

## REPORT AND EVIDENCE ON THE CHANNELS OF THE ST. LAWRENCE, &amp;c.

Thursday 11th December 1828.

PRESENT :—Messrs. *Laterrière, Fortin et Christie.*Mr. *Laterrière* in the Chair.

*François Cloutier*, of the Parish of *Sainte Anne*, Inn-keeper, examined and answers; I know the Channel between the *Côte de Beaupré*, and the *Island of Orleans*; I believe some benefit would result from its being better known to the Pilots, particularly with respect to the Ice in the Autumn; I know of no other reason why it should not be generally frequented, than that it is comparatively narrow in some places, and that there are shoals which cross each other; A little below the upper end of the *Island of Orleans*, there is a sand Bank which runs about half a league from *Beaupré*, leaving only a Channel of about fifteen acres wide; There is another Shoal which runs from the *Island of Orleans*, and stretches about half a league immediately below the River *Montmorenci*; These two Shoals cross each other about twelve or fifteen Acres; at the end of this Shoal which is generally called the *Batture du Pavillon*, the Channel is only about five Acres wide, for the space of about ten or twelve Acres; Thence the Channel is pretty regular as far as the *Islets du Chateau Riché*; These Islets divide the Channel into two; that on the North is almost impassable, that on the South is good and is about twelve Acres wide; the least depth of water when the tide is out is about five fathoms.

The *Sainte Famille* Shoal stretches about a quarter of a league from the shore, whence the Channel is good as far down as the Church of *Sainte Anne*, where there is a shoal which runs about thirty-six arpents, leaving also a good channel on the north; thence as far as the river *Ste. Anne*, there is only about five fathoms of water, and afterwards below the lower end of the Island, the currents form a sand Bank which stretches about a league and a quarter, leaving in the North Channel about six or eight fathoms of water; This Channel can only be occasionally used, for in some parts it is so narrow that it would be impossible to tack a ship in it:—Last Spring I took up a Ship drawing fifteen feet water by this Channel, and having a leading wind, I experienced no difficulty; the Anchorage is every where good.

*Henry Bayfield*, Esquire, Commander in His Majesty's Navy, employed surveying the *Saint Lawrence*, appeared and answered as follows.

Q. What is your name and what rank do you hold in his Majesty's Service?

A. My name is *Henry W. Bayfield*, and I hold the Rank of Commander in His Majesty's Navy.

Q. Are you not commissioned by the Navy Board of England, to sound and explore all the navigable part of the River *Saint Lawrence*, and to make an Hydrographical Chart thereof?

A. I am employed by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to survey the River *Saint Lawrence*, from *Montreal* to the *Island of Anticosti*; and to construct such Charts and Plans of the said River, as I may judge necessary for the purposes of shewing the various dangers of the navigation, &c.

Q. Have you not in the course of last Summer sounded and made a Chart of that part of the said River, and of the different Channels between the Islands and Shoals (*Battures*) lying between the port of *Quebec* and *Goose Island*?

A. I have during last Summer surveyed and sounded that part of the River which is included between the City of *Quebec* and *L'Isle aux Coudres*—I have examined all the Shoals and Channels in that part, with the aid of my assistant officers, and I have also visited many other parts of the River.

Q. Will you inform the Committee, whether your observations tend to confirm the opinion that the Channel on the North side of the River, from the lower end of the *Island of Orleans*, to the *Ile aux Coudres*, would be preferable to that now used, and that it would tend to the improvement of the navigation of the River, if all Pilots were by Law bound to know and become acquainted with the said North Channel?

A. The North and South Channels of the *Saint Lawrence*, in the part above mentioned, and alluded to in this question, have each their advantages and disadvantages. The principal advantage which the South Channel possesses is that the Tides are not strong as in the North Channel, excepting in and near the Traverse, so that a vessel can anchor immediately wherever she may happen to be (excepting in the Traverse) in the event of a calm or change of tide rendering that measure necessary. But there is not so great a difference between the two Channels in this respect, as has been generally supposed; for vessels may also anchor in most parts of the North Channel, and the Tides are in a few parts of it stronger than in some parts of the South Channel near the Traverse, where vessels frequently anchor to wait for a change of Tide; The South Channel possesses a valuable anchorage at *Crane Island*; Its disadvantages are the dangerous pass of the Traverse, and the Shoalness of the Water, to the Southward of *Beaujeu's Bank* off *Crane Island*; Here a large Ship could not pass at certain times of the tide—I am aware that there is a deeper Channel between this Shoal and *Crane Island*, but it is too narrow for a vessel to beat through. The *Avignon Rock* to the Southward of the *Stone Pillar*, is very dangerous to a vessel beating in a dark night. The advantages of the North Channel are as follows:—Its entrance between *L'Isle aux Coudres*, and the main land is not nearly so dangerous as the Traverse, and there is good Roadstead at *Laprairie*, on the North side of *L'Isle aux Coudres*, at its commencement, where a vessel may safely ride in all winds. There is also good shelter from the North-east gales to the Westward of the Island; This Channel is perfectly straight, requiring no change of course and entirely free from detached Shoals all the way from *L'Isle aux Coudres*, to the old Traverse off *Cap. Tourmente*; This old Traverse passes between

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