

# Telescope

15¢

VOL. 3

JULY

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NO. 7



## THE THIRD ANNUAL MODEL EXHIBITION

SEPTEMBER 13-14 ARE THE DAYS SET FOR THE THIRD ANNUAL MODEL EXHIBITION OF THE GREAT LAKES MODEL SHIPBUILDERS' GUILD, AND FROM ALL REPORTS THIS YEAR'S DISPLAY WILL INCLUDE SOME OF THE BEST MODELS CONSTRUCTED IN THIS AREA SINCE THE GUILD HAS BEEN IN EXISTENCE. FOR THOSE OF OUR READERS WHO ARE NOT FAMILIAR WITH THIS ANNUAL EVENT, WE SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING:

ON THE TWO DAYS MENTIONED ABOVE, THE GUILD TAKES OVER THE MUSEUM OF GREAT LAKES HISTORY, LOCATED IN THE SCHOONER "J.T. WING", ON BELLE ISLE, DETROIT, MICHIGAN, INSTALLS ITS OWN EXHIBITION, STAFFS IT WITH GUIDES, GUARDS, AND TICKET SELLERS, AND TAKES THE PROCEEDS OF THE EVENT, WHICH GOES INTO THE TREASURY OF THE ORGANIZATION.

### EXHIBITORS.

ONLY THOSE MEMBERS OF THE GUILD WHO ARE IN GOOD STANDING MAY EXHIBIT THEIR OWN WORK.

### ENTRIES.

ENTRIES ARE NOT LIMITED TO MODELS OF GREAT LAKES VESSELS. ANY MODEL OF ANY TYPE OR PERIOD IS ELIGIBLE PROVIDED IT HAS BEEN BUILT BY THE MEMBER, OR MEMBERS WHO ENTER IT.

### CONDITIONS.

MEMBERS MUST ASSUME ALL LIABILITY FOR LOSS OR DAMAGE TO THEIR ENTRIES, AND MUST TAKE CARE OF ITS TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM THE MUSEUM OF GREAT LAKES HISTORY.

ALL MODELS MUST BE ON HAND AND READY FOR DISPLAY NOT LATER 8:30 A.M. MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1954. SINCE, IN THE PAST, REQUESTS HAVE BEEN MADE FOR A HOLD-OVER OF THE EXHIBITION THE EXHIBITORS MUST AGREE TO LEAVE THEIR MODELS AT THE MUSEUM UNTIL THE END OF MUSEUM BUSINESS ON THE SUNDAY FOLLOWING THE DATES OF THE EXHIBITION. EXCEPTIONS ARE MADE WHERE THE BUILDER COMES FROM A CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE AND BRINGS HIS ENTRIES. ALL MODELS MUST BE REMOVED FROM THE MUSEUM ON OR THE MORNING OF THE TUESDAY FOLLOWING THE EXHIBITION. LABELS OR COPY FOR SAME MUST BE PROVIDED BY THE MEMBERS EXHIBITING THEIR WORK.

### PROTECTION FOR MODELS ON DISPLAY.

ALL MODELS ENTERED WILL BE DISPLAYED BEHIND GLASS WHILE THEY ARE ON EXHIBITION. THIS PROTECTION WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE AFTER THE MORNING OF TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, AS ON THAT DAY THE MUSEUM'S REGULAR HISTORICAL SEQUENCE OF MODELS MUST AGAIN BE IN THEIR CUSTOMARY PLACES.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT THE GUILD'S SECRETARY, CAPTAIN JOSEPH E. JOHNSTON, BELLE ISLE, DETROIT 7, MICHIGAN BY LETTER, OR AT LORAIN 8-3933, THE MUSEUM'S TELEPHONE.

### REGARDING PUBLICITY.

GUILD MEMBERS, SUBSCRIBERS TO TELESCOPE, AND FRIENDS, ARE REQUESTED TO AID IN OBTAINING PUBLICITY FOR THIS EVENT. THE ADMISSION CHARGE WILL BE 25¢ FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN, AND TICKETS SHOULD BE PURCHASED IN ADVANCE, OR RESERVED BY PHONE OR LETTER.

