Excerpts from

L'HISTOIRE DE LA SEIGNEURIE DE LAUZON

Par J. Edmond Roy

Membre Société Royal de Canada
et
Docteur de Lettres de Universite
de Laval

Publié a Lévis

En vente chez l'auteur

1894-1898

" L'histoire de nos villages, c'est l'histoire de France en petits morceaux."—Victor Hugo

With

FOREWORD and AFTERWORD

by

Hally Carrington Brent

1948

FOREWORD

by

Hally Carrington Brent

(Written at New Orleans, La., March, 1948)

IN struggling through the five volumes of M. J. Edmond Roy's history of the Seigneurie de Lauzon, written in French and unindexed, I have been motivated by a burning desire to clear a mystery concerning one branch of my husband's ancestry. My mother-in-law, Rosella Kenner Brent, descended from the last two Seigneurs de Lauzon, had always maintained that these Quebec ancesters descended from the Marquis de Lauzon, first Seigneur de Lauzon, who, she said, was a brother of the Duc de Lévy, after whom the town of Levis was named.

Many years ago I became curious about the line of descent in this highly romantic branch of the family, and anxious to procure authentic data concerning the progenitors. It must have been twenty years ago that I first paid a visit to M. Roy, archivist of the records of Quebec, and put my questions to him. I remember that he had little time and less patience.

"Let me tell you," he said shortly, "the famous Marquis de Lauzon left no heirs and had no brothers. The Duc de Lévy was no relation whatever of his. As for the name Charest de Lauzon, which you ask about, there were no people of that name in Canada."

I was thoroughly mystified, and set about doing a little research of my own on the subject, but found the matter more and more confusing. I know now that M. Roy had the power to explain the whole matter in a few words, giving me all necessary information; but, in the light of the set of books which only came to my knowledge in 1947, I now understand the delusion under which he labored. M. Roy followed the family of Charest through four generations in Canada, he gave what information he could concerning their departure after the French and English war which ceded Canada to England, their return to France and subsequent emigration to San Domingo, finally brushing off the subject with the words, "They undoubtedly perished in the negro insurrection and massacres of 1793." We now know that they did not.

The matter was especially confusing to me, because, although I recognized in M. Roy the highest authority in Canadian lore, I had equal confidence in the statements given out by my mother-in-law, whose information was derived from her own grandmother, who in turn was the granddaughter of one Francois Charest de Lauzon, born at the Seigneurie de Lauzon in Pointe de Lévy, Canada, whose father was the last French Seigneur de Lauzon, who transferred to San Domingo and married there Perine Thérèse de Gourney; that this gentleman escaped with his family from San Domingo in the massacre of 1793, and removed first to Jamaica, where the records show he married off his daughter to a Frenchman, Pierre Francois du Bourg, an emigre from the French Revolution, and that they all removed in 1801 to New Orleans, which city holds all the later records of the family. I looked bewilderingly also at the old coat-of-arms bearing the name de Lauzon which had hung in my mother-in-law's house and now hung in mine.

The Marquis left no heirs by that name? What was the meaning of it all? Why did the coat-of-arms decorate our houses? The question had remained an enigma to me all these years, and has only just been cleared by the detailed histories of both the de Lauzon and Charest families as set forth in M. Roy's books. From this history I have tried to glean all the facts, but I am prepared to find that I have missed some points, owing to the fact that M. Roy undertook to give the stories of more than one hundred of the early settlers in that part of Canada, scattering his facts through the five volumes, often without sequence, presumably as he discovered his bits of information from the archives.

In order to facilitate the recognition of a direct progenitor to the Bringier-du Bourg-Kenner-Brent family, I have underscored in red the ancestors' names wherever they occur.

End of Foreword

The Seigneurie de Lauzon was located immediately opposite the promontory of Quebec City, on land which now comprises the cities of Lévis and Lauzon, and was bounded on one side by the St. Lawrence River. Two rivers flowed through it, the Chaudiere and the Etchemin. It comprised 218,816 square arpents de terre (acres) of what is now called the Comté de Lévis. The Seigneurie was established originally during the time of Champlaine in 1624. The land was given to Henri de Lévy, Duc de Ventador, nephew of Admiral de Montmorenci. In 1625 it changed hands and went to Simon de Maitre, under the system of proprietary government, yielding quit rents to the Governor.

The land opposite Quebec City was known as Pointe de Lévy, after the Duc of that name. The present city of

Lévis was not so named till long after, in 1765, when the Chevalier de Lévis, descendant of the original Henri de Levy and hero of the Battle of St. Foye in the French and English war for the possession of Canada, gave it his name. He changed the spelling of the name from Lévy to Lévis. This hero died in 1787. Prior to 1636 the Seigneurie was possibly known only as Pointe de Levy, but that year de Maitre gave over the title to Jean de Lauzon, a Frenchman of noble origin, tracing his family back to the twelfth century.

At this time Cardinal Richelieu, with the consent of King Louis XIII, decided to establish a Roman Catholic colony, including members of the nobility in France, in Canada. Jean de Lauzon was chosen to direct the entire enterprise, taking over as his compensation and share of land the beautiful property claimed by Henri de Lévy and later owned by de Maitre. De Lauzon was named the Governor of the whole of La Nouvelle France. He brought with him noble families, planning to hold a miniature court in the new country. The Marquis' son, also named Jean, was made Le Grande Sénéchal, and he became the idol of the colony.

The Governor was a wise and good man, and all went well until 1662, when, in the bloody warfare carried on continually between the colonists and the Iroquois Indians, the young Grande Sénéchal, after a battle on the Isle d'Orleans,* was discovered killed and scalped by the Indians. Grief pervaded the colony, and the Marquis was plunged into such distress that he abandoned his plans for settlement, and returned to France, never to set foot on the scene of tragedy again.

We now will take up briefly the history of one of the earliest outstanding colonist, Francois Bissot, Sieur de la Riviere, who arrived in Quebec from Normandy in 1647. He married Marie Couillard, of excellent family, who was graduated in the first class at the Ursuline Convent in Quebec. Marie was but fifteen years of age. Her youth at her marriage is accounted for by a ruling in effect at that time in France relating to the colonies which required that girls marry at fourteen or fifteen and boys at sixteen or seventeen, in order to advance the population. Fathers who failed to comply with this rule were deprived of the privileges of fishing and hunting. Bonuses were offered to parents having a dozen or more children.

---

*One sees today on the Isle d'Orleans an historic marker in bronze on the spot where the much loved young de Lauzon was killed. It stands on the eastern side of the road that circles the island.—H. C. B.

Francois Bissot was thirty-four when he married. He had left his home of Pont Audemer, an ancient town in Normandy, in the parish of Notre Dame des Pres, son of Jean Bissot, Esquire, Sieur de Gommer, Homme Honorable. He was bent upon seeking his fortune, and, finding it, was keenly aware of the vast opportunities of the new world.

Marie Couillard was the daughter of Guillume Couillard, Esquire, and his wife, Guillemette Hebert. Couillard settled upon his daughter as dot "800 pounds Tournois," money of Tours, while Bissot, on the day of his daughter's marriage assured his bride of forty pounds Tournois, payable "au prix de Roi," a varying value, following the ancient custom of Normandy.

