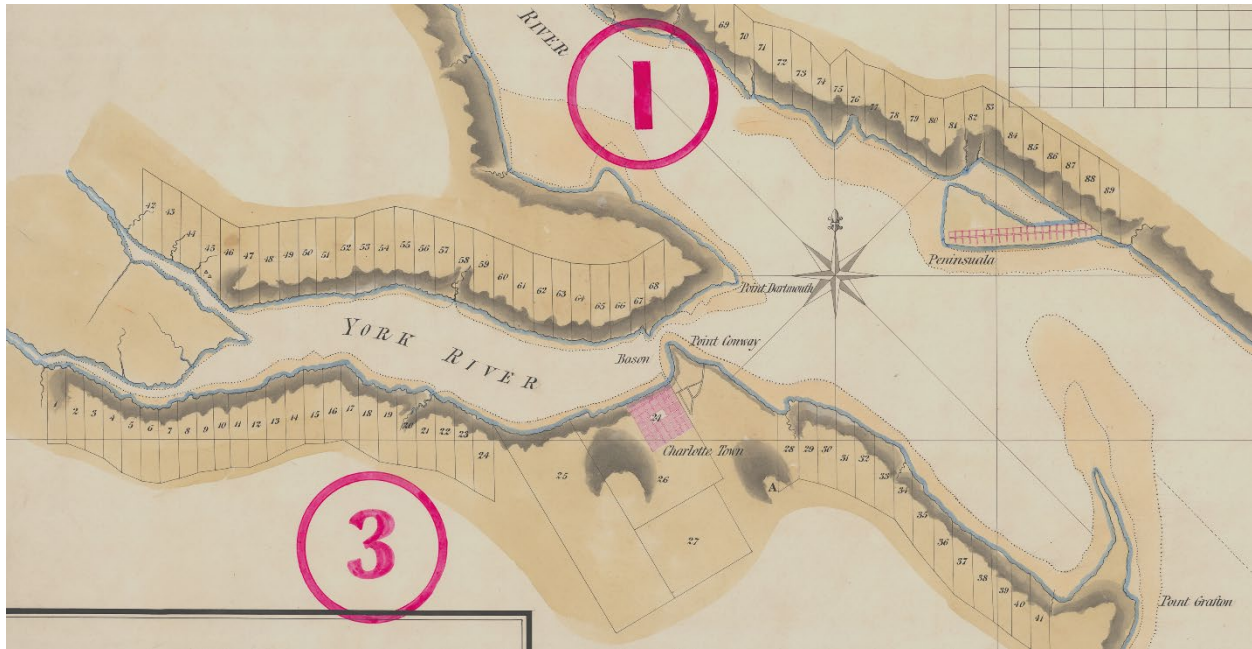


John Paterson Sr. (circa 1735-1807)

By: Marty Patterson (all rights reserved, copyright 2024)

Soon after British rule over Quebec was confirmed by the Treaty of Paris of 1763, the British government of the Province of Quebec began to look for lands to grant to soldiers from units disbanded in Quebec. The Deputy Surveyor of Quebec, John Collins, was commissioned to survey and make plans for a future British settlement in the Gaspé Bay area.

In 1765, under the instructions of James Murray, Governor of Quebec, Collins completed an official survey entitled “**A Plan of the Bay and Harbour of Gaspé in the Province of Quebec**”.¹ On this plan the name Charlotte Town was given to the southern shore of Gaspé Basin.



When Collins arrived in Gaspé, he found three families already settled there: Felix O’Hara on the north shore of Gaspé Basin, Richard Ascah in Peninsula, and my direct ancestor, John Paterson, along the banks of the York River in Sunny Bank. It is probable that the three families settled on their respective lands without any official permission to do. John and his family were living on 400 acres of land west of the present-day Mill Brook.

Extraordinarily little is known about the life of John Paterson (spelled with one t). He was born around 1735 in Scotland and died in Gaspé around 1807. How and when he came to North America is not known, although it is probably that he was a soldier under the command of General Wolfe. Family tradition has it that he was a Lieutenant in Wolfe’s army, but no military records have been found to confirm this. It is more likely that he was a non-commissioned officer, probably a sergeant.

John settled along the banks of the York River in 1764. What we do know is that he and his family settled in Gaspé around 1764. Various sources attest to this. Raymond Patterson in his work Family Gatherings writes:

“In 1764, John and his wife arrived at the mouth of the Gaspé Bay and landed at Grand Greve. After looking the place over, they found the place not for them. It was too hilly, and he did not like fishing. As they had permission to settle anywhere, they wished in Gaspé they sailed on up the Bay into the York River and came to a halt at the mouth of the Little River, four acres above the York Bridge

(present day bridge). This is the same year he was granted four hundred acres for his war services Lots 20 and 21".²

