

joyfully believed they were their own. So certain was Iberville, that he immediately raised anchor and started to join the new-comers. He was soon undeceived, but the perception of his mistake in no way daunted him.

The Company's commanders were not prepared either for the daring or the fury of the Frenchman's onslaught. It is true the *Pelican* was much superior to any of their own craft singly, being manned by nearly two hundred and fifty men, and boasting forty-four pieces of cannon. The Company's ships lined up, the *Hampshire* in front, the *Dering* next, with the *Hudson's Bay* bringing up the rear.

The combatants being now in close proximity, the battle began at half-past nine in the morning. The French commander came straight for the *Hampshire*, whose captain, believing it was his design to board, instantly lowered his mainsheet and put up his fore-top-sail. Contact having been by these means narrowly evaded, the battle suddenly shifted between the *Pelican* and the *Dering*, whose mainsail was smitten with a terrific volley. At the same time the *Hudson's Bay*, veering, received a damaging broadside. The Company's men could distinctly hear the orders shouted by d'Iberville to both ships to discharge a musket fire into the *Dering's* fore-castle, but in this he was anticipated by the English sailors, who poured a storm of bullets in upon the Frenchman, accompanied by a broadside of grape, which wrought havoc with the sails. While the cries of the wounded on the *Pelican* could be distinctly heard, all three of the Company's ships opened fire, with the design of disabling her rigging. But one of them, the *Hudson's Bay*, seeing that it could not engage the *Pelican*, owing to Iberville's tactics, determined to run in front of her and give her the benefit of a constant hull fire, besides taking the wind from her sails. Iberville observed the movement; the two English vessels were near, he veered around, and, by a superb piece of seamanship, came so near to the *Hamp-*

shire that the crew of the latter saw that boarding was intended. Every man flew out on the main deck, with his pistol and cutlass, and a terrific broadside of grape on the part of the Englishman alone saved him.

The battle raged hotter and fiercer. The *Hampshire's* salvation had been only temporary; at the end of three hours and a half she began to sink, with all sails set. When this occurred, Iberville had ninety men wounded, forty being struck by a single broadside. Notwithstanding this, he decided at once to push matters with the *Hampshire's* companions, although the *Pelican* was in a badly damaged state, especially the fore-castle, which was a mass of splinters.

The enemy made at once for the *Dering*, which, besides being the smallest ship, had suffered severely. She crowded on all sail and avoided an encounter, and Iberville being in no condition to prosecute the chase, soon returned to the *Hudson's Bay*, which surrendered. Iberville was not destined, however, to reap much advantage from his prize, the *Hampshire*. The English flag-ship was unable to render any assistance to the sinking *Hampshire*, which soon went down with nearly all on board.*

To render the situation more distressing, no sooner had some ninety prisoners been made, than a storm arose; so that it became out of the question to approach the shore with design of landing. They were without a long-boat and each attempt to launch canoes in the boiling surf was attended with failure.

Night fell; the wind instead of calming, grew fiercer. The sea became truly terrible, seeking, seemingly, with all its power to drive the *Pelican* and the *Hudson's Bay* upon the coast. The rudders of each ship broke; the

*Thus was concluded what was, in the opinion of the best authorities, French and English, one of the fiercest and bloodiest battles of the war.

"Toute la Marine de Rochefort croient que ce combat a été un des plus rudes de cette Guerre," says La Potherie.