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Schooner "Enterprise" and H.M. Brig "General Gage," 14 guns, first vessels built at Detroit. By Loudon Wilson.

J.E. Johnston,

Editor:

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EDITORIAL

THE SCHOONER "J.T.WING".

This month we tell the early history of the schooner "J.T.Wing", from her build until she became the home of The Museum of Great Lakes History, located on Belle Isle, Detroit, Michigan. At that location she became the first nautical museum on the Great Lakes. In several historical museums around our inland sea there had been marine collections but no all-nautical institution.

It is interesting to note that the earlier, salt water, history of this vessel is more complete than that of her sailing days on the Great Lakes. This is, in large part, due to the differences in log-keeping practices. The log book of an ocean vessel contains recordings of every incident connected with her operation, from the time she is placed in commission until she again idle and un-manned. It is a legal document which must not contain erasures and it may be accepted as evidence in courts. An ocean log book is history at its best; written on the spot by an officer whose reputation may be affected by the entries he makes. It gives days, hours, and even minutes. This record is kept in a bound volume,--not one with loose leaves which may be removed without detection and replaced by another. Great Lakes log books, at least in the past bear no resemblance to an ocean log.

In a later number of Telescope we will print all we have learned to date of the "Wing's" fresh water history, and still later we will try to tell most of the story of her service as a museum. That chapter has come to a close.

At the Detroit Historical Museum we are currently putting back together a "Story of Great Lakes Shipping", using exhibit materials that have been displayed on the ship in past years, and bringing out of storage some of those items previously mentioned as too valuable to risk in the damp and fire-inviting hold of the ship. It will take some time to get everything the way it is planned to be but already we are making a good showing in the section opened. Another section will be opened shortly, and later still another. There will be more space than was available on the "Wing", and more freedom of movement. Exhibits that have been in the planning stage for several years may now begin to take shape. Oil paintings of old Lakes vessels, early charts of the Great Lakes, and many other accessions can be brought out and displayed.

THE GUILD

ORGANIZED IN 1952 TO LOCATE, ACQUIRE, AND PRESERVE INFORMATION AND OBJECTS RELATED TO THE HISTORY OF SHIPPING ON THE GREAT LAKES AND TO MAKE SAME AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC THROUGH THE MUSEUM OF GREAT LAKES HISTORY AND THE COLUMNS OF TELESCOPE. THE CONSTRUCTION OF AUTHENTIC SCALE MODELS OF GREAT LAKES SHIPS IS ONE OF THE PRIME OBJECTIVES OF THE ORGANIZATION, WHICH HAS BROUGHT INTO BEING THE LARGEST EXISTING COLLECTION OF MODELS OF THESE SHIPS. THE MUSEUM OF GREAT LAKES HISTORY, LOCATED ON THE SHORE OF BELLE ISLE, IN DETROIT, IS OFFICIAL HEADQUARTERS FOR THE ORGANIZATION AND THE REPOSITORY OF ALL OF ITS HOLDINGS. THE GUILD IS INCORPORATED AS AN ORGANIZATION FOR NO PROFIT UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN. NO MEMBER RECEIVES ANY COMPENSATION FOR HIS SERVICES. DONATIONS TO THE GUILD ARE DEDUCTIBLE FOR TAX INCOME PURPOSES.

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THE SAGA OF THE J. T. WING
by Robert E. Palmer



The name of the schooner J. T. WING has long been well known about the Great Lakes. Stories, some true, some not so true, grow up about many public figures. Ships have even a harder time keeping their names free from fancy. Such has been the fate of the WING.

The present J. T. WING started her nautical life in 1919 as the CHARLES F. GORDON. She was one of the last of the war born wooden sailing vessels, which were built because of the submarine menace of the first world war and were to prove useful long after steam and steel had taken command of the waterways of the world.

Her Canadian registration papers describe her as a three-masted sailing vessel carvel built, and schooner rigged. Built at Weymouth, Nova Scotia, she was owned in shares by Edward Gaudet of that port, and Richard and Thomas Beazley of Halifax. With these men as owners and with Captain James Bower as master, she helped keep alive many memories of former sailing ship men as she coasted to Florida, Cuba, and the Bahamas.

Her luck deserted her one night while running light from Neuvitas, Cuba to Turks Island. That night of March 12, 1923, she became, as far as her owners were concerned, a total loss when she ran aground on Key Sal in the Bahamas. This would have proved true except for the fact that Mr. J. O. Webster learned of her fate. He was the owner and operator of a small salvage vessel, the SALVOR. Buying her as

she was he was able to re-float her and with the SALVOR towing, get her to Miami where she could be re-rigged. Changed to American registry, under the new name, J. O. WEBSTER, she carried lumber north and cement south and for a while brought materials for bridges, then being constructed, connecting the Florida Keys. In 1925 she was sold to Alexander, Lewis & Stockwell of Boston who had Mr. R. C. Elkin of St. John, New Brunswick, manage for them.

