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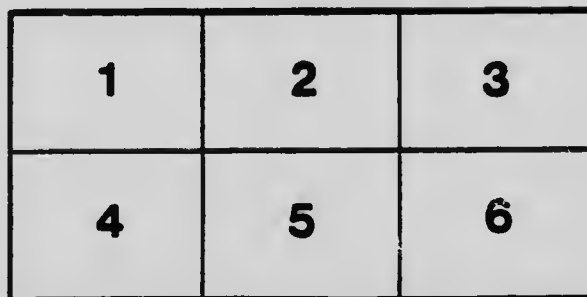
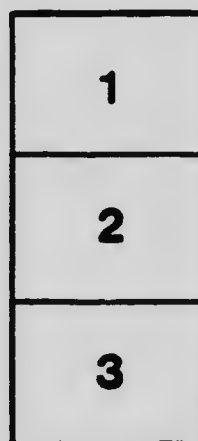
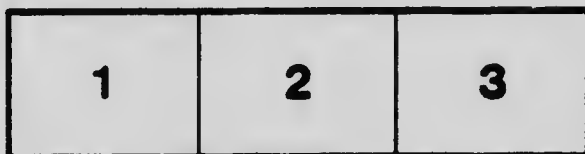
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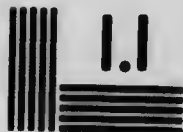
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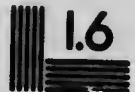
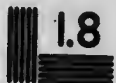
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AN HISTORICAL POEM

—

THE  
ST. LAWRENCE RIVER

BY

JUDITH JULIA FARLEY



QUEBEC

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*AN HISTORICAL POEM*

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# THE ST. LAWRENCE RIVER

BY JUDITH JULIA FARLEY

---

St. Lawrence, kingly River !  
What legends o'er it dwell,  
They slumber in each hollow,  
And on its billows swell;  
They breathe, o'er its fair landscape,  
And lend a pleasing charm  
To sunny bays and inlets,  
To homesteads bright and warm.

When forests in their quiet,  
And pristine grandeur reigned;  
Ere the valiant Sons of France,  
Its silver waters named,  
There, Chiefs, in glowing language,  
Gave laws and ruled with power;  
Or, oft smoked the calumet,  
Many a transient hour.

The wild deer of the forest,  
Came at the early morn,  
To drink its crystal waters,  
Not dreading hounds, nor horn.  
The lovely Maples bending,  
Oft dipped their verdant leaves;  
And trembling Aspens quivered,  
Above its ruffled waves.

Gem of primeval beauty !  
In pristine grandeur drest,  
No sounds of busy traffic,  
Disturbed its quiet rest;  
Till, bounding o'er its bosom,  
In all their native pride,  
Armadas from St. Malo,  
Sailed up its waters wide.

And from their decks, the soldiers  
Looked on the passing scene.  
Of mountains, vales and river,  
Of islands, robed in green,  
Unfurled their brave old banners!  
And waved them in the breeze;  
And raised the Christian Embient,  
They brought from o'er seas.

And cried ! to name this River,  
The honor let us pay !  
We'll call it for St. Lawrence,  
Because this is his day.\*  
Then, sailing up still higher,  
They spied an island fair,†  
And at its shores they anchored,  
And gladly rested there.

\* 10th August. † Orleans.



It was a rustic vineyard,  
Where purple laden vines,  
Festooned through brake and bramble,  
And clung round winter pines.  
So, plucking the ripe clusters,  
They thought it pleasant sport;  
To name the Island Bacchus,  
While quaffing Lisbon Port.

The sun, in ruddy glory,  
Beamed from the eastern sky;  
It rested on the mountains,  
And bade the darkness fly;  
It flitted through the forest,  
And lit in quiet nooks;  
And danced in playful shadows,  
Upon the purling brooks.

The birds, in joyous revels,  
Proclaimed the new-born day;  
While forest flowers their petals,  
Expanded 'neath each ray;  
And gentle summer breezes,  
Were wafted from the sea;  
To fan each wakened leaflet,  
Of forest, flower and tree.

