Who, Why, When, What, Where
Where
Who
Who
MONEY TO COMPLETE WATERWORKS SYSTEM

Five Year Bonds Sold Locally to be Redeemed by Debentures
When Conditions Improve
—100 Men to be Employed on Work

On June the 18th the ratepayers of Orillia carried a bylaw to expend $85,000 to extend the waterworks system and to build a new pumping station.

ENGLISH SCULPTORS WIN THE PRIZES

IN CHAMPLAIN MONUMENT COMPETITION.

Mr. Vernon Marsh, of Goddendene Farnborough, England, was awarded the first prize in the competition for the Champlain monument, to be erected at Couchiching Beach Park next year in connection with the celebration of the Champlain Tercentenary. There were 22 models entered...
Burling, October 18th 1914

Orillia Patriotic Fund

Founded Sep 14, 1914
Soldiers’ Memorial
Volunteered Services

Sergt. Major Norman John Harvie
40th Battery C.E.A.
Killed in Action, Courcellette, Oct. 15, 1916
Age 27

Capt. Arthur Holford Ardagh
24th Battalion C.E.F.
Killed in Action, Vimy Ridge, May 10, 1917
Age 22
Medical Community
Orillia Soldiers’ Memorial Hospital

This Is To Certify That

LEITH, ALEX WILSON

is entitled to receive Free Hospitalization, and while in Hospital, Free Medical and Surgical Attention, in the

ORILLIA SOLDIERS’ MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Under the terms to the Town of Orillia and Township of Orillia Act, 1953.

Chairman Board of Reference

To facilitate admission to the Hospital please present this card to the admitting clerk.
When
Why
What

ULANS, MAKING HIS
ATTACKS AT CAHLAGUÉ, THE CHIEF
VILLAGE OF THE HURONS, WHICH WAS
NEAR THIS PLACE

A SYMBOL OF GOOD WILL
BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH
SPEAKING PEOPLE OF CANADA

Appendix 5
One-on-One Consultation Presentations
Sault Ste Marie

Howell
From little towns, in a far land, we came,
To save our honour and a world aflame;
By little towns, in a far land, we sleep,
And trust those things we won
To you to keep.

— Rudyard Kipling, 1925
Inscription on Cenotaph
426 Queen Street East, Sault Ste. Marie
Sault Ste Marie
Howell
From little towns, in a far land, we came,

To save our honour and a world aflame;

By little towns, in a far land, we sleep,

And trust those things we won

To you to keep.

— Rudyard Kipling, 1925
Inscription on Cenotaph
426 Queen Street East, Sault Ste. Marie
Peterborough
Allward
A SYMBOL OF GOOD WILL BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH SPEAKING PEOPLE OF CANADA
“If ye break faith — we shall not sleep”
"If ye break faith —
we shall not sleep"

buy VICTORY BONDS
The Victory Pole

This pole was used as a “thermometer” in the victory loan campaign November, 1918.
When 1,873 citizens of Orillia subscribed $1,010,300 and 229 residents of Orillia Township subscribed $127,850.

Erected in commemoration of victory and peace November 1918.
Bookends on Huronia
The design of the Champlain Monument and content of the plaques do not give equal treatment to the featured Aboriginals with their European counterparts. This reflects Canadian-Eurocentric societal values of the early 20th century.

The original idea for the monument came from the Orillia Canadian Club in 1912. In the Victorian era and subsequent to it, the celebration of the “advent of the white race” into Ontario was an acceptable stance, commendable even. In addition, Sir Wilfrid Laurier had been elected Canada’s first francophone Prime Minister and the promotion of unity between Canadian French and English populations was of paramount importance.

Oral traditions of the First Nations record that the Anishinaabe people posed for the sculptor. Indeed leaders in full regalia participated in the unveiling of the statue and the re-enactment of Champlain’s arrival. The monument itself is now an historical artifact that bears witness to how Canadian society has evolved. Today the historical and modern day contributions of Aboriginal people to Canada are beginning to be fully recognized and valued.
"A Symbol of Goodwill"

The Remaking of the Champlain Monument at Orillia
In his book, *Death So Noble*, Jonathan F. Vance writes that "the subjects of historical study tend to view their past in terms that do not always correspond to our images of it. When we assume that they have perceived events as we have reconstructed them, we deduce at our peril." Vance seeks to shed light on the many ways in which Canadians chose to remember, commemorate and interpret their country's involvement in the First World War. This paper focuses on how that conflict contributed to the commemoration of the three hundredth anniversary of Samuel de Champlain's journey to the Huron country. It does so by examining the activities of the members of the Champlain Tercentenary Celebration Committee in erecting a monument to the French explorer in Couchiching Beach Park at Orillia, Ontario. Through a study of contemporary ideas about the nature and function of history and those who were responsible for its propagation, it will become clear that the Committee's original purpose in honouring Champlain shifted its emphasis to suit cultural fractures wrought by the war.

