

Our Heroes of the Past.

(Continued from page 14.)

post as an example to any others that would play such tricks on them. I have no doubt there are some of your readers who have heard of Jim Wilcox, of Brigus, who always went by the name of Britainer, and his son after him was the Young Britainer. We hear of many old nicknames. I want to tell you how Jim Wilcox got the name of "The Britainer."

It was back in the French wars in the early part of the past century. Capt. Wilcox was out fishing in one of the small covered-in jacks, that had two men and boy besides him. They had done very well, and had a nice bit of fish, and were ready for home, when one of the large French bankers came along with a crew of twenty-five men. In those and his descendants are to be found troublesome times "Might was Right," here to-day. His son, Michael Gill, and the Frenchmen thought it was the Colonel of the first Regiment an easy way to get their fish, by or dering the boat to come alongside, in 1757.

and hand over whatever fish they had to them. They hailed Capt. Wilcox, and told him to come alongside, but to their surprise he took no notice of them. They at once got out the big row boat, and twenty of the crew started in chase of him, and were soon alongside. Jim Wilcox was one of those small sturdy set men that feared nothing, and when he saw the boat in chase, he looked for a weapon to defend himself. There wasn't a gun or any thing of the kind on board, the only thing he could get was an axe; but he stood up to gunwale of that little boat, and swore a mighty oath. I won't give the words exactly, but he said that "not a D— Frenchman would ever come aboard while there was a Britainer aboard." He kept his word, and that boat made one attempt after another, but that gallant little hero with the hatchet was more than a match for them, and the Frenchmen had to give up their intended raid. You can well believe that story was repeated many a time when the crew got back to Brigus, and the name of "Britainer" stuck to Jim Wilcox for the rest of his life, and that of his son after him.

Capt. Wm. Jackman was the great hero of 1867. There was a terrible storm at Labrador on the 9th October. He rescued twenty-seven persons, mostly females, from drowning, bringing them all on his back through the surf.

When I get started telling stories I cannot stop, so now I must give you a typical one about the sealing fishery. There were so many heroes amongst those men that it will forever be the greatest romance in the history of Newfoundland life, and it is hard to make special mention, but I don't believe there was a greater exploit than Capt. Wm. Bartlett, who sailed out of Brigus about one hundred years ago in quest of seals. It wasn't an iron clad or even a wooden steamer that he had, but one of those old fashioned shallops, an open boat of about twenty tons with movable deck boards.

Judge Prowse tells us that these old shallops never went past the head lands, but Capt. Billy Bartlett did. He hoped to find the seals at Baccalieu, but they weren't there, so he followed on to Cape Bonavista, still there was no ice there, so he said, "Boys we will follow on till we get them." He followed on to the Funks, still there were no seals, so he told the boys, "we will follow on again," and he followed on till they reached the Spotted Islands on the Labrador Coast, and there off Hiscock's Island they met the ice and lots of seals. They soon loaded her, and drifted south with ice until they reached the latitude of Conception Bay.

Talk of heroes, but who ever heard of an ordinary mortal going to Labrador in mid-winter in an open boat? When we hear of such men, we wonder if they are only things of the past, but history repeats itself, and Capt. Bob Bartlett, one of his descendants, even beats that record to-day in his voyage of the "Karluk." He tells his story as if it was all in a day's work, how he brought the old "Karluk" through many dangers, but when her doom was sealed he saved his crew, and if the scientists had followed his advice they would also be alive to-day. We have already heard of D'Iberville's military exploit and plot of a 200 mile tramp during a Newfoundland winter, but here was the Bob Bartlett tramping 1100 miles in the depth of an Arctic Siberian winter with one lone Eskimo, who was frightened out of his life they would meet a stranger. What anguish Bartlett must have suffered, when he reached the first settlement, looking for assistance, to find the only two families living there were on the verge of starvation, and instead of getting relief for himself, he at once divided his slender stock of provisions with them. For days his legs and feet were numb and powerless from constant soaking in the icy water and slush, so that he had to rest

in spite of his spirit urging him on. We talk of our heroes of the olden days, but here we have one right up to date, and well might we all say that we are proud of him, and if we could only get him to give a proper account of what he did go through, it would turn my article into a summer dream.

Now let us come back to our early Newfoundland History. After D'Iberville's invasion the British Government sent valuable assistance to Newfoundland. The city was rebuilt, and the forts and batteries at St. John's, as well as Carbonear Island, were put in good shape for several years.

