

Page 24 - Cartier and the Cape Breton Shore

ISSUE: <u>Issue 32</u>

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1982/8/1

ward the coast (that is, toward Grosse lie and lie d'Est), we returned to the said Isle of Brion, where we were until the 10th of June. This wind, I believe, was northeast or southeast, for he would not have lingered six more days at Brion had it been a fair, northwest wind. Moreover, he must have scrambled for the boats, for the wind and the sea rise guickly in this passage be? tween Brion and the northernmost islands. Early, perhaps before dawn on the 10th, having gotten his fair wind--which fresh? ens considerably about 8 or 9 a.m.--he set a course somewhat to the south of south? east, ... and went to fetch a high land, which lay to the southeast of the said Island (of Brion), which appeared to us to be an island, and ranged it a-bout twenty-two leagues and a half (52 nautical miles). On the way to this high land, he sailed a-long the eastern shore of the Madeleines of which he saw three islands that lay to? ward the sands, which, he says, were like? wise an island. After leaving the Made? leines, he closed with the shore of a high land, and sailed some distance beyond the cape that he would later call Lorraine. He then concluded the "high and level land" was not an island but was mainland. -"'m'bc. ... and the said land, which is high and level land, to be the mainland falling off to the north? west (southwest). After which things were known we returned to the cape of the said land (Cape Lor? raine). This was a long sail for a day. Not only did he sail from Brion to the "high and level" land of the Bretons, some 60 or 65 nautical miles, but he coasted Cape Breton for over 35 to 40. The total nearly equals his sail from Cape Prato to Brion of May 30-31. I suppose it was nearly nightfall before he tucked his vessels under the windward shore, the south side of Cape Lor? raine. If I accept Cape North, for the moment, as Cape Lorraine, I can reasonably imagine that he fell in with the Cape Breton shore somewhere between MacKenzie Point and the High Capes. Then he rounded Cape St. Law? rence--which he might not have seen, for it is nearly invisible against the high land behind it, being but 50 feet above the sea. Then he turned Cape North and coasted somewhat beyond White Point to con? clude, by observing Cape Smokey to the southwest, that he had fetched mainland. Then he returned to Cape North. There can be no doubt Cartier knew himself to be in Atlantic water, for his next course was set for the Newfoundland. (24)