

GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY

CHARLES ROBIN

PIONEER OF THE GASPÉ FISHERIES

Paper read before the Quarterly Meeting of the Société Jersiaise, January 1929 by the Librarian, A.C.Saunders.

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by A. C. SAUNDERS, Librarian.

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FOREWORD.

About ten years ago a box full of old documents was found in an outhouse at Noirmont Manor and these papers eventually became the property of this Society. They had belonged to the Pipon family.

Among the papers were the diaries of Charles Robin for the years 1766 onwards, and, as Robin started in the employ of Robin, Pipon & Co., it is probable that these diaries were kept by Robin for the information of his employers. The papers were rolled up in a bundle and marked Robin papers and a casual look through them would give one the impression that they were simply the records of his daily work, catching fish, selling stores, sailing about from place to place in line and very often very rough weather, preparing fish for export and superintending the arrival and sailing of vessels with their respective cargoes.

But by a careful perusal of these papers one occasionally came across certain details which throw sidelights on the country and the people who lived in the Gaspé province and it is from these sidelights that I have prepared the following paper.

If you wander up the High Street of St. Aubin you will find a house on the left hand side called "La Rocque" which forms the corner of a lane leading to "Ker Anna" and on the left hand side of the lane in the top house called "Ty Anna" you will find a square stone under the shute and over the doorway marked

R R B
M D C
1715

This house was evidently built by the Robin family, and belonged to Charles Robin's grandfather, Raulin Robin, Jurat and Lieut.-Bailiff, who married Marie de Carteret. A pedigree of the family will be found in Bulletin's Société Jersiaise, Vol. vi, pp. 165-171.

Many people have questioned the date of the Jersey trade to Gaspé province but they have more or less treated this trade as part and parcel of the Newfoundland fisheries, which, from an English point of view, go back to the sixteenth century. The two trades were entirely different, for Newfoundland was always a British Colony whilst Canada did not become a British possession until after the Treaty of Paris in 1763.

The fall of Quebec destroyed the French rule in Canada and it is interesting to know that another Jerseyman had something to do with the success of that campaign, for whilst General Wolfe and Admiral Saunders made a success of the expedition by going up the St. Lawrence, Admiral Durell with six men of war kept guard at the entrance to the river and prevented the French from sending assistance to their Canadian colonists.

The distance between the Gaspé fisheries and those of Newfoundland is between 500 to 600 miles.

After the Conquest of Canada, several British firms from Quebec, started fishing adventures along the Gaspé Coast. During the French occupation, a considerable trade with St. Malo and other French Ports, had been carried on there on a very remunerative scale to those engaged in the fishing trade.

The centre of this trade was situated in the Baie des Chaleurs, on the East of Quebec Province in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The Bay was first discovered in the year 1534 by a French Navigator named Jacques Cartier, hailing from St. Malo, who, with two small vessels of 20 tons each, had adventured across the Atlantic and claimed the newly discovered country on behalf of his King.

It must have been a very fine day when Cartier arrived in the Bay—or perhaps he had had a very cold and boisterous passage—otherwise it is difficult to understand why a bay, often frozen over for several months in the year, should have been given the name of Baie des Chaleurs.

It took many years for the French to establish a settlement on the coast, but eventually a fishing trade sprung up, financed principally by the merchants of St. Malo. But, after the conquest of Canada, the country was ceded to Britain in 1763 and English merchants gradually took over most of the Canadian trade and some Quebec merchants like Messrs. Moore and Findley and Alexander McKinsay started fishery establishments in the Baie des Chaleurs.

The large fortunes made by the St. Malo adventurers had often been the subject of conversation around the Jersey firesides—generally grossly exaggerated but still sufficient to induce our merchants to send out vessels to find out what they could. So in the spring of 1766 a firm calling themselves Robin, Pison & Co. sent out a small brig the "Sea Flower" of Jersey, 41 tons, to see what trade they could obtain along the coast of the Baie des Chaleurs.

As a sort of supercargo they sent out a young man named Charles Robin who was directed to ascertain the possibilities of the country and on his return to Jersey make a full report to his owners.