In 1704 the French made another heavy attack on Newfoundland. This time they took Bonavista by surprise, but Captain Gill, a hardy New England land trader saved the situation, and his heroism repulsed the French for home, when one of the large French bankers came along with a crew of twenty-five men. In those and his descendants are to be found troublesome times "Might was Right," here to-day. His son, Michael Gill, and the Frenchmen thought it was the Colonel of the first Regiment an easy way to get their fish, by or dering the boat to come alongside, in 1757.

During the next twelve years there were many attacks of the French in Placentia, in St. John's and the out-ports. Carbonear Island was gallantly defended by our heroes, Davis and Pynn, who resisted all attacks to the mortification of the French. In March 1705, St. John's put up a gallant defence against a French invasion from Placentia, and never surrendered, although every intimidation of barbarity, flattery and offers of bribery were attempted by the enemy. Lieut. Moody and Lieut. Lanthan were the heroes of this occasion. What horrors they will do in time of war! I will give you one instance:

The French sent a messenger to Fort William with a flag of truce in one hand, and a small child with its throat cut in the other, and an intimation that every person in the Fort regardless of sex was going to be put to the sword. Nothing could get these worthy men to surrender, but the whole trade of St. John's, Conception Bay and Trinity Bay was ruined. The losses amongst the early pioneer planters were enormous, and the records state that fully One Million Dollars were lost to the merchants of Ferryland, St. John's, Harbor Grace, Carbonear and Trinity Bay. The following year, the British had revenge on the French establishments on the French Shore. It gives some idea of the fighting that our Newfoundland forefathers had in the settlement of this Newfoundland of ours. Surely with the blood of these old conquerors in our veins, there should be no difficulty to raise any amount of men to fight the battles of the Empire.

In 1709 a much better organization was arranged, and we find our old hero, John Pynn, was placed in charge of Carbonear Island. The Pynns were a worthy and noted family, and many of their descendants are with us to-day. They were amongst our earliest settlers of Harbor Grace and Bristol's Hope, and every generation had some noted member of this family. I will have more to say about them later. They were an old Bristol family, and tradition tells us were cousins of Sir Wm. Penn, who founded Pennsylvania, but there was very little of the Quaker spirit in this branch of the family.

There was about fifty years of peace till the next war broke out in 1762.

In 1762 both France and Spain declared war on England. The French Government were particularly anxious to obtain possession of Newfoundland, and their first effort was to despatch a strong squadron, which not alone took the British authorities by surprise, but made a sudden attack on Nfld. They arrived in the 24th June at Bay Bulls, and meeting no resistance, at once despatched troops over land to St. John's, and took every advantage of a total absence of any preparation. They seized every kind of property, and immediately began to repair the fortifications of the town and harbor.

The British Government at once started the means for the re-capture of Newfoundland. There were several able naval and military men then in authority, stationed between here and Halifax, who found the means to drive the Frenchmen out. By the 16th of September Colonel Amherst had landed troops at Torbay and had captured the French in the Ports at Signal Hill, and pointed his guns towards the Town. The French Admiral taking advantage of a thick fog slipped his cables, and escaped, leaving about 700 of his compatriots as prisoners, including several officers, of which there were two Colonels. The greatest credit must be given to these British officers for the able way they had handled this campaign, but special mention is always made to two of our Newfoundland merchants, who were our heroes on this occasion. Robert Carter, of Ferryland, by his prudence and indefatigable exertions found a means to secure a supply of

provisions and necessaries for the support of the garrison on the Island Garland of Harbor Grace, who supplied at his own expense, for a considerable time, a garrison for Carbonear Island. He was also most active and successful in providing crews to Bay Bulls, but when their number of seamen from his District arrived the enemy had left.

The other merchant was Charles Carter and Mr. Garland were fully indemnified afterwards for this expense, and their services were most honorably acknowledged, but the reward for this distinguished work comes in remembrance of the general public to these high spirited heroes, for the English squadron. But Mr. who came to the rescue at that critic-

al time. It is needless to say that the descendants of these worthy men are with us to-day.

A world renowned hero, who first distinguished himself in Newfoundland took part in this campaign. He had a minor position on the H. M. S. "Northumberland," one of Lord Colville's squadron. I refer to Capt. James Cook, who was stationed at Newfoundland for several years here in Newfoundland, we will make island of Burge that he recorded observations of an eclipse of the sun, which he happily forwarded to the Geographical Society, and drew their attention to him, when they were looking for a commander and skilled scientist for an expedition to the Antipodes.

Another circum-navigator who made a heroic name for himself two hundred and fifty years ago was William Dampier, who in his biography tells us that previous to his "Voyages round the Terrestrial Globe," that he spent a year in Newfoundland. I would mention here that tradition still points to the site of the McCarthy Hotel in Carbonear as the exact spot where Dampier had his fishing stage.

