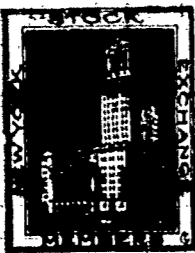


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Villages Celebrate 500th Anniversary of St. Joan of Arc

Unveiling Of Tablets Recalls Journey Of Maid Of Orleans—Early Life Of 'La Pucelle' And Her Long And Successful Effort To Win Support For Her Mission

(Paris Correspondent, N. O. W. C. News Service).

Paris, March 12.—On Saturday, February 23, at four o'clock, all the bells of the diocese of Verdun rang out to remind all those who heard that just five hundred years before at exactly that hour, Joan of Arc, mounted on a horse, set out from one of the towns of the diocese—Vaucouleurs—along the route de France and after eleven stages of her journey, reached Chinon in Touraine where dwelt her king. Her mission was to beg him to let her fight for him and country.

At the same hour, in gaily bedecked Vaucouleurs, Msgr. Ginsty, Bishop of Verdun, representing the Church, and the Prefect of the Meuse, representing the State, presided at the unveiling of a plaque on the porte de France, the gate through which La Pucelle set out on her heroic ride.

There were present at this ceremony a number of great grand nieces of Joan of Arc, including a heroine of the last war, Leonie Vanhoutte, a co-worker of Edith Cavell, mingling with the pilgrims who had come from Paris were many inhabitants of the surrounding country, descendants of those who had known the saintly peasant.

Commemorative Stone Unveiled
The first stage of Joan's journey was to the Abbey of St. Urbain in Haute-Marne. On Sunday, another commemorative stone unveiled at the ruins of the abbey with the same authorities presiding and, in addition Msgr. Remond, Chaplain-General of the Army, and General Weygand, Chief-of-Staff for General Foch.

These are the first of 400 stages to be erected this year and next in places visited by St. Joan of Arc during the year of her divinely inspired mission.

The event just commemorated at Vaucouleurs marks the beginning of one of the most prodigious epochs of all times, a young girl of seventeen years departing to assist her prince, to take command of an army, to battle the invader, to deliver cities, to make possible the coronation of a king of France.

Every incident of this story is extraordinary. Mounted astride an old workhorse, on a cold day of winter, Joan of Arc covered the first stage of her journey remaining ten hours in the saddle, she who had hardly ever been mounted on a horse. But in this fashion, in eleven stages, she traversed the 376 miles from Vaucouleurs to Chinon. Most of her voyage was made at night so as to avoid the scouts of the enemy and being molested by the bands of robbers that infested the country at that time.

The saint's parents, James d'Arc and Isabel Romez, were modest cultivators of Domremy, a little village situated on the borders of Lorraine and Champagne. Born January 6, 1412, Joan was the youngest of five children—three boys and two girls. She was trained in housework but received no other instruction. She could neither read or write. But her mother had taught her the *Pater*, the *Ave Maria*, and the *Credo* which she recited with devotion. Very pious, going frequently to church, she was also very charitable and on one occasion deprived herself of her bed to give it to a poor unfortunate tramp, and remained all night seated in a corner of the chimney. Her whole childhood had been shadowed by tales of battles between the English and the French.

Once Menaced By Enemy.
Though the full force of war did not touch her natal country, nevertheless the villages were divided one against the other. Domremy was attached to the king of France, but its neighboring hamlet, Maxey, was a dependency of the Duke of Burgundy and had espoused the English cause. In the fields, the children of the two villages met and fought with stones, and Joan carried in her memory the pictures of two bleeding comrades wounded by the gains of Maxey. From time to time, hordes of villagers, followers of the armies, passed through and ravaged the country. Once, when Joan was sixteen and a half, with the rest of her family she had to seek shelter in the fortified city of Neufchateau to escape from the dangers of an enemy force.

According to her own testimony, she was hardly thirteen years of age when, for the first time, she heard St. Michael anew, then St. Catherine and St. Margaret placed upon her the duty of renouncing all that she loved and putting herself in the service of her country.

In May, 1428, near Ascension Day, the voices became more pressing and precise. They besought her to go to Vaucouleurs to Robert de Baudricourt, governor of the place, Joan

but begged one of her uncles, Durand Laxart, to take her to Vaucouleurs. The uncle consented. Robert de Baudricourt received them both but thought the girl a visionary and her uncle a sot. He sent them back to Domremy saying to Durand, "Take her to her father and box her ears." This affront did not discourage Joan and, a month and a half later, she told one of her neighbors, the laborer Michael Lebun, "There is between Coussey and Vaucouleurs a maid who, before the year is ended will have brought about the coronation of the king of France."

Scolded By Her Father.
But James, her father, disturbed by his daughter's obsession, scolded her violently and even said to his sons: "If Joan insists upon going among the soldiers, you would do better to drown her first, or I shall do it with my own hands." In order to keep her in the country, he tried to have her marry. The little maid refused.

