

GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY

REGARDING THE MABE FAMILY  
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A recall of the life of some members  
of a distinguished Gaspé family of  
Huguenot and Loyalist background.

KEN ANNETT

REGARDING THE MABE FAMILY

PREFACE

Under the heading, "MABE FAMILY TREASURES - A Mystery for Museum Staff ", Cynthia Dow of SPEC wrote of Mabe family records from Corner of the Beach that were donated by Judge Coderre to the Gaspé Museum. The article referred to the arrival of Peter Mabe Sr. at Corner of the Beach some two hundred years ago and to one of his descendants in particular, Captain Daniel Mabe.

As a contribution to the growing body of information on the early and important Mabe family, "GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY" adds the records below.

TREASURE     The late Mrs. Margaret G. MacWhirter of New Richmond in  
TROVE IN     her interesting book, "TREASURE TROVE IN GASPÉ AND THE  
GASPE         BAIE DES CHALEURS", published in 1919, notes:

"...In 1797 Adjutant Mabe, an United Empire Loyalist from Rhode Island, settled at Corner of the Beach, the British Government having granted him, and each of his sons, a tract of land. The Adjutant's sword is still a treasured heirloom in the home of one of his grandsons, Capt. Dan Mabe. The sons followed the sea. One of them, Dan, built a top-sail schooner - the first built at Corner of the Beach, and carried a cargo of fish to Barbados. He was captured by a Spanish pirate who compelled all on board to "walk-the-plank". Eighteen months later a British gun-brig, in turn, captured the pirate, and the mystery surrounding the fate of the Gaspé seamen was solved.

The present Captain Dan Mabe has spent his life in the coast trade between Nova Scotia, Quebec and Montreal. He is very observant, intelligent and courteous and much interested in the early history of his native country, responding readily to the writer's request for "story". He described the old houses with their large chimneys and the huge birch back-log and the cod-oil lamps. But these have disappeared and only remain in the memories of those who still look back to the days of childhood. Captain Mabe died since this was written..."

FAMILY  
ORIGINS

The origins of the Mabe family take us back in time much further than the American Revolutionary War and the arrival of Peter Mabe Sr. and his family at Corner of the Beach as United Empire Loyalists. The late Dr.G.Elmore Reaman in his book,"THE TRAIL OF THE HUGUENOTS" writes as follows:

"...The Mabee family is widespread, the name appearing as Mabile, Maby, Maybee and Mubie. The Huguenot ancestor was Seigneur Pierre Mabile de Neve, born Circa 1550 in Anjou, France. He fought in the wars of religion under the noted Huguenot leader, Admiral de Coligny, and during the St.Bartholomew's Day massacre of August,1572 he escaped to Holland where he lived and died at Noorden. He had two sons, Gaspard and John. Gaspard was one of the signers of the Leyden Petition of July 1621 which was sent to Sir Dudley Carleton, British Ambassador in Holland, asking permission to emigrate to the New World. Being in the Dutch Navy he had previously made several trips to the Americas. John Mabile came to America and settled at Schenectady while a son of Gaspard, Pierre, married and settled in New York where he died in 1665.

[ A more detailed record of the family can be found in the Journal, "HUGUENOT TRAILS", a publication of the Huguenot Society of Canada]

In fact, members of the Mabile / Mabe family had been in the American Colonies for almost 100 years prior to the American Revolution. In common with many of their fellow Huguenots they were United Empire Loyalists and suffered exile from their American homes to live under the British flag in Canada.



THE "CORNER" AT CORNER-OF-THE-BEACH

At the lower edge of this aerial photo the bend in the white ribbon of the highway marks the end of the flat, sea-level lands of Corner-of-the-Beach and the start of the mountain road to Percé.

MABE  
LANDS

The Corner of the Beach lands where Peter Mabe Sr. and his family settled in Gaspesia lay on the marine plain bordered in front by the sea and towards Percé by the rugged mountains that still impress the modern traveller. The setting of Corner of the Beach was noted by the geologist and author, Dr. John Mason Clarke in these words from his book, L'ÎLE PERCÉE -

"...on over the tickle (at Barachois), along several miles of heavy sand bank, broad and stationary now, no longer overwhelmed by the tides, but the site of mills and homes. This anchored thoroughfare of sand spreads out at the farther end into the broad fields and obvious comfort of Corner-of-the-Beach, where the protection afforded by the endroit of the waters and the impending mountains has made the land more fertile, helped vastly in the "making" of fish, and the fishermen of "The Corner" have an enviable repute for the quality of their product and a reasonable pride in their open hospitality. The panorama we have had beneath our eyes all this way is most extraordinary. ...Here on the seaward face the very vitals of the (Percé) mountains are opened and ensanguined from the wound the rasp of the sea has made. The colors of these cliffs are riotous in reds and yellows and blue-greens all the way from "The Corner" to the edge of the Percé beaches...From "Corner-of-the-Beach" the mountains lie across our path..."

When the Gaspé Land Commissioners held hearings in 1819, Peter Mabe Sr. appeared then to establish his claim to lots at Corner of the Beach of 495 acres. The other claimants there were Peter Mabe Jr. (175 acres) and Jeremiah Dailley (100 acres)

The following notes on a series of Mabe family notarial acts from 1815 onwards will serve to recall the activities and interests of generations of the Mabe family.

