Telescope

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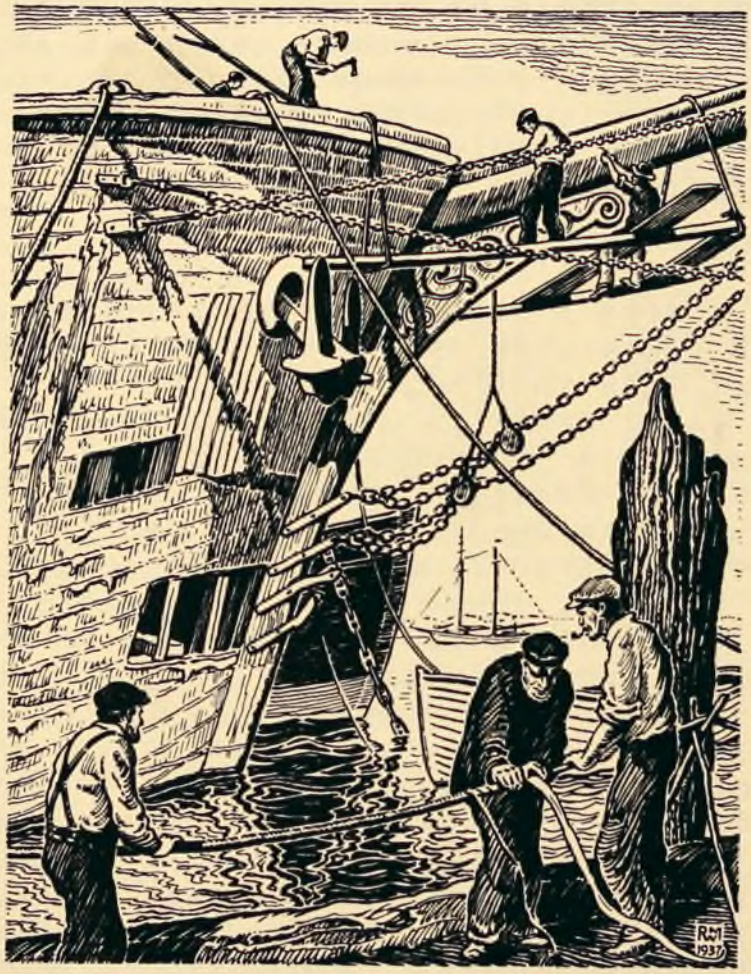
VOL. 3 AUGUST 1954 NO. 8



Editorial:

CATCHING UP WITH THE DATE LINE

An ounce of performance is worth a pound of promises, and with the August number of TELESCOPE we are trying to live up to that bit of philosophy. All during 1954 the publishing committee has been beset by circumstances that have all but caused a month's suspension of the magazine.

At last things are leveling off again and not only can we look forward to getting the TELESCOPE out on time, but we can look forward, with some assurance, to just doubling the number of pages. Thereafter, if TELESCOPE continues receiving support at the rate of increase that has prevailed during the past few months, additional eight-page sections may be expected from time to time. More good material is now on hand than our eight pages permit us to publish without having to run it serially for too long a time. We still are in need of short sketches having to do with people and places and we will always welcome items for our current events reports which appear under the heading, "For the Record". Let's make this department worth while.

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MODEL SHOWS, OLD AND NEW. Part 1.

This month we came across a sheet of paper listing model builders who exhibited their work at the Detroit Motor Boat and Sportsman Show, May 14th to 17th, 1932.

Listed as winner of first prize is Jack Williams, 235 Ardmore Avenue, Detroit, with his "Sovereign of the Seas". The second prize went to Ray A. Wyatt, Marysville, Michigan, "Blue nose" being his entry. A Spanish Galleon, done by Clarence Scheilberger, 5930 Eastlawn, Detroit, won the third prize.

