

GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY

A PACKET OF PROTESTS

The roar of Atlantic gales, the fury of hurricanes, the maelstrom of mountainous waves and the ominous sound of splintering masts and yards is the "leit-motiv" of these maritime protests of the 19th century.

KEN ANNETT

A PACKET OF PROTESTSFOREWORD

The following synopses of notarial protests made before Notary Public Joseph Geillaume LeBel of New Carlisle, are a reminder of the vital role of shipping in 19th century Gaspesia. These Deeds of Protest provide dramatic evidence of the perils of the seafarer in the age of sail and of the remarkable qualities of the mariners that persevered to bring their battered ships into safe harbour in Gaspesia.

Though often laconic as to incredible trials faced in gales and hurricanes at sea, these formal protests stir the imagination of the modern reader and highlight the remarkable qualities of the Masters, Mates and Sailors whose unrelenting efforts saved their ships and cargo in many cases.

Given the rich heritage of shipping and shipbuilding in Gaspesia from the earliest time, it is regrettable that no initiative has been taken to establish a Maritime Museum. In the Maritime Provinces of Canada and in the seaboard states of New England such museums not only testify to their seafaring past but draw thousands of visitors. At a time when Gaspesians are beginning to reflect on their cultural identity and heritage, the establishment of a Maritime Museum could not only draw visitors to the District but provide an invaluable focus for educational visits by school and college students.

A PACKET OF PROTESTS

DATE- November 6,1862.

SHIP- The Schooner "MINGAN" of 93 tons.

CAPTAIN- Joshua Blanpied.

CARGO- Dry codfish in tubs for the market of Brazil.

PROTEST- Because of storm and heavy sea in the "Road of Mingan" on the coast of the North Shore lost two anchors and cables.

DATE- May 28,1863.

SHIP- The "MARK WELL" of the Island of Jersey.

CAPTAIN- Thomas Le Dain

CARGO- Salt and general cargo of dry goods from Jersey for Paspebiac.

PROTEST- Voyage uneventful from April 10 to May 2. On May 3, "fell in with a field of ice in foggy weather". Vessel holed by ice and taking water. Some cargo thrown overboard to lighten ship. In ice until May 8 on Grand Banks of Newfoundland.

DATE- October 25,1864.

SHIP- The Schooner "CATHERINE" of 25 tons.

CAPTAIN- Joseph Déchéne.

OTHER CREW- Alexandre Trambley-First Mate
Joseph Trambley -Sailor

CARGO- From Quebec with flour,biscuits and sundry dry goods for Paspebiac and Bathurst.

PROTEST- Off Mont Louis on October 12 ran into a heavy gale from East with seas running "Mountain high". Took refuge at Pentecôte River on North Shore until October 18. One quarter of cargo damaged by salt water and condemned by survey.

WITNESSES - Edward Valpy and Alfred Carcaud.

3.

DATE- October 22,1866
 SHIP- The "TRINIDAD" of Greenock -523 tons.
 CAPTAIN- Thomas Anderson
 OTHER CREW- Walter Sinclair, First Mate
 William Frost, Sailor
 John Grant, Sailor
 CARGO- From Havanna,Cuba with load of sugar for
 Greenock in Scotland.
 PROTEST- After battling two September gales the ship
 was battered by an Atlantic hurricane and
 crew had to abandon her. They were rescued
 by Captain Pirouet of the ship "HOMELY" of
 Jersey and brought into Paspebiac on Oct.22.

DATE- May 17,1867
 SHIP- The "MARGARET" -505 tons
 CAPTAIN- William Wright
 CARGO- From Glasgow Dock with salt and general cargo
 for Paspebiac and Dalhousie.
 PROTEST- "...overtaken by several violent storms and
 gales of wind in which she shipped very great
 seas.." Fear of damage to cargo.

DATE- September 16,1868
 SHIP- The "TEASER"
 CAPTAIN- George Larbalestier
 MATE- John Picot
 VOYAGE- From the Island of Barbadoes (sic) to Paspebiac
 in ballast
 PROTEST- Hit by hurricane. Vivid account of storm,when
 "we could not see sky or sea -nothing also but
 a white foam blowing over the ship". Heavy
 damage to vessel.

DATE- May 23,1869
 SHIP- The "QUIZ"
 CAPTAIN- Edward LeBrun
 MATE- John Philip Trachy
 CARGO- Salt and other sundry articles from Island
 of Jersey to Paspebiac.
 PROTEST- Four days out of Jersey ran into strong gales
 and heavy seas. Vessel started to leak after
 battering from storm. Had to throw overboard
 25 tons of salt. Made landfall at Bonaventure
 Island. Reached Paspebiac 40 days out of Jersey.

DATE- September 24,1869
 SHIP- The Brig "HOMELY"
 CAPTAIN- Nicholas LeDain
 MATE - John Knight MASTER CARPENTER-Elias LeTemplier
 CARGO - Salt and dry goods from Birkenhead,England to
 Paspebiac.
 PROTEST- On September 5, on Grand Banks of Newfoundland.
 "...suddenly a frightful whirlwind (sic) struck
 the top of the masts,without being felt on deck,
 the fore topmast gave way, the main topmast and
 main mast also gave way..." Ship finally made
 Paspebiac under jury rig.

DATE- November 9,1869
 SHIP- The schooner "MARCELINE" of New Carlisle. 46 tons.
 CAPTAIN- George Poirier
 MATE - André Loubert
 CARGO - From Quebec to District of Gaspé and Dalhousie
 with general cargo of flour,crockery ware,stoves
 and other goods.
 PROTEST- On second day of voyage overtaken by "...a very
 heavy and thick,savage storm..." Unable to fix
 position. Schooner went ashore on rocky coast

PROTEST - near Cape Chatte. Threw part of cargo
(ctd) overboard to get schooner afloat and to
proceed to New Carlisle.

DATE- November 12,1870

SHIP- The "INDUSTRY" of Jersey. 155 tons.

CAPTAIN- Philip Giffard

MATES- Charles Queree (1st) and John Benest (2nd)

CARGO- Salt and sundry goods from Liverpool to
Paspebiac.

PROTEST- A detailed and incredible story of the
successive Atlantic storms that beset
"INDUSTRY" during a month's voyage from
September 26 until arrival at Bonaventure
Island on October 25. Before proceeding to
Paspebiac the Captain made a preliminary
Protest at Percé before William Flynn, J.P.

DATE- May 19,1864

SHIP- The "C.C." 203 tons

CAPTAIN- George LeBrocq

SURVEY BY- John Ahier, Ship Master
William Rowe, Ship Master
Charles Renouf, Shipwright

Do report that the said vessel was in a
very dangerous state, having eight stanch-
ions on the Port side carried away; main and
gallant bulwarks on the Port side and also
main bulwark on Starboard side carried away-
the Starboard quarter stove in-Bows started-
the long boat smashed up and rendered quite
useless; after booby hatch and Galley damaged;
studding sail booms and yards carried away;
Carpenter's bench and two chain plates broken,
also boat davits broken; all fenders carried
away; deck tubs broken and sheets of copper
carried away.