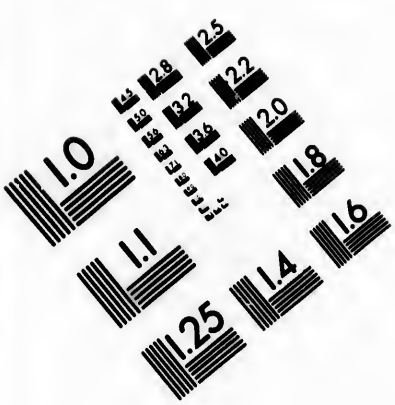

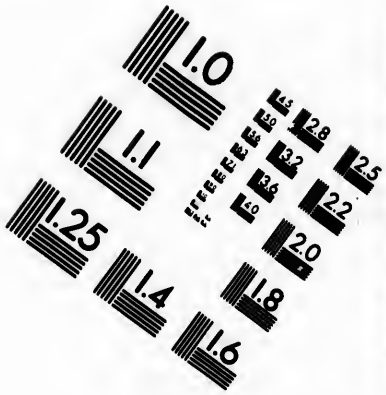

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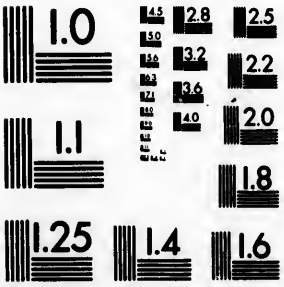

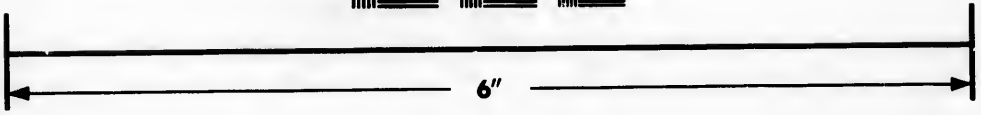

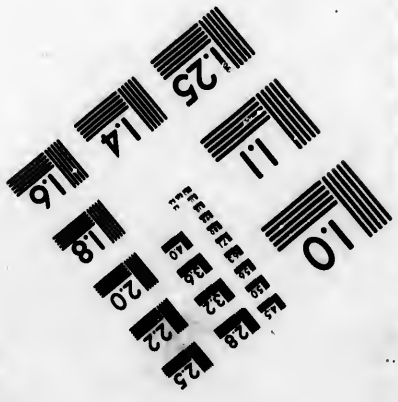

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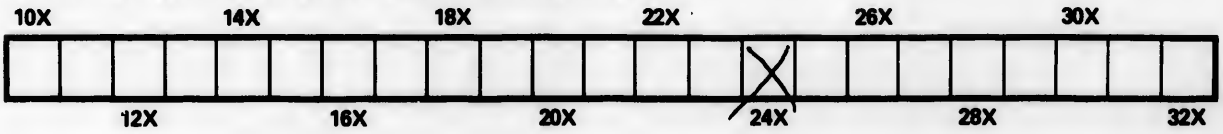

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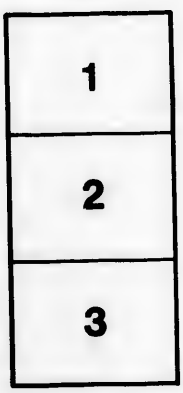

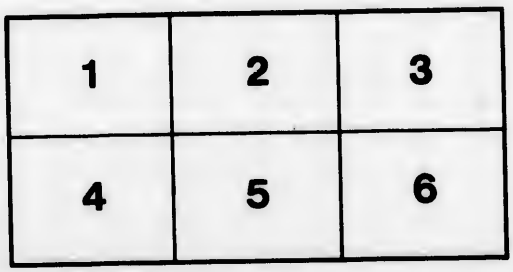

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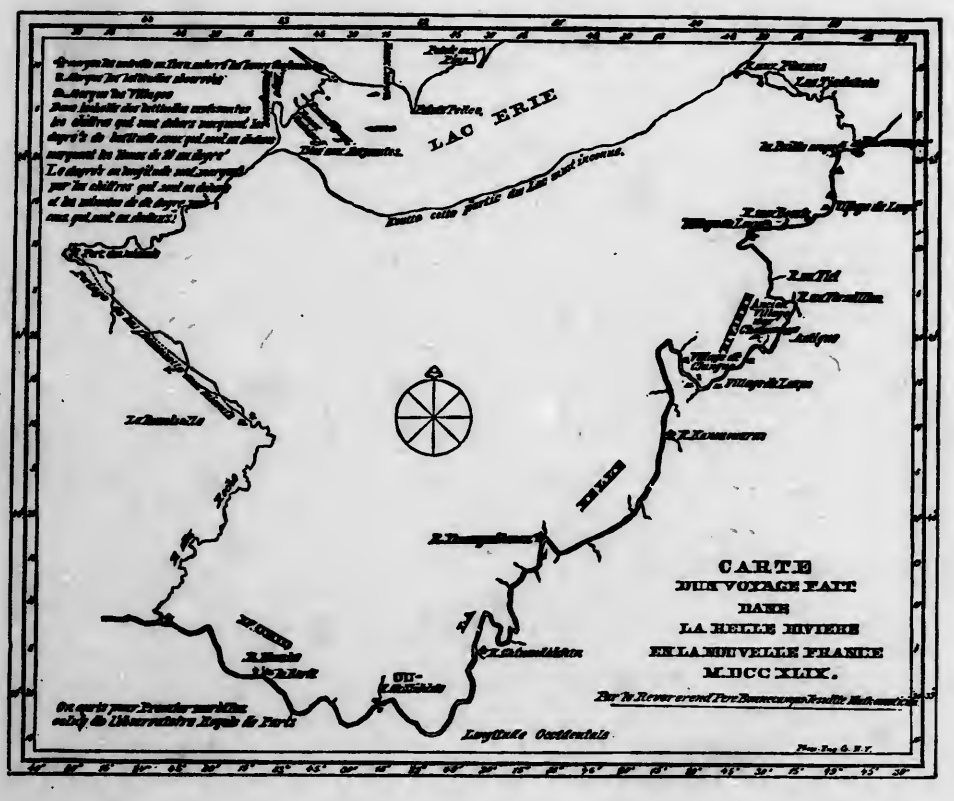
DE CELORON'S EXPEDITION TO THE OHIO

IN 1749

BY

O. H. MARSHALL

Reprinted from the Magazine of American History, March, 1878



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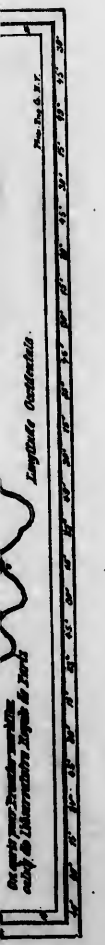

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EXPLANATION OF THE MAP

The map prefixed is a reduced photographic copy of a part of Father Bonnecamp's manuscript map of the route of de Céloron's Expedition, now deposited in the Archives of the *Departement de la Marine* in Paris.

- ⚜ Indicates the places where leaden plates were buried.
- ‡ Points where latitudes and longitudes were observed.
- 🏛 Sites of Indian villages.