The idea for a monument to Samuel de Champlain at Orillia first took shape in 1912. Almost three hundred years earlier, the explorer had journeyed in and around the area, known as "the Huron country." Champlain arrived in Huronia on August 17, 1615.
His experience in North America began in 1603 when he had accompanied Pierre du Guay de Monts in establishing a settlement along the Bay of Fundy. French authorities had sponsored several official voyages of discovery in eastern North America in hopes of finding riches similar to those taken by Spain and Portugal in the Americas. Jacques Cartier had launched this search in 1534, but following several attempts over the next seven years, produced little to spark the King’s interest. As the demand for furs increased at the turn of the seventeenth century, however, France once again renewed efforts to stake a claim to the region. Champlain established a settlement at present-day Quebec, in an attempt to monopolize the fur trade along the St. Lawrence River. By the time of his death in 1635, Champlain had enabled Quebec to transform itself into a settled agricultural community. French-Huron relations began on a relatively cordial basis. The French wanted ready access to furs, and the Hurons sought to become the region’s principal connection to European goods. In 1614, the Compagnie du Canada, in which Champlain had a stake, exported more than 25,000 skins from New France. The French were impressed by the complexity and sophistication of Huron society, noting that “the intelligence of the Huron” was “superior to that of peasants in their own country.” Jesuit missionaries studying Huron culture noted the complexity of trading relations among the Huron and their allies. A headman’s ability to acquire and redistribute goods—and those from Europe were of great value—among clan segments was seen as a sign of prestige and there were laws governing to whom and how these relationships were to be decided.

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1 Jonathan F. Vance, Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning and the First World War, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997) p. 4
2 The company’s monopoly on the St. Lawrence fur trade had been extended the previous year to limit competition and theft. See Bruce Trigger, Children of Aataensic: A History of the Huron People to 1660. (Kingston: McGill-Queen’s, 1976), p. 286.
and enforced. As trading partners, there was also an expectation on the part of the Huron that the French would join them in their military incursions against the Iroquois. In fact, Champlain’s arrival at Cahiaue on August 17, 1615 was simply one among many stops his party made during that summer, as the Huron gathered support for an anticipated attack on the Iroquois. The war party stayed at The Narrows—a thin waterway separating Lake Couchiching from Lake Simcoe—for a week, before heading east, then south. The ensuing rout of Huron forces left Champlain wounded and forced him (against his will) to winter at Cahiaue.

The French-Huron alliance remained relatively strong for the next 25 years; however, the clash of religious beliefs, political rivalries and diseases introduced by Europeans caused major social upheaval in the indigenous communities. Less than 50 years later, the Huron confederacy had collapsed and its people had been dislocated and dispersed by the Iroquois.

Few Canadians paid attention to the fate of the Huron until the latter nineteenth century, when the study of Canadian history became fashionable. In Ontario, this phenomenon manifested itself in several ways. The University of Toronto was first to formally recognize the subject with the creation of a chair in History in 1894; however, much informal activity in preceding years informed both its nature and the purpose. Regional disunity, massive immigration and disruptions caused by Canada’s transformation to an urban society contributed to debate about the country’s ability to withstand such change. “The bitter sectional and ethno-religious tensions evident in the

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4 For example, because the Arendar honon, a Huron clan, were the first tribe to make direct contact with French traders, Huron law granted them exclusive trading rights. They subsequently shared this preference with other tribes. See Trigger, pp. 288-292.
Jesuit estates disputes, the trial of Louis Riel and the Manitoba school question highlighted the need for a shared national history that could uphold a common identity, for political stability and for social order.”

History became a way of explaining myths of nation and of nation building.

In Ontario this feeling expressed itself initially in the creation of amateur historical societies, crystallizing in the late 1800s into more formalized institutions such as the Ontario Historical Society and the Canadian Club movement. Adherents simply “took it for granted that an integral connection existed between history and nationalism, that a knowledge of history was of essential importance to the development of any nation.” These societies quickly became the purview of well-to-do men and women, who saw it as their duty to cultivate this sense in their communities. In their hands, the preservation and conservation of the past became a useful tool in explaining existing cultural ideas about what constituted proper national heritage and appropriate social behaviour. This social context informed and influenced historical commemorations of the period. Events surrounding the tercentenary celebrations of Champlain at Orillia provide an excellent example of such tendencies.