There were about 44 entries. Only two of the contestants are known to your editor; Louden Wilson, now living at Fairhaven, Michigan, and Peter Vroom of Detroit. In the 22 years since this event it is likely that many of the others have changed their addresses. If any of the following are known to our readers will they please put us in contact with them if that is possible: Charles Stephens, box 558 Centerline, a suburb of Detroit; Russel Meyers, 16178 Indiana Avenue, Det. Edmund Biebe, 2740 Orleans, Det.; Horrace Allan, 4701 Marlborough, Det,; Adam Kehl, 1219 Fisher Ave., Det.; Myron Durkee 2203 Townsend, Det., Norman Monks, 4380 Larchmont, Det.; Robert Gardner, 7767 Burnette, Det.,; W.S. Dyer, 717 Maple, Battle Creek Mich.; Alan Stegar 2942 W. Grand Blvd, Det.; John Sytsma, Thomas Hughes, Bruno Strugynski, James McAlpine, Travis Whitton, John E. Frazer, William Zimmerman, and Fred Frazer, -no address for these is given. Then there was Charles Strobar, 3414 Buchanan, Det.; Earl Ziegler, Birmingham, Mich.; W.E. LaPointe, 5967 on Coplin Ave. Det.; Robert Bailey, Birmingham, Mich.; John Rowbotham, 15473 Mendota, Det., Orville Fox, Mt. Clemens, Mich.; J. Nelson, 18 Beverly Road, Grosse Pte. Farms; Joe Durman, 6852 Saint John St. Detroit.

AUGUST COVER
by
Rowley Murphy

"The Four Mast Schooner Reine Marie Stewart, Thomastown" is shown on our August cover, fitting out at Falmouth, Nova Scotia, 1937.

While not a Great Lakes vessel the art of Mr.Murphy, our Toronto marine artist, makes the Reine seem closely related to our own wooden ships of the past.

The bearded seaman, wearing a coat and a captain's cap, is parceling and serving a piece of wire rigging and we suppose he has already wormed it, to make a proper job of it.

"Worming" is a filler of spun-yarn or marline, laid into the spaces between the strands of the rope, or cable, to make the finished job nice and round. The worming is held in place, until the parceling is done by widely-spaced turns of sail twine and over this goes the parceling, a spiral wrapping of narrow strips of canvas, laid on"with the lay" of the cable. Over the canvas parceling goes the serving of marline which is put on with a tool called a serving mall or serving mallet, which enables the seaman to make the turns much tighter than if put on by hand. Serving is applied in the opposite direction to the two first applications,whence comes this ancient admonition:

Worm and parcel with the lay; turn, and serve the other way.

The object of the whole operation is protection to the cable against rust, and chafing. The man, in the picture, with the pipe in his mouth, is the helping hand who passes the ball of marline around and around the cable while the serving is being applied. In the left foreground the ever-present loafer is leaning on cable, -no doubt passing belittling remarks on the quality of the work.

The four men on the ship appear to be getting along very well without benefit of comment.

The first steamer built at Monroe was named the "Monroe". It was built by Captn. Harry Whitaker, who at one time was a wheelsman on the "Walk-in-the-Water".

BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES
I

Alexander McDougall
1845-1923

On June 23, 1888 several thousand skeptical onlookers crowded Duluth's waterfront to witness the launching of McDougall's dream, the first of a fleet of around half a hundred similar vessels which came to be known by several names and nicknames.Among those names we find Alexander McDougall's own designation of them."Turret", the general public's almost universal "Whaleback", and that of many Great Lakes seamen,"Pig Boats".

Each of these designations were in some degree fitting. The cylindrical superstructures suggested "Turrets", the round top of the hulls, almost always awash in even a light sea is not unlike the back of a whale swimming at the surface of the sea,while the round bows, to many seamen were suggestive of a pig's snout.For some years, like Henry Ford's model T automobile, they were the butt of numerous jokes, but until the development of unloading machinery on the docks they did very well for themselves and their originator.

Alexander McDougall could have been an inspiration to Horatio Alger had that writer looked for inspiration in this region. The son of a not too prosperous Scotch immigrant, he was apprenticed, at an early age, to learn blacksmithing, in a shop at Collingwood,Ontario, where the family had settled. Although he disliked the calling, and ran away to sail on the Lakes, who knows but what some obscure incident during that brief period in the forge produced the seed of the idea from which his ship sprung.

By modern standards McDougall's schooling was very limited;two years in Glasgow, Scotland, plus two or three months each winter, from 1856 to 1859,inclusive, in formal schools with two winters in night school in Detroit after he began sailing. From the captains under whom he served he picked up what he needed to know to become an officer. At the age of 18 he was a second mate, at 21 a chief mate, and received his first command at the age of 25.

