

# This Month Will See The Canonization Of Jeanne D'Arc By Pope: The ...

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## This Month Will See The Canonization Of Jeanne D'Arc By Pope

The Martyrdom Of The Maid Of Orleans, Who Died For Her Faith And Her Country Nearly Five Centuries Ago, Is At Last To Place Her Among The Formally Enrolled Saints Of The Roman Catholic Church.

By EMILY EMERSON LANTZ.

ON May 23 there will occur in St. Peter's Cathedral, Rome, the greatest event celebrated there within the past 10 years—the canonization by Pope Benedict XV of Jeanne d'Arc, the militant Maid of Orleans, who nearly five centuries ago led the armies of France to conquest of British and Burgundian foes and saved France as a nation.

In Orleans, France, is seen today the archiepiscopal palace adjoining the Cathedral, within the garden of which stands one of the finest statues of Jeanne d'Arc in existence. Here was established the first American hospital unit sent overseas to minister to soldiers of the World War who were injured in the eyes. Here Dr. Alexander D. McComachie, of Baltimore, had his headquarters, and through the gateway of this palace 6,000 injured men passed for examination and treatment; passed the statue of that dauntless virgin who had herself been wounded in battle and who suffered martyrdom at the stake because she had fought for the liberty of France as those valiant men were fighting for the liberty of the world. Gradually the great hospital at Orleans extended to one adjacent building after another in order to accommodate the wounded men, but always they entered through the gateway of the Bishop's Palace, the gateway protecting and guarding the statue of Jeanne d'Arc and doubtless the warrior maid grieved in secret over their sad estate.

"In the city of Orleans," said Dr. McComachie, "there is today a museum of Jeanne d'Arc relics in the house where the Maid of Orleans once lived, the armor worn by her, the standards and banners carried by her troops and many personal souvenirs of her career. In the center of the city at the Rue Republic there is a magnificent equestrian statue, exquisitely carved, of Jeanne d'Arc, which, in its entirety of figure, pedestal and base, must cover 100 feet. Portraits of the Maid are found everywhere, for the people of Orleans adore her, and pictures and statues have the same countenance, although whether copied in the beginning from life is not known. Doubtless they are the traditional features ascribed to her by artists and sculptors from descriptions handed down by her contemporaries, but they represent her as beautiful and young, and whether in canvas or in stone, she is usually seated on a charger."

Andrew Lang in his splendid book, "The Maid of Orleans," quotes a description of Jeanne d'Arc once setting out upon her charger that seems to suggest the Orleans church gate through which the soldiers passed. The witness to the scene writes:

"I saw her mount, all in white armor, but unhelmeted, a small steel spear (a little battle ax) in her hand. She had a great black horse, which plunged at the door of her house and would not permit her to mount. 'Lead him to the cross!' she cried; 'it stands in the road in front of the church.' There he stood as fast as if he were bound with cords and she mounted, and, turning toward the church gate, she said in sweet womanly voice, 'Ye priests and churchmen, go in procession and pray to God.' Then 'Forward, forward!' she cried, a gracious page bearing her standard displayed and she with the little spear in her hand."

There has never been a woman more

truly worshiped by a nation than Jeanne d'Arc, of France. Perhaps because she was most young and fair, perhaps because she was devout and innocent, perhaps because her life paid the forfeit of her courage, but certainly because she embodied the vision, the heroic enthusiasm, the unswerving loyalty that gladly sacrificed all for La Patrie, assured that she had been called of God to her mission.

