

A HISTORY OF THE GREAT LAKES

By Crockett McElroy.

CHAPTER II.

THE ERA OF SIDEWHEEL STEAMERS.

The decade from 1848 to 1855 was the greatest era for sidewheel steamboats ever known on the Great Lakes. They were numerous at the beginning of that period and during the next eight years a great many were built. After that they dwindled rapidly in number for twenty years when few were left. In the meantime there was a continuous increase in the number of screw-wheel steamers. In 1848 nearly every steamboat on the lakes, no matter what trade she was engaged in, was propelled by paddle wheels and a screw-wheel steamer was rarely seen. Fifty years later the situation was reversed and nearly all the steamers on the lakes were propelled by screw wheels. A few sidewheel steamers were still in use as car ferries and as passenger steamers of which a few lines were maintained. The majority of these were elegant boats and fully equipped in every particular, but there was not left on the Great Lakes a single sidewheel steamer used as a tug or a freight carrier, exclusively, except possibly on some shallow river or bay.

In 1847 there was no railroad reaching Chicago from the east, no railroad from Detroit to Chicago, or from Buffalo to Detroit, or from Detroit to Toledo, or a mile of railroad in Canada. That was the age of the paddlewheel steamer, but the age of the iron horse was soon to come, to be followed by the age of the screw-wheel steamer. At that time and for several years thereafter the passenger traffic on the lakes was very large. There were many little steamers running on short routes, varying in size from 75 to 150 feet in length. These boats were too small for the lake trade. Most of them hailed from Detroit and plied from Detroit to ports at the west end of Lake Erie; also between Detroit and Port Huron. In this class were the Red Rover, General Scott, John Owen, John H. Carter, Pennsylvania, Franklin, Detroit, Telegraph, Telegraph No. 2, and the little ferry steamers Unity and Alliance trading between Detroit and Amherst. These little steamers were much alike in style; most of them had high pressure engines that chugged into the open air and made considerable noise. They all carried a few hundred passengers and a few tons of freight.

The largest of these boats was the Pennsylvania, a 150-foot steamer, built in 1847, which was the largest of her class. She was built at Detroit and was the largest of her class. She was built at Detroit and was the largest of her class. She was built at Detroit and was the largest of her class.

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Missouri, Southerner, America and Baltic.

After the Empire had served out her time as a steamboat, her hull was converted into a floating dry dock and in 1909 was still in use. The Albany had the letters of her name woven into a monogram and painted on her wheel-house. The A. D. Patchen had a curve in her stem, bending inboard at the top as if afraid to put her nose into the sea; but such was not the case as she was a staunch steamer. She was commanded by Captain Harry Whitaker, an able and experienced steamboat master, who was also her owner. Captain Whitaker lived to be 90 years old and his widow lived to the age of 93.

The largest, finest and much the fastest sidewheel steamer that ever ran on the route between Buffalo and Chicago up to the year 1911, was the Empire State, which came upon the route about the year 1850. The hull for this steamer was built at St. Clair, Mich., and was towed to Buffalo to receive the machinery. She was 30 feet long, had a large walking-beam engine, fine cabins and ranked in speed with the fastest steamers on the lakes. Her wheels were 20 feet in diameter and as the outside of the wheelhouses were left quite open the noise made by the wheels could be heard a distance of five miles. She was commanded by Captain Morris Hazard of Buffalo. Her appearance created a sensation all along her route, as she was far and away faster, larger and superior to any other steamer in the upper lake trade. A remarkable feat performed by the Empire State was to make a run from Buffalo to Chicago inside of three days (72 hours), calling at Cleveland and Detroit. The number of boats on the Great Lakes 60 years later that could perform this feat were very few.

The best and most popular steamer on the Detroit and Buffalo route in 1848 was the sidewheel steamer Canada. She was a Canadian boat and was named by the Canadian government. She was built in 1848 and was the largest of her class. She was built in 1848 and was the largest of her class.

SYNOPSIS OF CANADIAN NORTH-WEST LAND REGULATIONS.

