

GASPÉ OF YESTERDAYRESPONSE TO 1833 INQUIRY ON GASPÉ  
\*\*\*\*\*

John D. McConnell, J.P. of Gaspé Basin replies  
to the questionnaire on Gaspé submitted to him  
by Lieut. Frederick H. Baddeley, Royal Engineers.

KEN ANNETT

RESPONSE TO 1833 INQUIRY ON GASPÉ

INTRODUCTION

The inquiry of Lieut. Baddeley had its origins in the ACT 10-11 GEO. IV, CAP.39 of the Quebec Legislature to promote the exploration and better understanding of certain "remote" areas of Quebec. A previous article of this GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY series, #67, "MEET SOME GASPESIANS OF 150 YEARS AGO" recalled the appointment of Commissioners under the ACT and the remarkable exploration of Gaspesia by Lieut. Baddeley, R.E. and his companions, the Provincial Surveyor, Joseph Hamel, and Mr. Evrinton. The article focused on the Gaspeians of 1833 that the explorers met in their travels. It is hoped that the article will eventually be published.

On his return to Quebec from Gaspesia, Lieut. Baddeley sought to supplement his observations and knowledge gained through conversations in the District of Gaspé by means of a questionnaire. One well-qualified Gaspeian who replied to the inquiry was John D. McConnell, J.P. of Gaspé Basin. As a Collector of Customs, Justice of the Peace and Major of Militia, McConnell was a widely known and well-informed citizen of Gaspé. As noted in the GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY article # 113, "FORT RAMSAY", he was , by marriage to Jane O'Hara, linked to the leading families of Gaspé - O'Haras, Arnolds, Stewarts, etc., and his work gave him insight into the commercial and legal aspects of Gaspeian life.

\*\*\*\*\*

To the Editor of the Quebec "MERCURY"

Quebec, 18th Nov., 1833

Sir:

While engaged this autumn ( under Commissioners appointed by His Excellency the Governor in Chief) exploring a portion of the unsettled parts of the District of Gaspé, I had occasion to

traverse its settlements and could not but be struck with three facts, viz:

- 1st Their importance and extent.
- 2nd Their neglected and unappreciated state.
- 3rd The little information the public is in possession of respecting them.

In making these observations the idea naturally occurred that the attempt to remove the last disadvantage by compiling all the information that can be obtained, might be useful to the District in particular, and the Province in general, as well as creditable to the compiler ---some scruples at first presented themselves to me on the score of my fitness for such an undertaking, but upon considering that the labour ought to be undertaken --- that I had no power to influence another to undertake it, and that as an employee from whom a Report was expected, I was already engaged in the cause, these scruples vanished.

I now therefore, as a preliminary step, beg leave to address the following queries to the inhabitants of the District of Gaspé particularly, and to the public in general, trusting that in so doing so both they and it will do me the justice to believe that these queries are not submitted under the conviction that they are entirely appropriate, but upon the supposition that it is necessary to put some in order to invite replies, and upon the certainty that I had no better to offer. In case of receiving the necessary assistance I pledge myself to submit it through the Commissioners and under acknowledgement to the House of Assembly.

Letters and papers on the subject addressed to the compiler under cover to J. Le Boutillier, Esq., M.P. will oblige

Your obdt servant,

F.H. Baddeley,  
Lieut. Royal Engineers

THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND THE REPLY (OR LACK OF REPLY) OF JOHN D. McCONNELL OF GASPE BASIN TO ALL QUESTIONS SUBMITTED.

1. Q. Name the town or settlement you are about to afford information upon.  
A. The County of Gaspé
2. Q. From whence, what, or whom does it derive its name?  
A. I have no historical or traditional information on this head.
3. Q. When was it first settled, and by whom ?  
A. I cannot say.  
[ In response to the more precise question as to who first settled Gaspé Basin, McConnell named the Hon. Felix O'Hara. Ref.-GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY. "THE O'HARA FAMILY OF GASPÉ.]
4. Q. How many inhabitants ? How many inhabited houses ?  
A. Refer to the several statistical accounts furnished government from this County.  
[ As example refer to APPENDIX (G.) 7 Victoriae A.1843 "Names of the Heads of Families, Business or Calling, and Number of Persons in each, residing at Gaspé Basin, South-West Branch, North-West Branch, Peninsula and Sandy Beach- part of GASPE OF YESTERDAY # 83 "THOSE GASPÉ ROADS OF FORMER TIMES"]
5. Q. What proportion of Catholics and Protestants ?  
A. I do not know exactly.
6. Q. What proportion use the French language? what proportion the English language ?  
A. This County may be considered chiefly settled by an English community with a few American Royalists but in consequence of a co-mixture of Canadian, Guernsey and Jersey fishermen, the French language is generally spoken or understood.
7. Q. What schools exist, how are they supported, and are the pupils instructed in both or in only one language, and which is that ?  
A. I cannot enumerate the schools accurately. Some are under "Royal Foundation" and others established by authority of the Provincial

Parliament and supported by sums voted by that body. I am not aware of any language besides English being taught in these schools.

[ For more information on early schools see GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY #70 "GASPESIA'S FIRST SCHOOL INSPECTOR" published by SPEC January 3, 1984.]

8. Q. What Churches or other places of worship, how are they served, by whom and how many times a year, what size and of what material built ?

A. The Established Church of England and the Church of Rome. There is a Church of England at Gaspé Basin, one at St. George's Cove, one at Malbay and one at Percé. They are served alternately, as the case may be, and with reference to the number of worshippers at the several congregations. During the summer months the Missionary divides the time as equally as circumstances will admit that at each station divine ordinances may be dispensed as frequent as possible and in winter he makes one or two journeys along the coast, which he is obliged to perform on snowshoes, as the winter roads do not admit of traversing such an extent with horses.

Besides preaching at the several churches the Minister visits the Sunday Schools and makes family visitations to those who by reason of too great a distance, old age, or other casualty, may be deprived of attending public worship.

The Rev. W. Arnold resides at Gaspé Basin and is the Missionary in charge in this County. The churches are wooden frame buildings. The one at the Basin is at present under repair. The church at Percé is a beautiful frame building situated on a mound which overlooks the Gulph of St. Lawrence and is highly creditable to the inhabitants who erected it at their own expense. They are, however, indebted to John Le Boutillier, Esq., for the liberal subscription which he contributed and for his active exertions in getting the work completed.

I may here remark that this Mission is attended with numerous, discouraging circumstances which bear particularly hard on the officiating clergyman in charge, namely the want of Roads, the danger of Boating in the summer months owing to sudden tornadoes from the high lands on our shores and the difficulty

and fatigue of travelling on foot thro' the natural forests in the winter, besides these, the expense forms an item of consideration as there is no fund for defraying incidental expenses. To overcome these obstacles requires a person possessing the vigilance, zeal and enterprose of Mr. Arnold, who certainly goes through that arduous duty with alacrity.

There are, I Believe, eight places of worship for the Roman Catholic Community under the charge of the Rev'd J.B. McMahon, C.P., whose attention in visitation of the sick, and indeed all his sacred duties, must be readily acknowledged. To this reverend gentleman the Roman Catholic worshippers at Percé are all the more indebted as by his exertions a very capacious and indeed ornamental church has been erected there and is now nearly finished.