The degrees of longitude are west of the meridian of Paris, and are indicated by the figures in the outer division of the scales on the eastern and western extremities of the map. Those on the inner divisions are leagues, in the proportion of 20 to a degree.

DE CÉLORON'S EXPEDITION TO THE OHIO IN 1749

THE extensive territory lying between the Ohio River and Lake Erie has been the theatre of many remarkable historical changes. Its earliest inhabitants left no record of their origin or history, save in the numerous tumuli which are scattered over its surface, bearing trees of the largest growth, not distinguishable from the adjacent forest. Measured by the extent and character of those vast structures, the race that built them must have been intelligent and populous. When and how they disappeared, we know not. Whether they were directly succeeded by the present race of Indians, or by an intermediate people, are questions to which history gives no answer. When La Salle discovered the Ohio he found it in the occupation of the red man, who claimed possession and ownership over the territory comprised within the limits of Western Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana, until the close of the last century. His villages were on every stream, and his hunting grounds embraced every hill and valley.

The attractions of the fur trade stimulated Eastern adventurers to penetrate, from time to time, the forest recesses of the West, and glowing descriptions were reported of the fertile soil, mineral wealth and the abundance of the fur-bearing animals. It was not until England and France, the two great rival Powers of Europe, became impressed with the prospective growth and value of the territory, and each prepared to grasp the coveted prize, that the native owners of the soil began to take serious alarm. On the one side, England claimed to the northern lakes, while France asserted ownership not only as far south as the Ohio, but over all the lands drained by its extensive tributaries.

The treaty of Aix la Chapelle, to which both of those powers were parties, while it terminated a long and sanguinary war in Europe, left many subjects of controversy still unsettled. Among them were the boundaries between the French and English in America. At the con-

clusion of that treaty England lost no time in initiating measures for the occupation and colonization of the disputed territory, and encouraged the formation of the Ohio Company as one of the efficient means for accomplishing that purpose. Half a million of acres were granted by the Crown to that association, to be selected mainly on the south side of the Ohio, between the Monongahela and Kanawha rivers. This was coupled with the condition that settlements, protected by suitable forts, should be established on the grant. The French were equally alive on the subject, and the demonstrations of the English aroused the attention of the Marquis de la Galissonière, a man of eminent ability and forethought, who was then Governor of Canada. In order to counteract the designs of the English, he dispatched Captain Bienville de Céloron,[1] a chevalier of the order of St. Louis, in command of a detachment, composed of eight subaltern officers, six cadets, an armorer, twenty soldiers, one hundred and eighty Canadians, thirty Iroquois and twenty-five Abenakis, with orders to descend the Ohio, and take possession of the country in the name of the King. The principal officers under him were de Contrecoeur, who had been in command of Fort Niagara, and Coulon de Villiers, one of seven brothers, six of whom lost their lives in the Canadian wars. Contrecoeur was subsequently in command of Fort du Quesne, at or immediately after the defeat of Braddock.

The present article is designed to give an account of that expedition, to trace its route and to identify as far as possible the geographical points which it visited. Only brief notices of the undertaking have heretofore been given to the public. The discovery of some of the leaden plates, buried by its officers on the banks of the Ohio, have from time to time awakened public interest and curiosity, which the meagre accounts already published have failed to satisfy. While recently examining the archives of the *Département de la Marine* in Paris the writer met with the original manuscript journal kept by de Céloron during his entire voyage. He also found in the *Grandes Archives* of the *Dépot de la Marine*, No. 17 rue de l'Université, a manuscript diary of Father Bonnecamps, who styles himself "Jesuitte Mathématicien," and who seems to have been the chaplain, as well as a kind of sailing master of the expedition, keeping a daily record of the courses and distances they traveled, the latitudes and longitudes of the principal geographical points, with occasional brief notes of the most important occurrences. In another department, called the *Bibliothèque du dépôt de la Marine*, there was found a large Ms. map, 31½ by 34½ inches square, representing the country through which the expedition passed, including the St. Law

rence westward of Montreal, Lakes Erie and Ontario, the territory south of those lakes as far as the Ohio, and the whole course of that river from the source of the Alleghany to the mouth of the Great Miami. This map forms an important illustration of the expedition. On it are delineated by appropriate characters the points where leaden plates were deposited, where the latitudes and longitudes were observed, and the localities of the Indian villages visited on the route.

The journals of de Céloron and Father Bonnecamps, and the map of the latter, have furnished the ground-work of the narrative. Explanatory and historical notes, drawn from other sources, have occasionally been added.

The first of the leaden plates was brought to the attention of the public in a letter addressed by Governor George Clinton to the Lords of Trade in London, dated New York, December 19th, 1750, in which he states that he "would send to their Lordships in two or three weeks a plate of lead, full of writing, which some of the upper nations of Indians stole from Jean Coeur,[3] the French interpreter at Niagara, on his way to the river Ohio, which river, and all the lands thereabouts, the French claim, as will appear by said writing." He further states "that the lead plate gave the Indians so much uneasiness that they immediately dispatched some of the Cayuga chiefs to him with it, saying that their only reliance was on him, and earnestly begged he would communicate the contents thereof to them, which he had done, much to their satisfaction and the interests of the English." The Governor concludes by saying that "the contents of the plate may be of great importance in clearing up the encroachments which the French have made on the British Empire in America."[3] The plate was delivered to Colonel, afterwards Sir William Johnson, on the 4th of December, 1750, at his residence on the Mohawk, by a Cayuga Sachem, who accompanied it by the following speech:

"Brother Corlear and War-ragh-i-ya-ghey:[4] I am sent here by the Five Nations with a piece of writing, which the Senecas, our brethren, got by some artifice from Jean Coeur, earnestly beseeching you will let us know what it means, and as we put all our confidence in you, our brother, we hope you will explain it ingeniously to us." Colonel Johnson replied to the Sachem, and through him to the Five Nations, returning a belt of wampum, and explaining the inscription on the plate. He told them that "it was a matter of the greatest consequence, involving the possession of their lands and hunting grounds, and that Jean Coeur and the French ought immediately to be expelled from the Ohio and Niagara." In reply, the Sachem said that "he had heard with great

attention and surprise the substance of the 'Devilish writing' he had brought," and that Colonel Johnson's remarks "were fully approved." He promised that belts from each of the Five Nations should be sent from the Senecas' Castle to the Indians at the Ohio, to warn and strengthen them against the French encroachments in that direction.

