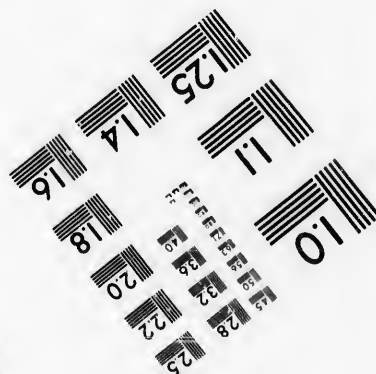
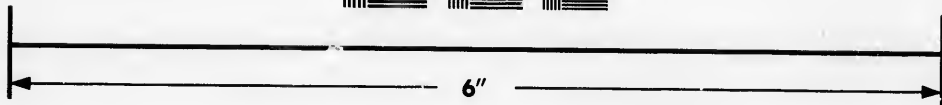
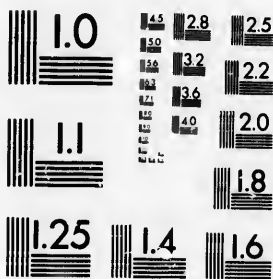


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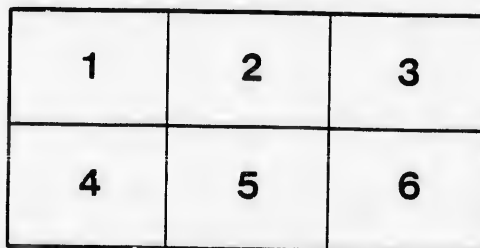
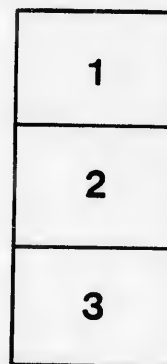
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VIII.—*Jacques Cartier's First Voyage.*

By W. F. GANONG, A. M.

(Communicated by Mr. George Stewart, Jun., May 25, 1887.)

The circumstances attending the first voyage of Jacques Cartier to Canada in 1534, in so far as they relate to its causes, results, and the general course of his explorations, are known to all students of our early history. The bold sailor of St. Malo, acting under the authority and patronage of Francis I, though not the first navigator to enter the Gulf of St. Lawrence, was the first who has left us any account of his explorations therein. His observations upon the Indian tribes of this region, also, are the earliest that we have. His voyage then, though unsuccessful in the object for which it was undertaken, was fruitful in results for the future geographer and historian.

In a very general way, Cartier's course can be readily traced from the account he has left us of it, and by the few surviving place-names given by him. This has been done more or less perfectly by every work treating of the history of Eastern Canada. All agree that he entered the Gulf of St. Lawrence by way of the Strait of Belle Isle, coasted to the south along Labrador for a time, crossed to Newfoundland and followed its shore to its most westerly point, visited the Magdalen Islands, the coast of New Brunswick, Bay Chaleurs, Gaspé and Anticosti, and returned to France as he had come, by way of the Strait of Belle Isle. But in the more exact tracing of certain parts of his course, and in regard to the identity of many of the numerous places visited, described, and named by him, there is considerable difference of opinion. Indeed, that portion of his course from the time of leaving Newfoundland until he reached Bay Chaleurs, is hardly interpreted in the same way by any two commentators on the voyage, and no one of them has given any consistent or satisfactory account of it. It becomes, then, a matter of extreme interest as well as of considerable historical importance, to trace his course exactly throughout the entire voyage, and to establish the identity of the places he visited and named.

Of Cartier's narrative of the voyage we have at least four versions :—

- (1) The first is one in Italian, published by Ramusio in 1556.
- (2) This was translated into English by John Florio, and embodied in Hakluyt's "Voyages and Navigations," published in 1600 and reprinted in 1810.
- (3) Another edition in French, almost beyond doubt a translation from Ramusio, appeared in 1598, and was reprinted in 1843, and again in 1865.
- (4) Lastly, there was published at Paris in 1867, under the title of "Relation originale du voyage de Jacques Cartier au Canada en 1534," an old manuscript recently discovered, which is supposed to be the original narrative written by Cartier's own hand.

The English translation in Hakluyt, the edition of 1598 and the "Relation originale," have been used in the studies of which the results are given in the following



pages. With the latter alone Cartier's course might, though it would be with difficulty, be traced; with the second alone, it would be scarcely possible; with Hakluyt alone, quite impossible. And just here is, doubtless, found the chief cause of the confusion of which we have spoken. Those who have used Hakluyt have been misled by some serious mis-translations; while the edition of 1598, without the light thrown upon it by the "Relation originale," might give very different results to different students. In tracing the course as it is given in the present paper, all three versions have been carefully compared, and in the case of important passages, this has been done word for word. Each threw light upon the other, and step by step the narrative became clear.

There are some marked differences between the "Relation originale" and the edition of 1598, but they are only so far treated in these pages as is necessary to our purpose. A very interesting question here arises as to whether a careful study of the former version, and its comparison with the latter in connection with the identification of the places they describe, tend to confirm or otherwise the belief that it really is the original narrative written by Cartier himself. The evidence bearing on this point is too long for insertion here. In a word, its tendency is to answer the question in the affirmative very strongly; in the writer's opinion the evidence is strong enough to be conclusive. This much is certain, however, that if it be not the original, it is certainly nearer what Cartier must have written, than is the edition of 1598.

Cartier was a practical navigator, though, as his narrative shews, no scholar. He was accustomed to judge distances at sea, and those which he gives are in general quite accurate. If an average be taken of his estimates of the number of leagues between places of which the identity is unquestionable, it will be found that his league amounted to somewhat less than three English miles. It must be constantly borne in mind, too, that all the compass directions in the narrative are given for magnetic and not true north. We might infer beforehand that such would be the case in the log-book of our sailor, but a comparison of his directions between known places with a modern chart places it beyond question. The writer has been told by an authority upon such subjects, that the variation of the needle cannot be calculated for so far back as 1534, but a rough estimate is generally sufficient for our purpose. At the present day the variation is from 36° near the Strait of Belle Isle, to 22° at Prince Edward Island west of true north. It would seem from Cartier's directions, as if the variation in 1534 was not more than a few degrees different from that of to-day.

The latitudes given in the narrative are, all things considered, quite accurate. In no case does the error exceed $30'$ to $40'$, and generally it is much less than this. In the edition of 1598, blanks are always left for the longitude; this is the case also in the "Relation originale," in all except two instances. In these the error is very great, amounting to $8^{\circ}.30'$ and $11^{\circ}.50'$ respectively. But we can well understand that, at that time, latitude could be much more accurately calculated than longitude.

In the preface to the edition of the "Relation originale" of 1867, the editor tells us that the MS. was deciphered with great difficulty. It is probable, then, that some of the apparent differences between it and the edition of 1598 are due to different interpretations of doubtful words by the translator for Ramusio and the editor of the edition before us. While, therefore, the "Relation originale" would be in general more accurate than the edition of 1598, which has undergone two translations, it may be less accurate in the spel-

ling of single words. We have noticed two important instances of this. For the port in Newfoundland, which the former calls *Rapont*, the latter has *Carpunt*. That the latter is the correct reading is shewn by the fact that it was used in the year 1542, in a description of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, by Allefoncee, Roberval's pilot, who was perfectly familiar with Cartier's explorations. The other instance is that of the bay called *St. Lénaire* in the "Relation originale" and *St. Lunaire* in the edition of 1598. All early maps have the latter reading; besides which the bay was clearly named, as will be shown later, after St. Leonarius, upon whose day Cartier entered it.