One of the first acts of Francois Bissot in his new abode was the acquisition of land at Pointe de Lévy on the Seigneurie de Lauzon. He proceeded to build in 1652 a small house on a crescent of land sheltered in a bay having a beautiful outlook of the rock of Quebec opposite. The small house was dwarfed further beneath huge trees.

In acquiring this large concession of land from the Marquis de Lauzon, Bissot came in contact with the Marquis, who, recognizing his ability, pressed him into service in colonial business, finding him clever and responsible.

In 1660 the colony advanced in size and stability owing especially to additional rules laid down by the French government. There were few women in the colony. That the population might grow, transportation and temporary support were offered young women to venture here. Hundreds of gay, attractive, carefully selected girls were chosen in France to become wives of the early settlers, taken principally from the French orphanages. The enterprise was supervised by the Ursuline Sisters in Quebec and in France. In this system, the young men who had proved themselves industrious and self-supporting and who possessed houses of their own received first choice amongst the prospective brides over the less responsible aspirants.

At about this time, when the colony was assuming more definite shape, Francois Bissot, in the service of the Seigneur de Lauzon, made many trips to France on colonial business. He saw the requirements of the budding colony, and asked for a concession of land on which to build a mill at Pointe de Lévy. As de Lauzon's special man of business, he later acquired a Seigneurie for himself, and became Sieur de la Riviere, but he continued

Madame de Maintenant Superintended the project.

at Levy. He replaced his original small house with a large one of stone, whitened with chalk. Like the first humble one, it stood sheltered in the bay under the large trees, with an extensive view across the river to Quebec. Fortune favored the Bissot family. It was a subject of pride that at the baptism of their daughter Catherine in 1655 the viceroy, Jean de Lauzon, had assisted and had signed the register. It was as if the King himself had been present in person at the christening.

Bissot was busy with plans. He was used to the sea, having passed his boyhood in Pont Audemer, on the coast of Normandy, among fishermen. He envisioned the future of the vast new country, the possibilities of great trade in trapping, fishing and seal-catching along the St. Lawrence and Saguenay Rivers. He began exploring in Labrador, where he became friendly and traded with "les Basques audacieux," practiced fishermen of those waters. Bissot next obtained a concession to build a tannery at Pointe de Lévy, the first in Canada.

It was in 1665, when Bissot was establishing his interests in many directions, that there appeared on the scene two brothers, Étienne and Jean Charest, settling on a modest piece of property on l'Isle d'Orleans made over to them by a widow, Renée Mahue. The archives say they were sons of Pierre Charest, of Poitiers, France, and his wife, Renée Merle, both of Sainte Redégonde, eveché de Poitiers. Étienne was born there in 1661. In registering his name, each of the Charest brothers signed "Tanneur" after it.

Astute Francois Bissot at once engaged the two young men to work in his tannery. He was especially impressed with the elder, Étienne, who was keen, quiet, industrious and ambitious. He seemed the most outstanding young man to enter the colony. In a short time Bissot had selected Étienne Charest for his son-in-law, a husband for his daughter Catherine. He settled 2,000 pounds upon her, taking Étienne into partnership with him in all his enterprises on the day of his marriage. Étienne, in turn, assured his wife of 500 pounds. Bissot had discovered that Étienne, in addition to his land on the Isle of Orleans, had small holdings in Poitiers and environs in France, and he was well satisfied with the worldly connection. In taking Étienne into partnership, Bissot guaranteed Charest one-fourth of the profits in all of his many enterprises. In addition, he not only agreed but insisted upon supporting the young couple and any children they might have for the

first three years after their marriage.

As the years rolled on, the names of Francois Bissot and his son-in-law became ones to conjure with in Canada in the industries of milling, leather making, cod fishing, seal-catching and trading.

Bissot's second daughter, Clare, had married the explorer, Louis Joliet, discoverer in 1673 of the Mississippi River.* This unfortunate Joliet, in spite of his great contributions to history, died unrecognized and ignored by both his fellow Canadians and the French government. He died in poverty. Bissot's youngest son, Francois Joseph, was of an adventurous spirit. He passed most of his life in Labrador furthering the interests of his father and brother-in-law. He returned, however, finally, and died in Quebec. He is buried in the Quebec Basilica.

Another son of Bissot was Jean Baptist, Seigneur de Vincennes, who, following the example of his brother-in-law, Louis Joliet, became an explorer, pushing on to what is now the state of Indiana, where eventually he was captured by the Indians and burnt alive. The capital of Indiana Territory was named Vincennes in his memory. x verification?

Francois Bissot, man of integrity and foresight, having furthered the advancement of everything worth while in the colony for church and state, died at the Hotel Dieu in Quebec City on July 26, 1673. He lies buried in the cemetery adjoining the old hospital. His widow lived many years after him, not dying till October 22, 1703, at Sainte Pierre on the Isle of Orleans. Sometime after Bissot's death she had married Jacques de la Lande, a Basque with whom her husband had traded in Labrador. La Lande was a devoted husband, and he showed great affection for all of Bissot's children. He had special admiration and love for Louis Joliet and his wife Clare. After the death of his wife, La Lande decided to return to his beloved Basque country in his native Pyrenees, and, in so doing, made over all his Canadian property and personal belongings to his step-daughter, Clare Joliet, the explorer having by that time died, leaving her with little means of support.

---

*Joliet penetrated the wilds of what now is Wisconsin to the head of the river. De Soto already had explored the mouth in Louisiana.—H. C. B.

As has been said, Francois Bissot had been a public-minded man as well as a successful one. He had received one concession of land after another from the King for colonial purposes. One request had been for land on which to build a church at Pointe de Levy. He contrived to procure a wise and good curé in the person of Pere Boucher. This outstanding man passed the rest of his life as the priest of the parish, which was called St. Joseph's. Pere Boucher was an intellectual as well as a spiritual man, and he began collecting books to form a library for the whole community at Pointe de Levy.

Although Bissot laid all the plans for the erection of St. Joseph's Church, the actual responsibility of construction fell upon his son-in-law, Etienne Charest, because, just prior to the beginning of the building in 1673, Francois Bissot died. He had been a great power in church and state in the colony. With deepest interest in the work of both the Jesuits and the Ursulines in Quebec City, he had greatly assisted both orders. He was also a judge for Pointe de Lévy in his last years.

To keep abreast of the story, we must return to the succession of the Seigneurs de Lauzon. After the death of Jean de Lauzon's son, the Grande Sénéchal, massacred by the Iroquois, the old Seigneur brokenheartedly returned to France. He took up his abode in Paris, at the cloister of Natre Dame Cathedral, where his second son, Louis, was a canon. He left the Seigneurie in the hands of a younger son, Charles de Lauzon de Charney, as regent for the son of the murdered Grande Senechal, then in Paris with his mother, Anne des Près de Lauzon. This boy was named Charles Joseph. He was the fourth Seigneur de Lauzon. In 1664 Anne des Près married again, Claud de Mermen, Sieur de la Martiniere, who from then on took over the regency of the young Charles Joseph. Adhering to the feudal custom, the old Seigneur saw to the children of his deceased son, keeping them under his care. Charles Joseph, therefore, lived with him in close companionship in Paris at the cloister of Notre Dame Cathedral.

