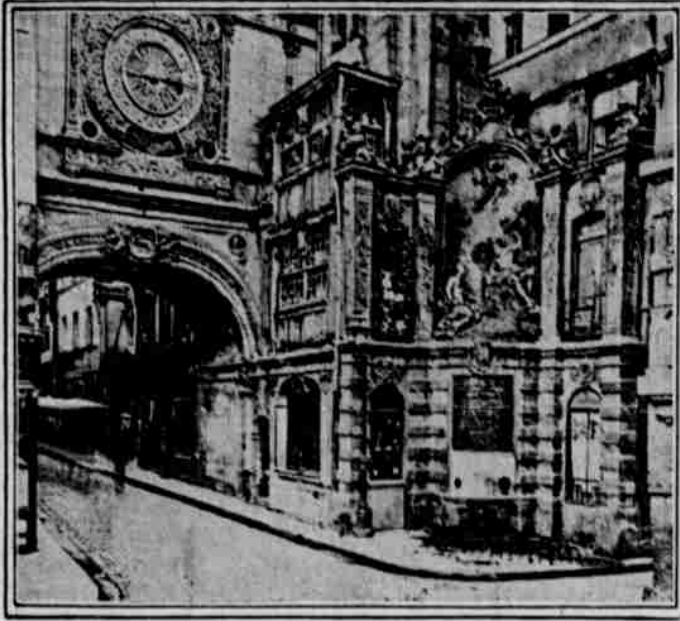


# IN NORMANDY



Street Scene in Rouen, Normandy.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)

THE early history of Normandy, even taking it only from the reign of Richard the Fearless (997), explains in itself why today, to those who look below the surface, Normandy seems in many ways a separate land from France. The 30 years of English occupation under Henry V left their lasting impress, though its natural position demands that it should be an integral part of France.

That Norman power of adaptation to circumstance was the "fatal gift," so apparent in its Sicilian conquest, which has destroyed the Norman as a separate race. It has been said that "the finished historian must be a traveler," but one who possesses to the full the instincts of the traveler must know his history as he knows with his own eyes the true look of a wide land.

Picture follows picture in the radiant Normandy landscape; the limpid light is at once brilliant and tender, and the eye feasts always on a banquet of color. Between slits of cliff are bits of sea, poplars shimmer in the sun, meadows slope from height to ocean, longing for the sea, and the green roadway threads its path through all. It is not strange that Isabeau and Daubigny found beauty here. In fancy Richard Sans Peur and "le Hellequin" still ride through the forests, and legends people every ruin. Less in the present than in the past, one dwells much on the stirring times when Normandy had a life of its own and the Norman name was famous from Scotland to Sicily.

Honfleur is a quaint port, with its famous Saint Catherine's belfry—house, shop, warehouse all in one, while a delicately modeled spire crowns the whole. Villas line the hills, old gates and watchtowers yet remain of the Honfleur of great days. Beyond the quay bristle a hundred masts, sails drip with color, and the water is Nile green—a bit of Cairo in the north of France. Along the water front the same old houses which nearly 300 years ago were brave in their brand-new carvings, as they looked out to see the high-decked Spanish ships ride in, dipping their flags to the fleur-de-lis of France. Then Havre was only a strip of yellow plain, before the threatening sand bar stole Honfleur's harbor inch by inch.

Reminders of the Conqueror. Lisieux is one of the charming corners where something still remains of the Middle Ages, and in the church are windows depicting the marriage of Henry II and Queen Eleanor, and Thomas a Becket in his Norman exile.

The most personal beginning of the Norman conquest was at Falaise. There from a window of the lofty castle-keep Robert, count of Bloisnes (later Robert the Magnificent and Robert le Diable), saw Arlette, the tanner's pretty daughter, washing clothes at the riverside. With all the settings of romantic legend she became the mother of that king whose bar sinister was blotted out in Conqueror.

