

GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY

JAMES CARTER AND FAMILY

Recalling the founder of the well-known Carter family of Gaspé, James Carter, Sr. and his wife, Ellen Toomey.

Ken Annett

JAMES CARTER AND FAMILY

The patriarch of the widely-known Carter family of Gaspé was James Carter, Sr. A native of Devonshire, England, born in 1814, he first migrated to the Island of Jersey where, circa 1833 he married the daughter of a Northern Irish military family, Ellen Toomey. Ellen had been born in the Island of Malta in 1815. A daughter, Margaret Ellen, was born to James and Ellen Carter in 1834 shortly before the couple made the major decision to emigrate to Canada. Channel Islanders had been Gaspesia since 1767 with the consequence that there was a well-established shipping route between Jersey, Guernsey and the Gaspé Coast. Records show that James Carter was resident at St. George's Cove on the Gaspé Bay Forillon by 1836. There the Carters would have as neighbours a number of Channel Island families.

From the notarial records of Gaspesia's first resident Notary Public, Martin Sheppard, we have significant reference to James Carter in 1838. Sheppard was a Guernseyman and on occasion travelled from his home at New Carlisle to do notarial work for his fellow Channel Islanders around Gaspé Bay. In August, 1838 he was at the home of Joshua Deniss on the Forillon at St. George's Cove to draw up a Deed of Sale between James Carter and the Rev. William Dunn of Percé, the Roman Catholic Missionary Priest for Gaspesia. Acting as attorney for the parishioners of the Catholic Chapel of St. George's Cove the Rev. Dunn sold to James Carter a lot of land, an acre in extent, with the buildings erected thereon. This lot was bordered in front by the waters of Gaspé Bay and on either side by the lands of Pierre Lemesurier and Captain Francis Ahier, respectively. The sale price was £ 10. In a time when many Gaspesians were obliged to make an "X" as signature, it is interesting to note that the above Deed bears a well-written signature "JAMES CARTER".

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The year 1838 was significant indeed for James and Ellen Carter for in addition to acquiring property at St. George's Cove, their first son, James Jr., was born. In time they would move from the Forillon to Gaspé Basin and there the other sons and daughters of their family would be born.

CHART I

James Carter Sr.	— M —	Ellen Toomey
1814-1870	c.1833	1815-1884
	* Margaret Ellen	1834
	* James Jr.	1838
	* John	1840
	* William	1844
	* Amelia	1846
	* George	1849
	* Alfred T.	1851
	* Jane	1853
	* Laura A.	1857

By 1847 James Carter was established at Gaspé Basin as a blacksmith and tavernist. He was evidently prospering for on November 30th of that year he made a loan of £ 400, a great sum in those days, to the well-known fish merchant and ship-owner, John Le Boutillier. The Deed of Obligation was drawn up by James Perchard, J.P. and as security John Le Boutillier mortgaged "...all the lands and tenements, real and immovable Estate " that he possessed. Witnesses to this Deed were John Vibert and George LeGros, both of Gaspé Basin.

The following year James Carter purchased from Captain George LeGros a parcel of land at Gaspé Basin that would remain in the hands of his descendants for generations. The Deed of Sale, drawn up by John Le Boutillier, J.P. on Sept. 7th., 1848 described the land purchased as follows:

"...a certain piece or parcel of land situate on the North side of the South-West Arm of Gaspé Bay...containing about

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" twenty-one acres in superficie, more or less, on a front of two hundred and eight feet, bounded on the East by the land owned and occupied by Capt. John Vibert and divided therefrom by a line running magnetically North, on the West by the land of Henry O'Hara, in front by the waters of the said South-West Arm and in the rear by the Anse au Cousin lots...with all/the buildings erected on the said piece of land-the whole in its actual state,including also a single stove, a cow, a heifer, a lot of bricks, all the hay on the said premises, without any reservation on the part of the said George LeGros except, one ox, one plough,one double stove and pipes, and all the potatoes,vegetables, and grain on the said premises..."

The sale price was £ 250 Halifax currency.

Witnesses to the Deed of Sale were Joseph Eden and John Vibert.