Leaving again the Seigneurie de Lauzon and returning to the history of the Charest family, from church records in Pointe de Lévy and from a census of 1681, we learn that Etienne, signing himself again "Tanneur," was thirty-eight years old. His wife, Catherine Bissot, was twenty-six. They had at this time six children:

Marie, aged	10	Étienne, aged	3
Francoise, aged	8	Marie, aged	2
Genévièvе, aged	6	Catherine, aged	6 months

Étienne was born April 24, 1678, Louis Joliet signing as godfather at his baptism.

In the census it is stated that Étienne had the only horse in the Seigneurie de Lauzon, everyone else owning only oxen. At this time practically all transportation was done by canoe. Each man's land, if possible, stretched to the water. This explains the long, narrow fields still existing in the country today. It is known that Étienne Charest I had two other sons born after the census of 1681. About them nothing is known except that they became members of the Recollets Fathers. And yet another son, Jean Baptist, born 1683, who later took the name of Charest Dufils and was largely associated with his elder brother, Étienne II, in all his ventures.

Étienne Charest I died in 1702 and is buried in St. Joseph's Church, which, on a square "arpent de terre" his father-in-law, Francois Bissot, had designed for its erection and which Charest had furthered since 1673.

An inventory of 1699 lists Étienne Charest as having amassed a fortune of many thousand pounds. It states that he and Catherine Bissot had had twelve children, that their property at Pointe de Lévy was estimated at 10,400 pounds and included a house, a tannery, a storage house for ice, flour mills, "deux mus par l'eau." At this date Etienne Charest I signed his name simply "Charest." At the time of his death, by his request, wearing apparel and linen were distributed to the poor of the parish. In the Church of St. Joseph, in recog- of the gift of land and furtherance of the church construction and support, Étienne Charest had been allotted the first pew in the church for the use of his family in perpetuity.

At the death of Étienne Charest Sr., his son Étienne was but twenty-three years old. But, with quiet assurance, he took over all the vast enterprises of his father and grandfather Bissot. He had inherited not only his father's ability, but he began to prove himself a man of rare wisdom, intelligence, judgment and enterprise. He continued to maintain, in conjunction with his brother Jean Baptist (known as Dufils), all the intricate ventures of his father, "the humble tanner whom Bissot had persuaded to come to him from the Isle

d'Orleans. Of this large family of Charest Sr. only one son, Étienne, perpetuated the name, two sons having entered monasteries, and the youngest, Jean Baptist, dying without heirs.

But of the large family of twelve children of Étienne and Catherine Charest, one besides Étienne II became known to posterity. This was Geneviève. She was amongst the oldest, and her great favorite amongst her brothers and sisters was Ursule, born after the census of 1681, making Geneviève fifteen years her senior. Both of these girls were educated according to family tradition at the Ursuline Convent. They lived in a small house near the old St. Joseph's Church at Pointe de Lévy. They both were beautiful and charming. Geneviève was like a mother to her younger sister, and when Ursule died before her twenty-first birthday, Geneviève became inconsolable. She altered her entire mode of life. She gave over to her brother Étienne all the ample income left her by her father, asking only that a small annuity be kept for her. She seldom went out except to visit her brothers of the Recollets order in Quebec, and on affairs of the church. She used all her means to equip and beautify St. Joseph's Church, and arranged all the flowers and washed and mended the church linen herself. She was called "Mad. La Veuve." A pew was bought by her in the church which she assigned to the Charest heirs in perpetuity.

Although the cause of Geneviève's changed mode of life was attributed to the death of her sister, there were people who gave another explanation. A legend grew up about her which exists today, true or untrue. On the banks of La Riviere du Sud there stood ruins of rocky walls which, the story goes, were once part of a chapel erected by a woman commemorating her lover lost at sea. Today this ruin is shown by guides to visitors as "le Rocher de la Chapelle," and the heroine is Mad. La Veuve.

Geneviève also was instrumental in the erection of several small chapels both at Levy and on the Isle d'Orleans. She wished to be buried in a chapel called "Notre Dame de Pitié," but, as no ground nearby had been consecrated for burials, her brother Étienne arranged for her to be buried in old St. Joseph's Church. She was known as a saint, dying in 1750 at the age of seventy-five. However, her memory might easily have been lost but for two things, the legend and the name given after her to the small town on the Etchemin River of "Ste. Geneviève."

Returning for a moment to the affairs of the Seigneurie, Charles Joseph had come to manhood and should have taken the reins of Governor from his stepfather, de Martiniere, but his mother, Anne des Pres de Lauzon, had continued in Canada. As her son remained in France, she managed indirectly the Seigneurie for a quarter of a century, and died in 1689. Charles Joseph, fourth Seigneur, had visited Quebec, but soon after his return to France in 1688 had started on a voyage and never was heard of again. He had married in France Marguerite de Gobelin.

The sudden deaths of both her husband and mother-in-law occurring at nearly the same time decided Marguerite Gobelin de Lauzon to sell the Seigneurie. She parted with it for 4,000 pounds to Thomas Bertrand. Bertrand thus became the fifth Seigneur.

In 1699 Bertrand resold the Seigneurie. This time it went to Georges Regnaud, Sieur du Plessis, who became the sixth Seigneur de Lauzon. These changes met with the approval of the crown. Du Plessis, though at heart a good man, was full of new ideas that displeased the people. He became unpopular and especially harassing to Etienne Charest, who, like his father and grandfather, assisted and advised the government in colonial matters. Du Plessis finally suffered a shattering blow in the destruction by fire, in the regents' palace, of the state papers. Having never met with success in the colony, and at the time having sustained heavy personal losses, he decided to sell the Seigneurie de Lauzon. Du Plessis had never lived at Pointe de Lévy, though he had chosen a site for a magnificent manor house, and his wife had brought presents to St. Joseph's Church, indicating their intention to remain.

On March 28, 1714, Du Plessis, for the sum of 40,000 pounds, sold the Seigneurie de Lauzon to Etienne Charest II. Du Plessis died immediately after. His widow received little benefit from the sale of the property owing to the fact that she was obliged to pay out large sums in collecting data with which to replace the destroyed state papers.

One year before his purchase of the Seigneurie de Lauzon, on February 6, 1713, Charest married in Quebec City Thérèse du Roy. The contract says she was eighteen years old, he thirty-five. Although a foremost citizen and a prominent man, he became additionally important by his marriage, which allied him with the best families in La Nouvelle France. All the officers of the

colony, the Seigneur de Lauzon, du Plessis, and all of the notables of the surrounding country signed the marriage register. They were married amidst this brilliant assemblage in the Quebec Cathedral. M. du Roy settled 3,000 pounds upon his daughter, who was known for her beauty and charm. Étienne assured his bride 8,000 pounds and an annuity of 400 pounds in addition. Two years after Étienne's marriage and one year after his succession to the Seigneurie de Lauzon, his brother Jean Dufils died. This was in 1715, only a year after his marriage to Louise Allemand. Dufils' death was a great grief to Etienne, though they met infrequently, as Dufils passed a large part of his time in Labrador, extending there his brother's interests. He was essentially a man of the sea, and often voyaged on his brother's affairs to Martinique and the Antilles. He is buried in the Quebec Cathedral.

