450; Viscount de Chalus, 350; Marseuil, 300; Quetton St. George, 400; Farcy, 350; Renault, Capt., 150; Segent, 150; Fouchard, Feuron, Langel, Bugle, Marchand, 100 each.

John Ross Robertson, in his "Landmarks of Toronto," gives the position of the land held by many of the *émigrés*. On the map of 1798 a range of nine lots on each side of Yonge Street is marked "French Royalists," and in one of the letters of Surveyor Jones the spot is marked as "Puisaye's Farm."

Of his life on the Niagara River only a glimpse here and there from the Archives could be obtained, but by one of the strange coincidences that are constantly occurring in our historical work, I have quite unexpectedly, within the last few days, been fortunate enough to obtain many interesting particulars. When asked a few weeks ago to read a paper to your honorable body, I was engaged in going systematically through the printed volumes of the Archives for anything relating to Niagara, and finding much that was new to me relating to the Count de Puisaye, said, "Here is my subject." Thinking it would be interesting to bring the picture of the house with me, I wondered if in any place in Canada could be found a picture of the Count. The very next day a gentleman called to say that he had seen the stone placed by our Historical Society, and had a picture of the Count and Countess, copies of which he would present to us, and by the kindness of Mr. G. S. Griffin you now see these, they being family portraits, the Countess having been his great aunt. I cannot tell the delight with which I welcomed these pictures, coming, as they do, so opportunely, and the information emanating from this source. Sir Richard Cartwright has lately placed in the Library of Queen's University, the letter-book of his grandfather, Hon. R. Cartwright, who was the banker or legal adviser of the Count de Puisaye, who placed in his hands four or five thousand pounds, drawing interest at five per cent., and apparently all his business was transacted through this agency, goods purchased, etc. These letters, by the kindness of Principal Grant, have been loaned to Mr. Justus Griffin, Secretary of the Wentworth



Historical Society, and son of Mr. G. S. Griffin, and by the kindness of both of these gentlemen I am furnished with many interesting particulars. The letters extend from April, 1799, to November 4th, 1801; there are nearly a score of letters from Cartwright to the Count, most of them in French; also a number of letters to the Count de Chalus, who seems to have acted sometimes as his secretary, and in letters to Messrs. McGill, of Montreal, and to Hon. R. Hamilton, Queenston, are references to the Count's affairs. First comes the reference to buying the property at Niagara, May 16th, 1799: "The General, after staying for a month at the head of the lake, has bought Mr. Sheehan's place on the Niagara River between Queenston and the Fort." September 16th, 1799, R. Cartwright says: "I have sent to a milliner at Montreal the models and samples with an order to send the goods as soon as possible." The milliner's materials must have been for Mrs. Smithers, the General's mother-in-law, who presided over his household. "I have also written to Messrs McGill to send for mares, donkeys, the harness and guinea hens. The sheep and turkeys I expect to get here." Another letter speaks of melon and other garden seeds, and of importing shrubs and trees. Again comes a reference that shows he had one or more negro slaves. Although the act of 1793 arranged for the doing away of slavery, children who were slaves were not to be free till a certain age. A letter of Cartwright speaks of having bought for him for "cent piastres," "une petite negresse." Again he thanks de Puisaye for a present of peaches which were excellent, and which Madam Cartwright pronounced delicious. In connection with this, Mr. Warren, one of the late owners of the place, informs me that there were old pear trees with most delicious fruit; although skilled in fruit-culture, he did not know the name, and has never seen any similar varieties. The Count was very anxious to build a windmill; whether he succeeded is not known. Many passages in the letters speak of the machinery and other material, and abound in excuses for non-arrival, and difficulty of getting workmen to build it. There seems, too, to have been a great deal of difficulty about a large iron kettle, which finally arrived. One letter speaks of a young French-Canadian girl whom he had induced to go up on next ship as a servant, but next letter says she absolutely refused to go.

Several of the letters refer to the Marquis de Beauport, who must have visited Cartwright before leaving the country, and for whom he shows much commiseration, as "I have taken the liberty to give one

of the boats to the Marquis de Beauport, so as to get down in time. The Commandant here will give us a King's boat in return, at all events the finances of the unfortunate gentleman will not admit of any other remuneration." And, "He left here several days ago with the intention to return to Europe, Madame and the son to remain in Lower Canada for a time. They left in my hands a bed of feathers all new, a large mattress little used, and a good white counterpane, the wood of the bed and the curtain complete, to sell; the whole valued at fifty-six pounds." In one letter the General directs Messrs. McGill, Montreal, to give the Count de Chalus five hundred pounds *cy. credit*, having gone into keeping a general store for the use of the colony.