In 1776 we had two enemies. The United States declared its independence, and during the next six years our Newfoundland Coasts were harried by these American Privateers. They weren't strong enough to make attack on fortified places, but they created an immense amount of trouble amongst our fishing operations. Old Major Cartwright at Labrador gives a heartfelt account of how they attacked him at Labrador and carried off everything to the value of \$70,000.00, and brought ruin to him which he never got over.

In 1794 France again declared war, and before a year was out our Newfoundlanders started a regiment, called the Royal Newfoundlanders, under the command of Colonel Skinner.

In 1803 the Nfld. Light Infantry was formed, 1000 strong. The former Regiment, Nfld. Fencibles, was disbanded this year.

In 1806 a Volunteer Corps, Nfld. Rangers, was embodied.

1808 further formations of Volunteer Corps for defence of St. John's and other place of the Island.

Now to commence I must begin. All this was done by Henry Pynn.

This was a snatch of an old song of a Newfoundland Hero who was famous in song and story. Although we have very little information of the men composing the Regiments of Newfoundlanders fighting in these wars, still there was one hero, who was head and shoulders over all rest. Henry Pynn was the great grandson of the famous old Admiral John Pynn of Carbonear Island. I am sorry that I cannot give the rest of that old song, but you can depend upon it that every Newfoundlanders was proud to relate the achievements of this hero, who was bone and sinew with us all. Six years ago the Newfoundland Highlanders visited the birthplace of Henry Pynn at Bristol's Hope, and did honor to themselves in saluting the spot where tradition tells us this worthy old hero first saw the light.

When England began the great campaign with Napoleon, she looked everywhere for soldiers to man her armies, and there was great excitement in Newfoundland just as there is to-day, and we know the Regiments were formed, and I would like to give you more particulars about this, as it is an interesting subject to those patriotic men who are doing their best to show our fellow-country men where we stand in this momentous crisis of our History.

We all know what dangers England passed through one hundred years ago, when Nelson and Wellington made their imperishable names. We are meeting another great crisis to-day with the German Empire, and we have to listen to our leaders, just as our forefathers did to those never-to-be-forgotten Newfoundland heroes, Robert Carter, Charles Galand, John Pynn and Wm. Davis, as well as Christopher Martin and Wm. Holman, who so distinguished themselves on similar occasions. When your sons or brothers are leaving here as soldiers or sailors, you must not think that they are going away to be killed—that should be the very last thought in your minds, and you must banish that idea from you. They are leaving here to fight for the principles of British Liberty that are so dear to us all. When we sing "Britons Never Shall Be Slaves," do we really mean it, and think that we can accomplish victories and hold our Empire without fighting for it? Perish the cowardly thought, that we are not needed. Are we not as able and willing to fight as those who have gone to the front, and why should we stay at home and take it easy, whilst others are enduring hardships, and risking their lives for us. Depend upon it that some of our boys who are going to the front will make names for themselves, and that future generations will tell how such a young man enlisted and left with the

contingent. He rose from the rank of Private to be an Officer, and eventually led his men to victory and got the thanks of His King.

From what I know of Newfoundland character I have no hesitation in prophesying that a year hence we shall hear of more than one of our lads being presented with the Victoria Cross. What a jubilee we will have here in Newfoundland, we will make a whelkin ring with our cheers when our first sailor or soldier being presented with this coveted Medal for courage and valor. There is no man ever won this medal who thought of his own safety, or any selfish desires. You have to sink your own personality in the thought of saving your comrade or your regiment. There is no higher deed of humanity than the man who risks his life for his friend, and we hear of this so often in Newfoundland, that I am confident and certain that before a year is out, we will boast of some hero, now unknown, winning this coveted Victoria Cross for Newfoundland.

What a proud day it will be when we read on the Telegraph Bulletin that of the Newfoundland Regiment was presented with the Victoria Cross for unquestioned bravery that delighted every person in the British Empire. But I must get back to my story of our past history, and show how that Harbor Grace boy, Henry Pynn, distinguished himself in Wellington's Army of the Peninsular War.

Henry Pynn was a young man in Danson's office at Harbor Grace. Judge Prowse tells us that Pynn was a member of one of our Volunteer Regiments, and that Governor Holloway when visiting that town was greatly taken with Pynn's soldierly attainments, and assisted him to get a commission in the British Army. The Judge has made very careful enquiries about the Pynn family, and brought a lot of valuable information to light, but the tradition that has been handed down to us in Harbor Grace is that Henry Pynn gave up his place in Danson's office for a position in the British Navy, or as we would say to-day he became a Naval Reserve. For what reason I don't know, but possibly as a wish of his own he was drafted in to the British Army, and it was there he made a name for himself. He was famous amongst all Newfoundlanders in song and story.