The following is a literal copy of the inscription in question. It was sent by Governor Clinton to the Lords of Trade on the 17th of January, 1751:

"L'AN 1749 DV REGNE DE LOVIS XV ROY DE FRANCE, NOVS CELORON, COMMANDANT D'VN DETATCHIMENT ENVOIÉ PAR MONSIEVR LE MIS. DE LA GALISSONIÈRE, COMMANDANT GENERAL DE LA NOUVELLE FRANCE POVR RETABLIR LA TRANQUILLITÉ DANS QUELQUES VILLAGES SAUVAGES DE CES CANTONS, AVONS ENTERRÉ CETTE PLAQUE AU CONFLUENT DE L'OHIO ET DE TCHADAKOIN CE 29 JVILLET, PRÈS DE LA RIVIÈRE OVO AUTREMENT BELLE RIVIÈRE, POUR MONUMENT DU RENOUVELLEMENT DE POSSESSION QUE NOUS AVONS PRIS DE LA DITTE RIVIÈRE OVO, ET DE TOUTES CELLES QUI Y TOMBENT, ET DE TOUTES LES TERRES DES DEUX CÔTES JVSQVE AVX SOURCES DES DITTES RIVIÈRES AINSI QV'EN ONT JOVI OU DV JOVIR LES PRECEDENTS ROIS DE FRANCE, ET QU'ILS S'Y SONT MAINTENVS PAR LES ARMES ET PAR LES TRAITTES, SPECIALEMENT PAR CEVX DE RISWICK, D'VTRECHT ET D'AIX LA CHAPELLE."

The above is certified to be "a true copy" by "Peter De Joncourt, interpreter."

TRANSLATION.

"In the year 1749, of the reign of Louis the 15th, King of France, we Céloron, commander of a detachment sent by Monsieur the Marquis de la Galissonière, Governor General of New France, to reestablish tranquility in some Indian villages of these cantons, have buried this Plate of Lead at the confluence of the Ohio and the Chatauqua, this 29th day of July, near the river Ohio, otherwise *Belle Rivière*, as a monument of the renewal of the possession we have taken of the said river Ohio, and of all those which empty into it, and of all the lands on both sides as far as the sources of the said rivers, as enjoyed or ought to have been enjoyed by the kings of France preceding, and as they have there maintained themselves by arms and by treaties, especially those of Ryswick, Utrecht and Aix la Chapelle."

On the 29th of January, 1751, Governor Clinton sent a copy of the above inscription to Governor Hamilton of Pennsylvania, informing him that it was "taken from a plate stolen from Joncaire some months since in the Seneca country as he was going to the river Ohio."

The expedition was provided with a number of leaden plates, about eleven inches long, seven and a h inches wide and one-eighth of an

inch thick, on each of which an inscription in French, similar to the one above given, was engraved or stamped in capital letters, with blanks left for the insertion of the names of the rivers, at the confluence of which with the Ohio they should be deposited, and the dates of their deposit. The name of the artist, Paul de Brosse, was engraved on the reverse of each. Thus provided, the expedition left La Chine on the 15th of June, 1749, and ascended the St. Lawrence to Fort Fontenac. From thence, coasting along the eastern and southern shore of Lake Ontario, they arrived at Fort Niagara on the 6th of July. They reached the portage at Lewiston on the 7th, and ascended the Niagara into Lake Erie. On the 14th, after advancing a few miles up the lake, they were compelled by a strong wind to encamp on the south shore. They embarked early on the morning of the 15th, hoping to reach the portage of "Chatakouin" the same day, but an adverse wind again forced them to land.

The southern shore of the lake at this point is described as "extremely shallow, with no shelter from the force of the winds, involving great risk of shipwreck in landing, which is increased by large rocks, extending more than three-fourths of a mile from the shore." Céloron's canoe struck on one, and he would inevitably have been drowned, with all on board, had not prompt assistance been rendered. On the 16th at noon they arrived at the Chatakouin portage. This was an open roadstead, where the United States Government many years ago attempted unsuccessfully to construct a safe harbor. It is now known as Barcelona or Portland. As soon as all preparations were made for the overland passage, and the canoes all loaded, Mm. de Villiers and le Borgue were dispatched with fifty men to clear the way, while Céloron examined the situation of the place, in order to ascertain its fitness for the establishment of a Post. He says: "I found it ill-adapted for such a purpose, as well from its position as from its relation to the navigation of the lake. The water is so shallow that barks standing in cannot approach within a league of the portage. There being no island or harbor to which they could resort for shelter, they would be under the necessity of riding at anchor and discharging their loading by batteaux. The frequency of squalls would render it a place of danger. Besides, there are no Indian villages in the vicinity. In fact, they are quite distant, none being nearer than Ganaougon and Paille Coupée. In the evening Mm. de Villiers and le Borgue returned to lodge at the camp, having cleared the way for about three-quarters of a league." Up to this time, the usual route of the French to the Missis-

sippi had been by the way of Detroit, Green Bay, the Wisconsin, Lake Michigan and the Illinois river. They had five villages on the Mississippi, near the mouth of the Illinois, as early as 1749.

"On the 17th," continues the Journal, "at break of day, we began the portage, the prosecution of which was vigorously maintained. All the canoes, provisions, munitions of war, and merchandise intended as presents to the Indians bordering on the Ohio, were carried over the three-quarters of a league which had been rendered passable the day previous. The route was exceedingly difficult, owing to the numerous hills and mountains which we encountered. All my men were very much fatigued. We established a strong guard, which was continued during the entire campaign, not only for the purpose of security, but for teaching the Canadians a discipline which they greatly needed. We continued our advance on the 14th, but bad weather prevented our making as much progress as on the preceding day. I consoled myself for the delay, as it was caused by a rain which I greatly desired, as it would raise the water in the river sufficient to float our loaded canoes. On the 19th, the rain having ceased, we accomplished half a league. On the 20th and 21st we continued our route with great diligence, and arrived at the end of the portage on the banks of Lake Chatacoin on the 22d. The whole distance may be estimated at four leagues. Here I repaired my canoes and recruited my men."

It is a little over eight miles in a direct line from the mouth of Chautauqua Creek on Lake Erie to the head of Chautauqua Lake. The route taken by the expedition would of course be more, and probably equal to the four leagues, or ten miles, stated by Céloron. The difficulties they encountered must have been exceedingly formidable. Chautauqua Lake is 726 feet above Lake Erie, and in order to reach the water-shed between the two lakes, an ascent of at least one thousand feet had to be overcome. Although at that early day, when the forests were yet undisturbed, the Chautauqua Creek flowed with fuller banks than now, yet even then but little use could be made of it by loaded canoes, except near its mouth. The portage could only be accomplished for the greater part of the way by carrying the canoes, baggage, provisions and supplies on the shoulders of the men up the steep mountain sides to the summit, from which the waters flowed southward into Chautauqua Lake. Looking back from this elevation, a magnificent panorama must have presented itself to Céloron and his companions. Lake Erie lay at their feet, with the Canada shore, forty miles distant, in plain sight, while the extremities of that great inland sea, extending east and west, were lost below the horizon.

The expedition did not loiter long on the banks of Chautauqua Lake. On the 23d they launched their bark flotilla on its clear, cool waters, and paddling south-eastward through the lake, passed the narrows at what are now known as Long and Bemus Points. The shape of the lake is quite peculiar. Its northwestern and southeastern extremities, which are nearly equal, and comprise the greater part of the lake, are connected by two short irregular straits, between which nestles a small beautiful bay. The singular configuration of the whole gives plausibility to the interpretation of the Indian name, Chautauqua, which is said to signify "a sack tied in the middle."

