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WILLIAM NOSWORTHY, LTD., Water St. West.

Famous H.B.C. Captains and Ships.

(By H. M. S. COTTER, Cumberland House, in "The Beaver.")

For two hundred and twenty-two years sailing ships bore cargoes to the Bay, but in 1892 the first steam-propelled vessel took in the York Factory supplies. This was the Erik, formerly a noted whaler in the Greenland seas. The Erik and her sister ships, the Hope and the Windward, were owned by the Greys, of Peterhead, Scotland, a name that was a household word in the whaling industry for three generations.

Captain Alex. Grey, one of the three brothers, was in command of the Erik on this first voyage for H.B.C.

The Erik was a fine ship, and, like all vessels in the Polar seas, massive in her construction. Though steam-propelled, she carried sails, and was square rigged.

The sailing ships continued operating to James Bay until 1906, when the Discovery, Capt. Scott's ship of Antarctic fame, came into the possession of the Company and sailed for Charlton Island, James Bay, under Capt. Grey.

From 1781, when the Sea Horse (Captain John Fowler) cast anchor on the Moose Roads, up to 1905, when the Stork, commanded by Captain Norman Frazer, arrived at Charlton Island, Moose Factory had its annual sailing ship.

Such a record must be unique in the annals of shipping and surely bears testimony to the character and quality of the officers and crew. They were no "fair weather sailors."

It is worthy of note, too, that during the long and protracted wars of the latter part of the 18th and early 19th centuries when privateering was considered the sport of the day, the H.B.C. ships arrived with unfailing regularity at the Bay ports. No doubt this was in great measure due to the activity and vigilance of Nelson's frigates.

When the Battle of Trafalgar was fought on October 21st, 1805, the Prince of Wales, (Captain Hanwell), was nearing England, or perhaps had just arrived for she had sailed from Moose on September 14th of that year.

In 1815, the year of the Battle of Waterloo, two H.B.C. ships, the Edystone (Captain John Turner), and the Hadlow, (Captain John Davidson), were sent out to Moose Factory. Both ships wintered at Stratton Island in James Bay, arriving October 20th, presumably having run back from the Straits on account of ice.

In 1901, the H.B. Pelican came on the scene, replacing the Erik on the Labrador, York Factory and Churchill route.

The Company's establishments on the Labrador coast date back to the early years of the last century. In 1880, when the Governor, Donald A. Smith (Lord Strathcona), was su-

pervising that part of the country, a steam auxiliary was constructed in England for work on the coast as well as in Ungava. This ship was in commission for about thirty years when she was sold. But four years ago she was wrecked on the coast of Newfoundland.

She was noted chiefly for her strength of construction, being close-planked and with double planking of teak and greenheart. In her bows there was eight feet of solid oak. As an ice puncher she was of the finest. "Sandy" Grey, her master, "whacked" against every obstacle that came in the way—barring bergs. I mention this ship more particularly on account of its association with Lord Strathcona. He made many trips to England from the Labrador coast on her. Even this ship must have been too slow for his active mind and temperament, for he was only happy when every stitch of canvas was crowded on. She carried studding-sails and when Lord Strathcona was a passenger—as the stories go—there was air lost no matter how gentle a zephyr might have been blowing.

Captain Alex. Grey was held in high esteem by those in authority. He was a Britisher to the backbone, and none knew better the ways of the sea. He had sailed the "briny deep" for over fifty years. He could command men and always maintained discipline. He stood over six feet, a broad shouldered, powerful figure and a fine looking man. He was active and nimble on his feet and even at the age of seventy it was no trick for him to sway up aloft to the "crow's nest," a hundred and fifty feet above the decks, and on the ship through the ice. I have never met a man with a more remarkable eyesight. Nothing escaped his keen vision. His sense of locality and memory of landmarks was extraordinary.

Captain Grey in his younger days, sailing to Spitzbergen, carried as a passenger Arthur Conan Doyle, and if I am not mistaken it was on this voyage that the material for that author's interesting novel, "The Pole Star" was obtained.

Captain Grey was by no means a reckless skipper; on the contrary he was noted for being cautious. At the same time he was chock-full of grit, and daring, and I have seen and known him to take his ship into some ticklish and dangerous places on dark nights and in dirty, thick weather.

On one occasion he came into Rigolet Harbor, Labrador, in a fog that seemed "thicker than pea soup." The Post staff were certainly not looking for "Sandy" Grey that day, and the manager, James Fraser, a veteran on the coast, told me afterwards he could not believe his ears when the Pelican, with both anchors down, was heard blowing "blasts of glory" on her arrival from England.

The "Old Man" had brought her in with the lead and how he got past the headlands and reefs was never known. In York Roads the ships are compelled to lie off about twelve miles from the Fort. I was aboard some years ago and saw Captain Grey take his ship to her anchorage on a very dark night. Not a light or beacon was to be seen. Of course they took bearings in daylight, but even then, judging distance on time run in this open roadstead is no easy matter. They dropped the anchors, "by jiminy" as the boss remarked, "in the identical holes we made last year."

The Labrador coast had no lights, buoys, beacons, or sirens. Aside from charts, there were no aids to the mariner. A bleak, forbidding coast it is, with mighty, precipitous headlands and deep bays and the eternal snow covering the high hills. The coast line is fringed with rocky, bold islands, islets and reefs. Many of the harbors are dangerous and difficult to enter even in daylight.

Breakers and sunken ledgers abound, and during the equinoxes fierce gales of wind rage on that wild and desolate shore. Whirlwinds, whirlpools, ice slides, undertows, rainfogs, sleet, slush, jeld-ice, "bergs" and general damnation prevails, at times accompanied by wicked cold and vicious "northeasters" that roll boulders off the mountain sides; and rotten, crooked "southeasters" that kick up the most diabolical sea that ever man floated on. And I have seen it in winter with the full sweep of the North Atlantic breaking on that coast with a violence that was awe-inspiring; churning and flinging tons of sea ice hundreds of yards beyond the high-water mark.

This has been going on from time immemorial, when the hard black granite rocks to a polished surface. It appears to me now that every possible obstruction was here put in the way of the seafarer; yet in all its history the Company has not lost a ship on this coast.

Household Notes.

Frying pans which have been soaked with washing soda may be cleaned much more easily.

Lay a fold in the top crust of the pie if you would keep it from shrinking around the edge.

When serving fresh strawberries, cut them in half. They will go farther and will be more juicy.

With slices of lemon and capers for "malls," one can make excellent horseshoes for garnishing fish.

A coat of varnish applied frequently to the top of the kitchen cupboard saves so much scrubbing.

Diced pears and cut cherries with their juice poured over them make a delicious cocktail for a warm day.

Too much stove polish on the kitchen range will make everything black with which it comes in contact.

A good way to prevent wear under the arms of corset covers is to reinforce them, when made, with a shield-shaped piece.



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COLIN CAMPBELL, Ltd.
Certificate.

North Sydney, May 21st, 1921.

This is to certify that R. T. Sainthill & Co. have purchased or obtained from Nova Scotia Steel & Coal Co. Ltd., 717 tons of SCREENED Coal which were dug and taken from His Majesty's Mines at Sydney by authority of the said Co. and which have been this day taken on board a certain Schr. called the "MIRIAM H.", whereof N. Doyle is Master and has the charge, and which vessel is bound for St. John's, Nfld., for delivery thereof the said Coals.

This cargo is from the OLD MINES AT NORTH SYDNEY and is the ONLY GENUINE N. Sydney Coal having a registered trade mark as such and the public are cautioned against other coals sold with the prefix of North Sydney that are not the genuine North Sydney Coal.

(Seal)

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