Then from a birchin wigwam,  
With bow and arrow bent;  
Came mighty Donacona,  
And to the river went;  
He glided through the forest,  
And saw each well loved place,  
For he that region governed,  
A king of savage race.

But, halting 'neath the maples,  
His heart grew sick and cold;  
When he beheld the helmets,  
And epaulets of gold;  
Worn by those gallent soldiers,  
Who, on that happy day,  
Upon the decks dressed gaily,  
Were manned in proud array.

But soon, with heads uncovered,  
They humbly knelt to pray,  
As the priest, robed in vestments,  
Began the Mass to say;  
And 'neath the dome of heaven,  
Adorned with blue and gold,  
They read their prayers in silence,  
From missals quaint and old.

The "Asperges" was chanted,  
The priest with fervent prayer;  
The holy water sprinkled,  
And blessed the scene so fair;  
And Ange! clasped the blessings,  
And bore them o'er the land,  
Far o'er the mighty river,  
And to the forest grand.

The birds caught up the blessings,  
And warbled songs of praise;  
Where brighter grew the forest,  
Beneath the sun's blessed rays;  
The fishes drank the blessings,  
The river murmured low,  
For with those precious blessings,  
All nature was aglow.

And evil spirits vanished,  
Their reign, indeed, was o'er.  
For firm, the cross was planted,  
To stand for evermore.  
To tower in future ages,  
Above the rocky height,  
Which guards thee, fair St. Lawrence !  
Through storm and sunshine bright.

And from an opening sta,  
With sad and silent mein,  
Poor Donacona lingered,  
To watch the holy scene,  
And he too shared the blessings,  
And joyful was his heart,  
For he, unknown, had worshipped,  
And lent a willing part.

And "Sanctus" and "Hosanna,"  
Were chanted on that day;  
While echo caught the anthem,  
To send it far away.  
Yes, clear, true echo,  
Was then the Matin bell,  
Which sent the heaven-born anthem,  
O'er river, hill and dell.

But at the solemn moment,  
In adoration sweet;  
Each head was bowed in silence,  
Their sovereign Lord to greet,  
And unseen angels hovered,  
Around that holy place,  
And wafted up to heaven,  
The Offering of Peace.

And "Ave Maris Stella,"  
By grateful men was sung,  
While echo, clear as ever,  
Sweet "Maris Stella" rung!  
And still rings out the anthem,  
To "Ave Maria" Queen!  
Along thy shores St. Lawrence,  
Though changed is now the scene.

And Donacona lingered,  
And pondered deep and long,  
Who are those pale-faced children,  
That come with strange, sweet song?  
Whence came they while I slumbered,  
While, veiled, the moon's clear light,  
Or, was it the great spirit,  
Who brought them in the night?

For He is in the forest!  
He whispered in my ear,  
O! hate them not, brave warrior,  
They're mine! I want them here.  
That spirit, great and noble,  
Who guards the hunting ground,  
And welcomes my companions,  
When wild deer most abound.

So I must not feign slumber,  
When the Great Spirit's near,  
Nor treat with haughty coldness,  
Those strangers whom I fear,  
I fear! but 'tis not battle,  
Upon the war-path red;  
It is the Spirit's whisper,  
Which fills my heart with dread!

I shall retrace my footsteps,  
And to the council place,  
I'll call the ancient warriors,  
The sachems of my race;  
For they are wise and truthful,  
And from them I shall hear,  
The meaning of that whisper,  
Which lingers in my ear.

Soon gliding o'er the river,  
The bark canoes were rowed;  
For Stadacona's bravest,  
Had to his warriors vowed,  
That, ere the golden sunset,  
Should fade from that bright day;  
He to the pale-faced strangers,  
Would friendly visit pay.

So, on the Esmerillon,  
Was held the first levee,  
And thus the brave French soldiers,  
Rejoiced that day to see;  
When Donacona, standing,  
With calm, unstudied grace,  
Proclaimed the wealth and prowess,  
Of his untutored race.

Still bravest in the battle,  
The scalps he prized so dear,  
Hung from his wampum girdle,  
What cause had he to fear?  
So, looking very happy  
His waiting braves he led;  
Regained his birchin vessels,  
And o'er the waters sped.