On the evening of the 23d of July the expedition encamped on shore within three miles of the outlet. The lake is stated by Céloron to be "nine leagues," or about twenty-two miles long. The actual length is less than sixteen. Distances are almost always overstated by the early French voyageurs in America. In the evening a party of Indians, who had been engaged during the day in fishing in the lake, reported they had seen the enemy watching them from the adjacent forest. They had fled as soon as discovered. Early on the morning of the 24th the expedition entered the outlet, a narrow stream, winding through a deep morass, bordered by a tall forest, which, over-arching the way, almost shut out the light of day. The water being found quite low, in order to lighten the canoes, they sent the greater part of their loading about three-quarters of a league by land, over a path pointed out by the Sieur de Saussayc, who was acquainted with the country.[1] The distance they accomplished this day by water did not exceed half a league. It probably carried them through the swamp as far as the high land in the neighborhood of the present village of Jamestown. The next day, before resuming their march, Céloron deemed it expedient to convene a council to consider what should be done in view of the evident signs of an enemy in the vicinity, who on being discovered had abandoned their canoes and effects and fled, carrying the alarm to the adjacent village of Paille Coupée. The council decided to dispatch Lieutenant Joncaire, some Abenakis and three Iroquois, with three belts, to assure the fugitives of the friendly object of the expedition. After the departure of the embassy the march was resumed over the rapids, with which the outlet abounded.

"We proceeded," says the Journal, "about a league with great difficulty. In many places I was obliged to assign forty men to each canoe to facilitate their passage. On the 26th and 27th we continued our voyage not without many obstacles; notwithstanding all our precautions to

guard our canoes, they often sustained great injury by reason of the shallow water. On the 29th at noon I entered the '*la Belle Rivière.*' I buried a plate of lead at the foot of a red oak on the south bank of the river Oyo (Ohio) and of the Chanougon, not far from the village of Kanaouagon, in latitude 42° 5′ 23″.'[1] It is unnecessary to give a copy of the inscription on the above plate, as it is similar to the one which was sent to Governor Clinton, as before related, except slight variations in the spelling, accents and arrangement of lines. The three plates which thus far have been discovered present the same differences. The places and dates of deposit are coarsely engraved, evidently with a knife. In the one just described the blanks were filled with the words: "Au confluent de l'Ohio et Kanaaiagon, le 29 Juillet."

"At the confluence of the Ohio and Kanaaiagon the 29th of July."

The river, spelled "Kanaaiagon" on the plate, "Chanougon" by Céleron in his Journal, and "Kananouangon," on Bonnecamps' map, is a considerable stream that rises in western New York, and after receiving the Chautauqua outlet as a tributary, empties into the Alleghany just above the village of Warren. It is now known as the Conewango. On the site of Warren, at the northwesterly angle of the two rivers, there was, at the time of Céleron's visit, an Indian village, composed principally of Senecas, with a few Loups, bearing the name of Kanaouagon. It was opposite the mouth of the Conewango, on the south bank of the Alleghany, that the leaden plate was buried. The following is Father Bonnecamps' entry in his diary:

"*L'on a enterré une lame de plomb, avec une inscription, sur la rive méridionale de cette rivière, et vis-a-vis le confluent des deux rivières.*" "We buried a leaden plate bearing an inscription on the south bank of this river, and opposite the confluence of the two rivers."

The place of deposit is a little differently described in the Procès Verbal drawn up on the occasion. "*Au pied d'un chêne rouge, sur la rive méridionale de la rivière Ohio, et vis-a-vis la pointe d'une ilette. où se joignent les deux rivières Ohio et Kanaougon.*" "At the foot of a red oak on the south bank of the Ohio river, and opposite the point of a small island, at the confluence of the two rivers Ohio and Kanaougon." It will be noticed that the inscription on the plate recites that it was buried on the south side of the Ohio, opposite the mouth of the "*Chanougon*" (Conewango).

This presents a discrepancy between the inscriptions as given in the Journals of Céloron and Bonnecamps, and the one on the plate forwarded by Colonel Johnson to Governor Clinton in 1751 as above described.

The latter states it to have been buried "at the confluence of the Ohio and *Tchadakoin.*' The solution of the difficulty seems to be, that the latter plate was *never buried* or *used*, but was abstracted by the Iroquois friendly to the English, and another plate, having a correct inscription, was substituted by the French. The inscription on the one sent to Governor Clinton, was undoubtedly prepared on the supposition that the Chautauqua outlet emptied into the Ohio. But when that outlet was found to be a tributary of the Conewango, and that the latter emptied into the Ohio, a corrected plate, containing the name of the Conewango instead of the Chautauqua, was substituted and buried, as stated in Céleron's journal.[a] The latter plate has never been found. This solution is strengthened by the fact that none of the accounts of the plate sent to Governor Clinton state that it had been *buried*, or had been *dug up*. The Cayuga Sachem, in his speech quoted in Colonel Johnson's letter of December 4th, 1750, states that "the Senecas got it by *some artifice* from Jean Coeur."

Governor Clinton, in his letter to the Lords of Trade, states that some of the upper nations, which include the Senecas, "stole it from Jean Coeur, the French interpreter at Niagara, on his way to the river Ohio." The Governor states the same in substance in his letter to Governor Hamilton, of Pennsylvania. The theft must therefore have occurred while the expedition was on its way to the Ohio, and before any of the plates were buried. The original plate was probably soon after carried to England by Governor Clinton. The names "Chatacoin" and "Chatakouin," as spelled by Céleron in his journal, and "Tchadakoin," as inscribed on the plate, and "Tjadakoin," as spelled by Bonnecamps on his map, are all variations of the modern name Chautauqua. It will be found differently written by several early authors. Pouchot writes it "Shatacoin;" Lewis Evans, 1758, "Jadachque;" Sir William Johnson, "Jadaghque;" Mitchell, 1755, "Chadocoin;" Alden, as pronounced by Cornplanter, "Chaud-dauk-wā." It is a Seneca name, and in the orthography of that nation, according to the system of the late Reverend Asher Wright, long a missionary among them, and a fluent speaker of their language, it would be written "Jāh-dāh-gwăh," the first two vowels being long and the last short. Different significations have been ascribed to the word. It is said to mean "The place where a child was swept away by the waves." The late Dr. Peter Wilson, an educated Seneca, and a graduate of Geneva Medical College, told the writer that it signified literally, "where the fish was taken out."

He related an Indian tradition connected with its origin. A party of

Senecas were returning from the Ohio to Lake Erie. While paddling through Chautauqua Lake, one of them caught a strange fish and tossed it into his canoe. After passing the portage into Lake Erie, they found the fish still alive, and threw it in the water. From that time the new species became abundant in Lake Erie, where one was never known before. Hence, they called the place where it was caught, Jah-dah-gwăh, the elements of which are Gă-joh, "fish," and Ga-dah-gwăh, "taken out." By dropping the prefixes, acording to Seneca custom, the compound name "Jah-dah-gwăh" was formed. Among other significations which have been assigned to the word, but without any authority, may be mentioned "The elevated place," and "The foggy place," in allusion, probably, to the situation of the lake, and the mists which prevail on its surface at certain seasons.

It will be noticed the Alleghany is called by Céleron the Ohio, or "La Belle Rivière." This is in accordance with the usage of all early French writers since the discovery of the river by LaSalle. The same custom prevailed among the Senecas. They have always considered the Alleghany as the Ohio proper. If you ask a Seneca his name for that river, he will answer O-hée-yuh. If you ask him its meaning, he will give it as "Beautiful river.