Charles Robin was then 23 years of age. He was born in the Parish of St. Peter, Jersey, and was the son of Philip Robin, of St. Peter, and Ann D'Auvergne, of St. Aubin, his wife. He evidently had had a good general education for his handwriting was good and his diaries were well put together. Evidently the result of his enquiries were very satisfactory for the following year he was sent out to the Baie of Chaleurs as agent for the firm and sailed from Jersey on the 23rd March 1767 in the "Recovery," 118 tons, Captain P. Fainton, and arrived in the Baie on the 2nd June.

The "Recovery" was loaded with goods suitable for trading with the Indians. In his diary for the year 1767 he describes himself as

"Agent with John Robin at Arichat on the Isles Madam,
"Coast of Arcadia and at Paspebiac in the Bay of Chaleurs
"Coast of Canada for Messrs. Robin, Pison & Co."

They arrived in the roads of Paspebiac at 3 o'clock on the 2nd June having run short of water on the voyage and been obliged to put into Halifax for a fresh supply. He was evidently a man of energy for he enters in his diary,

"The day of our arrival at 5 o'clock I set out in the Neptune
"for Bonaventure to make a proposition to the planters,
"arrived there at 8 o'clock."

He returned to Paspebiac the next day having started at day break—many of the planters having engaged for salt—and arrived there at 8 p.m. The "Neptune" was a shallop, a sort of half decked whale boat.

He entered into a kind of partnership with a William Smith, who had been employed by the firm of Moore and Finlay of Quebec but had come to Bonaventure on his own account.

On the 7th June 1767 he arrived at Restigouche where he saw the shore dotted with many wigwams.

The Indians had come to the Coast to trade with their furs but he was too late to do any business as several other traders had been there before him and the King of the Indians at Restigouche had, with a number of his subjects, gone up the river to La Mission to observe the Pentecost. Robin was evidently a very determined man with a keen sense of observation. He tried to grasp the condition of the country. He tells us that the Indians in this part of Canada had mostly been converted to the Roman Catholic Faith—chiefly due to the noble work in the sixteenth century of a certain Father Baudoins, who devoted his life to the conversion of the Indians by giving up the luxuries of civilization and living amongst them as one of themselves.

With reference to this there is a note in Mr. Robin's diary :—

“ Father Baudoins and his successors had nothing to do but
 “ to till the deserts and sow therein the seeds of the Gospel
 “ and accordingly have pretty well succeeded for all those
 “ Indians believe in the Holy Trinity.”

The next day he engaged an Indian at Restigouche to pilot him up the river so that he might make the acquaintance of the Indian King, and, when he arrived at his destination, he found some 24⁺ Indian canoes moored on the banks of the river. Each canoe had brought an Indian family and when he arrived all the Indians were attending service at the wooden building serving as their church. When service was over Robin approached the King and presented him with a letter of introduction from Père Bonaventure the only missionary in the Bay. The King could read and putting on his spectacles he read what the Father had written. He then told Robin that as it was Sunday he could do no business on that day. Their religion did not prevent them from stealing and on several occasions we find Robin complaining that his goods had been stolen and on one occasion when his stores had been raided during his absence he wrote to the Governor of the Province and suggested that, at least, the Indians should be cautioned.

In those days the white men were few and the Indians still powerful and there was always the fear that they might get out of hand.

The King lived in a wooden house entirely different from an ordinary wigwam, furnished with many skins to lie on,

“ a muskett, a kettle and a few dishes made of bark very
 “ neatly made, it is their squaw's work. The squaws or
 “ females are as fond of smoking as the men for as long as
 “ they have pipes and tobacco they smoke, their children
 “ begin to smoke at 12 years of age.”

Mr. Robin met a Mr. Pringle who was surveying in the district. He had just received an invitation to attend a festival by the King at the Grand Festin and he asked Robin to go with him.

When they arrived they found the King and his Chiefs waiting impatiently for their guests. The Indians, in preparation for the feast, had had nothing to eat that day. Mr. Pringle sat on the right of the King and Robin on the left and on their right sat the Capitaine

de Guerre (next chief to the King). The latter presented each of the visitors with a powder plate full of Moose cut in small pieces and as soon as the visitors were served all began to eat.

The Indians then brought in a kettle full of the fat they had skimmed off and two guts full of kidney grease.

