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**The Voyage of Champdore,  
1608.**



# The Voyage of Pierre Angi- haut, known as Champdoré, Captain in the Marine of New France, made to the Coast of Maine, 1608.

Si des pilotes vieux le renom dure encore,  
Pour avoir sceu voguer sur vne étroite mer,  
Si le monde à present daigne encore estimer  
Ariomene, avec Palinure & Pelore:  
C'est raison (Champ-doré) que nôtre âge t'honore,  
Qui sçais par ta vertu te faire renommer,  
Quand ta dextérité empeche d'abimer  
La nef qui va souz toy du Ponant à l'Aurore.  
Ceux-la du grand Neptune oncques la majesté.  
Ne virent, ni le fond du son puissant Empire:  
Mais dessus l'Océan journellement porté  
Tu fais voir aux Frâçois des pais tout nouveaux,  
Afin que l'à vn iour maint peuple se retire  
Faisant les flots gemir souz ses ailez vaisseaux.

By B. F. DE COSTA.



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## CHAMPDORÉ IN NEW ENGLAND, 1608.

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PIERRE ANGIBAUT, called "Champdoré," has hitherto been known simply as a pilot in the service of De Mont, and not as an actual leader of an independent expedition. Nevertheless, in 1608, Champlain's former associate brought out a company of colonists to New France, and sailed down the Maine coast as far as Saco. This expedition has escaped treatment, for the reason that the statements concerning it have appeared confused, if not contradictory. It has been taken for granted, that the efforts of the French, after the desertion of Port Royal, in 1607, were suspended until 1610. This, however, will appear to be a mistake, as Lescarbot, in his edition of 1609, gives an account of an expedition that evidently went out in 1608. It is true that, in the autumn of that year, the Jesuit father, Biard, went to Bordeaux for the purpose of joining an expedition which he understood was to have been fitted out by Poutrincourt, but upon his arrival he could learn nothing about it. Poutrincourt had indeed promised the King to undertake the work again that year, yet he made no movement until 1610. In the meanwhile, however, an expedition was sent by De Mont, who had secured a grant giving him the monopoly of the fur trade for one year. Biard probably knew nothing of this expedition, though he understood that a movement was in progress. Besides, the members of his Order were not wanted in the colony, and it was not until 1611 that Biard succeeded in getting out to Port Royal, notwithstanding the influence of the King and Queen was thrown in his favor.\* From our general knowledge of the subject, it might be concluded that De Mont allowed the Jesuits to suppose that the expedition was to leave Bordeaux at the end of 1608, in order to be well rid of them, while at the time arranging to sail from St. Malo.

\* On this question, see *Relations des Jésuites*, Vol. I. p. 25; Shea's "Charlevoix," Vol. I. p. 260; and Parkman's "Pioneers," Chapters V. and VI. The Huguenots fought the Jesuits to the last.



The same year, under the same monopoly, De Mont sent Champlain with two vessels to Canada. It is possible that the expedition of Champdoré was authorized in consideration of receiving a portion of the profits.

But, before speaking of the voyage, it will be necessary to state what is known concerning Pierre Angibout, as in the future he must take rank with the worthies, who, amidst perils and privations, labored to achieve the conquest of the wilderness of New England.

In Champlain's narrative, Champdoré is traduced and denied his proper place, owing clearly to the jealousy excited by his merits. Champlain says that he was a good carpenter; but he must have been something more, in order to hold his place as pilot and navigator for a period of three years, and to be entrusted with an independent expedition in the fourth. Champlain, perhaps, felt that his appointment, after a long trial, to this responsible post, formed a sarcasm upon his attempts to cheapen Champdoré's merits, and he does not allude either to his appointment or his voyage. Lescarbot, however, recognizes Champdoré's services, also addressing a sonnet to him, as *Pierre Angibout dit Champ-doré Capitaine de Marine en la Nouvelle France*.\*

In describing the buildings at St. Croix, Lescarbot speaks of the abodes of "Sires d'Orville, Châplain, Champdoré, and other notable personages." Again, in speaking of those whom De Mont left behind at Port Royal to pass the winter of 1605-6, he mentions Monsieur Champlain and Monsieur Champdoré, the one for geography and the other for the conducting and guiding the voyages.†

The position of Champdoré while attached to the colony was clearly defined; and though at times the geographer was obliged to recognize the pilot's capacity, he nevertheless seeks every occasion to detract from his merit, and to set down every disaster to his credit. At the instance of Poutrincourt, Champdoré was on one occasion placed under arrest, having been charged with the wilful destruction of the shallop, which, in 1606, unfortunately struck upon the rocks at Port Royal, though they were glad to release him and secure the benefit of his skill.‡

Champlain vents his spleen in paragraphs like this: "We came near being wrecked on a rocky islet, on account of Champdoré's usual obstinacy."

