

CHWNE Module 3 Lesson 1

Lesson 1

Jacques Cartier (1491 to 1557)

Part 1

Jacques Cartier

1491 to 1557



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Jacques Cartier was a well-respected mariner from Brittany (France), **born in 1491.**

He lived in the walled city of **St. Malo** (home of corsairs/pirates and privateers).

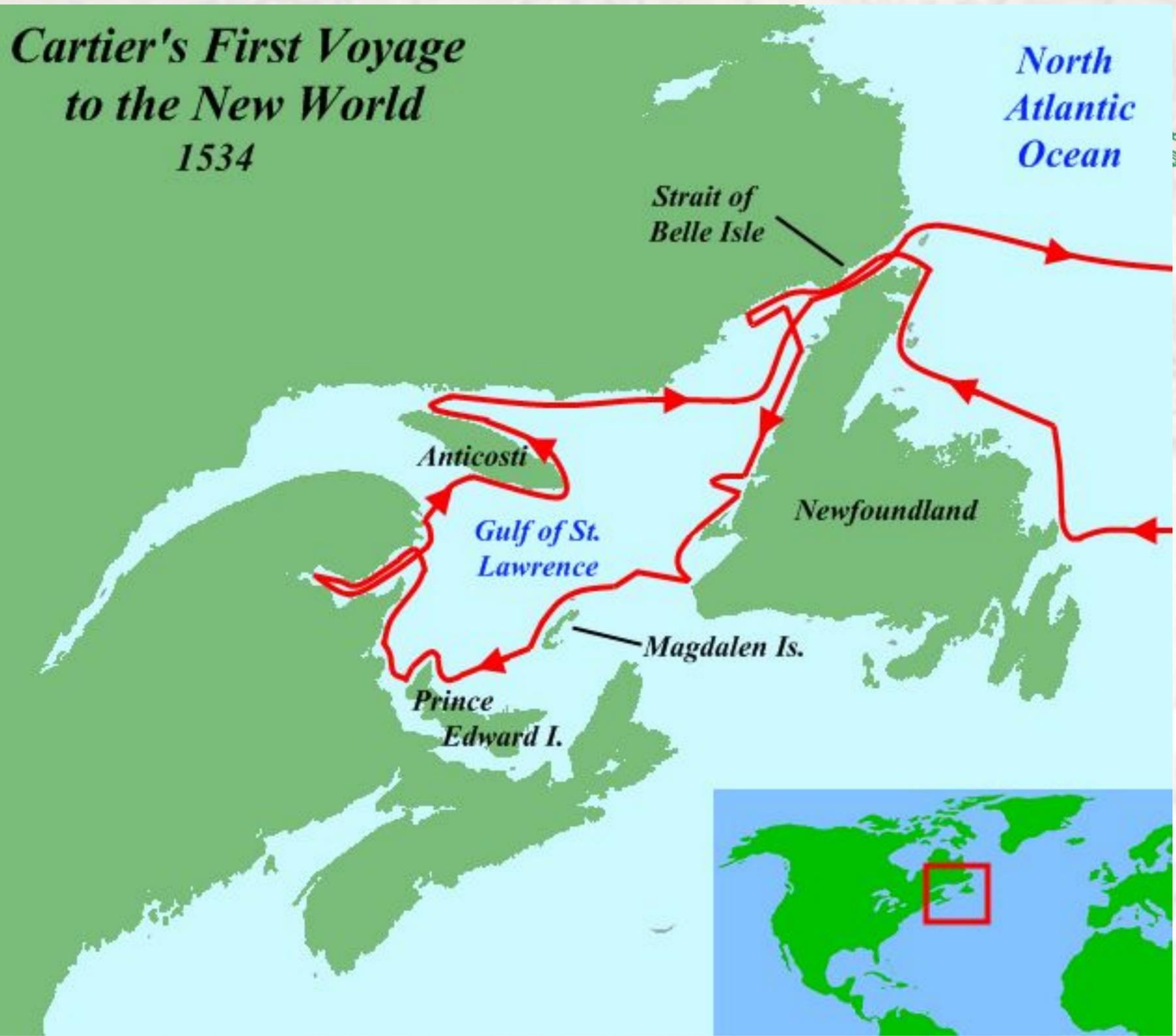
He was probably a Catholic, since **he was introduced to King Francis I by the Bishop of St. Malo.**



Cartier was commissioned by **King Francis I** to explore the northern lands, to search for a passage to India, and to look for gold and spices.

