

The First White Man In Pennsylvania and in Lancaster County.

There are probably not a half-dozen persons in this audience who can name the first white man who set his feet on the soil that to-day constitutes the great State of Pennsylvania. And yet that comparatively unknown man had one of the most remarkable, romantic, and, I regret to say, tragic careers that ever fell to the lot of explorer or discoverer in the New World or the Old.

Why, you may ask, has the name and fame of this man, called by the historian, Parkman, "the dauntless woodsman, pioneer of pioneers," not appeared long ago in all our histories and school books, to be known of all men? I will tell you. He was a Frenchman, who came to Canada, or New France, as it was called in those early times, with that noble and commanding figure and explorer, Samuel De Champlain, who made his first voyage to America in 1603—he made ten in all—founded Quebec in 1608, and, later, became Lieutenant Governor of Canada, where most of his life was spent, and where he died. With Champlain this young man of eighteen years came to America in 1608; he never returned to Europe; the rest of his days were passed among the various Indian tribes of Canada, New York, the Lake region and Pennsylvania. Although acquainted with many Indian dialects, he spoke no European tongue save his own. He wrote no books, nothing descriptive of what he saw and did, and it is only through his connection with the French officials and explorers in

Canada. his verbal recitals and the writings of Champlain and the Jesuit missionaries, Sagard, Le Caron, Brebeuf, Baillif, and others, that we learn the story of his dauntless courage, perseverance and achievements.

The facts bearing on the life, wanderings and discoveries of Etienne Brulé are not satisfactory as a whole, and, besides, are so scattered and sometimes so meagre as to leave much to be desired. Although able to write, he left no written records, never made any, so far as is known, and what is known of him is through the writings of his contemporaries and associates, especially those of that eminent voyager, commander and ruler, Samuel de Champlain. The narratives of the latter's voyages and operations in New France are our main source of information. A number of other writers, especially the Jesuit Fathers, who came in contact with him; Francis Parkman, the eminent historian; John Gilmary Shea, Charles A. Hanna, Winsor's Narrative and Critical History of America, and especially in Mr. Willshire Butterfield's sketch of Brulé's explorations may be consulted.

Of the French and Champlain it has been truly said:

"Long before the ice-coated plains of Plymouth listened to the rugged psalmody of the Puritans, the solitudes of Western New York and the stern wilderness of Lake Huron were trodden by the iron heel of the soldier and the sandaled feet of the Franciscan friars. France was the true pioneer of the great West. They who bore the fleur-de-lis were always in the van, patient, daring, indomitable, and foremost in this bright roll of forest chivalry stands the half-forgotten name of Samuel de Champlain.

"His books mark the man—all for

his theme and purpose, nothing for himself. Crude in style, full of the superficial errors of carelessness and haste, rarely diffuse, often brief to a fault, they bear on every page the palpable impress of truth."¹

Early Explorations and Settlements on the Delaware River.

But let us leave our hero, if we may call him such, for a little while, and try to unravel the somewhat tangled story of the early visits of European nations to our shores for the purpose of commerce and colonization. Beyond all question, the Delaware River and its adjacent country have become among the notable places in New World history. Not the Rhine nor the Tiber has been more strenuously battled for than this great Pennsylvania river by nations eager to extend their trade and territorial conquests. Allow me to rehearse the story briefly, as it bears close relation to my main theme, and shows who first colonized or attempted to colonize the region which in after years became the Province of William Penn.

John Smith, the renowned soldier, sailor, explorer and general adventurer, landed at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607. He made several expeditions up the Chesapeake Bay, and came within a few miles of the Pennsylvania line, but historians are pretty well agreed that he never planted foot on Pennsylvania soil. Two years later Hendrick Hudson, also an Englishman, but at that time in the service of the Dutch East India Company, sailed along the American coast and entered New York harbor; he also sailed up the Delaware Bay and river, but he, too, failed to ascend the latter far enough to reach Pennsylvania, but

¹Parkman's *Pioneers of France in the New World*; p. 420.

his discovery of the river gave the Dutch their claim to the territory on the banks of that stream. Cornelius Hendrickson, another Dutch skipper, also sailed up the Delaware as far as the mouth of the Schuylkill in 1614, it is alleged, but this claim has not been accepted by some writers. Still another Dutch sailor, Captain Cornelius Mey, sent out by the Dutch West India Company in 1623, sailed up the Delaware and built a trading post named Fort Nassau, where the city of Greencastle, N. J., now stands. He gave his name to one of the capes at the entrance of the bay. Of course, he passed along the Pennsylvania shore also and possibly landed on Pennsylvania territory, and must, after Hendrickson, be the explorer to have come within sight of our shores.

The First Permanent Settlement in Pennsylvania.

