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of Labrador: Volume 2
George Cartwright
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A Journal of Transactions and Events during
a Residence of Nearly Sixteen Years on the Coast of Labrador

George Cartwright (1739–1819) was a soldier, trader and explorer who spent sixteen years travelling and working in Labrador in northern Canada. In 1754, he entered the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich in London before taking up a commission in the Indian army. In 1760, he served in the Seven Years' War, returning to England with the rank of Captain. After his army career, he turned to exploration and set himself up as a trader along the Labrador coast of Canada, making six expeditions from 1770–86 between Cape St Charles and Hamilton Inlet. Published in 1792, this is the second book in a three-volume work that recounts the author's adventures along the Labrador coast, vividly portraying the land and the culture of the indigenous peoples. This volume covers Cartwright's third and fourth expeditions, between 1773 and 1779. Each volume also includes a glossary of unusual terms.

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VOLUME 2

GEORGE CARTWRIGHT



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A
JOURNAL
OF
TRANSACTIONS AND EVENTS,
DURING A
RESIDENCE OF NEARLY SIXTEEN YEARS
ON THE
COAST OF LABRADOR;
CONTAINING
MANY INTERESTING PARTICULARS,
BOTH OF THE
COUNTRY AND ITS INHABITANTS,
NOT HITHERTO KNOWN.
ILLUSTRATED WITH PROPER CHARTS.

By GEORGE CARTWRIGHT, Esq.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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G L O S S A R Y.

- AUNTSARY.** A bird of the wading genus, resembling a redshank.
- ANGLE OF A BEAVERHOUSE.** The entrance; it is always under water.
- BAKED APPLES.** The fruit of a plant so called, from the similarity of taste to that of the pulp of a roasted apple.
- BARRENS.** Elevated lands, which will not produce timber.
- BARRICADOS.** That ice which is formed upon the shore above low-water mark.
- BEAVER-CUTTINGS.** A furrier's term for those trees or sticks which have been cut down by beavers. It is also used for the stumps which are left.
- BLOCK UP A BOAT.** To place blocks, or logs of wood under her keel.
- BOBBER.** A small piece of wood, which is made fast by a piece of line (called the bobber-line) to that corner of a shoal-net next to the land, which, by floating upon the water, shews where the net is.
- BRIDGE OF A DEATHFALL.** A piece of board placed within a deathfall; one end of which is hung to a small stake by a piece of twine, and the other end is supported in an horizontal position by a peg (called a tongue.) When an animal treads on it, the peg is drawn out, which sets the cat-killer at liberty, and that falls upon the back of the creature and kills it.
- BRIDGE OF A TRAP.** A plate of iron in the centre of a trap for the animal to tread on, which then falling down, sets the jaws at liberty.
- BULK OF FISH.** A quantity of fish salted one upon another.
- BULL.** A small sea bird. I believe it is called the ice-bird.
- BUSK.** A piece of board which is pointed at one end and broad at the other. When a furboard is not broad enough to spread skin properly, the busk is introduced on the belly side to stretch it completely.
- CALLIBOGUS.** A mixture of spruce-beer and rum.
- VOL. II.** a CAPLIN.

- CAPLIN.** A fish “*Salmo Archicus*” Pennant.
- CAT-HOUSE.** A hut of boughs erected over a trap, to defend it from snow.
- CHINSING.** Filling with mofs, the vacancies between the studs of houses, to keep out the wind and frost.
- CODSTAGE.** A covered platform, which is built, projecting over the water, to split and salt codfish in.
- CRAFT.** A fisherman’s term, signifying the whole of the implements they use ; such as nets, hooks, lines, &c.
- CREW OF BEAVERS.** The two old beavers, and all their young ones which have not yet begun to breed. If there are more breeding pairs than one in the same house, it is said, to be inhabited by a double or treble crew.
- CROSS-FOX.** A fox which is bred between a silver and a yellow.
- CUFFS.** Mittens to wear upon the hands. They resemble those made use of by hedgers in England.
- DEATHFALL.** A trap made of logs. They are chiefly used to catch martens, but they will kill any beast, by erecting them in proportion to his size and strength.
- DILLROOM.** The well in a boat.
- DOATER.** An old, common seal.
- EDDY FLAW.** Where the current of wind is interrupted by a hill or any other body, short puffs will often strike in a contrary direction; those are called Eddy Flaws.
- FAGGOTS OF FISH.** Small parcels of codfish, from a dozen to a score, laid one upon another, with their backs upwards to be defended from wet, during rain or the night.
- FALL IN A RIVER.** A small cataract.
- FISH UPON THE GANGBOARDS.** An expression used by fishermen to denote, a boat being completely laden with fish; to shew which, they bring in two or three upon the GANGBOARDS.
- FLAKES.** Sets of beams, which are supported on posts and shores, and covered with boughs. They are used to dry fish upon. They are of two sorts, viz: Broad flakes and Hand-flakes.
- FLEET OF NETS.** A number of nets, which are fastened to each other, in such manner as to form a pound, or pounds. A fleet of salmon-nets, commonly speaking, is but three. But there is no determined number for a fleet of Stopper-nets for seals.
- FLIGHT-TIME.** The periodical migration of ducks.
- FROSTBURN.** A deep and serious penetration of frost on any animal substance. The effect of severe frost on animal substances being equal with that of fire, is the reason of that term.
- FURBOARDS.** Boards to spread furs upon.