While under their ownership, ill luck again befell the ship, this time off Cape Cod. The newspaper account starts out, "Tragedy rode in the wake of the storm through which the WEBSTER passed, for of the six men who originally composed her crew, only three men are here to tell the tale of her wild 48 hour experience." The account tells how Captain Beryn Bradford, master of the WEBSTER, was forced to watch his son drown as the would-be rescuers were blown from sight in the wind swept seas.

Working out of New York and Boston, she again became a familiar sight along our Eastern coast. For a second time, however, she ran aground. This time it was on Norwalk Island, Connecticut. Brought off, she was taken to Noank, Connecticut and repaired in the shipyard of Harry F. Morse. In an effort to collect his unpaid repair bill, he brought legal action and had the ship sold by the United States Marshal. At this sale, he bought her in for the price of his repairs.

It is at this point, 1935, that the story of Great Lakes shipping and that of the WEBSTER join. Mr. Grant Piggott, of Detroit, had often dreamed of some way to give present day youth, including his own sons, a taste of the training he knew, from personal experience, could come from shipping aboard a sailing vessel. Seeing the WEBSTER at Noank, he knew that it was then or never, as sail had passed from the lakes with the sinking of the re-rigged OUR SON in 1930. He purchased the WEBSTER and she began her boyage to the Great Lakes, her new stamping ground.

The ship was renamed the J. T. WING in honor of a man long associated with Great Lakes shipping, Jefferson Thurber Wing. Mr. Wing was president of the J. T. Wing

Co., ship chandlers, and associated in business with Mr. Piggott. The Wing family had been prominent in Detroit history for more than a century.

It took 48 days to come from Rimouski, Quebec, where she had picked up a load of pulpwood, to Port Huron, her destination. The sight of her wind filled sails brought back memories of the days when sail dotted the lakes. It brought rushing to mind the Great Lakes own peculiar type of schooner design which differed from that of the WING which had been built and rigged for salt water. As in days long past, her work was transporting wood. This time pulp wood was added to the cargo types of the past, logs and timber. Green Bay, Goderich, Detroit and the shores between saw her, sometimes flying before the wind and sometimes hardly moving as she glided past with her decks piled high with wood.



THE SCHOONER "J.T.WING, BELLE ISLE
Winter of 1953

A change of occupation came again in 1938 when she was offered for the use of the Sea Scouts of this area. More than 2,000 boys saw some duty aboard her while she was officially known as the Great Lakes Training Ship. During this period of service she was rechristened the OLIVER H. PERRY in honor of the naval hero of the Battle of Lake Erie near Put-in-Bay during the War of 1812.

Back to the work-a-day world she came in 1941 to return to the less glamorous work of a lumber carrier. Time, progress, and the growing shortage of manpower due to the second world war, combined to lay the ship up at Marine City after the 1943 season. Here she lay half sunk in the Belle River where the wind, the rain and the small boys all joined to turn a working ship into little more than a semi-abandoned hulk. Thus seemingly ended the active life of the last commercial sailing vessel on the Great Lakes.

The idea of somehow preserving the only sailing ship remaining on the Great Lakes slowly came into being. Mr. Joseph Braun and Mr. Grant Piggott, owners of the ship, talked to others interested in finding a way to preserve this ship and at the same time tell the story of Great Lakes shipping. The ship was offered to the City of Detroit in 1945 and accepted by Mayor Edward J. Jefferies. At first it was planned to beach the ship and use it as a shop where model ships could be built by young Detroiters under the supervision of the Department of Parks and Recreation. In the summer of 1946, however, the new Detroit Historical Commission came into being and they were charged by the Mayor and the Common Council with responsibility of creating a Museum of Great Lakes History. The Common Council made a substantial grant of funds that fall for reconditioning purposes. At the same time, the J. T. Wing committee, of the Detroit Historical Society was formed under the chairmanship of Prentis M. Brown. Its members and other interested people and organizations combined to raise money and materials needed to augment the city appropriation and put the ship in condition as a museum.

On July 24, 1948, the WING made her last voyage to Belle Isle where a permanent berth was constructed on the Canadian side of the island, just south of the old ferry dock. The following year was spent in further reconditioning and preparing exhibits for opening on the 2d of July, 1949. In her first three months as a museum, some 56,000 people came aboard to see the last commercial sailing ship on the Great Lakes and her exhibits of Great Lakes lore, 91,000 by the end of the first fiscal year or six months of operation.

