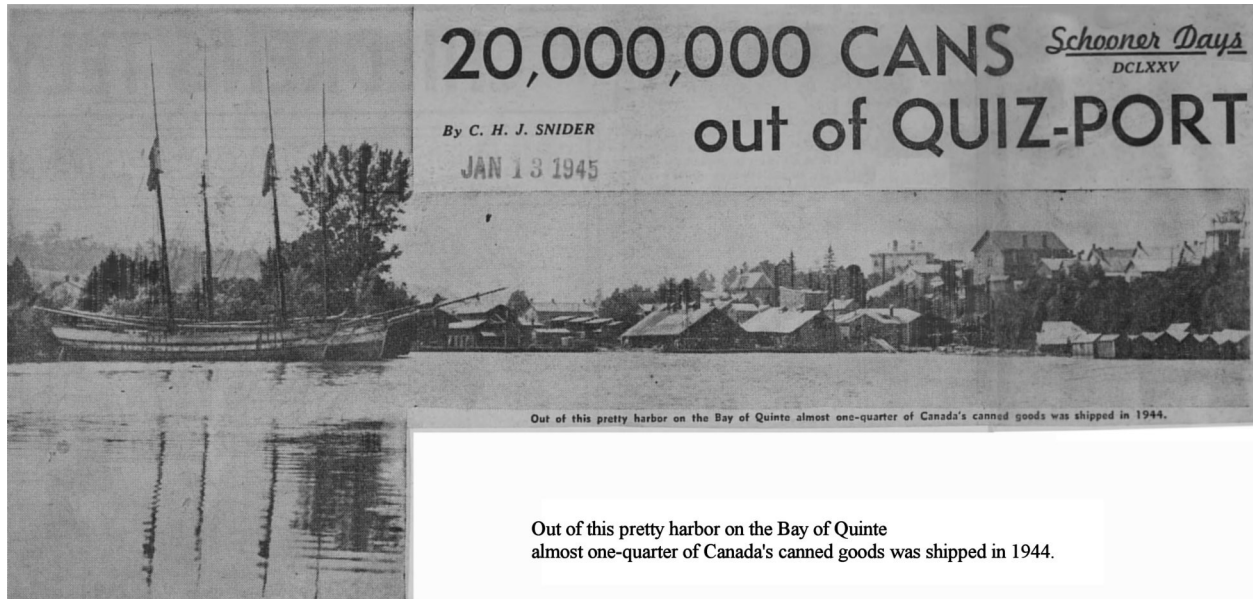


Toronto Telegram, January 15, 1945
Schooner Days DCLXXV (675)
By C.H.J. Snider



THAT quiz-port picture of last Saturday brought answers from points five hundred miles apart, showing how our sailors spread.

Nobody “guessed” the port. Everybody knew it. It was Picton, not “on Lake Ontario” because it is on the Bay of Quinte, but a great barley shipper in schooner days and a great shipper of canned goods in 1944. Did you know that Canada Steamships took out of Picton almost twenty million cans last year? – 805,000 cases of canned goods, 300,000 cases over 1943’s output. Prince Edward County’s total pack required over 33,000,000 tin cans and supplied almost 25 per cent, of all Canada’s canned pumpkin and canned tomato products and one tenth of Canada’s peas and corn. The farmers took in \$1,100,000. One reader points out that he has found Picton canned goods in Europe.

No wonder Mr. A. E. Pearce of Canadian Packers Ltd. was proud to submit a picture of the old port for a guessing contest. We are proud to repeat it.

“Believe me, I was definitely interested in the picture submitted by Mr. A. E. Pearce and published in your issue of January 6th,” wrote Edgar P. Jewell from Woodbridge. “The harbor is in my boyhood home town of Picton, from which port I sailed for many years, both in schooners and steamers.

“It is my belief that this picture was taken previously to 1894, since there are no signs of ship building behind the mill on the right of the picture – and in the year 1894 the Steambarge “*Aberdeen*” was built in the yard behind the mill, by builder John Tait, for A. W. Hepburn – also in 1897 the tow barge *Rob Roy* was built on this spot.

“As to the names of the two schooners – the inside one might be the *S. & J. Collier*, but I believe it is more likely that it was the “*Dan Freeman*,” as the foremast sets back a long way from the bowsprit and she has an exceptionally long jibboom. Also there is no rake, or very little

to the spars. These are all characteristics of the *Dan Freeman* – very familiar to me since I sailed on her as mate in 1909, '10 and '11.

“The schooner “*Two Brothers*” had two wale strakes or strips, as shown, but also carried name boards on the quarters, which do not appear in the picture. However Capt. Nathan McCrimmon, a Prince Edward County man, did sail the “*Two Brothers*” of Port Hope at about the time I place this picture. On the other hand, to me this schooner looks like the “*Nellie Hunter*,” which was sailed at that time by Capt. Wyatt Welbanks of Cherry Valley.

“It is many years since I have done any sailing, but as you know, one never loses interest in ships, harbors, particularly when all my younger days were spent on board. Then – when your home town appears in your ‘Schooner Days’ the temptation was too great to be resisted and I had to give my ‘two cents’ worth. I do read your column each week with true interest and relive for a little while the ‘good old days.’ All success to you and ‘Schooner Days.’

“P.S. – I also had the honor and pleasure of sailing with the founder of the Mariner’s Services, Captain Nelson Palmateer of Cherry Valley.”