It is not supposed the Countess ever came to Canada, but that she died previous to 1798. Her maiden name was Susanne Smithers, and her mother, the Mrs. Smithers in the list, presided over the Count's household. The William Smithers in the list was his brother-in-law, who came out at the age of seventeen, but changed his name to William Kent, from his native county, and started business on his own account.

In a letter to Hon. R. Hamilton, Mr. Cartwright speaks of de Puisaye's young friend, Mr. Kent, and in another to the Count, of having supplied goods to Mr. Kent, and given instructions to him, as requested by the Count. The last of these letters to de Puisaye was written October 31st, 1801, in English, and apparently closes their business transactions, Mr. Cartwright having returned to the Count in cash and drafts all the balance due him. These letters give the little personal items which form a pleasing break in a dry historical paper.

In a letter from de Puisaye, in his own hand, dated Rivière de Niagara, May 24th, 1801, addressed to General Hunter, he says, "My plan is to leave towards the end of autumn for England; I will be occupied till then with the composition of a work of some extent which should be made public," supposed to be a history of the French Royalist party during the Revolution. Dr. Benjamin states, "The only work I can find traces of is one in six volumes published in London from 1803 to 1808, entitled "Memoires qui pourront servir a l'histoire du parti royaliste Français durant la dernière revolution."

A few more traces are found in the Archives. In 1799 a proposal by the Mississagua Indians through Brant, to cede five miles along the lake to make 69,120 acres, on condition that it is granted to de Puisaye to be paid for at one shilling and three pence, Halifax *cy.*,

per acre. This proposal was not accepted by the Government. In the minutes of the House is a request from the Count for the Government tavern on the beach at the head of the lake. This had been pledged to Wm. Bates till next October, but he, de Puisaye, might deal privately with Bates or establish another tavern equally commodious, a request from Bates to extend his lease and renewed application from de Puisaye in 1799 and 1800, and later on it is seen that he bought the land on which the Government House stood, three hundred acres, on which were salt wells, from which his heirs sold salt during the war at \$10.00 per barrel. Mr. Griffin remembers that on the farm at the beach was a fine orchard of apple, peach, pear and plum trees, with delicious fruit. Whether the present house there was built by the Count or Mr. Kent is not known. In 1801 some trouble arose between the Count and Angus McDonnell, and he was to attend at York with his witnesses to sustain his charges against McDonnell; evidence was taken and the dismissal of the latter was recommended.

A later letter in the Archives from de Puisaye in England, is dated 14th February, 1803, stating that two volumes of his Memoires would be published that week, of which copies would be sent. He proposes to return to Canada, but not for another year; but it is not supposed this hope was realized. He speaks of detractors, even in Canada, M. de Chalus being of the number, but still begs the Government to continue its goodness to the emigrants.

Of his last days we know little. Not being allowed to return to France during the short peace of 1814, he became naturalized in England and died in 1827 at Blythe House, near Hammersmith, aged seventy-three. A pathetic reference is found in the Archives—the last we find from himself—dated June, 1818, to the Canadian Government: "Had waited eighteen months, so as to give time for information. At his age, and broken down in health, he had not expected to survive that time. The Government appropriated his place on the Niagara River for a hospital for the troops, and has occupied his house at York (which was burned down) as public property. For neither of these has he been paid, nor any compensation made."

His property was willed to William Smithers Kent, and another brother of the Countess, who went to India. Mr. Kent went to England several times to see the Count after his return there, the last time being in 1827, and de Puisaye then gave him his heavily gold-mounted Damascus sword, which had been presented to him by

his friend the great statesman, William Pitt. This valuable relic bears the following inscription, "Given by Wm. Pitt to General Count Joseph de Puisaye, 1794."

The sword was exhibited at the Historical Loan Exhibit of 1897, by Rev. M. S. Griffin, D.D., of Toronto. The Count must have been possessed of considerable property, as besides the land in Windham, the farm of two hundred acres near Niagara, the three hundred acres bought from Augustus Jones, Prov. Land Surveyor, including the salt-wells at the beach, he also had a house in Toronto, as in the letter-book is an acknowledgment of thirty pounds, three shillings, and three pence from the Chief Justice, as rent for his house in York. And he owned besides a house in Hammersmith, all left to William Kent, who lived for some time on the farm near Niagara, as afterwards did his son, Joseph Kent. The will of the Count is in possession of Mr. G. S. Griffin. In 1830, three years after his death, his heirs made a claim that five thousand acres had been given to the Count in 1798, of which only 850 acres had been received by him, and asking for the remaining 4,150 acres. Referred to H. M. Government.