GANGING

G L O S S A R Y. v

- GANGING HOOKS AND LEADS.** To fix line twine in a particular manner to fish-hooks, and small straps of line to leads, that they may be ready for immediate use.
- GIGGER OR JIGGER.** A pair of large hooks fixed back to back with some lead run upon the shanks, in the shape of a fish. The Gigger being let down to the bottom, is played by sharp jerks, and such fish are hooked by it, as are enticed by the resemblance of the lead to a real fish.
- GULLY.** A Barrel with only one head in it, and a couple of large holes bored under the chime hoops of the other end, to introduce a stang to carry it upon. They are used chiefly to carry salt in.
- HARP.** An old seal of that kind called by Pennant, "Blackback."
- HAUL A NET.** Such nets as are constantly moored in the water are hauled by going out to them in a boat, laying hold of one end, and hauling the boat along by the head-rope to the other end, taking the fish out into the boat; the meshes being made large enough for the fish to entangle themselves in them. A seine is hauled, by shooting it, by degrees, out of a boat into the water, and hauling it on shore again by the two ends.
- HOUND.** A water-fowl rather larger than a teal. These birds migrate to the north in large flocks in the spring, and as they fly, make a continual noise, than which nothing can more resemble the cry of a pack of beagles when in chase. When, and how they return to the south again I am unacquainted.
- HUMMOC.** A little hill.
- JAM ICE.** The low ice with which the whole face of the ocean is covered every winter, and until late in the summer.
- JAR.** The young of the smallest kind of seal; the old ones are called Double Jars.
- JERK.** To cure fish or meat in the open air without salt.
- KILLERS OF A DEATHFALL,** are three, viz. The Ground-killer; which lies upon the ground, across the front of the Deathfall. The Cat-killer; one end of which turns upon a nail which is driven into a strong stake, and the other is supported high up by a line which passes over a crutch on the top of a stake and then comes down to another at the bottom, under which one end of the tongue is fixed, while the other supports the bridge; which being pressed by the animal, disengages the point of the tongue, that sets the cat-killer at liberty and it falls down upon the ground-killer; consequently falls down upon the back of any animal, which may be standing across the latter. And the Main-killer; one end of which rests upon the ground and the other upon.

- upon the elevated end of the Cat-killer, and falls with it; serving to keep the latter down.
- KILLICK. A wooden anchor, made by nailing a pair of claws across each other, and fixing three rods to each claw; within which a large stone is placed to give it weight, and the ends of all the rods are tied together above the stone, to secure it in its place.
- KING-HAIRS. The long, glossy hairs in the skin of a beast, which cover the thick coat of fur.
- KYACK. The Esquimaux name for the canoe which is made use of by that nation.
- LADY. A water-fowl of the duck genus, and the hen of the lord.
- LANCE. A small fish. The Sand-eel.
- LANDWASH. That part of the shore which is within the reach of the water in heavy gales of wind.
- LAYING-ROOM. Boughs spread upon the ground to dry fish upon. They are seldom made use of, except on the first establishing a cod-fishery, before there has been time to erect flakes.
- LEDGE. Sunken rocks, and shoaly places in the sea, where the codfish resort.
- LOBSCOUSE. A sea dish. It is a composition of minced, salted beef, sea biscuit broken small, together with potatoes and onions, pepper, &c. resembling a thick soup.
- LONGERS. Poles, which, by being nailed top to but, are made use of for floors, instead of boards.
- LOLLY. Soft ice, or congealed snow floating in the water when it first begins to freeze.
- LOON. A large fowl of the diving genus.
- LORD. A water-fowl of the teal kind.
- MEW. A keeper's term, for deer casting their horns.
- MINK. A small amphibious animal of the otter species.
- NITCH OF RINDS. Ten in number, or as many large ones, as a man can conveniently carry under his arm. Each rind must be six feet long, and as wide as the circumference of the tree on which it grew.
- NORTHWESTER. A hood to cover the head and shoulders in severe weather. It is intended chiefly to defend the cheeks and neck.
- PACK OF CASKS. A cask which is taken to pieces, first marking the staves, bundled up together and secured by four hoops.
- PAN OF ICE. A piece of flat ice of no determined size, but not very large; the large ones are called sheets of ice.
- PELT. The skin of an animal with the fat adhering to it. That term is made use

