

depend for their supplies upon timber which is towed from the lakes down the Niagara river.

I am well acquainted with Captain Orson Shepard, and believe him to be not only a sailor in the broadest sense of that term, but a man of prudence and unimpeachable integrity; I have the utmost confidence in his skill and judgment as a mariner, as also in the truth and fairness of his statement. S. S. PACKARD.

Sworn before me this 6th }
day of April, 1857, }

S. WAKEMAN, *Ch. of the Com. on Com. and Navigation.*

Uriel Driggs being duly sworn, deposes and says: I am a resident of the village of Tonawanda, county of Erie, State of New-York, where I have resided for more than thirty years past; am well acquainted with the Niagara river from Tonawanda to Lake Erie; have known large fleets of vessels to arrive at Tonawanda from upper lake ports; have seen twenty-five to thirty vessels discharging and loading at Tonawanda at one time; I believe that there is no more commodious harbor in connection with the lakes than the harbor of Tonawanda, and that the business at this port is steadily on the increase; I believe that a bridge constructed across the river at any point between Tonawanda and Lake Erie would have the effect to cut off the commerce of the port of Tonawanda, and prove a vast detriment to her citizens; I have been acquainted with Captain Orson Shepard since 1849; know him to be a man of truth and veracity, and I have the utmost confidence in any statement he may make with reference to lake or river commerce.

U. DRIGGS.

Sworn before me this 7th }
day of April, 1857, }

S. WAKEMAN, *Chairman of Committee.*

Orson Shepard, being duly sworn, deposes and says: I am a resident of Wheatfield, Niagara county, New-York; I have been a sailor by profession and occupation for thirty years, and have followed my calling upon the western lakes and rivers during that period; I have sailed as master for twenty-two years without encountering any serious misfortune to either life or property; am well acquainted with all the harbors on the western lakes and tributary streams where lake vessels usually trade; and am free to say there is no harbor upon said lakes and streams affording better security for the safety of vessels and mariners under any and all circumstances than that of the Niagara river. In the principal channel the shallowest water from Lake Erie to Tonawanda, Chippewa or Schlosser, within three miles of the brink of