

# OUR HEROES OF THE PAST

## Newfoundlanders Who Have Fought For The Empire.

By H. F. SHORTIS.

In giving this article about our heroes, I find that there is material for half a dozen articles. We have had so many heroes that I find it necessary to confine myself to a few words about each, and keep as close as I can about our Military and Naval Heroes.

I could name scores of Heroes among our old Sealing Captains, who risked their lives for their men, who by their pluck and ingenuity turned impending disaster into success.

We have had Governors here who reckoned not for their own promotion but pointed out to the British Government in spite of their instructions that the desire of Newfoundlanders was the right policy to follow. Such Governors we will always remember as our Heroes. Governor Maxe, who was here in 1881, was one of the mortal Six Hundred. Governor Duckworth was the great hero of the Dardanelles. Governor Greaves was another mighty hero of Great Britain.

We have had many heroes among our Merchants and Politicians and Ministers. Men who fought as only heroes and for the good of their country, and gained the estimate of a Responsible Government, who rid this country of that incubus, the French Shore Question, and the exaggerated claims of United States Treaty rights. Heroes who fought for the Bait Act. Our village Hampden who dared the British Commander to tear down a lobster factory. Although these men stood alone at the moment, their courage and heroism will never be forgotten by an appreciative people.

But let us start from the beginning. What a hero John Cabot was to come out here in search of unknown lands, the British Government from Ferryland that on August 25th, a French was, well and truly called the father of the British Empire beyond the seas. We recognize his heroic feelings when in danger he refused to separate from his brave comrades on that little ten ton pinnace, in which he was crossing the Atlantic.

Here is another hero, Capt. Richard Whitbourne, who spent the best part of his life in Newfoundland, and who tells us that he had been here so often that the country was as familiar to him as the English Channel. We as know he was here in 1580 as master of a ship. In 1583 he was an eye witness at St. John's when Sir Humphrey Gilbert took possession of the country in the name of Queen Elizabeth. In the 1588 he served under the Lord Admiral as captain of his own ship, fitted out at his own expense against the Spanish Armada. He was too modest to mention his own exploits on that renowned occasion, but there can be no doubt that he did render valuable services to his Queen and Country, for he tells us a record of them was made in the Book of the Whitehall Court, and we do know that a reconnaissance was made to him by the Privy Council for expenses incurred on his own ship, also two other ships and a pinnace, so that the charge of victuals and the wages of the men employed should not be burdensome to him. That is a hero we should all be proud of, and emulate in every way. His only reward is the imperishable glory of being recorded as one of the saviours of England.

Sir Walter Raleigh tells us in his records that in the year 1594 the Spanish Government sent three men-of-war ships here to capture the Newfoundland fleet, which was then 200 fishing vessels. Raleigh wrote the Premier of England, Lord Cecil, that if this danger befell the Newfoundland fleet, it would be the greatest calamity that could befall England. It shows what an important factor our Newfoundland trade was at that time, and the Spaniards recognized the vital point to hit England's ascendancy. In 1601 the Spaniards made another attempt to intercept the Newfoundland fleet. In 1603 the French made their first attempt to destroy our Newfoundland shipping, and did damage to the extent of £200,000. We can readily see that Newfoundland was the cock-pit for fighting between these nationalities for many years before and after the launching of the Invincible Armada.

In 1610 John Guy and his band of settlers came to Newfoundland. And a new era started in the development of our country. He showed his spirit in denouncing and eventually driving Peter Easton and his piratical crews from Newfoundland waters.

In 1620 we hear of a combat between the English and Portuguese at Petty Harbor.

In 1625 27 Newfoundland ships and 200 persons were captured by Turkish pirates. This wasn't as bad as Peter Easton, who took 300 men in one year from Conception Bay, but you can imagine what fighting there must have been, and how many heroes had to be killed.

In 1628 Lord Baltimore writes to the British Government from Ferryland that on August 25th, a French Admiral with three ships and 400 well-armed men captured two of our ships then fishing at Cape Breton. The fishermen were surprised when in danger he refused to separate from his brave comrades on that little ten ton pinnace, in which he was crossing the Atlantic.

The French Admiral took his ships his cables and went off to sea, leaving 57 of his crew on shore, who were quickly taken prisoners. Lord Baltimore followed the chase as long as there was any possibility of catching up with that French Admiral, but he was here in 1580 as master of a ship. In 1583 he was an eye witness at St. John's when Sir Humphrey Gilbert took possession of the country in the name of Queen Elizabeth. In the 1588 he served under the Lord Admiral as captain of his own ship, fitted out at his own expense against the Spanish Armada. He was too modest to mention his own exploits on that renowned occasion, but there can be no doubt that he did render valuable services to his Queen and Country, for he tells us a record of them was made in the Book of the Whitehall Court, and we do know that a reconnaissance was made to him by the Privy Council for expenses incurred on his own ship, also two other ships and a pinnace, so that the charge of victuals and the wages of the men employed should not be burdensome to him. That is a hero we should all be proud of, and emulate in every way. His only reward is the imperishable glory of being recorded as one of the saviours of England.