Lescarbot was probably indebted to Champdoré for portions of the material used in describing the voyages of 1604, '5 and '6, as he did not go in person further south than Grand Menan. On more than one occasion he refers to Champdoré as an informant.

The voyage of Champdoré is mentioned in three editions of Les-

\* *Les Muses de la Nouvelle France*, p. 42.

† *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, Ed. 1612, p. 476. Ibid. Ed. 1609.

‡ Champlain's "Œuvres," Ed. Quebec, Vol. I. pp. 84-85.

carbot's *Nouvelle France*, though the edition of 1609 forms the real authority.\* The succeeding editions omit that part of the narrative found in chapter iv. of the edition of 1609, evidently to avoid going over the same subject twice. The portion omitted in the two succeeding editions is very interesting.

Lescarbot says, first, that the colonists, returning to France in the autumn of 1607, brought samples of the products of the country, such as corn, wheat, rye and barley, and presented them to the King. Poutrincourt, as a special offering, presented some tame "Outards," or geese, which he had "taken from the shell." They pleased the King, and were at once domiciled in the beautiful ponds of Fontainbleu. The reports made appear to have encouraged his Majesty; and Lescarbot is correct in saying that at this time, "upon a fair exhibition of the fruits of the said country, the King confirmed to Monsieur De Mont the privilege for the trade in beavers with the savages,"† and that this, in connection with the general encouragement which the prospect afforded, led to the attempt in 1608. Lescarbot states that the King acted with direct reference to the establishment of colonies, and, writing in 1609, says: "By this occasion he [De Mont] sent thither in March last families to begin the Christian and French Commonwealth there, which God grant to bless in increase."

The statement that "families" were sent out is very significant, showing that the French saw distinctly the true policy to be pursued, and that they entertained the project of permanent homes. Of the experience of these "families" we, at present, have no particular knowledge. Nevertheless a glimpse is given of the condition of Acadia after the terrible winter which had frozen the spirits of Popham's men, but which the French happily escaped. They found the grain which had been sown the previous year in a flourishing condition, and the faithful old savage, Membertou, with his dusky followers, ready to extend a cordial welcome. It is not clear, however, that Champdoré and his colonists remained in New France during the winter of 1608-9. Perhaps the account of the severity of the previous winter dampened their ardor and hastened their return, notwithstanding they had brought out what are called "families."

\* The Edition of 1612 (p. 459) mentions the voyage and the exploration of the St. John's River. In the heading of L. IV. C. xix. (p. 603) is the following: *Voyage en la Nouvelle France, depuis le retour du dit Sieur Poutrincourt*. In dropping the part of the narrative to which this refers, Lescarbot forgot to erase this reference to it. The edition of 1618 possesses the same features, though C. iv. takes the place of C. xix. The first edition of Lescarbot's work was published in 1609. Editions followed in 1611, 1612 and 1618. Le Long refers to an edition of 1617. See *Bibliothèque Historique*, Vol. III. No. 39,654. A letter attributed to Lescarbot by M. Gabriel Marcel, of the geographical section of the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris, has been published by that writer, with notes. Paris, 1885. It was written at Port Royal, Aug. 22, 1606, and is of interest. Lescarbot was born about the year 1565-70, and died about 1630.

† It is clear that the privilege, which was for one year only, had no special application to the territory ceded to Poutrincourt. The Patent to De Mont covered all of New France. See Patent in Champlain's *Œuvres*, Vol. I. p. 136.

Lescarbot mentions Champdoré's return, and says :

"The said ship, being returned, we have had report by Monsieur de Champdoré, and others, of the condition of the country we had left, and of the wonderful beauty of the corn that the said Monsieur de Poutrincourt had sown before his departure, together with the grains that have fallen in the gardens which have grown incredibly. Memberton gathered six or seven barrels of the corn that we had sown, and still had one left, which he reserved for the French whom he expected. When it was charged that he had eaten our pigeons which we had left there, he fell to weeping, and embracing him that told him, said it was the Macharoa, that is, the great birds called Eagles, which eat many of them while we were there. Besides all great and small inquired how we were, naming each by his own name, which is a proof of great love."

