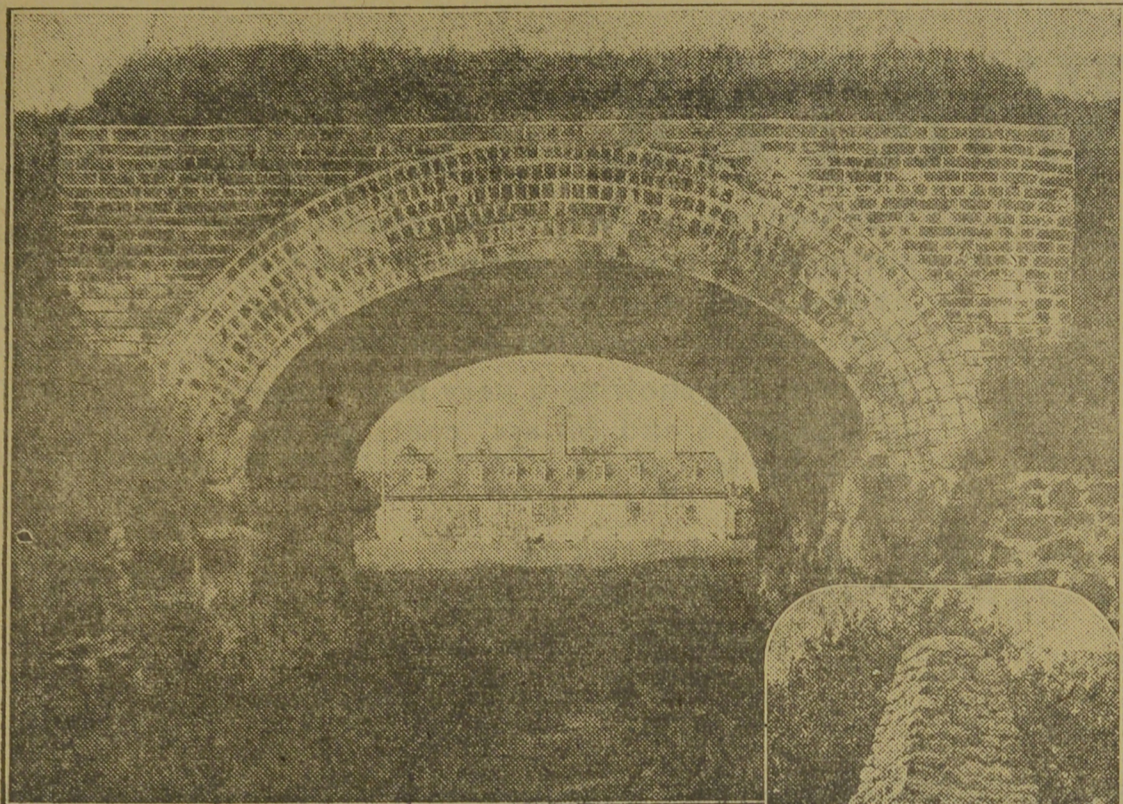


## The First Theatre in North America



Arched entrance to Old Fort. Inset—Cairn on site of first French Fort commemorating the birthplace of Canadian Drama.

To commemorate the first theatrical performance on the North American continent, a simple stone cairn and tablet has been placed on the site of the first French Fort at Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia, the birthplace of Canadian literature and drama.

Here the first American play was written and acted 320 years ago. Although it was unlike the kind of dramatic performances one sees today from comfortable orchestra stalls, it was from all historical accounts, a "pretty good show." It was called "Neptune's Theatre" and was staged on the waters of Annapolis Basin, the actors performing on a movable and precarious stage of canoes, and the actors themselves, men of opposite extremes in social and intellectual condition, some gentlemen of France, and others aboriginals of Nova Scotia wilds.