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It is recounted in the records that the French arrived with two powerful frigates with ninety guns, who put in a heavy fight for five hours, but Holman and his crews so battered them, that they ran away leaving anchor and chains and eighty to ninety Frenchmen as prisoners. This so discouraged the enemy that they gave over their intended raid on the most heroic defence that even Lord Kitchener or Baden Powell could wish for. Several attempts were made by D'Iberville to land on the Island, and on the night of 31st December they went all around in boats with ninety picked men ready for a desperate attack. There was one spot, the Bench Rock, still pointed out, where they made a determined effort to land, and were challenged at pistol shot distance. The French version says that they were able to touch the rock with their hands, and ready to leap ashore, but the tradition at Bristol's Hope, says that one man did jump ashore, but he was driven back off the Bench Rock into the water. When we remember that Carbonar Island is about three miles in circumference, and being attacked in the dark by six boats, and no one knowing where they were going to land, it must have been an exciting time for the small garrison, who must have been scattered in all directions.

After finding their best efforts foiled, D'Iberville continued his march down the North Shore, then across to Old Perlican, and up to Heart's Content. Here an Irishman had built a small fort made of boards, with port-holes above and below, and in it he had thirty men besides women and children. The French version says they surrendered on being summoned, but I don't believe it. I pin my faith to the local tradition which still tells of a fierce battle with the French at New Perlican, which is quite near the entrance to Heart's Content coming up the shore, and is a celebrated "look out." It is a most likely spot where a defence would be put up. This place still goes by the name of Bloody Point, and everyone will tell you that it was here there was a fight with the French.

Who ever heard of an Irishman having surrendered on being summoned? Is that what we heard about the Connaught Rangers a few days ago. I will never believe that French version. The very mention of an Irishman in charge belies this statement, and only proves that here, in another hero, whose name is unfortunately forgotten, who shed his own blood, and that of a good many French men before they were finally overcome.

D'Iberville now took the short cut across from Heart's Content to Carbonar to finish his work by capturing the Island. He arrived on the 17th January only to find that the garrison had succeeded in taking several of his men prisoners. D'Iberville finding that he could not succeed in taking this Gibraltar of Newfoundland by fair means resorted to treachery. He entered into negotiations for exchange of prisoners. The ammunition or supplies, and no offence was just out of the place agreed upon was just out of the defence. For three days they held a dispute and seized the English

Fort. One of their number, Wm. Draw, was captured, and barbarously treated, and they threatened to scold every prisoner.

As there was no food in the Fort, terms of surrender were arranged, all were to depart for England, but the French Commander dishonorably evaded it. The invaders continued their march to Portugal Cove, and