Cartier, with two ships and one hundred and twenty-two men, set out from St. Malo, on April 20th, 1534, and after a prosperous voyage sighted Cape Bonavista (*Cap de Bonne viste*)¹ in Newfoundland, on May 10th. The ice at this place drove them to the harbour of St. Catherine (*Sainte Katherine*), the present Catalina, five leagues to the south. Here they were detained ten days by bad weather, a time which they improved by refitting and repairing their ships. On May 21st, they sailed north and by east to the Island of Birds (*isle des Ouaiseaulx*), the present Funk Island. They found the birds so abundant here that "unlesse a man did see them, he would thinke it an incredible thing,"² and so tame that they could be taken in any numbers without trouble.

This was on the 21st. In all relations of the voyage there is a break here until the 27th, when they reached the mouth of the Bay of Castles (*baye des Chasteaulx*), the present Strait of Belle Isle. Where they went in the meantime we are not told, but as there is given, immediately after the description of the Island of Birds, a brief account of the coast from Cape Rouge (Rel. orig.; *Rasé*, ed. 1598; *Raso*, Hakl.) to Cape Degrat, it is probable that they coasted along the shore among the islands. The latter cape is the most northerly point of Newfoundland. It is usually marked Cape Bauld on later maps, but Cartier's name *Degrat* is retained on De Barre's charts of the last century and some others.³ The former cape is marked Cape Rouge and Red Cape on some modern maps, and Cape Reige on others. It is on the main island to the west of Groais or Groix Island, sixty miles south of Cape Bauld. Cartier describes its distance (25 leagues), and direction (S.S.W.) from Cape Degrat, in a way which leaves no room for doubt as to the identity of the place. The two low islands which he says are visible from the highest island near Cape Degrat would seem to be Groais and Belle Isle South.

Bad weather and ice detained them in the harbour of Rapont (Rel. orig.; *Carpunt*, ed. 1598) till June 9th. Of *Carpunt* or *Carpont*, the true reading of the word, we probably have a survival in the name of the Island of Kirpon or Quirpon. The harbour is apparently the Noddy Harbour of to-day, immediately to the west of the island.

There is some confusion in the account after leaving this place. Sailing to the west from Cape Degrat, Cartier says there are on the right two islands, one three leagues distant from this point, and the other, appearing like a part of the main land, seven leagues ("about seven," Rel. orig.; "more or less," ed. 1598) from the first. The latter he named St

¹ The names given in brackets are, unless it is otherwise stated, those of the "Relation originale."

² Hakluyt. It will be noticed that in the following pages the writer frequently follows the diction of Hakluyt, though not closely enough to require special acknowledgement. Those parts of the narrative which are placed in quotation marks are the writer's own translations as literal as he can make them.

³ Some old maps have both names, making Cape Bauld the most northerly point, and Cape Degrat a point on the east of Kirpon Island.

Katherine (*isle Sainte Katherine*) and his further location of it leaves no doubt that it was the present Belle Isle. The only island that the first-mentioned can be is the present Sacred Island. His distance from it to Belle Isle is too short, but he expresses it merely as an approximation.

It does not seem to have been noticed by commentators on this voyage, that Cartier speaks both of a Bay of Castles¹ (the Strait of Belle Isle) and a Port or Harbour of Castles. Yet he undoubtedly referred to both, as several passages shew. "Ladite isle" [i.e. Belle Isle] "est le hable des Chasteaux gissent Nort Nordest et Su Surouaist, Et y a entreulx quinze lieues; et dudit hable des Chasteaux au hable des Buttes, qui est la terre du Nort de ladite baye [i. e. des Chasteaux], gisante Est Nordest et Onaist Surouaist,² y a entr'elx doze lieues et demye," reads the "Relation originale" and the edition of 1598 substantially like it. Had Cartier simply used the terms port (*hable*) and bay (*baye*) loosely and interchangeably for the Strait of Belle Isle and the Harbour of Buttes (the present Greenish Bay in Labrador). These very distances and directions locate the Harbour of Castles for us beyond question; it was the present Pistolet Bay.

The Harbour of Buttes (Rel. orig. and Allefonsee; *Gouttes*, ed. 1598 and Hakl.) is certainly Greenish Bay. Two leagues from this Port is Whale Harbour (*hable de la Balaie*, Rel. orig.) or Port of Balances (*port des Balances*, ed. 1598 and Hakl.). This would be the present Red Bay, south of Greenish Bay.

Towards the W.S.W. of this harbour, at a distance of twenty-five leagues (ed. 1598: Rel. orig. has a blank here; Hakl., 15 leagues) they entered the Port of White Sand (*Blanc Sablon*); the latter name persists to the present day. South-west of this port are two islands, one of which was named Wood Island (*isle de Bouays*, Rel. orig., but *Isle de Brest* of ed. 1598) and the other Isle of Birds (*isle des Ouaiseaulx*.) These islands are called to-day, respectively, Wood Island and Greenly Island; but whether the former be a persistence of the name given by Cartier is very doubtful. It is a name so commonly applied to islands that it may be a mere coincidence.

Passing a point one league from Blanc Sablon, the present Grand Point, but not named by Cartier, they came to a harbour better than Blanc Sablon and a passage, which together they named "the Islets" (*les Islettes*), to-day called Bradore Harbour. Ten leagues further they found the Harbour of Brest, without doubt Old Fort Bay at the mouth of Esquimaux River. The latitude of this place, as given by Cartier, 51°. 50', is about 20' too far north.

They entered the Port of Brest to take in wood and water. On St. Barnabas Day, after hearing mass, they sailed towards the west, passing among islands too many to number. These they called simply "the Islands" (*Toutes Isles*) and they noticed that they extended for ten leagues past Brest. The next day they sailed beyond them and entered a

¹ Why called "des Chasteaux"? Perhaps the reason is suggested by the following passage:—"The distance from this Island [Green Island, Nfld.] to the opposite part of the coast of *Labradore*, called *Castles* or *Red Cliffs*.... is the narrowest part of the Straits of Belle Isle." Pamphlet accompanying the North American Pilot for Newfoundland, Labradore, etc., London, 1779. (The latter work is an atlas of charts containing "36 arge copper plates"). It is altogether probable that we have a survival of this name "Bay of Castles" in "Chateau Bay," on the coast of Labrador to the west of Bello Isle.

² This phrase, of course, refers to the direction in which the bay lies, not to the Harbour of Buttes.

good port which was named St. Anthony (*Saint Anthoine*). One or two leagues further they found a little river forming a good harbour, to which they gave the name St. Servan (*Saint Servan*). The latter place Cartier describes for us as follows (Rel. orig.):—"It is between two high lands. . . . To the south-west of this harbour and river, about a league, is an island, round as an oven, surrounded by several other smaller islands which give notice of these harbours." In a work quoted above¹ the following passage is found which settles the identity of Port St. Servan: "Bowl Island lieth E. by N. 2 leagues from the Island of Shecatia, and 1 mile from the Main; it is a remarkable round island of a moderate Height. About the Island, and between it and Shecatia, are a number of small Islands and sunken Rocks. From Bowl Island to the entrance of the Bay D'omar, the course is N. E. by N. $\frac{1}{2}$ E. Distance 2 miles. This bay runneth up N. by E. nearly 3 miles with high land on both sides. . . . One mile to the Eastward of Bay D'omar lyeth Little Bay in which is tolerable good anchorage for small vessels." Bay D'omar and Little Bay of 1779, are respectively Lobster Bay and Rocky Bay on charts of to-day. The correspondence of the description in this work with Cartier's is so close as to be very remarkable, that especially of the appearance, distance and direction of the round island being very striking. It settles beyond the possibility of question the identity of Port St. Servan with Lobster Bay, and of Port St. Anthony with Rocky Bay.