Étienne Charest II, the seventh Seigneur de Lauzon, was the first to live on his property and among his people, who still held to old feudal customs. They had no fear of him, however. He was the most respected, most beloved man in the entire colony, and he began great improvements for the people. He built roads twenty-four feet in width, replacing the crooked paths; he furthered education and commercial progress. More and more people asked for concessions of land on his domain. One interesting item, picked up in the archives of the day, alludes to adherence to the old feudal custom by all the inhabitants of planting on the first day of May each year a hawthorn tree on the estate of the Seigneur, in recognition of their concessions of land.

Unaffected by his important position, the Seigneur worked tirelessly. During all the time he was developing his lands to the highest state of cultivation, he was enmeshed in a thriving commerce with Labrador. Also, he advanced money, outfitted ships, collected merchandise for and from other countries. His own ship, the St. Etienne, took him across the seas to foreign lands. But at the zenith of his good fortune he was stricken with a great sorrow. Marie du Roy, beautiful and the only love of his life, whom he had married six years before, died at the age of twenty-four. On April 13, 1719, she was buried in the Quebec Cathedral. They had four children:

Joseph Marie, b. 1713, d. 1719
Therese, b. 1715
Étienne, b. February 26, 1718
Joseph, b. April 4, 1719

Étienne summoned his niece, Catherine Boucher de Montbrune, to the Seigneurie to keep house for him and make a home for his children. The old house built by Francois Bissot became the manor house. It stood sixty feet long of whitened stone. It is said the beauty of the outlook from the bay next to the Pointe de Lévy was that of the Bay of Naples. Seen from the manoir were, at a near distance, the water mills, the wind mills, the tannery eighty feet in length, the bakery, the ice house, the stables, barns and pigeonaires. To the north lay the Isle of Orleans, The City of Quebec loomed opposite.

There was luxury as well as comfort in the manor house. A view of the great room of the manor would show on the walls tapestries from Hungary (pointe de Hongrie), a large centre table, sofas and chairs of mancade, four tabourets of the same, a tall clock, a large mirror sixty by twenty-three inches with gold-leaf frame. Coverings and curtains were of nile green serge. Rugs of fur covered the floor. Curtains were looped back during the day with brass vergettes tamisent. Large sconces adorned the walls for light. Two large cupboards of walnut faced each other across the room, one holding blue and white china from India, the other linens, toile de Rouen.

Of silver, Charest possessed one large sppon for serving vegetables, one ragout large spoon, fourteen knives, eighteen silver forks, six coffee spoons, one immense goblet, three silver cups, three salt cellars and one ecueule.

At the far end of the large room was seen the Seigneur's bed with swansdown mattress, huge in dimensions and hung with nile green curtains of serge to draw from floor to ceiling. White caribou skins covered the bed.

From this great room opened all the lesser rooms. The kitchen glowed with brass pots and vessels of all descriptions.

In the "greate room" Étienne Charest attended to business and received his friends. His coat, de drap d'Elbeuf, was trimmed with gold buttons. He wore black serge stockings from Paris, a fine chemise of toile de Rouen trimmed with finest lace, and a cravat of mousseline.

Quietly, here, Étienne listened with sympathetic ears to the troubles and joys of his paysant friends. He call-

ed them "brave gens." Did he not know, as proved by his family, the results of industry, perseverance and right thinking? He gave wise advice always. In spite of possessing now a vast fortune, Charest worked harder than any man within the Seigneurie.

His only daughter, Thérèse, became the wife of Jean Baptist Charley. Charest settled 10,000 pounds on her, with the stipulation that nothing further could be demanded from the Seigneurie .

His oldest son, Joseph Marie, having died, and his youngest son, Joseph, taking, like his uncle, the name of Dufils, again an Étienne was the only one to carry on the name of Charest. By degrees, Charest was becoming more and more a power in the colony. In 1730 he bought a house in Quebec City, a comfortable edifice of stone twenty-four by sixty-three feet in size. It stood on la rue Sous le Fort. Seeing the need of general merchandise for the people, he next bought two properties and turned them into stores, one in Quebec City, the other at Pointe de Lévy, putting competent men in charge of them. Inventories in the two stores listed the following articles, available now to the community and bringing life to a more comfortable, happy pitch for everyone:

Bolts of flowered gauze	Weaving wools, silks
Striped satin, red, green, blue.	Shoes
Caudebec caps	Goat skins
Worsted galloons	Needles and threads
Silk handkerchiefs	Chinaware
Stockings from Paris	Earthenware
Toile de St. Jean	Kitchen utensils
Toile de Rouen	Nails
Taffeta from England	Scissors from Siam
Linen from Holland	Tools
Linen from Naples	Brushes and combs
French batiste	Hardware
Sealskin slippers	Olive oil
Lace d'Alencon	Coffee
Gloves from Siam	Sugar
Belts from Granada	Wines from France

The French colonist drank wine to the exclusion of all other alcoholic beverages. There is an instance in the records of a parish priest refusing Christian burial to an exporter of eau de vie, brandy, into the Quebec settlement. Strange wares were named in Charest's inventory of his stores, ferrets among them. These stores

contained, certainly, a comprehensive assortment of stock.

Like his father and grandfather, Étienne II interested himself in the good work of the Ursulines and the Jesuits. Under the latter, a second parish was set up at Pointe de Lévy, upon Seigneurial grounds. It was called St. Nicholas.

Charest also bought two more houses in Quebec City which he rented. They were on la Place de la Basseville on rue St. Pierre.

But Charest II was not to enjoy old age amongst his well-established surroundings. According to the feudal customs of the day in La Nouvelle France, prayers were said every Sunday for the Seigneur and his family in all the parish churches. On a Sunday in May, 1734, Pere Boucher, of St. Joseph's, announced that there would be no incense, no holy water, no blessed bread presented at the Seigneurial pew. This dramatic announcement heralded the sad tidings of the sudden death, on May 11, 1734, of the seventh Seigneur de Lauzon, Étienne Charest II. He had succumbed to excess of responsibilities and exertion. He is buried under the Seigneurial pew in St. Joseph's.

Étienne Charest died one of the richest men in the entire colony, and the most beloved and respected, as the man who had contributed most to the welfare of the people, the progress and cultural life of the colony.

