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A Shipwreck at Canso, 1629 In Issue 41 of Cape Breton's Magazine, we published an article called "The Early History of St. Ann's (Englishtown)." In that article, Rev. Fr. R. P. Pacifique told of Jesuit Fr. Bartholomew Vimont • "the very first known missionary" in Cape Breton, who arrived in 1629 with Capt. Charles Daniel when a storm forced their ship to seek the shelter of St. Ann's Bay. Fr. Vimont was joined shortly after by Fr. Vieuxport, who was shipwrecked at Canso by the same storm. The following letter was written by Fr. Gabriel Lalemant, another survivor of the wreck at Canso. He tells of the disaster and of Fr. Vieuxport's leaving to serve the Indians at St. Ann's. It was Fr. Vieuxport together with Fr. Vimont who named the spot St. Ann's. This letter begins with the shipwreck. They were, returning from a visit to France when they learned that Quebec had fallen to the English. In trying to sail back to France, they were caught in the storm. Fr. Lalemant's letter: "The Lord chastising has chastised me; but he hath not delivered me over to death."-- (Psalms cxvii. 18.) A chastisement the more severe, as the shipwreck has been attended by the death of the Rev. Father Philibert Noyrot, and of our brother, Louis Malot, two men who would, it seems to me, have been of great service to our seminary. Yet, as God has so disposed, we must seek consolation in his holy will, out of which there never was a solid or contented mind, and I am sure that experience has shown your reverence that the bitterness of our sorrows, steeped in the sweetness of God's good pleasure, when a soul binds itself indissolubly to that, loses all or most of its gall, or, if some sighs yet remain for past or present afflictions, it is only to aspire the more for heaven, and meritoriously perfect that conformity in which the soul has resolved to spend the rest of its days. Of the four members of our Society in the ship, God, dividing equally, has taken two and left the two others. These two good religious, well disposed, and resigned to death, will serve as victims to appease God's wrath justly excited against us for Railings Fire Escapes Room Dividers Spiral Staircases Wrought Iron Furniture 564-2075 Sydport Industrial Park The Iron Shop Ltd. our faults, and to render his goodness favorable henceforth to the success of our designs. What destroyed our vessel was - a violent southwester, which arose when we were off the coast; it was so impetuous that, with all the care and diligence of our captain and crew, with all the vows and prayers which we could offer to avert the blow, we could not avoid being driven on the rocks, on the 26th day after our departure, feast of St. Bartholomew, about 9 o'clock in the evening. Of twenty-four that were in the vessel, only ten escaped; the rest were engulfed in the waves. Father Noyrot's two nephews shared their uncle's fate. We interred the bodies of several, among others, of Father Noyrot and Brother Louis. Of several others, we have had no tidings in spite of all our search. To tell you how Father Vieuxport and I escaped, would be difficult, and I believe that God alone knows, who, according to the designs of his divine providence, has preserved us; for, for my own part, not deeming it possible, humanly speaking, to avoid the dangers, I had resolved to stay



in the cabin with Brother Louis, preparing ourselves to receive the death stroke, which could not be delayed over three Mi? sereres , when I heard some one calling me on deck. Supposing that my assistance was needed, I ran up and found that it was Fa? ther Noyrot, who asked me to give him ab? solution. After giving it, and singing the Salve Regina with him, I had to stay on deck; for there was no way to get below; for the sea was so high and the wind'so furious, that, in less than a moment, the side on the rock went to pieces. I was close by Father Noyrot when a wave broke so impetuously against the side where we were standing, that it dashed it to pieces, and separated me from Father Noyrot, from whose lips I heard these last words: "Into thy hands I commend my spirit." For my own part, this same wave left me struggling a- mid four fragments of the wreck, two of which struck me so violently on the chest, and the other two on the back, that I ex? pected to be killed before sinking forever; but, just then, another wave disengaged me from the fragments, sweeping off my cap and slippers, and scattered the rest of the ship over the sea. I fortunately fell on a plank to which I clung; it was con? nected with the rest of the side of the ship. CONTINUED NEXT PAGE Mairy Brown's FHed Chieken. Kings Road Sydney River Welton Street Sydney King Street North Sydney Mary Brown has the best l's in town. (64)