The next explorers to come along were a party of Dutchmen sent out from Holland under the auspices of David Peterson De Vries, one of the finest characters among the early explorers of the New World. He proved to be intelligent, energetic and humane. They reached the place where Lewes, Delaware, now stands, built a substantial house, or fort, defended by palisades, and began a settlement. Up to their arrival in 1631 no white men had made permanent settlements on the east bank of the Delaware River. The colony was called "Swanendal," or the valley of the swans. In the following year De Vries himself came over. He reached his little settlement in December, 1632. Upon his arrival at Swanendal, he found his palisaded house burned down. He says in his narrative: "I found lying here and there the skulls and bones of our peo-

ple and the heads of the horses and cows which they had brought with them." There had been trouble with the natives and this had been the unfortunate result. De Vries re-established friendly relations with the Indians, and there was no further trouble with them. He proceeded up the river in his little vessel, the "Squirrel." He wintered on what is now called Tinicum Island, which is to-day part of Delaware county. This is the first absolutely authenticated settlement made by Europeans in what is now the State of Pennsylvania. In the spring of 1633 De Vries returned to Holland, having left none of his companions behind. Doubtless he had too few men with him or else feared a catastrophe similar to that which overtook the previous colonists. The Dutch continued, however, to carry on a trade on the South River, as the Delaware was then called. In a short time, however, a new Dutch commissary came down from Manhattan and purchased from the natives the land on which Philadelphia is located. Both by right of discovery, occupation and purchase, the Dutch seem to have had a good claim on the Delaware country.

Meanwhile King Charles of England had granted a patent for a district to be called "New Albion" to Sir Edward Plowden. This patent covered all the country between Lord Baltimore's province of Maryland and the Hudson river country, which was claimed, and, in fact, occupied by the Dutch on Manhattan Island and the adjacent territory. Plowden came over, remained several years, mostly in Virginia, did nothing, and went back to England without ever having settled a single soul on his "paper colony" of New Albion.

Next came an expedition which had its birth in the fertile brain of Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, and his able minister, Alex. Oxenstierna, and was commanded by Peter Minuet. It has been called a Swedish colony, and it was one, but of the capital required to set it afloat, half was subscribed in Holland, while most of the cargo and crew came from that country, and nearly all the colonists, sixty in number, were Dutch, the rest being Swedes, Finns and Germans. The two ships composing the expedition sailed late in 1637, and entered the Delaware in March, 1638, passing up the river as far as the mouth of the Brandywine. Here a debarkation was made of all who were to remain, and the necessary buildings for their comfort and safety erected. Seeds were sown and gardens planted. The first "permanent" settlement on Pennsylvania soil was on that spot, all that had been done before by the Dutch having been destroyed or abandoned.

So much as to the early attempts at settlement within the present State of Pennsylvania. But an equally interesting chapter remains to be told of the attempts to gain and maintain complete possession of this new land of promise. The Dutch Governor of Manhattan, New York, at this time was William Kieft. Some traders informed him of what was going on in the waters of the Delaware, and he lost no time in protesting against the action of the Swedes in occupying what he claimed was Dutch territory. He declared "The whole South River in New Netherlands has been many years in our possession, and has been secured by us with forts above and below, and has been sealed with our blood, which has happened even during your (Swedes) direction of New

Netherlands, and is well known to you."² Minuet paid no attention to this protest, but proceeded to complete his fort; log houses were built, a large store of corn was procured from the natives; meat was also collected and more land purchased, the latter extending from the head of the bay to the falls of Trenton. By July, Minuet, having secured a cargo of peltries in the way of trade, sailed for home, leaving twenty-four persons in his new settlement of Christina. William Penn was not yet born when the Swedes began this settlement. It is true this colony of New Sweden did not long continue, but it marks a notable era in Pennsylvania history.³

These Swedes appear to have been more liberal in their dealings with the natives than either the Dutch at Manhattan or the English at Jamestown, and presently secured much of the trade these nations had previously carried on with the Indians.

More Troubles Among the Contending Nationalities.

In 1635, the acting Governor of Virginia, Captain West, having heard of the Dutch settlements on the Delaware, sent an agent with a few soldiers up to Fort Nassau and took it. But this news having reached Van Twiller, the Dutch Governor of Manhattan, the latter lost no time in sending down a force of soldiers, captured the intruders and sent them prisoners up to Manhattan; later, however, returning them to Virginia, where they arrived just as another English party was about starting up to their assistance.

In 1640 another English party made

²Jenkin's History of Pennsylvania; vol. I, p. 72.

³Pennsylvania, Colonial and Federal;

its appearance on the river. This time they came from the North, from the New Haven colony, which had learned of the great profits that were being made out of the fur trade with the natives. Late in 1640, a tract of land had been purchased from the Indians, who were always ready to sell land when a new purchaser came along, by Captain Nathaniel Turner, which included both sides of the Delaware at Passayunk, which is included within the present site of Philadelphia, and where a fortified trading post was built. This settlement did not disturb the Dutch much, and was abandoned within two or three years.

The Dutch at last determined to get rid of the Swedes by force of arms, and causes were soon found for open hostilities. The result was that a strong force was sent from the New Netherlands in August, 1655, which captured the Swedish forts and ended forever all Sweden's sway on the Delaware. From 1655 to 1664, a period of nine years, the Dutch remained in absolute possession.

But even then there was trouble with Lord Baltimore, the owner of the province of Maryland, who, under his patent, claimed part of the territory lying on Delaware Bay, and sent an official at the head of a small embassy to require the Dutch to vacate the disputed country. Nothing further came of it at that time.