At the time of his death his two sons were minors, Étienne aged seventeen and Joseph aged fifteen. Jean Baptist Charley, the husband of his only daughter, Thérèse, took the reins, representing his wife and two brothers-in-law. Charley was liked and respected, but he was not a man of business ability. He was then thirty years old. He was overwhelmed by the intricacies of Charest's far-reaching industries. One interesting incident connected with settling the estate is recounted as follows: In carrying out the instructions of the will, Charley was to open a certain drawer in a brassbound cabinet in the great room, inspect and count the contents of gold and silver, which was to be kept intact until Charest's two sons became of age. The box contained 24,043 pounds.

As has been said, Étienne Charest II, the first Charest Seigneur de Lauzon, had brought into his house his

niece, Catherine Boucher de Montbrune, as the lady of his household. Charest promised her the sum of 3,000 pounds if she would bring up his boys and manage his domestic affairs. Catherine de Montbrune was of fine character, and an attractive woman. When Charest's health began to decline, she became nurse as well as housekeeper, and tended him devotedly. Charest had given into the safekeeping of his sister Geneviève, "Mad. La Veuve," a small metal casket containing 3,000 pounds for Catherine de Montbrune. When it was opened after the Seigneur's death, it was found to contain another 3,000 pounds, also for her, this as a tribute for her devotion during his last years of illness. Immediately after his death Catherine married, having deferred her marriage for years owing to his dependence upon her.

Étienne Charest II left in his will five pounds to each of his nephews, 100 pounds to his cousin, the Seigneur de Beaumont, 100 pounds to his aunt Vincennes, whose husband had been captured and burnt alive by the Indians, and money for his five house servants. A curious item came to light in the naming of one of these servants, Jean Charest. It is not known exactly who this young man was. His posterity has caused confusion and trouble by claiming relationship with the family. It is accepted by some that he was the son of a priest of the family name and was adopted by Étienne Charest. In any case, Charest befriended him, was one of the signers of the marriage contract, gave him a present of money and some livestock at the time of his marriage. The many claims brought by the man's descendants were never substantiated or upheld by the courts.

On October 22, 1742, Étienne Charest III was married to Catherine Trottier Desaumiers, of Quebec, daughter of Pierre Trottier-Desauniers and his wife, Marguerite Charon. Joseph Charest Dufils married her sister Catherine. The double wedding took place in St. Joseph's Church at Pointe de Levy. There were present the Commander of Labrador, the new Lieutenant Governor of Montreal and all the outstanding people of the colony, including many other Seigneurs. Among them was M. de Lotbiniere of Platon. Etienne Charest III lived much in Quebec City. In 1748, according to the Quebec Cathedral records, he occupied the fifth pew. In 1750 he is spoken of as the chief layman of the cathedral.

The two brothers Charest continued the great Charest enterprises, but these men were of a very different

character and temperament. Étienne was conscientious and thoughtful, like his father and his grandfather Bissot. Joseph was impulsive, bent on adventure. What he loved best was the perils of the sea. But this only tended to advance the Charest fortunes. They paid 11,000 pounds for an immense brigantine armed with eight cannon which they called "St. Francois." It made trips to Labrador, Bordeaux and the Antilles. At one time it carried 400 barrels of oil from Labrador to La Rochelle, France.

Étienne Charest III, when of age, took over with understanding and wisdom the business affairs of his father, and with difficulty straightened out the complications brought about by the short mismanagement of his brother-in-law Charley. Étienne had, as the fourth generation from Francois Bissot, the family ability for finance.

The children of Étienne Charest III (eighth Seigneur de Lauzon and second of the Charest name to be Seigneur) and Catherine Desaunieres were:

*Étienne, born at Pointe de Lévy	. . . . .	Nov. 23, 1743
**Francois, " " "	. . . . .	Dec. 12, 1744
Joseph, " " "	. . . . .	Feb. 5, 1746
Joseph Francois Zavier "	. . . . .	Aug. 25, 1747
Catherine, born at Lévy; later became nun.		Jan. 31, 1749
Marie Joseph," "	. . . . .	June 8, 1750
Marie Catherine, "	. . . . .	April 6, 1752
***Phillipe Marie, "	. . . . .	April -- 1753
Louise, born at Lévy; died before 1775	. .	Nov. 22, 1754
Marie Madelaine, born in Quebec City	. . .	Dec. 26, 1755
Therese " "	. . .	March 26, 1757
Joseph Joliet, born in Loches, France	. .	- -- ----

*Étienne, known in San Domingo as "Charest," adhering to the French custom. In all probability was killed in the negro insurrection of 1793.

**Francois, ancestor of this history, bought land in San Domingo which he named after the Seigneurie in Quebec "Lauzon." Signed himself as "Charest de Lauzon" or simply "de Lauzon."

***Phillipe Marie named his plantation in San Domingo "Levy" and signed himself "Charest de Lévy." Probably killed in insurrection.

In 1754 there began the seven-year war between England and France for the possession of Canada.

Joseph Charest Dufils threw himself into the organization of a navy for La Nouvelle France, having always been a man of the sea and an expert in all sorts of ships. He became a captain in the new navy. The colony was assembling its meagre resources for defense. Bougainville and Montcalm implored help from both France and Louisiana. An English diarist, keeping notes throughout the war, entered a telling bit of information concerning the strategy practised by the British navy in order to commandeer Canadian pilots into their service to steer their fleet up the treacherous channel of the St.Lawrence River. He writes that the British ships flew the French flag from their mastheads. It may be said that from the moment the British fleet sighted Quebec, French Canada's fate was sealed. Pointe de Lévy was the first point of attack by General Wolfe. Victorious in the battle, he laid siege from there to Quebec City.

In 1758 Joseph Dufils carried out an audacious plan of procuring food for the defenders, and made a trip to France in "Le Soleil Royal," having gotten away through a strategic move up the river. He managed not only to get provisions but materials to the defenders during the siege.

Étienne Charest, though a captain in the militia, was completely unused to military life. He threw himself, however, with such determination and zeal into the work of defense and showed such military ability, he was soon advanced to colonel at the head of the forces defending Pointe de Lévy against Wolfe and Monkton. When the British became victorious at Lévy, they turned the church and grounds into their encampment, using the church itself as a hospital, ripping out altars and pews. Generals Wolfe and Monkton and their staffs established themselves here at St. Joseph's and in houses nearby.

It is interesting to read the account written by Knox of the finding hidden in the woods of the many sealed boxes of books collected over many years by Pere Boucher, the first devoted curé of St.Joseph's,which had been hidden by Charest and others in a vain hope of saving them. Knox says that during the weary hours of the siege the British whiled away many hours reading and studying these books. Throughout the years parish priests from isolated missionary areas had borrowed books from St.Joseph's at Pointe de Lévy. They considered this parish the cultural center of Canada. Some of the books had necessarily been

* Knox

lost. And after the siege and the British occupancy of the premises, there remained only books on theology and eccleastical history. However, previous to the war, in 1750, there had been made a list of the entire contents of the library, and with this old list, Charest and others began the reassembling of the original library of 200 volumes. These can be seen today, the outcome of years of search and devoted interest on the part of the parishioners of old St. Joseph's, which continued until all the list of Pere Boucher had been duplicated.

