

GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY

WRECK OF THE NEW RICHMOND SCHOONER
"CAROLINE" AT ESQUIMAUX RIVER.1831.

Captain Archibald McNair and crew
PROTEST the loss of their vessel.

KEN ANNETT

PROTEST

by

Archibald McNair

Master of the late Schooner "CAROLINE"

of New Richmond

January 23rd. 1832

Before Martin Sheppard, Notary Public, by Royal Authority
duly admitted and sworn for the
Province of Lower Canada and residing
at New Carlisle in the County of
Bonaventure in the District of Gaspé.

Appearers: Archibald McNair of New Richmond, in the Township of
New Richmond, District of Gaspé, Master Mariner and
late Master of the Schooner "CAROLINE".

Nathaniel McNair, Chief Mate.

Thomas Johnston, Seaman.

Witnesses: Hugh Montgomery.
Michael Ferguson.

Testimony: That the said Schooner or Vessel called the CAROLINE,
being tight, staunch and strong, well and sufficiently
manned, provided, equipped and furnished with all
things needful and necessary for the voyage hereinafter
mentioned, they the said Appearers set sail on board of
the said vessel from the Port of Québec on Saturday the
nineteenth day of the month of November now last past
at about twelve o'clock or mid day of the day last
mentioned loaded with a general cargo of goods, provisions
and effects on a voyage to New Richmond and to the Port
of Dalhousie in the Province of New Brunswick, both in
the Bay des Chaleurs;

That the said Appearers proceeded on, in and with the
said Vessel on the said voyage without anything particular
or extraordinary occurring until Monday the twenty first
day of the said month of November now last past at about

Testimony: mid-day of the day last mentioned when the wind which until that time had continued favourable, blew fresh from the Eastward accompanied with a dense fog, and obliged the said Appearers and the rest of the crew to cast Anchor and bring their said vessel under shelter of Bic Island in the River St.Lawrence, and where the said vessel cabled to in goog anchorage in about five fathoms of water at seven o'clock of the day last mentioned.(the Twenty first)

That the said vessel continued riding at anchor with apparent safety near the Island od Bic aforesaid with the wind blowing strong from the North Eastward until about six of the clock P.M. on Tuesday the Twenty-second of the said month of November when the wind came on to blow a gale from the North Eastward with snow falling fast. At about seven of the clock P.M. of the same day the wind freshened and increased considerably and caused a strong swell and heavy sea, with snow still falling fast without any intermission. Owing to the extraordinary swell and strong wind the vessel strained and labored exceedingly and broke one of the flukes of the best bower anchor, when their said vessel began to drive from her anchorage. Sounded the pumps every half hour during this day as they had been in the habit of doing during the preceding part of the voyage but always found their said vessel free and that she made no water. Paid out the second cable and let go the second anchor but their said vessel still continued to drive and would not bring to. Hove up the second bower anchor and cable and lay to under the foresail close reefed, the snow all this time continuing to fall fast as before.

On Wednesday the Twenty third day of the said month of November now last past, still blowing a strong gale of wind with a heavy sea running, in which their said vessel was near being buried with snow still falling fast, tried the pumps every half hour as heretofore but their said vessel still continued free. Kept the lead constantly going without however being enabled to obtain soundings.

Testimony: At about half past twelve o'clock in the afternoon of Wednesday, the said Twenty third day of November last, the said vessel struck with great violence on a sunken reef of rocks near Esquimaux River on the North side of the said River St. Lawrence, at about ten miles below Green Island, which reef of rocks extended about one quarter of a mile from the shore and upon which their said vessel struck forcibly and with great violence. again sounded the pumps and then first perceived that their said vessel made some water. At about three quarters of an hour past twelve of the clock P.M. of this day the vessel forced over the reef of rocks on which she first struck and came into calmer water between the said reef and the mainland. Secured the rigging and sails of the said vessel and placed every part of the tackling as safely as the nature of the case and their situation would permit and placed the tackles to the boat to be ready for every emergency. Let go the bower anchor and cable and came to in about one fathom and one quarter of a fathom of water, the wind still continuing unabated and their said vessel striking occasionally with such great violence upon the bottom that the rudder loosened from its fastenings and unshipped. Remained at their anchorage for about one half hour striking upon the bottom as before, with the wind North East, indirectly towards the shore, when the chain cable broke and the said vessel drove directly towards an almost perpendicular and iron-bound shore near the River Esquimaux aforesaid and drove thereon and carried away the bowsprit and staved and rendered the boat of their said vessel entirely useless and unserviceable, and upon which she struck with such extraordinary violence that several barrels and puncheons composing part of her cargo forced their way through the bottom of their said vessel and floated off, notwithstanding the utmost possible exertions of these Appearers and the rest of the crew to prevent the same. That these Appearers and the rest of the crew, seeing their said vessel in a hopeless and wrecked situation, concerted