THE ST. JOSEPH RIVER IN PIONEER DAYS

By
Ralph Ballard

Niles, Mich.

Improvement of the St. Joseph River was one of the objects listed in the \$5,000,000 internal improvement schedule undertaken by the State just before the land bank operation broke in 1837, throwing the county into a long depression.

In 1838, an engineer, Charles Smith, was sent to make a survey of the possibilities of the river, and the required improvements. He affirmed that navigation was possible to small steamboats as far as Niles, and to Keelboats as far as Three Rivers.

At several times of the year, navigation was made difficult by the swiftness of the stream, and by the many bars formed by deposits from erosion. Sometimes, he said, islands were formed, and the river had two channels, neither deep enough for navigation.

The depth of the river varied from four to six feet, between high and low water, and he recommended a system of dams and locks from the mouth of the river to the Sturgis riffle, well toward Constantine.

His survey commenced at Porters warehouse at St. Joseph, where the river was four hundred feet wide, and deep enough for the largest vessels. A pier would be required at the mouth.

On the north side of the river opposite the town of St. Joseph was the mouth of the Paw Paw river, one hundred and fifteen feet wide and six feet deep, and navigated by keel boats as far as Watervliet, thirty miles up stream, but the lack of depth and the circuitous route made the Paw Paw unsatisfactory for navigation. Half a mile above the marsh, opposite the village of St. Joseph, was the mouth of Pine Creek, fifty feet wide and four feet deep. Just below Royalton, three miles above St. Joseph, was a large island with a shoal at the head of one channel, and the other with a depth of only four and a half feet.

Yellow creek enters from the south two and three quarters miles above Royalton, opposite the site of Valparaiso (now gone). Seven miles above St. Joseph was the mouth of Pipestone Creek, shallow and rapid, with a sawmill just above the mouth, powered by a ten foot fall.

From Saint Joseph to Niles, he reported, the river was from three to four hundred feet wide, with a valley from one fourth to three fourths of a mile wide.

At Ox Bow bend, several miles below Berrien Springs, the river made a circuit of one and a fourth miles and returned to within two hundred and sixty feet of its beginning.

From Ox Bow to Little Russia, four and a half miles down stream, it was nearly free from snags. A dam would be needed at Little Russia, and another at Devils elbow, opposite the Barns farm. Between these sites two streams emptied, Kimmels from the south, and Wallings from the north.

Berrien Springs was reached at twenty two miles above St. Joe. Opposite Berrien were two islands. Just below Shoemaker Island, Spring Creek came in from the north, and navigation would be possible by clearing the south channel.

Three miles up a dam would be required which would slacken the water to the Snyder farm. Opposite the Snyder farm a dam and a lock would be required five feet high. Five and one fourth miles above Berrien, Lybrooks Falling Branch, entered the river from the south, a half mile above Bartletts island.

Moccasin shoals and riffles extend two miles in the stream. The stream here was broad and much broken by islands, the largest being Needles island and Moccasin island, now Debs, and Batchelor islands. Just above the islands was the village of Benton, on the north side of the river, opposite the mouth of McCoys Creek. There was no mention of Buchanan or of McCoys Creek made in the report. McCoys Creek was an important stream, twelve feet wide and two feet deep

and falls of eight, ten, and fifteen feet just above the mouth. Two miles above McCoys Creek, a three and a half foot dam would be required to slacken the water to Weesawa village, where a five foot dam would be required to correct the stream to Niles, forty one miles from St. Joseph.

The Dowagiac River entered the river a half mile below Niles, with a flouring mill and a saw mill at the mouth.

At Niles, navigation was interfered with by a riffle below the bridge and an island above it. A four foot dam would be required somewhere between Beesons Warehouse and the bridge.

At Grand Dado Riffle, two miles above Niles, a three foot dam would be required to correct navigation to Bertrand, where a dam five feet high, the highest in Michigan, would be required, just above the bridge. The distance from St. Joseph to the Indiana line was forty miles, and the whole rise was sixty eight feet. The river ran forty three miles through Indiana, where it was more rapid than in Michigan, rising ninety nine feet, or two and a half feet to the mile. The rapidity caused many ripples, which kept forming and reforming. The first dam required in Indiana would be two and a half miles south of the line at Hullers Riffle, where Hullers Branch came in from the north, with a flour mill and a saw mill near the mouth. Here a five foot dam would correct swift waters at Portage and McCartney riffles, the latter being one of the most dangerous on the river.