A NY person who is the sole head of a family, or any male over 18 years old, may homestead a quarter-section of available Dominion land in Manitoba, Saskatchewan or Alberta. The applicant must appear in person at the Dominion Lands Office or Sub-office of the District Office by proxy, duly authorized, and pay a fee of \$10.00 in compliance with the following regulations: (1) that of another male, son, daughter, brother or sister.

During 100 months of residence upon and cultivation of the land in each of three years. A homesteader may live within five miles of his homestead on a farm of at least 30 acres, solely owned and occupied by him or by his father, mother, son, daughter, brother, or sister.

In certain districts a homesteader in good standing may pre-empt a quarter-section alongside his homestead. Price \$300 per acre. Duties—Must reside six months in each of six years from date of homestead entry (including the time required to earn homestead patent) and cultivate fifty acres extra.

A homesteader who has exhausted his homestead rights and cannot obtain a pre-emption may take a purchased homestead in certain districts. Price \$300 per acre. Duties—Must reside six months in each of three years, cultivate fifty acres, and erect a house worth \$300.00.

W. W. CORY, Deputy of the Minister of the Interior, N. B.—Unauthorized publication of this advertisement will not be paid for. 46-6-mo

troit. As she could not go from Detroit direct to Buffalo without violating the coasting law, she touched at Amherstburg, a Canadian village near the mouth of the Detroit river. The Canada was a staunch steamer and could make the run from Detroit to Buffalo in 21 hours.

The engine of the Canada had an interesting history. About the year 1851 the Canada was seized by the United States government for violating the revenue laws and was sold at public auction. She was bid in for Eber B. Ward of Detroit, a wealthy steamboat owner. It was charged at the time that the seizure was the result of a scheme concocted by Captain Ward to get possession of the boat at a nominal cost.

Captain Ward took the engine out of the Canada and put it into a handsomer and faster boat which he named Caspian. In attempting to enter the harbor at Cleveland during a storm the Caspian was wrecked against the piers. The hull of the Canada was converted into a three-masted vessel and she was a fleet sailor. It was said of her that she made the run from Chicago to Buffalo in the remarkable time for a vessel of 4 1/2 days, with a cargo of 26,000 bushels of wheat, on which she was paid the extraordinary rate of 25 cents per bushel freight. In 1911 there were steamers on the lakes that could carry sixteen times that quantity of wheat and the going rate would bring them less than was paid to the Canada. This startling contrast shows what 60 years on the Great Lakes have wrought. In her new role the Canada had a short life. It was the common talk that she broke her back and was lost.

Immediately following the loss of the Caspian Captain Ward built a new hull for the Canada's engine. She came out in the spring of 1854 and was placed on the route between Cleveland and Sault Saint Marie. This boat was named E. K. Collins. She connected at the Sault with the steamer Sam Ward, that ran on Lake Superior, the two boats forming Ward's Lake Superior line. The Sault Mary's Falls ship canal was then under construction. The Collins was a fine steamer and one of the latest in her day. She was destroyed by fire in the Detroit river, near Amherstburg, on October 8th, 1855. The cargo, consisting of 100,000 bushels of wheat, was lost. It was thought that the fire was started in the freight on deck by sparks from the fire of a dock furnace.

Captain Ward proceeded at once to build the third hull for the Canada's engine. The new hull was called the Empire. She was larger than the Collins and had a still greater speed. The Empire came out in the summer of 1856, after the opening of the Sault canal, which occurred in June. She was a fine steamer and one of the best in her day. She was destroyed by fire in the Detroit river, near Amherstburg, on October 8th, 1855. The cargo, consisting of 100,000 bushels of wheat, was lost. It was thought that the fire was started in the freight on deck by sparks from the fire of a dock furnace.

To Be Continued.

Some men never get religion till they have tried everything else.

A woman's corsets are not matter so much as her complexion, please her.

It's awfully hard for a girl to forgive the high young man for not kissing her.

The average man doesn't think he is having a good time unless he makes a fool of himself.

"What's the matter here?" asked the caller, noting the barren appearance of the house. "Sent your goods away to be stored?" "No," replied the hostess. "Not at all. My daughter was married last week and she has merely taken away the things that she thought belonged to her."

Every church has a nave, but, unfortunately, it isn't always spelled that way.

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