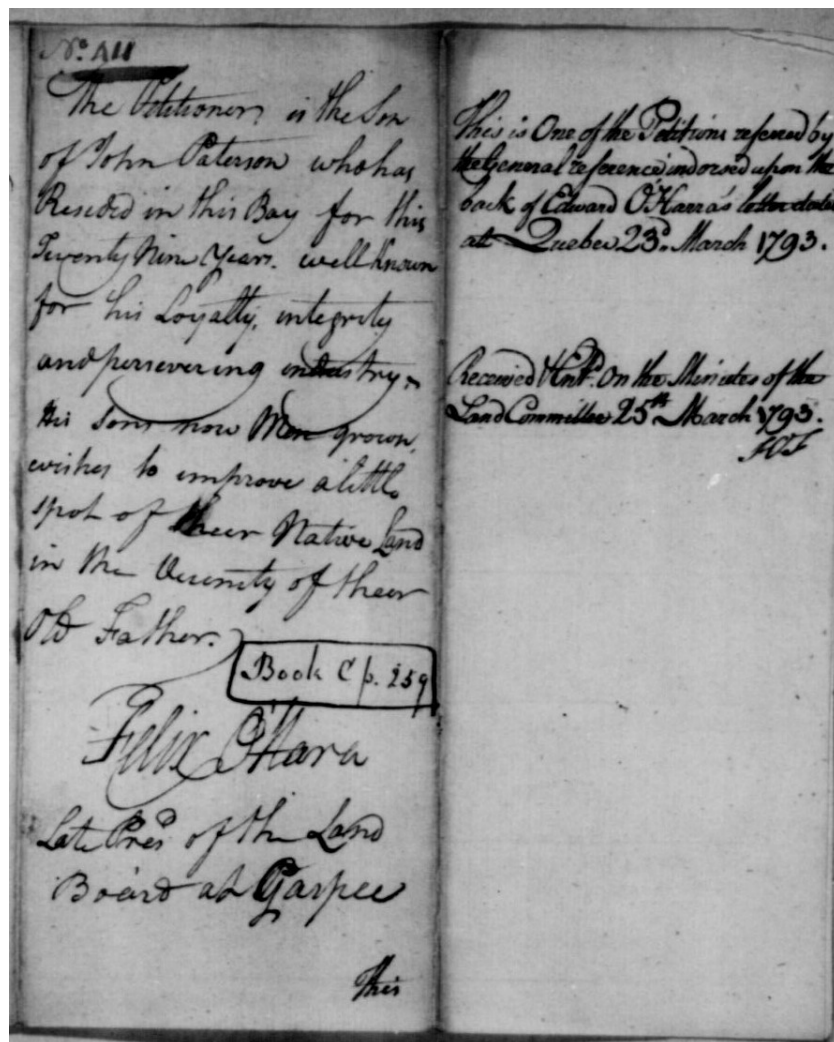
In *Historical Gaspé* by Charles-Eugene Roy and Lucien Breault wrote:

*"In the spring of 1764, Governor Murray allowed Felix O'Hara, a naval lieutenant, to settle wherever he wished in Gaspé, provided he did not take anyone else's place. On June the 23rd of the same year, Hugh Montgomery asked for a grant of land along the north shore of Gaspé Basin. At the same time John Patterson, a lieutenant in Wolfe's army settled on the upper York River."*³

Neither of the above authors offer any documented sources for their information.

In a land petition of 1793 made by his son Peter (for 200 acres of land adjoining his father) Felix O'Hara, President of Gaspé Land Board endorsed the petition.⁴

"The petitioner is the son of John Paterson who has resided in this bay for this twenty-nine years. Well, known for his loyalty, integrity, and persevering industry. His son now a man grown wishes to improve a little spot of his native land in the vicinity of his Father".



The claim made by Peter was in 1793. If John Sr. had resided in Gaspé for 29 years, that would confirm that he arrived at the latest 1764. In that petition Peter also claims that his father was given an occupation certificate by John Collins. ⁵

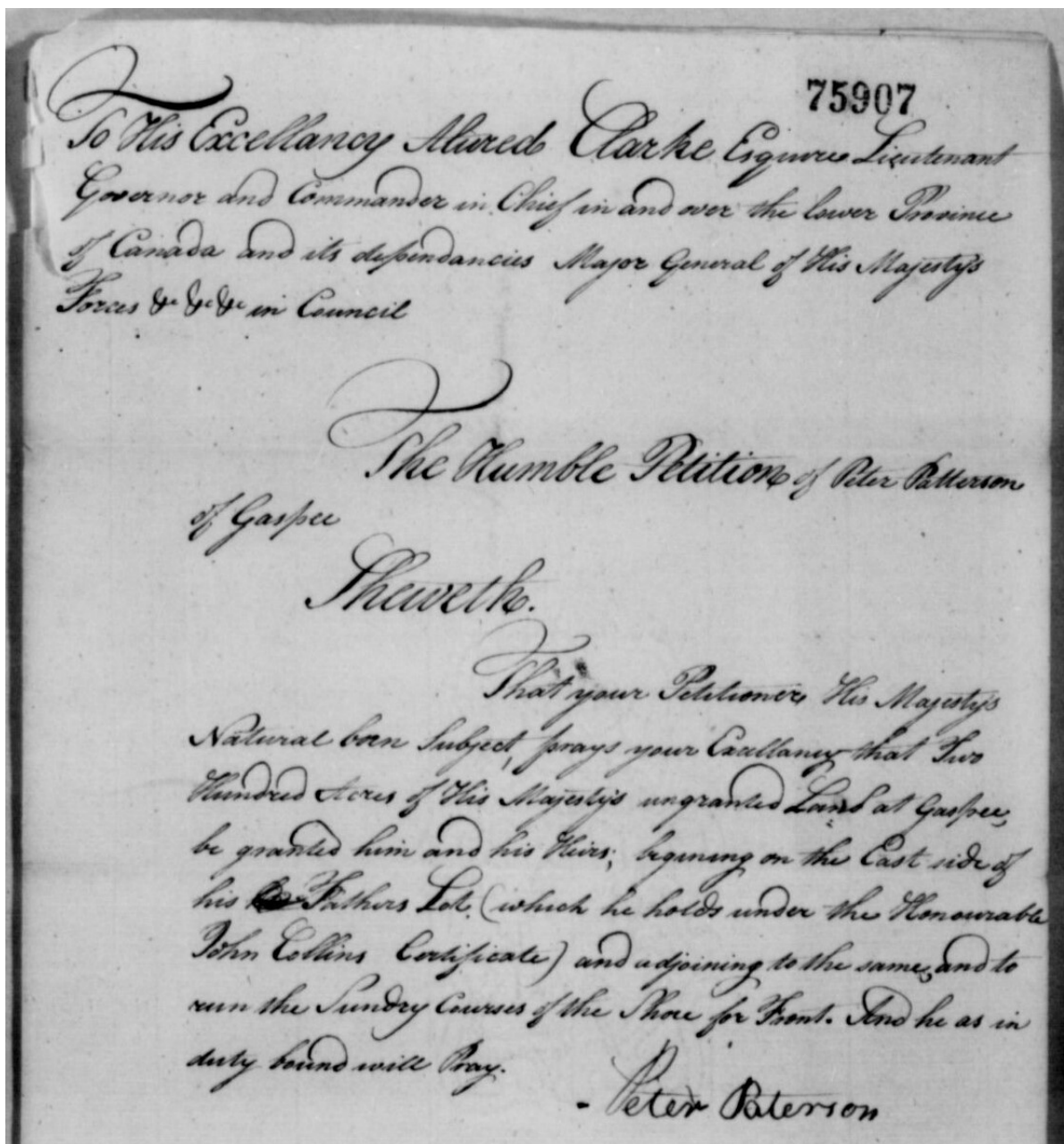
To his Excellency Alured Clarke Esquire, Lieutenant General and Commander in Chief in and over the lower Province of Canada and its dependencies Major General of His Majesty's Forces in Council.