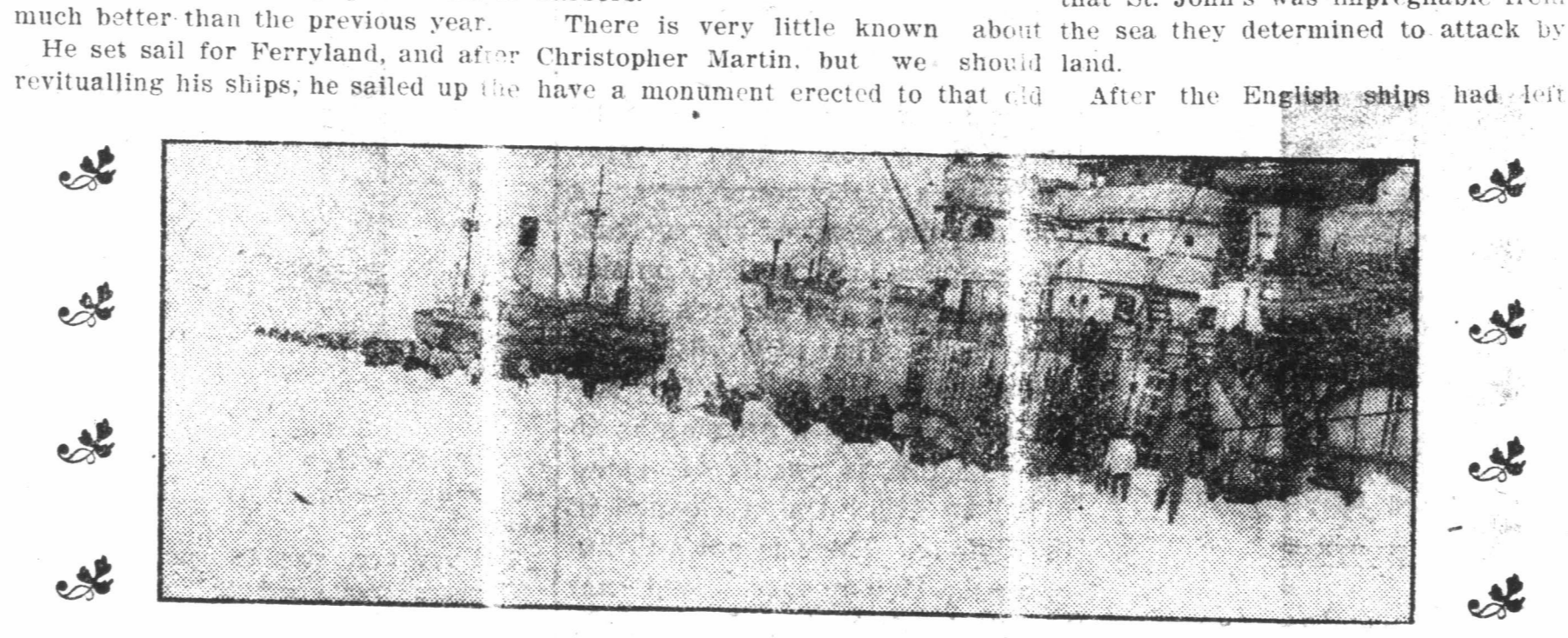
Ten days later D'Iberville had to admit his failure to take Carbonar Island and left again for Trinity Bay. If I wasn't writing about Newfoundland heroes I would mention D'Iberville's exploits in Hudson Bay, where he defeated the English at all their important stations, destroyed their fleet of man-of-war, and captured their great stronghold, Fort Nelson. When you read of their exploits you can get some idea of the men our humble Newfoundland fishermen were fighting against. His journeys to Hudson Bay and sea-fights were simply marvellous, and old John Pynn, Davis and Garland were men who showed him the stuff that real Newfoundland heroes were made of.

The losses in this war, 1696, were tremendous. Ferryland alone is put down at \$60,000.00 and that is nothing compared to St. John's Harbour. The destruction of this raid, to the people of Newfoundland at this time? We know from the census of 1675 that there must have been fully 2,000 people living here during the winter. When we think of the suffering they had to undergo with the sacking and pillage of these Frenchmen and Indians, then the burning of their houses in mid-winter, and no chance of getting any provisions till the following spring, it must have been terrible.

We know something about the great fire in 1892, and what suffering had to be undergone, but that was in mid-summer, and assistance was sent from Halifax within two days, and every kind of relief offered, but if that fire happened in mid-winter, and no opportunity for relief offered for four months, and not that alone, but a pitiless enemy standing guard over you, demanding everything you held dear, you can get some idea of what the Newfoundland settlers had to undergo; and I am not exaggerating when I say our Newfoundland heroes and is a celebrated "look out." It were ten times worse served than even the stories we hear of Belgium to-day. It was only after this destruction of all the Newfoundland settlements that the English Government was aroused to send assistance by Soldiers and Navy, to help in defending the country against these invaders.

In reading Abbe Baudouin's journal, while it gives interesting facts, we must remember that it was intended for French readers, and therefore accounts of British bravery, is minimized to mere nothing, but happily we have some fragments of actual occurrences that give about John Earle, a young man who lived with his family on Little Belle Island in Conception Bay. He anticipated an attack, and had a cannon on the cliff. To make believe he had a considerable force, he had scarecrows dressing up. The French attacked him with two barges full of soldiers. With a well directed shot he sank one barge, and the sight of the scarecrows frightened off the other barge.

That man Earle deserves the Victoria Cross. His valor was unquestionable, and such were the deeds of the men who won our British Empire. There were probably fifty men in those two boats and here was one young man who attempted the impossible. He defied the lot of them.