The idea of erecting a monument to Champlain in Orillia was the brainchild Charles Harold Hale, the editor of the *Orillia Packet* (later the *Packet and Times*). The

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5 The notable exception appear to be collections commemorating the Roman Catholic Church to the ‘martyrs’, and some rudimentary archaeological excavations. See Trigger, pp. 858-894.


weekly newspaper had been started by Hale’s father in 1870, with the younger Hale assuming editorship in 1900. Hale exemplified the man of influence in his hometown. He served on Orillia’s council for ten years and was involved in so many public projects, he eventually became known as “Mr. Orillia.” Hale’s grandfather sat as a Liberal Member of Parliament, but the younger Hale’s politics were staunchly conservative. During the 1911 federal election he had worked himself to the point of exhaustion in opposing Laurier’s platform for trade reciprocity with the United States. That exertion, coupled with his election to council later that year proved too much, making Hale so sick that he was bedridden for weeks. During his recuperation in the summer of 1912, Hale took a vacation, touring eastern Canada. While touring, Hale had come across monuments commemorating Samuel de Champlain in the cities of St. John, New Brunswick, and at Quebec City. As Hale himself described, “it occurred to the traveler that it would be appropriate that Ontario should pay a tribute to the man whose vision and energy first brought representatives of the white race to Ontario.” As a founding member of Orillia’s Canadian Club and its Historical Society, Hale was deeply immersed in contemporary notions about the purpose and practice of history. He was keenly interested in the preservation and marking of historic sites, and encouraged its study. Upon his return, he successfully pitched the idea to the Club executive. They called a general meeting for 6 February 1913, and Hale invited John R. Bone, president of the

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9 Some of Hale’s contributions include the development of the town’s sewage system, streetlights, public library and hospital. For a more complete list, see “C. H. Hale,” Orillia Library Biography Binder, H-K, Orillia Public Library.
10 By his own admission, Hale had exhausted himself, spending several weeks in bed before beginning his trip. See Richmond, p. 64.
12 These included former native and non-native settlements and buildings, as well as memorials to military personnel. See Orillia Library Biography Binder, H-K.
Canadian Press Association, and Dr. Alexander Fraser, provincial archivist and current secretary of the Ontario Historical Society, to speak in support of the proposal.

Following their speeches, Hale and club president George H. Clark asked for an endorsement of the project. Clark told members that the St. John statue had cost $10,000 and the Quebec monument $35,000, sums which had been heavily subsidized by the federal government. Clark suggested Orillia might strike a happy medium of around $15,000.13 “Recognizing the fact that the visit of Samuel de Champlain, the great French explorer, to this section of the country in 1615, was the advent of the white man into Ontario, the executive of the Club considered it fitting that the question of commemoration should be discussed, and if possible brought to a successful issue.”14

Several letters of support came from guests unable to attend, notably one from Charles R. McCullough, president of the Association of Canadian Clubs. McCullough, also a noted journalist, had been an original member of the first Canadian Club, formed in Hamilton in 1892. The club’s purpose was to “encourage a study of the history, literature, culture and natural resources of Canada, to recognize native worth and talent, and to foster patriotic sentiment.”15 Drawing upon his experience with the tercentenary celebrations at Quebec in 1908, McCullough encouraged the Orillia club to “invite the attendance of the Federal Government’s representative and also in a particular way those of the Province and city of Quebec.”16 He recounted the glory of the 1908 celebrations at Quebec City, having been part of the national committee put together by Earl Grey to

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13 Orillia Times, 13 February 1913. File: Orillia – Champlain Monument, (Orillia Public Library). This collection contains a series of transcriptions of original articles. There are no authors, and page numbers are rarely given.
14 Orillia Times, 13 February 1913, ibid.
16 Orillia Times, 13 February 1913, File: Orillia – Champlain Monument.
coordinate Dominion participation. "I shall never forget those magnificent pageants that caught the eye and inspired the imagination during the Tercentenary of Quebec. Nothing can eradicate them from my memory as they passed in splendid review before the many thousands of Canadians speaking two tongues, but having one language—that of the eye."  

The spectacle at Quebec had similar origins, beginning as a local commemoration to mark the 300th anniversary of the founding of Quebec City, but it soon took on provincial and national dimensions. McCullough’s suggestion that the inclusion of Quebec should play a more prominent role in the campaign appears to have met with little enthusiasm. This is not to suggest that there was active opposition to the option. The idea that such events could be used to actively promote a unified vision of French and English Canada was indeed on the minds of Ontario historians. This is well illustrated in the work done by the Ontario Historical Society—an organization within which Hale had many contacts. Although there existed some anti-Catholic, anti-French feeling among its members, the general view of its officials on this matter was much more conciliatory in tone. In the Society’s 1913 annual report, Mr. Justice W. A. Weir wrote:

The people of Quebec may differ in their customs and methods from the people of the Maritime Provinces, Ontario, or the great West; but any bitterness or prejudice on that account is apt to be unjust and certainly antagonistic to the development of broad citizenship. The differences