" Each man drank two large ladles full of this fat, and, after that, took hold of the gutt with his fingers and eat out of it, this dainty was presented to us. I tasted some of the gut and stuffin but could not taste the liquid. When the repast was over the squaws came in and carried away their husbands' dish with what they had left. The squaws are never admitted at dinner on these occasions not even the Queen. After dinner each man got up and gave a song, the rest making a chorus which was very diverting, when this scene was over in came the ladies about a dozen in number (one of them was one hundred years old) singing and dancing; they gave us a very pretty hornpipe which was the end of the Grand Festin."

Next day Robin did good business with the Indians and bartered goods for about 1 cwt. of furs.

There were many Arcadians still in the district—the descendants of the ancient French settlers. These people owing to their hostility to the English—a hostility chiefly encouraged by a notorious French priest who taught his people to hate the English and honour their French King—had been distributed among the several British Provinces in 1758. Robin tried to induce one of these Arcadians to pilot the " Neptune " to Trocarnoir but he refused to do so.

He had on arrival in 1767 obtained permission from the Governor of Quebec " pour moy à faire le traité avec les Sauvages."

But trouble was in the air for on the 31st May 1767 he hears that a vessel consigned to his brother John had been stopped by Captain Mowat and taken into Halifax. This news was confirmed by a letter from John received on the 8th June in which he was informed that the brig " Endeavour " 122 tons, Captain Balleine, had been seized on information lodged before the Commissioner of Customs at Boston. The information which John believed had been sent from Halifax was as follows:--

" Two brothers of the name of Robin which come yearly from Jersey to Les Madame and the Bay of Chaleurs bring with them whole cargoes of prohibited goods and therewith carry on an illicit trade with the inhabitants of those places and also in their trade with the Indians impose upon them in the vilest manner contrary to law."

This accusation was a great blow to Charles Robin but after reading it he adds:

" which falsehood I hope we shall be able to clear up in the course of time."

By the Navigation Act passed in the 4th year of George III, vessels sailing from Jersey to foreign parts were obliged to proceed first to an English Port to clear outwards and it was only after strenuous efforts by the Jersey Chamber of Commerce that an Order of the Privy Council restored the ancient privilege of Jersey, - clearances to their outward bound vessels.

On the 25th June 1768, H.M.S. "Glasgow" arrived in the Baie des Chaleurs and the Captain having landed showed Mr. Robin a letter from the Commissioner of Customs at Boston wherein we (my brother and I) were reported as "downright smugglers and villains." The Captain also showed him a copy of the Navigation Act whereby, by one clause our vessels were seizable for not having entered inwards at Gaspé and both ship and master liable to penalties of £100, and, whereby by another clause our ships were seizable for not having cleared outwards from a British Port.

Robin produced his Jersey certificate of clearance but the "Captain only laughed and called those that gave such certificates great fools."

Matters were getting serious for the next day the Captain landed again and directed Robin to put on board again all the goods which had been landed from the "Seaflower" and the "Recovery" and made him produce all goods which had been landed the previous year.

The broad arrow was then marked on the vessels and Robin found himself after his two years hard work practically destitute.

Robin pleaded with the Captain to allow him sufficient goods to carry him over the winter and the Captain agreed to allow him to purchase such goods as he wanted, for "he did not wish to be too hard on me but he had to do his duty."

Many a man would have given up. He was trading with other people's money and he did not know what steps they would take in the matter. His diary tells us what a hard life he had led in his endeavours to build up the business. He was generally afloat in his small half decked shallop facing all kinds of dangers—he was making progress—a stranger in a far land, and his progress had aroused the envy and spite of those merchants who had been in Canada before him.

So the ships sailed away and Robin was left to make the best of a bad bargain. All his stores had not been delivered to the King's Officers and later, on the 12th August 1768, when in the shallop

"Sophia," off Cape St. Louis, he saw the "Sea Flower" and the "Recovery" about a mile away, but, as the "Sophia" had part of the cargo of the "Sea Flower" on board, *which should have been handed over to the Officers*, he did not go near the vessels, for as Robin says:

"it was very hard for me to haul the wind and to avoid two vessels which but three weeks ago were our own and my pastime."