Subsequent to the above Deed of Sale a problem arose with regard to the boundary of the land of James Carter with that of Henry O'Hara. The latter had inherited the homestead and land of his father, Felix O'Hara, pioneer of Gaspé Basin. In 1835 Henry O'Hara had transferred the ownership of his property to his son-in-law, Duncan McCallum, who had, in turn sold it to the Rev. Francis de la Mare in 1854. In the Deed of Sale between McCallum and de la Mare was the following interesting clause:

"...Also, the said Vendor (McCallum) to save entirely the said Purchaser (de la Mare) from all losses which may arise or grow out of a certain Law Suit instituted by James Carter against him, the said Vendor, the said Law Suit being still pending in Court and undetermined..."

In the belief that this clause was significant, GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY sought out and found a notarial document titled, "Accord entre Duncan McCallum et James Carter. 21 aout 1858." Drawn up by the joint protonotaries of the Superior Court of Lower Canada in the District of Gaspé, John Wilkie and Louis

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George Harper, this document stated:

- * That Duncan McCallum pay the costs of the Law Suit.
- * That James Carter would withdraw his Law Suit against Duncan McCallum.
- * That the boundary in dispute would be and was to remain as follows:

To the East by the said James Carter.

To the West by the representatives of the late Henry O'Hara on a line running North magnetically from the Main Road then, below the Main Road on a line running South five and one half degrees East to meet the waters of the Basin of Gaspé. The frontage on the Basin to be an acre and the depth, to the limits of the Gaspé Basin ~~lots~~ to be twenty acres, more or less.

While the circumstances that led to this protracted boundary dispute between McCallum and Carter over the O'Hara line are obscure after a century and a half, it might be hypothesized that James Carter sought to obtain right of access to part of the "O'Hara's Point" with its valuable potential for deep-water wharfage.

With passing years James Carter and his sons acquired additional land adjacent to that purchased in 1848. From Morin Lane to the East the Carter lands extended to the Baker Hotel. There, in addition to the homestead of James and Ellen Carter were the respective homes of their sons, George, William and John. Alfred T. Carter, son and heir of James and Ellen would inherit and reside in the homestead.

5.

FIRST
GENERATION

MARGARET ELLEN CARTER. Born in Jersey in 1834. Became the wife of Captain John Vautier, member of a Jersey family well-known in Gaspesia and still represented on the Coast. She died August 23, 1874 and was buried in St. Paul's Anglican cemetery at Gaspé Basin.

JAMES CARTER, Jr. Born at St. George's Cove, the Forillon on August 16th., 1838. Married Sarah Jane Harbour, daughter of William Harbour. His brother, John, a witness at the marriage. He resided in Sandy Beach. Daughters born of this marriage were Greta and Mabel Carter. Died 1877.

JOHN CARTER. Born in 1840. In 1880 at a civil marriage ceremony at Gaspé Basin before Justice of the Peace Philip Vibert, Jr. he married Annie Steele Thomson of Montreal, daughter of William Allan Thomson. Witnesses were John J. Annett and William Fingleton. John's occupation given as Merchant. Two sons, Mortimer and Sydney and three daughters, Ida, Jessie and Muriel were the children of John and Annie Carter. Died 1929.

WILLIAM CARTER. Born in 1844. Married c. 1880 Alice E. Charlton who was born in Montreal in 1852. Two sons, Arthur and William Jr. and four daughters, Maud, Ruby, Constance and Victoria were born to William and Alice. Neither of the sons married and the daughters moved away from Gaspé. William survived his wife by 28 years to die in 1929.

AMELIA CARTER. Born in 1846. The date and place of her marriage remain to be established. It is known that she lived in Barachois after she was married and her married name was possibly Ross.

GEORGE EDMUND CARTER. Born in 1849. Did not marry and is known to have worked in Newfoundland. Had a small house in Gaspé Basin on Carter land. His

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FIRST
GENERATION
 (ctd)

mother, the Widow Ellen Toomey Carter, in her Last Will and Testament of 1884, had enjoined her son and heir, Alfred Theodore Carter, to allow his brother, George Edmund, - "...to reside at home until he shall within a reasonable time provide a house for himself..." This was done apparently subsequent to 1884.

