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Alex storm: Treasure Ship Chameau From a new book, The Island: New perspectives on Cape Breton history, 1713-1990 I landed in the fishing community of Louisbourg in 1960, a year before the project to reconstruct the 18th-century Fortress of Louisbourg would be announced. It was not long before I read J. S. McLennan's Louisbourg From Its Foundation to Its Fall, taking particular interest in the tragic story of the sinking of the Chameau in 1725. During the winter months, I became familiar with Louisbourg and soon felt at home. Since it was too cold for diving, long hours were spent listening to local sea lore and tales about wrecks and salvage possibilities. I began accumulating more diving equipment in readiness for the spring and in May 1961, I joined the crew of a fishing vessel called the Marion Kent, owned by a Portuguese-born fisherman, Manuel Sequeira. Our arrangement was that on fine days, I would assist them on board, sailing out to lay the fishing trawl. Once the trawl was laid, we sailed to known sites of wrecks where I would dive for salvage. We made a little money on scrap metal from the first day and continued to work under this agreement. On 15 July, while searching for the wreck of a steamer sunk in 1923, I asked the skipper to take his boat in close to the Alex Storm looking south, with white waves breaking over Chameau Rock. Porto Nova Island in the background. The passenger ship Chameau struck in 1725. Alex and his partners found the treasure breaker named "Chameau Rock." Leaning over the side and using a waterglass to look through 30 feet of water, I spotted a number of large, rusty cannons lying crisscross along the jagged bedrock of the sea floor. Excitedly, I told the skipper that these guns might have belonged to the Chameau and there could be valuables nearby. He agreed to anchor his vessel over the crevasse next to the rock pinnacle which the Chameau had struck. Upon entering the water, it did not take long to reach the rugged outcrops of the reef. Strong currents rushed over the rocks and crevices, some of which were covered by sea urchins and swirling kelp. Swimming nearer to Chameau Rock, I entered a barren, deeper area and there, in front of me, were the iron cannons seen from the surface. Ten guns lay scattered along the sea floor as though thrown by a careless giant. In addition, there were clusters of eroding cannon balls fused to each other and to the bedrock. It was a strange feeling to touch these ghosts from the past and reflect on the disastrous event that landed them here on a reef in Cape Breton. Staying down until I ran out of air, I was deter-

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