The British flag flying over Pointe de Lévy, misery prevailed for the French Canadians. Many of their houses had been put to the torch. Then followed the Battles of Montmorenci, of St. Foye, where the Chevalier de Lévis distinguished himself, and of the Plains of Abraham. From the old manor house at Pointe de Lévy, the women and children, as in an amphitheatre, watched the 8,000 British soldiers scale the heights, and later the burning of large portions of the city. The men of the place were fighting in Quebec, across the river.

On the evening of victory, the air thick with smoke and the acrid smell of burning things weighting the atmosphere, the embalmed body of General Wolfe was brought across the St. Lawrence to lie in the British encampment at old St. Joseph's Church at Pointe de Lévy. Here it rested several hours, until the departure of the ship "Royal William," which started its sad voyage that same night, bearing the conqueror's body to lie in state in Westminster Abbey. Montcalm died soon after, both generals having given up their lives in the final struggle.*

---

*In the Governor's Garden in Quebec one may see today a monument erected by King George IV of Great Britain, commemorating alike the two gallent generals. The foundation stone was laid by "George, Earl of Dalhousie, Governor in Chief over all British possessions in North America." It reads:

In Memory of Two Illustrious Men

Wolfe and Montcalm.

Courage Gave Them a Common Death,

History a Common Fame,

Posterity a Common Monument.

November 15, 1827

—H. C. B.

The frightful winter of 1759 followed. The inhabitants were without food and shelter.

Étienne Charest III became the hero of the situation. Grimly, he threw all personal interests aside and entered a fruitless struggle to sabotage what he could of the rights and properties of the French people. For the next three years he worked tirelessly, making trips to England in their service. On one of his trips, in early March, 1763, he saw for the last time his courageous brother, Joseph Dufils, who had taken up his residence at La Rochelle. Dufils died on March 16, 1763, and is buried in La Rochelle. He left six children, all of whom married and remained in France.

The news of the Versailles Treaty becoming known in Canada threw the French there into direst consternation. Charest, signing the appeals, still to be seen in the archives, as "Charest, Deputé from Canada," addressing letters of entreaty concerning civil and religious matters to King George III of England. He outlined the many grievances and tragic situations of the French people in Canada. There are filed many letters in both England and Canada between Lord Halifax, England's Secretary of State, and Étienne Charest III. Charest continued to visit personally the English Cabinet in behalf of the French Canadians.

An interesting little encounter between le Chevalier de Léry, who had married in Canada a cousin of Charest's through the Bissots, is alluded to in a letter to his family at Pointe de Lévy. He writes that Léry also had business with the English Government, and that at the Court of St. James's his beautiful cousin, who had accompanied her husband, was presented to the King. George III fixed his eyes upon the serene beauty of Madame de Léry, and exclaimed:

"If all the French women of Canada possess a similar flawless beauty, ours has, indeed, been a worthwhile conquest."

Charest passed the winter of 1764 in England and France, becoming more and more despondent and hopeless. He could make little headway amid the delays and refusals. At last, in that year, the French Canadians were given eighteen months either to leave the soil of Canada or take the oath of allegiance to England. His own situation confronted Charest. Things began shaping themselves in his mind.

Sorrowfully, he admitted to himself the impossibility of continuing his life in Canada under the changed condition of both state and church. His ~~warm friend~~ patron, Lord Halifax, holding Charest in highest esteem and realizing the extent of his labors for his French Canadians, granted him an additional eighteen months in which to liquidate his own affairs.

Charest felt he had no choice. He advertised the Seigneurie for sale. His beautiful property comprised many miles of farm land, containing three parishes, St. Joseph's, St. Nicholas', and St. Henri, all of which owed their creation and existence to the three successive generations of Charests.

The old St. Joseph's was in the process of restoration at this time, eighty parishioners having come together to examine the devastation after the war. There was no altar There were no pews. All the beautiful accessories accumulated by Madame la Veuve or Ste. Geneviève were destroyed.*

Charest considered with sorrow the renunciation of his land. Besides the farm lands and three parishes, the Seigneurie comprised many small, flourishing villages and two large towns, Pointe de Lévy, now Lévis, and Lauzon. All of this progress was due to the wise governing of the three generations of Charests. Two beautiful rivers flowed through the property—"those blue waters of the Chaudiere" and the Etchemin.

From the year 1762 James Murray, the new and first Governor General of Canada, had leased the farm lands of the

---

*Although St. Joseph's was restored at the time, in 1886 it was almost destroyed by fire. The church to be seen there today dates from 1886 in its outer frame.

Of the three churches of the Seigneurie, St. Henri, on the Etchemin River, is the best example of the old buildings to be seen today. It stands, a little Gothic church, rich in fine paintings, brought to it in 1793, some thirty years after Charest's departure from Canada. These paitings were sent by the Grand Vicaire des Jardins for safekeeping and as a present to the parish from France. They were brought by a French priest escaped from the French Revolution.

In all of the three churches established on the Seigneurie de Lauzon, there are said today once a year prayers for the wellbeing of the descendants of the Charest family in recognition of their devotion in the establishment and support of the churches.—H. C. B.

Seigneurie. Now he bought the entire property. Although much had suffered destruction during the war, Murray had seen the estate and surrounding land in the heyday of its prosperity. He was a wise as well as a just and good man. With care and vision he set about restoring the Seigneurie. He was considerate of the people settled upon it. They worked together for renewed orderliness and fertility.

It was on the twelfth day of February, 1765, that Etienne Charest III, for the sum of 3,750 English pounds sterling, sorrowfully handed over the dear land which for four generations had been his family's home, and of which for two generations the Charests had been the Seigneurs. But, in spite of his heavy heart, fortune had smiled warmly upon his family, seeming to award them for their benevolence and wisdom, Charest II having become a veritable father to the people about him. Even yet his kindness and charity and quiet wisdom are proverbial in the locality. The King of France, Louis XV, bestowed upon Étienne Charest the military order of St. Louis in recognition of his heroism during the defense of Pointe de Lévy and the Siege of Quebec. No more deserving recipient existed in Canada.

A similar order was extended to another member of the family who again had taken the name of Charest Dufils. There is filed in Quebec a series of letters between Lord Dartmouth, Dufils and French and English members of the State Departments on this subject. The correspondence is strung over many years. Dufils, a colonel of militia in Montreal, declined the honor, saying that, "although it pleased his vanity," he was more than sixty-three years of age and, as his personal presence was required in Paris in order to receive the badge of merit, he was not sufficiently interested to cross the seas to procure it. He was then a subject of England. He had relatives in France who were annoyed at his refusal to accept the honor. They would have liked the prestige and the perquisites pertaining to it to be inherited later by them. But Dufils remained indifferent, spoke of his financial competence and said he could live on happily without any such recognition of his services.

As far as the financial position of Étienne Charest went, he came off far better than any one of the colonists, through the far-reaching enterprises of the great grandfather Bissot, grandfather and father Charest and continued by himself, added to the fact that he had sold the Seigneurie to Governor General Murray and additionally received excellent prices from the incoming English settlers for his three residences in Quebec City as well

as for his store buildings. His personal fortune when he left Canada totaled 118,000 pounds. Having a large family, he was grateful for his fortune, but he seems spiritually never to have recovered from the heart-breaking wrench of renunciation and abandonment of his beloved home.