SELECTED MABE DEEDS

DATE - 4th October, 1815  
 TITLE- Sale of the schooner "SWALLOW"  
 (Built in 1813 -square-sterned schooner,  
 forty one feet in length)  
 VENDOR Captain Daniel Mabe.  
 BUYER Captain J-B Giroux  
 SALE PRICE Fifty Pounds Quebec currency  
 NOTARY Archibald Campbell, N.P.

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DATE - 12 December, 1822  
 TITLE- Sale of land by Jeremiah Dailey to Philip Mabe  
 and Edward Mabe.  
 LAND SOLD- Lot No. 8 on the South-West side of Malbay,  
 containing 200 acres, on a front of nineteen  
 chains, or six acres, by thirty-three and one  
 third acres in depth. Bounded in front by the  
 Bay, on the North by Lot No. 9, on the South by  
 Lot No. 7, in rear by waste lands of the Crown.  
 SALE PRICE- Seven Pounds currency.  
 NOTARY- Unknown.  
 WITNESSES- Alexander McNeil  
 Peter Gerard  
 Peter Mabe Sr.

SELECTED MABE DEEDS (CTD)

DATE- 27 January, 1829.

TITLE- Bill of Sale by Charles Rail to Peter Mabe Sr.  
(Charles Rail, fisherman, of L'Ance au Beaufils,  
his wife, Elizabeth Peggé or Paggé.

Land Sold- A certain piece or parcel of land containing five  
or six acres, more or less, at the place called  
Corner of the Beach in Malbay. Bounded on the South  
by a Lot of land occupied by Peter Mabe, bounded on  
the North by the land of Louis Rail, on the West  
by waste lands of the Crown and on the East by the  
sea. Together with all improvements thereto belong-  
ing.

SALE PRICE The sum of Five Pounds currency and the said amount  
paid in wheat and potatoes.

NOTARY- Joseph Stowe Tuzo, J.P. of L'Ance au Beaufils.

WITNESSES- Charles Cass  
John Cass

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DATE- 1st April, 1834.

TITLE- Deed of Sale by Silvestre Raile (of Malbay, Farmer),  
and Johanna Chequine, his wife, Firman Chequine (of  
Malbay, Farmer) and Mary Myers, his wife and Genevieve  
Bourget (widow of the late Antoine Raile, in his life-  
time of Malbay) to Peter Mabe, Jr. of Malbay.

LAND SOLD- A certain lot or parcel of land being and situate in  
the Corner of the Beach, Malbay, containing one  
hundred and twenty four superficial acres on a front  
of three and three-quarters acres less nine links,  
being part of Lot No. 3... together with all improvements  
and buildings.

SALE PRICE- Fifty three Pounds current money.

NOTARY- Henry B. Johnston, Esq. J.P., Point St. Peter

WITNESSES- William Macdonald  
Richard Francis

SELECTED MABE DEEDS (CTD)

DATE- 13 June, 1835

TITLE- Deed of Sale by Edmund Flynn (of Percé, Farmer) and Margaret McGrath, his wife, to Peter Mabe, Junior (of Malbay, Merchant.)

LAND SOLD- A certain lot or parcel of land situate in Malbay containing about two acres in front and also another lot or parcel of land, situate in Malbay, about half an acre in front, together with all the buildings and improvements.

SALE PRICE- The sum of thirty-five pounds, thirteen shillings and four pence, payable by three instalments.

NOTARY- John Le Boutillier, Esq., J.P. of Percé.

WITNESSES- James Richard Cotton  
Lawrence Lamb

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DATE- 12 April, 1836

TITLE- Sale and Assignment by Lewis Chrétin (of Percé, Fisherman) and Rosalie Fox, his wife to Peter Mabe Jr. (of Malbay, Farmer)

LAND SOLD- A certain Fishing Room situate at "Cannes-des-Roches", bounded in front by the sea, on one side towards the East by Laurant Valcour and on the South and West by other property before purchased from Joseph La Flame by the said Mr. Peter Mabe, Jr., with all buildings and dependencies which may or may be on the said Fishing Room.

SALE PRICE- The sum of Twenty one Pounds currency.

NOTARY - James Rooney, Esq., J.P. of Percé.

WITNESSES- Elias De La Perelle  
George Balleine



SELECTED MABE DEEDS (CTD)

DATE- 25 October, 1860

TITLE- Protest by George La Boutillier (Provincial Land Surveyor, of Percé) versus Edward Mabe (Shipbuilder and Carpenter of the Township of Percé)

ALLEGATION- That Edward Mabe had failed to build for George Le Boutillier a dwelling house in the North East Cove of the village of Percé, together with a barn and stable and a third outbuilding - all in a good, strong, substantial and workmanlike manner with materials of good quality.

NOTARY- Louis George Harper, Prothonotary of the Superior Court for Lower Canada, residing at Percé.

WITNESSES- Joseph E. Tuzo  
Michael Furlong

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DATE- 8th May, 1884

TITLE- Certificate of Discharge by the Widow Peter Mabe to Josiah Mabe.