Mr. Heckewelder, the Moravian missionary, supposing the word to be of Delaware origin, endeavors to trace its etymology from several words, signifying in that language, "The white foaming river." The late Judge Hall of Cincinnati adopted the same derivation. Neither of them seem to have been aware that it is *a genuine Seneca word*, derived from that nation by the French, and by the latter written "Ohio." Its pronunciation by a Frenchman would exactly represent the word as spoken by a Seneca, the letter "i" being sounded like e. The name "Ohio" was, therefore, correctly inserted on the plates buried on the banks of the Alleghany, above its junction with the Monongahela at Pittsburgh.

At the time the plate was interred opposite the mouth of the Conewango, as already narrated, all the officers and men of the expedition being drawn up in battle array, the chief in command proclaimed in a loud voice, "Vive le Roi," and that possession was now taken of the country in the name of the King. The royal arms were affixed to a neighboring tree, and a *Procès Verbal* was drawn up and signed as a memorial of the ceremony. The same formality was adopted at the burial of each succeeding plate. This procès verbal was in the following form, and in each instance was signed and witnessed by the officers present:

"*L'an*, 1749, *nous Céloron, Chevalier de l'ordre Royal et militaire de St. Louis, Capitaine Commandant un détachement envoyé par les ordres de M. le Marquis de Galissonnière, Commandant General en Canada, dans la Belle Rivière accompagné des principaux officers de nôtre détachement, avons enterré* (Here was inserted the place of deposit.) *une plaque de plomb, et fait attacher dans le même lieu, à un arbre, les Armes du Roi. En foy de quoi, nous avons dressé et signé, avec M. M. les officiers, le present Procès verbal à notre camp, le* (day of the month) 1749." "In the year 1749 we, Céloron, Chevalier of the Royal and military order of St. Louis, commander of a detachment sent by order of the Marquis of Galissonière, Governor General of Canada, to the Ohio, in presence of the principal officers of our detachment, have buried (Here was inserted the place of deposit) a leaden plate, and in the same place have affixed to a tree the Arms of the King. In testimony whereof we have drawn up and signed, with the officers, the present Procés verbal, at our camp, the (day of the month) 1749." This method of asserting sovereignty over new territory is peculiar to the French, and was often adopted by them. La Salle, at the mouth of the Mississippi in 1682, thus proclaimed the dominion of *Louis le Grand*, and more recently the same formality was observed when a French squadron took possession of some islands in the Pacific Ocean.

A few miles from Kanaouagon, on the right bank of the Alleghany, just below its junction with the Brokenstraw Creek, was the Indian village of "Paille Coupée," or Cut Straw, the name being given by Céloron as *Kachuiodagon*, occupied principally by Senecas. The English name, "Broken Straw," and the French name, Paille Coupée, were both probably derived from the Seneca name, which is De-ga-syo-noh-dyah-goh, which signifies literally, broken straw. Kachuiodagon, as given by Céloron, and Koshenunteagunk, as given on the Historical Map of Pennsylvania, and the Seneca name, are all three the same word in different orthography, the variation in the first two being occasioned by the difference between the French and English mode of spelling the same Indian word. Father Bonnecamps states the village to be in latitude 41° 54′ 3″ and in longitude 79° 13′ west of Paris.

While the expedition was resting in the vicinity of these two Indian villages, a council was held with the inhabitants, conducted by Joncaire, whom Céloron states had been adopted by the Senecas, and possessed great influence and power over them. They addressed him in the council as "our child Joncaire." He was probably the person of that name met by Washington at Venango four years afterwards,[1] and a son of

the Joncaire mentioned by Charlevoix as living at Lewiston on the Niagara in 1721, "who possessed the wit of a Frenchman and the sublime eloquence of an Iroquois." The father, who was a captive, died in 1740, leaving two half-breed sons, who seem to have inherited his influence and distinction. Their names were Chabert Joncaire, Junior, and Philip Clauzonne de Joncaire. Both were in the French service, and brought reinforcements from the west to Fort Niagara at the time it was besieged by Sir William Johnson in 1759. Their names are affixed to the capitulation which took place a few days later. The former was in command of Fort Schlosser, his brother, who was a captain in the marine, being with him. They were both in the expedition of Céloron.

The result of the council held by Joncaire was not satisfactory to the French. It was very evident there was a strong feeling among the Indians on the Alleghany in favor of the English. It did not, however, prevent the French from descending the river. After pledging the Senecas in a cup of "Onontios milk" (brandy), the expedition left the villages of Kanaouagon and Paille Coupée on the first day of August, and after proceeding about four leagues below the latter, reached a village of Loups and Renards, composed of ten cabins. The Loups were a branch of the Delawares, called by the English Munseys. Four or five leagues farther down they passed another small village, consisting of six cabins, and on the third of August another of ten cabins. The next was a village on the "Rivière aux Boeufs." According to Father Bonnecamps, they passed between Paille Coupée and the Rivière aux Boeufs one village on the left and four on the right, the latitude of the third on the right being 41° 30′ 30″, and the longitude 79° 21′ west of Paris. The Rivière aux Boeufs is now known as French Creek, it having been so called by Washington on his visit there in 1753. The English named it Venango. A fort was built by the French in 1753–4 on its western bank, sixty rods below its junction with the Alleghany, called Fort Machault. In 1760, when the English took possession, they built another, forty rods higher up, and nearer the mouth of French Creek, which they called Fort Venango. In 1787 the United States Government sent a force to protect the settlers, and built a fort on the south bank of the creek, half a mile above its mouth, which was called Fort Franklin. From all of which it appears that this was at an early day an important point on the river. It is now the site of the flourishing village of Franklin. At the time of Céloron's visit the Indian village numbered about ten cabins.

After passing the Rivière aux Boeufs and another on the left, the expedition reached on the same day a bend in the river about nine miles below, on the left or eastern bank of which lay a large boulder, nearly twenty-two feet in length by fourteen in breadth, on the inclined face of which were rude inscriptions, evidently of Indian workmanship, representing by various symbols the triumphs of the race in war and in the chase. It was regarded by the natives attached to the expedition as an "Indian God," and held in superstitious reverence. It was a well-known landmark, and did not fail to arrest the attention of the French. Céloron deemed it a favorable point at which to bury his second leaden plate. This was done with due form and ceremony, the plate bearing an inscription similar to that on the first, differing only in the date and designation of the place of deposit. Céloron's record is as follows: "*Août 3me*, 1749. *Enterré une plaque de plomb sur la rive méridionale de la rivière Oyo, à 4 lieues, au dessous de la rivière aux boeufs, vis-a-vis une montagne pellé, et aupres d'une grosse pierre, sur laquelle on voit plusieurs figures assez grossièrement gravées.*" "Buried a leaden plate on the south bank of the Ohio river, four leagues below the river *Aux Boeufs*, opposite a bald mountain, and near a large stone, on which are many figures rudely engraved."