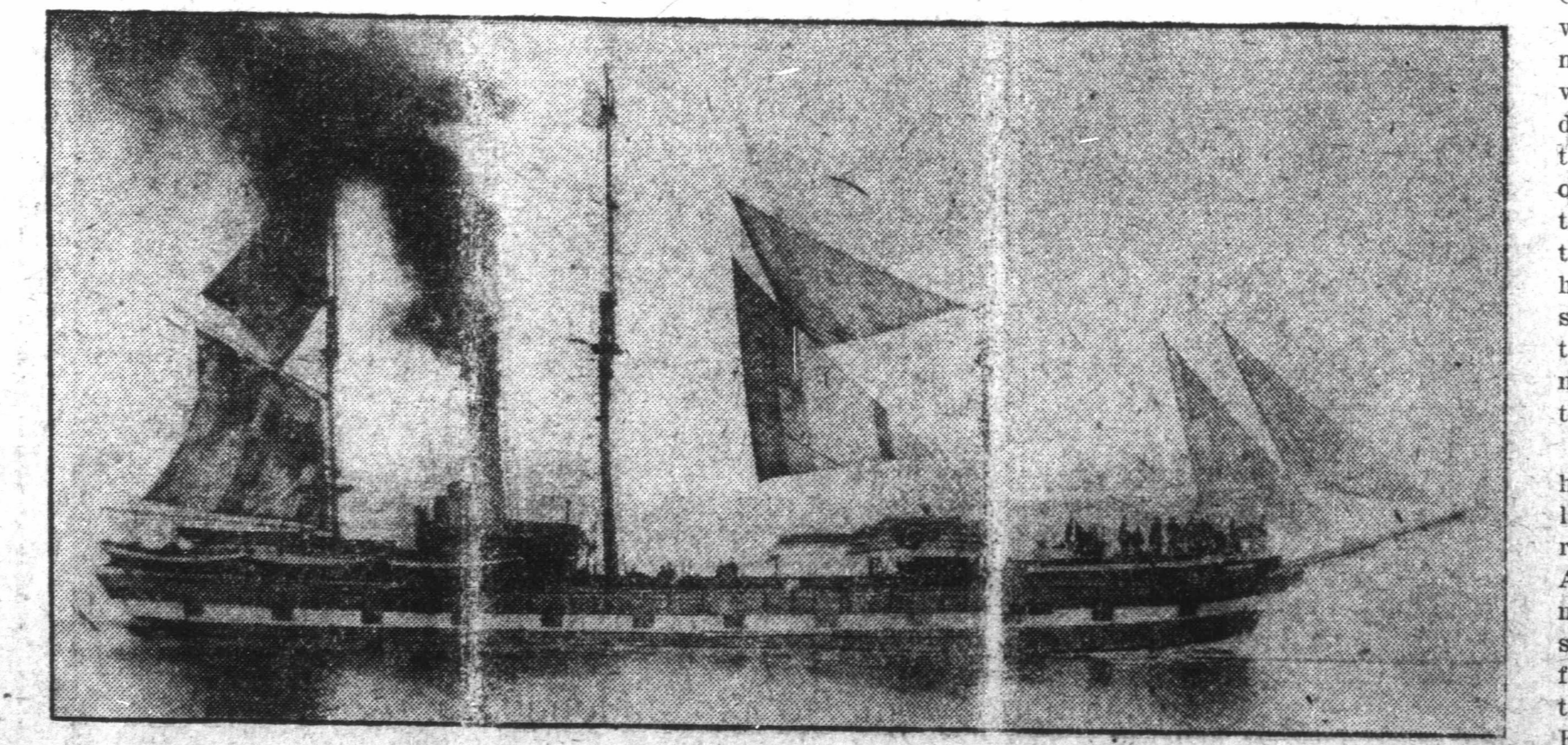
STEPHANO AND NASCOPIE JAMMED MARCH 17, 1914

St. Lawrence with orders to compel the surrender of Quebec. Champlain, the worthy founder of that city put up a spirited defence from his almost impregnable position. Kirk quickly bombarded, and Champlain was forced to surrender, and the British flag was hoisted on the Citadel. Kirk placed his brother in charge, and returned to England with the good tidings. Quebec remained a British possession for several years, but was handed back to France during the infamous reign of Charles II. Now for the story about that worthy old loyalist, who was so attached to his King, Charles I, that he offered him a safe home at Ferryland, and suggested that he should come to Newfoundland should his enemies in the Civil War prove too much for him. Correspondence of Sir David Kirk with Prince Rupert, who was then in charge of the Navy, fell into the hands of

who, who was the first of our sealers, the coast in September, this daring enemy started the horrors of a winter campaign, and spread desolation and misery at every Harbor from Placentia to Ferryland, and thence up the shore to St. John's. At Petty Harbor a desperate fight occurred where 36 of the inhabitants were slain. Hearing of this fight, 88 St. John's men went to the assistance of their friends, but a mile outside of St. John's they encountered the French on the South Side Hills. There were 400 disciplined French troops, but these courageous planters stuck to it, until 31, nearly half of their number were slain, then they retired in good order to Fort William, near where the Prince's Rink now stands. The unfortunate settlers in St. John's found themselves without ammunition or supplies, and no officers to command or lead in the defence. For three days they held a dispute and seized the English