The Humble Petition of Peter Patterson of Gaspé

Sheweth.

That your Petitioner His Majesty's natural born subject, prays your Excellency that two hundred acres of His Majesty's ungranted land at Gaspé be granted him and his heirs beginning on the east side of his father's lot (which he holds under the honourable John Collins Certificate) and adjoining to the same and to run the Sundry courses of the shore for front and he his in duty bound to prey.

Peter Paterson



75907

*To His Excellency Alured Clarke Esquire Lieutenant
Governor and Commander in Chief in and over the lower Province
of Canada and its dependencies Major General of His Majesty's
Forces &c &c in Council*

*The Humble Petition of Peter Patterson
of Gaspé*

Sheweth.

*That your Petitioner His Majesty's
Natural born Subject, prays your Excellency that Two
Hundred Acres of His Majesty's ungranted Land at Gaspé,
be granted him and his Heirs, beginning on the East side of
his Father's Lot (which he holds under the Honourable
John Collins Certificate) and adjoining to the same, and to
run the Sundry Courses of the Shore for Front. And he as in
duty bound will Pray.*

- Peter Paterson

Government officials such as surveyors had permission to grant Occupation Certificates giving settlers permission to occupy their land, without granting official title. It seems that Collins did in fact issue one of these certificates to John Paterson. However, very few papers of Collins's time in Gaspe have been found and it is likely that the certificate, like all others along the Gaspe coast, was never registered with the British authorities. Collins makes no mention of Paterson but to issue an Occupation Certificate, he must have surveyed the lands in question. In addition, John would have been an asset to Collins, having extensive knowledge of the area.

It seems that Collins did not include lands to the west of the present Mill Brook (at that time known as Sawmill Creek) in his plans for Charlotte Town. The most likely reason is that immediately to the west was the land claimed by Felix O'Hara and John McCord and to the west of that would be the lands occupied by John Paterson. These lands would not be available for the planned Charlotte Town. The British government, most likely the cost of doing so, never acted on the plans drawn up by Collins.

The earliest known map of the York River, a preliminary draft, shows little detail. ⁶ Saw Mill Creek (present day Mill Brook) is clearly marked.



Why did John choose to settle in Gaspe? The logical answer might well be that he must have been there earlier and knew the area. After the capture of the French fortress of Louisburg in 1758, an expedition was organized and dispatched to Gaspe to destroy French settlements and shipping in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, to

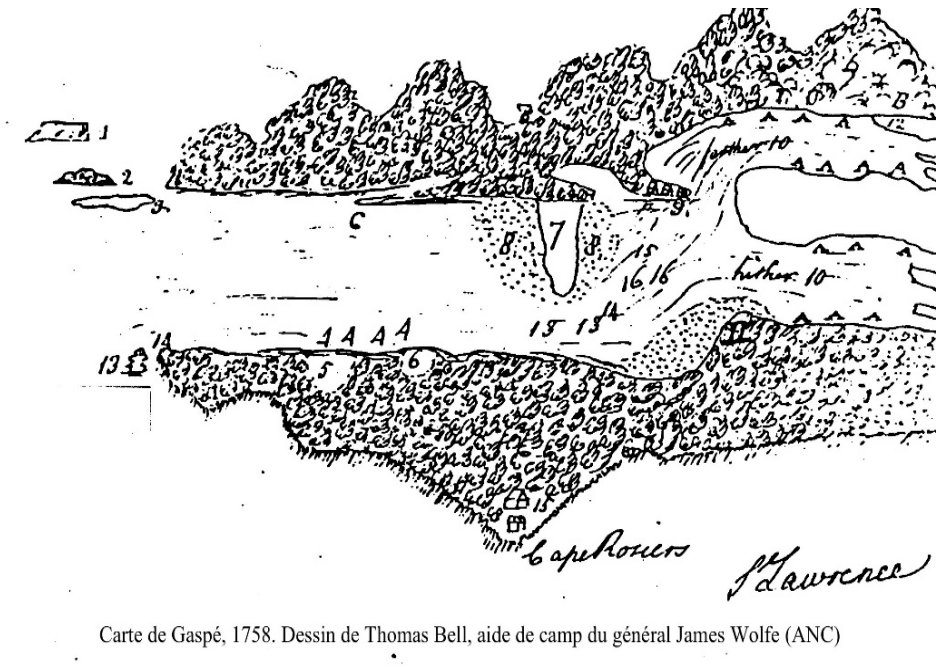
prepare for the invasion of Quebec the following year. Sir Charles Hardy and Brigadier General James Wolfe were in command of the naval and military forces, respectively.

Information about this expedition is available in the journal of Captain Bell, A.D.C (Aide de Camp) to General Wolfe. ⁷ It is logical to assume that John was a member of this expedition, and this is how he gained knowledge of the land at Gaspé. Eight men were sent some ten miles up the York River and burnt a sawmill and three houses.