The author of this unique production was Marc Lescarbot, a French lawyer and poet, who came with Poutincoeur to Port Royal in 1606. During his first winter he was in charge of the Fort during the absence of Poutincoeur on an exploration expedition. If Lescarbot must be credited with the distinc-

tion of being the author and producer of the first North American play, he is also responsible for inaugurating a short hours day for his men, and the first experimental farm in the country. Moreover he was one of the most prominent members of the "Order of Good Cheer", an epicurean organization established by Champlain for the purpose of setting a record in the variety and excellence of food, which members washed down with a plentiful supply of rare old wines. Lescarbot was as particularly proficient in "throwing" a good party.

To add a still further "touch of gaiety", as Lescarbot put it, to the return of Poutincoeur from his voyage of discovery, Lescarbot composed an original masque called "Neptune Theatre," which was enacted in the presence of Poutincoeur aboard ship. After it was over the merry company went ashore, entered the "habitation" and home of the "Order" and the banquet began. Later Lescarbot returned to France and wrote the "Histoire de Nouvelle France," and the Old Fort fell into the hands of the British.

It is the most peaceful spot in the world now. A beautiful bronze tablet, bearing the arms of France and Navarre at the top and the inscription:

"Site of the first fort or 'Habitation' of Port Royal. Built by the French under De Monts and Champlain, 1605. Attacked and partially destroyed by a British force from Virginia, 1613. Restored and occupied by Scottish Colonists, 1629. Laid waste on their retirement from the country, 1632. Home of the 'Order of Good Cheer'. Birthplace of Canadian Literature and Drama."

With a simple ceremony the tablet was unveiled recently by the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia before members of the Historic Monuments and Sites Board of Canada, who were responsible for its erection, and prominent archivists from all over the Dominion. It is just one more interesting landmark at Annapolis Royal, surely the most romantic centre of Nova Scotia on the Dominion Atlantic Railway with its park and museum, and beloved of travellers.

## BOAT RIDE ON THE RIVER NIGER IS MARKED BY MANY BUMPS; SMALL CRAFT POLED BY NATIVES

Peanuts and peanuts! Can you imagine such piles that they looked more like the big circus tents themselves than the peanuts at the circus? Ten huge mountains of them all out under the sky, with no need of cover, as there the date of the first rain is pretty well known, and by the time it comes the peanuts can be well started on their "bon voyage" to other far-away countries, says a writer in the Christian Science Monitor.

It was here, in Dakar, Senegal, on the west coast of Africa, that we were told that we would have to wait three weeks for a steamer to take us to our destination, Liberia, farther down the coast. It was here, too, that we were told it was time for the tornadoes and the seventeen-foot rainfall to begin at the same destination. But we were on our way and meant to go through with it—so in the meantime why not take advantage of the opportunity to see some of the interior?

We left Dakar by rail, and after the hottest, almost waterless ride one can imagine of two days and nights, with plenty of sand, little sleep and no sheets, we arrived at beautiful Bamako, French Sudan, on the Niger River, fully intending to stop at a hotel. But after much maneuvering on the part of the three of us under two helmets (we had been told never to step out of the house without one on our head), we found that the six hotel rooms were occupied.

### Missionaries to Rescue.

It was then that we learned to appreciate missionaries all over again, for one offered most kindly to share his new house with us. He had just moved in (what he moved showed very little), but there was plenty of good will present.

What a meal he did serve that evening, cooked by one of his boys! We were still eating when a big, happy-faced black boy arrived to wash the dishes, and while he waited he seemed to enjoy watching us. When he could stand the heat no longer he removed his heavy shoes and purple sock tops (all of which he had put on for the occasion.)

The following day I saw the greatest observance or whatever one might call it that I have ever seen of the Sabbath day by this chap. He wore the same outfit on his feet, white linen knickers and a heavy frock coat—which, when he thought no one was looking, he would swing open for purposes of cooling his dark skin. Only on Sundays was all this worn, while the others wore scarcely anything and never shoes.

It was hard to realize that we were not dreaming, for it was all so very strange and beautiful, but hotter than hot, and when the wind blew it felt as if it came from a furnace.

### Boatmen Hired.

He we hired, at a ridiculously low price, the houseboat with six men and a captain, to take us up the Niger River on the way to Timbuktu, the city we had only thought of in connection with comic opera before.