Trouble of a more serious character once more arose when King Charles, in 1663, granted to his brother, James, the Duke of York, a patent for all the land "from the head of the Connecticut river to the source of the Hudson, and thence to the east side of Delaware Bay."⁴

That grant included every acre of

⁴Duke of York Book of Laws.

land settled, occupied and claimed by the Dutch and the Swedes since the discovery of those regions by Henry Hudson. It also meant war between England and the Netherlands. The Duke of York was at that time Lord High Admiral of England, and promptly sent a fleet against the Dutch possessions in America—an expedition the latter were unable to resist. On the 20th of August, 1664, the flag of New Amsterdam was lowered. The hostile ships soon appeared thereafter in the Delaware, and, after some show of resistance on the part of Fort Arnstel, that place also hauled down its flag, and all of what once had been the New Netherlands passed under English control.

But once more there came a change of ownership. War broke out in Europe between England and the Netherlands. In August, 1673, a very strong Dutch squadron appeared before New Amsterdam; resistance was in vain, and again the Dutch flag waved in triumph over the island of Manhattan and the city was once more a Dutch possession. The Delaware colony was also given up. The Dutch restoration lasted little more than a year. The war in Europe ended, and by the treaty of Westminster, 1673-4, Holland gave back to England her colonies on the North and South rivers—the Hudson and the Delaware—and to that country they remained attached until the American Revolution of 1776-83 gave them to their present owners. From the foregoing we have seen what peoples came near or into Pennsylvania waters and on her soil, and who made settlements there. Of them all we can single out no particular individual who may be entitled to that honor

The Real Pioneer Makes His Appearance.

But I now introduce a man, a European, who, it can be shown on proof that cannot be denied or set aside, traversed our State from its present northern to its southern boundary, and then passed through the Province of Maryland, and down the Chesapeake Bay to where it mingles its waters with those of the Atlantic. That man was Etienne Brulé (Aye-tee-ane Brulay) a young Frenchman, who, as has been stated, came to New France (Canada) at the age of eighteen years, and spent the remainder of his life in Canada, New York, Pennsylvania, and the regions further westward. It is of him a great historian speaks when he calls Champlain's guide and interpreter "The Dauntless woodsman, pioneer of pioneers."⁵ Not much is known of Brulé's early life. He was born at Champigny, near Paris, about the year 1592. He came to America with Samuel Champlain. That intrepid explorer and discoverer came to New France in 1608, on his first voyage, with the supplies for the colony that was to be founded at Quebec, on the St. Lawrence. He was one of eight out of the twenty who survived the hardships and sickness that fell upon the little colony during that hard Canadian winter. Champlain had made an earlier voyage to the new world in 1603, not as commander, however, but as an explorer, to spy out the new lands, open up trade with the natives and to advance the interests of France generally. Before his return he visited Vera Cruz, the City of Mexico, and the Isthmus of Panama, where "his bold and active mind conceived the plan of a ship canal across the

⁵Francis Parkman.

Isthmus." In all Champlain made ten voyages to America, the first in 1603 and the last in 1633. He died in Canada.

As Lieutenant General of the new colony, Champlain had ample powers to carry on the work intended. He could make war and treaties with the natives as the circumstances seemed to make those steps necessary, and undertake explorations and discoveries. In short, his mission was to found a French colony and open up traffic with the Indians. He early came into contact with certain Indian tribes of Algonquin lineage who inhabited that part of New France, and especially with the Hurons, who occupied the region of Lake Simcoe and the Georgian Bay. Before leaving for France he held by special appointment a meeting with that tribe, which had long been warring with the Iroquois, or Five Nations' Confederacy. In traveling toward the appointed place of meeting, Champlain and his little party of twelve white men and sixty Indians was encountered by a band of Iroquois, when a fight ensued. A few musket shots by the white men sent the enemy about in wild dismay and the campaign for the time being was over. Champlain returned to the French settlements, but his allies had invited him to visit them at their more remote towns, and he agreed to do so.

It was at this period that Brulé appears on the scene for the first time. Champlain kept his promise and met his allies at the place agreed upon, taking with him the "young iad" Brulé. Only a part of the Indians had arrived, but, unexpectedly, another canoe load came in with the unwelcome intelligence that a portion of his allies were engaged in a desperate battle with a body of Iroquois war-

riors, who had erected some strong defenses and were making a successful resistance. The assistance and skill of Champlain prevailed, and the enemy were completely defeated. Fifteen Iroquois warriors were captured alive; the rest were either killed or drowned. Champlain was able to save only one of the captives; the rest were doomed to be tortured and killed later, and one of them was eaten.

"The Call of the Wild."

It was on this occasion that Brulé's character for the first time came to the front. "The call of the wild" came upon him, and he expressed a desire to go with the Hurons to their homes when the other Frenchmen with Champlain returned to Quebec. Champlain wisely decided to grant his request in case the Indians would take him along. A Huron chief, Iroquet by name, had taken a fancy to the young lad and agreed to receive him, care for him in the Huron country, and return him to his friends in the following year, when another meeting was to be held, meanwhile treating young Brulé as his own son. But when Iroquet made his agreement known to the other Indians they refused to ratify his bargain. They feared the boy might be harmed, sicken and die, and then they would be held responsible for his death, and the French take vengeance upon them in consequence. Champlain rose to the requirements of the situation, and called all the chiefs together. He asked them what they meant by their refusal to take the boy with them. "By keeping your promise we shall become closer friends. If you do not, I will have nothing further to do with you," and more bold talk to the same effect. The boy said he would adapt

himself to their way of living, to their food and wild life, and, if sickness came upon him, it should be no cause for complaint. To all this the chiefs at length replied that they would take the young boy with them, but as a pledge of good faith would send one of their brightest young men with Champlain to Europe, to learn the French language, and, upon his return, to be able to tell them all he saw and learned. Champlain agreed to the proposal, and a young Huron, named by the French Savignon, was accordingly carried away with them and taken along to France by Champlain. There was to be a meeting in the following June, when the young Frenchman and Indian were to be returned to their respective friends.