Father Bonnecamps states the deposit to have been made *under* a large rock. An excellent view of the rock in question, with a fac-simile of the hieroglyphics on its face, may be found in Schoolcraft's work on the "Indian Tribes in the United States," Vol. VI, pp. 172. It was drawn by Captain Eastman of the U. S. Army while standing waist deep in the river, its banks being then nearly full. At the time of the spring and fall freshets the rock is entirely submerged. The abrasion of its exposed surface by ice and flood-wood in winter has almost obliterated the rude carvings. At the time of Céloron's visit it was entirely uncovered. It is called "Hart's rock" on Hutchings' Topographical Map of Virginia. The distance of "four leagues" from the mouth of the river Aux Boeufs, or French Creek, to the rock, as given by Céloron, is, as usual, a little exaggerated. The actual distance by the windings of the river is about nine miles. The league as used by Céloron may be estimated as containing about two miles and a half. The leaden plate deposited at this point has never been found, and some zealous antiquarian living in the vicinity might, from the record now given, be able to restore it to light, after a repose of more than a century and a quarter.

From this station Céloron sent Joncaire forward to Attigué the next day, to announce the approach of the expedition, it being an Indian set-

tlement of some importance on the left bank of the river, between eight and nine leagues farther down, containing twenty-two cabins. Before reaching Attigué they passed a river three or four leagues from the Aux Boeufs, the confluence of which with the Alleghany is described as "very beautiful," and a league farther down another, having on its upper waters some villages of Loups and Iroquois.

Attigué was probably on or near the Kiskiminitas river, which falls into the south side of the Alleghany about twenty-five miles above Pittsburgh. It is called the river d'Attigué by Montcalm, in a letter dated in 1758.[10] There were several Indian villages on its banks at that date. They reached Attigué on the sixth, where they found Joncaire waiting. Embarking together they passed on the right an old "Chaouanons" (Shawnees) village. It had not been occupied by the Indians since the removal of Chartier and his band to the river Vermillion in the Wabash country in 1745, by order of the Marquis de Beauharnois. Leaving Attigué the next day, they passed a village of Loups, all the inhabitants of which, except three Iroquois, and an old woman who was regarded as a Queen, and devoted to the English, had fled in alarm to Chiningué. This village of the Loups, Céloron declares to be the finest he saw on the river. It must have been situated at or near the present site of Pittsburgh. The description of the place, like many given by Céloron, is so vague that it is impossible to identify it with any certainty. The clear, bright current of the Alleghany, and the sluggish, turbid stream of the Monongahela, flowing together to form the broad Ohio, their banks clothed in luxuriant summer foliage, must have presented to the voyagers a scene strikingly picturesque, one which would hardly have escaped the notice of the chief of the expedition. If, therefore, the allusion to "the finest place on the river" has no reference to the site of Pittsburgh, then no mention is made of it whatever. On landing three leagues farther down, they were told by some of their Indians that they had passed a rock on which were some inscriptions. Father Bonnecamps and Joncaire, who were sent to examine it, reported nothing but some English names written in charcoal. This was near the second *entrepôt* of the English.

Their camp being only two leagues above Chiningué, they were enabled to reach the latter the next day. They found the village one of the largest on the river, consisting of fifty cabins of Iroquois, Shawnees and Loups; also Iroquois from the Sault St. Louis and Lake of the Two Mountains, with some Nippissingues, Abenakis and Ottawas. Bonnecamps estimated the number of cabins at eighty, and says, "we called it

Chiningué, from its vicinity to a river of that name." He records its latitude as 40° 35′ 10″ which is nearly correct, and longitude as 80° 19′. The place was subsequently known as "Logstown," a large and flourishing village which figures prominently in Indian history for many years after this period. Colonel Croghan, who was sent to the Ohio Indians by Governor Hamilton, of Pennsylvania, in August 1749, mentions in his journal that "Monsieur Celaroon with two hundred French soldiers, had passed through Logstown just before his arrival." [11] Crogan inquired of the inhabitants the object of the expedition, and was told by them that "it was to drive the English away, and by burying iron plates, with inscriptions on them at the mouth of each remarkable creek, to steal away their country."

On reaching Chiningué Céloron found several English traders established there, whom he compelled to leave. He wrote by them to Governor Hamilton, under date of August 6th, 1749, that he was surprised to find English traders on French territory, it being in contravention of solemn treaties, and hoped the Governor would forbid their trespassing in future. De Céloron also made a speech, in which he informed the Indians that "he was on his way down the Ohio to whip home the Twightwees and Wyandots for trading with the English." They treated his speech with contempt, insisting that "to separate them from the English would be like cutting a man into halves, and expecting him to live." [12] The Indians were found so unfriendly to the French, and suspicious of the objects of the expedition, as to embarrass the movements of de Céloron. His Iroquois and Abenaki allies refused to accompany him farther than Chiningué. They destroyed the plates which, bearing the arms of the French King, had been affixed to trees as memorials of his sovereignty.

After leaving Chiningué, they passed two rivers, one on either side, and crossing the present boundary line between Pennsylvania and Ohio, reached the river Kanououara early on the 13th. Here they interred the third leaden plate, with the usual inscription and customary ceremonies. The blank in the plate was filled as follows: "*Enterré à l'entrée de la rivière, et sur la rive Septentrionale de Kanououara, qui se décharge a l'est de la rivière Oyo.*" "Buried at the mouth and on the north bank of the river Kanououara, which empties into the easterly side of the Ohio river." Neither Céloron nor Bonnecamps gives such a description of the locality as to warrant a positive identification of the site. The plate was probably buried on the northerly bank of Wheeling Creek, at its junction with the Ohio, in the present State of

Virginia, and near where Fort Henry was subsequently built in 1774. No vestige of the plate has been discovered so far as known.

The expedition resumed its voyage on the 14th, passing the mouths of three streams, two on the left and one on the right. Deer abounded along the banks. Two of the rivers are stated to be strikingly beautiful at their junction with the Ohio. On the 15th they arrived at the mouth of the Muskingum, called by Father Bonnecamps Yenanguá-konnan, and encamped on the shore. Here the fourth leaden plate was buried on the right bank of that river, at its junction with the Ohio. Céloron describes the place of deposit as follows: "*Enterré au pied d'un érable, qui forme trépied avec une chéne rouge et un orme, ā l'entrée de la rivière Yenangudkonan, sur la rive occidentale de cette rivière.*" "Buried at the foot of a maple, which forms a triangle with a red oak and elm, at the mouth of the river Yenanguakonan, and on its western bank."