At the head of McCartneys Riffle was Little Kankakee.

The second Indiana dam, at the bank below Stumps riffle, would collect the flow as far as the South Bend Riffle.

At South Bend, an eight foot dam and lock was contemplated by a South Bend Commercial Company which would correct the flow to Coombs Riffle. At Mishawakee a five foot dam had already been built by the St. Joseph Iron Company backing the water to twin islands. A dam above Twin islands would back the water past the riffles to Paw Paw Riffle. Above the

Paw Paw Riffle, several wing dams would be required to slacken the water and deepen the channel and deflect the current at bends.

A four and a half foot dam would slacken the water past the Penwell and Burnstein Riffles, as far as Sturgis Riffle, the most dangerous on the river. Where the fall was ten feet in a mile, a dam here would deepen the water past Christiana Creek and Elkhart Creek. Elkhart Creek was navigable by rafts as far as Goshen.

The above concluded the recommendations of the engineer.

From Union City to the mouth of the river it flowed one hundred miles, with a fall of two hundred and eighty feet. At the time of the survey in 1838, one steam boat was operating between Niles and St. Joseph, and several keel boats above Niles, and occasionally a steam boat ascended to South Bend. The word Riffle, as used above, is a pioneer adaptation of the word ripple. It was a shallow place in a stream with a current broken by obstructions. The above was taken from a supplement to Lanmans history of Michigan, published in 1839. There is a copy in the Niles Library. The improvements were begun by the State General John Van Fossen, appointed Commissioner of Internal Improvements in 1839, made a careful survey of snags from Mottville to St. Joseph, and built a snagboat equipped with capstan and other equipment for pulling the snags, and with it every snag was taken from the river from St. Joseph to within a few miles of Berrien Springs, with the exception of one huge snag that could not be handled. After that Steam boats could run at night as far as the river was cleared. It was the original intention to clear the river as far as Three Rivers, but the work was abandoned in 1840.

One year late in the 60's the river froze early, and several Keelboats, making their last run from Niles to St. Joseph were caught and were wrecked and sunk by the ice, including the Mary, owned by John Slaughtry, and loaded with barrels of whiskey. The cargo went down near Tabors Landing, near the present

town of Ardmore, on U.S. 31 and was never recovered. It has been hunted by divers a number of times. During prohibition times interest was particularly keen, but resulted in nothing.

A cargo of flour went down at the same time, but later it was raised and the flour found to be all right except for a half inch of paste that sealed the barrel.

A cargo of stoves went down and was never recovered.

The boat takes its name from the keel, which extended about two inches below the bottom. The sides were planked lengthwise, with two inch planks, and on each side, about a foot below the edge of the boat, was a cleated plank walk, on which the pole men walked.

The usual crew consisted of from six to nine men, including the Captain, who acted as steersman. Going down, when the boat was carried by the current, it was a very easy life, but going up, against the current was another matter. The men took their places, at the bow, on the running boards, standing close together, and facing down the stream. At a command from the Captain, the two men in the rear plunged their poles into the water, and set them firmly on the bottom. Then, leaning forward with their shoulders against the top of the pole, they started to walk down the stream, pushing hard, until they were almost horizontal. This propelled the boat up stream, and as soon as they had gone a little way, the number two men set their poles and pushed, then the number three, and in turn the number four men. When the number one men reached the stern, the number four men ceased pushing, withdrew their poles, and running forward to the bow, reset them, and as soon as they had a good hold, the other men ran back for new positions. In this way, the headway of the boat was kept up.

It was a very laborious process and only the most hardy men could stand it, and they soon acquired heavy calouses on their shoulders where the poles rested.

Judge B. F. Fish, testifying in a case at Indianapolis in 1903, said that he was fifty five years old and had lived in St. Joseph from 1838 to 1855, and at Niles from 1855 he had been a member and manager of a firm that controlled boating on the river, from 1835 to 1855, and that his Companies had boats over one hundred feet long, with a capacity of 600 barrels of flour. These boats operated especially at low water, when steam boat traffic was not practicable, and they drew about two feet of water.

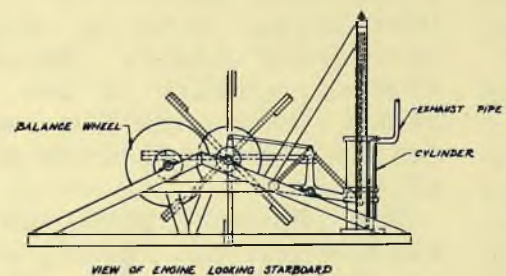
The Newberryport was the first steamer on the river. She was built at Erie Penn. for the St. Joseph trade, and was brought around the lakes, but she was found to be too large for the river traffic and grounded on a bar below Berrien Springs on her first trip, after which she was taken off.