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17 *Orillia Times*, 13 February 1913, File: Orillia – Champlain Monument.
18 The event was interpreted and used by local politicians, nationalist groups, the Dominion government and others to achieve a diverse set of purposes, many of which conflicted and were thus reconciled through outright historical misrepresentation. See H.V. Nelles, "Historical Pageantry and the “Fusing of the Races” at the Tercentenary of Quebec, 1908," *Histoire sociale/Social History*, 19, (1996), 391-415.
19 It was head provincial archivist and then OHS Secretary Dr. Alexander Fraser with whom Hale held initial discussion regarding the feasibility of constructing the Orillia monument. Fraser reportedly encouraged Hale to greatly expand the size and scope of the event by doubling the goal of the fundraising effort from Hale’s original target of $10,000 to $20,000. See Richmond, p. 64.
after all are few and temporary while the common interests are so many and of enduring nature. The lesson of our history is that we should try to get each other’s viewpoint and develop kindly and fraternal sentiments for the future activities of the various provinces seemed destined to remain together.\(^{20}\)

The underlying message in OHS literature of the period point to two assumptions made about the place of French culture in Canada. First, English Canadian culture, replete with British tradition, was clearly of a more civilized, enlightened nature; second, as is evident in Weir’s address, there is a sense that French Canadians would eventually adopt the central tenets espoused by English Canada. F. Barlow Cumberland made this clear in his 1908 presidential address, visualizing the day when a ““blending of the races” would be completed and a homogeneous Canadian nationality would be created. This more subtle and palatable concept of assimilation only differed in degree, not kind, from the brutally simple concept of assimilation espoused in many quarters of English-speaking Canada.”\(^{21}\)

Support for Hale’s proposal was overwhelming and a committee was set up to begin the work of securing funds from government and organizing publicity for the event. In March a delegation headed by Clarke and Hale, accompanied OHS president John Dearness and provincial archivist Alexander Fraser, went to Ottawa to meet with new Prime Minister Robert Borden, seeking a grant of $10,000. Hale recalled the meeting in later years, saying his group feared a disappointing response from Borden, whom Hale described as a “cold, practical, unromantic man.” However, upon its arrival, the committee was informed that Borden was busy and that it would instead be seeing Finance Minister Sir Thomas White. A man of culture and amateur historian himself,

\(^{20}\) Quoted in Killan, p. 84.
\(^{21}\) Ibid, pp. 86-87.
White proved a much easier sell, initially contributing $7,500 on behalf of the federal government. The delegation said it had already received $1,500 from the town and that it would also be asking for contributions from the County of Simcoe and the province of Ontario. Quebec was absent from the list of participants, although Fraser did characterize the project as symbolizing a "happy omen of growing national goodwill, a feature of the case that ought to appeal to the government."22 When officials appeared at County Council that June, presenters married visions of loyalist settlers with French-English harmony. Joseph Downey, Superintendent of the asylum in Orillia pointed to the similarity between Champlain’s achievements and those of the early settlers of the area. "In glowing words, he pictured the achievement of Champlain, and the pioneers who followed him. This monument would show to posterity that we in this date appreciated the great things done for us by this great pathfinder of the pioneers."23 Orillia Mayor William Goffatt told Council that the honour “thus done to a great Frenchman by the English people of Ontario would prove a great factor in unifying the French and English speaking people of the two provinces.”24

By the time the committee was ready to entertain proposals for the monument itself, it had secured $7,500 from the Dominion government, $2,500 from the Ontario government and $1,500 each from the County of Simcoe and the Town of Orillia. In addition, Governor General Lord Strathcona had donated $1,000 to the cause.

On 20 December 1913, the Executive Committee of the Ontario Champlain Tercentenary Celebration announced the opening of a competition for sculptors to submit designs. In its announcement, the committee outlined the primary goal it had in mind for

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22 Orillia Times, 6 March 1913, File: Orillia – Champlain Monument.
23 Orillia Times, 26 June 1913, ibid.
the project—the affiliation it saw between Champlain and the introduction of white European civilization into the area. “The monument is intended to commemorate the advent of the white race into the Province of Ontario, and the visit of Champlain to the Huron country (now the County of Simcoe) in 1615-16.” Artistically, the committee expressed a preference for designs incorporating “a statue of Champlain, upon a pedestal which may or may not have other figures emblematic of circumstances connected with his expedition and its results.”

The original deadline for the competition was to be June 20, 1914, but delays pushed it into September. Meanwhile, events overseas had boiled over into continental war. However, 22 models did make it under deadline and all were put on display at the town’s armories building. In the run-up to the committee decision, the public was invited to view the works, at a cost of 15 cents per individual and 25 cents a couple.

By the time the panel made its decision on October 20, 22 entries had been received; nine coming from Canada, seven from Britain and six from France. The successful design was submitted by Vernon March, a young sculptor from Farnborough, England. March came from a family of artists, none of whom had married, in order to devote themselves entirely to artistic pursuits. The youngest of eight siblings, Vernon’s later work would include the national War Memorial in Ottawa, while his older brother Sidney would be chosen to design a war memorial in Victoria, B.C.