At Caen one is in his footsteps. Saint Etienne contains his tomb, and has an interior remarkable for strength and solidity—a perfect example of the Norman-Romanesque, "adorned" though it now is by 24 glass chandeliers of the Nineteenth century's most lurid pattern. The Hotel de la Monnaie is a splendid house, built by a princely merchant, Etienne du Val, Sieur de Mondrainville, the man whose great wealth enabled him to get sufficient supplies into Metz for it to withstand its siege in 1553.

There is an atmosphere of heroes and kings in Caen. One sees the tomb of the Conqueror and the house where Beau Brummel died. He sees the ruined castle where "le Jeune et beau Dunois" performed prodigies of valor.

Many French artists, archeologists and men of letters are alarmed at the lack of consideration manifested by the state for the national monuments, which are being allowed either to fall into decay or to be restored with indiscretion. The great master Rodin was deeply concerned with this question, and in his desire to awaken public interest wrote a series of essays on the Cathedrals of France, the study of which was his favorite pastime.

The walls that William built and Froissart writes about are a girdle that is lost today. The Conqueror's vow is brought to mind as one looks

at l'Abbaye aux Hommes, and vis-à-vis l'Abbaye aux Dames, like the queen who builded it, sits on a throne.

It is at Bayeux, though, that one feels nearer that queen, Mathilde Gray, dim Bayeux, old even then, when the Conqueror's queen was writing history with her needle. The first of the great French realists, she seems in the naïve sincerity of those old tapestries, which truly are an epic.

### Fine Percherons Are Many.

Between towns in Normandy one is struck by the fine percherons. Along the smooth, white roads they pass in sturdy line, with that majestic dignity only possible to thoroughbreds, whether horses or humans. Their mottled haunches and polished coats gleam like mother-of-pearl, and their liquid eyes speak volumes to one who loves them.

Then Dives-Dives, with its Inn of the conquering William, where Madame de Sevigne really left her patch-box, and one almost fancies the odor of rose leaves behind her, where the cook beats eggs in old Caen bowls that the china collector greedily gazes on, and where the exquisite tapestries ought to be put under glass. A chateau it was, built for the Conqueror while his boats were building that he crossed to England in, and over the door are still the arms of an old seigneur who married into the house of Savoy. Dives' port, now nearly choked with sand, was once a great haven. There William's fleet, assembled for the conquest of England, lay a whole month awaiting the favorable winds which never came until they had changed their position to Saint Valery.

Between Rouen and Havre is the pretty town of Caudebec, with quaint timbered houses and its broad terrace beside the river. On a market day, in the Grande Place in front of the church, is to be seen one of the few old-time sights of Normandy, the grand old church and the place itself contributing their share in the ensemble. But the traveler who would see this specimen of an old Norman town, wearing still its mellow and picturesque charm, must hasten thither without delay.

### Wonderful Mont Saint Michel.

Mont Saint Michel, with its detached air, appears as though man and nature united in their work to build a masterpiece. Its one straggling street, that begins in the gateway of a king and ends—ah, that is the point. Where does it end? Three times did the vision of Saint Michel appear to Saint Aubert, commanding a church on the rocky heights. Hence rose that marvel of early Norman architecture, with its tombs of kings and heroes and brothers of kings, its Black Virgin, its Salle des Chevaliers with sunlit aisles, its cloisters and exquisite colonades. As one thinks of the history that has peopled this pinnacled hill, emotions, impressions, and sensations crowd the mind, and surely the faintest imagination can fill the structure with the kingly shapes and knightly shadows of the Hundred Years' war.

Trouville, Deauville, Dieppe—in a short sketch of Normandy, those gay bathing places, those "doubles extraits de Paris," must be omitted. They are Watteau in the Twentieth century, though, and the salon of a casino in the height of the season is an animated and diverting scene.

