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Schooner Days DCLXIX (669)
By C. H. J. Snider

AGAIN OLD PORT DARLINGTON

“WHAT SHIP? WHAT PORT?” of last week turned on the tap full for more information about old Port Darlington.

Only one schooner fan guessed wrong, but in appreciation of his interest and promptness – his was the first letter opened Monday morning – he should be quoted:

“St. Catharines, Nov. 27th. Schooner, *Clara Youell*.

Port, Frenchman’s Bay.

Respectfully,

W. D. GRAHAM, M.M.

P.S. – You have started something that will require Capt. Johnny Williams’ attention to solve, although he is my junior.”

Capt. Williams, aged 87, assures his senior master mariner that this wasn’t the *Youell*, and he ought to know, for he was mate in her sixty-five years ago. And the port wasn’t Frenchman’s Bay, nor Whitby, although it looks a little like both. We join Capt. Williams in hoping Capt. Graham will write again.

“No doubt you will have many replies from residents of Bowmansville, who will recognize this picture in ‘Schooner Days’ of Saturday, Nov. 25, 1944, as old Port Darlington, with the familiar schooner the *Oliver Mowat* of Bowmansville,” wrote Forrest A. Dilling, who also hails from Bowmansville.

“These articles of ‘Schooner Days’ have recalled a lot of forgotten events and pastimes and many of the younger crowd have been taught the history of Port Darlington in a most pleasant manner. They have held a great deal of interest to the old timer as well as the newcomer. One of the pastimes we as school boys had was a standing competition to see who could get, in his little black book, the largest list of schooners and boats entering the harbor during the summer vacation, and the autograph of each captain had to accompany the boat named or that craft was not counted. As I recall the *Oliver Mowat* of Bowmanville appeared with Captain Peacock’s autograph many times on our books.

“I send two pictures, one of Port Darlington at dredging time which also includes a picture of the *Oliver Mowat*. The second is a picture of the harbor taken from the lighthouse in, with the I in the background.”

J. Guernsey McClellan, 14 Oriole Crescent, secretary-treasurer of the Port Darlington Harbor Co., was immediately in the field with the correct identification of the harbor elevators as old Port Darlington’s, and the schooner as the *Oliver Mowat*. He contributed a list, recently found among the papers of his father, who was harbormaster for many years, showing the schooners which had called at the port.

From such names as the *Great Western*, *Royal Oak*, *Wanderer*, *John A. Macdonald*, *Lewis Ross* and *Erie Queen* it must go back behind the 1870's, for the vessels mentioned had been wrecked or changed their names in the 1880's. The *Great Western* became the *F.H. Burton*, the *Royal Oak* the *Fabiola*, and the *John A. Macdonald*, so christened before Sir John was knighted, had been launched as the *J.H. Torrance* of Wellington Square. The *Lady Macdonald* was, of course, named after the knighting.

One little vessel not mentioned is the *Maple Leaf*, built in 1880. She was a frequent caller at Port Darlington, bringing in 300 tons of coal in one season and carrying screenings from the coal yard there for the King Edward Hotel here when the city by-law of the dear dead smoke prevention days required a certain proportion of hard coal in all furnace fires, around 1910.

Here is the list, with a few amendments as to spelling:

“Old Sailing Boats On LakeOntario”

<i>Albacore</i>	<i>JohnA.Macdonald</i>
<i>Ariel</i>	<i>LadyMacdonald</i>
<i>H.M.Ballou</i>	<i>JaneAnnMarsh</i>
<i>L.D.Bullock</i>	<i>SarahAnnMarsh</i>
<i>Cavalier</i>	<i>CarolineMarsh</i>
<i>FloraCarveth</i>	<i>MariaAnnette</i>
<i>KatieEccles</i>	<i>OliverMowat</i>
<i>Echo</i>	<i>Newsboy</i>
<i>ErieBelle</i>	<i>OceanWave</i>
<i>ErieQueen</i>	<i>RoyalOak</i>
<i>ElizaFisher</i>	<i>SnowBird</i>
<i>FloraEmma</i>	<i>O.R.Storrs</i>
<i>GreatWestern</i>	<i>TradeWind</i>
<i>Garibaldi</i>	<i>Vienna</i>
<i>AgnesHope</i>	<i>Wanderer</i>
<i>Wm.Jamieson</i>	<i>WaveCrest</i>
<i>MaryAnnLydon</i>	<i>WhiteOak</i>

Wonder how many autographs in Mr. Dilling's "little black book" were connected with the list above?

W.W.D. McGlennon, Colborne, wrote:

“Those of us here who follow your weekly articles in The Telegram have been much interested in the picture of the schooner which appeared in last Saturday's issue. To me it looks very much like the *Oliver Mowat*. I would not be too sure of the port, probably Bowmanville or some other north shore port down this way where the *Mowat* regularly traded.

“Capt. Harry Redfearn who sailed in the *Mowat* with Capt. Peacock years ago is of the same opinion and Capt. Charles Redfearn says it looks like the *Oliver Mowat* and he thought perhaps the picture was taken at Whitby. The donkey engine rather puzzles us, however. As I remember the *Oliver Mowat* years ago she carried a raffee, but it seems to me this was later done

away with.

“Anyway it is a very fine picture reminding us of bygone days when sailing vessels were a common sight on the lakes, presenting a beautiful sight to the true sailor when traveling up and down the lake under full sail, days which I suppose shall never return.”

The *Oliver Mowat* was sunk by a steamer off the False Ducks, September 1st, 1921, and her afterguard, Capt. T. L. Vandusen, Mate Jacob Corley and Mrs. McGregory, stewardess, of Port Hope, were all drowned. She had no raffee in 1916 when seen in the Bay of Quinte. Capt. Vandusen may have taken it out of her when he got her, around 1913, which is approximately the date of the picture.

A. Easson, manager of the Oakwood Theatre, who started all this fun with his picture, wrote: “You were right in your guess, it was the *Oliver Mowat*, and the port was Bowmanville. I had a chap call me up Saturday noon and tell me it was Bowmanville, but he started a real argument that it was not the *Oliver Mowat*, he claimed that the *Mowat* did not have a donkey engine. Mr. McClellan, who was in your column a few weeks ago, called me Saturday night and said it was the *Mowat*, he knew, because it was his father’s boat, and he had helped install the donkey engine, although for many years she did not have one.”

As soon as space can be found for it we shall put in another puzzle port within fifty miles of Toronto, supplied by Mr. Easson, and invite guesses. It will be harder than Bowmanville. We have two or three stories connected with it.

(Caption) Two glimpses of the elevators, storehouses, coalsheds, lighthouse pier, OLIVER MOWAT, tug and dredge DRAGON ROUGE, contributed by Forrest A. Dilling of Bowmanville.

(Caption) LOOKING LIGHTHOUSEWARDS IN BOWMANVILLE HARBOR about 1918, with Mr. Easson's motor "Zeus No. 2" lying on the west side.