

GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY

WRECK OF "ALERT" AT PABOS

The Jersey schooner, ALERT, Capt. John
Allez Le Scelleur, Master, wrecked at
Pabos in Gaspesia.

KEN ANNETT

WRECK OF "ALERT" AT PABOSFOREWORD

The following account of the wreck of the schooner ALERT of Jersey at Pabos some one hundred and forty years ago serves to recall her Master, Captain John Allez Le Scelleur, Master Mariner, of a Jersey family whose name is well known in Gaspesia.

In 1969 and 1970 the REVUE D'HISTOIRE DE LA GASPESIE published interesting articles by John Le Scelleur of Cloridorme, then in his 80's. In his "NOTES GENEALOGIQUES SUR MES ANCESTRES.." Mr. Le Scelleur recounted something of his family background. He recalled that the Le Scelleur family was native to France but that members had emigrated to the Channel Island of Jersey at the time of the excesses of the French Revolution. There his grandfather, Charles Le Scelleur, 1818-1899, had been a shipbuilder. Three sons, John, Philip and Charles, and a daughter, Sophie were born to this Charles and his wife, Sophie Gendron Le Scelleur. Of the sons, Charles Jr. had come out to Gaspesia in 1866 as an employee of the Fruing Company and had remained. John LeScelleur of Cloridorme was one of his sons.

Pending correction by contemporary members of the Le Scelleur family, GASPE OF YESTERDAY presumes that Captain John Allez Le Scelleur, Master of the schooner ALERT of Jersey was a brother of Charles Le Scelleur, the Jersey shipbuilder. Indeed Charles may well have had a hand in the building of the schooner, ALERT.

Seafaring and the fishery was evidently in the blood of the Le Scelleurs of Jersey. Mrs. Marion Turk's interesting volume, "THE QUIET ADVENTURERS IN CANADA", notes that Philip and James Le Scelleur were on the coasts of Gaspesia on or before 1820 and that a Captain Le Scelleur, Master of the Bark SWIFT of Jersey had his vessel driven ashore at the entrance to Amherst Harbour, Magdalen Islands in the great gale of 1873. In Gaspesia the family name is associated with Griffon Cove, Fox River, Grand Valley, Cloridorme, Paspébiac and New Carlisle.

RECORDS OF MARTIN SHEPPARD, N.P.

26th September, 1849. Protest of John Allez Le Scelleur, Master
of the Schooner ALERT of Jersey

By this Public Instrument of Declaration and Protest Be It Known and made manifest unto all to whom these presents shall come or whom the same may in any wise concern, That on this twenty-sixth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty nine, Before us the undersigned Martin Sheppard, Notary Public duly admitted and sworn for that part of the now Province of Canada, formerly constituting the late Province of Lower Canada, and the Witnesses hereinafter and hereunto subscribing personally, came and appeared and were present John Allez Le Scelleur, Master Mariner and Master of the schooner or vessel called the ALERT of Jersey, of the burthen of seventy seven tons or thereabouts register measure, now lying stranded at or near the place called Dupuis Island at Pabos, in the County of Gaspé in the District of Gaspé and Province aforesaid, in part loaded with dry, merchantable codfish for sale, and Christopher Kalloway Bryant and Edward Hototte, Seamen, of and on board of the said vessel;

Which said John Allez Le Scelleur, Christopher Kalloway Bryant and Edward Hototte. appearers, of their own free will and voluntary accord, in the presence of us, the said Notary and subscribing Witnesses, did and by these presents do, severally and respectively, each of them for himself only, allege, affirm, declare, protest and say -

That the said schooner or vessel called the ALERT, being staunch, strong, and in all respects in good order and condition, and in every way fit and capable for her intended trading voyage herein after mentioned and other purposes of navigation, well, properly and sufficiently manned, victualled, apparelled and provided, they the said appearers set sail on board of the said vessel from the Roadstead of Paspebiac, in the County of Bonaventure and District of Gaspé on a trading and collecting voyage in the District of Gaspé aforesaid, intending to call for the above said purposes at Anse aux Gascons and Pabos in the said District and return...

to Paspebiac aforesaid.