[ Ref.- For Rev. Wm Arnold. GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY #27 "SPRING GROVE"  
FOR Rev. J.B. McMahon. PERCÉ by the Rev. C.E. Roy. 1947 ]

9. Q. What other public buildings, describing size and material ?

A. There is a fine stone building at Percé which was erected by John Le Boutillier, Esq. and sold by him to the Provincial Government. It is occupied as a Gaol and Court Hall. There is also a House at Douglastown occupied as a Court House in which the Provincial Court and Quarter Sessions are held.

10. Q. Name the principal inhabitants and their occupations ?

A. Gaspé Basin:

- . Malcolm Graham McArthur, Esq. J.P. Retired Captain Royal Marines
- . Henry O'Hara, Esq., J.P. Colonel of the Gaspé Militia.
- . James Stewart, Esq. Retired Sea Captain and Merchant now occupying a beautiful and extensive farm at the Basin and a good agriculturist
- . John D. McConnell, Esq., Sub.-Collector Customs. Major of the Gaspé Militia. Agent for "LLOYD'S".
- . Rev'd W. Arnold, Missionary of the Church of England.
- . Mrs. Hugh O'Hara (Lemoine Cottage) Relict of the late Hugh O'Hara, Esq.

## 10. A.(ctd)

South-West Arm

Felix Boyle, Merchant and carrying on whaling.

Abraham Coffin and James Boyle - Farming.

Joseph L. Languedoc, Esq. - Farmer.

Philip Bechervaise - Shipbuilder and Farmer.

L'Anse aux Cousins

Benjamin Coffin

- Boat building and farming.

Charles Davis

Sandy Beach

W.Baker

- Merchant and carrying on fishing.

Peninsula

Messers Miller,  
Ascah and Annett

- Whalers

Douglstown

John Johnston, Esq., Lumber Merchant

Mrs. Johnston, Relict of the late H.Johnston, Esq.

Grand Grève

Messrs P. and F. Janvrin and Co., residing in the Island of Jersey and carrying on Fishing at Grand Grève and Malbay. Owners of several ships and brigs trading to Brazil and Foreign Europe with fish.

St. George's Cove

Monamy and Ahier - Fishing and shipowners.

Peter Briard - Fishing and shipbuilder.

Peter Le Mesurier- Merchant and fishing.

Point St.Peter

H.B.Johnston, Esq. Merchant carrying on fishing, lumbering, etc.  
Justice of the Peace.

W. Alexander Merchant, fishing and shipowner.

John Perrie and Son " " "

10. A. (ctd)

Point St. Peter (ctd)

R. Bond. Fishing and trader

John Packwood, Esq., Justice of the Peace. Numerous small fishing establishments at Cape Rossier.

Malbay

Charles Vardon Esq., Justice of the Peace. Merchant and fishing.

Messrs. Girrard Fishing.

Peter Maybe, Jr. Shipbuilder, Fishing and Farming

Peter Maybe, Sr. Fishing, Grist Mill. Farming.

Philip Maybe Blacksmith, locksmith, fishing, farming.

Percé

Messrs Charles Robin and Co. - Merchants, shipowners and carrying on fishing on the most extensive scale.

Buteau Co. Merchants carrying on a large fishing establishment and also merchants at Quebec.

At Percé there are numerous minor establishments who make a great quantity of fish.

John Le Boutillier, Esq., has also a store at Percé and at several fishing stations along the coast.

Messrs. P. Duval and Co. carrying on fishing on the Island of Bonaventure and have good buildings there.

Messrs Cass and Ferguson have each fishing establishments at Ance aux Beaufils.

Cape Cove

Messrs John Vibert and Co.)

C. Savage )... Merchants and Fishing

Messrs Beck-Cape d'Espoir )

Grand River

Messrs C. Robin and Co. Merchants and Fishing

Messrs J. Rossier and Co. Merchants and Fishing  
(also at Newport)



10. A.(ctd)

Besides the foregoing, there are numerous settlers along the coast who make fishing a secondary pursuit.

Ance Griffon - Synnots and English

Fox River - Bonds, St.Clair, Scott and Cotton

Grand Etang - Joseph Le B. (Bond ?) and Co.

11.Q. How many stores, by whom kept, what are the articles they are usually supplied with, and at what rate are they usually retailed ?

A. Almost the whole of those enumerated above carry on fishing, keep store and vend such articles as may be requisite for that pursuit besides wearing apparel, provisions, Rum, Sugar. Molasses, Tobacco, tea, coffee, rice, Indian meal etc. and in general and constant demand.

12. Q.What is the difference between cash and store payment ?

A.Cash can scarcely be considered a circulating medium in this County, barter being the desideratum of our trade. The difference between cash and store payment may be therefore termed nominal and is completed at about 25% premium (which when the risk, expenses of handling etc. in receiving fish payment are taken into account is by no means an extravagant or too liberal a difference.)

13.Q. What is the price of labour ?

A. The price of agricultural labour, during the fishing months, is about £ 3 per month, besides bed and board, and to men engaged as "shoremen" at the fishing £ 10-12 to "Salters", £ 4.10-5 to "Splitters" £ 5-5.10 per month.

The men who go in the Boats fishing (if not on half their catch) about £ 3 per month. Many of the fishermen go on "half-line" and hire men to go with them on lower wages, but as the operative fisherman is found in hooks, lines, boat and provisions, unless he is very attentive and sparing he will have very little to his credit at the end of the season. This often happens to our friends from the Emerald Isle but the Guernsey and Jersey men who are steady and industrious, almost without exception, soon gather a "purse".

## 13. A. (ctd)

I may here remark, altho rather a digression, that our Fisheries afford annually employment to many hundreds of Canadian young men from the parishes (l.e. from those parishes along the St. Lawrence River to the East of Quebec) and that many of the schooners make revenue by carrying those passengers to and from in the Spring and Fall. They are, generally speaking, not good fishermen and have mainly what must be deemed middling success. It may not perhaps be generally known that the "planters" here have agents in the parishes for hiring and shipping Canadian young men in the Spring. Other fishermen emigrate annually from Jersey in great numbers for the same purpose and return in the Fall.

14. Q. What mechanics reside on the spot, what is the rate and description of their pay, and which are most in request ?

A. Chiefly carpenters, boat builders and coopers.

The native inhabitants are all more or less self-taught craftsmen and are very ingenious. Boat building and house carpenters are most in request.

Their pay is chiefly rated by "the piece" and not under 5/ per diem (i.e. 5 shillings per day.)

15. Q. What is the principal staple of the place, how is it disposed of, in what quantity per annum, and at what rate ?

A. Codfish. It is exported to the United Kingdom, Jersey, Foreign Europe, South America, Quebec and Nova Scotia.

The price, as in other purchases, varies in a ratio with the demand but may form an aggregate of 12/6 per Quintal.

For Quantity see accompanying compendium of the Fishery.

16. Q. What other resources have the inhabitants ? detail particulars.

A. The inhabitants generally hold lots of land and employ their leisure time in Agricultural pursuits, cultivating potatoes, wheat, barley, oats and hay, without which I am of the opinion they could not support themselves through a long winter. They employ themselves also in bad weather and when the navigation is closed, making and mending their fishing barges, getting out fuel and generally preparing for the ensuing summer's operations.