Cont: pg. 7

BOTTOM OF #6 TOP OF #5

HALF BREADTH PLAN

NOTE: SAW LIFT NO 7 TO TO BOTTOM CONTOUR

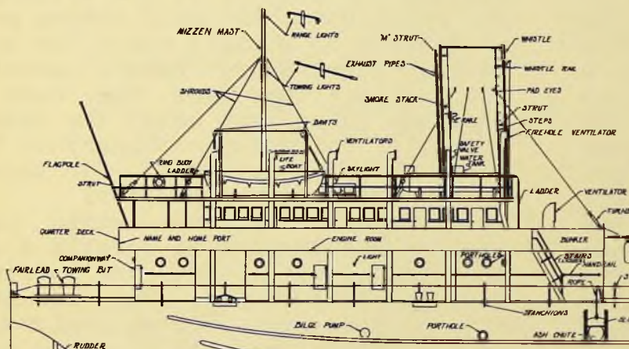
10 11 10 13 14 15 12 11 10

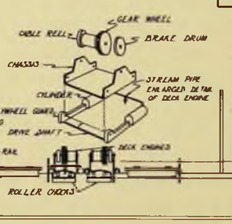
SHEER PLAN

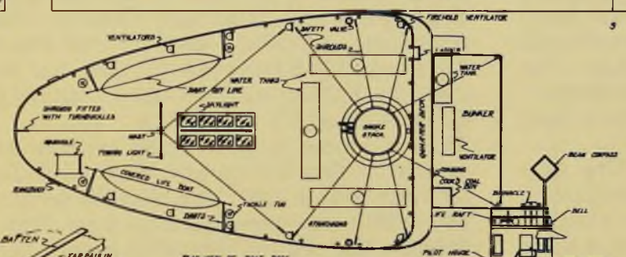
AFTER BODY PLAN FORE BODY PLAN

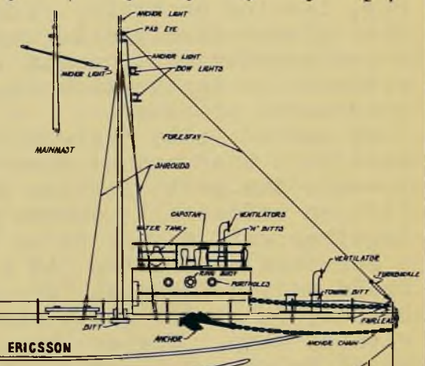
9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

JOHN ERICSSON (WHALEBACK)
GREAT LAKES MODEL SHIPBUILDERS' GUILD
DRAWN BY George & James
CHECKED BY Geo. Campbell & Son Association
3201 GRO TONS. BUILT, WEST SUPERIOR, WIS. 1896
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0" DATE AUG 21, 1954



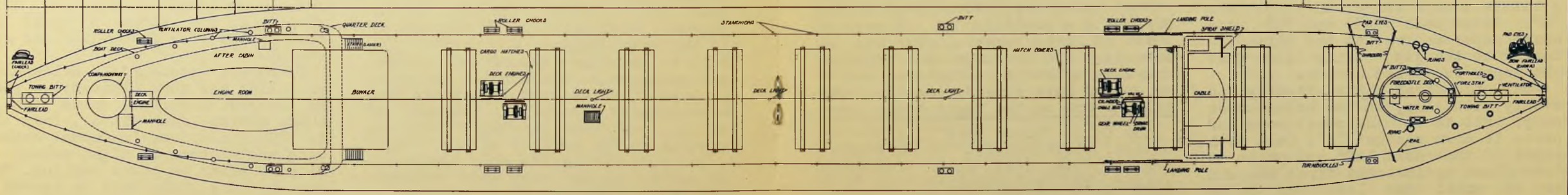






JOHN ERICSSON

OUTBOARD PROFILE



DECK PLAN

JOHN ERICSSON

THE MODEL SHIP YARD

Part III

Assembling the Hull

When you have worked off most of the surplus wood and are almost ready for sanding you may begin assembling the hull. Much has been written about glues for the model builder. If you are building a model that is to be put in water I suggest using "Weldwood" brand, mixing small quantities as needed. If the model is only for exhibition my preference is for a glue made in Detroit and sold under the name "Hurez". It is milk white and not as messy as most glues. The makers do not claim that it is water proof, but I have found that it is as moisture-resistant as need be. It is soluble in water and all surplus may be removed with a wet, or damp rag, leaving no stain. I have found that pieces firmly held together for a few moments will remain together without the application of great and protracted pressure.

