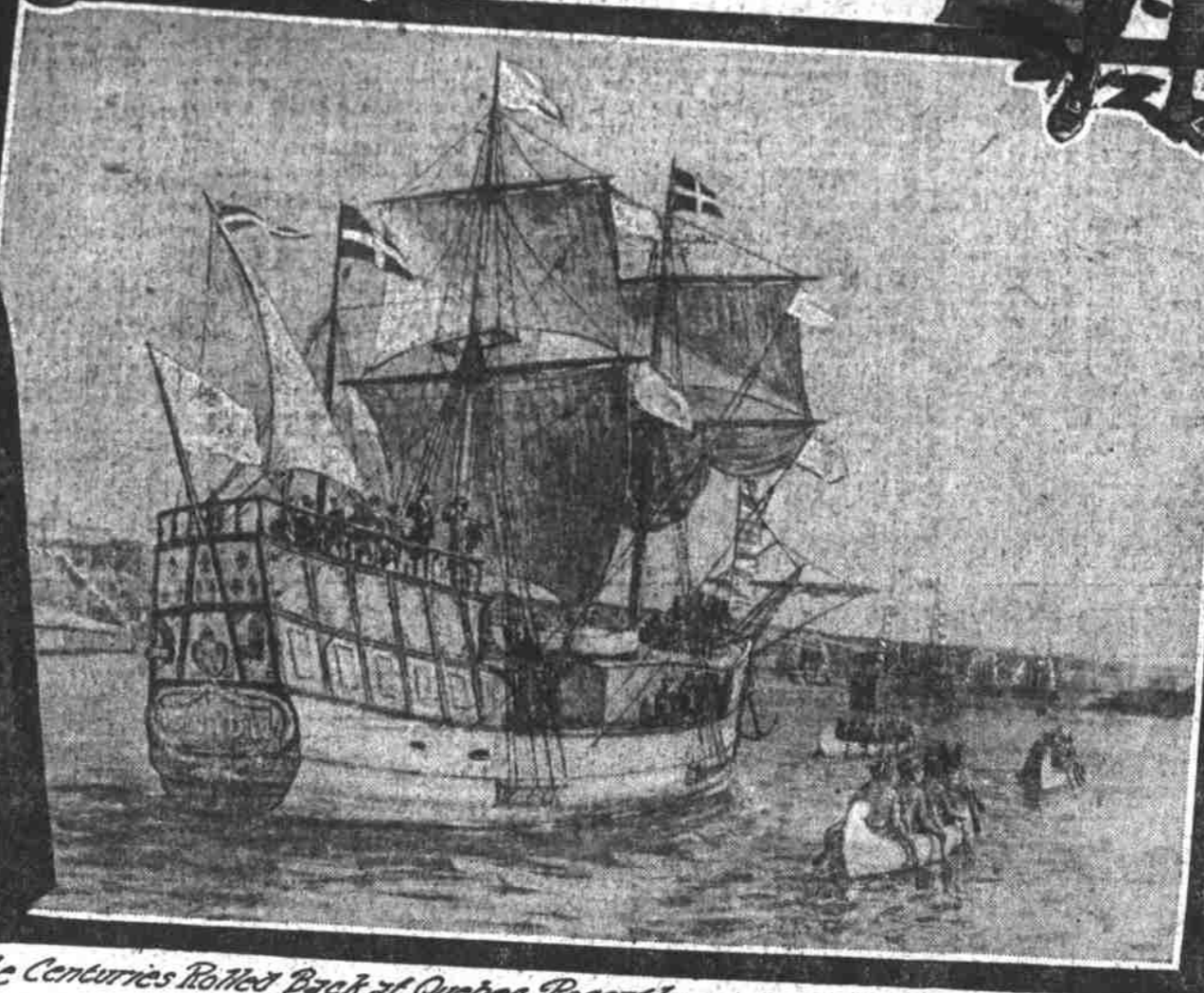


# THE DAY OF THE PAGEANT, IS IT HERE?



Three Women Figures in a Sussex Pageant

**AMERICAN POPULARITY OF HISTORIC SPECTACLES PREDICTED.**



The Centuries Rolled Back at Quebec, Recently Champlain's Ship

Drama players, presenting Shakespeare's plays in the open with their marvelous reproduction of the conditions under which the plays were originally seen, may have afforded Mr. Parker some hint of what was to be accomplished in the utilization of local history. Unquestionably, they prepared the way for an indulgent reception of the new idea, which was exceptionally fortunate in its parentage by men who were endowed with the ability to carry it into such admirable execution.

Then came the Warwick pageant, where, upon the actual spot on which the actual words were uttered by the original queen more than 300 years ago, a pageant-queen Elizabeth spoke history-making sentences.

England was now profoundly impressed. Pageant-making fairly leaped into popularity. A single summer would see

as many as half a dozen, organized speedily upon a vast scale, the proceeds designed for charitable purposes; whole communities uniting to produce imposing effects; famous literary people contributing their art; London theater managers giving their skill, and the spectators including many distinguished men.

