

**CATALOGUE OF THE
CHÂTEAU
RAMEZAY MUSEUM
AND PORTRAIT GALLERY**

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Catalogue of the Château Ramezay Museum and Portrait Gallery by Thomas O'Leary

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THOMAS O'LEARY

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OF THE
CHATEAU RAMEZAY
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AND
PORTRAIT GALLERY



PREPARED BY
THOMAS O'LEARY
ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

(Under the supervision of the President of the Numismatic Society)

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CHATEAU RAMEZAY.



THE CHATEAU DE RAMEZAY

"There stands no building the length and breadth of the Dominion, around which associate so many of the thrilling events, episodes and social life of our history, as pertain to this Chateau, the oldest public building in the country. Not only in French days but in those of our own era this building has occupied a prominent focal point from which diverged some of the greatest events of our history." Under the French régime the Governors were appointed for the honor of the position and so regarded it. The salary was small and they had to pay for public as well as private entertainments and build their own palaces.

Claude de Ramezay, the 11th Governor of Montreal, appointed 1703, was born in France 1657, was of Scotch descent, a grandson of a Sir John Ramsay, captain in the regiment raised by Sir John Hepburn, in Scotland, in 1635, for service in France.

DeRamezay came to Canada in 1685, with a number of other young officers, in the suite of Governor de Denonville. He was then a lieutenant in de Troye's company, of the Marine troops, which later took part in the expedition to Hudson Bay. His promotion was rapid, being captain in 1687, later colonel, then commandant of troops and finally governor.

In 1687 he took part in the expedition against the Iroquois and in 1690 when Phipps appeared before Quebec, he brought over 800 men from Montreal for the defence of the former town.

History tells of the spirited defence made by Frontenac and his gallant officers, the latter, no doubt, being encouraged by the bright smiles of some of Quebec's fair daughters who it seems lost no time in rewarding their brave defenders with their heart and hand. Scarcely had the last of Phipps' fleet disappeared around Pointe Levi, than de Ramezay was married to Melle. Marie-Charlotte Deny's, a daughter of Deny de la Ronde one of the oldest and wealthiest families of Canada. His example was soon followed by de Vaudreuil, d'Ailleboust and many others. Could they have seen into the future their happiness would have been mingled with sorrow, for it was destined that a son of de Ramezay should be the one to open the gates of Quebec to the English in 1760, and a son of de Vaudreuil should do likewise, at Montreal, the year following.

De Ramezay was one of the most prominent men of his time, occupying an official position in Canada for a term exceeding forty years. He was Seigneur de la Gesse, deMontigny et Boisfleurent, in France, and in Canada was Seigneur de Monnoir and de Ramezay, Knight of the Military Order of St. Louis, Governor of Montreal, and Commandant of all the militia in the country, and was Administrator of the Governor-Generalship during the two years' absence of de Vaudreuil in France.

The Chateau was built in 1705. The neighborhood was then the fashionable part of the town and was occupied by the Baron

de Longueuil, the Contrecoeurs, d'Eschambaults, d'Allebouts and Madame de Portneuf, the widow of Baron Bécancourt. Situated on a hill and opposite to the magnificent garden of the Jesuits, this plain unembellished house had an open view to the river front.

Under de Ramezay's regime, 1703 to 1724, this venerable edifice was the hail of entertainment of the illustrious of the country. The many expeditions to the distant far fields, the voyages of discovery of new lands, the councils of war, the military expeditions, the conferences with the Indians, the annual fairs and fur trading market attracted to the shores of Montreal, not only the Governor-General, the Intendant, and their suites, but a considerable number of the most important people of the country including all classes of society. To one and all the portals of this hospitable mansion were ever open. To the lowly Indian and his squaw and to the exalted nobleman and his consort, the noble and beneficent Ramezay and his family showed equal attention. Fearless to the Indian or enemy, his bravery and charity were equally exemplified in the personal care and attention he and his family gave to the suffering citizens of Montreal during the pest which devastated the town in 1721.

De Ramezay died in 1724, and his family sold the Chateau to the "*Compagnie des Indes*" in 1745. The latter retained possession until the cession, 1763, when it was bought by Wm. Grant, Baron de Longueuil who in turn disposed of it to the English Government for the sum of two thousand guineas. It thus became once more the residence of the Governors and remained such up to 1849.

In 1775-6, the Chateau was the Head-quarters for the Continental Army under Montgomery, and in the spring of 1776, there came Benjamin Franklin, Carroll of Carrollton and Samuel Chase envoys sent by Congress to influence the French Canadians, to join the revolted colonies. Then came Benedict Arnold who occupied the Chateau for several weeks.

Lord Metcalfe was the last resident governor, but for some years after his establishment in a new government house the Chateau was used for departmental offices. When the government was withdrawn from Montreal the Chateau served several purposes. For several years the courts were held here, and later the Normal School.

In 1894, the Chateau was sold by the Government and purchased by the Corporation of the City of Montreal and in 1895, the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society obtained the building for the purpose of founding an Historical Portrait-Gallery and Museum.

CATALOGUE.

HALL.

ENGRAVINGS, PHOTOGRAVURES, MAPS & ANTIQUITIES.

(The names of the donors are printed in italics).

ENGRAVINGS.

1. The Thin Red Line. 93rd Highlanders at Balaclava, Oct. 25, 1854. Crimean War.
H. J. Tiffin Esq.
2. Battle of Tel-el-Keher. Attack of the Highlanders on the trenches, Sept. 13, 1882.
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3. Battle of Quatre Bras. French Cavalry attacking the English Squares, June 16, 1815.
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4. Colonial views, Rhode Island Infantry, 1775, do 1810. State House Philadelphia in 1775.
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5. "Pour la Patrie." Franco-Prussian War, 1870.
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6. Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava, led by Lord Cardigan, Oct. 25, 1854.
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7. Charge of the 42nd Highlanders, led by Sir Colin Campbell, at the Battle of Alma, Sept. 24, 1854.
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8. The Bridal Morning. Queen Victoria and Prince Albert upon the return from the marriage ceremony.
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