In Normandy the artist may find congenial occupation and the opportunity, so difficult in these days, of sketching picturesque types—groups at the market place, groups at the inn doors, horses in clumsy harness, goats and sheep in Biblical melange. He will find doors and porches of so good a pattern and so old that they are new to the world of today. One may learn the value of variety in its simplest forms and realize the artistic worth of high-pitched roofs and contrasts in color, if it be only of dark beams against plaster, and of meaning in the lines of construction. But these treasures of Normandy are disappearing fast and must be quickly gathered.

In all the fair Normandy coast, each year more and more is there a disappointing note. One looks almost in vain for the old Norman costumes; the blouse and the close white cap are all that are left now of the wondrous headgear, the short petticoats, the embroidered stomacher, the Caen and Rouen jewels of a generation ago. Modernizing destruction is rapidly blotting out the memory of old days!

# OUR COMIC SECTION

## Events in the Lives of Little Men



### FINNEY OF THE FORCE

### Snoop Is No Longer Interested



### THE FEATHERHEADS

### Something From Chopin



### Runs Stone a Fake

Concerning the authenticity of the Kensington Rune Stone, Dr. Walter Hough, head curator of anthropology of the Smithsonian Institution, makes the following statement: "This stone was established as a fake by the confession of the man who inscribed it. The work was cleverly done and deceived many, but a scholar found that a few runes not in use in 1302 were used and finally the faker made a clean breast of it."

### Talking About Oneself

Speech of a man's self ought to be seldom and well chosen. I know one was wont to say in scorn, "He must needs be a wise man, he speaks so much of himself"; and there is but one case wherein a man may commend himself with good grace, and that is in commending virtue in another, especially if it be such a virtue whereunto himself pretendeth.—Bacon.

### Cities of Glass

Buildings and whole cities of glass are predicted by a well-known architect. There would be two shells of glass to a high building, 18 inches or so apart, leaving space to be made into at least a partial vacuum. Glass buildings would probably be heated and cooled in the same way as a thermos flask is used to maintain heat and cold.

### Haydn's Nationality

Haydn has always been considered a German, but Rahran, the village in which he was born, changed rulers when Germany annexed it. Before then it was Croatian. His music has more of the Slav character about it than Teutonic, but no doubt some of it is susceptible to German influence.

### Formality

Little Jean was visiting her small cousin. They were playing and having a glorious time together when Jean's father came to take her home. After she had donned her coat and hat, she turned around and said: "Say, come back to me, somebody!"

### Atomic Energy

According to the theory of Dr. Robert Millikan, the cosmic rays which physicists detect coming to the earth from interplanetary space are the form of energy freed by the breakdown of atoms in the process of creation of new atoms.

### How Compass Works

The compass does not point exactly to the geographical North pole, but to the magnetic North pole, which is some distance away from it, its approximate position being 70.8 degrees N. latitude and 96 degrees W. longitude.

### How Blood Travels

Assuming the heart to beat 60 times a minute at ordinary heart pressure, the blood courses through the veins at the rate of 207 yards in a minute, or seven miles an hour, 168 miles a day, and 61,320 miles a year.

### Have Hard Task

To develop the wisdom of serpents while they retain the guilelessness of doves is the task which faces the religio-moral forces if they would aid in the moral regeneration of society.—Rinhold Niebuhr.

### Keeping Up With Juniors

On the whole, it's wiser not to start making a pal of the boy till after the boy finishes with periphrastic Latin conjugations and quadratic algebraic equations.—Arkansas Gazette.

### Desires Never Fulfilled

Our desires always disappoint us; for though we meet with something that gives us satisfaction, yet it never thoroughly answers our expectation.—Rochefoucauld.

### But They Get the Coconuts

It is said of native Sumatrans that they are too lazy to climb coconut trees so they train monkeys to go up the trees and get the fruit for them.

### Probably Hot Music

Scientists have been able to set fire to wood by sound waves, produced probably by some jazz band instrument.—New York Herald Tribune.

### Orchid Matures Slowly

Nearly five years are required for an orchid plant to mature under glass from a seed and only about one seed in a million produces blossoms.

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