The winter of 1768 was a very severe one and as the firm had had a very disastrous season he decided to spend the winter in his hut at Arichat. A boy named John Le Caux and a man named George Bichard stayed with him. His brother John returned to Jersey. He and his men spent their time in fishing when they could, cutting logs of wood for firewood and occasionally going out shooting for food. It was bitterly cold and the hut was not wind tight and they cut turf and piled it up outside against the wood sides to keep it as wind tight as possible. Some French settlers at Cansa wished Robin and his party to winter in a stone-built house which they had empty in their village and Robin decided to cross over to Cansa with his goods, but although the Frenchmen brought over two large canoes they were unable owing to the rough weather to get across.

But he managed to spend his Christmas with his French friends at Barachoua à l'Espagnol. He remarks that the French observed Christmas day very strictly. He says :—

“ The French drink plenty if they have liquor but observe it strictly, they don't even dance although they do the Sundays nor do they amuse themselves by any other diversions.”

The next day however they made up for it. They had no musicians at Barachoua, so they set out for Arichat and our party

“ plundered the village of women and girls as they have no musicians and we have no less than four, as soon as we arrived went to Vespers and afterwards they began to dance--continued the best part of the night.”

On New Year's day his hosts at Barachoua crossed over to pay him the compliments of the season and we began :

“ to drink wine, rum, and punch plenty together and were very merry by the time our dinner was ready, none of us were in a condition to know whether we were eating or drinking.”

The festivities were kept up the next day but, although the writing was very shaky, the diary was kept up to date.

As the days passed the weather got worse and worse and it was so cold that “ our bread must lie before the fire for an hour before we can eat it and a barrel of beer which was fixed within a foot of the chimney was all frozen, so that we can draw none of it.”

The winter did not pass without some social intercourse, for on three or four occasions we hear of people from the neighbouring villages visiting him in his hut.

Sometimes his visitors were women who adventured across the ice to spend the day with him and once when returning with a neighbour's wife and her sister Nanon, they, getting on to thin ice, were almost drowned. They had not observed the state of the ice until it began to crack.—“ unknowingly thro' their chat.”

Then we hear of Nanon and her sister arriving on another occasion to cook the dinner as Robin expected visitors.

And then as the days grew longer he was able to get more outdoor exercise and on April 27th three New England vessels arrived in the Bay.

Robin hastened on board to try and get a small quantity of bread but the vessels could not spare any as they had already supplied two or three starving families at Canso, who had, six weeks before, arrived there from Crow Harbour, where they had run short of food. They had reached such a state of destitution that all their dogs and cats had been eaten and they were casting longing eyes on a young Mulatto girl when succour arrived.

Robin went home to Jersey for the winter of 1769/70 and on the 14th May 1770 he arrived at Arichat in the brig Hope, Phil Hamon, Master.

On the 23rd September 1772 on arrival at Paspébiac he found that his house had been burnt to the ground during his absence and all goods stored there totally destroyed except one pair of breeches and a few of his things which had been out to wash. It was a great blow to him but he was philosophically inclined for as his diary relates : “ after having breathed a dozen mournful Helas ! and “ rested half an hour, I sailed away to Bonaventure.”

Evidently his business was growing; the difficulties under the Navigation Act having been overcome by the firm who had, in 1771, managed to obtain a Treasury Order for His Majesty's share on the seizure of the "Sea Flower" and "Discovery" in 1768.

We find on Sept. 8th 1769 the "Seville Trader" Captain Nightingale, chartered by Robin, Pipon & Co. "sailed with ye permission of God for Seville in Spain." The firm had ascertained that salmon was much appreciated by the Spaniards, so the Hope was sent to Bilboa with 70 tierces of salmon along with other fish bought at the rate of 8 dollars per tierce—the price to be paid in furs at the following rates—viz: Spring beaver at 5/- per lb. and Martens at 2/6 per skin.

On Sept. 12th 1770 Robin bought 10 geese from the Indians for 3½ lbs. of powder, for as he reasons "Our people cannot be found with provisions at a cheaper rate."

The winter of 1770/1 he remained in Canada having agreed with Thomas Filleul to remain with him at a wage of 45 livres a month.

The diary now becomes simply a record of hard work—he is mostly afloat and he simply lives for work and sees that those under him have little time for anything else. The business was extending and many men from Jersey are brought out to work at the Fisheries. In the selection of lads he suggests to the firm that St. Ouen would be a very good parish from which to get the recruits, for that parish is far away from the towns of St. Helier and St. Aubin and the lads would not be accustomed to town dissipations.