Testimony: together as to the best means of saving their lives from the critical and perilous situation in which they found themselves placed and after the greatest exertions succeeded at length in saving themselves by the aid of those who first succeeded in gaining the shore from the bowsprit when the vessel first struck the shore as before mentioned, the Master being the last person who left the wreck and was saved with the utmost peril and difficulty to himself and those who risked their own lives for his preservation.

On the same day, Wednesday the Twenty third of November last, the said vessel was bulged and staved on the larboard side and afterwards went to pieces, several portions of their said vessel with sundry portions of the cargo floating towards the shore where a part was saved.

That the sea by this time made a clear breach over their said vessel and the tide flowed in and out of her the same as on the outside. And these Appearers and the remainder of the crew, finding themselves in an uninhabited portion of the Country, without any prospects of assistance, erected a store on the shore in order to secure such parts of the cargo as might be saved and left one, James McKenzie, Carpenter on board of their said vessel, with two other persons, in charge thereof until the next ensuing Spring, where they now remain in charge of such portions of the cargo as may be secured and saved for the general interest of all parties concerned therein.

That the place where the said vessel was wrecked as aforesaid presenting nothing but a rocky aspect, barren and destitute of inhabitants or the least vestige of habitation, these Appearers, after leaving persons in charge of the portions of the cargo saved as aforesaid and after providing for the wants of the persons left in charge in the best manner they could, prepared for leaving a portion of the Country so unpromising, in quest of their own homes, and fortunately on Friday the Twenty-fifth day of the said month of November last succeeded in obtaining a passage

Testimony: onboard of the Pilot Schooner, SWALLOW, Number Fifty, in which vessel they shortly afterwards transported themselves from the scene of their misfortunes to the South side of the River St. Lawrence at a place called Rivière du Loup, a few miles above Green Island aforesaid, and travelled over land from the said place called Rivière du Loup to New Richmond aforesaid, a distance of about Two hundred and fifty miles at a season of the year when the roads were in a most unfavourable state, and after enduring great hardships and fatigue arrived at New Richmond aforesaid on or about the Thirtieth day of the month of December now last past...

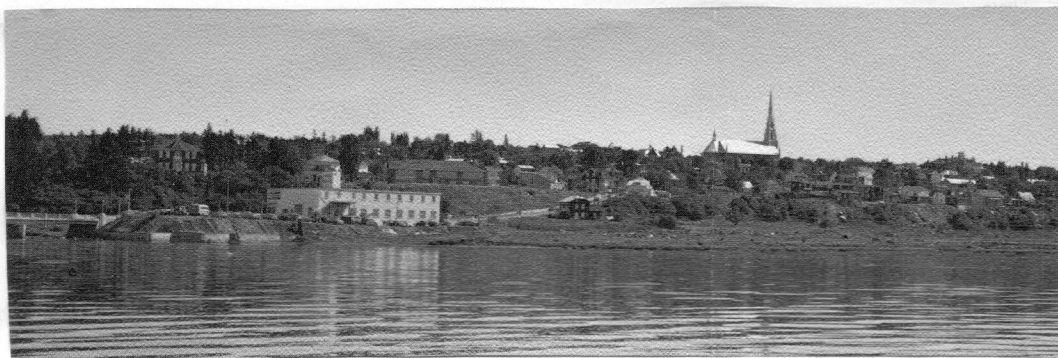
[There followed the usual notarial text absolving Captain McNair and members of his crew from all personal responsibility for the wreck]

(SIGNATURES)

High Montgomery - Witness
(Merchant of Dalhousie)

Michael Ferguson - Witness
(Farmer of Ristigouche)

Archibald McNair
Nathaniel McNair
Thomas Johnston
M. Sheppard, N.P.



Rivière du Loup