In 1798, half a century later, some boys, who were bathing at the mouth of the Muskingkum, discovered something projecting from the perpendicular face of the river bank, three or four feet below the surface. With the aid of a pole they loosened it from its bed, and found it to be a leaden plate, stamped with letters in an unknown language. Unaware of its historic value, and being in want of lead, then a scarce article in the new country, they carried it home and cast a part of it into bullets. News of the discovery of so curious a relic having reached the ears of a resident of Marietta, he obtained possession of it, and found the inscription to be in French. The boys had cut off quite a large part of the inscription, but enough remained to indicate its character. It subsequently passed into the hands of Caleb Atwater, the historian, who sent it to Governor De Witt Clinton. The latter presented it to the Antiquarian Society of Massachusetts, in the library of which it is now deposited. A poor fac-simile of the fragment is given in Hildreth's Pioneer History of the Ohio Valley, at page 20. It appears to have been substantially the same as the other plates which have been discovered, with the exception of a different arrangement of the lines. The place of deposit is given as "*rivière Yenangue*" on the part of the plate which was rescued from the boys. Mr. Atwater, Gov. Clinton and several historians, misled by the similarity between the names "Yenangué" and "Venango," supposed that it had originally been deposited at Venango, an old Indian town at the mouth of French Creek in Pennsylvania, one hundred and thirty miles above the mouth of the Muskingum, and had been carried down by a freshet, or removed

by some party to the place where it was discovered. The Journal of de Céloron removes all doubt on the subject, and conclusively establishes the fact that the plate was originally deposited where it was found, on the site where old Fort Harmer was subsequently built, and opposite the point where the village of Marietta is now situated.

After the deposit of the fourth plate was completed, the expedition broke up their forest camp, embarked in their canoes, and resumed the descent of the river. About three-fourths of a mile below the Muskingum, Father Bonnecamps took some observations, and found the latitude to be 39° 36′, and the longitude 81° 20′ west of Paris. They accomplished twelve leagues on the 16th, and on the 17th, embarking early, they passed two fine rivers, one on each side, the names of which are not given. On the 18th, after an early start, they were arrested by the rain at the mouth of the Great Kanawha, which is called by Father Bonnecamps "Chinodaichta." The bank of this large stream, flowing from the southeast, and draining an extensive territory, was chosen for the deposit of the fifth plate. Only a brief record of the ceremony is given. A copy of the inscription is omitted by Céloron, but his record of the interment of the plate is as follows: "*Enterrée au pied d'un orme, sur la rive meridionale de l'Oyo, et la rive orientale de Chinondaista, le* 18 *Août*, 1749." "Buried at the foot of an elm on the south bank of the Ohio, and on the east bank of the Chinondaista, the 18th day of August, 1749."

Fortunately the discovery of the plate in March, 1846, leaves no doubt of the inscription. It was found by a boy while playing on the margin of the Kenawha river. Like that at the mouth of the Muskingum, it was projecting from the river bank, a few feet below the surface. Since the time it was buried, an accumulation of soil had been deposited above it by the annual river freshets for nearly one hundred years. The day of the deposit, as recorded on the plate, corresponds precisely with the one stated by de Céloron. The spelling of the Indian name of the river differs slightly from the Journal, that on the plate being "Chinodahichetha." Kenawha, the Indian name of the river in another dialect, is said to signify "The river of the woods." The place selected by Céloron for the interment of the plate must have been one of surpassing beauty. The native forest, untouched by the pioneer, and crowned with the luxuriant foliage of Northern Kentucky, covered the banks of both rivers, and the picturesque scenery justified the name of "Point Pleasant," which was afterwards bestowed by the early settlers. On the 16th day of October, 1774, it became the scene of a bloody

battle between an army of Virginians, commanded by Colonel Lewis, and a large force of western Indians, under the leadership of the celebrated Cornstalk, Logan and others, in which the latter were defeated."

The expedition was detained at this point by the rain. It re-embarked on the 20th, and when they had proceeded about three leagues, Father Bonnecamps took the latitude and longitude, which he records at 38° 39′ 57″ for the former, and 82° 01′ for the latter. Joncaire was sent forward the next day with two chiefs from the Sault St. Louis and two Abenakis, to propitiate the inhabitants of "St. Yotoc," a village they were now approaching. They embarked early on the morning of the 22d, and reached St. Yotoc the same day. This village was composed of Shawnees, Iroquois, Loups, and Miamis, and Indians from the Sault St. Louis, Lake of the Two Mountains, as well as representatives from nearly all the nations of the "upper country." The name "St. Yotoc" seems to be neither French nor Indian. It is probably a corruption of Scioto. Father Bonnecamps calls it "Sinhioto" on his map. He records the latitude of the south bank of the Ohio, opposite its mouth, at 38° 50′ 24″, and the longitude 82° 22′. Pouchot, in his "*Mémoires sur la dernière guerre*," French edition, vol. III. page 182, calls the river "Sonhioto." This village of St. Yotoc, or Scioto, was probably on the north bank of the Ohio, a little below the mouth of the Scioto, now the site of Alexandria. Its principal inhabitants were Shawnees.

The expedition remained here until the 26th of August. On the 27th they proceeded as far as the rivière La Blanche, or White river, which they reached at ten at night. On the bank of the Ohio, opposite the mouth of this river, Bonnecamps found the latitude to be 39° 12′ 01″, and the longitude 83° 31′. Embarking on the 30th, they passed the great north bend of the Ohio, and reached the rivière à la Roche, now known as the Great Miami. Here their voyage on the Ohio ended, and they turned their little fleet of bark gondolas northward into the channel of its great tributary.

The sixth and last of the leaden plates was buried at this place. The text of Céloron's Journal reads as follows:—"*Enterrée sur la pointe formée par la rive droite de l'Ohio, et la rive gauche de la rivière à la Roche, Août* 31, 1749." "Buried on the point formed by the intersection of the right bank of the Ohio, with the left bank of the Rock river, August 31, 1749." So far as known, this plate has never been discovered. Céloron calls the Great Miami the Rivière à la Roche, and Pouchot, quoted above, and other French writers give it the same name.

The expedition left its encampment at the mouth of this river on the

first day of September, and began the toilsome ascent of the stream, now greatly diminished by the summer drought. On the 13th they arrived at "Demoiselles," which Father Bonnecamps, with his constant companion the Astrolabe, found to be in latitude 40° 23′ 12″, and longitude 83° 29′. This was the residence of La Demoiselle, a chief of a portion of the Miamis who were allies of the English." The fort and village of La Demoiselle were mentioned by M. de Longueil in 1752. It was probably situated on what was afterwards known as Loramies Creek, the earliest point of English settlement in Ohio. It became quite noted in the subsequent history of the Indian wars, and was destroyed by General Clark in his expedition of 1782. A fort was built on the site several years afterwards by General Wayne, which he named Fort Loramie. Here the French remained a week to recruit, and prepare for the portage to the Maumee. Having burned their canoes, and obtained some ponies, they set out on their overland journey. In arranging for the march, M. de Céloron took command of the right, and M. de Contrecoeur of the left. The distance was estimated by Céloron as fifty leagues, and five and a half days were allotted for its accomplishment."

They completed the portage on the 25th, and arrived at Kiskakon. This appears to be the Indian name for the site of Fort Wayne, which was built there in 1794. Céloron found it a French post, under the command of M. de Raymond. It undoubtedly took the name of Kiskakon, from a branch of Ottawas that removed to this place from Missillimackinac, where they had resided as late as 1682. It was here that de Céloron provided pirogues and provisions for the descent of the Maumee to Lake Erie. The Miami Chief "Pied Froid," or Coldfoot resided in the village. He appears not to have been very constant in his allegiance either to the French or the English.

