Georges BOUCHER (1865-1956)

Georges-Alphonse Boucher was a doctor as well as a poet. Born in Rivière-Bois-Clair (now Saint-Édouard-de-Lotbinière), Québec in 1865, he descended on the maternal side from the seigneurs of Deschambault.

His uncle, a pastor in Lawrence, Massachusetts, brought him there to study English and music. Later, having obtained his bachelor's degree from Ottawa College (1885) and having finished his medical studies at Université Laval (1890), he sought to settle in a milder climate than Québec’s, because of his fragile health. He returned to the United States. Knowing that many of his fellow emigrants lived in Brockton, a city in eastern Massachusetts, he settled there after doing a residency in New York. He would remain there for the rest of his life, which was very long since he died only in 1956, at the age of 91.

Georges Boucher consoled himself about the need for this voluntary exile by writing poetry: *Je me souviens* (1933), *Sonnets de guerre* (1943), and finally *Chants du Nouveau Monde* (1946). In 1952, he published a revised and expanded edition of the latter. In this last collection, the poet sings, in turn, of a France battered by war, of the courage of American soldiers during the Second World War, and of the glory of Québec. His poem on Québec is composed of eight parts containing 613 verses. The dedication to this collection clearly indicates that the author sees himself as a bard of the New World. He nevertheless emulates the poets of another time. Discreet echoes of Lamartine and Hugo, French authors he read and admired, as well as of the great Québec poets Octave Crémazie and Louis Fréchette, permeate his poetry.

An active member of the Société Historique Franco-Américaine, he received its Guillet-Dubuque-Bédard Prize, awarded to the author of the best essay on “the participation of France or the French race to the evolution and formation of the American people.” He often spoke to the
society on various topics and did readings of his poems at its meetings. Several of his works were published in the *Bulletin de la Société Historique Franco-Américaine*, namely: « Le coucher du soleil » (1909), « Le génie » (1909), « Le rocher de Québec » (1909), « Ode sur la fête civique de Plattsburgh » (1909), « Ode aux Franco-Américains de Burlington » (1909), « Québec » (1924), « Éloge au Dr Stanislas Martel » (1936), « Le patois de Québec » (1937), « Suprême richesse » (1939), « Québec mystique » (1940), and « Éloge au Dr Thomas-J. Dion » (1944).

A member of the Société des Médecins de langue française de l’Amérique du Nord, the Société des Poètes canadiens-français, and the Société des Auteurs canadiens-français, he was honored by the government of France, which made him an « officier d’Académie » and awarded him the Palmes académiques in 1938.

A husband and father, Dr. Boucher, who was survived by two sons and two daughters, chose to be buried in the land of his ancestors.

Claire QUINTAL

**WORKS**


**BIBLIOGRAPHIE**


  English translation by Oumou Cissé, Salem State University