At St. Albans, the pageant covered the period of 1500 years that elapsed between the time of Julius Caesar and that of Elizabeth. Out on the greenward, with the very grasses the direct heirs of those that had been fed with the blood of historic wars, the ancient Druids prepared to offer their sacrifice of a beautiful maid to appease their gods' wrath; Boadicea sacked the Roman city of Verulamium over Verulamium's buried ruins; King Offa performed his solemn penance for the murder of Ethelbert; Queen Eleanor's funeral procession wended its stately way with its early monks wearing their copes, its court ladies astride their horses, as in the olden day.

Down to the Elizabethan period the pageant proceeded, with its long series of changes in

**IS THE day of the pageant at hand in this country? There is no telling how soon, having invaded America, it will pervade the whole land.**

Already there are cities, like Philadelphia and New Orleans, that have long years back of them in handling open-air masques that are not so very different from the pageant proper; and already Canada has indulged in as big and gorgeous a pageant as any Europe has beheld. And, every little while, some American city celebrates an important anniversary with some display which is, at least, a pageant in miniature.

For the present, there is no American city, be it as old as New York or as young as Seattle, that can afford to look with disdain upon the progress of the pageant cult. It is liable to break out any time, anywhere.

large a wealth of historical associations, aimed this fall, in laying out its celebration of "Founder's Week," to assemble the episodes of just such a pageant as Mr. Parker outlined for Boston.

They had their historical settings planned for reproduction, as the director of the pageant said, down to the last shoe buckle. Wherever even a collateral branch of the historical character survived, as in the case of William Penn and Benjamin Franklin, the endeavor was made to insure impersonation by some descendant.

So complete was the plan, and so harmonious the enterprise to the spirit of the city which, alone in the world, has preserved on a grand scale the traditions of the ancient Yuletide "mummers" of English history, that the devising of a great modern pageant was shown to be as practicable in the United States as it had been in England.

Already, however, Canada had taken her cue from the mother country, and, in July of this year, had demonstrated



Another St. Albans Picture, - John Ball, the Itinerant Preacher

what could be accomplished on a really grand scale in the way of pageantry.

In celebrating Quebec's tercentenary, under the eyes of the prince of Wales and with the Vice President of the United States among the distinguished guests, while 12,000 Canadian troops were under arms for review and great fleets assembled, the famous Samuel de Champlain sailed into the harbor in a ship which reproduced accurately that ancient vessel which bore to the savage shores of the new continent the founder of Quebec.

The mock Champlain, in all the picturesqueness of his ancient garb, attended by his ship's company, landed exactly where the real Champlain landed, and halted at a perfect reproduction of the first building, the "Abitation de Quebec," erected by Europeans on the soil of New France.

The same fidelity to detail marked the whole sequence of the pageant, as though the long centuries of time had been rolled back, and the descendants living today could behold, in their every action—in their very gestures—the forefathers who made the land the home of a new, strange race, now growing into its greatness.

Even in England, the pageant dates back only to 1905. Mr. Parker, at the little town of Sherborne, in Dorset, prepared a home-made folk-play, dealing with occurrences in local history, which he produced with the aid of purely local talent.

military costume, the shaggy skins of the aborigines contrasting with the gleaming armor of the conquering Romans, and the trappings and caparisons of armored knights on their splendid steeds enhanced by the stately gowns and quaint or beautiful headdresses of their dames and damsels.

No notable historic incident or personage was omitted from that remarkable re-enactment of the episode in England's tragic and dramatic riches of the past: Richard II royally imposing his imperious will with all the statelyness of his time; John Ball, the itinerant preacher, taking his humble way for the salvation of his neighbors, near and far; the Wars of the Roses raging amid all the picturesque romance of their dashing day.

England, in the course of her now numerous pageants, has discovered that, sharply defined as are the lines of class and caste in her population, the intense interest generated in nearly every local community brings all together, in a common endeavor inspired by a common pride.

It seems probable that, in the United States, where society is so rapidly crystallizing and where lineage is playing, steadily, a more prominent part in the estimation of the people, the pageant may receive its most urgent impetus from those having social position or aspirations, and its heartiest co-operation from all whose origin dates back to that remarkable type, the American settler.



Richard II and His Royal Wit, Scene from a Pageant at St. Albans, Eng.

**WHAT is a pageant?**

Well, up until England began to go wild over it, a pageant was pretty nearly anything in the way of an outdoor procession that made some pretense to picturesqueness in display. A Canstatter Volksfest was as good a pageant as any one could dig up, in these modern, prosaic times—and often a good deal better.

But in the new dispensation of pageantry it has suddenly evolved itself into a reproduction, in minute details of costumes and even of architecture, of major scenes, events and incidents of the local history attached to the place where the pageant is performed.

The inventor, creator, foremost authority on the modern pageant—the man whose genius awoke England to the marvelous possibilities that lay buried in its old, quiet towns and even its enterprising, thronged cities—is Louis N. Parker, himself half an American, one branch of his family belonging to the oldest Boston clans. He declares that the United States offers opportunities for pageants unsurpassed by Europe.

"Take Boston or Plymouth—to mention only a couple of places," he observed. "Either could have, so far as site and history go, pageants as stately and as interesting as those of any English town."

"A Boston pageant might open with the English historical events that would show at work the forces which, gradually accumulating, drove the English Bostonians to their tragic pilgrimage across the waters."

"Then there are the Indian wars, the cold of the land, the famines, the famous Tea Party, the War of Independence, and the culmination in the new Boston. Done by the citizens themselves, it would be superb."

To a great extent Philadelphia, which has so