

GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY

A TALE OF THE SCHOONER "LAZY"

The Protest of Louis Bernier, Master
Mariner and Master of the Schooner or
Vessel called the "LAZY" of Gaspé.

KEN ANNETT

A TALE OF THE SCHOONER "LAZY"

FOREWORD

(FROM PSALM 107)

"...They that go down to the sea in ships,/and occupy their
business on the great waters;

These men see the works of the Lord,/and his wonders in the deep.

For at his word the stormy wind ariseth,/which lifteth up the
waves thereof.

They are carried up to the heaven, and down again to the deep:/
their soul melteth away because of the trouble.

They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man,/and are at
their wits' end.

So they cry unto the Lord in their trouble,/and he delivereth
them from their distress.

For he maketh the storm to cease,/so that the waves thereof are
still.

Then are they glad,because they are at rest;/and so he bringeth
them unto the haven where they would be.

O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness,/
and declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men ! "

The following tale of the voyage of the Gaspé schooner, LAZY, Captain Louis Bernier, Sr., Master, can be duplicated by the experience of many another Gaspesian Captain and crew in the day of the wooden ship and iron men. The Gulf of St.Lawrence in November was no place for the faint-hearted. The LAZY survived thanks to the integrity of the Gaspé shipwrights that had fashioned her and the courage, skill and tenacity of the crew that manned her. However, such Gaspé mariners were keenly aware of the limits of self-confidence and in the words of the Psalmist:

" Then are they glad, because they are at rest;/
and so he bringeth them unto the haven where
they would be."

THE RECORDS OF ERROL BOYD LINDSAY, N.P.

PROTEST

24th DECEMBER, 1841

By this Public Instrument of Declaration and Protest, Be it Known and made manifest unto all to whom these presents shall come, or whom the same may in anywise concern, that on the twenty-fourth day of December in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty-one, Before us the undersigned Notaries Public duly admitted and sworn for that part of the Province of Canada heretofore constituting the Province of Lower Canada and residing in the City of Quebec in the said Province, personally came, appeared and were present Louis Bernier, Master Mariner and Master of the Schooner or Vessel called the LAZY of Gaspé, of the burthen of forty-five Tons or thereabouts, now lying in this Port of Quebec, Louis Bernier Junior, Mate and Louis Richard, seaman of and on board of the said vessel, Who, in pursuance of a Protest- entered and noted by the said Louis Bernier in the Office of Errol Boyd Lindsay, one of us the said Notaries, on the morning of the twenty second day of November last, and in extension of the same, the said Louis Bernier, Louis Bernier Junior and Louis Richard, being previously severally and duly sworn on the Holy Evangelists before us the said Notaries, of their own free will and voluntary accord, in the presence of us the said Notaries, did, and by these presents do, jointly and severally allege, affirm, declare, protest and say-

That the said Schooner LAZY being tight, staunch and strong, well and sufficiently manned, provided, equipped and furnished with all things needful and necessary for a voyage to sea, loaded with fish and oil, and her hatches well and sufficiently caulked and covered, They, the said appearers set sail on board of the said vessel from Gaspé Basin on the fifth day of the said month of November last on a voyage to this Port of Quebec, where she arrived at her moorings on the said twenty-second day of the said month of November.

That they left Gaspé at two o'clock P.M. with a moderate breeze of wind from the westward, that at six o'clock A.M. the wind came round from the east and at eight it blew a tremendous gale with thick snow,

that they took in the top gallant sail and topsail, that at ten o'clock the gale increased so as to force them to put back for Gaspé Basin, with the snow falling very thick, that the gale continued during the day following, that the seventh of said month commenced with snowy weather and north winds, that at noon the weather was moderate, that at two o'clock P.M. they set sail to meet the fair wind but were afterwards forced by foul winds and a heavy sea to gain Malbay where they anchored at eight o'clock P.M., the weather having a threatening appearance and a heavy snow falling -

