

GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY

A TALE OF STORM AND RESCUE AT SEA  
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The Barque "C.COLUMBUS" survives a  
great storm and rescues the crew  
and passengers of the "ST. LOUIS"

KEN ANNETT

A TALE OF STORM AND RESCUE AT SEA

The pioneer Notary Public in Gaspesia, Martin Sheppard, heard many a true and dramatic story of distress and disaster at sea in the days of sail. One such story unfolded in his office on October 8th., 1846, as Charles Le Cornu, Master Mariner and Master of the Barque "C.COLUMBUS", 214 tons register measure, belonging to the port of St. Helier, Jersey, together with his Chief Mate, George LeBrocq, Second Mate, Jean Hamon and Seaman, Jean Le Cornu, recounted their experiences on a voyage from Jersey to Bay Chaleur and made official, notarial PROTEST. The highlights of their tale, as recorded by Notary Sheppard follows.

The said Barque called the "C.COLUMBUS" being in ballast, on Tuesday the 10th day of September, 1846, the said Apperers set sail from the port of St. Helier in Jersey on a voyage bound direct to Paspébiac in Bay Chaleur.

In the prosecution of her voyage the Barque was overtaken on Monday the twenty-first day of September by a violent storm and gale of wind, which, in the forepart of the day, blew from the Westward and afterwards shifted to the North Westward, blowing tremendously, with a heavy sea. At 5:30 P.M. the vessel shipped a sea which shifted her ballast. They handed in sail and wore ship to the Southward under her trysail double-reefed and secured the ballast and water casks. At ten o'clock P.M. the wind and sea having greatly increased, blowing tremendously, a sea struck their vessel on her starboard quarter, carried away the (...ship's boat..) shattered it to pieces and rendered her binnacle totally useless and unserviceable and shifted her ballast for the second time, bringing the vessel round, with great violence, from the South to the Northward. Again succeeded in replacing and securing the ballast and moved the ship round under easy sail.

On the next day, Tuesday, the twenty second of the same month, the wind moderated some but the sea still continued running heavily. On the next day (Wednesday) the wind shifted to the North North West, blowing moderately. At two o'clock P.M. perceived a vessel in distress, dismasted and presenting the appearance of a complete wreck, with the french flag flying from her spar, put up for the purpose. At three o'clock P.M. bore up to the vessel

and spoke to the Master, offering him any assistance, but the vessel lying in the water like a log, destitute of small boat, spars, sails - wrecked and totally unmanageable, the Master and all on board determined to abandon the wreck as the only means in their power to insure their safety and preservation. Put out and manned the long boat and in four trips took the crew and passengers to the number of thirty one persons on board of that said vessel, together with such provisions and other effects that could be saved from the said wreck, which they ascertained to be the "SAINT LOUIS" of St.Servan, Edouard Maselet, Master, but with the approach of night lost sight of the wreck.

They continued on their said voyage without experiencing anything further particular or extraordinary and came to anchor in safety in the roadstead of Paspébiac, with the Crew and passengers of the said wreck still on board of their vessel on the eighth day of October, where she still remains....

Witnesses:

Felix Briard

John Allbeury

(both of Paspébiac,  
Gentlemen)

(Signatures of)