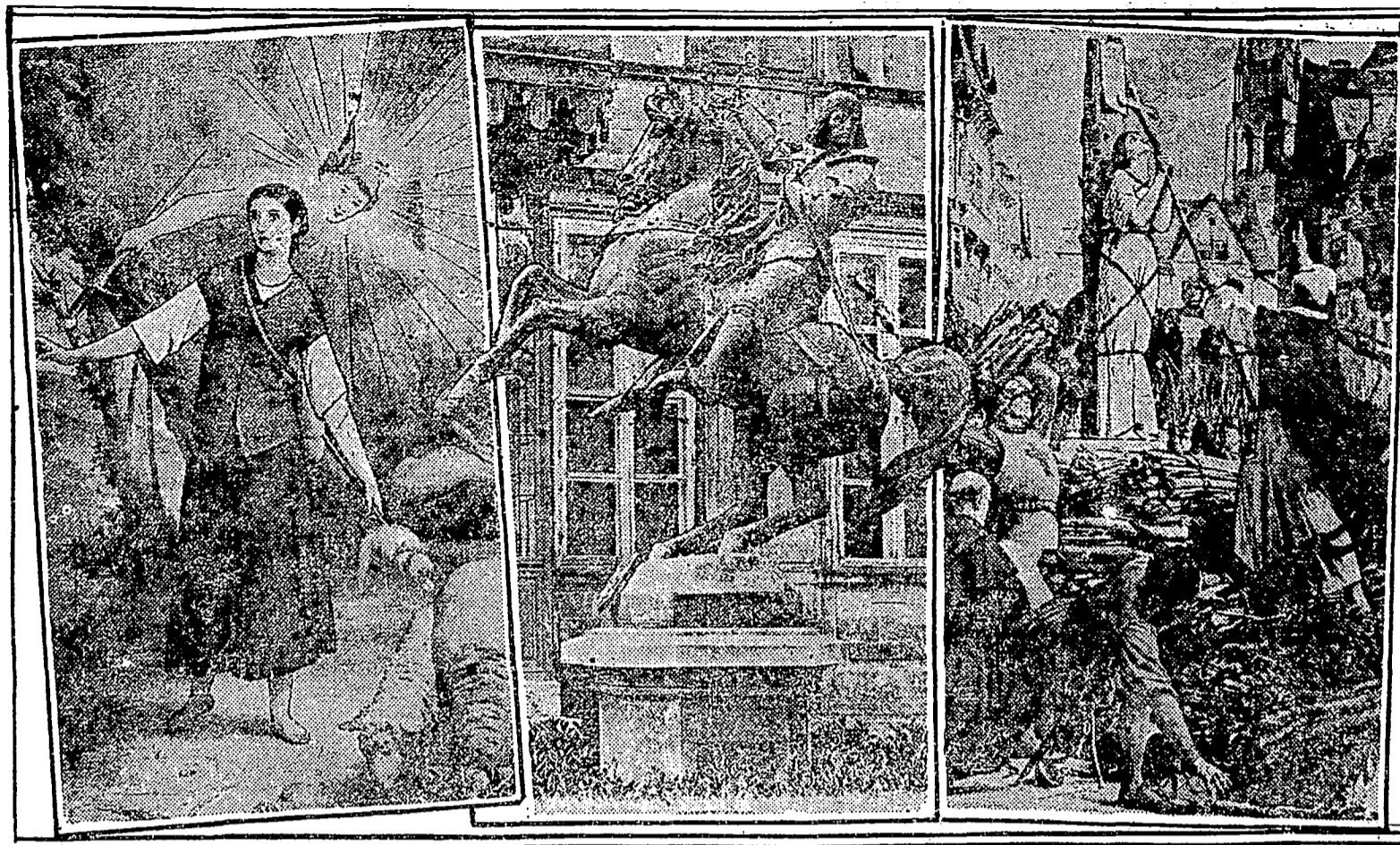
To understand how the Maid of Orleans became to France the personification of the country's military soul, one must be somewhat acquainted with the condition of France in the early years of the fifteenth century. The advent of the Maid of Orleans into the military life of France came at a period of peculiar national misery. The sons of two kings claimed the throne of feudal France. King Henry V of England had conquered the hosts of France at Azincourt, or Agincourt, and seized the city of Rouen. He had married a French princess who had borne him a son (afterward Henry VI) and had been proclaimed regent of France during the life of the demented King Charles VI. And then, just after this, both kings, the victor and the vanquished, died, and while the British proclaimed Henry V's infant son King of France, the Dauphin of France, son of Charles VI, was crowned at Poitiers as Charles VII, established his court at Bourges and took the field to contest his rights with exceeding ill success until Orleans, the key of the province beyond the Loire, became the scene of hostilities and the final fate of Charles and his kingdom seemed destined to be contested and determined under the walls of that city.