Beyond this they came to a great river (*bonne ripuiere plus grande*, Rel. orig.; *bon fleuve plus grand*, ed. 1598), where they caught many salmon; they named it St. James River (*la ripuiere Sainct Jacques*). There is, however, an important difference in distance from St. Servan as given in the "Relation originale" and the edition of 1598. The former reads *ten*, the latter *two* leagues. Now, there can hardly be a doubt that the river meant is the present Shecatia Bay. It is the only one in the vicinity corresponding to the description, in which it will be noticed its large size is insisted upon. The actual distance from St. Servan is about five of Cartier's leagues; but that it was probably *dix* and not *deux* that he wrote, may be inferred from the fact that, for some unexplained reason, all of his distances in this region are too great. He calls it, for instance, ten leagues from Brest to the end of the islands, when in reality it is about five. He may have been deceived by fog, or the tides, or confused by the number of the islands.

But there is another cogent reason for considering his St. James River to be Shecatia Bay. While there, they saw a ship from Rochelle which they directed to "another harbour about a league more to the west than the said River St. James, which I consider one of the best harbours in the world; and it was named the Harbour of Jacques Cartier" (Rel. orig., the same in ed. 1598). This is very high praise from a man who had seen so many good harbours as Cartier. The harbour one league to the west is the Cumberland Harbour of to-day in position, and here we have a partial description² of it:—"And anchor where you please, from 20 to 7 fathom water, in good ground, and an excellent roomy harbour fit for any ships, and is the best harbour and the easiest of access on this coast." This is very high praise for a harbour on a coast which has so many good ones as that of Labrador. The correspondence in these descriptions can hardly allow us to doubt that the Harbour of Jacques Cartier is our Cumberland Harbour. In this case the River St. James must be Shecatia Bay.

¹ Pamphlet accompanying the North American Pilot for Newfoundland, etc.

² *Ibid.*

Cartier was very unfavourably impressed by what he saw in Labrador. He admired its harbours, but says that in the whole of it he did not see a cart-load of good earth, and he thought it must be the land allotted by God to Cain.

On June 13th, they returned to the Port of Brest. On Monday the 15th, they left it and sailed towards the south to explore the land which appeared to them like two islands. But when they "reached to about the middle of the bay," they saw that it was firm land, with a great double cape, one above the other. They, therefore, named it Cape Double, and estimated its distance from Brest to be about twenty leagues. Both distance and direction (allowing for magnetic variation) would place Cape Double at or near the present Point Rich. But it could not have been Point Rich itself to which this name was given, for in the atlas¹ already referred to, plates are given shewing the appearance of the coast from the sea, and Point Rich is quite low. Cartier says that Cape Double was visible clear from the coast of Labrador, but Point Rich would not be visible half that distance. The same plates, however, shew beautifully and conclusively what it was he did name Cape Double; it was the highest part of the Highlands of St. John, just east by north from Point Rich. Here is most perfectly presented upon the plates, as seen from about the direction in which Cartier came, an appearance well described as "a great double cape, one above the other," the whole towering high above Point Rich itself. That it is the highest part of these highlands which corresponds thus perfectly with Cartier's description is very significant, as he saw Cape Double from Labrador and kept it in view until he gave it its name. The name has, however, been applied quite naturally to the point itself; in fact the very latest and far the best chart² we have of this coast, marks it "Point Rich or Cape Double."

The next day they sailed about thirty-five leagues to the south where they came to high mountains, among which (Rel. orig., but not ed. 1598) there is one like a grange (*granche*), whence they named them the Grauges (*les monts de Granches*). The one mentioned was probably the conspicuous mountain of Portland. That day, between the Granges and a cape three leagues to the S. S. W. of them, they saw an opening into the land, the present Sandy Bay. The "Relation originale" is much more clear and consistent in the description of this region than the edition of 1598. The cape to the south, on the north of which is a low island they named Pointed Cape (*cap Pointu*); it is the present Cow Head. The presence of the island settles its identity, for the latter is "low and rocky, and the only island on the coast between the bay of islands and Point Rich."³

The next day, the 17th, they ran before a high north-east wind to the south-west about thirty-seven leagues, when they found themselves opposite a bay full of round islands like dove-houses. They named them the Dove-houses (*les Couloubiers*) and the bay in which they were, St. Julian (*Saint Jullian*). The latter, as is shewn by its position relative to places described later, is the present Bonne Bay, though Cartier has made its distance from Pointed Cape much too great. Bonne Bay itself contains no small islands such as Cartier mentions; but on the northern side of its entrance is a small harbour, Roche or Rocky Harbour which does contain many little islands. It must have been to these that he gave the name of Dove-houses.

¹ The North American Pilot for Newfoundland, etc.

³ Pamphlet with the North American Pilot, etc.

² Cape Cod to Belle Isle: Murray & Son, London, 1886.

About seven leagues S.S.W. of this bay there is a cape which they named Cape Royal (*Cap Royal*), and to W.S.W. of it, another, about half a league on the north of which is an island. Between the two capes there are many islands. The latter cape was named Cape of Milk (*Cap Delatte*), to-day called both Cape of Milk and South Head. The islands are in the present Bay of Islands, and the former cape would seem to be, on account of its distance of seven leagues from the Bay of St. Julian, the present Cape Gregory. The directions are not accurate, but there can be no doubt as to the identity of the places. The next day, the 18th, they explored the Bay of Islands, giving it, however, no name. Its latitude, as given by Cartier, 48° 30', is about 37' too far south.

That night, June 18th, they put to sea, and such a storm arose that they were tossed about by great winds without having sight of land until the 24th. On that day they sighted a cape of land towards the south-east, to which they gave the name, in honour of the day, Cape St. John (*cap saint Jehan*). They estimated that it was about thirty-five leagues south-west of Cape Royal; and had we no other evidence on the point, we might think it was the present Cape St. George. But storm-driven as they were, their estimate can be of little value, and their subsequent course proves beyond question that their Cape St. John¹ could only have been the present Cape Anguille.²

Cape St. John was the last land they sighted in Newfoundland. From it they sailed away north-westerly, and the next day, after changing their course, they came to two small islands, the description of which shows them to be the Bird Rocks of to-day. With regard to the course after leaving Cape St. John, the account in the edition of 1598 is confused and altogether erroneous in its distances and directions. The "Relation originale" on the other hand, gives correct distances and clear and accurate directions. They went north-west and by west seventeen and one-half leagues from Cape St. John, and then to the south-west fifteen leagues, which brought them to Bird Islands (*isles des Margaults*).

Five leagues to the west of the latter, Cartier describes another island, two leagues in length and as much in breadth, which he named Isle Bryon (*ille de Bryon*). This name it still retains, though it is sometimes corrupted to Byron. He was greatly pleased with the fertility of its soil³ which must have presented a great contrast to the barrenness of Labrador and Newfoundland.

