

## **Building of the *Gore*: extracts from the diary of shipwright Robert Gilkison**

**Walter Lewis, ed.**

*Le présent article comprend des passages concernant la construction du bateau à vapeur Gore extraits des journaux intimes de Robert Gilkison, qui a été l'architecte naval de la Niagara Harbour and Dock Company de 1834 à 1840. L'intérêt à l'égard de la construction de ce bateau à vapeur du Haut-Canada plutôt ordinaire est dû en partie à son caractère tout à fait ordinaire. À cela s'ajoute le fait qu'il existe, au moins en ce qui concerne les Grands Lacs, très peu de sources qui présentent ce niveau de détail sur le rythme de construction des navires.*

In 1909, the Niagara Historical Society published extracts from the diaries of shipwright Robert Gilkison, contributed by one of his nieces, Augusta Isabella Grant Gilkison.<sup>1</sup> The diaries, and other family papers eventually made their way to what is currently called the Library and Archives Canada, in Ottawa where they form the “William Gilkison and family fonds” (R3450-0-9-E, formerly MG24-I25).

In selecting the extracts for the six pages of the NHS article, Miss Gilkison included only two references to the *Gore*: the contract for her construction and two sentences about her launch. The diaries have much, much more to say about the process.

Born in Queenston, Upper Canada, in 1810, Robert left for Scotland with his parents at the age of five. At fourteen he was apprenticed to John Wood, a well-

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<sup>1</sup> Augusta Isabella Grant Gilkison, “Early Ship Building at Niagara,” *Niagara Historical Society*, no. 18 (1909), 29-35.