That during the forepart of the following day the weather was clear and the wind blowing a gale from the northeast, at six P.M. the wind abated. That on the ninth they set sail at four A.M. with fine weather and the wind east north east, that they stood off and at eight o'clock A.M. were met by strong contrary gales which forced them to put back to Malbay, that they remained at Malbay the two following days during which the gale continued with unabated violence and caused their said vessel to labour and pitch very violently, that on the twelfth day of the said month the gale continued with rain and snow until four o'clock P.M. when the wind abated considerably, that at eight o'clock P.M. the wind still abated, coming more from the east, the waves at the same time beating in from the sea caused a heavy swell, that at ten P.M. the wind and sea increased considerably, that the said appearers then thought proper to set sail but in doing which they found the chain and anchor foul among the rocks, their vessel pitching most violently, that they heaved in as much of the chain as they could and prepared to cut, when their vessel suddenly pitched with such force as to cause the chain to break and the anchor, with about forty fathoms of chain, were lost-

That on the thirteenth, having got clear of the dangers of the preceeding day, they proceeded on, the wind blowing from the south west, that at noon they passed Grand Etang, at four P.M. they were off Grand Valley with the wind blowing from the north, that at six the wind having veered to west they run towards the north north west, the wind blowing a violent gale with heavy rain.

That on the fourteenth the gale continued with increased fury, accompanied by rain and fog, they close-reefed all their sails, that at six P.M. they made the land thirty miles below the Seven

Islands, that they put about and steered to south west, that the following day the wind being still from the west, they, at four A.M. altered their course to north north west and at six A.M. again saw the Seven Islands, at noon light winds from the south west got to the Seven Islands, at six P.M. light breeze from south east, at eight strong breezes, that at ten P.M. they took in their sails and two reefs of the main sail, and at almost the same time took in the main sail, the wind being too strong to carry it, a tremendous gale blowing with thick snow -

That the next day commenced with awful weather and violent gales from the south east and snow and a tremendous sea, that at two A.M. they saw Point Des Monts Light House, that at three the wind being too strong they clued up the top gallant sail and top sail, that three men were ordered up to make them fast- but before they were half way up the sails were blown to pieces by the violence of the wind, that they lowered the fore-sail and close reefed the same, the wind being too violent to carry sail, that they continued so until four A.M. the night being dark with heavy snow -

That at eight o'clock A.M. they set the fore-sail with two reefs, at noon unreefed the foresail and at two set the main sail with two reefs - that at three the weather moderated, they let go the reefs of the main sail, Barnaby Island being in sight and the weather nearly calm -

That they afterwards proceeded on their said voyage and arrived at Quebec without any further extraordinary occurrence-

And the said appearers do further jointly and severally allege, affirm, declare, protest and say on their oaths aforesaid that all and singular the losses, injuries and damages which have happened to the said vessel were in no way owing to or occasioned by any unseamanship, mismanagement or neglect of any of them the said appearers or of any other of the said vessel's crew, but solely and entirely to the perils before mentioned and that during the said time they and the remainder of the said vessel's crew used their utmost endeavours and exertions to preserve the said vessel from damage -

Now therefore that these presents may enjoy full force and effect we, the said Notaries, at the request of the said Louis Bernier did protest as by these presents we do most solemnly protest against all

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and every person and persons whom the same doth, shall or may in any wise concern and do declare that all damages, losses, and detriments which have happened to the said vessel are and ought to be borne by the underwriters on the same or whomsoever else it shall or may concern, the same having occurred as before mentioned and not by or through insufficiency of the said vessel or neglect of the said Louis Bernier, his Officers or any of his mariners.

Thus done, protested and sworn to in the said City of Quebec in the said Province of Canada / where no stamps are used / at the office of Errol Boyd Lindsay, one of us the said Notaries, on the day and year first above written-

IN FAITH AND TESTIMONY WHEREOF the said appearers have to these presents, first duly read according to Law, severally set their hands in the presence of us, the said Notaries, also hereunto subscribing.

(SIGNATURES) Louis Bernier (Sr.)
Louis Bernier (Jr.)
Louis Richard
E.B.Lindsay, N.P.
L. Prevost, N.P.