Four leagues from Bryon Island they saw a fine cape which they named Cape Dauphin (*cap du Dauphin*) because it was the beginning of good lands. This must have been the present North Cape of the Magdalen Islands; it could not have been East Point, for the latter is represented on the charts as low, while at the former is a hill. On the 27th of the month (June), they coasted along a land which lay E.N.E. and W.S.W., clearly the north-

¹ Some writers have held that Cartier's Cape St. John was on Prince Edward Island, and that it was from this circumstance the island took the name Isle St. John, by which it was known until 1798. It is needless to point out how groundless such an idea is. It has as little in its favour as the theory that it was the island discovered and so named by Cabot.

² The chart last referred to (Cape Cod to Belle Isle: Imray & Son, London) gives both Anguille and St. John for this cape. It gives also Milk Cape or South Point, Gulf of St. Julian or Bonne Bay, and Cow Head or Pointed Cape. Up to this point the interpretation of the course given in these pages corresponds pretty closely with that in the footnotes of the edition of Cartier's voyages published by the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec in 1843. Beyond this, however, the two are quite independent of each other.

³ "It is nearly surrounded with high capes, and on the North side is some land of tolerably good quality." Dictionary of Lower Canada, by Jos. Boucette, 1832.

western coast of the main island, which has this direction. That day they went fifteen leagues and the next ten more, which brought them to a red cape with a rounded top. The narration describes the region as follows:—"The next day we ranged along that land about ten leagues even to a red cape of land, which is a rounded cape within which is a passage towards the north and low ground; there is low ground between the sea and a pond. From the said cape of land and pond to another cape of land, there are about four leagues¹; between them the land is in the form of a semi-circle, and all ranged with sands like a ditch, about which and over which there is a kind of marshes and pools as far as one can see. And before arriving at the first cape there are two little islands very near the land; and five leagues from the second cape, there is an island to the south-west which is high and pointed, which was named by us Allezay. The first cape was named Cape St. Peter, because it was on the day of that saint we arrived there."

After the first day's sailing, it will be noticed, no direction is mentioned; they simply coasted along the land. The distance traversed in the two days, however, would bring them about to Entry Island; the rest of the narrative now becomes clear. Some charts mark on the south of Entry Island "Red cliffs," and a recent popular work² says of it:—"Abrupt and magnificently shaped cliffs, beautifully tinted red and brown are to be seen in its entire circuit, which at the eastern end are over four hundred feet high." Cartier's red Cape St. Peter, then, might have been in Entry Island, and the context clearly shews that it was. The only cape which is four leagues from the first (no direction is given) is some point on Grindstone Island, possibly Red Cape. Any good chart on a sufficiently large scale will represent the appearances described by Cartier between the two capes. The land lies in a semicircle between them, all ranged with sands, very low and full of pools. The two little islands met with before reaching Cape St. Peter, would seem to be Sea Cow Rock and possibly some detached rock on the main island.

Five leagues to the south-west of the second cape, was the island named by them "Allezay." The island corresponding to this description in regard to position is the present Deadman's Island. The work last mentioned says of it:—"It is indeed a singular rock, about a mile long. Not a herb, nor a bush, nor a blade of grass is to be seen on its rocky sides, which rise to a sharp, razor-like ridge in the centre." Now, this island, as will be seen by reference to the map accompanying this paper, is much longer than broad, and almost its shortest diameter is seen from Cartier's second cape. If it rises to a razor-like ridge in the centre, it must certainly seem pointed from such a position; it is marked as being 170 feet high on some charts and, therefore would seem very well to answer to Cartier's description of Allezay, which was "high and pointed." It is not strange that he should give its distance and direction from Second Cape, instead of Cape St. Peter. As these were the only two conspicuous places he mentions, he had to locate it with reference to one of them, and it would only be visible from the former.

On June 29th they left the Magdalen Islands,³ setting out, apparently, from Cape

¹ Edition of 1598 has *fourteen*. But that of Relation originale is undoubtedly correct, for there is no cape in this vicinity as great a distance as fourteen leagues from any other cape. If it reads *four* leagues, the account is clear; if it reads *fourteen*, nothing can be made of it.

² Cruise of the "Alice May," by S. G. W. Benjamin.

³ The very different views of Dr. Kohl and Rev. B. F. DeCosta, as to the identity of these places will be referred to further on.

St. Peter. The wind blew towards S.S.W. and they sailed¹ without sighting land until the evening, when they saw, about nine or ten leagues to the W.S.W. of them, land which seemed to be two islands. They kept on all that night and until sunrise, traversing in all, from the time of leaving the Magdalen Islands, about forty leagues. On the morning of June 30th, they saw that the land they had taken for two islands was really firm land "lying S.S.E. and N.N.W. to a goodly cape of land" which they called Cape Orleans (*cap d'Orléans*). The shore Cartier further describes as follows (Rel. orig.):—"All this land is low and the most beautiful it is possible to see, and full of beautiful trees and meadows; but in it we were not able to find a harbour, because it is a low land, very shallow and all ranged with sands. We went ashore in several places in our boats, and among others into a beautiful, but very shallow river, where we saw boats (*barques*) of savages, which were crossing this river, which, on this account, we named the River of Boats" (*ripiuere de Barques*.)"

Although the "Relation originale" does not distinctly state that they sailed westward after leaving the Magdalen Islands, the context clearly shows that they did so. Making an allowance for magnetic variation, their course must have taken them to the coast of Prince Edward Island, a considerable distance to the south of North Point. While following this course they saw what they took to be two islands about nine or ten leagues to the W.S.W. of them, which would place the two islands somewhere to the south of the present Richmond Bay. In order to determine, if possible, what land Cartier must have seen, the writer searched in works describing the island and found the following passages:—"Probably the highest spot on the island does not rise above five hundred feet above the level of the sea." "The highest land on the island is on the road between Charlotte Town and Prince Town, stretching from the head of Harris Bay to the head of Grenville Bay."³ Its position is indicated upon the accompanying map. We have not found what appearance it presents from the sea, but as it extends for a considerable distance, it is quite probable that there are two parts of it higher than the rest which would seem like two islands from Cartier's position. But this much is certain, that the land they sighted was in this region, and that this is the highest in the island, and hence that first visible from the sea.

But the next morning they saw that it was not two islands but firm land lying S.S.E. and N.N.W. A glance at the map will shew that the only coast in all this region having this direction is that of Prince Edward Island between the high land we have spoken of and Cape Kildare, and that this has it very exactly. This alone should be enough to establish the identity of this coast with that visited by Cartier, but it is placed beyond all question by his further description of it. Any chart will shew how shallow and ranged with sands it is, and many passages could be quoted from books describing the island, substantiating the evidence of the charts as well as describing the fertility of the soil and beauty of the region which so delighted the appreciative explorer.

From the way in which Cartier speaks of the land "lying S. S. E. and N. N. W. to" Cape Orleans, the latter would seem to be to the north of the land having this direction. This would make it the present Cape Kildare, and we shall presently give an additional reason

¹ "To the west" ed. 1598; Rel. orig. does not mention in what direction they sailed.

² All writers have considered this to be the Miramichi in New Brunswick.