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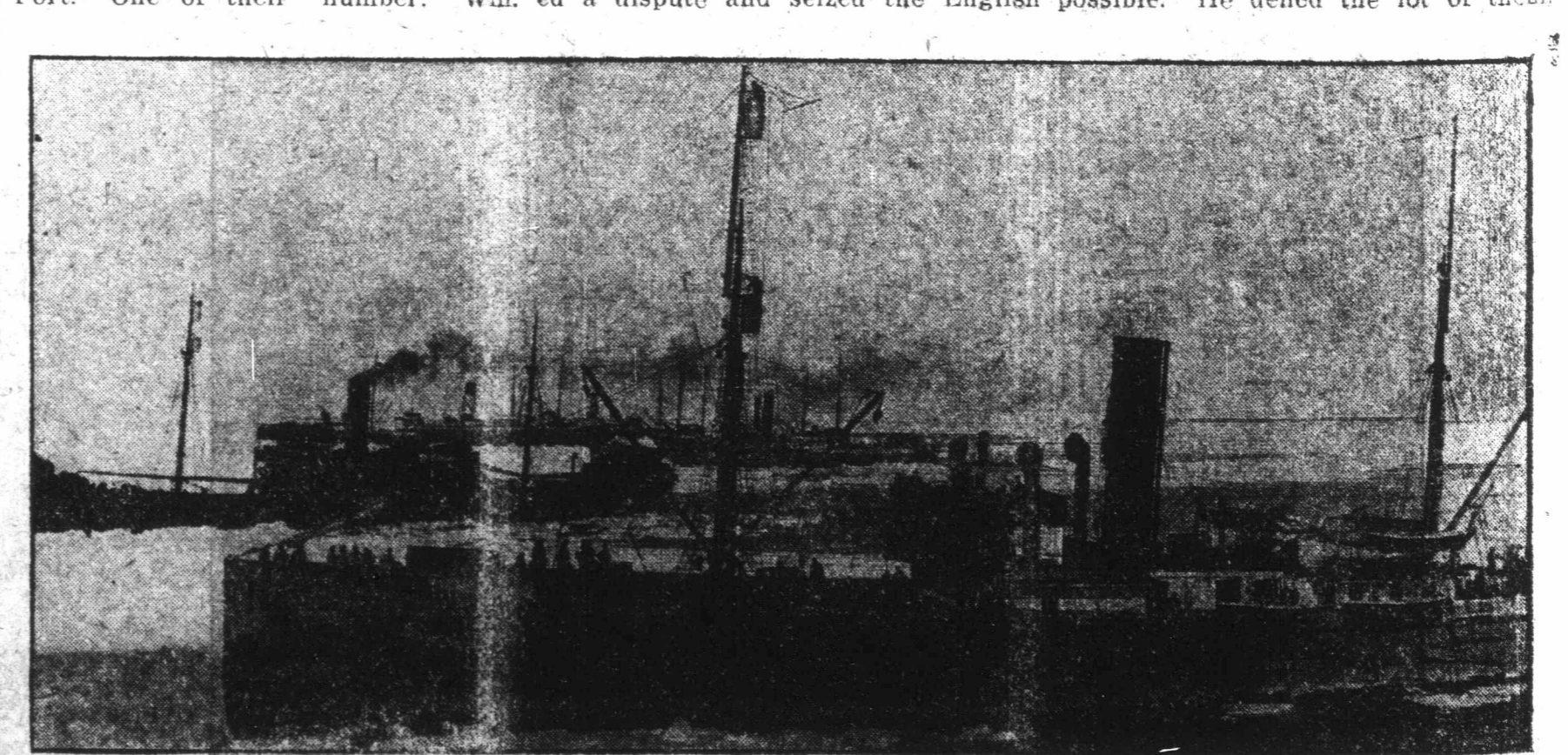


S.S. BLOODHOUND, ONE OF THE WOODEN FLEET

During the year or two years after from King Charles I. to fight the Cromwell, in confirmation of these plans, and for this, his estates were confiscated and himself thrown into prison for some time, but this worthy old Loyalist returned to Newfoundland, and kept the British flag, that he was so proud of, flying at Ferryland, until the end of his days. During the reign of Cromwell, the

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STEEL SHIPS OF FOGO, 1914, READY TO ENTER THE NORTHERN FLOE

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(Continued on page 15.)