

## Marie Doucet de la rivière Gascoigne

In the early days of white settlement along this beautiful shore the Acadians, who had first arrived, had most of their little villages ravished by Captain Ben Church, who during "Queen Anne's War" in 1704 was sent from Boston with an avenging force and who went from Penobscot to Chignecto and up and down the Basin of Minas seeking what he might destroy.

### A Tragic Story

At the Acadian settlement at River Gascoigne, now Diligent River near Parrsboro, lived Jean Doucet

and his beautiful, but ill-fated daughter, Marie. The small village being a mile or so from the shore escaped the cruel notice of Capt. Church but Lyon, one of the crew sent ashore for water, deserted. Later as a guest of the Doucet's he tried to gain the interest and love of Marie by lying accounts of adventures and "moving accidents by land and sea," but her heart was safe in the keeping of Jean Richard to whom she was to be married when Father Cosmo came at Christmas.

Repulsed but still determined, Lyon stole the life time savings of his unsuspecting host, sneaked his way at night along the shore to Greville Bay and boarded a vessel which he knew was about to sail for Boston. Once safe in Boston he bought a vessel, the Osprey, with the stolen money, collected twenty ruffians as lawless as himself, fitted his craft with a couple of cannon, stowed away as much gunpowder as he had money to buy and set sail for Acadia, designing to steal Marie and rob the Jean Doucet village and other settlements on the Basin of Minas. On the 16th of December as the Osprey was nearing River Gascoigne a sailboat was intercepted which Lyon found was manned by only his detested rival. He would have given orders for a quick hanging but decided to wait for a more exquisite revenge though Richard, a man of active body and strong will boldly defied his unscrupulous captor.

### The Kidnapping

Leaving him in charge of part of the brutal crew Lyon with the other despicable wretches rowed up the river to the Doucet home, seized Marie, and, throwing her into the boat, made all speed back to the Osprey. Her father and the other men who were chopping in the nearby woods, hearing her piercing screams, rushed to their small boats and pursued with all the desperation of a death struggle, for well they knew if they failed to rescue their dearest Marie, her fate would be immeasurably worse than death. As they reached the mouth of the river a cannon ball struck the water beside them and they saw

Marie lifted on board the Osprey. To the despairing men in the Doucet boats all hope of rescue was past but they were immediately startled by the thunder of an explosion and broken pieces of the pirate craft fell back into the water. Nothing was left of the Osprey but a mass of wreckage. Ly-

on had perished with all his villainous crew, a good riddance, but alas, death had also claimed Marie and Richard.

### United In Death

The heart broken father and the others spent hours by the wreckage searching for Marie's body but in vain. The morning before Christmas of that year, he was at the mouth of the river as the tide was coming in. Floating on the surface of the swift current he saw his beloved daughter clasped in the arms of her lover in the unyielding grasp of death. That day had been set for the wedding and Father Cosmo had come across the Basin not knowing the sadness of the ceremony which awaited him. United in death, their clasp unbroken Marie Doucet and Jean Richard were

buried near the little village.

The only explanation of the tragedy seems to be that Richard, seeing no escape for Marie from the horrible fate which awaited her, dove through the gates of death, seized the lighted match at his gun, threw it into the barrel of gunpowder, caught his bride in his arms and jumped overboard. Tides of over two hundred and thirty years have ebbed and flowed over the place where youth and love sank beneath the waves. For long it was said that a mysterious light was often seen floating on the tide toward the mouth of the river. None had seen the torchbearer, but by some it was whispered, "'Tis the spirit of Marie watching the waters."