“ . . . On the 7th at day break we went up the farther arm having heard some of the people were there, tis ten mile up to the Morass, the Channel the same in regard to its difficulty as to other, we took 8 men here and sent them down in the Barge, (1 an Indian) then went to a saw mill just bye where we found a vast number of plank, we immediately fell to work and sett fire to the Moulin, plank and 3 houses. . . ”.

We do not know for certain if John was one of those eight men who went up the York River in the August of 1758; although it is highly likely. What we know is that the French did have a small settlement in the Sunny Bank area. In addition to the mill and three houses, there must have been a sizable area of cleared land. John may have kept this place in mind when he settled in Gaspé around 1764 and claimed four hundred acres of land.

Map of Gaspé, 1758, by Thomas Bell, A.D.G. to General James Wolfe.



Carte de Gaspé, 1758. Dessin de Thomas Bell, aide de camp du général James Wolfe (ANC)

On the map we can identify Boom Defence (#7), Pointe Conway (#9), and the area where John settled in Sunny Bank (B).

The following illustration, drawn in 1759, shows what Gaspé Basin and the York River may have looked like during that expedition of 1758. ⁸



A view of Gaspe Bay in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Drawn on the spot by Captain Hervey Smith, 1759

Another possible explanation why John settled in Gaspe is that it may have reminded him of his former home in Scotland. The Gaspe coast and Gaspe Bay are remarkably similar to the Scottish topography and coastline. Although we do not know what military unit John served in, many former members of the 78th Fraser Highlanders did claim land and settle along the Gaspe coast.

Ownership of the original claim from 1764 was confirmed by the Gaspe Land Commission of 1819, when the widow of Peter, a son of John Sr., requested a grant for lots 20 & 21. In 1820 the Commission confirmed the ownership of 600 acres of land to the widow of Peter Paterson. This would include the 200 that Peter requested in 1793 and would explain the original 400 which John was supposed to have been granted. It also gives a clue to when John Sr. died. In her request, Peter's widow states that the request was based on 12 years occupancy. That indicates that John Sr. died in 1807 and that Peter, who was no longer living in 1819, and his family were occupying all 600 acres of land. ⁹

No 61

District of Gaspe } Claim by Widow Paterson relict of the
 18 July 1820 } late Peter Paterson in his life time
 This land comprised lots Nos 20, 21 & 22 on the plan filed by Mr. Drubault, Gaspe Bay, for a plot of ground
 situated on the South side of the SW branch of Gaspe Bay
 bounded in front on the South by the South River of
 the said SW branch, and in depth by waste lands of the
 1 House Crown, on the East by Land heretofore granted to Miss
 3 Outhouses Maria Peleford, and on the West by Land claimed by
 12 Acres cleared of Maria Peleford, and on the West by Land claimed by
 10 in family Jean Janset dit Papouloquet (an Indian) consisting of 50
 4 Acres 5 families hundred Acres, or a front of fifty seven chains. Claimed by
 the Widow Paterson during twelve years. Further a small lot of land
 female of age in common with Jean Janset dit Papouloquet (an Indian)
 the rest under on the eastern extremity of a small Island in the
 Bay opposite to the land claimed by the said Widow Paterson
 the said lot consisting of about five Acres, and upon
 which a clearing of about five Acres have been
 made by the late husband, and the said Jean Janset
 dit Papouloquet.

The lands settled on by John in 1764 and then officially granted to his daughter in law in 1820 are shown on the following map. (Widow Paterson's Adjudication) ¹⁰





It would be highly unlikely he would have made land claims in a place he had never visited, especially when there was so much land and so few settlers. In addition, he arrived in Gaspé at the same time as Richard Ascah. We know that Ascah served with the 48th Regiment as a corporal and was with Wolfe at the Plains of Abraham. It is likely that John and Richard were friends and served together. They decided to take up land in the same area, Richard at Peninsula and John on the York River. Both Peter and John, sons of John, married daughters of Richard Ascah.

Although no military records have been found that mention John, it is probable that he was a sergeant in one of the British military units disbanded in 1763. Non-commissioned officers received a grant of two hundred acres, along with an additional allotment of 50 acres for each dependent, which would account for the 400 acres he received. This indicates that when John arrived in Gaspé, he was accompanied by four dependents.

The first mention of in any official document comes from the **Census of Part of the Province of Quebec 1765**. John's (Jon) name appears in the information for Gaspé. ¹¹

At that time there were only ten or so houses and thirty-two residents around the Gaspé Bay. Jon Paterson is listed along with a wife, a male child under fifteen and three female children. This would indicate that John's first son, either John Jr. or Peter, we do not know for sure, was born after John settled along the banks of the York River.

Comis

Qualité ou	Maisons	hommes	Sexe mâle	infirmes - Malades au	Blancs de 15 ans	infirmes - Malades au	Blancs de 15 ans	infirmes - Malades au	Blancs de 15 ans	Blancs de 15 ans	Blancs de 15 ans	Blancs de 15 ans	Blancs de 15 ans	Blancs de 15 ans	Blancs de 15 ans
------------	---------	--------	-----------	-----------------------	------------------	-----------------------	------------------	-----------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------

Delautre Bart	8	6	3	6	8											
Mr. Moryoy	1	1	1		3											
Peter Bondin	1	1	1	1	1											
Peter Dijonne	1															
Michel Olexie	1	1	1		1											
Thomas Depeau	1	1		1	1											
J. Charnelle	1	1														
Ch. Blondelle	1				1											
P. Derack	1	1		2												
J. Garnier	1	1	3	1	2											
Nicolas Praton	1			2	2											
John Garnier	1	1		1	1											
J. Aye. Sen	1															
J. Aye. Jun	1															
Eduard Manuaring	1				1	12										
Wm. Smullen	1	1			2	6										
Jelie & Hara	1	1	2		1	16										
Calid Nelson	1															
John Koskne	1				1											
Jan Batorson	1	1	1	3												
<p style="text-align: right;">27 16 9 17 22 6 . 210</p>																

Jon is listed along with other British occupants, including Felix O'Hara. For some reason Richard Ascah does not appear on the census.