THE JULY COVER  
Done by Rowley Murphy

## MUSEUM NOTES

## Plans of the JOHN ERICSSON

A Recipe for Romance: Into a quiet harbor, lined with wooden wharves, place two or more sailing vessels of any age or size. Sprinkle with well tanned sailors going quietly about their work bending or unbending sail mending, painting, splicing, and in many other ways making ready for all the countless exigencies of life at sea. Add a dash of tobacco smoke, nicely blended with the aroma of oakum and pine tar and the sound of creaking spars. Sprinkle lightly with sea gulls on the wing, and there you will have the makings of romance.

Rowley Murphy, in our July cover has mixed most of those ingredients, as he shows the Great Lakes schooner "Guido" with one anchor down and the "Island Queen" lying at the wharf in Toronto harbor, fitting out for the 1907 season. Here we see ships at rest, but not for long, for spring is in the air and the open Lakes are calling. Tomorrow they will be away to many places with strange-sounding names--to Skilligalee, and Thunder Bay, to Tobermaury and Penetanguishene and to Escanaba, beyond Death's Door itself. These ships will not thread the intricate passages among the Spice Islands. They will not in all their comings and goings raise Java Head, nor round Cape Horn, nor will they ever feel the sting of the salt on their bows, but the equal of them they will see, and do; and some will come home and some will go on to their final resting places on sandy points and rocky headlands or in the cold dark depths of Superior where he who goes down, frozen to the task at hand will remain at that task, unchanged through all time, until the last bell is rung and the last watch is called, --and beyond.

But here we see them at rest, -the ships of the Lakes, as romantic as any, but little known beyond the rim of the vast lakes they sailed.

J. E. Johnston

Under the careful hand of Mr. James Jones the plans of the whalebacker "John Ericsson" are nearing completion. A number of discrepancies were found in the set from which ours are being re-drawn, and fortunately for us the real "John Ericsson" has been passing back and forth close in, at the museum, and a number of details have been easily corrected.

Before this number of TELESCOPE is in your hands the first drawing will be finished and some work done on the tracing. The drawing will be published in an early number of the magazine.

This model has a number of interesting features and should be popular with the builders. *Cont. pg. 7*