The six men managed to move the boat against the strong current with the aid of six long bamboo poles, which sometimes slipped and sent their manager overboard, but never into much water, as the Niger was in most places as ridiculously low as the price. So low, in fact, was it that the ride proved the roughest we have ever had on land or sea, and at that our boat only drew about four inches of water.

Every now and then we would strike a rock or the bottom with such force that all our boat-household goods would topple over, until we got down to system and each one was appointed to see that a certain article remained upright while all inspected the floor to see if any leaks developed.

Thus we went on from early days until sunset with a stop at 11 A. M., when the crew would go ashore to sit spoon fashion around a big pot of cooked millet and with the aid of their hands eat their first meal of the day. A fine big, strong lot of blacks they were, too. As we went on and the sun got higher and hotter, the metal deck on which three of the men stood would get so hot that they would throw water over it to cool it. The men's feet were bare and their soles at least a half-inch thick. The captain sat on the roof under a great big straw hat and grunted his orders.

### See Black Storks.

We had plenty of time to talk over the latest news of America with the two missionaries of our party and their boys, while they told us many interesting things about this, to us, new country. One of these missionaries and his boy worked on their translation of St. John into Bambara. When it sounded right, the boy would click his approval with his tongue, as in

the custom. We saw many white birds that they call cow-birds, because they will follow cattle, also a number of black storks which we thought exceedingly appropriate in this land of negroes.

Our first stop for the night was at Berbe or Big Stick, a temporary town built by people further inland who came to fish. The walls of their huts were of thickly woven mats and the roof of thatch.

Then women were busy pounding grain. They would stand two to a mortar, and after one would throw the heavy pestle high up in the air, they would clap hands and the other would take it for a while and pound, and so on turn and turn. This pounding was the usual thing at 4 o'clock every afternoon in Bamako. While the women were doing this a group of children were busy rolling peanuts into a paste on a low, flat stone on the sand.

### Children Won Over.

Here my sister and I had quite a surprise, for the children ran away and were frightened—not knowing white women. Later we had perhaps an even greater shock when the beautiful white baby of a missionary, for the same reason, would cry at the sight of us and cling to the neck of some black boy. It was a new experience to be looked at as we had been looking. After I learned how to ask them their name in Bambara, the children soon gathered about me in a big circle as I sat on the sand, until I had about fifty little naked blacks, who looked as if they were made of chocolate, sitting and laughing with me.

The missionaries told the people that if they would come to the shore that evening, they would speak to them. So after a splendid meal, part of which consisted of a fish mixture that a woman carried to us in a calabash on her head, on our little deck in rose sunlight as the sun was setting, we sang songs, and the people began coming.

Then the girls clapped their hands so that they sounded like hitting two boards together and sang. Then the moon came up in an old blue and rose sky full of stars. And still the people came and sat on the deep sand, all but six mothers who had to stand because their babies were astride their backs at the waist.

Then the missionaries told them simple stories from the Bible, usually addressing one man, who would click his approval, while all listened attentively.

The most interesting place of all was Dyeleba, a town to which we walked one evening at sundown, much of the time through elephant grass, as they call it, which was higher than our heads. This town was very picturesque with its winding ways and big cap oak trees. Here, too, many of the people seemed afraid of us, but much interested in watching us eat our evening meal that we had brought with us and ate as we sat on the ground in the bright moonlight. The canned pineapple seemed to draw the greatest interest.

Very little clothing was worn in this town, too, but plenty of earrings. One little fellow with earrings came and sat beside me; that made the others braver, for here many of the grown people feared me. This was the home of one of our boys, and he did his best to have us think well of his town by having the children run races and dance for us. Usually two of the same age would dance at a time while the others kept up the hard-sounding clapping.

The whole town received its native boy with joy and perhaps with wonder, and a little pride over his white shirt and ducks. At any rate, the whole evening was a success, and when we left most of the children followed us until we had to tell them to turn back when we thought they had gone far enough.

On the last day we offered our men extra francs if they made good time. We forgot to count on the strong current and stiff breeze in their favor, for we fairly flew over the rocks and low places that had caused such disturbance on the way up—and we landed when the sun was most broiling and had to walk home. How wonderful and comfortable it looked to us this time! And how we did enjoy our trip on the Niger!