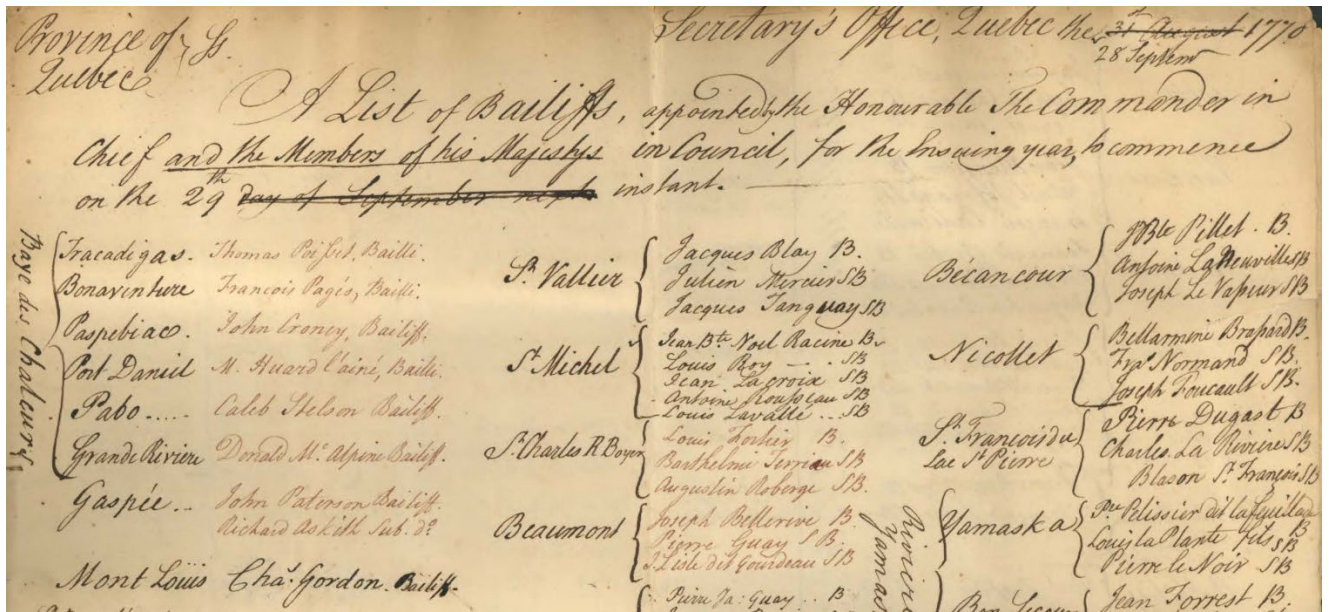
In 1768 John was named Bailiff for Gaspé and Richard Ascah as sub-Bailiff. They continued to serve in that capacity until 1773. Usually, men with military experience were appointed to such positions. From records of British regiments at the Plains of Abraham we know that Richard Ascah served with the rank of corporal. Although there is no mention of John in those same records, for John to be appointed Bailiff, it would make sense that he had held a higher rank than Ascah, therefore reinforcing the hypothesis that John was a sergeant.

Both John and Richard appear on the records of the Office of the Civil Secretary of Quebec, which were published in the Quebec Gazette. The first such appointment appears in the August 31st, 1768, edition and continues until 1773.¹²

PROVINCE of QUEBEC, } } ff.		SECRETARY'S-OFFICE, Québec, August 31 st . 1768.				
A LIST of BAILIFFS for the ensuing Year, to commence on the 29 th of September next, appointed by the LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR and Council on the 29 th of August, 1768.						
Bailliés Châteaus. Tracadigas, Bonaventure, Paspébiac, Port Daniel, Pabo, Grande Rivière, Gaspé,	M. Poiffet, Bailli.	Rivière du Sud. Rivière de Bellechasse.	St. Pierre,	Jean St. Pierre, Bailli, Michel Blais, sub do. Simon Fournier, do. Jacques Beaudouin, Bailli, Michel Boulé, sub do. François Fortier, do. Joseph Dion, Bailli, Jean Marcoux, sub do.	St. Nicolas,	Louïs Demers, Bailli, J. Marie Demers, sub do. Joseph Lorimier, do. Joseph Aubin, Bailli, Louïs Côté, sub do. Joseph Guenet, do. Joseph Hamelle, Bailli, Augustin Durocher, sub do.
	François Paget, Bailli.		St. François,	St. Antoine,		
	Jean Croncy, Bailli.					
	M. Huard, l'ainé, Bailli.					
	Caleb Stelson, Bailiff.					
Donald M'Alpine, Bailiff.						
John Patterfon, Bailiff.						
Richard Askith, sub do.						

PROVINCE of QUEBEC, } } ff.		SECRETARY'S-OFFICE, Québec, 31 st August, 1769.				
A LIST of BAILIFFS, appointed by His EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR in Council, for the ensuing Year, to commence on the 29 th Day of September next.						
Bailliés Châteaus. Tracadigas, Bonaventure, Paspébiac, Port Daniel, Pabo, Grande Rivière, Gaspé, Mount Louis,	Thomas Poiffet, Bailli.	St. Thomas, Rivière du Sud.	St. Marie,	René Deneau, Bailli, M. Dumontier, sub do. Pierre Fournier, sub do. Joseph Lamonde, sub do. Michel Blais, Bailli, Antoine Morin, sub do. Ignace Belanger, sub do. Noel Forgeau, Bailli, Guillaume Le Mieux, f. do.	St. Marie,	Joseph Gagné, Bailli, Louïs Parant, sub do. Vincent Lemire, sub do. François Leflar, Bailli, Jaques Ducharme, sub do. François Nadau, sub do. Jean Rodrigue, Bailli, Joseph Fortin, sub Bailli, Jean Buque, sub do.
	François Pagés, Bailli.		St. Pierre,	St. Joseph,		
	Jean Croncy, Bailli.					
	M. Huard l'ainé, Bailli.					
	Caleb Stelson, Bailiff.					
Donald M'Alpine, Bailiff.						
John Patterfon, Bailiff.						
Richard Askith, sub do.						
George Thompson, Bailiff.						