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THE SCOW SCHOONER MILTON

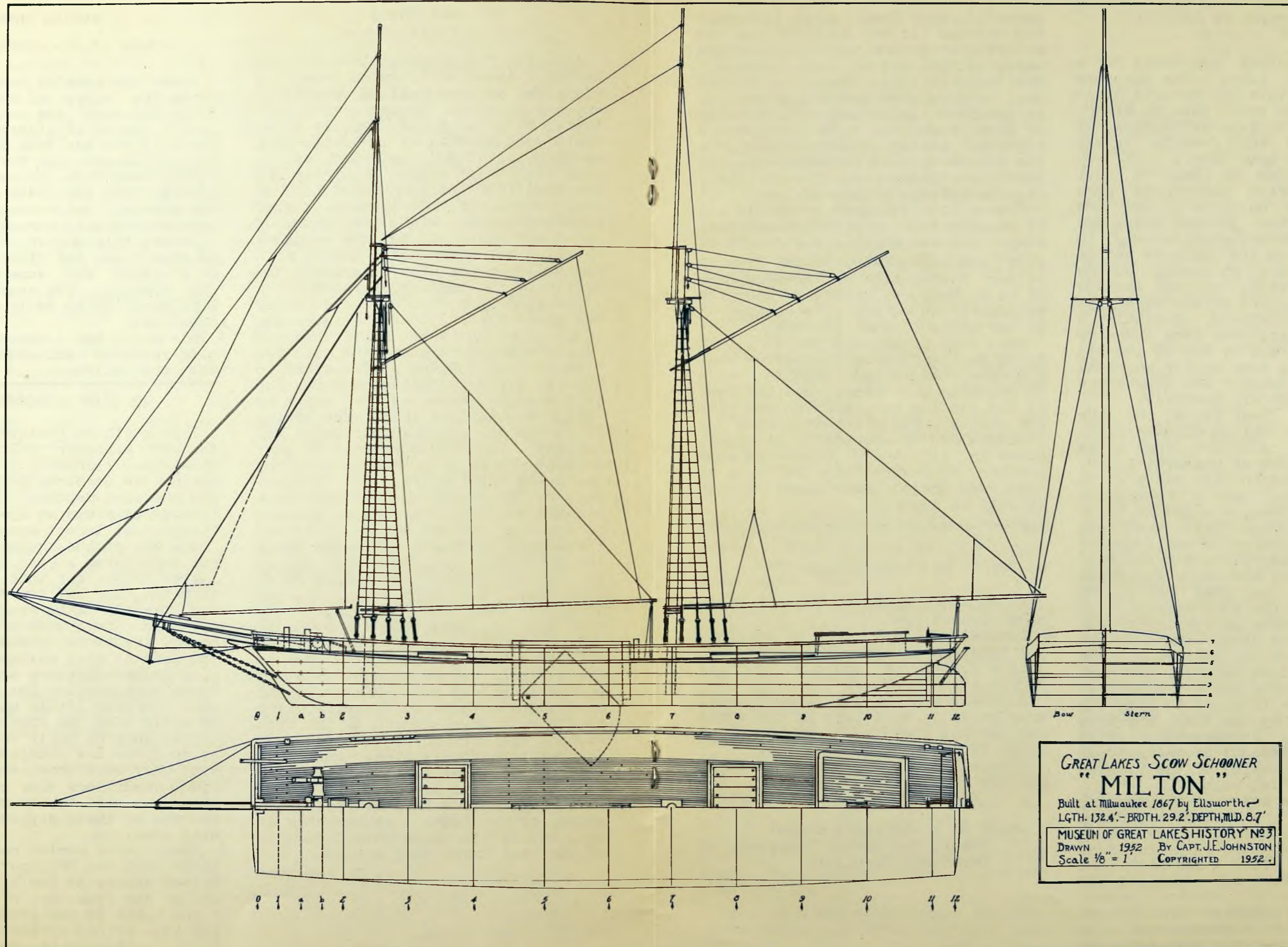
This month we feature the plans of the scow schooner "Milton", built in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1867 by Elsworth. She measured 132.4 x 29.2 and had a molded depth of 8.7 feet. Her tonnage is given as 234, probably net though that is not specified.

She was of the square-bow type and was considered a good carrier in the lumber trade, for which she was constructed. She had two cargo hatches, and like all Lakes vessels of those days was fitted with a large center-board, the trunk of which came above the deck as high as her rails.

As lumber carriers the Great Lakes scows were popular for several reasons. They drew little water, cost less to build than the conventional types and because of their low tonnage got by on lower tax charges. Before the wind they were considered fast. Given equal conditions they could weather storms as well as any of the sailing vessels of their day, except in heavy head seas.

Great Lakes marine casualty lists state that the "Milton" was finally driven ashore at Two Rivers, in 1885, one of 138 disasters of that year.

The Guild is now prepared to supply blue prints of this vessel: Price \$1.25, postage paid. One sheet, as is shown in this number of TELESCOPE.



GREAT LAKES SCOW SCHOONER  
 "MILTON"  
 Built at Milwaukee 1867 by Ellsworth  
 LGTH. 132.4' - BRDTH. 29.2' - DEPTH, MLD. 8.7'  
 MUSEUM OF GREAT LAKES HISTORY NO 3  
 DRAWN 1952 BY CAPT. J.E. JOHNSTON  
 Scale 1/8" = 1' COPYRIGHTED 1952.

## INTRODUCTION TO AMERICA

*B. E. O'Keefe*

The July weather was ideal for a voyage on the Lakes. The schooner Nelson Smith left the Detroit River and headed out into Lake St. Clair, bound for the village of Saginaw, far up in the wild but fertile valley that bears the same name.

Sitting around on deck a small group of Bavarian immigrants were discussing the incidents of the now almost completed journey which had started from Bremerhaven, Germany, in April. The long and arduous voyage across the North Atlantic, on the good ship Carolina, and the landing at the strange port of New York; the train trip to Albany, including a wreck on the way; the long tiresome journey to Buffalo by way of the old Erie Canal, all came up for comment. Already those dangers and discomfort were fading into dim memories.