The *D. Freeman*, so registered, was built in Port Burwell in 1869 in the shipyard operated by Big Dan Freeman, a six-foot lawyer who made a swift fortune in the lumber business and went to California where he founded a university. The schooner was 108 feet long, 21.6 ft. beam, 8.4 ft. depth of hold, and 193 tons register. She was extant in 1917, a black hulk in Kingston harbor with a “whirly” hoist for unloading coal.

No two readers were in entire agreement on the pair of schooners in the picture. The *Two Brothers* seems to have been one of them, but the slightly larger one, of which only half could be seen, because she was lying inside, was guessed to be the *S. & J. Collier*, *Fabiola*, and *Dan Freeman*, in addition to our other hazards of the *Picton* or the *Persia*. She may have been the *Freeman* in her palmier days. From the time we knew her the *Freeman*’s stem was not as in the picture. It had the same amount of rake, but was without the little cutwater-knee which gives the appearance of curve in the upper part. Perhaps the knee was knocked off. The reader who submits this identification manifestly knew the vessel and writes convincingly.

The crispest identification came from J. W. Redner of Belleville, who, as was remarked recently, went into railroading after a thorough education in lake schoonerdom. Clean as despatcher’s order came his bid first thing Monday morning. It was the first one read:

“*Two Brothers*, outside, *Fabiola*, inside. Picton Harbor, 1890 or 1891. Happy New Year.” Had the *Fabiola* four headsails? Our recollection of her is that she had only three, but Dr. J. C. Connell of Ayr House, Kingston, identified a photograph of a four-jibber which he had taken as the *Fabiola*. The inside schooner in the Picton Harbor picture shows a fore-staysail boom and a long jibboom, with stays for three jibs on it.

From New Britain, Conn., where Ralph Britton, of the Stanley Works, exiled Canadian, solaces himself with a large job and a small yawl, came this suggestion:

“In your “Schooner Days” of January 6, I think the harbor is Picton. I have been in there a good

many times and, whereas it has changed some what, I think I recognize the old coal sheds and the steamboat dock.

“As regards the schooners laying off the point. I think the outside schooner is *The Briton*, formerly *S. & J. Collier*. The inside schooner’s bow is too straight for it to be the *Collier*. The outside schooner, however, you will notice has much more of what we used to call cutter bow. Of course, the photographs, as reproduced, are not quite as clear as probably the original photographs which you have but, from what other pictures I have of the old *Collier*, I am pretty sure the outside schooner is she.

“You will probably report in next Saturday’s issue the secret of the harbor which I will watch for carefully, but don’t tell me it is anything except Picton! ! !

“My yawl has been finally hauled out for the winter although I kept her in the water until December 9. I run down to her storage shed every couple of weeks and do a little work on her. At present I am putting in an additional locker where I took out the shipmate coal stove. I have taken the electric heater down with me, which I plug into the electric light line in the shed. I also have an electric cord which I can pull into the cabin, which makes things pretty snug.”

“Clipper bow,” not “cutter bow,” was the term lake sailors used for those pretty concave-profiled stems, because the old cutters were usually plumb-stemmed.

Mr. Britton should know more about the renamed *S. & J. Collier* than anyone else, for he sailed in her, and she was laid up at his family island in the St. Lawrence near Gananoque. His father was her last owner. Our own opinion is that the inside schooner in the picture is more like the *Collier* than the other one, and that the latter is the *Two Brothers*. She was a sweet little schooner, built in Port Burwell, 1868, 92.7 ft. length, 21.5 ft. beam, 7.5 ft. depth of hold and about 140 tons register. Alex. Cochrane, Port Hope, was her registered owner in 1874, and so she was the *Two Brothers* of Port Hope. She was afterwards owned on Prince Edward, and in Kingston. In 1900 she was hurled against a pier at Oswego and lost both her masts. She was converted into a tow barge, a sad fate for one so pretty. She greatly resembled the schooner *Vienna*, also built in Port Burwell and brought to Lake Ontario. There was another *Two Brothers*, hailing from Picton, a slim scow schooner of 56 tons register. She never hailed from Port Hope, but she is buried there, where she served as contractor’s plant in the new harbor.

It is true that in the reproduction nameboards do not appear on the quarters of this schooner, but under a microscope in the original photograph there is an interruption apparent in the line of the quarter rail, the topgallant rail above the main one, which might be a name board. It has a short and a long series of marks which might be the letters of the two-word name. This is so small that it would not have been noticed but for the point raised by Mr. Jewell.

W. W. D. McGlenon, one of the old Cat Hollow sailor family now specializing in insurance at Colborne, Ont., comes under the wire with the following:

“Having had a fair batting average in your last contest, I hope we are not too late to enter for last Saturday’s quiz.

“From many trips I have made there and from your subtle hint, I would name the port as Picton,

Ontario. I have seen Picton labels on canned goods as far away as Europe. The time would probably be in the nineties as it would be quite hard to find two schooners tied alongside after the turn of the century when sailing vessels were rapidly vanishing from the lakes.

“As for the two schooners in the picture, one’s guess would be as good as another’s. Capt. Harry Redfearn and I have studied them carefully, I thought first the one on the outside might be the *Robert McDonald*, but she was probably smaller. She was a pretty little thing and well known here when she traded regularly to Lakeport years ago. She was very trim with a nice rake to her spars and I noticed this in comparing her with the inside vessel.

“Capt. Redfearn is of the opinion this might be the *Vienna* or perhaps the *Greenwood*. Capt. Williams could easily confirm if it is the latter or both for that matter. The inside schooner might be the *Collier* as you suggest or would it be the *D. Freeman*? Both vessels were well known around Prince Edward County.

“We will look forward with interest to the outcome of this contest when Mr. Pearce draws aside the curtain.”