

Acc. 1010

Document relating to
Earthquake at St. Basil.

Department of Crown Lands,
Quebec, October 20. 1874

Sir

Reference having been made to this Department in relation to the recent extraordinary shocks and subterraneous detonations which have been perceived in the parish of Saint-Basile, near the confluence of the Rivers Portneuf and Des Sept-Isles, it has been thought expedient, on the suggestion of His Grace the Archbishop of Quebec, to send to that locality a person of adequate scientific standing and geologic attainments, to inquire into, and report upon, these phenomena, with a view to quieting the apprehensions of the inhabitants, should there be no reasonable cause of alarm, or of giving them due warning should it appear probable that these noises and commotions are likely to be the precursors of some more serious catastrophe, such as the rending or disturbance of the earth's surface, the subsidence of any large area, or any of those destructive earthquake shocks and perturbations which are wont to attend the more serious manifestations of volcanic or eruptive energy.

Bernard James Harrington, Esquire
Geological Survey
Montreal

} Your

Your name having been submitted and approved for this service, the following remarks have been prepared for your information and guidance, together with a trace of the official plan showing the outlines of the Parish of St. Basil.

Mr. Lachaine, an Officer of this Department, conducting the Cadastre, at the Village of Portneuf, will be able to afford you considerable information as to the topography of the surrounding country.

On arriving at St. Basile you will forthwith place yourself in communication with the resident Curé, the Rev. M. B. Laurent Chabot, and having obtained from him such particulars relative to these perturbations as he may be able to afford, you will proceed, yourself, to the scene of operations, accompanied by the Rev. Curé should he desire it, and there make such investigations and researches as may be deemed necessary to throw light on the probable causes and result of these disturbances.

Having concluded your examination you will prepare a full Report for this Department accompanied, if necessary, by a plan or sketch, giving a detailed account
of

of your proceedings and a description
of the geology of this District, together
with such extended remarks as to
the probable nature and origin of
these phenomena as your own judgment
and information may suggest.

The expenses attending this
service will be paid by this Depart-
ment.

I have the honor to be,

Sir

Your obedient servant



Assistant Commissioner

If the information given me, however,
can be relied upon, it would appear as
if the impulse had been a vertical one,
that is in relation to the locality on the
Riviere Chaudé where the shocks were
the most severe, this locality being ^{so to speak} then
a centre of divergence for the waves. This
conclusion is arrived at simply from the
fact that here the motion appears to
have been sufficient to exert a considerable
overturning power had the angle of emergence
of the waves been slight.

Santhya