PROVINCE of QUEBEC, } } ff.		SECRETARY'S-OFFICE, Québec, the 28 September, 1770.				
A LIST of BAILIFFS, appointed by the Honorable The Commander in Chief in Council, for the ensuing Year, to commence on the 29 th Instant.						
Bailliés Châteaus. Tracadigas, Bonaventure, Paspébiac, Port Daniel, Pabo, Grande Rivière, Gaspé, Mount Louis, S. Bernard, de Rimouki, Les Isles d'Orléans, Les Isles de la Gaspésie,	Thomas Poiffet, Bailli.	Rivière du Sud. Berthier de Bellechasse.	St. Pierre,	Michel Blais, Bailli, Charles Mathieu, sub do. Pierre Gagnier, sub do. Jean Blondreau, Bailli, J. Bte. Boulé, sub do. Joseph Picard, sub do. Joseph Moragay, Bailli, J. Bte. Blay, sub do. Joseph Prévencal, sub do. François Mercier, sub do. Jacques Blay, Bailli,	St. Nicolas,	J. Bte. Demers, Bailli, Baptiste Drapeau, sub do. Denis Frichette, sub do. Louïs Côté, Bailli, François Dion, sub do. Joseph Boucher, sub do. Joseph Lancuville, Bailli, J. Bte. Hamelle, sub do. Joseph Gagnier, sub do. Jean Le Claire, Bailli, Jacques Touffignat, sub do.
	François Paget, Bailli.		St. François,	St. Antoine de Padoue,		
	Jean Croncy, Bailli.					
	M. Huard l'ainé, Bailli.					
	Caleb Stelson, Bailiff.					
Donald M'Alpine, Bailiff.						
John Patterfon, Bailiff.						
Richard Askith, sub do.						
Charles Gordon, Bailiff.						
M. Le Page, Bailli.						
M. Rieu, Bailli.						



PROVINCE of }
QUEBEC, }

SECRETARY'S-OFFICE, Quebec, 28th September, 1771.

A LIST of BAILIFFS, appointed by the Honorable the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, for the ensuing Year, to commence on the 29th Instant.

Baies des Chaleurs	Tracadigas	* Thomas Poiffet, Bailli.	Rivière du Sud	St. Pierre	Jean Bte. Dubé, Bailli, J. Bte. Blanchet, sub do. Basil Morin, sub do.	St. Nicolas	Jacques Rousseau, Bailli, Pierre Bouraffas, sub do. Michel Dupont, sub do.																			
	Bonaventure	* François Pagé, Bailli.		St. François	St. François		Jean Bte. Martineau, Bailli, Louis Lanoué, sub do. François Thibault, sub do.	St. Antoine de Padoue	François Dion, Bailli, Etienne Lombard, sub do. Joseph Genette, sub do.																	
	Paspébiac	* John Croncy, Bailli.			Bertbier de Belle Casse		Aubin De l'Isle		Joseph Morancy, Bailli, Philippe Chartier, sub do. Jacques Provençal, sub do.	St. Croix	* Joseph Laneuville, Bailli, J. Bte. Hamelle, sub do. Joseph Gagnier, sub do.															
	Port Daniel	* M. Huard, l'ainé Bailli.							St. François du Lac		St. Pierre	St. Hyacinthe	St. Amara	Pierre Duguay, Bailli, Baptiste Deschenaux, sub do. Verville Couturier, sub do.												
	Pabo	* Caleb Stelson, Bailli.													St. Hyacinthe	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara	a Catresage, dit Beau-oleu, B. a Joseph Nivernois, sub do a N. Pron, dit Jolibois, sub do a J. Bte. Alard, Bailli, a Regis Brisbeois, sub do a J. François Gingras, sub do							
	Grande Rivière	* Donald M ^e Alpine, Bailli.																		St. Hyacinthe	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara		
Gaspée	* John Paterfon, Bailli. Richard Askith, sub do.	St. Hyacinthe	St. Amara			St. Amara																			St. Amara	St. Amara
Rivière à la Magdelaine	Thomas M ^e Dermot, Bailli.			St. Hyacinthe				St. Amara																		

PROVINCE of }
QUEBEC: }

SECRETARY'S OFFICE, Quebec, 1 September, 1773.

A LIST of BAILIFFS, appointed by His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, for the ensuing Year, to commence on the 29th Instant.

Baies des Chaleurs	Tracadigas	a Thomas Poiffet, Bailli.	Rivière du Sud	St. Henry	François Morin, Bailli, Louis Paradis, sub do. Louis Buffiere, sub do.	St. François du Lac	St. Pierre	St. Hyacinthe	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara																																			
	Bonaventure	a François Pagé, do		Rivière Boyer	St. Nicolas								Aubin De l'Isle	St. Pierre	St. Hyacinthe	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara																											
	Paspébiac	a John Croncy, do																			St. Nicolas	Aubin De l'Isle	St. Pierre	St. Hyacinthe	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara																		
	Port Daniel	a M. Huard, l'ainé, do																												St. Nicolas	Aubin De l'Isle	St. Pierre	St. Hyacinthe	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara									
	Pabo	a Caleb Stelson, do																																					St. Nicolas	Aubin De l'Isle	St. Pierre	St. Hyacinthe	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara
	Grande Rivière	a Donald M ^e Alpine, do																																													
Gaspée	a John Paterfon, do a Richard Askith, sub do	St. Nicolas	Aubin De l'Isle			St. Pierre	St. Hyacinthe	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara																																			
Rivière à la Magdelaine	a Thomas M ^e Dermot, Bailli.			St. Nicolas	Aubin De l'Isle								St. Pierre	St. Hyacinthe	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara	St. Amara																												

John's name next appears on a census of 1777.