Agriculture with those who follow fishing is scarcely a secondary object.

17. Q. What is the nature of the soil, does it afford encouragement for a farming population ?

A. The soil is generally light, of a sandy nature and not well calculated for retaining manure. The mountains in the neighbourhood of the Basin seem to be formed of small gravel or sea beach stone and in many places at a very considerable depth (20 to 30 feet) Small sea shells have been found. The Gravel is very dark or blackish blue and is often discovered in lumps being cemented together with a black matter having the appearance of recent liquation and rendering the small pebbles strongly adhesive. The soil formed on this basis is an accumulation of decayed vegetable matter and in many places several feet deep, perfectly decomposed, resembling the vicinity of Peat moss which when slightly burnt yields excellent potato crops.

Other open soils with loose under stratum loam or mother earth.

Brickish soils are sometimes, altho not frequently, met with and yield excellent crops of summer wheat and barley. The lands here are well calculated for manures but do not retain putrescent matter. I have found compost taken from a swamp on my land during the summer and mixed with marsh or eel grass answer well on my lightest fields. The mud taken from this swamp is decayed vegetable matter bedded on dark blue sand, is about 12 feet deep, of a strong noxious smell and is considered by me as a most valuable manure.

The marsh and eel grass which descends in August and September from the swamps at the S.W. arm of the Basin and collects in considerable quantity on our beach, being impregnated with saline water, also sea wrack, seem particularly adapted to our soils and I claim the introduction of the former about 9 years ago, the utility of which was clearly demonstrated on some upland meadow land as well as in planting potatoes.

Manures of animal origin are seldom used here and only profitably applied to alumins and stiff soils, their adaptation here can be extended if compost were more in use. Limestone of excellent quality can be readily had along our shores.

I consider the County of Gaspé particularly well calculated for general agricultural purposes and offering more ready means

17. A.(ctd)

of settling than any other section of Canada, as its waters (to the industrious) afford a ready means of subsistence or at least an auxilliary which gives a very material article of food until their farming endeavours be matured.

18, Q. What proportion of the front concession is taken up?

A. I cannot say exactly, but may remark that the front is occupied wherever it gives convenient access to the water for the purposes of carrying on fishing, altho in most cases very small extent backwards be cleared.

19. Q. What proportion of the 2nd concessions granted and settled, and what is the agricultural character of the 2nd concessions, and the back woods in general ?

A. I am not aware of the 2nd concession being occupied anywhere in this County. The lands are mountainous but with very rich valleys and partake of the character set forth in answer to your question 17.

The forest trees are of comparatively large growth remote from the seaboard, some groves of Pine are found affording square timber of merchantable size. The other woods are chiefly: Fir, Cedar, Elm, Maple, Sugar Maple, Birch, Ash, Mountain Ash, Witch Hazel, Black and White Spruce. besides numerous shrubs and underwood common to Canada.

20. Q. Are any lands in the vicinity granted, though not settled, and to whom ?

A. I believe so, but cannot say to whom.

21. Q. What is the nature of the tenure, through whom and upon what conditions is land obtained, and what are the fees to be paid on obtaining a grant ?

A. I don't know.

[ An interesting reply - McConnell, it is presumed, knew quite a lot about land grants in Gaspé - but evidently did not wish to reveal such information.]

22. Q. What is the nature of the security upon which land already granted is held, and are there many cases describing it in which it may be considered doubtful ?

A. I cannot say.

23. Q. What crops are most abundant and certain, which are those which usually fail and to what cause do you attribute the failure ?

A. Wheat, Barley, Early Oats, Timothy Grass, Clover, Potatoes. The potato crops frequently fail in consequence of early frosts, if planted in the vicinity of the natural forests or near the Rivers. Potatoes, however, thrive here generally and repay the husbandman more amply than any other article. Some seasons, when they are planted early, the seed dies before there can be sufficient warmth to force the germ. This was the case, most unfortunately, last year, with almost every farmer here. My crop was not fully one half and many a total failure.

[ Ref. GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY #66 "THE GREAT GASPÉ FAMINES OF  
1816 AND 1833" SPEC 17 FEB.'87]

24. Q. Are the occupations of fishing and farming, when pursued by the same family, much opposed to each other, and why so ?

A. No. Fishing and farming may be carried on by the same family with more success than if either pursuit were followed distinct, as there are many days during the fishing season not adapted to that pursuit when the fishermen can be profitably employed in farming.

25. Q. Is any regular system of Agriculture followed ?

A. No. Except by a very few.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

23. What crops are most certain and abundant, which are those which usually fail and to what cause do you attribute the failure?

A. Wheat, Barley, Early Oats, Timothy Grass, Clover and Potatoes. The potato crops frequently fail in consequence of early frosts, if planted in the vicinity of the natural forests or near the Rivers. Potatoes, however, thrive here generally and repay the husbandman more amply than any other article. Some seasons when they are planted early the seed dies before there can be sufficient warmth to force the germ. This was the case, most unfortunately, last year, with almost every farmer here. My crop was not fully one half and many a total failure.

24. Are not the occupations of fishing and farming, when pursued by the same family much opposed to each other, and why so?

A. No. Fishing and farming may be carried on by the same family with more success than if either pursuit were followed distinct, as there are many days during the fishing season not adapted to that pursuit when the Fishermen can be profitably employed in Farming.

25. Is any regular system of Agriculture followed, the rotation of crops following, and manuring attended to?

A. No. Except by very few.

26. Is the grazing of cattle attended to, and are these fed upon natural or artificial meadows - do they thrive?

A. Yes. In a greater ratio than husbandry generally. The cattle in this vicinity go at large in the woods or on the marshes during the summer and are habituated to attend at their homes in the evening and morning to be milked. They thrive well on the salt marshes and give very rich milk. The Butter made at Gaspé Basin is superior to any I ever saw in Canada and surpasses in my opinion the much-famed "Glades Butter" of West Maryland. Indeed our Butter is the best dressed, finest coloured and most delicious flavoured I ever saw. In the winter the horses and \_\_\_\_\_ cattle are "blind fed" on upland or marsh hay and straw.

27. What is the price of a cow, an ox, a bull, a horse, a sheep, a pig, etc. etc. What is the price of milk, butter and cheese; also fresh meats per lb.?

A. A good cow of 7 years old 8 to 10£. A working ox of 5 years old 10 to 12£. A Bull (not of superior breed) about the same as an ox as he is not exempt from labour in the winter. Horses 10 to 30£. Sheep 20/ ea. Pigs 6 to 5. Milk is not an article of merchandise, the shipping and the calves get the surplus skim milk and the pigs are treated to that agreeable beverage Buttermilk. Fresh Butter 1/ to 1/4 lb. Fresh beef 4 to 6 lb. Hens 1/ to 1/3. Chickens 6 to 8. Geese, wild or tame 2/6.

28. What is the amount and description of pay which the fisherman receives, and what duties is he expected to perform? Give a detail of his life and pursuits? Also the expenses by items of, and the mode of conducting a fishing establishment in all its branches, as followed in the District?

A. I respectfully leave the answer to this question for those who are engaged in that pursuit.

29. Are the vessels or boats employed capable of sustaining rough weather, or do they run for shore when it is stormy?

A. The Barges employed in the codfishing are well adapted for the purpose and capable of sustaining boisterous weather in proportion to their size. Generally run for shore on the approach of storm when practicable.