The American War of Independence lasted from 1775 to 1782 and the question of raids from American privateers made trading very difficult. We find him writing to his brother John congratulating him on his safe arrival at Paspebiac after a narrow escape of being captured by an American privateer.

In June 1777 he shipped to England furs to the value of £1000—£1200 and 10 tons of whale and cod oil.

Communications were difficult and in December 1777 he had to send his letters via Halifax and the courier's expenses amounted to £30—a very large sum in those days. He was very much afraid that the Americans would capture Quebec and if they did then they would come down to the coast and plunder their stores, and he therefore applied to the authorities for a ship of war to protect the trade on the coast.

There were very good grounds for his fears for on the 11th June 1778 at 11 p.m. two American privateers, each of 45 tons, each carrying 45 men and mounted with 2 carriage guns and 12 swivel guns, boarded the Company's vessels "Bee" and "Hope" then lying in the Baie des Chaleurs. There were only three men on each of the vessels the remainder of the crews being either fishing or ashore. Evidently the raid was unexpected, as, if the crew of the "Bee" had been aboard, they could have put up a good fight. But the vessel had been in the bay for some time and as the cargo had been taken out they had been obliged to dismount her guns and put them in the hold as ballast until the outward cargo was ready.

The "Hope" a brig of 101 tons was partly loaded having 1400 quintals of fish aboard and the next day was to have completed her cargo and be ready to sail for Lisbon at the first favourable breeze.

The Americans sent the "Hope" southward next day and landing they plundered the stores and loaded the goods on board the "Bee." She was to have sailed on the 15th, so on the 14th of the month they went ashore again to try and capture Charles Robin but found that he had fled to the woods the night before. The day after, H.M.S. "Hunter" and "Viper" and Mr. Smith's "Bonaventure" arrived in the Bay. The "Bonaventure," arriving first, fired on the American vessels and as the other vessels came in sight the Americans hastened to get away. Robin had concealed about 1/2 of his stores but they had found the best part of his furs but having coiled the cable on them when on board the "Bee" they were obliged in their hurried departure to leave behind them their furs and also the stock of powder and ammunition. Before leaving they set the "Bee" on fire.

Both privateers were captured later on at Restigouche, so Robin recovered the greater part of his goods except a small quantity which the privateers had given to the Indians for the use of their canoes when they abandoned their vessels and escaped ashore.

But the firm had to pay 1/4 of the value of the "Bee" as salvage, amounting to £270, and the "Hope" with her cargo was lost altogether.

The "Hunter" and the "Viper" were at Gaspé at the time of the raid and warning was given to the Government by Captain Fainton that the privateers had been seen cruising in the neighbourhood and they arrived in time to save the "Bee" but not the "Hope."

Captain Boyle of H.M.S. "Hunter" left one of his vessels to patrol the coast. The fire on the "Bee" was soon extinguished and Robin kept ten men on board the vessel day and night and thirty men ashore ready for any emergency.

"I keep four shallops fishing and the Percé gang but they dont absent themselves at night, the crew sleeping on board."

Then on the 25th July 1778 he states that the "Neptune" left for Miscou to collect fish but on the 26th she was captured by an American privateer.

The American vessel carried 2 guns and 26 swivel guns and after having taken on board 1050 quintals of fish the Americans sank the "Neptune." They afterwards captured another shallop but the "St. Peter" arriving on the scene the privateer sailed away.

Robin complained to the Government that although armed vessels patrolled the fishing grounds the American privateers managed to do a great deal of damage to the fishing trade. He writes to a correspondent that the "Bee" is now fully armed and

"You may be persuaded we shall do our utmost to defend ourselves and property. These are very embarrassing times and very heavy charge upon my weary shoulders. This is no place for an Englishman, the inhabitants being all inclined towards the Americans."

This letter throws considerable light on the condition of affairs in the Quebec Province. Canada had only been ceded to Britain in 1763 and by the agreement of 1774 the French inhabitants retained full freedom of religion and their ancient laws and customs. By the treaty of 1763 the French continued in possession of the Islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon on condition that no fortifications were erected in these Islands.