In 1777 the 13 Colonies were in revolt against Great Britain. In response, Governor Haldimand, the British Commander in Quebec, instructed the Lieutenant Governor of Gaspé, Nicholas Cox to conduct a census of the population of the settlements in Gaspé Bay and the Bay de Chaleur and to establish Militias along the coast. The British government was concerned about the loyalty of some of the residents, particularly those who came from New England.

The surveys were to include:

"The names of the settlements, number of inhabitants settled at each of them, what country they are native of and how disposed toward government, a list to be made out of such as have favoured rebellion and those to be

particularly pointed out upon whose fidelity and probity reliance may be had whether there appears to have been or at present any correspondence kept up before the settlers residing there and the colonies in rebellion, whether any vessels belonging to the latter have touched at these settlements since the commencement of the present Troubles and with whom they had dealing, whose names you will transmit here by the first safe conveyance” 14

John’s name appears on the resulting census “**Inhabitants at Gaspee within the Capes**”. 15 On the census, John is listed as being from Scotland and had three dependants: two males under the age of sixteen, and one female over 16. There is no mention of a wife. It is also listed that he had one boat and two horned cattle.

Heads of Families	Boys & Children under 16	Women & Children under 16	Men & Children under 16	Boats	Cattle	Sheep	Horned Cattle	Swine	Other	Sum of all	Sum of all	Sum of all
John Bond	S. Lundon			6			1			3		
Will Bond	Ditto	1										
James Bond	N. York	1										
James Reynolds	R. Island	3										6
P. Derby	Ditto											2
E. Munden	Ditto											
John & Munden	Ditto											
James Jones	Ditto											
W. D. Buchanan	Ditto											
Calcutt Allen	Ditto											
James Jones	Ditto											
Thomas Chiquan	Native			1			1					2
Mac & How	Ditto											
John & How	N. England			3			1					
Robt. Lord	Ditto											1
John & French	Ditto											
Hannah Bromley	Guernsey	4		1						2		6
P. Brewster	D°	18								5		12
P. Bromley	D°	7								10		10
John O'Hara	Ireland	1		3			3			14		2
John Patterson	Scotland	2		2		1				1		2
R. Auscha	England			2		1				2		1
John & Buchanan	R. Island											
Total	23		35	18	2	8	25	28		70		

Signed
Nichl. Cox Surveyor

Cox’s report goes into detail about this survey.

“Gaspee

This is the only safe harbour between Quebec and Nova Scotia; and on that account will in time likely to be the principal fishing port. Upon an average there has been for the last five years exported from this port about sixteen thousand quintals of fish ...

Three families only occupy land at Gaspee but about thirty men winter there belonging to the various fishing places in the Bay.” 16

The three families Cox was referring to were Felix O’Hara (Ireland) at Gaspe Basin; John Patterson (Scotland) along the banks of the York River and Richard Auscha (Ascah, from England) at Peninsula Point. Most of the others on this survey were mainly from New England (Rhode Island) and were temporary residents

who worked in the fisheries. These were the people who the British authorities were concerned about re their loyalty to Great Britain.

Cox's second task was to form local militias.

“ You are to firm the Inhabitants residing there into a militia in the best manner you can, some blank commissions for the Officers are furnished you, and you will fill them up with the names of such of the principal men amongst them, as you find best disposed to support the King's Government and most likely to have weight and influence with the people.” ¹⁷

Very few militia records had been found from 1777. What has been discovered shows that each militia had three officers: a Captain, a Lieutenant, and an Ensign. Each position would have required men with military experience.

In Gaspé, with so few British settlers with military backgrounds, it is likely that John was a member of the militia for Gaspé. From correspondence found in the Haldimand Papers, we know that Felix O'Hara was the Captain of the Gaspé Division of Militia. With the survey of 1777 showing only three families occupying land at Gaspé, it would make sense that, in addition to O'Hara, John Patterson and Richard Ascah would have been the other officers. Patterson probably would have been the Lieutenant and Ascah the Ensign, although no records have been found to confirm this. As has been previously mentioned, Patterson was the Bailiff and Ascah the sub bailiff indicating that Patterson held a higher military rank and therefore would also have held a higher rank in the militia. This may explain why family tradition has it that John was a Lieutenant in Wolfe's Army. (It is quite likely that he was a Lieutenant and a member of Wolfe's army, but not at the same time).

In 1792, a John Patterson is listed as an Ensign in the Militia for Gaspé Township, with the Lieutenant being Daniel McPherson and the Captain Hugh O'Hara, son of Felix O'Hara. Since we know that John's son John Jr. was living in Perce until 1798, it is reasonable to conclude that this John is indeed Pioneer John. ¹⁸

DISTRICT OF GASPE.	
Colonel, Nicholas Cox,	
<i>East Newell & Port Daniel Militia.</i>	
Captain, John Mann,	Lieuts. John Traverser,
Ensign James Caldwell,	— Eli Henoly.
<i>Cox Township.</i>	
Captain Hugh Munro,	Lieuts. Wm. J. Mann,
Ensign John Jefferies,	— Edwd. Mann,
<i>Richmond Township.</i>	
Captain Az. Pritchard,	Lieuts. Wm. Buxton,
Ensign Pritchard junr.	— Wm. Tyler,
<i>Pierce Township, Ensign Mortough Moriarty.</i>	
<i>Gaspé Township.</i>	Lieut. Danl. M'Pherson,
Captain Hugh O'Hara.	Ensn. John Patterfon.