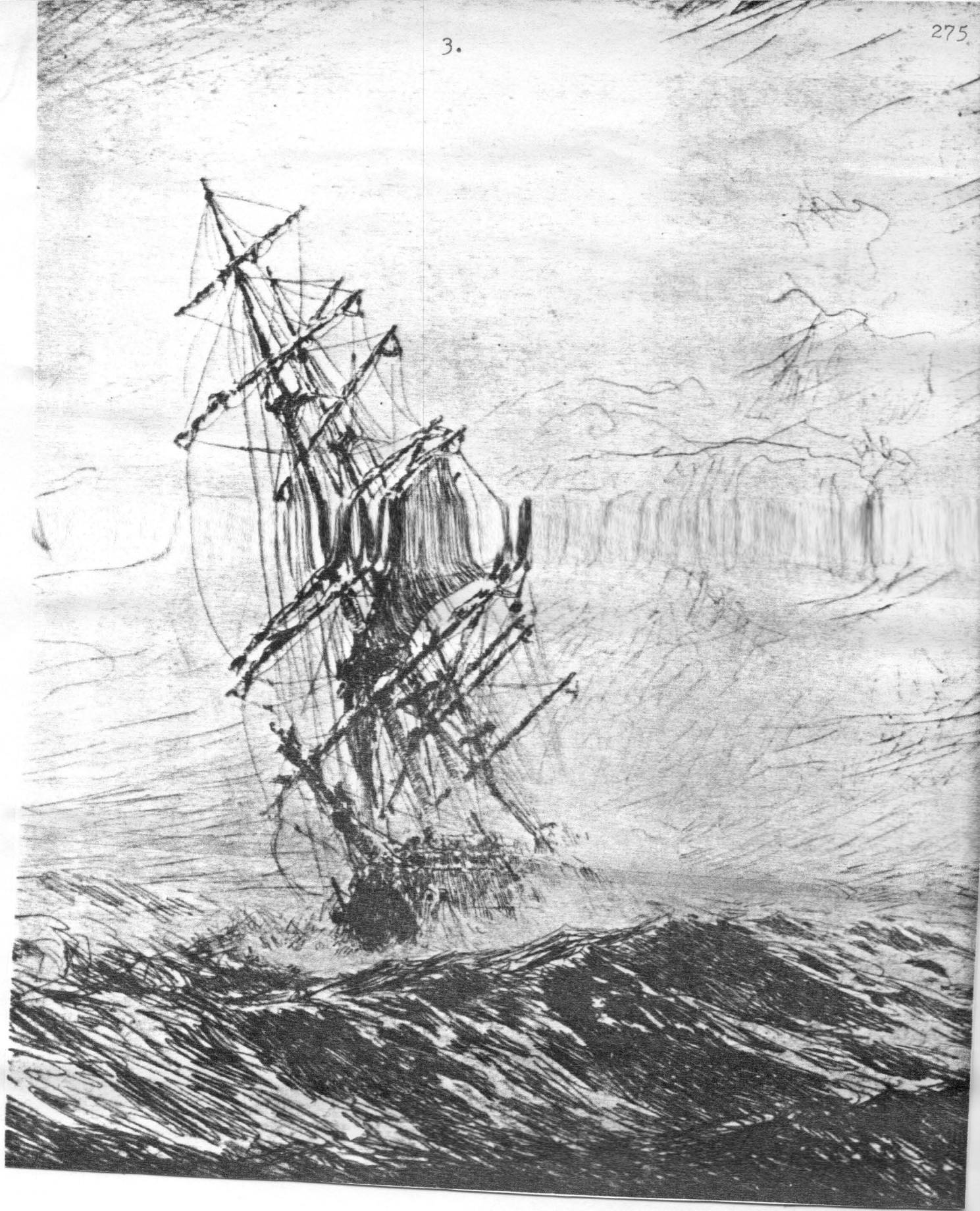
Charles Le Cornu

George Le Brocq

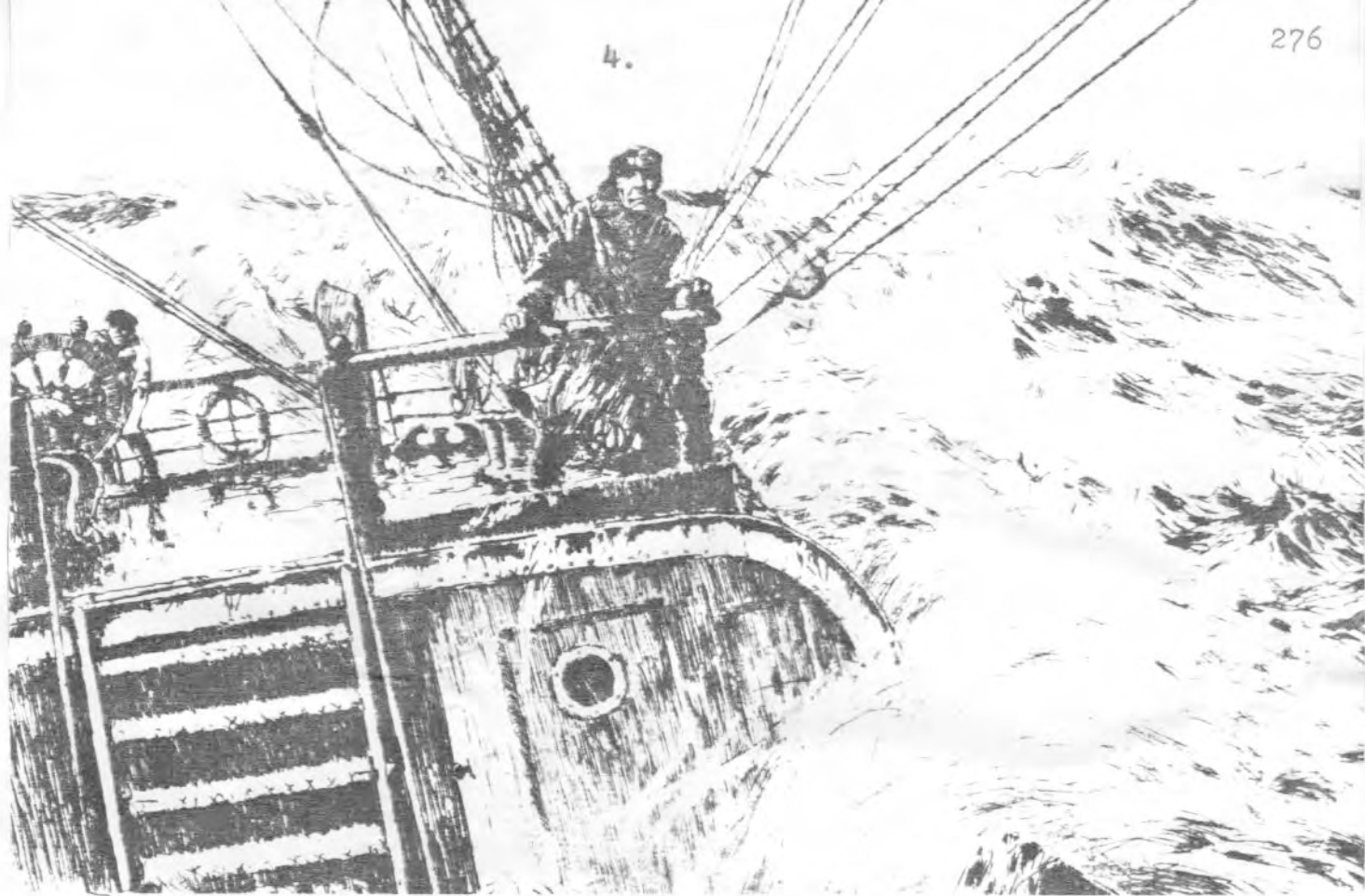
John Hamon

John Le Cornu

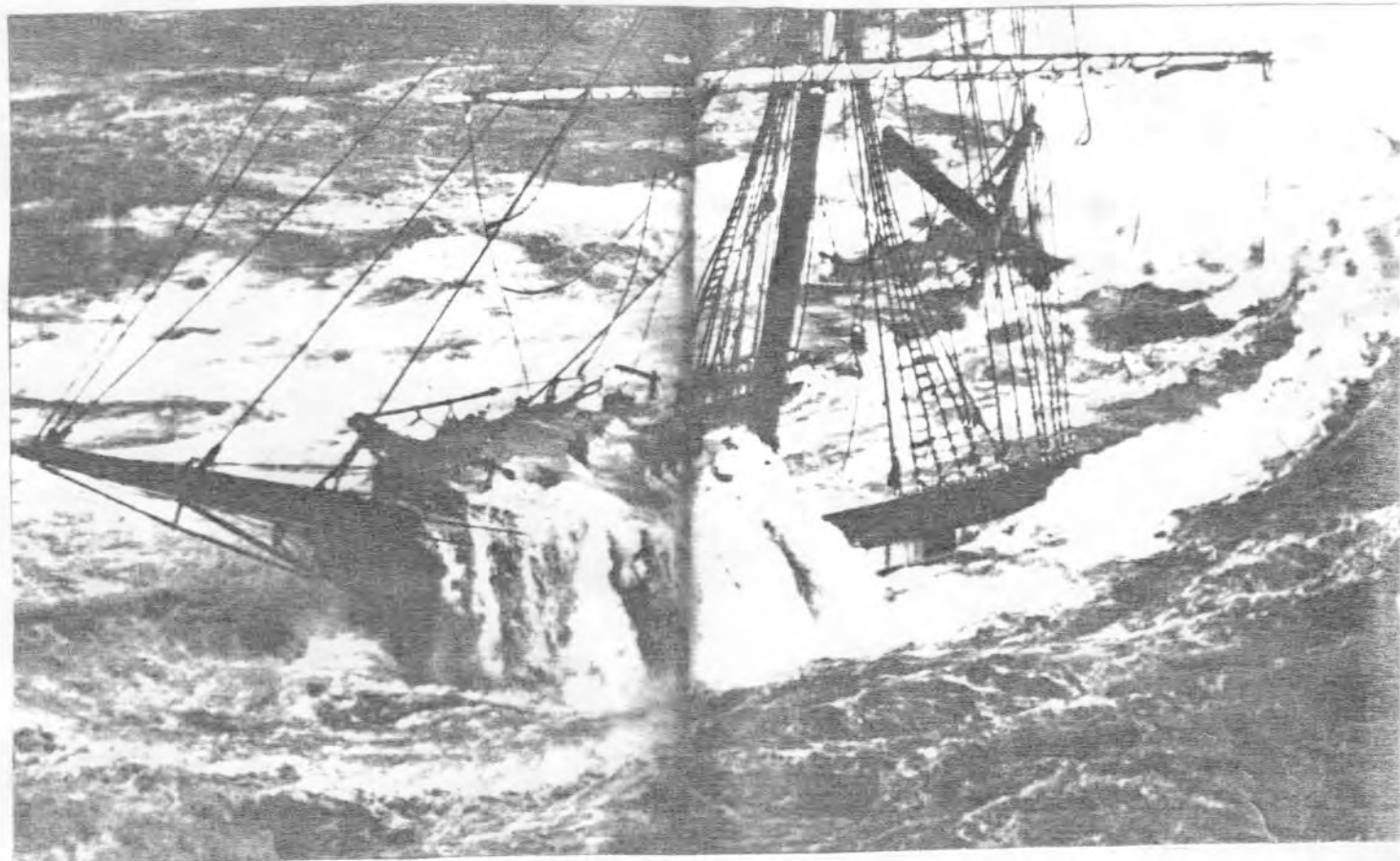
M. Sheppard, N.P.



"...a violent storm and gale of wind...blowing tremendously  
with a heavy sea..."



THE CAPTAIN AT HIS POST IN STORM



THE WRECK