

Page 26 - Cartier and the Cape Breton Shore ISSUE : <u>Issue 32</u> Published by Ronald Caplan on 1982/8/1

which we named Cape St. Paul, which is in forty-seven degrees and a guarter. (46i2;) The awe that Cape North strikes in its sea? borne beholder is reflected in the first three clauses of the narrative: the cape is "hauts a' merveille," the sea is "grand profond," the tide such that "gu'il n'est possible de plus." There is no other cape, I should say, below Cape St. John on the Atlantic shore of the Newfoundland, upon which such superlatives may, with justice, be thrust. Cape North 5 6 over 1400 feet at its high? est. It is composed of a pink granite which has a bright red appearance where it is scoured by the waves. It has at its extremity two points, Cape North and Money Point. If lower Cape Breton is a clenched fist. Cape North is a finger pointing to Newfoundland. The 30 and 60 fathom sound? ings are close inshore. Shallower water (marking the entrance to the Bay) begins on a line roughly from Money Point to White Point. Finally, the current from the Gulf, the Atlantic tides, and the stout winds all make for a rough sea. Rip tides are common. A lop tide forms under the southeast wind off Money Point which sets up great pyramidal waves through which a fisherman travels with caution. The fact that Cartier found no harbour of worth and that he guite likely found an? chorage difficult leads me to conclude he was uneasy, kept an eye on the wind, and was anxious to be off.-Nevertheless, he searched the Bay two days, for he tells us of the lowland forming the Sunrise Valley and the presence of a river for fresh wa? ter (probably the North Aspy). He took the latitude the next noon and was in error by nearly one-half degree too low. Perhaps he sent L'Emerilion off White Point to view Smokey (his Cape St. Paul) from outside Long Point (also called Cape Egmont). Smok? ey is exactly one-quarter of a degree "a- bove and to the south" off White Point. The 47% degrees of the manuscript should read 46%. Smokey is also visible over the top of South Mountain from the modern tow? er atop Money Point, but there is no indi? cation Cartier sent a party to climb the cape. All this summed was Cartier's disappoint? ment. "There is no harbour of worth." With? out a safe harbour--though water, wood, and seafowl were abundant--Aspy Bay could be no haven for the transatlantic sailor. It was open to the winds from the north? east through the southeast. Unless a con? venient haven in Newfoundland could be found, this wondrous high cape with its red granite wall would not mark a more per? fect navigation to New France. Cartier did not find such a harbour in Newfoundland. Therefore, on his third voyage to the New World, Cartier again used the northern strait, the Strait of Belle Isle, both com? ing and going. Yet those red cliffs he had seen were sure? ly red enough to rouge a Cardinal's cape-- red enough for one such of the House of Guise-Lorraine--and thus he named this red cape, Lorraine, for a churchman of that house. And he set off for the Newfoundland. Sunday, the 13th day of the said month, the day and feast of Pentecost, we had knowledge of the east-southeast of New Land, which was about twen? ty-two (32?) leagues from the said cape, and be? cause the wind was contrary we made for a harbour, which we named the harbour of St. Esperit, until Tuesday, when we got under way from the said har? bour and ranged the said coast as far as to the Isles of St. Pierre. Aspy



Bay seen from Sugar Loaf Mountain. Photograph by Hans Padelt, Gray's Hollow. SEASON'S GREETINGS! Ingrahams United Ltd. 213 Commercial St., North Sydney, N. S. B2A 185 Telephone 794-4536 (26) General Dealers • Clothing for the Whole Family Manufacturers of Castings and Sheet Metal Products P. O. Box 98, King St., North Sydney, N. S. B2A 3M1 nnGEL "THE BEST IN HEATING AND SUPPLIES '