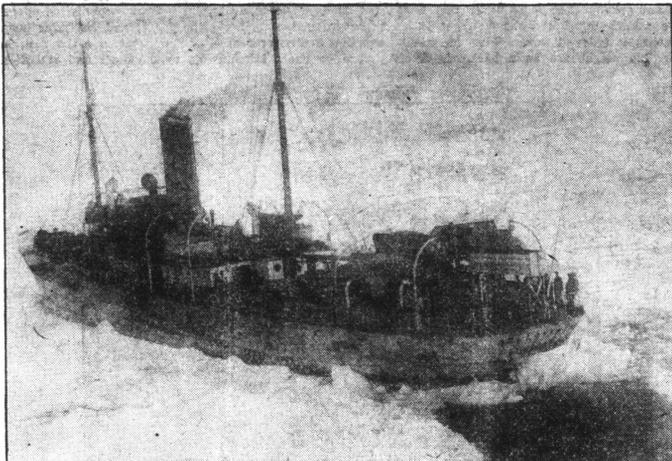
Wellington had the Supreme Command, and Marshal Beresford, who won the noted victories by pure British pluck was under him, and attached to his command was our hero, Henry Pynn. When England began the great campaign against Napoleon, the plan of the British Government at first was to send a small British Army and to place competent officers in command of the Portuguese and Spanish Regiments. The Spanish Ulcer as Napoleon calls it, was nothing but guerilla war-fare. These commanders and regiments ran for hiding as soon as a French regiment appeared.

Wellington determined to stamp out this guerilla fighting, and in 1809 Henry Pynn was appointed Colonel of the 18th Portuguese Regiment. At Fuentes Donora, Colonel Pynn, by his determination and manly courage, put back-bone into his Portuguese regiment, and contrary to the expectation of everyone, he held them firm on the side of a hill, while one of the Highland Regiments made a sweeping bayonet charge on the French army. The cold steel was as deadly as it is now, and this dash started a route. Henry Pynn brought his Portuguese Legion into the fray at the supreme moment, and carried off the honors of the day. The Portuguese were so accustomed to being defeated by the French on all occasions that they went wild with delight when they found their regiment had been on real valuable services in gaining this victory. The King of Portugal could not do enough for young Pynn, and he was knighted on the battle-field, with that most honorable order of the "Tower and Sword."

Henry Pynn fought all through the long Peninsular war. He attained the highest honors of Brigadier General, and at the end of the war in December 1815, he was appointed to the lucrative office of Lieut. Governor of the important Spanish City of Valencia. We find an account of this in the British records of January 15, 1815, he was presented to George IV. at Carleton House, and for his distinguished bravery, he was then, and there made a Knight Commander of the Bath. He died in London, April 25th, 1855, over eighty years of age. He visited Newfoundland once, and bestowed an annuity on his sister, Elizabeth.

During the American wars of 1780 and 1812 our Coast was harried by United States privateers. Several attempts were made on Harbor Grace and Carbonear. Not alone were strong batteries built on Carbonear Island, and considerable forces kept young man enlisted and left with the

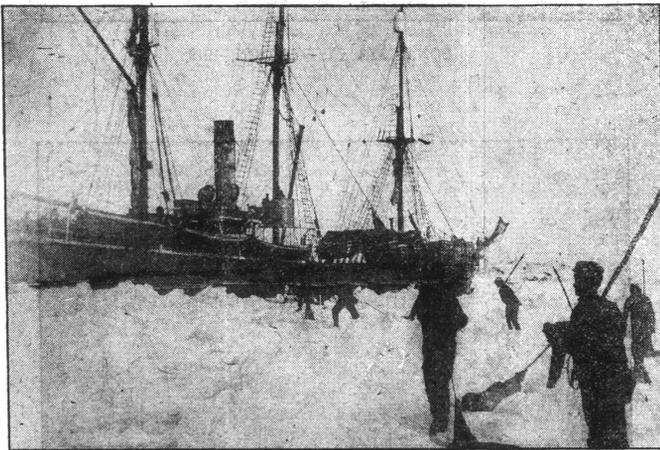
(Continued on page 16.)



S.S. BELLAVENTURE—ONE OF THE STEEL SEALING FLEET RECENTLY SOLD TO THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT



DIANA AND ERIK LEAVING FOR SEAL FISHERY, 1915



S.S. RANGER TAKING SEALS



S.S. NASCOPE JAMMED, 1914