30. Do the owners of fishing vessels or boats receive any premium from Government as an encouragement towards the fisheries?

A. No, not that I am aware of and the bounty or premium of 1/8 p. Quintal hitherto allowed by the Government of New Brunswick has also been discontinued.

31. Is any duty paid on salt and other articles necessary for the support of the fisheries, and what difference exists in this respect between the districts of Gaspé and Halifax, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick?

A. A drawback of 4 p. minot is allowed on salt which has paid that duty on its importation by being reshipped for the Gaspé fishing but this question can be best answered by reference to the Imperial and Provincial Statutes.

32. Do the Americans interfere with the fisheries, and to what extent?

A. They do not directly, nor am I aware that they approach our shores nearer than the limits allowed them by the 59 Geo. III Cap. 38 unless in cases of emergency with the exception of the Islands of Anticosti and the Magdalens. The former appears within these five years past abandoned of codfish and as we have no fishing establishments on the Island Foreigners can with impunity avail themselves of these circumstances.

In 1830 I detained the American Schooner "Rebecca" for having committed a breach of the Navigation laws since which the United States fishermen have not made their visits so frequent nor are their "notions" so visible on the shores of the River and Gulph of the St. Lawrence.

33. How many schooners and boats fitted out, and by whom?

A. 18 Schooners employed in carrying or coasting fish and 3 in whale fishing, viz.:

Messrs. P. & F. Janvrin & Co.	3	*
" C. Robin & Co.	3	*
W. Alexander	2	*
Messrs. J. Perrie & Son	1	*
" Monamy & Ahier	1	*
" Messrs. P. Duval & Co.	1	*
" J. Vibert & Co.	2	*

\* Those marked thus are carriers for their owners only, whose vessels for sea load at the Basin.

C. Vardon	1
C. Savage	1
N. Ascah	1
W. Baker	1
Messrs. McArthur	1
	<hr/>
	18

Felix Boyle	1
Annett & Baker	1
J. Miller & Bros,	1
	<hr/>

3 Whalers

34. Any ships owned or chartered by individuals, who are they, what name, tonnage, freight, destination?

A. * Bhip Messenger 247 tons	}	Coppered
* " Janvrin 228 "		Owned by Messrs. P. & F. Janvrin
* Brig Doris 168 "		& Company, Jersey
* Ship Oliver Blanchard	}	Messrs. C. Robin & Co., Jersey
* Brig Broad Axe		(The Messrs. Robin own many other ships and
* Schnr. Brig. Dit-on		vessels but the above are mainly noted as

having landed goods here direct)

34. Cont'd

* Brig d'Amour	141 tons	}	J. Perrie & Son, Jersey
* Brig Adventure	113 "		
* Brig Canada	144 tons		W. Alexander
* Schr. Minnow	63 "		J. Vibert & Co.
* " Habnab	138 "		"
* Schr. Brig Prince Regent	79 tons		J. Rossier & Co.
* " " Concord	86 tons		"
* Schr. Spartan	57 "		E. LeRossignol
Schr. Brig Superb	86 "		J. Le_____
* Brig. St. E_____	133 "		Monamy & Ahier
Schr. Brig Susan	87 "		LeGresley & Co.
* Brig Commerce	112 "		_____ & Vibert
Schr. Brig Young Peggy	60 tons		Messrs. LeCorne
Brig Adonis	142 tons		F. Bertram
* Schr. Brig. Judith & Esther	83 tons		J. Vibert & Co.
* Brig Seneca	103 tons		P. Perchard
* Brig Egton (?)	63 "		P. Duval & Co.
* Brig Friends	115 "		J. Vibert & Co.

\* Those marked thus have fishing establishments within county.

These vessels trade to Guernsey, Jersey, the United Kingdom, Foreign Europe, South America. The ships are fitted out as Letter of Marque, are very sharp built and fast sailers.

35. What are the Custom House fees, and where are they collected, and is the collecting them attended with much delay to the shippers, and if so, how could this be remedied?

A. There are no Fees received at the Customs-House except for examining new vessels. This is authorized by a recent Order-in-Council.

36. What is the annual produce of the fisheries, stating items?

A. Refer to an accompanying compendium.

37. What disadvantages do the fisheries labour under, and what should be done to remove them?

A. The ad valorem duty of 23 p/cent on \_\_\_\_\_ goods \_\_\_\_\_ and merchandise of British manufacture imported here for the use of the fisheries has been a source of complaint by those engaged in that pursuit as the high Crown and Provincial duties on Molasses being a very material article in their consumption. The Crown duty under the 14 Geo. III has been discontinued by a repeal of so much of that Act and has materially relieved importers of that necessary article. (Rendered of some importance in the fisheries from the general use of Spruce tea and Spruce Beer sweetened with molasses).

A Bounty on all Fish exported to Foreign Ports or on all Codfish made fit for market would be a ready encouragement to those who are actually engaged in carrying on Fishing and a repeal of the Prov'l Statutes 53 to 55 Geo. III so far as the duty of 23 per cent as made chargeable on netts, lines, seines, Boat sails and other materials if solely and bonafide for the operative purposes of Fishing in this District.

38. Is there any perceptible diminution in the quantity of fish of late years, and is there any truth in the supposition that the lashing over board the effects of the fish, tends to injure the fishing grounds?



38. Cont'd

A. A diminution in the quantity of fish has been felt for many years back and it is worthy of remark that at many places where codfishing yielded a fair average there are none now caught. In former times they were taken even in the Basin but none has appeared there for a long time past until last year when some were taken of very large size by hand on the Basin beach.

This diminution became more apparent after the Convention entered into with the Americans and the alleged cause was that their Schooners ranged along the Banks in the Gulph in vast numbers, curing their fish on board and throwing their offals into the sea thereby diverting the codfish from proceeding to their former resorts.

This allegation was supported by the opinion of the most experienced of the craft but the pleasing increase which took place particularly in 1830 and 1831 seemed to deny that theorem. It was remarkable that the quality was so much superior to the produce of former years that more than double the quantity of oil was obtained from the same weight of fish.

The fishing has been very limited and precarious these last two years on our shores altho at Misco and Shippegan they have been abundant. This discrepance renders the question thus doubtful, how far the presence of the United States fishermen may affect the success of our fisheries.

The Codfish have deteriorated also in quality in as great a ratio as in quantity and last year not more than one fifth of oil was made from the same weight of fish. The livers seemed decayed and assumed (even in healthy looking fish) a greenish hue and was a skinny sapless substance. Mackeral and herring partook but in a lesser degree of the same quality.

39. What distance to the nearest settlements on either side (naming them) and what is defective as respects the roads of communication between them?

A. I don't understand this Question. So far as respects the County of Gaspé there are no roads of communication which can be called perfect by any possible construction of the term.

40. What grants has the Colonial Government made towards the settlement of the place?

A. If this question has reference to land grants, the Government has not made any special ones for the purposes of settlement that I am aware of.

41. In what respect, and to what amount is the Colonial Government benefitted by the traffic carried on in the settlement?

A. By the duties directly or indirectly levied on the importation of goods consumed or used for the fisheries, and by the introduction of Foreign commodities brought into the British Dominions purchased as exchange for fish exported from these.

