

## NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

### THE COLUMBUS CELEBRATION

Italians from all parts of the Northwest gathered at St. Paul on October 12 to participate in the dedication of a statue of Christopher Columbus on the Capitol grounds facing the Historical Building. The statue, which is the work of Charles Brioschi of St. Paul, was presented to the state of Minnesota by the Christopher Columbus Memorial Association, an organization of Italian-Americans. Among the speakers who participated in the dedication—addressing a visible audience of twenty-five thousand people and, by radio, an audience of unknown size—were Adriano Manaco, secretary of the Italian embassy at Washington, Giuseppe Castruccio, Italian consul at Chicago, the Honorable Frank B. Kellogg, Governor Floyd B. Olson, and Senator Henrik Shipstead. The Minnesota Historical Society was represented by its president, Dr. Guy Stanton Ford, who accepted for this organization a portrait of the explorer Giacomo C. Beltrami. Mr. G. A. Micheli of Chicago, the artist who painted this portrait, used as his model a copy of a portrait of Beltrami by Enrico Scuri. This copy was presented to the historical society in 1865 by the city of Beltrami's birth—Bergamo, Italy. The address made by President Ford in accepting for the society the Beltrami portrait follows:

The twelfth of October, the anniversary of the discovery of Columbus which brought the western world into the ken of Europe, is marked today by the Italian citizenry of the Northwest in a special and very fitting manner. The Minnesota Historical Society, founded in territorial days to preserve the history of this state and this region, through me as its president, pays tribute to the generosity and effort of the Christopher Columbus Memorial Association, its officers and members, in making the city of St. Paul, the state of

Minnesota, and this society in particular, your debtors. You have made us doubly your debtor today by the form you have chosen in honoring the spirit of courage and high adventure that wrote the names of two Italians on the list of those whose discoveries, explorations, and writings opened to our ancestors — yours and mine alike — a new land, a new home, and the possibility of a new social and political order. For Columbus you have used the medium of Michael Angelo and that statue will stand, we hope, for ages against the background of the historical society's building. For that we are truly grateful. And now in the presentation to the society of this painting of Giacomo Constantino Beltrami of Bergamo you have made us doubly your debtor. Both gifts in form and spirit are worthy of the men they honor and of the race and land from which they came.

If the gallant Beltrami were to walk amongst us today, he would, I am sure, approve this gift that places his portrait on our walls among the many other memorials of the makers of Minnesota. The portrait — in which the artist, Mr. Micheli, has given a reproduction worthy of the subject and of the art cherished in Italy through the ages as in no other nation — and the place would appear fitting to him. Yonder winds the river with which his name is associated. From its further bank, at the base of Fort Snelling, he set forth in pride and confidence to find its source. Below us but a little way is the path he followed with his Indian guides and protectors as he returned months later, garbed like his Chippewa friends, but sustained by his belief in the success of his highly perilous and picturesque adventure. Here and hereabouts, he might well say, I lived the life I craved and here I would have history preserve my name and fame. I am at home here even as I was in Bergamo. My native city honored me when as a municipality it published my life and dedicated that life to the Minnesota Historical Society. The sons of all Italy now in this land have honored me as I would be honored by giving this portrait to the society which has in the past done more than any other agency to gather on its shelves the story of the deeds upon which rest my claim to a place in the history of the great Northwest.

Thus, I believe, would Beltrami speak if he walked among us. He would thank the givers of this gift, as I thank them on behalf of the Minnesota Historical Society, for this new addition to its riches.

It is a fitting memorial of the part played by a son of Italy in the exploration of our commonwealth and of the river that binds it to the endless sea that washes the shores of Beltrami's native land.

### D'ERAQUE, DARRAC, OR DAREC?<sup>1</sup>

In Pénicault's *Relation*, published in Pierre Margry's *Découvertes et Etablissements des Français*, volume 5, pages 419 and 424, mention is made of a certain d'Eraque, a Canadian gentleman whom Le Sueur met in 1701 in the Mississippi country and who, with six other merchants, had been attacked and pillaged by the Sioux. Le Sueur left d'Eraque in charge of Fort L'Huillier with its dozen Frenchmen, promising to send supplies from the Illinois country as soon as he should arrive there. But d'Eraque, after waiting a long time without news and having been attacked, was obliged to abandon the fort. Finally, in 1702, he arrived at Mobile, where d'Iberville, "having extended him many honors, induced him to remain."

Pénicault tells us more: that in 1708 d'Eraque was sent by d'Artaguette to the Illinois and even up the Missouri to negotiate with the Indians; and that when his mission had been fulfilled, he returned to Mobile.

Who was this Canadian gentleman, this Sieur d'Eraque? We do not find his name, nor any similar name, in Tanguay.

Yet among the witnesses at the investigation of Bienville in 1707, instituted on the complaint of Nicolas de la Salle, marine commissioner of Louisiana, we find mention of a certain René Boyer, who declared that he had been placed in irons by Bienville when he refused to repair a gun that Sieur Darrac had brought him.

One can hardly doubt that this Sieur Darrac was the Sieur d'Eraque to whom Pénicault refers.

<sup>1</sup>A translation, by Grace Lee Nute, of a note published in the *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, the official organ of the bureau of archives of the province of Quebec, 37: 216 (April, 1931).



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