The transaction seems to show the wise forethought of Champlain. The necessity of good and trusty interpreters was one of the supreme needs of all the peoples who founded colonies in America. Where the language was imperfectly understood there was always room for misunderstandings, real or pretended. A correct knowledge of the Indian dialects could only be obtained by men, and especially young men, living for long periods of time among the natives. No man realized this more fully than Champlain. We are told that, in addition to Brulé, certain other grown-up boys or men, named Nicolet, Marsolet, Hertel and Marguerie, were also placed among different Indian tribes to acquire a correct knowledge of their several dialects, between the years 1608 and 1620. With these young men at hand, communication between the French and natives was at once accurate and easy. Had the Quaker Government of Pennsylvania early shown like wisdom, there would have been far less

cause for trouble and misunderstandings with the natives. Almost the only reliable interpreter Pennsylvania had in early provincial days was John Conrad Weiser, who when a lad had lived among the Iroquois. Every historical student remembers how, upon one occasion, Shekellamy, the wise and just overlord or commissioner of the Six Nations in Pennsylvania, in his old age lamented to Weiser that the latter was now old and could not expect to live many years longer, and then there would be no one competent to take his place. It is true that some of the Indian traders at times acted as interpreters, and, while their acquaintance with the Indian languages was sufficient for purposes of barter, it was hardly adapted to meet the niceties of diplomacy, for which purpose their services were mainly required.

Upon his return from France in the following year, 1611, Champlain quietly set out to meet the Hurons, according to promise, accompanied by the young Indian hostage, Savignon. It was a joyous meeting; Brulé was welcomed with open arms by Champlain, while the same welcome was extended to the young Huron by his tribesmen. Champlain in his narrative says: "I saw also my servant, who was dressed in the costume of the savages, and had learned the Huron language very well."⁶

He had also acquired a knowledge of the languages spoken by the Montagnais, and other tribes near the Hurons. This knowledge was of inestimable service to Champlain.

Brulé on the Shores of Lake Huron.

During his year in the wilderness, Brulé had not been idle in other directions. He went everywhere he pos-

⁶See Champlain's Narrative.

sibly could to learn the lay of the land, the number and condition of the natives, and the possibilities for trade. He ascended the Ottawa river from its mouth to its source, a distance of 600 miles, and then crossed over to Lake Huron, being the first white man to see the waters of that great inland sea. In July of this same year, 1611, Champlain's conference with the Indians closed. Two young Frenchmen remained with the Indians, but Brulé returned with Champlain to Quebec.

During the ensuing four years, that is, from July, 1611, to July, 1615, we hear little of Brulé. All that is known is that, in accordance with Champlain's instructions, he made repeated excursions to the various Indian tribes in alliance with the French, learning all he could about the people and the country.

The Five Nations, even at that early day, were a terror to nearly all the tribes between New England and the Carolinas, and westward to the Mississippi. As Lieutenant Governor of Canada, one of Champlain's purposes was to draw as much of the fur trade as possible to Quebec and Montreal. The young men he sent among the different tribes were instructed to encourage this trade in every way. Upon his return from France in 1615, Champlain found an immense concourse of Indians upon the site of the present city of Montreal on their annual trading visit, their canoes laden with the furs secured during the winter. All these Indians were enemies of the Five Nations and in close alliance with the French. They proposed to him a general campaign against that formidable Confederacy, and especially against the Onondagoes, one of the principal members of the Federation. They pro-

posed to assemble a force of 1,500 warriors and make the attack on one of the strongly fortified towns of the Iroquois, despite the fact that, to reach the desired place of attack, involved in the going and coming a march of 1,500 miles, by river and lake, through tangled forests and dreary wastes of swamps, with a motley aggregation of savages who had no adequate supplies for such an expedition, but had to be fed by the chance proceeds of hunting and fishing; the stout heart of Champlain entered into the enterprise.⁷

On July 9, 1615, Champlain set out for the place of rendezvous accompanied by only two white men and ten Indians. Of course, one of these whites was the trusted interpreter, Brulé, who was at that time receiving 100 pistoles, something less than \$200, per annum for his services.⁸ All the allies having assembled, and all else being in readiness, the army was about to set out on its roundabout march. How many persons composed it Champlain does not say, but the Frenchmen numbered only ten men. At this moment, however, came the news that another tribe with whom the Five Nations were also at war had decided to join the expedition with 500 warriors. The matter had already been discussed at Montreal, and Brulé and twelve Hurons had set out for their country to complete all the necessary arrangements and hurry these 500 to the scene of action by a fixed time. Brulé had been successful, and the tidings now received to the effect that the Carantonnais, such was the name of the distant tribe of would-be allies, would join the main

⁷See Winsor's *Narrative and Colonial History of America*; Vol. 4, pp. 144-5.

⁸Otis' *Narrative of Champlain's Voyages*. Narrative of 1615.

force at the Onondagoes' town on the fixed day and take part in the attack.