³ The Progress and Prospects of Prince Edward Island, by C. B. Bagster, 1861.

for considering this to be so. It was upon this coast, too, that he entered and named the River of Boats. It must be remembered, in tracing his course from this time on, that we have no reason whatever to believe that Cartier had any knowledge that Prince Edward Island was an island, but rather very good reason to believe the contrary.¹ There are two large bays on the coast, Richmond Bay and Cascumpeque Harbour, either of which would seem to him like the mouth of a large river, and either of which might correspond to his beautiful but shallow River of Boats. But there is a strong probability that it was the former rather than the latter. Richmond Bay is much the larger of the two, and has a far more conspicuous entrance. It is worth noting too, in connection with the fact that Cartier saw many Indians in his River of Boats, that there have always been Indian villages around this bay,² one of them indeed existing on Lennox Island until 1861, if not later; but this fact is of no value as an argument, as there may have been, and probably were, Indians around Cascumpeque Harbour also. But the strongest reason we have for considering Richmond Bay to have been the River of Boats, is given us by his subsequent course. Immediately after leaving the River of Boats, the strong wind blowing on shore compelled them to put to sea, and they sailed away to the north-east until sunrise next day. They then lay to until 10 o'clock, when the mists cleared away and gave them sight of Cape Orleans and another cape about seven leagues "to the N. a point to the N. E." of it,³ to which they gave the name of Cape of the Savages. The latter we shall presently shew to be the present North Point: the former must, therefore be, though the distance is not exact, Cape Kildare of to-day. Now, had Cascumpeque Harbour been the River of Boats, in sailing from it to the north-east, he must have passed very close indeed to Cape Orleans, and it seems likely that he would have mentioned it, had he done so. It is evident, moreover, upon consulting the map, that his all-night's sail to the north-east, if it began at the latter harbour, would put him in a position from which the way he expresses the sighting of the coast next day would not be nearly so natural, as it would be were his course laid from Richmond Bay. On the whole, the probability seems very strongly to be that the latter was the River of Boats.

The next morning, July 1st, Cartier, off to the east of the island, saw Cape Orleans and Cape of the Savages. He went to the latter, which he thus describes:—"To the north-east of which, about half a league, there is a very dangerous reef and bank of stones." This description, brief but clear, enables us easily to fix the identity of the place. Upon the charts, as shewn upon the accompanying map, such a reef is marked as running out from North Point, and in the work last quoted,⁴ we read: "North Point . . . is formed of low, red cliffs, with dangerous reefs running out to the northward and eastward more than a mile." Remembering that Cartier's league included somewhat less than three English miles, these two descriptions, written over three hundred years apart, are so remarkably alike as not to allow of doubt that they refer to the same place. Cape of the Savages then

¹ Indeed, the writer has collected evidence enough (too long for insertion here) upon the question, to warrant the assertion that Prince Edward Island was not generally known to be other than a part of the mainland, until after the year 1600. The island marked upon maps of before that date, which has been taken for it, can be shown to be meant for one of the Magdalen Islands.

² The Progress and Prospects of Prince Edward Island, by C. B. Bagster, 1861. An old work on Cape Breton, printed in London, in 1760, mentions that one island in this bay was entirely given up to the Indians.

³ In both Rel. orig. and the ed. 1598; Hakluyt has "from us," which destroys the sense of the whole passage.

⁴ Progress and Prospects of P. E. I.

is North Point, in which case Cape Orleans can only be Cape Kildare. The latter is represented upon the charts as being higher than the former, the Admiralty Chart marking here a hill, with none at North Point which is forty feet high. It would, therefore, be quite conspicuous from the sea, and hence its prominence in Cartier's narrative.

They landed at Cape of the Savages and left gifts for an Indian they saw there. Then with their ships they coasted along the shore, though we are not told in what direction. The narrative continues as follows (Rel. orig.):—"That day we coasted along the said land nine or ten leagues, trying to find some harbour, which we could not; for, as I have said before, it is a land low and shallow. We went ashore that day in four places to see the trees which are of the very finest and sweet smelling, and found that they were cedars, pines, white elms, ashes, willows, and many others to us unknown. The lands where there are no woods are very beautiful, and all full of peason [Hakl.], white and red gooseberries, strawberries, blackberries, and wild grain like rye; it seems there to have been sown and plowed. This is a land of the best temperature which it is possible to see, and of great heat, and there are many doves and thrushes and other birds; it only wants harbours."

As they landed at North Point and were now sailing along the same land, the latter could only be the north-western coast of Prince Edward Island. In describing this coast, the work¹ on the island we have quoted, reads as follows:—"The only tract of any extent bordering on the sea, without settlers, is that between the North Cape and West Point. There are a number of fine streams of water and ponds in this district; the soil is rich and the land is covered with lofty trees. . . Its only disadvantage is having no harbour; but one may always land in a boat if the wind does not blow strongly on the shore." The similarity of these two passages leaves us no opportunity for doubt, and it seems certain that Cartier coasted south-westerly along this shore. His nine or ten leagues would have taken him nearly to the present Cape Wolfe, and it must have been somewhat to the north of it that he passed the night.

"The next day," July 2nd, the narrative goes on to say, "we saw the land to the north² of us which joined onto that along which we had ranged, and we knew that it was a bay which had about twenty leagues³ of depth and as much of breadth. We named the bay St. Lunaire (*Saint Linaire*)."⁴ The land to the north must have been, of course, the New Brunswick coast; and as Cartier could have had no knowledge that he had been visiting an island, or of the existence of Northumberland Strait, it very naturally seemed to him to join onto that along which he had been coasting. From his position near Cape Wolfe, and indeed from any position whatever in the head of the strait, he would seem landlocked to the south, the bay appearing merely to extend a little deeper in that direction.

Here then we have the very simple explanation of the Bay of St. Lunario, a bay which various writers from Lescaobot to those of our own day, have either confounded with the River of Boats, with the Miramichi, or have ignored altogether. It is found marked upon all the principal maps of the latter part of the sixteenth century, is usually given a circular form, and is represented of course as being upon the mainland. It has been already pointed out that the correct reading of the word is St. Lunaire or Lunario; though Cartier

¹ Progress and Prospects of P. E. I.

² It must be constantly borne in mind that all compass directions are given for magnetic and not true north.

³ Rel. orig.; ed. 1598 has a blank here.

gave it its name on July 2nd, it was upon the 1st, and, therefore, the day of St. Leonarius, that he entered it. It was for this reason he named it St. Lunaire.¹

Continuing on their course, they approached a cape towards the north, where they found the water so shallow that for more than a league from shore there was but a fathom of depth. This cape could only be the present Point Escumenac. The water on the north side of it, as is shewn upon good charts, is very shallow, but the one fathom line is at present not more than a mile from the shore.² Still, there is no room for doubt as to the identity of the cape, for there is no other in the region which it can possibly be. The narrative continues:—"To the north-east of this cape, about seven or eight leagues, we saw another cape of land, and between the two there is a bay in the fashion of a triangle, which is very deep,"³ which as far as we could see, lies north-east, and it is all ranged with sands, a low land."