This was the last leg of the long trek into the Michigan wilderness in the search of religious freedom and the opportunities of peaceful labor. The trip up from Buffalo had been an uneventful one, and a reasonably swift one. The men, dressed in their wide-brimmed black hats and black frock coats gathered in small groups discussing their plans for the future. The women, several with babies in their arms sat near the ship's rail, enjoying the cool breeze.

With the coming of twilight the breeze began to drop, and by night the Nelson Smith lay becalmed on the mirror-smooth lake and near the dark tree-lined western shore. Over head not a cloud was in sight to hide the stars as, one by one they appeared in the heavens. Conversation, as if keyed to the elements became subdued and even the creaking of the rigging ceased in the flat calm.

Suddenly the peace of the evening was shattered by a violent explosion and the sky above the woods along the shore was lighted by a brilliant flash of fire. Then a red ball shot up from the forest and plummeted into the water.

These brave pioneers who had already endured so much wondered what sort of horror was now descending on them. Were the wild Indians on the

warpath? Were they going to become the victims of the tomahawk and the scalping knife now that they were so close to the end of their journey? The small children began to cry and their elders grew more apprehensive as the loud explosions and the balls of fire continued. The schooner's captain, coming on deck to observe the spectacle, was surrounded by his terrified passengers. Seeing their fear he quickly reassured them:

"There is nothing to be afraid of. It is only the inhabitants celebrating. You see, this is the Fourth of July, the anniversary of the signing of our Declaration of Independence. It is a national holiday and the villagers ashore are celebrating, as is our custom, with fireworks."

When they understood the captain's words the immigrants laughed at what a minute before had been to them a frightening experience, and the rest of the evening was spent in enjoying the display. These pioneers were the founders of Frankenmouth, Michigan. Later in life they joined in many similar demonstrations but none of them ever forgot their first Fourth of July in America.

## NEW ACCESSIONS

A cut-away model of the U.S. Destroyer escort 776.

Several nautical books of particular interest to model builders.

Line prints of the U.S. gunboat "Dubuque".

A photograph of the largest model ever built in this part of the world and another photograph of the pilot model from which it was built.

Several sets of plans of small sailing yachts.

Donor, Commander Otis Howard.

A model of a whaleback steamer.

Donor, Mr. Arthur Koepfner, of Dearborn, Michigan

## Museum Notes:

Commander OTIS HOWARD

Commander Otis Howard, who was so helpful in getting the Guild started a few years ago has retired from active work as a professional model builder in Detroit and is making his home in San Diego, California.

Besides helping organize the Guild Commander Howard was host to the organization at the Brodhead Naval Armory on two different occasions. At one of these meetings he escorted the members through the submarine at the base, explaining, as only he can do, the many features of that craft. At the second meeting held at the Naval Armory he took the group on an extended tour of the building and fully explained the training equipment and methods.

Before leaving Detroit he presented the museum with a number of very welcome items which are listed under "New Accessions".

Our best wishes for a long and happy retirement go with the Commander to his new home.

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Plans of the T.R. McLAGAN

Again we can report some very fine cooperation from friend north of the border. This time it is the Canada S.S. Company, and The Collingwood Ship Yards. Ltd.

Our request for plans of the "T.R. McLagan", largest ship on the Great Lakes, was promptly passed on to the builders of the vessel, who just as promptly forwarded us nineteen of the many sheets of drawing which were used in the building of this mammoth bulk carrier.

Perhaps we are more impressed with the special attention given to our request by Mr. J. Surgenor, Naval Architect for the builders. Knowing how busy men in his position are, we, as usual, were over-modest in our request, -asking for only three or four sheets. Mr. Surgenor sent detailed drawings of deck equipment of all kinds, besides the sheets we had requested.

Here is a beautiful ship and complete plans. It will take us some

Cont. pg. 8

## PORTS OF THE PAST

## Part IV

## PORT SHELDON

By Helen Lobdell

The Port Sheldon Land Company was organized in 1835, backed by some stockholders in the National Bank of Philadelphia, among them Nicholas Biddle. The company tried to buy out Reverend Ferry at Grand Haven, and failing in that chose a site for their settlement about twelve miles south where the Pidgeon River empties into Lake Michigan. In 1836 a group of surveyors, woodsmen and guides went there and laid out a town of magnificent proportions----- 142 city blocks. The first settlers arrived in the ship "Vindicator", probably six months or a year later. There is some confusion about this date.