Champlain and his forces reached the Onondago stronghold on October 10, 1615. "The village was enclosed by four good palisades, which were made of great pieces of wood, interlaced with each other with an opening of not more than half a foot between two, and which were thirty feet high, with galleries after the manner of a parapet, which they had finished with double pieces of wood that were proof against arquebus shots. Moreover, it was near a pond where the water was abundant, and was well supplied with gutters, placed between the palisades, to throw out water which they had also under cover inside in order to extinguish fire."⁹

Some desultory fighting occurred soon after the arrival of Champlain, but no decisive action took place, as the arrival of the 500 auxiliaries with Brulé was awaited. But the Indians with Champlain, ever impatient of delay at the approach of battle, at length began an assault, which was repulsed. The Indians were disheartened, but under Champlain's directions another attack was made on the place, which was also unsuccessful. Champlain himself received two wounds. The non-arrival of Brulé, with his 500 Carantonnais warriors, so disheartened Champlain's forces that a retreat was decided upon and successfully carried out. But how about Brulé and his 500 warriors from the far away Carantonnais? They got away as soon as they possibly could, but were unfortunately delayed along the way and reached the scene of conflict at the Onondago town two days

⁹This is the first part of Champlain's description of the fortified Onondago town. See Champlain's *Voyages in the Narrative of His Expedition of 1615*.

after Champlain and his Huron allies had retired. There was nothing else left for them with their inferior force to do but retire also to their own country. Of course, Brulé had to return with them. He was then a long distance from Canada with the fierce Iroquois between, and no immediate prospect of getting back to Quebec. He made up his mind to make the best he could out of his unfortunate situation and spend the winter of 1615-16 with his Indian friends in their palisaded town of Carantonan, their principal village.¹⁰

The Carantonais were Susquehannocks, located on the Upper Susquehanna.¹¹

Brule Explores the Susquehanna Country.

Brulé was not the kind of a man to spend a long winter idle in an Indian town. He knew his patron's anxiety to learn all about the tribes south of the country of the Dutch and the country itself. He was now many hundred miles south of Quebec and in a region wholly unknown to white men. He was in the neighborhood of the Upper Susquehanna, and, in

¹⁰"The army of 500 men which Stephen Brule was to accompany from the Susquehanna district to co-operate with Champlain in his attack on the Onondago Fort did not arrive before that stout palisade till two days after the repulse and retreat of the Hurons with the wounded French leader; they, too, retired, but kept up the war until they were totally conquered by the Iroquois."—John Gilmary Shea, in the Magazine of History and Biography, Vol. 2, p. 108.

¹¹"The fortified town of Carantonais was the largest of the three towns of the Carantonais, and its exact site has been identified as located near or on the top of what is now called Spanish Hill, in Athen township, Bradford county, Pa., about five or six miles north of Tioga Point, the junction of the Tioga and Susquehanna rivers."—Chas. A. Hanna's Wilderness Trail, Vol. 1, p. 31.

getting there, had traversed a part of New York no white man had ever seen before. He had heard his Indian friends often tell of a great river that ran southward, and he determined to explore it, and the various tribes of natives along the valleys drained by it.

The Susquehanna is formed by the union of two streams, the North Branch and the West Branch. The former takes its rise in the Otsego and Schuyler lakes in New York, where it is sometimes called the Susquehanna. It runs southwestward to the great bend in Pennsylvania, returns to New York, turns to the left, and enters Bradford county in this State. The West Branch rises on the west slope of the Allegheny mountains, and its general direction is eastward, and, although nearly 250 miles long, is inferior to the North Branch. The two branches unite at Northumberland and form the Susquehanna. It is about 500 miles long. It is conceded that the village of Carantonan, the home of this allied tribe, was located somewhere on the upper waters of the Susquehanna.

As heretofore, in what still remains to tell, we are very largely compelled to rely on Champlain's own narrative of his voyages for what we know of Brulé's travels and explorations in Pennsylvania. Champlain thus relates the adventures encountered by the French interpreter during the winter, after he was compelled to return to the Carantonan village, after the disastrous attack on the Onondago fort: "Brulé made a tour along a river that flows in the direction of Florida, where there are many powerful and warlike nations, carrying on wars against each other. The climate there is very temperate, and there are a great num-

ber of animals and abundance of small game. But to traverse and reach these regions requires patience, on account of the difficulties involved in passing the extensive wastes.

"He continued his course along the river as far as the sea, also to islands and to lands near them, which are inhabited by various and populous tribes of savages, who are well disposed and love the French above all other white people. But those who know the Dutch complain severely of them, since they treat them very roughly. Among other things, he observed that the winter was very temperate, that it snowed rarely, and that when it did the snow was not a foot deep and melted immediately.

"After traversing the country and observing what was noteworthy, he returned to the village of Carantonan, in order to find an escort for returning to our own settlement (on the St. Lawrence)."

He Had No Companions.