Evidently the bay fashioned like a triangle, lying north-east, is Miramichi Bay; his mention of its shallowness and sandbanks⁴ helps to confirm this conclusion. There is in reality no cape to the north-east of Point Escumenac, even allowing for the greatest variation of the compass; Blackland Point, at the mouth of Tubusintac Gully, which would seem to be the cape meant, lies north. Still his subsequent course shews that this cape, or one very near it, was the one referred to. Cartier goes on to say, "from this last cape even to the said bank and cape of land there are fifteen leagues." Evidently he means by the "said bank and cape" his Cape of the Savages. We are somewhat surprised that he should have so much underestimated this distance, but it is, doubtless, merely an approximation. His mistake in overestimating the breadth of the Bay of St. Lunario is quite a natural one, for he had not then been to the western side of the entrance of his supposed bay.

The next night was stormy, but they coasted along the land which lay N.N.E. until the morning, July 3rd, when they entered a great open bay, fifty-five fathoms deep in several places and about fifteen leagues broad. From its great size and the direction in which it lay, they hoped to find the passage to the west they were seeking, and for that reason named the cape they rounded in entering it, the Cape of Hope (*cap d'Espérance*).⁵

¹ The writer is indebted for the following note to the kindness and learning of the Rev. C. Lecoq, Superior of the Grand Seminary of St. Sulpice, Montreal:—"St. Lunaire is the proper spelling, this being (along with *Liéouer*, *Léonor* and *Léonor*) the popular name of St. Leonarius, or, rather, Leonorius, who is believed to have been a Bishop in Brittany in the sixth century. As Jacques Cartier was from Brittany, I have no doubt he gave the name of this saint of his country to the bay."

² "This shoal [i.e., off Point Escumenac], as its Indian name implies, extends nearly three miles into the sea." History of New Brunswick and Gaspé, by Robert Cooney, 1832.

³ Cartier uses this expression frequently to signify not depth of the water, but the extension of a bay into the land.

⁴ As there occurs here the only case noticed in a comparison of the Relation originate with the edition of 1598, in which the latter gives a more satisfactory description of a locality than the former, it is worth mentioning. The former says:—"It [i.e. the triangular bay] is all ranged with sands, a low land; at ten leagues distance from shore there are twenty fathoms of depth." The latter has:—"This gulf is surrounded with sands and low places for ten leagues, and there are not more than two fathoms of depth." The statement in the former case is true; so is that in the latter, as well as much more natural under the circumstances, for he gives us no reason to suppose that he went ten leagues from shore and measured the depth of the water.

⁵ It is an interesting fact, illustrating the curious changes geographical names often undergo, that Cartier's name, Cape of Hope, has been corrupted to Cape Despair, and moved from its proper place on the north of Miscou Island to a cape in the Peninsula of Gaspé, a few leagues to the south of Percé. The transition both of name and position can be easily followed on old maps.

From this time on, the course can be quite easily traced, but before briefly doing so, a few words should be said about the different views which have been held in regard to the identity of the places already visited.

Dr. J. G. Kohl¹ gives the following account of the voyage after leaving Newfoundland: "West of these Bird Rocks there was another island, about two leagues long, and one league broad; which, according to this description, must have been the present 'Byron Island'; and then another, which was large, full of beautiful trees, woods, pleasant meadows covered with spring flowers, and having large fertile tracts of land, interspersed with great swamps. Along its shores were many sea-monsters, with two large tusks in the mouth, like elephants; and the forests were thronged with bears and wolves. This island was four leagues from the continent and was named in honor of the admiral of France who had favored this expedition, 'Isle de Brion.' According to this description, 'Brion's Island' must be our large 'Prince Edward Island,' though the name 'Isle de Brion,' on some old maps, is given to a small islet, which we now call 'Byron Island.'

"Cartier sailed along the north coast of Isle de Brion, giving now and then a name to some cape or island; for instance 'Cap d'Orleans' and 'Isle Alezay,' names which are still found on old maps, and which appear to have been placed near the 'North Point' of Prince Edward Island. Thence he went over to the continent, entering a bay, which from the great number of canoes filled with Indians, which he saw there, he named 'la baye des Barques'; and another triangular gulf, in 47° N., which he named 'The Gulf of Santo Lunario' (the present Miramichi Bay). He hoped here to find a passage like the 'Strait of the Chateaux' (Belle Isle) and therefore, named one of the capes of the bay, 'the Cape of Hope.'"

How confused and altogether inconsistent with Cartier's narrative this account is, must be evident to every reader who has followed Cartier's distances through the preceding pages. Dr. Kohl entirely ignores both distances and directions, and it seems as if he must have written from memory and not with the narrative before him. It is not, however, for the sake of criticism that this minor piece of work of the great and lamented scholar is quoted here, but for the reason that his authority has caused his views to be accepted by other writers. The account in Winsor's "America"² is little less confused. Rev. B. F. De Costa, who contributes the article on "Jacques Cartier and his Successors," makes Cartier go from Brion's Island to "Alezay", the present Prince Edward Island, of which the first cape was called St. Peter's, in honor of the day. He reached the mainland the last day of June, and named it Cape Orleans; "next he found Miramichi Bay, or the Bay of Boats, which he called St. Lunario." This article does not follow Cartier's account either, in regard to the natives whom he saw, and one is forced to the conclusion that it also was written from memory and not directly from Cartier's narrative.

The evidence of old maps has been adduced by both writers in support of their positions, but the fact that they have drawn different conclusions from the same maps, shews that such evidence is of very doubtful value. All of the old maps that the writer has been able to examine, either in the original or in reproduction in the Harvard College and Boston Public Libraries, are perfectly consistent with the interpretation of Cartier's course

¹ History of the Discovery of Maine; Coll. Maine Hist. Soc., vol. i, 1869.

² Narrative and Critical History of America, edited by Justin Winsor, vol. iv.

given in this paper, while at least two of them strongly confirm it. If one will but compare the famous "Henri II" map of 1543 with Diego Homem's map of 1558, he will see that the island on the former which has caused confusion by being mistaken for Prince Edward Island, is on the latter marked "ille de Sablões." This very word is used by Cartier in describing the largest of the Magdalen Islands as he coasted along it, and he gave it no other name. Granting that Cartier took Prince Edward Island to be a part of the mainland, the rest of the maps are perfectly intelligible.

Returning to our voyagers we find them on July 4th entering Bay Chaleurs and coasting along its northern shore. The first harbour they found was a little bay and haven altogether open towards the south, and having no protection from southerly wind. It being St. Martin's Day they named it St. Martin's Haven (*la couche Saint Martin*); it is to-day called Port Daniel. Here their ships remained until the 12th of the month, but with their boats they explored towards the head of the bay. They went first with one boat to a cape seven or eight leagues to the west, clearly the present Paspebiac Point, where they saw forty or fifty canoes full of Indians whom they had to frighten away with firearms and lances. Upon July 9th¹ they started upon a longer expedition. They sailed that day twenty-five leagues to the west, and the next until 10 o'clock, which must have taken them nearly or quite to the present Dalhousie. But the converging shores shewed them that there could be no open passage to the west, and they turned back. The narrative goes on to say, "and making our way along the coast we saw the savages upon the bank of a pond (*estanc*) on low ground where they were making many fires and smokes. We went to this place and found that there was a passage from the sea, which ran into the said pond." They seem to have come to this place soon after turning back, and such a pond, connected with the sea just as Cartier describes it and, moreover, so situated that they must have soon passed near it on their return voyage, is found at Traacadigash Point. It seems to be the only place on the coast to which the description is applicable, and how applicable the accompanying map will show. They traded with the Indians there and afterwards reached their ships on so hot a day that they named the bay the Bay of Heat or Bay Chaleurs.²

On Sunday, July 12th, they left St. Martin's and coasted along the shore eighteen leagues to the east, which brought them to Cape Pratto, the present White Head. They anchored between it and an island one league to the east, the latter being the present Bonaventure. On Tuesday they continued their course to the north, and were forced by stormy weather to put into a river, five or six leagues from the last-mentioned cape, which Cartier's description proves beyond question to be the present Gaspé Bay. In this safe haven they remained several days, making friends with the many Indians there. But the natives were not so well pleased when their visitors set up at the mouth of the harbour a great cross bearing aloft a shield with the three white lilies of France, and the inscription "Vive le Roy de France." Yet they allowed Cartier to take with them two of the children of their chief when he sailed away on the 25th.