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24 Orillia Times, 26 June 1913, ibid.
25 Champlain Monument Committee Papers, 1914-1925, (Clerk’s Office, City of Orillia). This collection of original documents from members of the Champlain Tercentenary Celebration Committee is housed in the basement of the Orillia Opera House and is not catalogued. I would like to thank Laura S. Lee, Orillia City Clerk, for making it available to me. Some documents pre-date its “1914” designation.
26 These appear to have been the result of what would have otherwise been late entries from overseas. A 10 September 1914 news item describes a committee decision not to postpone the awards date any longer, despite some French sculptors not being able to transport their work, due to the outbreak of war. See Orillia Times, 10 September 1914, File: Orillia—Champlain Monument.
Much was made of the design itself and the competition in general. Press releases, complete with pictures and descriptions were sent to newspapers across Canada and the United States. The competition itself roused such interest in and around Orillia that the committee extended the exhibition of all 22 models past the deadline day. In its account of the event, the *Weekly Times* provided readers with an elaborate description of what March had proposed:

The main feature of the design is a bronze statue of Champlain. The sculptor has endeavored [sic] to express in the pose of the figure the energy and courage of the explorer, and yet keep a dignified and thoughtful attitude. The statue is a heroic figure and will be some 12 feet in height. A rough hewn central boulder forms the support for the bronze statue. The boulder will be of Portland stone, about 14 ft. in height, and standing on a 6 stepped base, adding some 4 ft. to the elevation.

In addition, March had designed two sets of figures to depict “The Introduction of Christianity” and “Commercial Friendship.”

As the article explained,

Christianity is exemplified by a priest explaining Christian faith to the natives. Commerce is exemplified by a European trapper bartering implements for furs...The sculptor’s idea has been to design a pedestal that was in keeping with the life of a pioneer, and for this reason, any definite period of architecture has been avoided.

The two male aboriginals posed in each of the side scenes crouched themselves at the feet of their European counterparts. The message was unequivocal. There was no indication that the French-Huron interaction was an equal partnership. In both cases, it was the French who were in control, bringing the elements necessary to sow the seeds of a

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27 See Appendices A, B and C for photographs of each cast. From *The Champlain Monument at Orillia.*
28 See correspondence, Champlain Monument Papers, 1914-1925.
29 Committee members cited “increasing interest on the part of the citizens to see the models” as the reason for their decision. See *Orillia Times,* 22 October 1914, File: Orillia—Champlain Monument.
30 *Weekly Times,* 15 October 1914, ibid.
superior, civilized culture. Neither was there any reference made to what would ultimately occur as a result of this cultural exchange. Aboriginals held a somewhat ambiguous role in the historical promotion of the period, however, whether ally or enemy, their position was inevitably that of the “Other.”

Selection completed, the committee set about preparing for the upcoming celebration, planned for August 17 through 19, 1915. It printed pamphlets and handbills, promising a celebration of historic proportions. These notices also made very clear what the main purpose of the exercise was to be—“the Three Hundredth Anniversary of the Advent into Ontario of the White Race...” The only reference made to national unity came from Quebec’s Conservative leader F. D. Monk, whose quote appeared second from the bottom on some of the documents’ rear flaps. One may assume event promoters deemed this aspect of the event to have been of secondary importance, at best.

As 1914 drew to a close, however, it became clear that the recruiting slogan “Home by Christmas” was illusory. At a meeting in late January 1915, the Champlain Celebration Committee decided to postpone the tercentenary celebrations until the war was over. In its place, members chose to “mark the date, August 17, 1915, the anniversary of the arrival of Samuel de Champlain on the shores of Lake Couchiching, in

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33 “Champlain Tercentenary Celebration,” pamphlet, File: Orillia – Champlain Monument.
34 Ibid. Ironically, Monk had failed to act as liaison between Quebec and Ottawa during the early years of the Borden administration and was wary of any imperial entanglements that might commit Canada to foreign wars. Not surprisingly, he resigned as Minister of Public Works in December 1912, rather than support Borden’s Naval Aid Bill. See R. Douglas Francis, et al., *Destinies: Canadian History Since Confederation* 2nd ed., (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1992), pp. 158-159.
a manner befitting its importance..."35 A scaled-down ceremony was arranged, in conjunction with a recruiting drive and fundraising campaign to buy machine guns.36

The tercentenary committee met sporadically for the duration of the war. It raised money to buy machine guns and, as previously noted, combined its activities with those aimed at supporting Canada’s military contribution. One notable exception to this pattern came with the formal hiring of Vernon March “to execute the bronze part of the statue for $12,500.”37 It would be almost a decade before the contract would be filled.