Rent by foes without and conspiracies within, the nation suffered until at this acute crisis help came to the nation through a medium so unexpected and unusual that it seemed a miracle in the fifteenth century and continues so regarded to the present day.

In the village of Domremy, on the Meuse, on the frontiers of Burgundy and Lorraine, there lived at this time an humble peasant husband and wife, Jacques and Isabelle Darc, to whom had been born between 1410 and 1412 a daughter, Jeanneton Darc, one of five children, who was afterward known as Jeanne d'Arc, the Maid of Orleans.

Domremy is a small village in the Vosges. The Darc family were in easy circumstances, and that the wife was a devout woman is indicated by the fact that she had once made a pilgrimage to Rome. The daughter Jeanne was never taught to read or write, but her godly mother instructed her in religion and household arts so that none excelled Jeanne in fine needlework. She was a gay, docile and obedient child, exceedingly alert and active in all domestic duties. She was also physically beautiful and vigorous and a favorite among her youthful companions because of her sweetness and refinement, for she was by no means Amazonian, but rather exceedingly sensitive of nature. As the child advanced to girlhood she became silent, meditative and inclined to solitude and it was during this period of her life, when she spent many quiet hours watching her father's sheep, that, according to her own story, she began to feel the great calling to rescue her unhappy country from its sad estate.

Perhaps she was familiar with French and English folk tales—that in which Marie d'Avignon declared that France was being ruined by a woman and would be restored by an armed virgin from the marshes of Lorraine, or with the refer-



The Vision of Jeanne of Arc. — Statue at Orleans — The Martyrdom

ence made in an ancient prophecy by the enchanter Merlin, which associated a virgin and the oak woods of Domremy with the salvation of France. But whether Jeanne had heard the tales or not, she became convinced she had a mission to free France from the British yoke. She believed she heard the voices of the Archangel St. Michael, of St. Margaret and St. Catherine urging her to lead the armies of France to victory, and so insistent and earnest was her plea to the governor of a neighboring city to be

permitted to speak to King Charles VII, whose cause was so desperate, and with it that of French nationality, that the official provided the maid with an escort, and early in March, 1429, she set out to Chinon, where Charles VII was then established.

### She Knew Her King.

Tradition says that, introduced to the royal group, none of whom she had ever seen, and where Charles wore nothing to distinguish him from his courtiers, Jeanne d'Arc unhesitatingly advanced

to that monarch and knelt to do homage to him. The King and the simple peasant maid stepped apart and talked earnestly together—the maid assuring Charles she was charged by Heaven to rescue the distressed monarch and conduct him in triumph to be crowned at Rheims, until the King no longer doubted that the maid was sent of God. However, in order to dispel all suspicion from the public mind, the personal character of Jeanne both as to religious faith and moral purity was subject to strict in-

vestigation, and she was pronounced in all points beyond reproach.

One historian says of her: "Her fame spread rapidly through the country, and she became the object of universal reverence, admiration and confidence, as an inspired messenger from above. It was resolved to dispatch her, according to her earnest entreaties, to the relief of

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# Jeanne D'Arc Canonized

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Orleans. She was furnished with a complete suit of armor, mounted on a war-horse, and girt with a mysterious sword brought, by her desire, from the church of St. Catherine de Fierbois; a page bore her banner, a white field 'fleur-de-lise,' blazoned with a figure of the Savior, and the motto 'Jesus Maria.' Thus equipped, the Maid sent formal summons to the British to surrender all their fortresses and retire from France and herself advanced toward Orleans. She crossed the Loire and entered the city without opposition from the enemy, and "such was the magic affect of her presence both on besiegers and besieged, that on the first sortie the enemy gave way." Later she attacked the fort of the Tournelles, the strongest point of the English position, and won it, after having been herself wounded in the bosom. Attended by fierce fighting, but unchecked in her victorious advance, the victorious Maid pressed on, meanwhile urging the King to repair without delay, to Rheims. "I shall not last more than a year," she said; "I must employ the time well." After some hesitation on the part of the timorous King, her bold counsel was followed, while the Maid continued her mysterious and terrifying progress before panic-stricken foes.