It may be asked: Did Brule make this voyage down the valley of the Susquehanna by himself. There is no evidence that gives even a hint that he had a companion. The Indians then living in the valley of the Susquehanna, the Algonquins, were of the same linguistic family as the Iroquois to the north, with whose dialects he was quite familiar; therefore, he could have had no difficulty in making himself understood by those he met on the Susquehanna and Chesapeake Bay. Besides, the white man was not yet the obnoxious animal he became to the natives a century or more later. He was versed in Indian life through all its stages, and could take care of himself under the most adverse circumstances, as will he

shown later. As his main purpose was to spy out the land, he no doubt went down on one side and came up on the other. An explorer does not return in his tracks when in search of something new. Such being the case, it seems a certainty that he must have traversed our own county of Lancaster, settling forever the question of priority of this man's claim to being the first white man in our county as well as in our State. The evidence is so convincing that all the historians whose works have been examined virtually concede him the honor. In fact, there is no denial.¹²

It may be urged that this journey may have been made in a canoe, and not overland, and that, in such case, Brulé floated down the river without having touched our county. Indeed, one writer, in speaking of the long trip from Carantonan to the waters of the ocean, speaks of it as having been made in a canoe. That view cannot be entertained for a moment. The winters then, in all probability, were as cold, if not colder, than now. The river was almost certain to be frozen over some time during the winter season, rendering progress in a canoe impossible. Then, again, there were falls and rapids and rough places in the course of the river, even as there are now. That would have required portages in many places. How could one man have made these portages with his canoe unaided? Besides, the daily food requirements of the lone pioneer demanded that he should travel overland and not on the water. The idea that the trip was made by water and not by land is wholly untenable.

¹²See Parkman, Shea, Hanna, Giess, Jenkins, Winsor, Slafter, Butterfield and Sulte.

He Is Taken Captive.

Brulé remained for some time after his return among his friends at Carantonan, when he determined to make an effort to reach Quebec. This was about April, 1616. Five or six Carantonais volunteered to act as his escort and guides as far as the country of the Hurons. On the way they met a party of Iroquois (Senecas), who at once charged Brulé and his friends, who promptly took to flight. The guides found each other and continued their journey, but Brulé, who had kept aloof from his Indian friends in the hope of more easily escaping, found himself unable to return or go forward. For three or four days he wandered through the woods, half famished and almost hopeless, until at length he found an Indian trail which he followed, choosing rather to throw himself on the tender mercy of the Iroquois than to perish from starvation. Before long he came upon three Seneca Indians loaded with fish. He approached and shouted; they turned, and, seeing him, would have run, but he laid down his bow and arrows, his only weapons, in token of peace. Upon coming together Brulé related his plight to them, how he had not tasted food for several days. They pitied him, and he was offered the pipe of peace, and, after the smoke, he was taken to their village and feasted and made comfortable, but his arrival created a great stir, and great numbers quickly gathered to see him. He was questioned closely. Where do you come from? What brought you here? How did you happen to lose your way? Are you not one of the Adoresetong (French), who are our enemies? He knew what he was up against, and promptly began to lie. He answered

all the queries that had been made to him as best he could, but was particularly anxious to make them believe he was not a Frenchman, but belonged to a better nation than the French, and who were anxious to be their friends. But the wily Iroquois saw through his subterfuges. They fell upon him, plucked out his beard, burnt him with live embers and tore out some of his fingernails with their teeth—all this against the protest of their chief.

It is very evident that all this was preliminary to the torture at the stake. Brulé was a Catholic, but we nowhere learn that he was much troubled by religious scruples. But he wore upon his breast an *Agnus Dei*, attached by a cord to his neck. This was seen, and an attempt was made to take it from him; he resisted and said: "If you take it and kill me, you will yourselves immediately die—you and all your kin." The day was hot, and one of those thunder gusts which often succeed the fierce heats of an American mid-summer day was rising against the sky. Brulé pointed to the inky clouds as tokens of the anger of his God. The storm broke, and as the celestial artillery boomed over the darkening forests, the Iroquois were stricken with a supernatural terror. All fled the spot, leaving their victim still bound fast, until the chief, who had endeavored to protect him, returned, cut the cords, and, leading him to his lodge, dressed his wounds. Thenceforth there was neither feast nor dance to which Brulé was not invited.¹³

A similar rainstorm is on record for a still more important occasion, near the same locality, one hundred and

¹³Parkman's *Pioneers of France in the New World*, p. 379.

seventy-three years later, on August 6, 1777, during the hard-fought battle of Oriskany. The day had been hot and sultry. "The distant rumblings, indications of a coming storm, had not been heard amid the roar of battle. So intent were the contestants upon the struggle that they did not take notice of the thunderstorm until it broke upon them with great violence. The heavy downpour of rain, the swaying of the trees and the great darkness arrested the work of death for about an hour."¹⁴

Reaches His Friends at Last.

After several months' sojourn with these new "friends," he started for the country of his old friends, the Hurons, but before leaving the Iroquois he assured them that he would bring about better relations between them and the French and the Hurons. Of course, he was well received by the Hurons, but he learned that Champlain had returned to Quebec, having left instructions for Brulé to continue his explorations upon his return. But he seemed to be tired of his recent hard experiences, and after remaining among the Hurons many months, he concluded to return to his own countrymen on the St. Lawrence. So, in the summer of 1618, after eight years of continuous service in the wilderness, he joined his Indian friends, who were ready to make their annual trading trip to the French settlements, and on July 7 "greeted Champlain at the town of Three Rivers, after nearly a three years' absence since parting with him in the Huron country, and related the story of what he had seen of distant regions and of what he had suffered in his journeyings."¹⁵

¹⁴Faust's German Element in the United States, Vol. 1, p. 310.