### Great Singer Coming

John K. Heughan of London, England, advance man for William Heughan the great Scottish singer, arrived here this morning and registered at the Queen. The engagement of the singer is for the Opera House for Tuesday and Wednesday of next week.

Send a card or letter to The Borden Co. Limited, Montreal for free copy of St. Charles Recipe Book. Simple recipes for dozens of delicious and satisfying dishes from soups to ice cream and candy.

57 C-11-26

"Let the Maritime Provinces Flourish by Their Industries." BORDEN FACTORY-TRURO, N.S.

### FILLERS

The melancholy days have come, the saddest of the year: the kids are going off to school and learn another cheer.

It's strange the way mother changes her mind about the best place to go for the summer after the girls are married off.

## Acid Stomach

"Phillips Milk of Magnesia" Better than Soda

Hereafter, instead of soda take a little "Phillips Milk of Magnesia" in water any time for indigestion or sour, acid, gassy stomach, and relief will come instantly.

For fifty years genuine "Phillips Milk of Magnesia" has been prescribed by physicians because it overcomes three times as much acid in the stomach as a saturated solution of bicarbonate of soda, leaving the stomach sweet and free from all gases. It neutralizes acid fermentations in the bowels and gently urges the souring waste from the system without purging. Besides, it is more pleasant to take than soda. Insist upon "Phillips." Any drugstore.

A. H. PARSONS  
PHONE 147-32 332 SMYTHE ST  
FREDERICTON, N. B.

PAPERHANGING, WHITEWASHING  
GRAINING, VARNISHING, and  
ENAMEL WORK.  
ESTIMATES FREE.

OUTDOOR PAINTING A SPECIALTY

## FIRE ALARM LOCATION IN THE CITY

- 6 Argyle and York Sts.
- 7 Victoria Hospital.
- 8 Children's Aid Home.
- 12 Westmorland and Aberleens Sts.
- 13 Northumberland and Saunders Sts.
- 14 Brunswick and Smythe Sts.
- 15 Charlotte and Smythe Sts.
- 16 George and Northumberland Sts.
- 17 King and Northumberland Sts.
- 21 Queen and York Sts.
- 23 York and George Sts.
- 24 Queen and Westmorland Sts.
- 25 Brunswick and Westmorland Sts.
- 26 Charlotte and Westmorland Sts.
- 27 King and York Sts.
- 28 Saunders and York Sts.
- 31 Queen and Regent Sts.
- 32 Needham and Regent Sts.
- 34 Queen and Carleton Sts.
- 35 Brunswick and Carleton Sts.
- 36 Charlotte and Carleton Sts.
- 37 George and Regent Sts.
- 38 King and Regent Sts.
- 43 St. John and Aberdeen Sts.
- 44 Queen and St. John Sts.
- 45 Brunswick and St. John Sts.
- 46 Charlotte and St. John Sts.
- 51 King and Church Sts.
- 52 George and Church Sts.
- 53 Union and Church Sts.
- 54 Shore St. and University Ave.
- 55 Brunswick St. and University Ave.
- 56 Lansdowne St. and Waterloo Row.
- 57 Grey St. and University Ave.
- 112 Smythe and Aberdeen Sts.
- 113 Argyle and Northumberland Sts.

## A LITTLE THING

THE power called habit is a little thing \* \* \* \*  
but it can pull your eyes open at a certain hour every morning, determine whether you dress the right or left foot first, drop a fixed amount of sugar into your breakfast coffee—free your mind for thoughts that demand actual choice.

The little habit of glancing over these advertising columns daily, checking this and that which appeal to you, frees your mind from any guesswork about the merits of a product; helps you choose wisely when you buy. If you are familiar with newspaper advertisements, you can discriminate merits, weigh one product against another, these truths against those. And the habit of buying only advertised goods takes the hazard out of shopping; puts in a good, sturdy sure.

Start a Friendly Little Habit That Will Pay.

Read the Advertisements in These Columns today.