My method is to begin with the top most lift that has no sheer and work towards the keel, putting the sheer-lift on after all others are stuck together well enough to be handled.

For this operation it is well to build a jig, shown at "2". Take two boards, "a" and"b",both straight and without warp. Fasten them together so as to form a trough with a ninety degree angle. Place the first lift against "a" and bore holes to take one end of the dowel rods. Insert a rod in each hole, being sure to use straight pieces. Sand the rods just a little except where they fit into "a". Cover both "a" and "b" with waxed paper to prevent the lifts adhering to the jig, being sure that the paper is spread smooth.

Coat the first lift lightly and evenly with glue, on the bottom side only. Fit it to the dowel rods and press it down against "a". Coat both sides of the next lift and press it into place against the first one, and so on until the last one is in place. This calls for rapid work, with the glue thin enough to spread quickly and evenly. Hand pressure for a few moments is all that is required after the last lift is on.

Cont: pg. 8

ÖUR AUGUST SHIP PLAN

The Whaleback Steamer "John Ericsson"

Working from plans made available to us by POPULAR MECHANICS magazine and from inspection of the vessel itself we are presenting in this month's TELESCOPE the plans of the "John Ericsson", one of Captain Alexander McDougall's famous whaleback steamers. Built in 1896 at the West Superior yard of the American Steel Barge Company, this vessel is still in operation for the Upper Lakes and St. Lawrence Transportation Co.Ltd., of Toronto.

The drafting of the lines presented problems not encountered in conventional hulls. In construction of the hull these problems will reappear in that part of the ship where the tumble home starts, and above there,but if careful study is given to the two upper lifts before any cutting is done all will be well.

This is one model upon which we recomment the frequent and careful use of templates for the stations.In fact two sets of templates, one for above where the sides turn inward, and one for below that point.We also suggest that each lift be made in one piece and not in two, as outlined in our article under the heading of "The Model Ship Yard".

Blue prints will not be ready for this model until about the middle of October.

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OUR PORTFOLIO OF PLANS

Word has gotten around that we are preparing a portfolio of 12 sets of plans of Lakes vessels, for use in schools, and although the original drawings are not all completed several orders have already come in.Looks like we are on the right track there.

The Brig "Black Hawk", a 384 ton vessel, left Detroit for Liverpool, England, in 1858 with a cargo of lumber. She returned home only to be wrecked off Point Betsey in Lake Michigan in 1862.

All lighthouses and lights on Lake Michigan were changed from lard burners to kerosene burners in the spring of 1880.

McDougall:

His was the era in which copper was king in the Lake Superior region and speculation and wild spending the rule. Iron was a contestant for the crown, and later won it, but not without a struggle. Wheat, from the western plains, was rolling down to the Lakes ports faster than existing shipping could handle it, but with all that wealth there were financial ups and downs, and McDougall spiced his career as a mariner with such occupations as fishing, hunting, and even cutting cordwood at 50¢ per,for the steamers that managed to remain in service during slack times.At one time he was engaged in commercial fishing at Marquette, but failed for the simple reason that there were too many fish and not enough customers. Shipping of refrigerated cargos had not arrived, a detail which he took time out to correct later in his varied career, but not until after he had built a fleet of whaleback bulk carriers.

By 1872 he had the plans for these unique vessels formulated, but years were to pass before he could finance construction. On limited frontage which he owned at Duluth,and largely with unskilled help he built barge No.101, and put her into service the following year. With an actual ship to demonstrate his theory capital became available, the first coming from the Rockefeller interests.After trying unsuccessfully to acquire the needed space for a ship yard on the Duluth waterfront he established the American Steel Barge Company at West Superior. By 1890, the company was employing 3,000 workers, and in 1893 ten steel ships were built at once. One ship a week,for eight weeks,went down the ways, always on Saturdays, and on the ninth Saturday they put two ships and one tug in the water. These achievements, for the day and time, were notable indeed, but Capt. McDougall is credited with other kinds of activities as well.