¹ Both the Relation originale and the edition of 1598, call Monday, the 6th, Sunday, the 12th, and Thursday the 8th. As a mistake of this kind is more likely to be made on the day of the month than the day of the week, it probably should read Thursday, the 9th.

² There is nothing in the narrative to shew whether they gave the name "Bay Chaleurs" to the whole bay from its entrance or only to its upper part. The former seems to us the more probable.

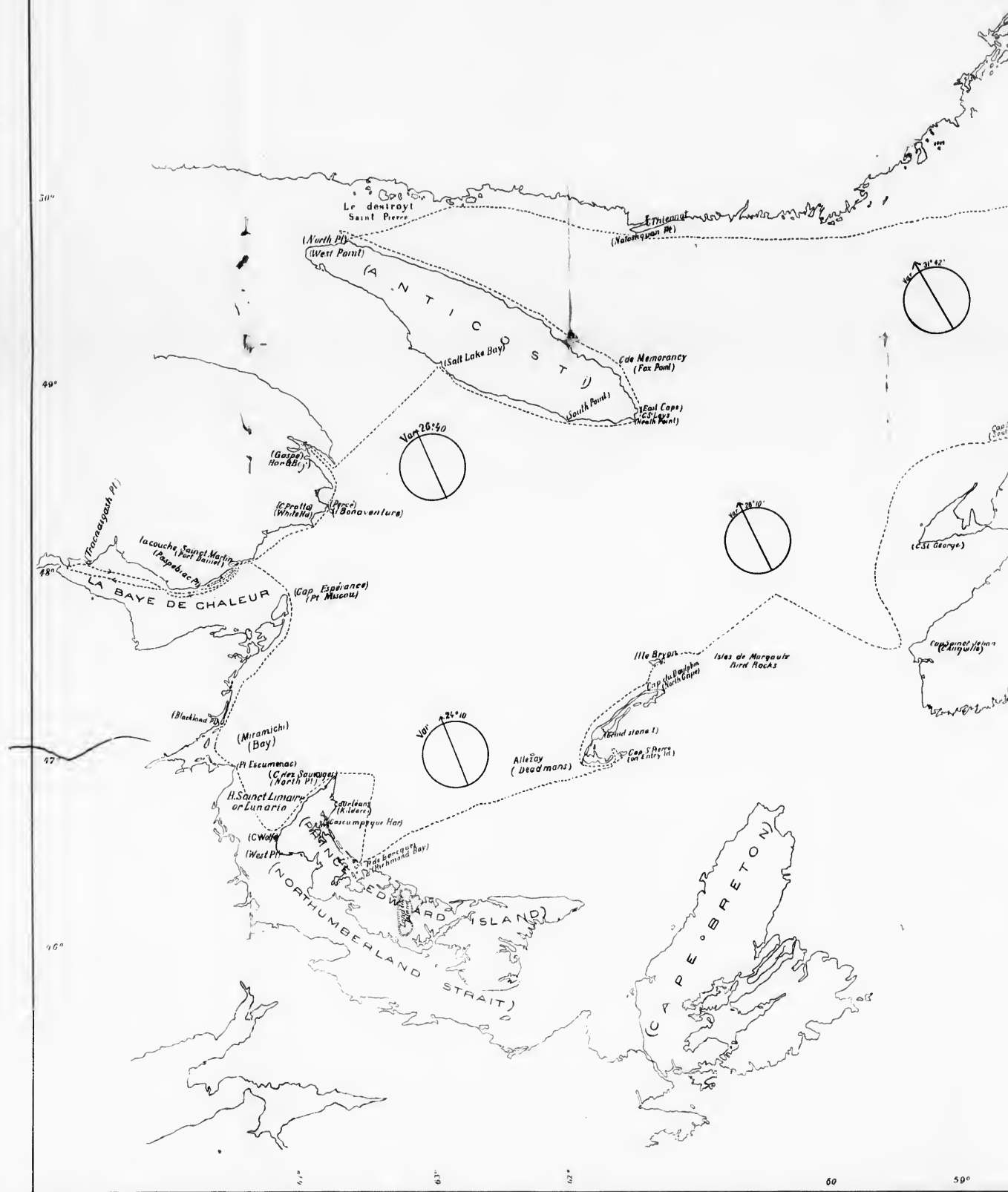


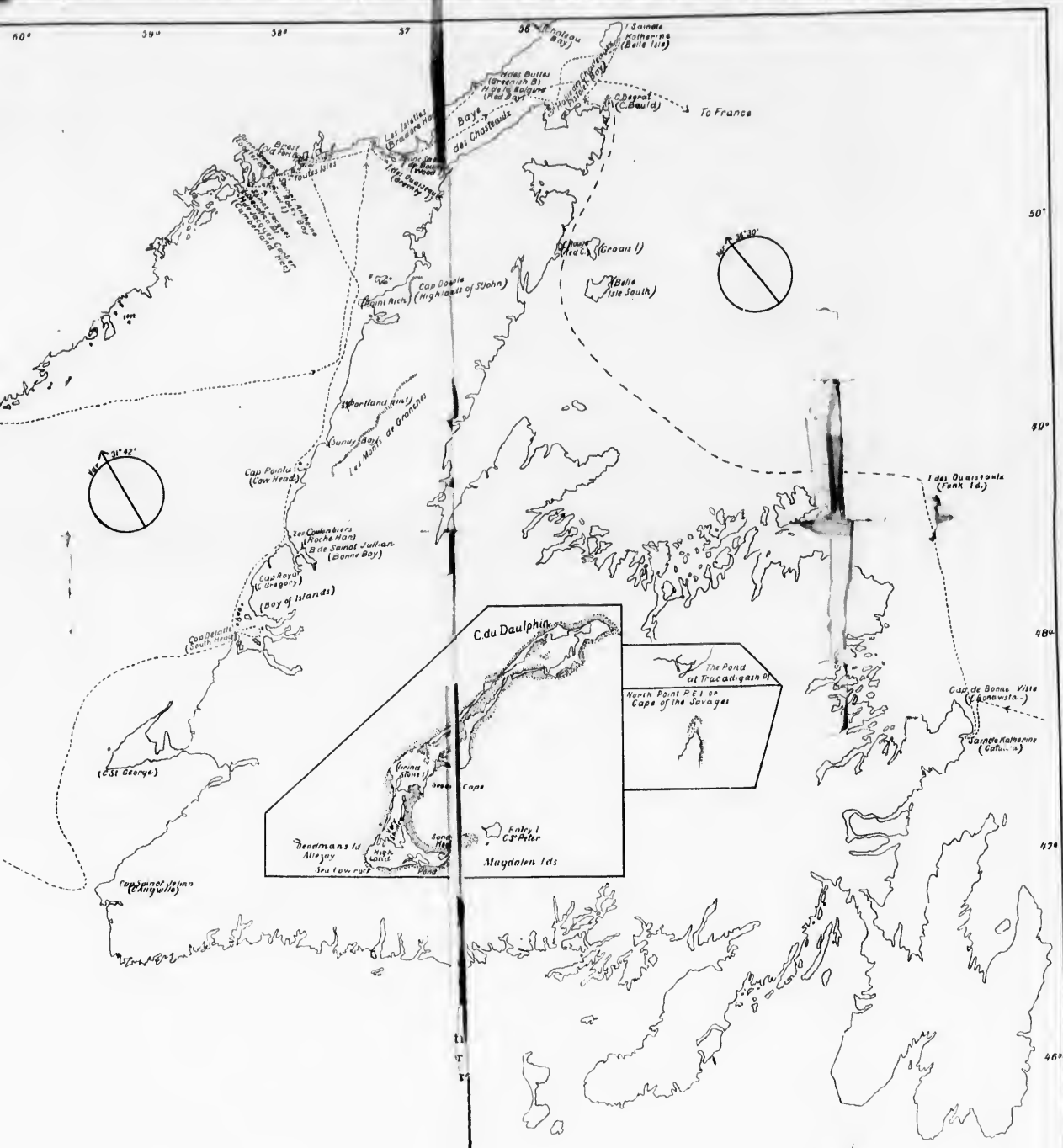
70°

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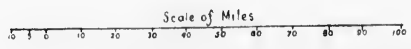


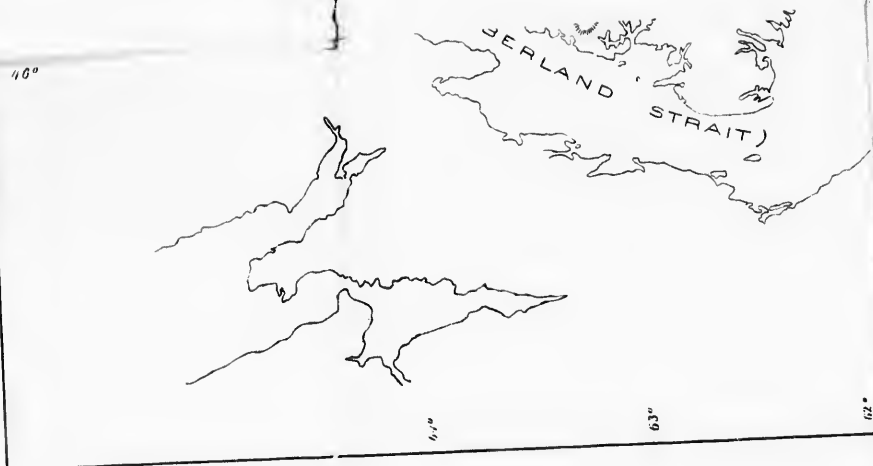
MAP
OF
The Gulf of St. Lawrence,

TO ILLUSTRATE A PAPER ON
JACQUES CARTIER'S FIRST VOYAGE TO CANADA,
IN 1534.

By W. F. GANONG, A.M.

--- CARTIER'S COURSE.
..... WHERE HIS COURSE IS UNCERTAIN





It has always been thought strange that the west, should have crossed to Anticosti and sailed up the St. Lawrence shore to the east instead of sailing directly up the St. Lawrence. The reason, however, he himself tells us in part at least, and the rest can be readily inferred. The "Relation originale" (and the edition of 1598 is substantially like it) reads:—"The next day, the 25th of the month, the wind was favourable and we left the harbour; and [when] we were outside of the said river, we laid our course on the east-south-east, because from the land¹ of the said river the land ranges [around] ~~in the fashion of a half~~ circle of which we had sight of the whole coast from our ships; and in taking this course we saw the said land which lies south-east and north-west [i. e. Anticosti] the passage of which proved to have of distance from the said river, about twenty leagues." The reason then that Cartier crossed to Anticosti was, as he himself tells us, because he thought he was crossing the mouth of a great bay, the whole coast of which he could see from his ships. The only conjecture that we can offer, as to what Cartier saw and mistook for land where there is really open sea, is that he was deceived by fog-banks. Mariners have been deceived before and since by the same cause. He naturally would afterwards coast to the east in order to get out of his supposed bay as soon as possible to continue his search to the west.

The narrative makes no mention of where they passed the time between the 25th, and the evening of the 27th, but it was possibly in the present Salt Lake Bay, as their course would have taken them very near it. Coasting along the land "which lay S. E. and N. W.," they came to a cape where it began to turn to the east. Fifteen leagues further, the land made an abrupt turn and, as the context shews, tended to the north. The latter cape was named St. Louis (*St. Loys*),³ and it would be South Point near East Cape of to-day. The former cape to which no name was given, was undoubtedly the present South Point. The latitude of Cape St. Louis in the narrative, 49° 15', is 10' too far north; but the longitude in the "Relation originale" (*soixante et treize degres et demi*) is 11° 50' too far west.

