



The Founder of New France: A Chronicle of Champlain

Charles William Colby

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Champlain, Samuel de. Explorer, geographer, and colonizer. Born in 1567 at Brouage, a village on the Bay of Biscay. Belonged by parentage to the lesser gentry of Saintonge. In boyhood became imbued with a love of the sea, but also served as a soldier in the Wars of the League. Though an enthusiastic Catholic, was loyal to Henry of Navarre. On the Peace of Vervins (1598) returned to the sea, visiting the Spanish West Indies and Mexico. Between 1601 and 1603 wrote his first book—the *Bref Discours*. In 1603 made his first voyage to the St Lawrence, which he ascended as far as the Lachine Rapids. From 1604 to 1607 was actively engaged in the attempt of De Monts to establish a French colony in Acadia, at the same time exploring the seaboard from Cape Breton to Martha's Vineyard. Returned to the St Lawrence in 1608 and founded Quebec. In 1609 discovered Lake Champlain, and fought his first battle with the Iroquois. In 1613 ascended the Ottawa to a point above Lac Coulange. In 1615 reached Georgian Bay and was induced to accompany the Hurons, with their allies, on an unsuccessful expedition into the country of the Iroquois. From 1617 to 1629 occupied chiefly in efforts to strengthen the colony at Quebec and promote trade on the lower St Lawrence. Taken a captive to London by Kirke in 1629 upon the surrender of Quebec, but after its recession to France returned (1633) and remained in Canada until his death, on Christmas Day 1635. Published several important narratives describing his explorations and adventures. An intrepid pioneer and the revered founder of New France.

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