

Early History Of The Rapeljes

Editor's note: Next Wednesday afternoon a plaque, erected by the Ontario Archaeological and Historic Sites Board, in honor of Daniel Rapelje, first settler in what is now St. Thomas, will be unveiled by Hon. Bryan Cathcart, Ontario Minister of Travel and Publicity. In this connection the following history of the Repelje (or Rapalje) family, taken from the archives of the Pennsylvania Huguenot Society and kindly forwarded to The Times-Journal by Dr. G. E. Reaman, director of adult education at Waterloo University, Waterloo, Ont., will prove interesting. Dr. Reaman is at present working on a book which will depict the contribution of the Huguenots to Canada, thus his interest in the Rapeljes, who have played a prominent part in the development of this and other sections of the province.

GEORGE RAPARLIER (Joris Jansen de Rapalje)

This numerous and reputable family is descended from that of de Rapalje, which as early as the eleventh century possessed large estates in Bretagne, and ranked among the arriereban of the French nobility. Some of its members were distinguished as military leaders in the crusades, others were celebrated for political eminence and professional talent. But in the religious wars of the sixteenth century, being known as Protestants, they became the

victims of Papal animosity and were scattered and expelled from France. The family subsequently gained prominence in Switzerland and Belgium, where they acquired large possessions and continue to the present time.

Joris Jansen de Rapalje, one of the proscribed Huguenot race, from Rochelle in France, was the common ancestor of all the American families of the name. He came to this country with the Colonists in 1623, in the Unity, a ship of the West India Company, and settled at Fort Orange, now Albany, where he continued three years.

George de Rapalier and his bride, Cataline Tricaud, or Joris Jansen Rapalje and Catalyne Trico, as their names were spelled phonetically by the Dutch people, came from Leyden in Holland, where he was born. The patronimic "Jansen" indicated that George was "fils de Raparlier." His father, Jean Raparlier, a weaver, had settled there from one of the Belgian refugee colonies in the southern part of England, either from London, Canterbury, Sandwich or Southampton, where he was born. Jean Raparlier's parents and his grandfather, Jean de la Raparlier, had fled to England after the Spanish capture and destruction of their ancestral city of Valenciennes in 1567, and they had landed in Southampton in September of that year. Valenciennes then a city in the French speaking part of the Netherlands, was the first city which heroically

opposed the tyranny of Philip, Lord of the Netherlands, and hereditary King of Spain. Those reverent martyrs, the well known formulators of the Reformed Confession of the Faith, known as "The Galic Confession," "Peregrine de la Grange and Guido de Bray, preachers at Valenciennes, friends and probably relatives of the Raparlier family, had found their death and heavenly crown in 1567.

From family letters, in the possession of the New York Historical Society, based upon the statement of her great-grandson Gysbert Bogart, we know that Sarah Raparlier, daughter of George Raparlier and Cataline Tricaud, his wife, was born at Fort Orange (later Albany), on June 7, 1624, and not on the 9th of June as some have said. She was the first white girl born in New Netherland, the first-born white boy there being Jean de la Vigne, or an Finje, as named among the Dutch. A picture of the historical Raparlier Cradle, subsequently used for many children of that family, is on file here. It is the first cradle of Huguenots in America and at the same time that of the white race in the Cosmopolitan Colonies of the Middle East.

Silas Says: Camera Faces

When "candid shots" are not candid, they are shocking. See the prominent citizen placing a