John Garton, a native of Bridlington, Yorkshire, was born about 1784 and entered the Hudson’s Bay Company service in 1807. He was first employed as mate of the schooner at Eastmain until 1812 when he became schooner master at that place (HBC Archives B.59/d/26,29,27,39).

In 1814-15, he is mentioned as master of the Mainwaring schooner his winter residence being at Whale River where he remained in the capacity of sloop master until 1820. (HBC Archives A.30/14-16). He was then appointed master of the Albany River sloop, where he remained until 1823 (HBC Archives B.135/g/1, fo. 2d; B.135/k/1, fo.2d). He then became sloop master at Moose Factory, in which capacity he continued to serve until 1828, with the exception of the year 1826-27 when he was again appointed to Albany (HBC Archives B.135/g/3-9).

In 1828 he was detailed to proceed from Moose Factory as master of the Union sloop bound on the expedition to Ungava Bay under the direction of Chief Trader John Lee Lewis. The expedition, however, did not take place, since the vessel proved unseaworthy. (HBC Archives, B.135/k/1, fo.47d). B.135/g/10, fo.5) It appears that in 1828, he was seized with a paralytic stroke, which rendered him quite helpless, and in consequence, he was superannuated from the service (HBC Archives B.135/g/11-13; B.135/a/136, fo.54d).

He continued, however, to reside at Moose Factory, where he died on 13th August, 1831, at the age of forty-seven years. (HBC Archives, B.135/1/135, fo.54d; B.135/g/13, fo.7).