Port Sheldon was to be no ordinary town. It was to be "The Queen of the West", the great metropolis which would be the hub of the east-west and the north-south trade. The backers planned railroad connections from Port Huron to Port Sheldon, a line of steamers to Racine and then a rail line to the Mississippi River. It was to be the trading center that Chicago actually became.

The lavish expenditure of money to build this city in the wilderness was astonishing. Good gravel roads were built to Grandville and Grandhaven at a cost of \$20,000.00, and a depot was built for \$15,000.00. Then \$10,000.00 was spent for an office building, \$10,000.00 on a company store, \$20,000.00 on a mill with steam-driven machinery, one of the first in the West, and, most ambitious of all, they built a tremendous hotel, the Ottawa House, \$60,000.00 being spent on furnishings alone.

This hotel in the wilderness operated until 1848, had an average of twenty-five guests per year. It was a beautiful building, 80 by 150 feet and two stories high, its main feature six great doric columns across the portico. Later Abraham Pike, the company's clerk who acted as receiver for it when it failed, took four of these columns by ox-cart to Grand Rapids, where he used them on the

front of his house. This building is now the Grand Rapids Art Gallery.

Probably about thirty dwellings were erected---prefabricated in Philadelphia and shipped in. There were no log cabins in Port Sheldon. At one time there were about 300 inhabitants of the settlement. Besides these, there were a goodly quota of wasters, gamblers, fugitives from the eastern law, lumberjacks and half-breeds. Most of the regular inhabitants were employees of the company. Someone said that the trail from Pt. Sheldon to Ionia was well marked by broken champaign bottles. The gay blades of the town even had a yacht, the "Meme", (Indian for pigeon), and built a boat house, a miniature replica of the Ottawa House. They had yachting regalia and took part in regattas as far away as Detroit.

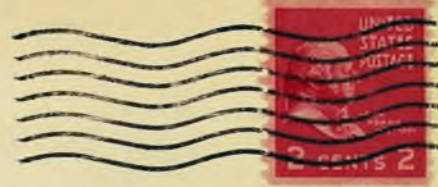
Several things caused the downfall of Port Sheldon. It was too far north to be a trading center and the Pigeon River outlet could not be kept open for lake traffic. A lighthouse was built and a long pier constructed, but in spite of repeated dredging, sand drifted across the harbor entrance. Another factor in the town's collapse was the financial panic of 1837, with the resulting failure of the National Bank of Philadelphia.

Port Sheldon cost about \$2,000,000 only one twentieth of which was backed by available security. The third cause of failure was the type of people who gathered there. Not enough good hard down-to-earth workers ever arrived to make the town productive. Company workers built the town, the adventurers enjoyed it, and no one ever produced anything to keep it alive.

Most of the inhabitants left by 1839 or 1840, though the Ottawa House continued to operate until 1842. Then the whole project was declared bankrupt and everything sold off to pay up the creditors insofar as possible. Mr. Pike stayed on to liquidate the affairs of the settlement and to operate the Ottawa House for the few travelers who might be going up and down the west coast of Michigan.

Today there is no sign of the original Port Sheldon Settlement. The houses were bought by Van Raalte and

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DETROIT 7, MICHIGAN



L. W. Richardson  
1570 Westwood Ave.  
Cleveland 7, Ohio

moved to Holland. The Ottawa House, the pier, the lighthouse, and all the rest have crumbled away. Now Port Sheldon is a summer resort, with few people knowing it was ever anything else.

### CITY OF CLEVELAND III

has been sold to the Ventimiglia Demolition Co., 743 Chene St. Detroit, Mich. by the Detroit and Cleveland Navigation Co., and will be turned into a barge for use in construction work on the St. Lawrence Seaway.

Salvageable materials from the old paddlewheel steamer will be sold as it is removed. She is berthed at the foot of Pine Street, Wyandotte, Mich.

#### Museum Notes:

Time to whip them into shape for the model builders, but when they are ready, there will undoubtedly be a big demand for them. It is a must for the museum.

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