His first voyage on **April 20, 1534 (at 43 years old)** was funded by the Huguenot nobleman **Philippe de Chabot of Poitou**.

Remember that **the Placard Affair** happened in 1534. In spite of the persecution unleashed on Protestants, this was a 'heretic' helping to fund exploration to Canada.



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As An Aside: Poitou

From **1550 to 1650**, during the reigns of **Henry II (son of Francis I)** and his son **Francis II**, Poitou was a hotbed of Calvinist activity among the nobility.

Many Acadians who settled in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick came from Poitou.



It is reputed that Cartier's first encounter with the natives was brief.

He traded some goods with the **Mi'Kmaq** on the north side of **Chaleur Bay**, sailed around the northwest coast of **Newfoundland**, saw **PEI**, and sailed as far as **Anticosti Island**.



He turned around at Anticosti Island and **planted a cross for France on Gaspé.**

He had a longer encounter with **Iroquois natives** who had gathered for the seal hunt. The **Iroquois chief, Donnacona,** protested his act of planting the cross.

In time, Donnacona agreed for two of his sons to return to France with Cartier as long as they brought back goods to trade.



Jacques Cartier named the country **Canada** (*meaning 'village' or 'settlement' in the Iroquois language*).

He was told about their two main Iroquois settlements or '**kanadas**': **Stadacona (Quebec City)** and **Hochelaga (Montreal)**.

He was the first European to map and describe the mouth of the St. Lawrence River.



On his second voyage (44 years old), **Cartier left on May 19, 1535 with 2 ships, 61 men and the 2 sons of Donnacona as guides.** They left the larger ship moored at **Stadacona (Quebec City)** - a 'small squalid village'.

He continued to **Hochelaga (Montreal)** which he described as 'impressive'.

*Cartier's Second Voyage
to the New World
1535-36*



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He arrived at Hochelaga on **October 1535**, and was told by the natives about a 'sea' in the middle of the country.

Cartier thought that he had reached the Northwest Passage to India and China. He attempted to reach it but could not go further than Lachine Rapids.



NOTE:

Because Cartier believed he had found the Northwest Passage to Asia and China, but the rapids were preventing him from getting there, he used the French name for **China ('chine')** and called it **La Chine** rapids.

These two French words have now been morphed into the current name of the **Lachine Rapids**. The **'sea'** was really **Lake Champlain** (which was named over 50 years later) **south of Montreal**.



By the time Cartier got back to Stadacona from Hochelaga in late **October 1535**, his settlers had developed poor relations with the Iroquois.

As a result, they settled at the mouth of the **St. Charles River** and made preparations for the winter by salting fish, hunting large birds, and stacking firewood.



The settlers experienced a severe winter, unlike those of Europe. From **mid-November 1535 to mid-April 1536**, their ships were frozen in the ice with four feet of snow on the ground.

Scurvy caused the death of 25 of his men and about 50 Iroquois men. Donnacona's sons gave them the remedy for scurvy from the **Eastern White Cedar** trees.



Cartier left as soon as the river thawed in **May 1536**, arriving in **France in July 1536**.

On his way out, he **seized 10 Indians (including Donnacona) to take them to France**. He wanted Donnacona to tell King Francis I about the Kingdom of Saguenay.



The Iroquois remained in France for four years before being brought back home. Cartier could not return them, because Francis I was fighting in the Italian wars between the years of **1536 to 1538**.

Donnacona died in France, which did not bode well for future relationships with the Iroquois.