That the said vessel in the prosecution of the said voyage left Anse aux Gascons aforesaid with about two hundred and fifty Quintals of dry codfish and about forty hogsheads of salt on board on Wednesday the nineteenth day of September instant and arrived therewith at Pabos and came to anchor at Dupuis Island aforesaid at about three o'clock P.M. on the same day. On the Saturday following blowing strong from the Eastward with a prospect of increase. Secured and moored ship with both bower anchors and chains. On Monday morning at about three o'clock A.M., the wind having suddenly round to the South Eastward, in a direction towards the shore, and blowing a strong gale, the said vessel parted from her strong chain at about five fathoms from the anchor, drifted and struck repeatedly and with the utmost violence on an outside sand bar, distant about sixty fathoms from the shore, where she continued striking for about thirty minutes and unshipped her rudder, which was afterwards broken by the force of the seas and the violent striking of the said vessel and rendered totally useless and unserviceable -

That the said appearers, finding the vessel filling fast and beginning to settle in the sand with the sea making a clear break over her, sweeping the deck fore and aft, deeming their lives in danger, after consultation unanimously determined to slip the chain cable as the only means of saving themselves and their vessel, which was accordingly done, and the vessel drifted towards the beach with the wind and tide, where she continued straining and labouring heavily, filling with the tide and the water flowing in and out of her the same as on the outside -

After which she embedded herself firmly in the loose sand on the shore in which she settled to the depth of about four feet and where she still remains in a wrecked and dangerous atate, with little prospect of her being extricated...

And the said appearers do jointly and severally allege, affirm, declare, protest and say that all and singular the injuries, losses and damages which have happened to the said vessel and

her cargo, and the total loss thereof, were in no way owing to or occasioned by any unseamanship, mismanagement or neglect of any of them the said appearers, or of any of the rest of the crew of the said vessel, but solely and entirely to the causes, perils and accidents before mentioned, and that during the said time they and the rest of the crew of the said vessel used their utmost endeavours and exertions to preserve the said vessel and her cargo from loss and damage.

To the truth of all which said several matters and things herein before alleged and declared, the said appearers have duly and severally made Oath on the Holy Evangelists before us the said Notary and subscribing Witnesses.

Now therefore that these presents may enjoy full force and effect I, the said Notary, at the request of the said John Allez Le Scelleur, have protested and by these presents do most solemnly protest against all and every person and persons whomsoever whom it doth, shall or may in any wise concern, for and by reason and on account of all manner of damages, losses, prejudices, costs, expenses, interests and detriments whatsoever which the said schooner or vessel called the ALERT and her cargo, or either of them or any part thereof have or hath already sustained or may hereafter sustain either in the total or partial loss of the said vessel and the cargo therein as the case may be and occur; and also against all charges and expenses whatsoever which the said schooner or vessel called the ALERT and her cargo, or either of them, have or hath already sustained or may hereafter sustain. And also against all charges and expenses whatsoever which the owners or Freighters of the said vessel and her cargo, or either of them, or any person or persons whomsoever may be put to or sustain for or by reason of the aforesaid accidents, perils and causes, or otherwise relating thereto; the same and every part thereof having occurred as before mentioned and not by the insufficiency of the said vessel or by neglect of the said John Allez Le Scelleur or his crew -

All which matters and things were declared, alleged and affirmed as aforesaid as set forth in the presence of the said Notary and subscribing Witnesses and therefore I have hereunto subscribed my name being as requested to testify and certify the premises.

Thus Done, Protested and Sworn to at Paspebiac in the County of Bonaventure, in the District and Province aforesaid (where no stamps are used) on the day and in the month and year herein first above written. In Faith and Testimony whereof the said John Allez Le Scelleur and Christopher Kalloway Bryant have hereunto set and subscribed their respective names and signatures and affixed their respective seals and the said Edward Hototte having declared not to know how to write and sign, demand therefore by us duly made, hath made his ordinary mark, being a cross and affixed his seal - in the presence of Messieurs Alfred Carcaud and Alfred Payne Le Boutillier, both of Paspebiac, Clerks, Witnesses to the due execution of these presents, and in the presence of and with me the said Notary, also hereunto severally subscribing - these presents having been first duly read in the presence and hearing of the said appearers and Witnesses to their entire satisfaction.

SIGNATURES:

Alfred Carcaud

Alfred P. Le Boutillier

John A. Le Scelleur

Christopher K. Bryant

Edward X Hototte

M. Sheppard, N.P.

