

## Letter No. 14

The city of Montreal

Quebec 1709

Sir:

This city is situated on an island and has two names Montreal and Ville Marie. It retains the former from custom and for public use, the latter comes from the gentlemen of the seminary who established themselves there and who depend on the St. Sulpice seminary of Paris. They formerly were seigneurs of the entire island but for some years have yielded the chief jurisdiction to His Majesty, reserving for themselves the registry of the city and all the quit rent and revenues. The first name came from the island where the city is situated. The island in turn took it from the huge mountain in the middle known as Mont-Royal. By corruption, the mountain, the island and the city were called Montreal.

This island is the most beautiful in the country. The soil is good and the climate is more temperate than that of Quebec.

The city is quite large and well populated. There is a governor, a lieutenant of the King and a major. There is also a tribunal comprised of a lieutenant-general with an attorney and a registrar. Its appeals are under jurisdiction of the superior council of Quebec.

It is in this city that much of the trade with the Indians is carried on. There are three missions as well as Indians from the lands and lakes on which they travel down here to trade.

The governor and the lieutenant-general spend the greatest part of the summer there to deal with the Indians and the intendant goes up there as much for these dealings as for those of the law.

The priest of the parish as well as those of the island meet at the seminary. There is a Jesuit monastery, a convent of Recollets and a hospital for the ill operated by the nuns or sisters of the congregation of Notre-Dame. This institution was established in this country by Sister Bourgeois who obtained the letters-patent from His Majesty in 1671.

These sisters are not cloistered and are not bound to take the vow. They instruct the young girls and teach them to read, write and work. There are several seigneuries where they are established and where they do a great deal of good with the instruction they give to the young people.

This city is surrounded by palisades. The King has some storehouses. It is the headquarters of almost all the troops of this country in garrison there under his government. These number 28 companies composed of 30 men each. This part of the country is more vulnerable to attacks by the English and the Indians than either Quebec or Three Rivers. It is for this reason also that there is a fort on each seignury where the inhabitants can withdraw in time of war.

There is a general hospital near this city for the poor and needy. Sieur Charron, merchant of this country, is the founder of this house and obtained letters-patent from His Majesty for this establishment in 1694.

On crossing to the south shore, one finds Fort Chambly which is not far, only five leagues from this city by land. This fort is situated on a river enabling the English to come into this colony. A garrison is stationed there with a commanding officer.

I am, Sir, etc.