French-English relations had been strained before war broke out in Europe in 1914. The hanging of Louis Riel, and threats to use of the French language in Manitoba and Ontario had caused friction between the two, and the rise of the Ultra Montaine movement in Quebec and the Orange Order in Ontario simply exacerbated matters during the two decades preceding war.38 The Conscription Crisis of 1917 caused all of these simmering tensions to boil over. Its announcement sparked riots in Montreal in the summer of 1917, followed by more riots in Quebec City during Easter weekend 1918. Four people died in the latter incident.39 Opposition was certainly not limited to French Canada. However, its national visibility and vehemence flew in the face of the complementary story of goodwill espoused by historical promoters in central Canada.

It took a while for the Champlain Tercentenary Celebration committee to refocus itself following the war. In the meantime, Couchiching Beach Park, where the proposed monument to Champlain was to be erected, became home to two captured German field
guns. The “war trophies”\textsuperscript{40} as they were referred to by the federal government, served to remind the citizens of Orillia of the justness of the war and may have been cause for concern among the tercentenary committee. This is suggested by the change in the committee’s promotional emphasis following war’s end. First, the committee shifted its emphasis from Champlain as a symbol of white civilization to that of Champlain as a symbol of national unity. Prior to the war, lip service had been paid to Quebec’s representation in the project; however, post-war realities made its inclusion critical. For one thing the cost of the monument as proposed had greatly increased, due mainly to the trebling in the price of bronze. Sculptor Vernon March waived outstanding fees and agreed to finish the monument’s figures for the cost of the bronze. The committee’s renewed appeals to the federal and Ontario governments resulted in another $5,000 and $2,500 respectively, but funds still fell far short of the $34,000 now required to complete the project. A contribution from the Quebec government would not only ameliorate the financial challenge, but could also serve as a symbol of French and English unity.

Although much was made in the days leading up to the official unveiling about the $5,000 eventually donated by the Province of Quebec, the only reference made to the subject in the minutes of the committee is a motion, dated 11 April 1922, “that steps be taken to interview the Quebec Government with a view to getting an appropriation towards the Champlain Memorial...”\textsuperscript{41} Subsequent press accounts led the casual reader to believe that the Ontario and Quebec governments had contributed $5,000 to the project and by association played an equal part in the process. One two-page recollection of the entire process referred to “a substantial grant from the Government of Quebec which

\textsuperscript{40} \textit{Weekly Times}, 17 June 1920, File: Champlain Monument.

\textsuperscript{41} Champlain Monument Papers, 1914-1925.
recognized the happy inter-racial significance of the monument.”

Another informed readers that contributions “to this national and inter-provincial monument were made by the Dominion Government and the Governments of both Ontario and Quebec. Of the total cost of $35,000, the Dominion gave $12,500, the Provinces $5,000 each.”

Publicity surrounding the new date for unveiling, scheduled for 1 July 1925, began to play up race harmony and national unity as the main reason for the erection of the monument. A press release of 25 June 1925 stated that in addition to marking the coming of the “white race to Ontario,” the celebrations were also intended to promote a “furthering (of) the “bonne entente” between the French and English-speaking races of the Dominion.”

Above the typed information, on committee letterhead, remained its original aim: “To mark the three hundredth anniversary of the advent into Ontario of the white race.”

Finally, the plaque unveiled on Dominion Day is curious, if for no other reason than the way in which its text is set. There are two statements, the top one referring to the coming of European civilization. Written below, separated by a full blank line, reads “A symbol of goodwill between the French and English speaking people of Canada.”

Whether the latter was added in order to accommodate historical expedience remains unclear. However, if one considers it in the overall context of events, it is plausible to conclude that it was indeed a conscious addition perpetrated by a group attempting yet again to square a mythic past with current reality.

46 See Appendix D. From The Champlain Monument at Orillia.
Newspapers throughout North America covered events leading up to and including the Dominion Day celebration. Dozens of publications ran pictures of the monument during its transport, Vernon and Sidney March arriving in May 1925 to make final preparations, and of the event itself.\footnote{Much of the coverage included stock photos and news stories, suggesting that papers must have simply reprinted what the committee sent them. See File: Champlain Monument.} Much of the coverage revolved around Champlain and his travels and the significance of the monument to French and English amity.\footnote{See ibid.}

The Dominion Day celebration was attended by more than 18,000 people and was broadcast on radio via Toronto by CFCA, a station owned by the \textit{Toronto Daily Star}. The technological innovation created some interesting timing problems, as Orillia residents noted later. “Stories of hearing reproduced sounds before the actual sound was heard in Orillia” caused a stir in the days following the event.\footnote{“Says He Heard Radio Cheers Earlier Than Actual Ones,” \textit{Toronto Daily Star}, 4 July 1925, ibid., p. 63.} The day’s proceedings also featured a historical pageant of Champlain’s arrival at Cahiage. Staged by the Orillia Women’s Canadian Club, it featured 300 actors, directed by former Hart House thespians Roy Mitchell and Jocelyn Taylor. The \textit{Toronto Daily Star} noted that Mitchell “masqueraded as a savage” on the day of the pageant. The spectacle opened with the Huron going about their daily tasks:

In the foreground, squaws were cooking food, grinding corn, raining deer-skins and crooning the weird music of the “taking of hands melody.” Its intonations passed from group to group with an old feeling of intensity until the men’s rough voices took it up and a burst of laughter ended their uncouth effort. A rift in the clouds let through the day’s first sunlight as a crescent line of canoes appeared on the gray waters towards the Narrows and the sound of a shot startled the camp into frozen silence. Now the placid life of the forest village has given way to a tense watchfulness in which even the children join. Not a sound breaks the murmur of waves on the beach as the flotilla draws near, but presently
Champlain stands erect in the canoe and unfurls the blue ensign of Imperial France. The suspense is broken and Darnotal, the Huron Chief, advances with his right hand held aloft in greeting. Disembarking with his ten French companions and their escort of Hurons from Cahigua, Champlain exchanges a dignified salute with Darontal, while peeping squaws and children form an animated background. Champlain’s black velvet doublet strikes an odd note in this sylvan setting but with the brilliant uniforms of his ten arquebusiers it forms the cynosure of savage admiration.  

A smaller story on the same page recorded that “[t]here was only one dark note in the otherwise happy spectacle...It was provided by Chief Bigwin, who stood apart from the merry-making.” Bigwin spoke of how his tribe had been “deceived” into signing away its lands, noting that a tribal delegation sent to appeal the grievance to the King had failed to meet him. “My people are sad. In the old times we lived a free life and were strong. I was born in a birch bark lodge and grew up happily there. Now that is changed. There is sickness among us and we die.” It is impossible to determine for certain what readers’ reactions to this piece might have been. However, given its headline—“Chief Deplores passing of Aboriginal Glories”—it fitted nicely with the theme of the triumph of European over native culture.  

The pageant was followed by a choral and band concert, and then the unveiling of the monument took place. It was presided over by the Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux, Speaker of the House of Commons, “representative of Quebec.” Following the unveiling, Lemieux addressed the crowd, much of his speech stressing the unity symbolized by Champlain. “Well might it be said of the great explorer,” Lemieux intoned, “that he was not only the father of New France, but in a sense the father of

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50 This rather romantic dispatch of the day’s events appeared in the *Toronto Daily Star*, under the banner headline “Stress Unity of French and English Races at Orillia Celebration. Ibid, pp. 60-61.
51 “Chief Deplores Passing of Aboriginal Glories” *Toronto Daily Star*, 2 July 1925, in ibid, p. 60.
Canada as well.” Lemieux also invoked the pioneer spirit in his address, tying it to the strength of national character required to succeed in Canada:

We are assembled here to-day on this historic spot to record our homage not only to Champlain but to the galaxy of pioneers who encountered and surmounted obstacles of all kinds and laid the ground work of a great country. It is well that we, their descendants and beneficiaries should record our sympathy for their sufferings, our gratitude for their labours, our admiration of their virtues, our veneration for their piety—but above all that we should solemnly pledge ourselves to maintain their traditions and principles.  

Sir William Mulock, Chief Justice of Ontario, gave the toast to Quebec, saying that Canada’s citizens should endeavor to understand each other’s point of view, that we should entertain for each other feelings of goodwill and tolerance for our differences, and that principles of justice should regulate our relations—these must be the foundation of the great future for Canada to which we all look so confidently forward.

In return, Mr. Justice E. Fabre Surveyor toasted Ontario on behalf of the Province of Quebec. The day ended with a banquet for 300 dignitaries and prominent citizens and was capped off with a large fireworks display.

During the weeks following the tercentenary celebration, editorials lauded the event itself and the values it imbued. *Saturday Night* called it “a practical demonstration of bonne entente sentiment in this country.” *The Brantford Expositor* hailed the unveiling as “a striking tribute to the pioneer work of this illustrious and intrepid French

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52 See *The Champlain Monument at Orillia.*
54 *Saturday Night,* 11 July 1925, ibid, p. 119.
explorer.”55 The Hamilton Herald declared “Champlain belongs to English Canada as well as to French Canada.”56

The re-creation of Champlain from race representative to a symbol of national unity no doubt appeared perfectly acceptable to the people who promoted the tercentenary celebrations at Orillia in 1925. Whether the feeling was felt as strongly among people who attended or heard the spectacle on radio is difficult to assess. As H. V. Nelles states in his final assessment of the 1908 pageant at Quebec, “A turbulent and violent history could be made to teach tolerance, but what actors and audiences chose to remember is another matter.”57 But the mere fact that the Committee felt it could refashion its message after the war suggests that members must have been confident that their shift in emphasis would be a successful move.
I like the fact you've included these illustrations - but more could be done with them.
INSCRIPTION

Erected in commemoration of the voyage into Ontario of the white race under the leadership of Samuel de Champlain, the intrepid French explorer and colonizer, who with fifteen companions arrived in these parts in the summer of 1615 and spent the following winter with the Indians, making his headquarters at Cahaghe, the chief village of the Hurons, which was near this place.