By the direct duties, I mean those collected here on goods imported from the United Kingdom or the Colonies, and the indirect, those collected at Quebec on commodities imported there and transhipped here for our consumption. The latter may be estimated at double the former. The dried codfish sent from this to Quebec and thence shipped for the West Indies forms also a very convenient and considerable article of export with our Canadian merchants.

\* See statement of Revenue accompanying for 1832 and 1833.

42. Name the rivers which are met with in the vicinity, describe their sources, direction, navigability, character of their shores, particularly as regards soil, and the quality, size and quantity of timber upon them? Are the waters fishy, what description of fish, and are they made an article of commerce?

- A. The North West River at the head of Gaspé Bay.
- The South West River at the extremity of the Basin.
- The former empties itself into Gaspé Bay.
- The latter empties itself into the Basin.
- The St. John's or Douglastown River on the south side of Gaspé Bay.

The Malbay River	}	discharging their waters into the
Little River		
Grand River		
Pabos River		
Fox River	}	discharging their waters into the
Magdalene River		
		River St. Lawrence

I have not explored any of them to their sources. They are only navigable for small boats or canoes. Their shores are generally mountainous with some flat land, the soil various but is unadapted to agricultural purposes. Some good Pines have been found in the vicinity of the N.W., S.W. and St. John's Rivers, the size such as are generally wanted for export.

An Indian informs me that the N.W. River takes a S.W. direction amongst the mountains and terminates in a lake about 30 miles inland near the "Burnt Mountains" where the caribo herd in such numbers nearly joining the S.W. River which Mr. Errington ascended.

These rivers all afford good Trout fishing and Salmon is caught in them in considerable numbers. The Basin also yields a little more than a supply of Salmon for Household use. By setting netts every man opposit-his own land. The waters of the Basin and Rivers are very fishy and early in the spring herring are taken for domestic use but not in such quantity as heretofore. The S.W. River abounds with very fine trout and at the "Embarrass" about 6 miles from this by standing on the fallen trees you may see 1000s playing amongst the sticks which impede the navigation of the River. Only for the fallen timber, what a fine haul might be caught with a seine. The Indians sometimes take them in considerable quantity but not to form any article of export.

43. Do these rivers afford good positions for the lumberer, and has he yet commenced operation, and to what extent?

- A. The S.W. and St. John's or Douglastown Rivers at 6-8 miles above the navigable waters afford pretty good positions for lumbering. The Mess<sub>rs</sub>. Johnston have got out a few cargos but exploring parties from Miramichi have declared our forests unworthy for the enterprise.

44. Any good sites for Mills in the vicinity, have any been yet erected, where, and for what purpose?

- A. I know of no very desirable mill site. Mr. Stewart has erected one on a small stream at the Basin but it does not afford a sufficient supply of water throughout the season.

45. Does the settlement afford a good roadstead or harbour, and during, what winds, what is the character of the shore and anchorage?

- A. The Basin of Gaspé forms one of the most commodious, beautiful and safe Harbours in His Majesty's Dominions. Its waters are sufficiently deep for the reception of any ship in the British Navy, the entrance safe and easy of access. This encompassed with mountains and sheltered from any wind. About 3 miles from this is Sandy Beach a natural but most perfect "breakwater" which screens the inside road-

45. Cont'd

stead from the heavy seas sent in by S.E. and Easterly gales and extends more than halfway across the Bay. Anywhere inside of this breakwater there is excellent anchorage for vessels running in for shelter without coming into the Basin and during the summer months the ships and other square-rigged vessels belonging to the Fishing ride in the Basin until their cargoes be ready, this being the only safe harbour and general resort of vessels coming to load for Foreign or Trans Atlantic voyages renders it also most desirable and convenient to keep the Custom House here and the officer in charge has invariably given his attendance and dispatch to those who had business at the office at all hours by day or by night, Sundays not excepted in order to facilitate the trade and to remove as much as possible any obstacle which operates against the merchants from the peculiarity of this navigation. There are none the less numerous creeks, coves and Roadsteads which with certain winds may be safe and where small vessels land merchandise and take on Board Fish and in many places good anchorage may be found. Frequent tornados from the highlands and sudden changes of the wind require that masters of craft coasting here ought to be well acquainted with our shores and particularly in the Spring and Autumn.

In the summer when the weather is fine and steady we have regularly the land and sea breezes every day which secures vessels from being detained by beating up Gaspé Bay. The land breeze sets in about 10 p.m. and continues until about 8 or 9 a.m. At 10 or 11 A.M. the sea breeze sets in and at 2 or 3 o'clock it generally freshens and continues until Sunset.

46. What are the rocks in the neighborhood (in the absence of more definite information) say whether limestone, sandstone, or slates?

A. Limestone Rock abounds on our shores particularly on the north side of Gaspé Bay and is of good quality. Pudding stone forms a great part of the shore from Douglastown to Pabos diversified with coarse sandstone, brickish rotten rock and blue slate.

47. Any useful or valuable minerals, what are they, describing locality, etc.?

A. I discovered in the face of a precipice between Malbay and Percé Strata of coal but not in such quantity as to afford sufficient investigation. It was accompanied by bituminous substance of sulphurous appearance and in its vicinity very perfect specimens of Sandstone. I sent a sample of this coal to the lady (?) of the late Mr. Perceval who afterwards informed me that it was coal but of an indifferent quality. I also burnt a small piece which left a residium of dark ashes.

In a Rock ("The Split") which forms a kind of peninsula near Percé I found a great quantity of quartz and other interesting strata of different colors. This Rock is upwards of 300 ft. in perpendicular hight with 2 large passes in which (I believe) boats can sail thro' from one side to the other, hence the name Percé. On our shores or beaches are found in great beauty and variety pebbles, some bloodstone, jasper, carnelian and others resembling fish eyes, reptiles, etc. receptive of the finest polish and in much repute for ladies' trinkets. Some of them have been manufactured into very costly necklaces, etc. For specimens and particulars I refer you to Mr. Smelie, Lapidary and Jeweller in Quebec.

At Cape Cove, I saw a large block of Labrador felspar and in a few weeks after I returned to break off a piece for a specimen but in the meantime it had either been drawn into deep water by the surf or got bedded in the sand as I could not find it (could this rock which was perhaps a ton weight made its way from Labrador in the ice or how?)

47. Cont'd

Many rich and large specimens of lead ore have been found at "Little Gaspé", thence to the "Old Woman" I have tested some pieces which seemed pretty rich and is not "Galena inanis (?)" If this were sought after it might be made profitable.

There are two bituminous springs in this vicinity, one on Douglastown River and the other about 6 miles up the S.W. river. The latter affords a plentiful oily fluid resembling Barbados Tar.

There is also a sulphurous spring near the Basin on the N. side. Some of its water has been presented for analysis.

The late Mr. O'Hara discovered (a little up the N.W. River) a large ledge of rock projecting out of the Bank of the River of a slaty nature dividing itself into slabs of various thickness and on opening them they exhibited on their surface the appearance of herbaceous plants in great variety with rich foliage, some delineating the Forest in their vicinity interspersed with tropical shrubs. These slabs susceptible of a fine polish retain the same appearance throughout and are of sufficient thickness for chimney pieces and can be had of any reasonable superficies. The margins are \_\_\_\_\_ resembling the Water of Ayr stone, the same color but contain a great variety of plants, etc. and the centres represent larger trees.

