

**DIANE OF VILLE  
MARIE; A ROMANCE  
OF FRENCH CANADA**

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Diane of Ville Marie; a romance of French Canada by Blanche Lucile Macdonell

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**BLANCHE LUCILE MACDONELL**

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# DIANE OF VILLE MARIE

A ROMANCE OF FRENCH CANADA.

BY

BLANCHE LUCILE MACDONELL.



WILLIAM BRIGGS,

29-33 RICHMOND ST. WEST.

MONTREAL: F. W. COATES.

HARLOW: S. P. BENTON.

1898

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8474  
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Entered according to Act of the Parliament of Canada, in the year one thousand  
eight hundred and ninety-eight, by WILLIAM BRIGGS, at the Department of  
Agriculture.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

**A Mother**

WHO WAS

INSPIRATION, FRIEND AND COMFORTER.

## PREFACE.

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THIS story is an attempt to make known the men and women who once lived and loved and suffered amid these very scenes wherein we are now enacting our own life stories.

In dealing with historical events and characters it seems only fair to the reader to avow what liberties have been taken with facts, and to state exactly to what extent this tale is founded upon history.

The Le Ber family were prominent figures among their contemporaries. Jacques Le Ber, brother-in-law to the redoubtable Charles Le Moyne, was one of the richest merchants of New France. A hardy and intrepid soldier, he was ennobled by Louis XIV. in 1696. In speaking of him M. Dollier de Casson says: "M. Jacques Le Ber has in this way rendered valuable services to the colony, exposing himself very often in canoe, on the ice, or in the woods, carrying despatches."

His only daughter, Jeanne Le Ber, was considered



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a great heiress. At seventeen she determined to offer herself as an expiatory offering for the sins of her country. During the fifteen years following she remained in seclusion in her father's house, and was never seen but once, and that exactly as described in this story. Later, this fair enthusiast decided to give the Sisters of the Congregation sufficient money to build their church, if they would provide her a cell behind the altar in which she could spend the remainder of her days. This cell, divided into three storeys, and extending the whole length of the building, was from ten to twelve feet deep.

The original deed, containing these conditions—drawn up by Bassett, a notary of Ville Marie, and signed by the principal nuns of the Congregation, as well as by M. Dollier de Casson, Superior of the Seminary—may still be seen in the Registrar's office in Montreal.

The Le Ber family proved substantial benefactors to the Sisters of the Congregation. Pierre Le Ber the eldest son, left them a legacy of two thousand francs, and his sister remembered them handsomely.

Pierre Le Ber joined Charon de la Barre in founding L' Institut des Frères Hospitaliers de Ville Marie. He was the only one of Charon's associates who remained faithful to the end. He appears to

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have been the first Canadian artist, and painted portraits of le Sieur Bourgeois, St. Paul, Ste. Thérèse, and the Virgin Mary, for different churches. He died in 1707, and his heart was buried in the Church of the Congregation.

Lydia Longloy, a New England girl, was taken prisoner by the Abenakis in 1694. She was baptized a Roman Catholic in Ville Marie on April 14th, 1696.

The Chevalier de Crisasi was a veritable personage. Charlevoix says of this gentleman: "One does not know which to admire most, his skill in war, his sagacity in council, his fertility of resource, or his presence of mind in action." The elder brother, the Marquis de Crisasi, was appointed Governor of Three Rivers; the Chevalier, neglected by his friends and forgotten by the Court, died of a broken heart.

Madame de Monesthrol, her niece, and Nanon can lay no claim to be considered historical, but have been drawn after close and extensive study of the types portrayed in the histories and memoirs of the time.

It may be objected that the expedition of Diane and Lydia to Mount Royal is improbable; but it must be remembered the road to the Mountain furnished the most popular pilgrimage of that period,

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and the dangers which beset the enterprise only heightened its merits. At a still earlier date Madame d'Aillebout and her sister climbed the mountain-side nine days in succession in order to make a neuvena before the cross erected by Maisonneuve.

Four Iroquois were actually burned at Montreal in the manner described, but the event occurred in 1701. Dubocq's exploit is likewise historically correct, but it also occurred some years later than I have taken the liberty of placing it. In these, as in some other instances, the actual chronology has not been strictly followed, but has been altered to suit the exigencies of the tale.

BLANCHE LUCILE MACDONELL.