\* \* \* \* \*

Then lifting up the anchors,  
Before the sun was high,  
The strangers sought a harbour,  
Where ships might safely lie,  
Then, moored their sturdy vessels,  
To anchor in the tides,  
Where St. Charles's River,  
By peaceful homes now glides.

St. Lawrence! far famed river,  
What scenes of strife and woe,  
Were mirrored on thy surface,  
Since that day, long ago!  
When presents, rare selected,  
From trophies, bravely won;  
Were offered to Jacques Cartier,  
By friendly Algonquin.

Along thy banks, fair river!  
Or 'neath the somber shade,  
Of thy primeval forests,  
Or in some quiet glade,  
The missionaries often  
Thy savage children sought,  
Addressing them with fervor,  
Redemption's truths have taught.

But when the transient summer,  
Too soon had taken flight,  
While noble plans were forming,  
And hearts, with hope, beat light,  
While o'er thy rippling waters,  
Oft sped the light canoe,  
And spots which now are famous,  
Then hid the foe from view.

The bright and brilliant autumn,  
Breathed o'er the forest old;  
And decked each hill and valley,  
In crimson, brown and gold;  
Then, as they viewed the landscape,  
They marvelled at the scene,  
When changed to golden beauty,  
Was summer's robe of green!

And northern lights, so splendid,  
Their flitting flashes shed,  
And o'er the ling'ring azure,  
Fantastic figures spread;  
Now curving in the zenith,  
Then darting out of sight,  
To re-appear, majestic,  
With jetting rays of light.

But Winter, stern, cold Winter!  
Came with his tempests loud,  
And o'er the broad St. Lawrence,  
He cast an icy shroud.  
And on the trembling forests,  
He placed a snowy vest;  
And sealed the graceful pine-cones,  
Within a crystal crest.

And rugged rocks, grim sentries,  
Touched by his icy hand,  
Like giant ghosts stood guarding,  
Above its waters grand.  
While in the starry Heavens,  
The night's pale, silent queen,  
Oft in resplendant beauty,  
Lit up the Arctic scene.

And oft, the angry tempest,  
Urged by the Atlantic's roar,  
Rushed up its frozen waters,  
And swept from shore to shore.  
And on those ice-bound vessels,  
Its wildest fury spent;  
And to their stricken victims,  
Exceeding torture lent.

For on those famous vessels,  
Some dying heroes lay,  
Who yearned for home and country,  
For loved ones far away.  
Perhaps their passing spirits,  
Their dying wishes bore;  
Swift through the land of shadows,  
To those loved friends once more!

\* \* \* \* \*

Once more, sweet May, thy songsters,  
High o'er St. Lawrence soared,  
Once more the Falls, in grandeur,  
Their wealth of waters poured,  
To mingle with the current,  
And swell the mighty tide,  
Which bore away those vessels,  
Far o'er the ocean wide.

And from their decks a captive,  
The wronged Algonquin chief,  
Beheld with mingled feelings,  
Of savage rage and grief,  
Beheld his happy wigwam,  
The headlands rocky height;  
His forest home fast fading,  
Forever from his sight!



Yes, fading from his vision !  
For never more should he,  
As trusted chief and warrior,  
His tribe's proud leader be.  
No more in hunt nor battle,  
Nor on the council ground;  
With calumet and vassals,  
Would he again be found.

Outwitted by a stranger,  
Captive against his will,  
The forest chieftain fretted,  
Was homesick and grew ill,  
So, with the pale-faced strangers,  
He closed his dying eyes,  
And in their grand old city;\*  
Poor Donacona lies.

But o'er thy shores St. Lawrence,  
Through battle and through storm,  
Thy legends and romances,  
Retain their pristine charm,  
And 'neath our busy footsteps,  
There may be hallowed ground;  
Where bel- night or martyr,  
Perhaps may yet be found.

\* Rouen.

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**REGISTERED** in the Office of Minister of the Agriculture in conformity with the law passed by the Parliament of Canada, in the year 1906.

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