Leaving Kiskakon on the 27th of September, a part of the expedition went overland to Detroit, and the remainder descended the river by canoe. The latter landed near Detroit on the 6th of October. Having renewed his supplies and canoes for the transportation of his detachment, Céloron prepared for the return to Montreal by way of Lake Erie. His Indian allies, as usual, occasioned some delay. They had stopped at the mouth of the Maumee, and were overcome by a drunken debauch on the white man's fire water. It was not until the 8th of October that the party finally launched their canoes, and descended the river into Lake Erie. Their first night was spent on its northern shore at Point Pellée. Nothing worthy of note occurred during their traverse of the lake. They reached Fort Niagara on the 19th, where they remained three

days. Leaving there on the 22d, they coasted the south shore of Lake Ontario, and arrived at Fort Frontenac on the 6th of November, their canoes badly shattered by the autumnal gales, and their men greatly fatigued with the hardships of the voyage. They pushed on, however, with as little delay as possible to Montreal, which they reached on the 10th of October, having, according to the estimate of both de Céloron and Father Bonnecamps, traveled at least twelve hundred leagues.

Allusion has been made to the changes which took place in the Ohio Valley prior to the expedition of de Céloron. Those which have since occurred are no less remarkable. Both the French and the English continued equally determined to possess the country north of the Ohio. The former stretched a chain of posts from Niagara to the Mississippi, as a barrier against English encroachments, and to exclude the Indians from their influence and control. To counteract these demonstrations, Gist was sent by the Ohio Company in 1750 to survey its lands preliminary to their occupation and settlement. In 1753 Washington was dispatched by Governor Dinwiddie to Venango and Le Boeuf on what proved to be a fruitless mission. A post was established the same year by the English at Pittsburgh, which was captured the next by the French, and called after the Marquis du Quesne. It was occupied by the latter until retaken by General Forbes in 1756.

This was followed the next year by an expedition under Washington, who at the age of twenty-two drew his maiden sword at the Great Meadows in an encounter with a detachment of French under Jumonville, which resulted in the death of the latter. Washington pushed on farther west, but the advance of the enemy with strong reinforcements compelled him to fall back to the Great Meadows, which he strengthened and fortified, under the significant name of Fort Necessity. Here he was attacked by the French under Coulon de Villiers, a brother of Jumonville, with a vigor inspired by the desire of avenging his brother's death. Washington was compelled to capitulate. The French were thus enabled to acquire complete control for the time being over the disputed territory. Thus was the opening scene in the great drama of the "Old French War" enacted. The disastrous defeat of Braddock followed the next year, and exposed the whole frontier to the hostile incursions of the French and Indians.

In 1759 the grand scheme for the conquest of Canada, conceived by the illustrious Pitt, was carried into execution. The expeditions of Amherst against Ticonderoga, Wolfe against Quebec, and Prideaux against Niagara, resulted in the fall of those important fortresses.

Major Rogers was sent to the Northwest in 1760 to receive possession of the French posts, which had been surrendered to the English by the capitulation of Quebec. He was met at Cuyahoga by Pontiac, the Ottowa, who forbade his farther progress. "I stand," says he, "in your path; you can march no farther without my permission." A friend to the French, a leader in the attack on Braddock, ambitious and vindictive, Pontiac was a chief of commanding intellect and well qualified for bold enterprises and strategic combinations. These qualities were indicated in his great conspiracy for the simultaneous capture of the ten principal posts in the Northwest, and the massacre of the English trading in their vicinity. Eight of those posts, embracing Sandusky, St. Joseph, Miami, Ouatanon, Mackinaw, Presque Isle, Le Boeuf and Venango successively fell before the deep laid plans of the wily chieftain. Forts Pitt and Detroit successfully withstood the most vigorous assaults, and the latter a protracted siege conducted by Pontiac himself.

Now war in all its horrors raged with savage intensity along the entire frontier. The unprotected settlers, men, women and children, were massacred and scalped, or if spared, borne away into a hopeless captivity. The English colonists were aroused to meet the emergency, and Colonel Bouquet was sent in 1763 with a large force into the Indian territory to relieve the western posts, but was compelled to halt at Pittsburgh.

The succeeding spring found the Indians again on the war-path, and Detroit was invested for the second time by Pontiac. An expedition was sent to the Northwestern posts under Bradstreet, and another under Bouquet penetrated the interior of Ohio. Bradstreet was duped by his crafty adversaries into a peace not intended to be kept, but Bouquet, undeceived by similar artifices, pushed on to the heart of the Indian country. At the junction of the White Woman and Tuscarawas rivers he dictated a peace by his bold and energetic movements, which, with the exception of occasional outbreaks, was destined to last until the commencement of the great contest between the colonists and the mother country.

The treaty of 1783 left the western tribes without an ally, and the United States became free to extend the arts of peace over their new territory. The pioneers shouldered the axe and the rifle, and marching westward in solid column, invaded the land. The frail canoe and sluggish batteau, which had so long and wearily contended with the adverse currents of the Ohio, were soon replaced by the power of steam. The dense forests that for a thousand miles had fringed both borders of the

river were opened to the sunlight, and thriving cities and smiling villages arose on the ruins of the mound builders. The narrow trails of the Indian, deep worn for centuries by the tread of hunter and warrior, were now superseded by the iron rail and broad highway. The hardy emigrants and their descendants subdued the wilderness, and with the church, the school-house, the factory and the plough planted a civilization on the ruins of a fallen barbarism.

The dominion and power of France have disappeared, and no traces of her lost sovereignty exist, save in the few names she has left on the prominent streams and landmarks of the country, and in the leaden plates which, incribed in her language and asserting her claims, still lie buried on the banks of the "Beautiful River."

O. H. MARSHALL

[1] This name is usually spelled Céleron, but incorrectly. M. Ferland, in his Cours d'Histoire du Canada, vol. ii, p. 493, calls him Céloron de Blainville.

[2] Joncaire. [3] N. Y. Col. Doc., vi, p. 604.

[4] The Indian name of Sir William Johnson. It signifies "Superintendent of Affairs."

[5] V Penn. Col. Records, p. 508.

[6] N. Y. Col. Doc., ix, p. 1097.

[7] This observation, like most of those taken by Father Bonnecamps. is incorrect. Either his instruments were imperfect or his methods of computation erroneous. The true latitude of the mouth of the Conewango is less than 41° 50′, as it about twelve miles south of the boundary line between New York and Pennsylvania.

[8] On Crevecoeur's Map of 1758, in *Dépots des Cartes, Ministère de la Guerre, Paris*, the Conewango is called the "Chatacouin" as far down as its junction with the Allegany.

[9] Governor Clinton, in his address before the New York Historical Society in 1811, inquires if the Joncaire met by Charlevoix and Washington were the same. They could not have been, for the one mentioned by Charlevoix died in 1740.

[10] N. Y. Col. Doc., IX, 1025; X, ib., 901.

[11] N. Y. Col. Doc., VII, p. 267.

[12] N. Y. Col. Doc., VI, pp. 532–3.

[13] See Vol. I. pp. 747, Magazine of American History.

[14] N. Y. Col. Doc., X, pp. 139, 142, 245 and 247.

[15] Major Long of the U. S. Army, in his second expedition to the St. Peter's River in 1823, traveled over the same route.