In the Annual Register of 1796 is found some reference to his personal appearance:

"Count Joseph de Puisaye was still less distinguished by high birth than by those advantages which he derived from nature and education. His natural talents, of no common order, had been cultivated with the greatest assiduity, and with a success proportioned to the care bestowed upon them. Well informed, capable of laborious application, master of a ready and powerful eloquence, full of resources, and never deserted by his presence of mind, he seemed destined to be the leader of a party. To these mental qualifications he added some corporeal ones which, though inferior, were highly useful. His manners were dignified, yet prepossessing; his person was graceful, his stature tall and commanding." With this description the portrait painted and engraved in Plymouth corresponds, and with the description sometimes given of a fine-looking, courtly gentleman of the old school. These pictures—the Count, a steel engraving, and the Countess, an oil painting—are in the possession of Mrs. Horning, Dundas, a great-granddaughter of William Smithers Kent.

In the Jarvis letters, published in No. 8 of the Niagara Historical Society, there is a reference to his personal appearance. Mrs. Jarvis says: "Having entertained him at dinner in Niagara, January

31st, 1799, I like him very much. He is, I think, much like Governor Simcoe in point of size and deportment, and is, without exception, the finest looking man I ever saw."

A few references are found regarding some of the other members of the party. For most of these we are indebted to "Toronto of Old," by the venerated Dr. Scadding. As, "At the balls of the Governor and others at York, the jewels of Madame la Comtesse de Beaupoil created a great sensation, wholly surpassing everything of the kind that had been seen by the ladies of Upper Canada." A descendant of Count de Chalus retains property here, but resides in Montreal, and so far as known, the descendants of only one other family are now represented in Canada (besides those of Wm. Smithers). In St. Mark's Register in the Marriage notices is that of one member of the party: "December 6th, 1802, Ambroise de Farcy and Ellen Weymouth." Quetton St. George became a very successful merchant in York, returned to France when Louis XVIII. succeeded to the throne, and in 1869 his descendant returned to Canada, and, when Dr. Scadding wrote, was exercising a refined hospitality at Glen Lonely. He says Quetton St. George was of the noblesse, as all officers in France were then obliged to be. The name was originally M. Quetton, but as an exile landing in England on St. George's Day, in gratitude he added the Saint's name, making his full name M. Quetton St. George. He traded with the Indians and had a post at Orillia. In the *Niagara Herald*, August 7th, 1802, his advertisement reads thus: "New store at the house of the French General between Niagara and Queenston. Messrs. Quetton St. George & Co. have goods from New York to be sold at the lowest prices for ready money, for from the uncertainty of their residing for any time in these parts they cannot open accounts with any person. Dry goods, groceries, tools, trunks, empty barrels, etc." "A similar assortment to the above may be had at their store at the French General's House, between Niagara and Queenston."— June 18th, 1803.

The "Co." was M. de Farcy. In 1811 there is a petition of De Farcy asking to have their grants given them, also a memorial of Quetton St. George in French, and another in English, and in August, 1812, the Count de Puisaye asks Commissioners to inquire into his claims, and those of other Royalists. A special charter of denization had to be given.

An advertisement in the *Upper Canada Gazette*, December 15th,

1804, unearthed by J. J. Murphy, Crown Lands Dept., to whom I am indebted for copying it.

“TAKE NOTICE.

“On the first day of February next will be sold at Public Sale by the Subscribers who are duly authorized to dispose of the same, at the House of the Count de Puisaye, the Household furniture and books belonging to that gentleman, a list of which will hereafter be given in this paper.

“DE FARCY.

“QUETTON ST. GEORGE.”

In the issue of *Upper Canada Gazette*, January 12th, 1805, appears the list of furniture.

“List of Household Furniture which will be sold at the House of the Count de Puisaye at Niagara on the 1st Feb. next :

“Mahogany Chest of Drawers, Chairs, Sopha, do.; Large Looking Glasses, Middling size do. Pictures and Copper Plates; Turkey Carpets, Common do.; two clocks, one of which is a Chime Clock and plays twelve different tunes; Kitchen Utensils, Horses, Waggons, etc., etc.

