

*from Renfrew Advance, Oct. 25  
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# NOTES and COMMENTS

## THE CHAMPLAIN ASTROLOBE

In the unveiling this fall beside Highway 17, three miles east of Cobden, of a cairn to commemorate the visit of Samuel de Champlain, the explorer, in days of Canada's early history, it is proposed to borrow, if possible, the Champlain astrolabe, lost long ago and found in Renfrew county in 1867. That surveying instrument is in New York, owned by a collector of astrolobes and similar instruments who on a former occasion declined to loan it, fearing that it might be lost, with recovery impossible.

Hope is not yet abandoned that a loan of it may be secured, for this time the instrument is not to be used on a vessel to represent one of Champlain's sailing ships. It is pointed out that a likeness of an astrolobe may be seen in Ottawa as part of the Champlain statue located on Nepean Point, within sight of the Parliament buildings. One of this sort would be the next best thing to the real article which so long lay unseen on ground within the county of Renfrew, close to the shores of the Ottawa.

*Historical Research*

## CORN HAS VALUE

Ontario's first cornland field held at or near the village of Spencerville in Grenville county, one of the few Eastern Ontario counties in which the production of corn on a liberal scale is being attempted. Existence of a starch plant at the village of Cardinal in Grenville county may have had something to do with the movement. In Renfrew county two or three years ago much was heard touching hybrid corn, a great deal being expected of it, seeing that corn common in Western Ontario has not done well in the Ottawa

Valley, where frosts come earlier and wither the stalks. An attendance of 500 people as reported from Spencerville field day is an indication of keen interest on the part of farmers there and in counties adjoining, it being well known that corn is a favorite diet with hogs, second only to peas in the matter of excellence. An exhibit at the Spencerville field day was something in the nature of an electric scarecrow. It may be that in Renfrew county a contrivance for the scaring of raccoons would be of value as a help to the scarecrows.

*Canadian Industries & Agriculture.*

# Historic Site and Monument to Mark Finding of Champlain's Astrolobe

(By E. McF.)

About three miles east of Cobden, on Highway 17, land has been surveyed for a historical site and a monument will be erected in the near future, according to communications received from National Parks and Historic Sites Services, Ottawa.

In 1615 when Samuel de Champlain made one of his trips up the Ottawa river he made notes in his diary to the effect that he lost his astrolobe on the way from the Ottawa River to the Muskrat Lake. The loss of the instrument was not discovered until the party had reached Muskrat Lake. A search party was sent back over the trail to locate the astrolobe but returned unsuccessful.

The astrolobe remained in its lost condition for 255 years. In 1870 the late Edward George Lee and his father were engaged in clearing their land with a team of oxen when one of the logs were pulled away and the astrolobe was found. The astrolobe later found its way to a museum and from all that is known it is secure in some museum in New York.

In those early days Champlain made his way up the Ottawa river as far as Portage du Fort, and possibly to avoid the rapids, and for a short route, he crossed over to the chain of lakes, Olmsted's lake, Jeffrey's lake, and following the outlets to Green lake and to Muskrat lake, along which shore he mentions in his diary of a little Indian village (now Cobden). From there up the Muskrat river, Mud lake, and whatever else there may be, on to Indian river and back to the Ottawa river at Pembroke.

This later became an established portaging route.

The historical farm is now owned by Roy McKay and although the monument will be erected near the highway so that all who travel may read, the exact location where the instrument was found is about a mile back. A little lake, known as Green lake, is hidden beyond the hill

and some old logs still remain, all that is left of the old farm buildings near where the find was made.

Mr. McKay has donated the land for the site and the monument will be placed in the centre of a 25 foot plot. The contract for the foundation and the placing of the monument has been given to Edward Mau of Pembroke and work will begin in a couple of weeks.

The monument will be shipped from the Department of Justice to Cobden to be received by Sam Blackwell, who has been interested in this for the past several years.

Letters have been received from C. H. Dove of the National Parks and Historic Sites Services, in Ottawa, by Zion Line W.I. and Mr. Blackwell advising them of the plans of erection.

The members of Zion Line W.I. and Mr. Blackwell have been persistent in their efforts over a period of years to have this event commemorated by a historical site and monument.

This monument for the finding of Champlain's astrolobe will be the only historical marker between Richmond and Mattawa