But there remained considerable bitterness in the minds of the French inhabitants and they did their best to hinder the activities of the conquerors. News travelled very slowly in those days and there was always uncertainty in the air as to what was going on, for, in writing to his firm in Jersey, Robin states that

" he has directed all vessels to report themselves at Falmouth
" in case Jersey had in the meanwhile been captured by the
" French."

Evidently his firm approved of his work for he writes to thank them for a gold watch which had been sent to him as a mark of their appreciation of his services.

On the 18th August 1778 the " Bee " was ready for sea. She carried 40 sailors and 40 passengers and was mounted with 16 guns. The strain of continuous work and anxiety was beginning to tell upon him and after writing to Governor Cox at Percée he decided to return to Jersey. So we find him writing to the London Agents and the Jersey Firm advising them that he intends sailing on the 23rd September 1778, and informing them about the arrangements made as to the goods left in store. He also suggested to the firm that should he—on the passage home be taken by the Americans, they should send a trusty man from Quebec the following year to look after their goods, " as they are worth while and would yield money at Quebec."

Before he sailed he writes to Mons. Charles Dugat, fils, at Trocadiguessé (now Carleton) whom he had left in charge

" Je conte sur vous comme sur mon frère en conséquence de
" votre amitié que vous m'aviez témoigné il y a dix ans."

Another letter he writes to Geo. Alsopp, Esqre. at Quebec about the business advising him that he was ready to sail the first fair wind and had just heard that war with France had been declared on the 26th July. He arrived safely in Jersey, still a young man of 36 years of age, and remained there until after the American War.

He returned to Paspébiac on the 14th July 1783 having sailed in a Jersey vessel flying the French flag after a voyage of two months.

Soon after he appears to have started on his own and founded the firm of Charles Robin & Co. We have a letter dated 1st July 1784 in which he complains about the delay in sending out supplies.

" Being pinched hurts my credit and character. There's no
" slave in the West Indies but what has much more time to himself
" and enjoys life better than I do, if I was clear of the business all
" the treasures in the World would not tempt me to undertake it
" again. I observe £150 stg. is my salary for the year round. £50
" more or less will make very little difference to me considering the
" short time I am to be in it but I know that is not adequate to my
" trouble and that none of the Gentlemen concerned would do half
" the work for that sum—also the Jersey Gentlemen look upon that
" as a good deal."

We have heard something of the pioneer days of Charles Robin, the dangers he faced and the hardships he endured. He never saved himself and had no use for idle people. He never married and would not allow any of his married employees to bring their wives to Canada. He did his best for the firm, was careful in small things and not afraid of facing big ones. He gave up the comfort of home life to face a very precarious existence in the Gaspé Province. Most of the time he was afloat in small half-decked vessels, facing foul weather, trading with planters and Indians. He was in an unfriendly country and yet he did not lack sympathy for the conquered.

In a letter dated Sept. 1783 he asks that their next vessel should be called "St. Peter," after the Patron des Pêcheurs, and, if a second vessel be built, the "Aurora." for these names are familiar to the inhabitants of these parts, such as were used by their former connection. Then he hopes that

"in time their old manner will wear out and they naturally will adopt ours, seeing no other set of men. This I observe daily. Our borrowing for a time something of their manners make us appear more familiar which renders access easier—a contrary measure, such as blaming their dress or their Customs and those that introduced them in the Country to whom this generation must yet in a measure be partial, would retard that uniformity so very necessary to men who must live together, and we are obliged by principles of generosity to go through the hardest part to bring it in, for we are the conquerors and they the vanquished and such as could not leave the Country and seek a refuge among their own, being too poor—a hard situation which merits the consideration of every feeling breast."

So spoke Charles Robin, the Jersey Pioneer.

REMARKS ON THE SETTLEMENTS IN LOWER CANADA SINCE THE CONQUEST.

By CHARLES ROBIN.