G L O S S A R Y. vii

- use of, for the skins of seals, and such other animals, the fat of which lies between the skin and the flesh. A seal &c. is said to be **PELTED**, when the skin and fat are taken off together.
- PHRIPPERS.** The fin-like feet of seals, and other amphibious animals.
- PILE OF FISH.** A large quantity of dry fish, built up in the form of a round haystack. When they are sufficiently cured upon the flakes, they are made up into a pile, in order to preserve them from wet; to get a gentle heat, and to make room for others.
- PINOVERS.** Bits of flannel, which are tacked to one side of the Northwester, and pinned to the other; one covering the nose, and the other, the chin.
- PLANTER.** A man who keeps servants of his own, and carries on business for himself: but who, by not having a vessel, buys his necessary supplies from, and sells the produce of his concerns to a merchant in the country.
- POOLER.** A salmon which has lain a long time in a river, but has not yet spawned.
- POST.** A stout piece of timber, standing perpendicularly under a beam. A station from whence a fishery is carried on.
- PRYOR-POLE.** A long pole, which is fastened to that end of a shoal-net that is farthest from the land, by a piece of rat-line; which, not being long enough to reach to the surface of the water, causes the top of the pole to appear, when the water is covered with ice or lolly.
- PTARMIGAN.** A bird of the grouse kind; it generally weighs about a pound, but seldom more.
- PUNT.** A small boat.
- RAFTING OF ICE.** Ice is said to raft, when, by being stopped in its passage, one piece is forced under another, until the uppermost ones rise to a great height.
- RAND OF FAT.** A sealer's term for a large piece of fat, just as it happens to be cut off the animal.
- RAPID, IN A RIVER.** Where there is a sudden declivity of the bed of a river, the stream runs quicker; such places are called *Rapids*.
- RATTLE, IN A RIVER.** Where there is a succession of falls in a river (which are frequently to be met with in mountainous countries) the falling water makes a great noise; such a place is called a *Rattle*.
- RENDERING OIL.** A sealer's term for melting fat into oil.
- RINDING.** The action of taking the bark from trees. In this part of the world, one length only, of six feet, is taken off the lower part of the trunk of a tree. The chief use of rinds is, to cover the roofs of houses and piles of fish.
- RODE.** A small tow-line, of four inches and an half; made use of by thallops, by way of a cable.
- VOL. II.** b ROUND

- ROUND SEAL. A seal which has not yet been either skinned or pelted.
- RUBBINGPLACE. A place by the water-side, which otters have frequently made use of to rub themselves on after fishing.
- RUMMAGE. A furrier's term for searching a country; particularly for beaver-houses, when nothing else is mentioned.
- SADDLE OF A HILL. The low part between two elevations on a chain of hills.
- SADDLEBACK. The largest species of gull. "Blackback." Pennant.
- SCULPIN. A fish of the gurnet genus.
- SEWEL. A device to turn deer; particularly applied to the feathered line.
- SHELLBIRD. A water-fowl. I believe it is called *honer* in England.
- SHARES. Men are said to work on the *shares* when they have a proportion of what they kill or make, in lieu of wages; their employer furnishing craft.
- SHIN. An instrument of wood, to take rinds off the trees.
- SHOAL-NET. A net to catch seals in. It is generally forty fathoms long and two deep. The foot of it is brought to, on a shallop's old rode, and the head, on two fishing-lines; with corks between. It is set in any depth of water, not exceeding fifteen fathoms nor less than three, and moored by a couple of killicks, fastened by eight or ten fathoms of rope to the ends of the foot-rope, which by its weight keeps the foot of the net close to the bottom of the water, and the corks make it stand perpendicular. As the seals dive along near the bottom to fish, they strike into the net and are entangled; for the net is placed, with one end towards the shore, and the other right off. The Pryor-pole at the outer clew (corner) and the bobber at the inner one, shew where the net is. The sealers lay hold of either, and by their means bring the head of the net to the boat; they then haul their boat along to the other end, and take the seals out as they go.
- SHOALS OF SEALS, OR FISH. A number of seals or fish being in company, are called a *shoal*. I presume the term arose, from the breaking of the water among them, appearing like the rippling of shoaly ground.
- SHOOT IN A RIVER. A place where the stream, being confined by rocks which appear above water, is shot through the aperture with great force.
- SHORE. A stout post placed on the side of a beam in a reclined position, to prevent its giving way on that side.
- SHOREMEN. The people who are employed on shore, to head, split, and salt the codfish.
- SHORE UP A BOAT. When a boat is placed upon the blocks, and set upright, several shores are placed on each side; to prevent its falling either to one side or the other.