¹⁵Butterfield, p. 98.

Champlain also informed Brulé that he was about to sail for France, and assured him that he would return with ample means in men and money and would suitably reward him.

On the Shores of Lake Superior.

It has already been stated that Brulé traveled to the northwest, until he stood upon the shores of Lake Huron. But there and elsewhere he had met with Indians who had told him of a still greater sea beyond. Champlain was aware of these things, and had all along been hoping this was the great northern ocean. It was to learn the truth of these stories, and also to draw these distant natives to open trade relations with the French, that he urged Brulé to undertake this new quest. He was now accompanied by another Frenchman named Grenolle. It does not fall within the province of this paper to attempt to relate all these men saw and where they went. They traveled to the Falls of St. Mary, and presently stood where no white man had ever stood before, on the shores of Lake Superior. It was the "North Sea" the Indians had been for years telling Champlain and Brulé about, the object of their hopes, the way that was to lead to China, but alas, for these hopes, the water was fresh! A long time was passed in explorations in the vicinity, and then the return trip was made, Brulé reaching Quebec July 2, 1623.

Champlain not having returned from Europe, Brulé, that same summer, returned to the Huron country to make further discoveries. The year 1625 found Brulé among a tribe of Indians called Alliwandarons, which he had not visited before. For several years Brulé was each season passing to and fro between the French

settlements and the Huron and other native tribes.

He Leaves the French Service.

Our narrative is drawing to a close. We come now to a time when the career of Brulé underwent a change. Trouble had been brewing in Europe. Hostilities broke out between France and England, owing largely to religious complications, and, as a result, in 1629 an English squadron was sent into the St. Lawrence to capture the French settlements, under the command of Captain David Kirk. He captured a large quantity of food supplies which had just arrived from France, and there was great distress and want. Parkman says: "Seven ounces of pounded peas were now the daily food of each, and at the end of May even this failed. Men, women and children betook themselves to the woods, gathering acorns and grubbing up roots. Some joined the Hurons and Algonquins; some wandered toward the Abenakis in Maine. There was scarcely one who would not have hailed the English deliverers."¹⁶

Four Frenchmen were among the number who went over to the English; they were Etienne Brulé, Nicholas Marsolt, Pierre Raye and Baillif. Thirteen others were induced to remain and live under English rule. Brulé has been censured for having aided the English vessels in ascending the river. There is a bitter assault on him in the last edition of Champlain's voyages, issued in 1632, but it is not from the hand of Champlain himself. Here are the words: "It was a very bad example to send persons of such bad morals as the interpreter Brulé among the Indians,

¹⁶Parkman's *Pioneers of France in the New World*, pp. 405-406.

who received a salary of one hundred pistoles a year, to urge the savages to trade with us. Such characters ought to have been severely chastised, for it was recognized the man was vicious and licentious; but what will not be the mischief wrought by the hope of gain which cometh before every consideration?" Surely Champlain could not have written that, for it condemns his own action. The place was taken; all the French prisoners who were seized were sent to England. It was a matter of living at liberty under English rule or of going as a prisoner to England. Then again for a period of twenty-one years—1608 to 1629—Brulé had served Champlain with dog-like fidelity. Most of that time he lived among savages, living like them on the products of the woods and streams. His services to France were greater than those of any other Frenchman, save Champlain himself. What was his recompense? Less than \$200 annually for a few years. Besides, he was not an enlisted soldier, and when the French towns were captured he had a right to look out for himself. Were not Frenchmen of noble lineage at the same time serving in armies that were fighting those of France? The charge that he was a bad man had never before been made. We have seen that he was Champlain's most trusted agent, always reliable and to be relied upon. He simply made the best of a bad situation, and gave himself the benefit of the doubt, if he had one. Besides, there is no evidence that he rendered further assistance to the English. In a few years a treaty of peace was concluded between England and France, and New France was turned over to her founders, the French.

The closing chapter of our story has been reached. It is brief and tragic. After what had occurred, it was, of course, impossible that Brulé should seek or even desire further service under the French Government. He had now reached the age of thirty-six years, eighteen of which had been passed almost exclusively among the Indians. To all intents and purposes he had become like one of them. It was only a few months which he from time to time spent in Quebec and other French towns. He was as fully qualified to spend a month or a year in the wilderness as any living man, red or white, between the St. Lawrence and the Delaware.

His Tragic Fate.

He took up a residence among his life-long associates, the Hurons, in their village of Toanche, the exact locality of which has not been determined, but which seems to have been his favorite resort when with the savages. Here he was barbarously and treacherously murdered by his former friends, the Hurons, to whom he had been of immense service for so many years. The reason for this bloodthirsty deed is not known. Whether he had given some unpardonable offense to his life-long friends, whether the deed was incited by outside agencies, or whether it occurred in some drunken orgie, it is impossible to tell. He was clubbed to death. But his foul assassins did not stop there. In their uncontrollable ferocity to take revenge on their hapless victim they feasted on his lifeless remains. It may fairly be inferred that Brulé was neither better nor worse than the hundreds of others who, like him, have spent their lives among the savages of America, but it