TEXT- I, Richard Mathers of the Peninsula, Gaspé Bay, a Clerk in Holy Orders, acting as the duly constituted attorney of Ann Sutherland, Widow of Peter Mabe, Esquire, deceased, in his lifetime of the Corner of the Beach, in the Township of Percé, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that Josiah Mabe, also of the Corner of the Beach aforesaid, Planter and Cultivator, hath paid the sum of money due upon a certain Deed of Sale bearing date the twenty-fifth day of March, in the Year of Our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, made between Peter Mabe, Esquire, deceased, and Ann Sutherland his wife of the other part - Which was registered on the ninth day of July one thousand eight hundred and seventy three - And I do hereby require an entry of such payment to be made in the Register wherein the same is registered pursuant to Law.

(Signed) Richard Mathers

WITNESSES- W.H. Annett  
J.A. Lindsay

SELECTED MABE DEEDS (CTD)

DATE- Last Will and Testament of Mr. Francis Mabe and Last Will and Testament of Mrs. Jane Cass, wife of Mr. Francis Mabe. 8th May 1884  
(Done and passed in the house of Francis and Jane Cass Mabe at the Corner of the Beach.)

PROVISIONS- "Cross Wills" of husband and wife bequeathing each to other all their estates moveable and immoveable and the survivor as testamentary executor.

NOTARY- James Thomas Tuzo, Esq., J.P. of Percé

WITNESSES- Joseph Garon  
Joseph Xenophon Lavoie

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DATE- 31 March 1886

TITLE- Renunciation by Simeon Mabe et al (Simeon Mabe, Master Mariner, Samuel Mabe and Edward Mabe, sons of Philip, fishermen and farmers, all of Corner of the Beach, Mrs. Margaret Katherine Mabe of Cape Cove, wife of James Lenfesty, Jr., fisherman and farmer, the said James Lenfesty to assist his wife and Mr. Josiah Beck of Cape Despair, farmer) in favor of John Francis Mabe of the Corner of the Beach.

RENOUNCING- All claims, rights, title and interest in a certain lot of land containing about seven acres in front by thirty-three acres in depth and being part of Lot No. Six and Lot No. Seven in the first range of the Township of Percé at Corner of the Beach, bounded in front by the sea and in rear, towards the West, by lands of the second range, on one side towards the North by lands of the Heirs of the late Philip Mabe and on the other side by Henry Enderby (whose wife was a Mabe) together with the house, barn and other buildings.

[The present renunciation made for divers considerations one of which is that the said John Francis Mabe lived

SELECTED MABE DEEDS (CTD)

RENOUNCING -  
(ctd)

for many years with Peter Mabe and Ann Sutherland, his wife, took care of them in their old age and that the said property has always been considered his since the death of the said Peter Mabe and Ann Sutherland.]

NOTARY-

James Thomas Tuzo, Esq., J.P. of Percé.

WITNESSES-

Joseph Garon, Esq.

James Maret Remon, Esq.

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DATE-

13 April, 1886

TITLE-

Last Will and Testament of the late Edward Mabe.

THE MAIN

PROVISIONS -

To his daughters Emma, wife of Henry Edward Enderby, Corner of the Beach, Mary Ann, wife of William John Jean, Coin-de-Roch, and Louisa, (spinster) living now in household with me, all money or sums of money standing in my name, wheresoever found, in Banks or elsewhere, to be equally divided among the three with all Interest accruing thereto.

To my sons Christopher and alfred all my share and interest in the schooner, "GOOD INTENT", now wintering in the Barachois River.

To my sons Daniel, Henry and Alfred Lot No. One situated at Corner of the Beach to be divided equally among them.

To my son Alfred the dwelling house wherein I now live with all furniture and contents.

To my four sons the working implements of the farm to be used with mutual consent and goodwill.

SELECTED MABE DEEDS (CTD)

THE MAIN  
PROVISIONS-  
(ctd)

The cattle on the farm to be divided between my sons Henry, Christopher and Alfred.

The barn to be used jointly by my sons Henry and Alfred, until such time that with his brother Alfred's help, Henry shall build one for himself.

To son Christopher half of Lot No.Nine in the Township of Malbay - the other half to be equally divided between sons Daniel, Henry and Alfred.

Lot No.One situated in the Marsh in the Barachois River to be divided equally between my four sons.

I nominate and appoint my son Daniel to be the sole executor of this my last Will and Testament

NOTARY-

Rev.George Radley-Walters

WITNESSES-

Edward Mabe (Jr.)

George Vibert

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MABE SHIPS

Reference has been made above to members of the Mabe family of Corner of the Beach as shipbuilders and master mariners. The authority on Gaspé shipping, Dr.David J.McDougall, in his article, "GASPÉ-BUILT SQUARE-RIGGED SAILING SHIPS", published by GASPÉSIE, VOL.XXIX, SEPT-DEC.1991 refers to Mabe built ships. A previous but unpublished article by Dr.McDougall was entitled, "SHIPBUILDING ON THE GASPÉ COAST FROM 1763 to 1920.