

THE INSPIRATION AND MARTYR OF FRANCE

The Maid of Orleans, as Joan of Arc was now called, became the inspiration of France. She rode on to many victories against the English. The Baron de Rais paid for new troops who helped Joan rid the Loire Valley of the Goddamns. He insisted that his Laval cousins also mortgage some of their choice properties to assist Joan as the Dauphin did not have the financial resources to do so. With Gilles and her other revered captains at her side she took Jargeau (Charles singled out de Rais and rewarded him for his actions to recover this village east of Orleans.), Meun, Beaugency and Patay in one week. The English captured and killed in the latter town alone mounted to four thousand. Perhaps if Joan had then gone on to Paris, she would have conquered it as well, given the adoration and assistance she received wherever she went. However, her Voices directed her to take Charles to his coronation instead. By her spectacular advances on the above territories held by the English, Auxerre, Troyes and Chalons falling soon after, the Maid and her army successfully cleared the way for the Dauphin, who became popular by these gains, to enter Reims. Bells reeled; vast crowds wildly cheered as he was crowned King Charles VII of France in July, 1429 in an elaborate ceremony lasting over five hours.

De Rais's participation and cooperation with Joan throughout the successful hostilities in the Loire Valley enhanced his own career, with Charles next ordering him to accompany a religious cavalcade transporting the Holy Oil kept at the Abby of Saint Remy near the city's eastern gate for the official coronation. A drop from the sacred Ampoule, guarded within the Abby at Reims, had been used during every succession to anoint the French Kings since Clovis was enthroned in 496. De Rais, one of four knights handpicked by Charles, along with the other

nobles, fully armed and mounted, in splendid harness, carried silk banners with their family emblems as they led the bedecked procession of churchmen in scarlet and purple robes to the Cathedral of Reims.

The Grand Prior of Saint Remy, sitting on the back of a choice white horse and protected by a resplendent jeweled canopy, bore the vial or holy chrism in its case suspended from his neck by a gold chain.¹ While Gilles as well as the other knights, still escorting the Ampoule, approached the richly patterned west front of the Cathedral, the smiling sculptured angel on the left side of the farthest doorway, known as the “Sourire de Reims”, appeared to be particularly happy. Still protecting the holy vial, de Rais and the other nobles rode their palfreys into the exquisite Cathedral, packed with people, through the great main door with its beautiful rose window above the entrance, to the choir where they dismounted. The Prior presented the precious anointing oil to the Archbishop of Reims dressed in his grand costume with his miter on his head, his cross in his hand. The monarch awaiting the oil along with his entourage was in tears. Holding her standard, Joan of Arc wept too as she wrapped herself around Charles’s knees; the Crown was finally his. Overwhelmed, de Rais shared and felt Joan’s great joy. His heroine, his savior of France had successfully accomplished the mission her Voices commanded.

One of Charles’s first acts as King was to make the Baron Gilles de Rais a Marshal of France, the highest military rank in the army. He was not the single Marshal, but he would command the crown’s troops and carry a baton as a symbol of distinction.² In recognition of Gilles de Rais’s loyalty, inspiring service and heroic deeds, recorded on strong parchment, the

King also permitted him to display a border of the royal symbol, a three-petaled iris flower, (the fleur de lys) on his own coat of arms. Gilles was not yet twenty-five years old when these great honors were bestowed upon him. He had won these considerations by his bold defense of France and his relentless support of Joan of Arc. No one questioned his mental stability. He had become a legendary warrior, a partner of the Maid. He had a lifetime of distinguished service to look forward to. [Read more](#)

After the coronation Gilles declined Charles's invitation to return to his Court. Instead de Rais linked up with Joan's army at Senlis, sixty kilometers north and slightly east of Paris. The Maid's Voices did not tell her she would have any more victories, but she marched on to Paris anyway with her troops as she longed to finish her work and send the Goddamns back to their island. She immediately captured the Saint-Honore Gate on the outskirts of the city. During a day of hard fighting, her men led by the new Marshal of France, de Rais, gained ground around the exterior of the tall ramparts by the Gate, today near the center of the town in the vicinity of the Theatre Francais square and the Rue de Rivoli. (Joan's gilded equestrian statue presently guards that street.) The French continued their struggle with the assistance of many Parisians hostile to the Goddamns.

But the Duke of Burgundy, Philip the Good, was up to no good regarding the French cause and sent word to the newly anointed Charles VII. If he called a halt to the Maid's attacks, the Duke, in charge of Paris and supporting the English like his deceased father, would give the city to Charles at a future date. Georges de la Tremouille, the French Chancellor, easily deceived

the King too, advising him to follow a policy of negotiation and appeasement with the Goddamns over Paris. He urged the King to sign a truce.

¹Morris, Charles. Historical Tales:French. Retrieved 07/07/2007 from <http://www.mainlesson.com/display.plp.author&morris&books=french&story=ampoule.com>

² <http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/marshal>