ALFRED THEODORE CARTER. Born 1851. Heir and executor to his father's estate upon the death of the Widow Ellen Carter. Prominent and active business man and civic leader of Gaspé Basin - a career worthy of a biographical study. In 1890 he married Mary Stuart Lowndes, daughter of the merchant family of Gaspé. (Ref. THE LOWNDES COMPANY FILE in VOL.8, GASPE OF YESTERDAY)

Family of son, Kingsley and daughters, Queen, Cora, Olga, Grace and Eileen. Died in 1925

JANE AND LAURA A. CARTER. Born respectively in 1853 and 1857. Reference in WILL of their mother.

WILL OF
WIDOW ELLEN
CARTER.

Gaspe Basin
 District of
 Gaspe

In her 69th year and 14 years after the death of her husband, James Carter, Sr., the Widow Ellen Toomey Carter had her Last Will and Testament prepared by the Rev. John Richmond, Anglican Rector of St. Paul's Parish, Gaspé Basin. The witnesses were Dr. N. C. Smillie and Fred. J. White. This document has significant references to the Carter family of 1884:

"On this twenty seventh day of August in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and eighty four at Gaspe Basin aforesaid, BEFORE ME, John P. Richmond, Clerk in Holy Orders, acting in this behalf in default of a Notary Public as by Law duly authorized, personally

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WILL OF THE
WIDOW ELLEN
TOOMEY CARTER
(ctd)

appeared Ellen Toomey, widow of the late James Carter of Gaspé Basin, who did say as follows-

I, Ellen Toomey, widow of the late James Carter, revoking all former Wills, do make this my last Will and Testament as follows.

First, I ratify as far as I legally can the division of the half of the homestead made by my sons under the Will of my late husband and subject thereby to the payment by them to their sisters of an equivalent in money.

Secondly, I give and devise to my son, John, all my right, title and interest to and upon a certain part of the property known as the Point property on which he, the said John Carter, did during the lifetime of and by verbal permission from his father, erect a building formerly used as the Post Office and Telegraph Office.

Thirdly, I give, devise and bequeath unto my son Alfred Theodore Carter all the property, moveable and immoveable which I now possess and of which I may die possessed, unto my son Alfred Theodore Carter upon the following conditions.

- . First that he shall pay all my just and lawful debts.
- . Secondly that he shall provide a home for his sisters Jane Louisa and Laura Alice and for my granddaughter, Ellen Jane Charlotte Vautier until such time that they are married and that he, the said Alfred Theodore Carter shall allow my son George Edmund Carter to reside at home until he shall within a reasonable time provide a house for himself and that my grandson, John James Vautier shall also be allowed to reside with my son Alfred in case of necessity.

8.

WILL OF THE
WIDOW ELLEN
TOOMEY CARTER

(ctd)

I also Will that my son Alfred shall give to each of my daughters Jane L. and Laura Alice a tea set of china and to whoever of the afore-said daughters who shall be first married a dozen silver teaspoons and to my daughter Laura the Chest of drawers, the bedstead and feather bed which I am accustomed to use and to my daughter Jane a feather bed.

And I appoint John P. Richmond, Clerk in Holy Orders, my sole executor.

In testimony whereof I have affixed my hand on the day and date first above written.

(Signature) Ellen Carter

CARTER
BURIED

Extract from the Register of Births, Marriages and Deaths of St. Paul's Church, Gaspé Basin for the year 1844.

Ellen, by her maiden name Toomey, widow of of the late James Carter of Gaspé Basin, aged sixty eight years, died on the fifteenth day of September in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and eighty four and was buried on the eighteenth day of the same month in the same year by me

John P. Richmond, Clk

Witnesses: A.T. Carter (Son)
 N.C. Smillie, M.D.
 Jas. J. Lowndes

From ancestral homes in England and Northern Ireland and experiences in the Islands of Jersey and Malta, James Carter, Sr. and his wife Ellen Toomey Carter came to the Forillon of Gaspé Bay and the early village of Gaspé Basin where they put down deep family roots. Their family story is an integral part of the Gaspesian heritage.