“Books.—Buffon's 'Natural History,' 54 vols. (French); Rappin's 'Hist. of England,' 28 vols. (Eng.); Salmon's 'Traveller,' in folio, 2 vols., do.; 'Dictionary of Arts and Sciences,' 2 vols.; Pope, Shakespeare, 4-to., 2 vols.; 'Modern Architecture,' 4-to., 2 vols.; 10 vols. Du President, De Thou, and a great number of Novels too tedious to mention.”

We wonder who bought the Chime Clock, and if it is yet in existence.

All that remains is to give some slight description of the residence of the Count de Puisaye. What induced him to settle on the Niagara, we know not, except the beautiful situation. He certainly selected an ideal spot on which to build a house, which still stands, after a lapse of over a hundred years. To be exact, half of it stands, for some years ago half of it was taken down and the foundation stones can still be traced.

Originally a long, low building, about eighty feet in length, by twenty-four in width, with dormer windows and steep, sharply sloping roof, as seen in Norman French houses, there are now two windows on each side of the door, and above are three dormer windows, back and front; so it is likely there were eight windows below and six dormer windows above in front. There are still two old fireplaces, and there had been probably three or four. Built against one end is a curious



THE DE PUISAYE HOUSE AS IT IS TO-DAY.

fire-proof structure of brick, with walls three feet thick, and at one side, supported by three stone buttresses. The vaulted interior has two divisions with no connection with each other, entered from opposite sides, and with a thick division wall of brick. Various are the opinions as to the use of this—what is generally called “the vault.” A powder magazine, wine cellar, dairy, vegetable room, all have been mentioned, as well as a storehouse for goods when the building was a store. I give all, and a choice may be made, or other suggestions offered. Perhaps later investigation may make clear its use. A loft has been put on in modern times, which was there when Dr. Scadding visited it about 1870, but previous to that, it showed the round vaulted brick roof.

Various legends float about, as of fish-ponds, and that one room of the house was literally lined with mirrors. To the mind of the plain frugal settlers of those days, the abundance of mirrors in French houses would have a dazzling appearance. The ceilings are very low, as may be shown by the stairway of only seven steps. The building itself is frame, and is in excellent preservation, many repairs having been made at different times. During the war of 1812 it was used as a hospital.

The property has had many owners, but one can trace almost, if not all, the occupants and owners—the Count de Chalus, Quetton St. George, Mr. S. Kent in the first half of the century. About 1550, it was bought by Captain Baxter, with two hundred acres of land adjoining it, from Col. Allen, of Toronto, the father of Senator G. W. Allen. Every year two barrels of a special kind of apples grown there, were sent to him by Capt. Baxter. The house had previously been occupied by Mr. McPherson. It next passed into the hands of Mr. Warren, by whom it was sold to Mr. Shickaluna, the famous boat builder of St. Catharines, who erected near it a house, many said, as much resembling a boat as could be done. In his turn, it was sold to Mr. Mills, still living in Toronto, who made great improvements in the house. Afterwards the property came into the hands of Cap. Geale Dickson, who erected the fine residence now standing, since improved by the present owner, Mr. Jackson, one hundred acres having been sold to Mr. Doyle. While in possession of Mr. Dickson, the half of the Count's house was taken down. This year the Niagara Historical Society has placed seven stones to mark historic spots, and one of these has been placed here with the inscription, “The building near was erected by the Count de Puisaye, a French Refugee, about 1800.”

As we think of these exiles gradually returning to their own land, we cannot but heave a sigh when we think what must have been their feelings. Witnesses of all the horrors of the Reign of Terror; escaping to Britain; fed by the bounty of the Government there; crossing the ocean in the late fall when Atlantic waves are boisterous; landing in a foreign land, almost a wilderness, covered with winter snows; felling the monarchs of the forest; building rude dwellings, and facing the cold of our winter after the pleasant land of France. Think of the *mal de pays* from which they must have suffered when they thought of their sunny skies, not knowing, in that first sad winter, that this country, too, has its bright skies, and balmy air as well as its bracing breezes. Was it of these exiles that Burke wrote in his "Reflections on the French Revolution"? "I hear there are considerable emigrations from France, and that many, quitting that voluptuous climate and that seductive Circean liberty, have taken refuge in the frozen regions of Canada." Writers a century later, have not yet forgotten to make similar references to "Our Lady of the Snows."

To the patient investigator it will be found there is much unexplored territory in our history, and that the links are lying all around us concealed, or, mayhap, open to every eye, but only those interested will be able to adapt and fit together the parts broken or separated into the complete chain.