Having wound up successfully all his intricate enterprises, there came a day when, with his wife and children around him, he stood at the prow of his ship, taking a last look at the beloved rock of Quebec, the blue waters of the Chaudiere River mingling with the dark St. Lawrence, the old church of St. Joseph, even the ground for which had been given by his ancestors Bissot, and the busy mills. He could even see the face of the huge clock his grandfather had erected to aid the workmen. His eyes rested upon the milky cataract of the Falls of Montmorenci spilling into the river. In thanking God for the prayers being said for him at the moment in all three of the parishes, in sad remembrance of all the brave men who had fought with honor in a glorious defeat and who now lay behind him, "mort pour la patri," he bade le Pointe de Lévy "un supreme adieu." Etienne Charest III had been the eighth and last French Seigneur de Lauzon.

And where was he going? King Louis XV of France had offered habitation in Touraine to Canadian officers desiring to leave Canada, in a gesture of recognition of their services in the war. Many families had found refuge there. Charest would have some old friends as neighbors in France. He had visited France so often he was familiar with it. He chose Loches as the spot in which to live out the rest of his life. He was forty-seven years old when he left Canada.

From letters still extant it is possible somewhat to visualize his situation and environment at that time. He had had thirteen children by his wife Catherine Trottier Desaunieres, eleven of whom went with him on his departure from Canada. However, almost immediately his eldest three sons left France for San Domingo to seek their fortunes. They were Etienne Charest IV, aged twenty-two; Francois, aged twenty-one (the ancestor of this history), and Phillip, aged twelve. Their father started them off each with a nestegg of 10,000 pounds with which to procure a plantation and build a house and buy slaves.

Charest had arranged to buy for himself a beautiful house in Loches in "le Quartier des Prairies paroise de

St. Ours." He gives a description to friends in Quebec by letter. One entered the house through a vistibule to the rez-de-chaussee. The salon looked out upon, on one side, the street, on the other, the river. The diningroom overlooked a garden. Small rooms were beyond the salon and diningroom. Galleries were many. The kitchen and service rooms lay below, bedrooms above. A series of formal gardens was surrounded and connected by cloisters. On the top floor, beneath the Mansard, were servants' rooms.*

From the old collegiate church, built in the tenth century, Charest bought his house. In this patriarchal setting he brought up his younger children, arranging exceptional marriages for them and settling 15,000 pounds upon each as a dot.

All this was in contrast to the life of the average emigre from Canada, many of whom became impoverished after the war and involved in litigation with the English Government concerning their property and rights, a struggle which dragged on for half a century.

For many years Charest kept in close contact with his friends in Quebec, "that beloved country to be forgotten only in death." He signs himself simply "Charest," as had his father. In 1775 he speaks of his three sons as having settled in San Domingo in Bas Bassin, Cap Francais in the parish of St. Marthe de Marmalade, where they all were engaged successfully in raising coffee and sugar. At that moment the eldest signed himself as Charest, as had the Etienne of the last two generations in Canada. The second son, Francois, had named his plantation in San Domingo Lauzon after the Seigneurie at Pointe de Lévy, and signed himself thereafter "Charest de Lauzon." The third son, Phillip, naming his plantation Lévy after the old Pointe de Lévy in Quebec, signed his name "Charest de Lévy."

Étienne Charest III died at Loches August 6, 1783, at the age of sixty-five. He had lived eighteen years in

---

*Loches, on the left bank of the Indres River, grew up about the monastery of St. Ours, founded by the saint himself in 500. From the ninth to the thirteenth century it was the stronghold of de Comte d'Anjou. From the thirteenth century through the time of Charles IX the chateau was occupied by the Kings of France.—H.C.B.

Loches. His sons were well established in San Domingo, his daughters succesfully and in many cases brilliantly married. In three letters written their mother, Catherine Trottier Desauniere, upon the news of their father's death, the fine character and affectionate consideration for their mother is plainly set forth by the sons. They grieve at their father's death, speaking of him as their beloved father. They tenderly ask if their "chere petite mere" would like them to return to Loches to remain with her. They inquire minutely into her financial situation and suggest returning the 30,000 pounds given them by their father eighteen years before. As they did not return, it is presumed their mother preferred their continuance of their successful colonial life. About her were her married daughters and her youngest son, Joseph, called Joliet, who had been born in Loches after their emigration.

In 1783, at the time of their father's death, Charest, the oldest son, was listed as a captain in San Domingo, and Francois, known as Charest de Lauzon, as a lieutenant.

Quoted exactly from M. Roy:

"We are often asked, 'The Seigneurs Charest, have they not left any descendants of the name in Canada?' We reply positively in the negative. Neither is there any trace of the last French Seigneur de Lauzon in Loches, where this noble man, the Cross of St. Louis decorating his shoulder, lived out his last twenty years in self-imposed exile.

"And it seems certain that all the brave members of this ancient, honorable family settling in San Domingo perished in the negro uprising and massacres of 1793. Would it not be interesting to find again some news in the Haiti of today of 'Charest,' 'Charest de Lauzon' and 'Charest de Lévy'?"

AFTERWORD

by

Hally Carrington Brent

(March, 1948)

AS has been said in my Foreword, the mystery is now solved. The original Seigneur de Lauzon and the Duc de Lévy, living in Quebec in 1625, were in no way connected with the Charests, except in that the last two Seigneurs were Charests, owning the Seigneurie de Lauzon at Pointe de Lévy. We see that the first to combine the names were the two sons of Étienne Charest III, who emigrated to San Domingo shortly after 1763 and named their plantations there after their home lands just abandoned in Canada, and from then on signed themselves as "Charest de Lauzon" and "Charest de Lévy." In the letters still existent, the eldest son adhered to the custom of using only the surname, "Charest."

I am sure it would have been very interesting to M. Roy to learn of the existence of a Charest surviving the negro insurrection in San Domingo. From documents in Jamaica and New Orleans, we know that Francois Charest de Lauzon survived and married in San Domingo Perrine Thérèse de Gourney, that he escaped with wife and children to Jamaica, that he lived from 1793 to 1797 in Jamaica, and that his daughter, Elizabeth Etienne Bonne Charest de Lauzon, married Pierre Francois St. Colombe du Bourg at Kingston, Jamaica, on February 28, 1797, and that immediately afterward he removed with his entire family to New Orleans. Du Bourg was an émigré from the French Revolution.

For much information concerning the family, I am indebted to a cousin, Trist Wood, who, great grandson of Hore Browse Trist, ward of Thomas Jefferson and brought up at Monticello, also great grandson of President Zachary Taylor, was reared to value family history. He has many original documents concerning the Charest family, among others the baptismal record of Étienne Charest II, naming Louis Joliet as his godfather in 1678.