The first British Merchants who settled in Bay Chaleurs, in the Township of Bonaventure, were some of the best Quebec Houses, as Moore and Finlay, Alexander M'Kinsay and few others. In the year 1766 C. Robin explored the said Bay Chaleurs, where he went in the brig *Sea Flower* on a Fishing Excursion; to satisfy his curiosity and for the advantage of the concerned that very year William Smith (who had been brought up in the House of Moore and Finlay and had been at Bonaventure at different times to settle their business) came to Bonaventure on his own account, to lay the foundation of a House of trade and fishing. W.S. and C.R. begun their operations the following year, the former at Bonaventure and the latter at Passibiak with each a vessel. The year 1768 C.R. had two vessels which were both seized by His Majesty's ship *Glasgow* and condemned at Halifax, being on a Trading Voyage and not having cleared out of England. Thus every Jersey Vessel at that time was equally seizable and it is that event that produced the application which immediately brought forth the Act by virtue whereof our vessels in Jersey are cleared out from hence. The reason Charles Robin's vessels were more exposed to be seized than other Jersey vessels on the same business is that he was fixed among strangers, whose trade he annoyed and they lodged informations at the Custom Houses of Halifax and Boston against him and the *Glasgow* was sent in search of him. Upon application, the king gave up to Robin, Pipon & Co., his part of the seizure. The succeeding year in the fall during Charles Robin's absence being on business at the south shore his first dwelling house was burnt, with his clothes, accounts and papers. On William Smith and Charles Robin first settling in the Bay they found their predecessors the Quebec merchants in a state of decay and two years after they were bankrupts and gone. A Halifax Employ of considerable magnitude was set up at Bonaventure; on the first year of their settlement which subsisted about three years, at that time Percée Bonaventure Island and the coast near Gaspée was a complete wilderness and remained so for some years, till the fishermen of Rhode Island, Cape Cod, and neighbourhood came with sloops and schooners which they layed up in Gaspée and carried on the fishery in whale boats which they brought at the different posts from Cape d'Espoire to Point St. Peter, which was the renewal of that business on that coast since the French had been drove out of it; no Europeans shipped off any of that fish to the year 1778. Owing to the American war, William Smyth went to the country for the last time. The year after at the peace in 1783 Charles Robin renewed the business; the year after John Sholbred, who represented the late William Smyth, who died in South Carolina, made an offer of all the debts that concern had in the country, to C.R. amounting to some thousand pounds, which he declined and the whole has been lost.

In 1784 a Guernsey Employ was set up in Gaspée Bay, under the agency of Thomas Le Mesurier; soon after another was set up at Percée by Nicholas Fiott & Co. under the agency of Geo. Le Geyt. Another on the Island of Bonaventure by Hamond, Dumaresq & Co. under the agency of Peter Le Blanc; one at Malbaye under the agency of Johnson; one at Port St. Peter under the agency of Ed. Square; another in the same place under the agency of John Le Montais. The Guernsey Employ finally gave up business, after having incurred most heavy losses, and has been succeeded by a Jersey Employ which has not been much more fortunate; Fiott & Co. Hamond & Co. gave up the business for want of success; all the others have equally disappeared through the same cause. In Bay Chaleurs, John Lee supported by London connections set up an employ and swampt upwards of £12,000 Sterling. Math. Stewart & Co. under the same auspices swampt from first to last at least as much, John Rimpoff under like auspices met with the same fate with an equal loss. In 1783, a Quebec employ was set up at Bonaventure in the place of William Smyth which was abandoned after about six years trial; an Employ from Quebec also subsisted at Bonaventure for many years before the Revolution in America and loaded two vessels belonging to John Carry of Guernsey and was likewise abandoned before the American war. A Jersey Employ was set up at Bonaventure after the Peace with America, under the agency of Daniel Le Geyt and after several years of careful toils and hard struggles gave up the business with considerable loss. Another Jersey employ was set up at Port Daniel and Miscou under the agency of Philip Le Coutour and after several years trial gave up the business with heavy losses; numberless other trials from different quarters in different posts have been attempted and have all failed except Daniel M'Phersons' Fishery and supplying business at Point St. Peter, Malbay and Doughlastown which has answered very well. Thus it is evident that if there is no competition at present it is because the place is poor; for if all those who have tried their fortune there had succeeded, or even one half of them, it would naturally have drawn a number of adventures which is not nor cannot be the case.

William Smith carried on his business with three times the capital C.R. used and ships in proportion.

Besides W.S. and C.R. from their establishment to that period, W.S. changed his connections three different times and made some compromise. C.R. gave up the business in 1778.