When railroad rails and other iron and steel products began moving west there was no organized stevedoring service to handle them at the ports of western Lake Superior. McDougall tackled the problem and organized an efficient stevedoring service employing about one thousand men, working in well-led gangs which could travel to any port where their services were needed, do the job, and return to headquarters for other assignments. The efficiency of this service put an end to unnecessary delays to vessels, and reduced port congestion where facilities were limited enough, at best.

Another achievement to the Captain's credit is the development of refrigerated warehouses to receive and preserve perishable commodities coming to Lake Superior ports from points westward. Poultry,eggs,butter and other items flowed in to these centers in great quantities, but the railroad charges from there to the markets of the eastern seaborad were prohibitive.

Again Captain McDougall took up the challenge. A line of refrigerated steamers was put into service to move these perishables down to the port of Buffalo, N.Y. The savings thus effected put western farm products on a competitive footing with those from other sections nearer to eastern markets until the cities of the West had grown in size to where they became the market. At one time there was a fleet of 14 refrigerator ships on the Lakes.

When World War I.broke out the McDougall yard enlarged its facilities and turned out 45 vessels for the United States Shipping Board. These, like the earlier whaleback steamers came in for their share of jokes. In order to reach salt water they had to be built short enough to go down through the locks on the St.Lawrence River. They were short and bulky,and among the larger ocean vessels were very conspicuous on that account.The type became known as "Lakers". They were very well-built and many are in service to this day.

Perhaps the best-known fleet of whaleback steamers is the "Christopher Columbus", the only one to be built for carrying passengers. Built to run between The Loop and the Ex-

Cont: pg. 8

McDougall:
position grounds in 1892 she is said to have carried more passengers than any other vessel (possibly disputed by others) and could discharge her entire load of 5,000 passengers in five minutes.

Shipyard:

Give the first half of the hull at least 24 hours to dry then remove it from the jig by lightly tapping the ends of the dowel rods at the back of "a" to drive them out. Drive just a little of first one and then the other until they are loose.

Now assembling the second half of the hull in the same way, boring new holes in the jig to receive the rods over which the hull is assembled.

Allow the second half to dry, then remove from the jig. Fit the sheer-lift over the stubs of the rods that had been fitted into the holes in the jig, and glue them,--both sides.

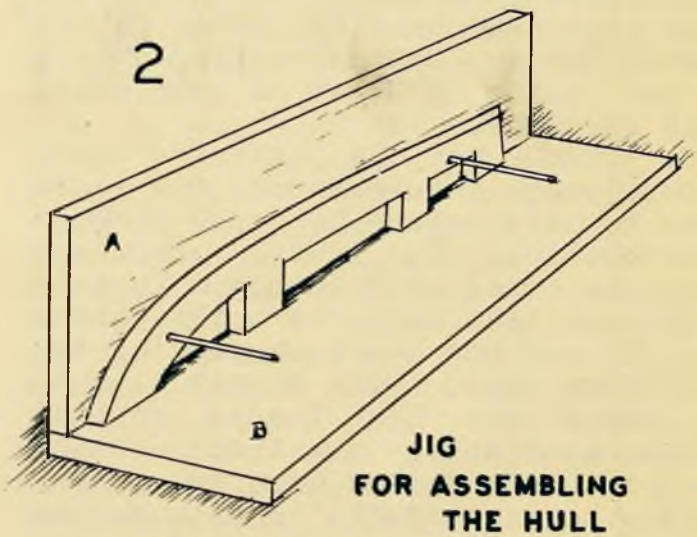
Fit both halves of the hull to the filler piece, using brads where possible, and glue, evenly spread. When this glue has dried thoroughly,it is ready for the final sanding, which may be better done before inserting the stem and the stern post, however they should be inserted and glued in place as soon as the sanding is finished, to prevent accidental damage along the rabbet lines.

FORM-FITTING CRADLE

Like the display case which we took time out to describe, a proper cradle for your model should be made as soon as the hull has taken final shape. This should fit the hull very closely, and it will be worth all of the trouble it takes to build it.The time it will save you while working on details from the deck upwards can be used to advantage.

You may want to build two cradles, one to hold the boat while you are working on it, and later a deluxe model for display purposes. Then you should make two substantial ones and be sure to make the base as wide as you have room for. Nothing is more exasperating than a wobbly cradle.

Shipyard:



JIG
FOR ASSEMBLING
THE HULL

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