A last piece of evidence mentioning John Sr. that has been found in an entry in the ledger books of Janvrin Company from October of 1798. The Janvrin Company was owned by Philip and Francis Janvrin from Jersey in the Channel Islands. The company was active in the fisheries in the eastern part of Canada, including Cape Breton Island, the Magdalene Islands and in 1790 they established operations in Gaspé Bay. ¹⁹

John Patterson		Contra Co.	
Sept 10	To Wall on a brogk from Gaspe 176	80	11
25	2 2/3 Muffick ditto from Gaspe out of throat 1/6	1	7
July 10	5 1/2 Cumbus from Gaspe 15/ 18 Timber Mails 1/2	16	2
May 17	2 1/2 yds Muslin 1/2 2 Wash hand 1/2 1/2 1/2	16	1
	8 1/2 yds Thimble Mails 1/6 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	3	3
	2 1/2 yds Mails 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	1	13
	1 Gallon Malt 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	16	9
	1 Quintal Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	1	17
June 10	3 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	0	11
July 1	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	2	5
15	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	1	10
22	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	9	1
26	2 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	5	1
27	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	2	3
31	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	2	3
Aug 23	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	1	3
30	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	10	10
Sept 10	6 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	9	7
	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	9	14
	3 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	1	1
	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	10	1
	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	1	6
	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	1	10
	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	1	9
	3 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	5	10
	4 Gallon Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	2	1
	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	9	1
Oct 6	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	9	9
	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	1	6
	2 Quintals Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	1	6
		155	19 5

May 26	By 5 New Boats £50 - 1 New Boat 7/6	53	10
	1 Boat 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	2	1
	1 pair Cars 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	10	1
	1 pair work 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	1	1
	2339 ditto fish freight to Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	6	5
	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	16	1
	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	4	1
	1 1/2 yds Mails from Gaspe 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2	2	6
		141	12
		14	7
		155	19

The first entry show purchase made by John. Items included fishing supplies, tobacco, rum and molassas.

The second entry show how John paid off his debt to the Janvrins. He built and sold boats to the company as well as providing several days of labour.

John died around 1807. No other evidence of his life in Gaspe or before has been found. What we can safely conclude is that John was a sergeant in a British regiment and settled in Gaspe around 1764.

John's son, John Jr., died in a house fire in 1812. At the time of his death John Jr. was a Justice of the Peace and Captain of the Militia for Gaspe. It is likely that John Jr. would be entrusted with family papers. Any documents that John had about military service or land grants would have been destroyed in the fire. At that time, John Sr. was no longer living, having died around 1807. Family tradition has it that land and military records of Richard Ascah, John Jr.'s father-in-law were also lost in the same fire.

Although no military records for John have been found, it is highly likely he was a member of one of two regiments. Members of the 78th Regiment (The Fraser Highlanders) were present on the raid on Gaspe, as well as at the battles of Louisbourg and the Plains of Abraham, Quebec. Many of the soldiers of the regiment remained in Gaspe after the unit was disbanded. They received lands along the coast. John may have been one of those. The regimental records are incomplete.

Another possibility is the 60th Regiment (King's Royal Rifles) which was a regiment recruited from men in the 13 Colonies. We do know that two companies of this regiment were at Gaspé. No evidence, however, has been found to show that John was a member.

A third possibility is that he may have been a member of a colonial militia such as Roger's Rangers or Butler's Rangers. Surviving musters of each unit are incomplete. Members of Roger's Rangers were with Wolfe at both Louisbourg and the Plains of Abraham at Quebec. It would be logical to assume that members were also present on the expedition to Gaspé in 1758. If you are going into the woods, as they did, Rangers would be a better choice than soldiers from a regular regiment.

Genetic testing of descendant's of John indicates a relationship to Patterson families in the United States, particularly New Hampshire, where Roger's Rangers came from, which would strengthen the argument that John moved from Scotland with his family to the 13 Colonies, then joining a regiment, serving in Quebec, and finally moving to Gaspé.

We do not know who John's wife was or where she came from, or when they were married, nor is there any mention of her in any records that have been found. We do know that John arrived in Gaspé with three daughters and shortly after their arrival in Gaspé, two sons, Peter and John, were born. Could their mother have died in 1766 shortly after the birth of the second son? This is certainly a possibility since there are no records of any further children.

Much research has been done and much more remains to be done to discover the origins of John Paterson, which military unit he served in, how he came to settle in Gaspé and who his wife was. Informed speculation can lead us to possible answers. The mystery remains to be solved. The story of the second generation continues.

Family of John Paterson

Wife: Unknown

Children: Daughter 1

Eleanor? born around 1758, married to Lawrence Berry,

Mary b. around 1760, married to James Boyle

Peter, born around 1764, married to Martha Ascah, died around 1818.

John, born around 1766, married Margaret Ascah; Margaret McPherson, died 1812.

Notes:

¹ LAC A Plan of the Bay and Harbour of Gaspé, John Collins

² Patterson, Raymond, Family Gatherings Volume 3. Unpublished manuscript held by the Gaspé Museum

³ Roy, Charles-Eugene and Breault, Lucien "Historical Gaspé", 1934 page 116

⁴ LAC Lower Canada Land Papers RG L3L Vol 155, page 75907

⁵ LAC Lower Canada Land Papers RG L3L Vol 155, page 75908

⁶ BAnQ

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⁸ BAnQ

⁹ LAC Lower Canada Land Papers, RG 1 L3 Vol. 154

¹⁰ BAnQ

¹¹ LAC A Partial Survey of the Province of Quebec 1765

¹² BAnQ Quebec Gazette, 1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1773

¹³ LAC Civil Secretary, records relating to appointment of Bailiffs, Quebec
RG 4 B 22 Vol 1 1770 File 2

¹⁴ LAC Haldimand Papers "Papers and Correspondence relating to Gaspee and Dependencies 1774-1786"

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ BAnQ Militia for Lower Canada 1792

¹⁹ LAC MG23-G III 15, page 21. Ledger of accounts (1798-99) relating to the Gaspé fisheries of Francis and Philip Janvrin