This bituminous shale may be indicative of the vicinity of coal but appears to differ from the Hyblian Bitumen as it does not discover any sulphurous smell when burned nor does the appearance of the plants etc. indicate their being grown out of the fossil but rather seems to be produced by Refractions.

48. When does the winter set in, when does it break up, what is the average depth of snow in the woods?

A. Severe frosts and \_\_\_\_\_ snows set in generally about the 1st November but the Navigation along our shores up the Bay and at the Basin does not close before the middle of December and very frequently ships might come into the Basin on the 1 of January.

I cannot say what the average depth of snow may be but being on the seaboard and partially governed by saline air it may be reckoned less than at Quebec. The Navigation opens generally about the first of May.

49. Have you made any observations, and what are they, respecting the prevalence and force of winds, the occurrence of rain, hail, fog, lightening, thunder, the aurora borealis, Meriage and other meteors?

A. I have not made any particular observations on the location and leave this question for those who have kept a diary of Astronomical occurrences.

The Aurora Borealis during the summer is more beautiful and resplendent here than in any other latitude I have ever been; it has been contended by some deserving of consideration that this electrical phenomena does not make a noise. I can, however, assert that in crossing Gaspé Basin in company with my son I have seen them descend perpendicularly and almost above us with a strong hissing sound and sometimes a kind of rumbling or rather like the rustling of silk. My being often out at night along the shore boating afforded me good opportunities for observing the motions of that beautiful and interesting meteor.

50. Can you afford any thermometrical or barometrical records registered in the District?

A. I have kept no records of that nature.

51. What are the occupations of the inhabitants during the winter?

A. The Householders generally have small farms and are engaged during the winter in attending their cattle, getting out fuel, preparing stuff for flakes to dry their fish on, mending their Boats, netts, etc.

51, Cont'd

The large fishing Establishment gives employment to many of the settlers in making drums for packing fish for the Brazils, and the Whalers give some employment in making Barrells for their oil for next season. Large quantities of Boards are also in ready demand for covering in stages and other domestic purposes. Agricultural servants have B5 and found for the winter 6 months with the more opulent settlers so none need be idle and when our crops do not fail the settlers are comparatively independent without feeling any of that abject poverty or the pinchings of cold and hunger so visible about the environs of Quebec and other towns. Fuel, an important article in enduring comfort to the poor being had here with little trouble.

52. What birds, beasts, and fishes are met with in the district (afford details), what natural curiosities are met with; in short, what is its natural history?

A. The Birds common to Lower Canada are found here; the same may be said of Beasts, amongst which may be enumerated the Bear, Carcagoux, Wild Cat, P\_\_\_\_\_, Fox, Polecat, Beaver, Minx, Otter, Muskrat, Rabbits, Squirrels, etc. The rabbits are taken in great plenty by snaring during the winter and form an excellent auxiliary for the poor. Some families have taken from 2 to 300. They are exchanged by the Indians for pork and other staple articles of Food at farms. Birch and spruce Partridges at same rate. The latter are very tame and sit on the branches of trees until they are taken by gin of twine fixed on a pole which they allow to pass over their heads.

Codfish, mackeral, herring, halibut, skate, dog fish, Horse mackeral, Haddock (scarce) Sturgeon, Caplin, Squid, Smelts, Crabs, Lobsters, any of flat fish, Whales (the Finner and Humpback).

53. What is the amount of fish procured during the year, what are they, and what is their comparative value?

A. The amount of furs nominal, a few Bear, Beaver, Otter, Seal, Marten, Minx, Raccoon and Muskrat skins are annually exchanged with the Indians who frequent our settlement but so inconsiderable as not to form any item of our trade.

54. Can you give a table of the statistics of the place, stating the quantity of live stock and agricultural produce?

A. I cannot.

55. What are the prevailing disorders, do they prove frequently fatal, and what distance have you to send for medical advice?

A. No particular epidemic or local disease pervades the place. Consumption or Pulmonary diseases scarce ever manifest themselves here altho some of our most estimable inhabitants have fallen victim by their philanthropy in sheltering unfortunate emigrants having typhus or other infective fevers. It frequently happens that vessels bound for Quebec with emigrants avail themselves of our shores to land destitute passengers labouring under contagious diseases and in some instances whole families have been infected.

The late Hugh O'Hara Esq. a gentleman of much disinterested friendship long known for his readiness to shelter the sick and destitute fell a victim to Typhus under these circumstances; frequent cases of great distress and privation present themselves here on board of vessels with passengers from want of provisions and by sickness.

There is a medical man who resides at the Bay de Chaleurs (I believe) but (praise be to God) we seldom want one here and if we do the case is generally reserved until some of the Men of War put in when we borrow the advice of their surgeon. In cases of accident when surgical operations are wanted some of the native inhabitants have amputated limbs with uncommon success. Our Dominie of the Hamlet (old Mills)

55. Cont'd

practices phlebotomy and our greatest gossip amongst the matrons of the \_\_\_\_\_ class does all the business in the obstetric art.

56. Can you afford any traditional information respecting the settlement either as regards the Indians, the Acadians, French or English?

A. I am not in possession of any from an authentic source.

57. How many, and what tribes of Indians are located in the settlement, what is their number, whence did they come, what is their religious persuasion, where are they located, etc.?

A. A few Micmacs located chiefly about the S.W. River and Pabos. They are professors of the Roman Catholic faith and are active and industrious.

59. What is their moral character, are their children educated?

A. They are peaceable and obliging, attentive to the duties of their Church but not scrupulously punctual in case they are so unfortunate at any time as to get credit. Their children are not educated.

58. Have they any, and what grants of land have they received, and what education, what are their occupations, do they cultivate the land?

A. I know of no lands granted them here. I believe some of them are educated or can read and they do not cultivate the land.

60. What books, old or new, afford information upon the District, and in what offices may documents and papers on the subject be procured?

A. I don't know of any worth noting.

61. Have you any information of a judicial character to afford, respecting the administration of justice, and the carrying into effect generally of the laws of the Province, etc?

A. The Judicial authority is vested in the magistrates and Hebdomadal and Quarterly Sessions of the Peace have not been much attended to here since the abolition of the office of Chairman.

Carrying into effect the Laws of the Province is also under the Survey of the Justices of the Peace.

62. Have you any additional remarks to make either upon the foregoing queries or upon subjects connected with the interests or history of the District in general, or settlement in particular which I have not alluded to?

A. Please refer to my accompanying notes and memorandum.

Note at end of questions: In affording answers to these queries, you are requested to enter into all the details which your leisure will allow.