On other points Lescarbot gives interesting information, and says that Champdoré extended his observation as far as Saco, or "Chouakouet." He also visited the Saint John River. He says :

"This river is one of the fairest that may be seen, having many islands and abounding in fish. This last year, 1608, the said Monsieur de Champdoré, with one of the said De Mont's men, has been some fifty leagues up the said river, and testify that there is a great quantity of vines along the shore, though the grapes are not so large as in the country of Armouchiquois. There are also onions and many other good herbs. As regards the trees, they are the finest to be seen. When we were there we saw a great number of cedar trees. In regard to the fish Champdoré has told us, that, putting the kettle over the fire, they had taken fish enough for dinner before the water was hot. Besides, this river, stretching as it does far within the land of the savages, greatly shortens the long journeys."

The modern tourist who ascends this stream will justify Champdoré's praise.

Champdoré then descended the river, and sailed southward, visiting for the fourth time the wild coast of Maine. Lescarbot writes :

"The said Champdoré went as far as Chouakouet, the beginning of the Armouchiquois land, where he reconciled that tribe with the Etechemins, which was not done without solemnity. For as he began to speak of it the captive, named Asticou, who is now in the place of Olmechin,\* a grave man of goodly presence, howsoever savage he may be, demanded that some one of the Etechemins should be sent to him, and that he would treat with him. Oagimout, Sagamore of the St. Croix River, was selected for that purpose, though he would not trust them; but under the safe conduct of the French, he went thither. Some presents were made to Asticou, who, upon the speech of peace, began to exhort his people and to show them the reasons which should induce them to listen to it. Whereupon they agreed, making an assent to each article proposed to them. Some five years† ago Monsieur de Mont had also arranged a peace between those people, and declared unto them that he would be the enemy to the first one that should commence war, and would pursue him. But after his return into France they

\* This appears to be an error. Asticou was a Penobscot chief, and appears to have succeeded Bashaba.

† He should have said *three* years, as the peace referred to was made in 1606. It was a poor peace at the best. See Champlain, Vol. I. p. 93, and Lescarbot, Ed. 1612, p. 560. For the names of various chiefs, see Champlain, Vol. I. p. 126.

could not maintain the peace. And the Armouchiquois killed a Sourequois savage named Panoniac, who went to them in order to trade in merchandise, which he obtained at the store house of the said de Mont. The war above mentioned broke out on account of this murder, under the leadership of Sagamore Membertou; the said war was carried on in the same place now mentioned where Monsieur de Champdoré treated the peace in this year. Monsieur Champlain is in another place, that is, in the great River of Canada, near the place where Captain Jaques Cartier wintered, where he has fortified himself."

In closing, Lescarbot says :

"As regards Monsieur de Poutrincourt, his desire is unchangeable to colonize and build up his Province, to bring thither his family, and all kinds of trades necessary for the existence of man; which, with God's help, he will continue to do, throughout the present year, 1609;\* and as long as he has health and strength, will prosecute the same, to live there under the King's obedience."

It is perhaps due to Champdoré, in the absence of the details of his life, that we should give the Sonnet which Lescarbot wrote in his praise; especially as it forms an offset to the envious criticism of Champlain, who, as the geographer, found a rival in Champdoré the navigator. Lescarbot, the witty lawyer, was evidently on the best of terms with the Pilot, and they doubtless enjoyed together good dinners and merry evenings in Acadia, when Lescarbot feasted royally, after the fashion of his brother of the Bar, Thomas Morton, of Merry Mount, wearing the Collar of the Order of the *Bon Temps*. In this Sonnet the Parisian Advocate bestows his praise with the liberality that marked Champlain's blame; and the neglect of renowned characters of antiquity is somewhat explained by the devotion exhibited to the overshadowing renown of Pierre Angibout.

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\* See ante; this fixes the date of Champdoré's voyage. The Sonnet has been transferred to the title-page.

This article was written some fifteen years ago, on finding that Parkman had overlooked the expedition of 1608, which had also been overlooked by every author of whom the writer had any knowledge. Subsequently, Dr. Slafter, in editing the Prince Society's edition of Champlain's work, noted the fact that the voyage was made. It is time for Champdoré to have due recognition.







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