SILVER-FOX.

G L O S S A R Y. ix

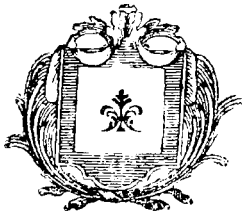
- SILVER-FOX. A black-fox, with white king-hairs disperfed on the back of it.
- SILVER-THAW. When it rains and freezes at the fame time.
- SLINK. A falmon which has spawned, and has not yet recovered itself by returning into the fea; till which time, it never will.
- SLIP. A snare for catching deer, bears, or other large animals. They are made of various materials, accordingly as a man is provided.
- SLOT. The foot-mark of deer.
- SPRING FISH. A falmon which is in perfect feafon.
- SPRUCE-GAME. A bird of the groufe genus.
- SPUDGEL. A small bucket fixed to the end of a pole, to throw the water out of a boat, which has no pump.
- SPURSHORES. Very long fhores, to fupport the wall-plate of the roof of a codftage.
- SQUID. The inkfifh.
- SWING A NET. A net is faid to be at *fwing*, when one end only of it is made faft.
- STEADY IN A RIVER. A part where the bed widens, inclining to a pond, and there is no perceptible fream.
- STINT. The dam made by beavers acrofs a fream, to raife the water to a height convenient for their purpofe.
- WRITH. The contents of the magazine formed by beavers, for their fupport in the winter.
- STOCK OF TIMBER. A piece of timber, intended to be fawed.
- STOPPER-NET. A large net for catching feals, which is made to fit the place in which it is fixed; the foot lies upon the ground, and the head floats on the furface of the water, by means of buoys. The farther end is made faft to an ifland (where there is one) or to the head-rope of a long net which is moored parallel to the fhore, and the near end is raifed or lowered at pleafure, by means of capftans. Several of thefe nets being placed at certain diftances from each other, form fo many pounds,
- STOUTER. Very ftrong fhores, which are placed round the head of a ftage or wharf, to prevent them from being damaged by fhips or boats.
- STRANGER. A water fowl of the duck kind.
- TAIL A TRAP. To fix it properly for catching an animal.
- THWART UP A BOAT. To move a boat out of the reach of the tide, by the affiftance of leavers or bodily ftrength, when fhe is laid broadfide to the fhore.
- TICKLE. A paffage between the continent and an ifland, or between two iflands, when it is of no great width.
- TINKER. A fea fowl. “ Razorbill.”—Pennant.
- TILT. A fmall hut.

TILT-

x

G L O S S A R Y.

- TILT-BACK.** A Back-tilt is a shed made of boughs, resembling the section of a roof ; the back part is placed towards the wind, and a fire is generally made in the front.
- TOM-COD.** Young codfish.
- TONGUE OF A DEATHFALL.** A peg, which is tied to the end of the line which supports the Cat-killer ; the but end of which is placed under a fork or notch in a flake, and the point is inserted in a hole in the end of the bridge.
- TONGUE OF A TRAP.** A small bar of iron, which is placed on one side of the bed of a trap, and turns upon a pin : it passes over one of the jaws, and the end of it is fixed under the heel of the bridge, which it supports until that is pressed upon ; when, being set at liberty, the jaws fly up.
- TURN OF TIMBER.** So much as a man can carry on his shoulders.
- WATER-HORSE.** Newly washed codfish, which are laid upon each other to drain before they are spread to dry.
- WHABBY.** A water-fowl of the diving genus.
- WHIGWHAM.** An Indian tent of a conical form.
- WHITECOAT.** A young seal, before it has cast its first coat, which is white and furry.
- WHITEFISH.** A fish of the Porpoise kind.
- WHITINGS.** Trees which have been barked, and left standing.
- WHITTLED-STICKS.** Sticks from which beavers have eaten the bark.
- WRAPPERS.** Loose sleeve-pieces to button round the wrists, to defend them from the frost.
- YOUNGSTER.** A novice ; a person in the first year, or early part of his servitude one who has his business to learn.



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