McConnell's Remarks:

In conformity with my promise made to you when I had the pleasure of seeing you here, it now becomes my duty to commence giving you a detail of our commercial operations as connected with the Fisheries but must crave your indulgence in offering the few detached ideas which may present themselves, and may begin by stating that:

The Fisheries in the County of Gaspé are carried on chiefly by Guernsey and Jersey merchants some of whom are large capitalists and import annually from the United Kingdom and the island of Jersey merchandise to a considerable amount. The chief articles for the use of the Fisheries are:

Salt, netts, lines, hooks and other fishing tackle, British manufactured dry goods, comprising almost any article vended in retail stores in Quebec, also cider, cider vinegar, Brandy and Gin, Canvas, \_\_\_\_\_, cordage, ironwork, hardware and fittings for new vessels. Coarse readymade cloathing is one item much in demand. Flour, salted provisions, rum, sugar, molasses, tobacco, tea and other groceries are imported from Quebec and Halifax as well by the established merchants and traders who dispose of these commodities afloat. The latter commonly make their appearance about the time the new fish is getting ready or half-made. They go around the coast and land their goods to those who purchased and return to take on board the fish in payment (generally to equal(?)) or such as are not culled. This Barter is effected by fixing a medium price on the fish and in general the price of their merchandise is rated cent per cent on the \_\_\_\_\_ or prime cost. The advance may appear large but when the risk of carriage, duty, freight, insurance, hire of vessel, handling risk of payment and market are taken into account I do not consider the Trader sufficiently compensated altho the operator fisherman carrying on a small establishment cannot be \_\_\_\_\_ for his trouble and \_\_\_\_\_ paid by the exchange. Merchants who have fishing rooms and thus find this species of trade bear rather hard upon them as the Traders get the fish from needy fishermen which ought to have went in payment of perhaps the very provisions which kept them alive in winter given them in advance by those merchants who had certainly the best right to be paid but this is a circumstance which must find its own level and we cannot judge how far the immediate wants of his family may compel a man to deviate from strict probity in an emergency of this kind.

Messrs. Charles Robin & Co. have a large establishment at Percé as well as at Paspebiac. They have at the latter place an extensive shipyard and carry on building vessels in addition to their Fishing Business.

Ships built at the yards of Messrs. Robin & Co. at Paspebiac rank higher than any other Colonial built vessels. Those merchants have extensive commercial establishments in Brazil, Foreign Europe and other Ports. They export their fish in their own vessels and bring return cargoes to Hamburgh and other ports in Foreign Europe. They also annually import from the United Kingdom and Jersey large quantities of Br. manufs. dry goods and an excellent assortment of any article that might be requisite for extensive trade. To those gentlemen the extensive settlements of Percé and Paspebiac owe much of their prosperity, as by their liberality and enterprise every one feels encouraged to be industrious. The Messrs. Robin have deservedly acquired family fortunes in this district. Their business is conducted at the different stations by agents who enter the service at an early age and are brought up with a certainty of promotion in regular rotation. Our present Representative, John Le Boutillier, Esq. in the Provincial Parliament has lately retired from the charge at Percé, much and deservedly regretted by a large and respectable community and is succeeded by a young gentleman, Mr. John Fauvel (?) a young man of much merit, also a native of Jersey who had charge at Grand River.

Remarks Cont'd

The principals of this extensive concern reside in Jersey with the exception of Philip Robin, Esq. who at an early stage of the business had charge at Percé. This gentleman was also conspicuous for his taste in Literature and the fine arts, has long since removed from the turmoils of commerce and spends his time chiefly in travelling on the Continent. I believe he has adopted Switzerland as his chief domicile these several years past but continues to entertain a lively interest in the Fisheries and a wish for the prosperity of the settlement.

Messrs. P. & F. Janvrin & Co. who have their principal Fishing establishments at Grand Greve and Malbay have also an extensive wharf and range of stores at Gaspé Basin. The extent of their business and amounts of capital are unlimited. Their ships (built in Jersey) of the best materials and workmanship, their trade in Rio Janiero, Foreign Europe, Liverpool and London demonstrate mercantile speculation becoming the character of British merchants.

Mr. John Aubin in the usual mode of graduation is their agent and resides at Grand Greve. He has authority to draw on London or Quebec so that we can obtain as good Exchange as if we were in a commercial town. Mr. Aubin has managed the affairs of this great establishment with much care and whilst he studies the interests of his employers he has secured the good will of all around him.

The Fish caught or purchased by the Messrs. Robin at Percé and Grand River being coasted to Paspebiac and cleared from there for Foreign Ports does not appear on my a/c of exports although the produce of this County but is included in the estimate on the "Compendium".

The Boats or Barges used for Codfishing are about 20 ft. keel, have 2 masts and 2 sprit sails, are sharp sterned and about 6-1/2 ft. Beam. These boats are well adapted to stand a heavy sea, will carry about 8 quintals round or fresh fish and with experienced hands seldom upset unless by very heavy and sudden squalls. It is not unusual to see them making for shore in a gale with their foresail set when square rigged vessels are close-reefed. There are two men to each boat and as no subordination could be otherwise maintained, one of them is Captain.

Codfishing commences generally here about the 15th to 20th of May but not until the Herring (which is the first bait) sets in which they do in great plenty along the Coast and even at the Basin almost as soon as the ice leaves us. This affords abundant bait and continues altho decreasing until the Caplin appear. They come in vast quantity and are thrown ashore on the beaches in \_\_\_\_\_ of 3 to 4 feet deep, sometimes. A description of the immense influx of this tribe would seem incredible when they retire the fishermen continue to set nets for herring near the shore and generally take as many as supplies them with bait until about the middle of July when the mackerel appear. These fish come in immense shoals visible on the surface of the water for acres and were formerly taken by hook and line. The barges passing to and from the codfishing ground put out lines and take sometimes as many as will serve for next days bait. They are also taken by netts.

In the year 1830 I detained the American Schooner Rebecca of Salem for a breach of the Navigation laws. She was fitted for mackerel fishing and whilst the crew remained at the Basin they demonstrated the utility of catching mackerel on a new plan which altho known a little had not been hitherto practised by our fishermen. To elucidate this method, it may be proper to state that the Americans fit out numerous schooners solely for the mackerel fishing in the Gulph of St. Lawrence. These vessels are large 100 to 120 tons, well found and having 10 to 12 men each on board,



Remarks Cont'd

They bring 5 to 600 barrels for packing and a sufficient quantity of salt for curing. The vessels have deep bulwarks and when they arrive at their fishing grounds or rather when they discover the presence of fish each man takes his station inside the gunwales. They are provided with boiled rice, old fish boiled and bruised and sometimes at commencing only the "Cook's slush". This they throw overboard all round the vessel to feed and entice the fish. This they call "Raising the shoal". The Cook has his duty to attend to; the rest of the crew are provided with short line (blue cotton twine) with a hook run into a piece of pewter and very nicely made some resembling little fishes etc. and as soon as the "shoal is raised" which is frequently in a few minutes, they remain round the vessel and are taken in great quantity, as fast as the men can throw them in. They bait with a small piece of pork skin which being larger than the other floating particles they catch with avidity. Each vessel is provided with a very ingenious cutting mill in which they grind some of the interior fish almost to a liquid and throw over with a ladle. When they become satiated by eating too much, the fishermen throw over large Bay salt. These particles they swallow readily which produces a nausea and having vomited all up, they seek the bait with renewed avidity. The Americans consider 50 to 80 barrells per day taken in this way a fair average fishing. They continue catching until the fish become flush with the bulwarks on deck and then commence cleaning and salting; altho the miraculous success of this method has been clearly demonstrated our fishermen have not been able to make mackerel fishing a prominent item in our Fishery. They are however progressing and in a very short time it must be profitable. It is not unfrequent that little boys raise shoals at the wharf in the Basin and some children go out in "flats" a little from shore and by feeding the fish with a little offals round their skiff return in a few hours with 2 or 3 barrels of mackerel, a facility hitherto totally unknown. This mode of fishing is called "Bobbing".