On July 16 the royal cortege arrived in sight of Rheims, and "on the next day Charles, in the midst of an indescribable tumult of joy, received the sacred unction, with all accustomed rites in its superb cathedral. Jeanne, who stood beside the altar with her standard in her hand, was the first to congratulate the monarch and called upon him to recognize the accomplishment of her predictions."

Of the Maid's subsequent military operations and their success history has written in detail. Eventually Jeanne d'Arc was taken prisoner and delivered to the English. Subjected to trial by juries foreign and native, she was accused

of witchcraft and Satanic influence, condemned to death and suffered martyrdom at the stake in the marketplace of Rouen on the 31st of April, 1431. Deserted by her king and hounded by her enemies, never was there truer martyrdom than that suffered by the guiltless and fearless Maid of France.

But the death of Jeanne d'Arc, from which her enemies expected an immediate change of military fortune, had a precisely opposite effect. The flames that consumed the innocent warrior-maid so kindled the wrath of France against the foes of their idol as to make further co-operation between disaffected nobles of France and the English impossible, and after the peace of Arras, in the spring of 1436, the throne of Charles VII was practically secure.

## Her Rehabilitation.

More than 20 years later the King of France took the first steps toward repairing the atrocious injustice which had destroyed the deliverer of France. An inquiry was instituted that laid the execrable arts and treachery of the judges who had convicted "Pucelle d'Orleans," as Jeanne was familiarly called, and completely re-established the fame and memory of that innocent victim. The sentence was publicly reversed and revoked and two solemn processions of honor of Jeanne d'Arc were ordered to take place annually at Rouen, one on the Place St. Quentin, where the judgment had been delivered; the other at the old marketplace, the scene of her execution. Sainthood has come to Jeanne d'Arc as the culmination of investigations begun by the Catholic Church 25 years after her martyrdom, a search for truth that has covered a period of nearly 500 years.

And now the whole world is uniting to do her canonization honor. All of France will be pilgrims to her shrine on May 23, and the Holy City will celebrate her entrance into sainthood through the Church with solemn ceremonials and municipal festival.

On the campus of Fordham University, New York, a historical pageant

commemorative of the event will be given May 23 under the patronage of the Archbishop of New York. All the Catholic parishes of Manhattan will contribute to the success of the pageant, which will be under the professional direction of the Catholic Actors' Guild of America and in which 50,000 persons are expected to take part. Tiffany has designed a medal to commemorate the canonization of the Maid and American Catholic clergy will represent this continent at Rome during the great event, for Jeanne d'Arc is a heroine belonging to the world. On

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# Jeanne D'Arc Canonized

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Riverside Drive, New York, there stands a fine equestrian statue of her. in the Metropolitan Museum strangers

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pause long before the famous painting of Joan, the peasant visionary of Domremy, forgetting her humble station while listening to celestial voices that called her to the courts of kings and the rescue of her country.

Sarah Bernhardt, of France, and Julia Marlowe and Maude Adams, of America, have visualized the career of the French warrior-maid through dramatic art, and Margaret Anglin, in California, is even now arranging a Jeanne d'Arc pageant on the Pacific Coast. The last very beautiful presentation of her story in Baltimore was "The Maid of France," by Harold Brighouse, which was given in June, 1918, by Josephine Victor at the Maryland Theatre.

Thus today is fulfilled the words spoken by King Charles VII in Shakespeare's drama, Henry VI, Part 1, Act 1, Scene VI:

"But Joan la Pucelle shall be France's saint."