Meanwhile the king of France had undergone new defeats. Towards the middle of October, Orleans was besieged. The voice urged Joan, almost threatened her.

"I am a poor girl," she replied. "I do not know how to mount a horse, nor how to make war."
The voices responded: "It is God who wishes it; it is God who ordains it."

Overcome, almost dying of grief at the thought of leaving her home and people, the girl departed without saying farewell to anyone, and informing only her uncle, Durand Laxart. His wife being ill, Laxart, who resided at Vaucouleurs, had come to Domremy to seek her mother's aid. Joan, making use of this pretext to return to Vaucouleurs, left her home early in January, her heart heavy with chagrin. On the outskirts of the village, she met one of her little friends, Menette, kissed her and recommended her to God.

Arriving at Vaucouleurs, she visited Robert de Baudricourt many times. At the beginning, he was always sceptical and cunning but, bit by bit, struck by the strange obstinance of this girl, ended by going with the cure, Johan Fournier, to find her at the home of the brave people who sheltered her. Joan had passed the day in prayer and in tears in the chateau chapel, begging God to touch the heart of Baudricourt. When the cure questioned her regarding her intentions, she replied: "Was it not prophesied that France would be saved by a virgin from the marches of orraine? I shall go to the king at Chinon, if I wear my legs to my knees."

Baudricourt Finally Relents.
The people of Vaucouleurs took sides with the maid, Baudricourt, nevertheless, still hesitated. Meanwhile, Joan, accompanied by her uncle, made a pilgrimage to Saint Nicholas-du-Port.

Upon her return to Vaucouleurs, she announced to Baudricourt that the king of France had just submitted to a new defeat. Some days later, the governor learned that the French at Orleans had lost another battle, called the Battle of the Herrings. Suddenly struck by this coincidence, he decided to let Joan set out on her journey and to furnish her with an escort. The villagers donated a costume for the "cavalier" and purchased a horse for sixteen francs. Three armed men and three servants accompanied her.

The little band of seven persons cleared the porte de France at Vaucouleurs the evening of Wednesday, February 23. Baudricourt, seeing Joan depart, cried out to her, "Go, come what may!"

This child of Domremy would never again see her country of Lorraine, but she was about to inscribe in history one of its greatest names, and as its purest, one that the nation's honorary president Msgr. Rodie,

BISHOP OF AJACCIO HONORED
Paris, March 12.—The Association of former Combatants of Ajaccio, chief city of Corsica, have elected as their honorary president Msgr. Rodie, Bishop of Ajaccio.

Msgr. Rodie was formerly an artillery officer and has been decorated with the Cross of the Legion of

Lady Catechist In New Mexico

Las Vegas, N. Mex., March 11.—Special Missionary Catechist Mojita Ulibarri, of the Society of Missionary Catechists, has just arrived at Victory-Mount, to begin her missionary and catechetical labors.

Catechist Ulibarri was one of the first four native young ladies to enter Victory-Mount subsequent to its opening in October, 1927. Upon the completion of her training at Victory-Mount, Catechist Ulibarri continued her course of training at Victory-Noll, Huntington, Ind.

Victory-Mount is not only the Preliminary Training House of the Society for its native subjects; it is also a most active missionary center. From it the Catechists go to six out-missions, in each of which they carry on their catechetical and social service work. In addition they are now teaching twice a week in Las Vegas proper.

SCHULT MISSIONARIES AUTHORS OF BOOKS IN MANY DIALECTS

Rome, March 11.—The Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, or the Missionaries of Schult, have just issued a catalogue of publications of which its members are authors. This catalogue shows the wide activity of the congregation in the domain of ethnography in all its forms.

There are 359 works listed in the catalogue which include 31 grammars and dictionaries of native languages; 163 catechisms, Bible histories, and religious manuals in native languages; 132 geographical and ethnographical works and seven works on philology. There are also histories, maps and medical studies.

This Schult library is composed of books written in 28 dialects of French, Latin, English, Flemish, German and Chinese; thirteen native dialects of the Congo and eight Philippine dialects.

Honduran President Attends Cathedral

Tegucigalpa, Honduras, March 14.—Evidence that liberalism is not identified with anti-clericalism in this Central American Republic was given recently at the ceremony attendant upon the installation of the new President of Honduras, Dr. Vicente Mejia Colindres.

After having been invited by the outgoing President with the blue and white band, symbol of authority, the Presidential party went in procession to the Cathedral, where a solemn Te Deum of Thanksgiving and benediction was sung.

Msgr. Augustin Hombach, Archbishop of Honduras, preached an eloquent sermon before intoning the Te Deum. Msgr. Hombach chose for his subject the teaching of the Catholic Church respecting authority and the rights of a free people.

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