When the mackerel grow scarce the Herring reappear and are esteemed at this season (about the beginning of October) much superior to the spring or summer. They are called "Fall Herring" but seldom abundant.

The Squid (a curious fish which I cannot discover in Ichthyology but seems to be the "ink fish" of the East Indies as it discharges a very black liquid) appears in summer and is taken by what is termed "jigging". Clams, a large shell fish found at various sand banks in the vicinity of fresh water by digging about a foot deep form also a good bait.

The Codfish caught in the Fall (very late) is esteemed fatter than the summer fish and is sent to Quebec market in bulk without the process of drying. This is termed "green fish", the large ones "\_\_\_\_\_ or tablefish".

In the vicinity of Cape de Rossier Hippoglossus or Halibut is taken in very considerable quantity and might if properly attended to be made an article of profitable traffic. It is rather singular that, altho our waters abound with genus of pleur-nectes yet the turbot has been seldom or never taken here.

Skate, a species of Ray fish, is often caught in our fishing altho not plenty nor are they equal to those taken in St. George's Channel.

I will not enumerate the minor fishes inhabiting the water of the Gulph. They are in common with other places. It may be worthy of remark that amongst our small flat fish at the Basin great numbers slightly torporific and evidently partaking of the Cramp or Electric Ray Fish are found. They do not inhabit deep water. I have experienced very sensible shock by touching these flat fish when in the water.

The Horse Mackerel (or \_\_\_\_\_) is sometimes taken at Sandy Beach by Harpooning. They are very large and yet this fish is said to be as delicate as the small mackerel. Lobsters are also found in great abundance and are sold at 1\$ p.c.

The whale fishing has been promoted here for the last 30 years with various success. An American from Nantucket gave the Messrs. Boyle of the Basin some instructions as to the method practiced by the Americans in killing whales and these young men's perseverance fully demonstrated the utility of promoting that pursuit. Their bravery, dexterity and skill have been fully rewarded. Mr. Felix Boyle may be ranked the first as a Harpooner. He owns an excellent schooner built by himself of 70 tons burthen. His average catch exceeds 200 barrels annually with £600 the expense not exceeding £300. This pursuit is a steady nursery for hardy active seamen and we owe to this the fact of our young men being the most active, undaunted and dextrous in Seamanship of any I ever saw. There are other whalers besides Mr. Boyle. Mr. W. Baker a man of excellent character and of great perseverance has been also very successful and is at present on a new and interesting enterprise. The large black whales have long made their appearance early in the spring on the North Shore and it is supposed may be taken by netts made of strong ropes. Mr. Robertson of one of the ports held out inducements which \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. Baker, skilled in this profession to proceed thither last fall for the purpose of hunting in the winter and to be ready for the whales as soon as they appear. I sincerely wish them success. The proceeds of one fish would cover the expenses of the enterprise. The oil alone besides the whalebone (for these are the ones which yield that article) would be worth 5 to 600£ and the bone as much.

My time unfortunately will scarce allow me to mention our Caribou hunting. There are immense droves which herd on a burnt mountain a little to the Wward of where you came out or thather in a line (?) with where you crossed from Pabos river and near a lake the source of the N.W. River. They weigh about 3 cwt. and herd like those in the Highlands of Scotland or the mountains of Kerry and are only seen in the winter. Our "Grand Louis" with sometimes a party of goung men goes out after them (the distance is about 30 miles). They frequently shoot down 6 to 12. The deer approach on their path in Indian fyle. If the first be shot, the next leaps over him, meets his fate and so on until they have as many skins and much more venison than they can carry. Louis and another Indian have just returned after being absent 6 days. They killed 5 and brought out some fine horns, etc. They are gone again for some more venison as it remains on the field of battle quite secure. I have not succeeded in procuring a pair of large horns but wish very much (if they are such as I have seen in the back settlements of Virginia) to adorn the portals of your museum. The hunters bring each 80 to 100 lbs. venison. Moqasins made of the skin of the ancles with the hoofs attached are really forest like and I am promised a pair. They are a curiosity and I hereby promise to send them for your special use if I succeed. Sometimes the caribo are in droves of 10 to 100 and I assure you their flesh is a great help to the Indian in winter as they exchange with us for other food.

It was my intention to have offered you such information as I could collect relative to the settlement at the Basin, etc. but having met with an unexpected opportunity for sending to the Bay of Chaleur I am compelled to gather up all my scraps and send them to you as they are. I am sorry my data does not afford any correct information on the subject of first settling this very interesting Hamlet, its Forts, etc. nor can I furnish any traditional detail that might serve to convince you of its having been once a considerable "place of strength" altho I can trace without the inspiration of an antiquary the remains of the trenches, glacis, etc. at old Fort Conway (now Fort Ramsay). I may however add that with the loyal vigilance of our Militia under command of Col. Henry O'Hara, the Basin would be a safe depot for warlike stores and a secure roadstead for all His Majesty's Navy.

Remarks Cont'd:

In the absence of other information I may state that the Basin was settled by the late Honble. Felix O'Hara. That gentleman was a native of Ireland, the descendant of an ancient and no less reputable family of the same name in the County of Antrim and nearly allied to the O'Neils of Shanes Castle, the ancient Kings of Ulster. Col. John O'Hara of O'Hara Brook still possess<sup>es</sup> the paternal Castle and demesne and is the near kinsman of the late Felix O'Hara of O'Hara Hamlet at Gaspé Basin. The latter, either from a spirit of adventure or being pleased with the wild beauties of the place, adopted this as his residence and his remaining son, Henry O'Hara, Esq. at present occupies the first house which was erected by him.

The Honble. Felix O'Hara was Provincial Judge for the district, had the charge of the Revenue and being a Justice of the Peace exercised that trust for the regularity and well being of his colony. He raised a numerous family of sons and daughters, lived an exemplary, moral and happy life, diffusing peace and good fellowship around him and died at an old age much regretted.

The late Col. Edward O'Hara was the eldest son of Felix O'Hara. He died in London last year, was a Companion of the Bath, was for some time Governor of St. Lucie and was much respected by His. R.H. Duke of Kent with whom he was on very intimate terms.

I must now stop. Excuse my prolixity and evident lack of knowledge on the subjects you desire information. Your being in communication with Mr. Butler (?), our member, will answer much better purpose than any remark you may draw from almost any other source and his information on the fishing returns, etc. must be correct being founded on intelligence, observation and experience. I submit the whole as it is for your use (if of any) leaving it for your good taste to reject and accept as the case may be. Begging however that you will in charity bear in mind that I am not a native nor old resident in Gaspé. At same time allow me to assure you that any remark of mine offered you has been the result of my own observation and investigation. I will be happy at all times to obey your requisitions and if in my power will from time to time send you such specimens as I may procure altho I am neither Botanist, Mineralogist nor any, I am sorry to say, of the scientific ists in your line. Accept the will for the deed and believe me, whilst I have the Honor to be

Your very obt. svt.,  
(Signed) John D. McConnell

Gaspé Basin  
20 February 1834

To F.W. Baddely Esq.  
Lt. R.E. etc.etc.  
Quebec.