A SYMBOL OF GOOD WILL BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH SPEAKING PEOPLE OF CANADA.
Appendix 5

Bibliography


City of Orillia. Champlain Monument Committee Papers, 1914-1925.


Orillia Public Library. File: Orillia - Champlain Monument.

----------. Orillia Public Library Biography Binder, H-K.


Champlain monument discussion – Orillia
March 1st, 2019
Who was Chaplain, where did he come from and why?

- Champlain first came to the shores of north America as the King’s geographer and mapped much of the NE coast.

In the early part of the 1600s the French were in search of the North West Passage and Champlain was charged with that task.
• By 1603 he was put in charge of trade on the St Lawrence based out of Tadoussac Quebec with the hope that the funds raised by trade would help with the costs of financing additional exploration.
By 1608 Champlain established the habitat that is noted as the founding place of Quebec City. He and his men only survived there due to the good will of the Indigenous people who also settled around there.
An Ally in war.

- In 1609, he and a couple of his surviving men went on a sortie at the invite of his native allies against the Iroquois to the south of Lake Champlain. He participated with his allys in other battles with their enemies over the years while engaged in trade on the St Lawrence. It was during this period that he first met the Wendat who he referred to as the friendly Iroquois.

- The only known sketch of Champlain as he is first revealed as his allies' heavy weapon against Their enemy.
The first European to set foot in Huronia.

- In 1610, Champlain left Brule, an 18 yr. old interpreter, with some of his Algonquin allies and they brought him with them on a hunting expedition and overwintered with the Wendat at a Rock nation village close to the narrows in Orillia.

Brule was the first European to set foot in Huronia and it was Brule who encouraged Champlain to come to Huronia to cement his trading relationship with the Wendat.
• 1615 – Chaplain was finally able to fulfill his promise to come to Huronia and arrived at the Bear nation village of Toanche on the shores of Georgian Bay, August 1st. He had been preceded a few days earlier by a Recollect Priest named LeCarron who was being hosted at another village. The deal that was being negotiated during his visit was a simple one: cement the trade relationship in exchange for the French becoming the Wendat’s allies in their wars with the Iroquois.
To this end, Champlain was toured around the territory of the Wendat Confederacy to meet with the principal chiefs regarding trade, while the Wendat attempted to secure sufficient warriors to mount an attack against another large Iroquois village south of Lake Ontario. This tour of diplomacy took Champlain and 12 of his men through numerous villages of the confederacy and after 14 leagues (56 Kms) they arrive at a village, overlooking Lake Couchiching and not far from the narrows.
• This is when Champlain makes note of the fishing weirs in his journal.

From here, Champlain ventures down to the designated enemy village with his allies that included both Wendat and Algonquin warriors. They fail to overwhelm or destroy the village and Champlain returns with them to the Orillia area in December to recover from his wounds. He stays for a short while and then returns to the Nottawsaga Bay area in January where he rejoins Lecarron and proceeds to visit the Petun in the Blue Mountain area around Collingwood. He is called back from there to the Orillia area to settle a dispute between a Wendat and Algonquin chief and the destiny of a prisoner. From there he goes back to Quebec, never to return.
So, what’s wrong with the depiction of Champlain and his allies when one sees this statue?
• Is it historically correct? – No, it depicts some sort of conquering invader overseeing the subjugation of the First Nations people by the Church of Rome. In reality, Champlain saw these people as his friends and allys, not his subjects or subordinates.
Champlain did not bring the Jesuits to Wendake.

- All of the French, including the clergy were withdrawn to France in 1628 when the British took over Quebec. The French didn’t return until 1633 and the Jesuits did not establish themselves in Wendake until 1635, the year that Champlain died.
In conclusion.

• In my opinion, the statue of Champlain on the top of the monument should stay in the Orillia, perhaps down by the narrows where the pedestrian bridge was to go.
The politically incorrect and offensive lower part of the monument, if it is to be kept would be best placed at Ste. Marie among the Huron, in a place and time period where such a scene might have taken place.
What could replace the monument?

In place of the monument might be a walk-through set of figures and storyboards that represent both the First Nations (Wendat and Algonquin) and their French allies standing on an even footing in friendship and peace.