Trist Wood related to me the story of some family jewels saved in the escape from San Domingo, a story

told him by his grandmother. It appears that when Charest was offered escape on a ship whose owner was loading a quantity of barrels, he contrived to secrete a small negro girl who wished to escape with them, inside a barrel, securing some jewels and family papers upon her person. Great emphasis was put upon an old set of diamond. Salvaged in this extraordinary manner, this piqued my imagination. When my daughter, Hally Brent (Mrs. W. Page Dame Jr.), inherited from her grandmother, Rosella Kenner Brent, a set comprising a brooch and earrings in 1928, I had asked Samuel Kirk and Son to give me some idea of their date and origin. This firm informed me that the jewels were of French design and approximately 200 years old. If these are the jewels pinned to the clothing of the little negro girl in 1793, they perhaps were bought by Etienne Charest II, the first Charest to be Seigneur de Lauzon, for his wife, Marie Thérèse du [redacted] Roy. We have read of his vast importations to Canada from foreign countries, both for his own household and for his stores, his caskets containing gold; and it is easy to imagine the acquisition of rare jewels for the wife whom he adored and whom, dying young, he mourned the rest of his life. This would make the jewels over 200 years old. If less than 200, they may well have been the purchase of Étienne Charest III, who, we have seen, made countless journeys to France in behalf of his countrymen after England's acquisition of Canada. Whether the jewels traveled to Canada from France on the "St. Etienn Étienne," the Charest ship of 1715, or on the "St. Fr Francois," a generation later, the picture holds the same intriguing fascination.

Trist Wood was told many stories of the Charests in New Orleans. Francois Charest de Lauzon, known in New Orleans simply as de Lauzon, lived until his death on Dumaine Street in le Vieux Carre. His wife, Perrine de Gourney, survived him many years, also his daughter, Elizabeth du Bourg, by thirty years. She died at about 100 years of age in 1843 at Hermitage Plantation, the country home of her granddaughter, Aglaé Du Bourg Bringier, and her husband, Michael Douradou Bringier. She had resided with them many years at their town residence of Melpomene.

Trist Wood recounts the handed-down story of the Battle of Quebec as related by his grandmother. From the windows of the old mansion at Pointe de Lévy the family watched, "as in an amphitheatre," the 8,000 British soldiers scaling the heights of the Plains of

Abraham, and the burning of a great part of the city to follow. The family story is that after the battle, the body of General Wolfe was brought to lie in state for a few hours in the old Seigneurie manor house, awaiting the departure of the ship "Royal William," which sailed the evening of the day of victory, bearing the embalmed remains of the general to England, to be interred later in Westminster Abbey.× The French community was plunged in grief at the almost simultaneous death of Montcalm.

M. Roy assures us that the Seigneurial branch of the Charest family became extinct in both Canada and France. It seemed destined to perish also in Louisiana, for the Charest heir, Bien Aimé, known for his charm and personality, met death while still a bachelor in New Orleans.

Lyle Saxon, in his "Gumbo Ya Ya," writes: "Dueling prevailed in New Orleans to an extent unknown even in France. Creole society was an aristocratic and feudal organization founded on slavery, and Creoles lived like princes, developing an inordinate pride. Too, Latin passions, tropicalized under Louisiana suns, seemed to assume a violence surpassing anything known in calmer France. Young men fought over the slightest provocation, for such absurd reasons as the honor of the Mississippi River. At least half of the duals were caused at soirees."

This description is authenticated in the case of Bien Aimé Charest de Lauzon. At an evening party the partner of Charest moved her chair too close to the delicate tulle dress of another girl. Her partner challenged Bien Aimé to meet him at dawn the following morning. Accordingly, Bien Aimé left the house on Dumaine Street at daybreak. He was never to return. Later that day his mother, returning home from mass, heard on the street the shocked exclamations of neighbors announcing her son's death.

After collecting the detailed story of the Charests (who became de Lauzons in New Orleans), all the misconception seemed explained with the exception of the old coat-of-arms bearing the name de Lauzon which had hung on New Orleans walls and now hung on mine. It occurred to me that these arms should not be used by descendants of the Charests. I therefore wrote to M. Pierre Georges Roy, son of M. J. Edmond Roy, asking his opinion on the subject, and also for a description of the de Lauzon arms. I give his reply:

Henry Collins Brown in his "Story of Old New York" says Gen. Wolfe's body, on arrival in England, was buried at St. Alfage Church, Greenwich. This seems reasonable as Admiral Lord Nelson + [illegible] in the Navy to which many naval officers were brought, Admiral Lord Nelson is here [illegible] Naval Museum is here

Mrs. Brent
Madame:

I am absolutely certain that your family has no legal right to the de Lauzon arms. These arms belong to the blood, not to the land. Moreover, the Charests never used the arms while residing in Canada.

Respectfully to you
Pierre Georges Roy
Archives Judiciaires
Palace de Justice
Quebec, Canada, November, 1947

But M. Roy's description of the Lauzon armorial bearings differed completely from those in my possession. They consisted of a shield on which were displayed three serpents, the tail of which was affixed to each serpent's mouth. Our coat-of-arms consists of a shield on which a mountain rises, and a motto beneath of "Candor ex Superataurum." But the name de Lauzon is above.

Research has now solved the last mystery. These are the Charest arms. Obviously the Charest descendants who were called Charest de Lauzon in San Domingo and who later became erroneously simply de Lauzon in New Orleans, in reproducing the arms, affixed the wrong name. The arms we possess, then, are correct, but the accompanying name should be Charest, not de Lauzon.

That the Charests possessed arms is proved by statements in Le Grand Armouriel de France of 1682. An allusion is made to arms belonging to René La Vacheur, Sieur de Mantinguy, Kings Council, and of Renée Charest, and also of René Charest, Sieur de Quetardieres, successor of Nicholas Charest, all of Poitiers. Of course, these arms may have been granted for special reasons. Also we must remember that the two Charest brothers were, by this date, already residents of Quebec. However, the repetition of the baptismal names of René and Renée and of the town of Poitiers forges a link between the two branches. We have seen that the Charests emigrated from Poitiers and that their mother's name was Renée, as was the name of the relative from whom they acquired their first land in Canada on the Isle of Orleans.

In the face of all the information now collected about the Charest family, it is quite comprehensible

that the New Orleans descendants, ~~based~~ bolstered upon tales of the affluence, position, integrity of their ancestors, whom they knew to be Seigneurs de Lauzon in Quebec, the last member of the name being known simply as de Lauzon in New Orleans, should have assumed their descent to be from the old Marquis de Lauzon first Seigneur of the family property, and of his contemporary the Chevalier de Lévy, both famous settlers of Quebec.

In closing this story, one small, diverting item springs to my mind. With the tradition of the noble descent from the Marquis swept away by proofs and the name of Charest de Lauzon vanished from records in Canada, France and Louisiana, there still remains one deathless link between the Charests and their glory and their present descendants. With the proper evidence in hand, were they to step within the doors of old St. Joseph's Church at Pointe de Lévy and request their rights, no one could deprive them of the honor of taking their seats either in the Seigneurial pew or in the pew of "Mad. La Veuve" "Sainte Geneviève," assigned, as they were in the seventeenth century, to the family of Charest and their heirs in perpetuity.

#