is unfair to cast slurs upon his memory, as has been done by a few writers, without proof. A Pennsylvania writer with no better sources of information than anyone else has this fling at him: "Yet a man, it would appear, of qualities not all heroic."¹⁷ From some of his contemporaries who knew him best, and were associated with him, we get different reports. From the Jesuit missionary, John de Brebuef, who was associated with him for a period of seven years, we get this: "I also saw the place where the poor Etienne Brulé had been barbarously murdered." Evidently the good father bore no ill will towards his old companion, or he would not have spoken so sympathetically of him.¹⁸ Here is another reference to him by one who knew him well, Friar Segard: "Finally this unfortunate Brulé was condemned to death and eaten by the Hurons, whom he had so long served as Interpreter, and all for a hatred they had conceived against him, for I do not know what fault he had committed with respect to them. He had dwelt with them a great many years, lived almost as they did and served as interpreter to the French, and after all that, he had gained for all recompense only a painful death, and a sad, unfortunate end. I pray God to have mercy on him and to have pity on his soul."¹⁹

Historians do not use that kind of language toward bad men, and good Franciscan Father Segard would not have done so had he believed Brulé to have been a bad man.

But their cruel deed brought consternation and dread even to the

¹⁷Howard M. Jenkins, *Pennsylvania Colonial and Federal*, Vol. 1, p. 35.

¹⁸*Relations des Hurons*, pp. 28-29.

¹⁹Father Gabriel Segard's *History of Canada*.

hearts of the savages. The village where the deed was done was burned to the ground, its inhabitants fled to a distant spot, and built a new town—all because they feared some terrible judgment would overtake them if they longer remained where Brulé was killed. They would, if possible, avert what was feared might be an awful punishment for their crime. A terrible pestilence devastated the land a considerable time after the event, and not a few of the savages were convinced it was because of their deed. A sister of the murdered Brulé was said to have been seen flying over the country, breathing death and destruction as she hastened onward. She was her brother's avenger, and nothing could stay her onward course. So it was that the woman carried terror to the minds of the guilty Hurons, and the deadly pestilence could not be assuaged.²⁰

Conclusion.

It was Etienne Brulé's misfortune not to have lived in the era of the daily newspaper and the ubiquitous reporter. He was with the expedition that discovered Lake Huron ten years before the Pilgrim psalmody was heard at Plymouth Rock; six years after Hendrick Hudson discovered the river that bears his name he stood on the shores of Lake Ontario, and by an arduous tour within the same year connected Chesapeake Bay with the Great Lakes, traversing the broad expanse of our own State to do so, nearly seventy years before William Penn first saw the land that bears his name. Finally, he was the first white man to gaze on the broad expanse of Lake Superior. All in all, we will not go far amiss if we pro-

²⁰Butterfield's Brule. P. 125.

nounce him, so far as actual achievements are concerned, the greatest explorer the new World has ever known.

Inasmuch as the various nations that came into contact with the Indian tribes of Canada, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland and other localities did not give these tribes the same name, not a little confusion has arisen from that diverse nomenclature. Captain John Smith, the first white man to come in contact with the Susquehannocks, called them Sasqueshannocks, and their town nearest the mouth of the Susquehanna river, Sasquesahanough. The Dutch and Swedish writers called them Minquas, Mengue and Mingoos. The French called them Andastes, Gandastogues and Carantouains, the latter evidently from their stockaded town Carantouan. They were also called Conestogas as early as 1700. Although racially Iroquois, they allied themselves with the Algonquins, and were almost continually at war with the Iroquois confederacy.

The most advanced form of governmental and tribal relationship was shown by the Iroquois, so-called by the French, but more generally known by the English as the Five Nations—the Onondagos, Senecas, Oneidas, Cayugas and Mohawks: when the Tuscaroras were admitted to their confederacy in 1713-1722, they were known as the Six Nations. They had had upwards of fifty towns and at one time numbered 16,000 souls. They were also called Mengues, Minckquas and Mingos, being of the same stock as the Conestogas. Captain Smith called them Massawomeks.

Still another large confederacy occupied the shores of the Delaware river from southern New York to Delaware. They were called Lenape or Leni-lenape; and were the most important of all the Algonquin stock. The English knew them as Delawares. The Mohicans, Nanticokes, Conoys and Shawnees were all of this stock, and are believed to have had a common origin. They too were compelled to yield to the all-conquering Iroquois, who about 1720 assumed dominion over them. Their number never exceeded 3,000.

The Hurons were among the most powerful of the tribes in the valley of the St. Lawrence. Their real locality at the time the French came in contact with them was on Lake Simcoe, Georgian Bay and the Ottawa and Trent rivers, in Canada. They were of Iro-

quois stock, but were continually at war with the five allied Iroquois tribes of New York. Like the latter, they formed a federation of four tribes, and several other smaller tribes, who sought their protection. In their own tongue they called themselves "Wendats," which in time was corrupted to Yendats, Guyandotts and finally into "Wyandots." The French first came into communication with them in 1534; they found some of these Indians on the islands of the St. Lawrence, on the present sites of Montreal and Quebec. Even then they were at war with the New York Iroquois. Their numbers were estimated by the Jesuit Fathers at from 20,000 to 35,000, with more than 50 towns or villages, many of which were strongly palisaded or fortified. Their frequent wars with the Five Nations eventually broke up their federation, and to-day there are perhaps less than 1,000 in Canada and various parts of the United States.

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