They now found the land tending to the north for fifteen leagues, where, at a cape which they named Cape Montmorency (*cap de Montmorency*), it bent towards the north-west. The latter cape, though the distance as given is too great, can only be the present Fox Point. The land between the two last-mentioned capes lies north and south as the compass points in that region to-day.

On Saturday, August 1st, while still following the shore of Anticosti, they sighted wild and mountainous land to the north and north-east of them—evidently the coast of Labrador. They did not leave Anticosti, but kept on their course, still hoping to find a passage to the west. In these five days they were able to go only twenty-five leagues, so troublesome were the tides with the wind against them. They estimated the distance of one land from the other to be about fifteen leagues, and the latitude of a point half way between at 50°, 20', an error of about 15' too far north. As they approached the narrowest part of the strait, they noticed that the two shores previously converging, began

¹ Edition of 1598 reads "entrance."

² "In the same manner in modern times Sir James Ross, in Lancaster Sound, believed he saw mountains, where there were but fogs, and depicted this Sound as land-locked, whilst it has the widest open water in the whole world." J. G. Kohl, Coll. Maine Hist. Soc., vol. i, 1869.

³ *S. Loays*, ed. 1598; *S. Aluise*, Hakluyt and Mercator's map of 1569.

ST VOYAGE

...like as to their headway, but as they
...ed and carried down very rapidly west-
ward for two hours. Then it turned against them with great force preventing any further
advance in that direction. They went ashore in their boats at the last mentioned cape,
and noticed that the land began to rise towards the south-west. They gave no name
to it, but it must have been the present North Point. The strait between Anticosti and
Labrador was named St. Peter Strait (*le détroit Saint Pierre*), because it was on the day
of that saint they entered it.

A general council was now called, at which it was decided, on account of the lateness
of the season and the difficulties of advancing further, to return home. They accordingly
coasted eastward along Labrador, visiting and naming on the way Cape Thiennot (the
present Natashquan Point) in honor of the chief of a band of Indians they saw there. On
August 9th, they entered Blanc Sablon, and on the 15th, set sail for France by way of the
Strait of Belle Isle. On September 5th, they entered the Port of St. Malo.

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