The Matilda Barney, which was built by Devear and McCaleb, of St. Joseph in 1833, and started operations that year, was the first of a series of steamers, operating for over three quarters of a century.

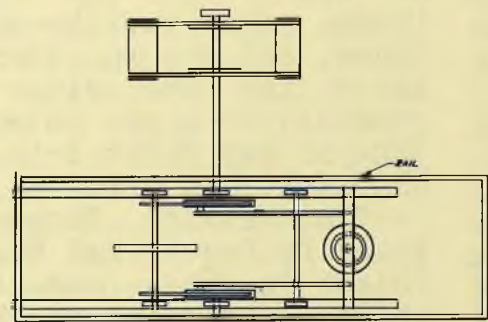
There was a lull in river traffic after the Michigan Central came to Niles in 1848, but not a cessation. Boat traffic enjoyed a revival in 1855-----1862 because of dissatisfaction caused by high railway rates, and an effort was made to enlist capital in stock of the St. Joseph Navigation Company, but without much success. During the war there was practically no river traffic, but after the war there was a revival, and steam boats and keelboats did quite a business between Niles and the mouth of the river.

In 1911 the May Graham was withdrawn from the river and followed by the Willow, but without much success.

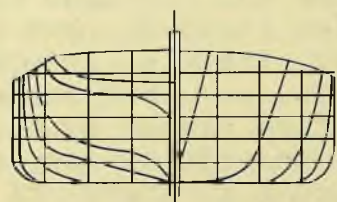
Among the steamers operating on the river from 1832 to 1911 were the Newberryport, Matilda Barney, Davy Crockett, Pocahontas, Algona, Mishawaka, Indiana, John F. Porter, Michigan, Niles, Niles Jr. St. Joseph, Union City, Pilot, Magnolia, King Brothers, Kakota, Schyler Colfax, Constantine, Albany, Diamond, Kalamazoo, May Graham, Patronage, China, Doc Hanley, and Willow.



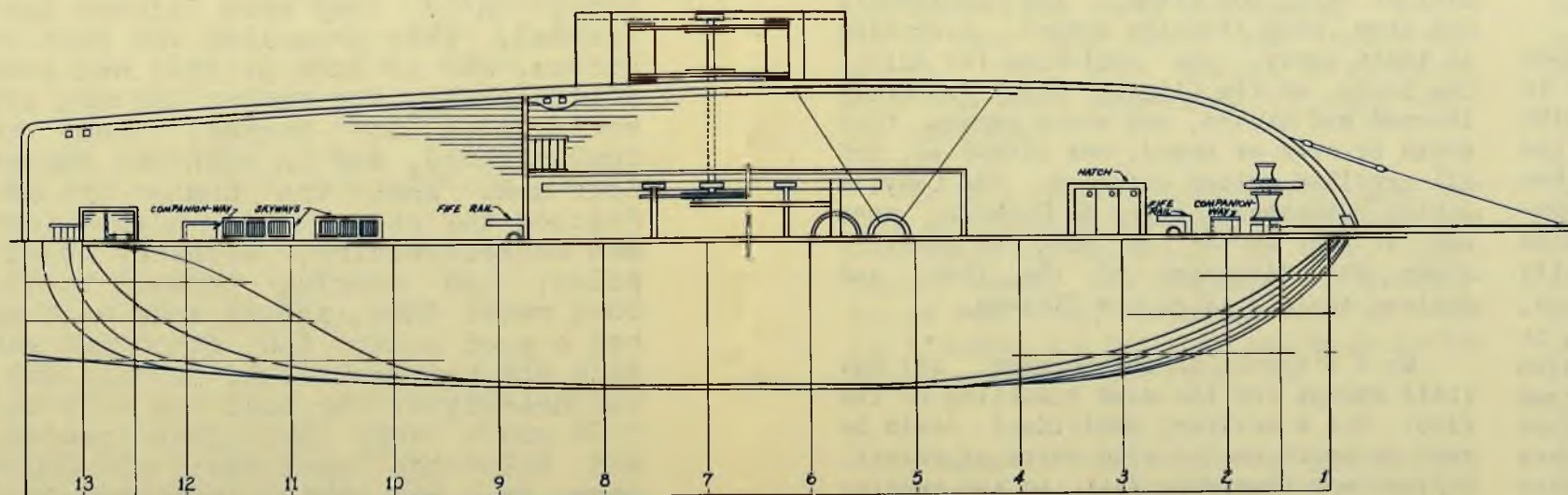
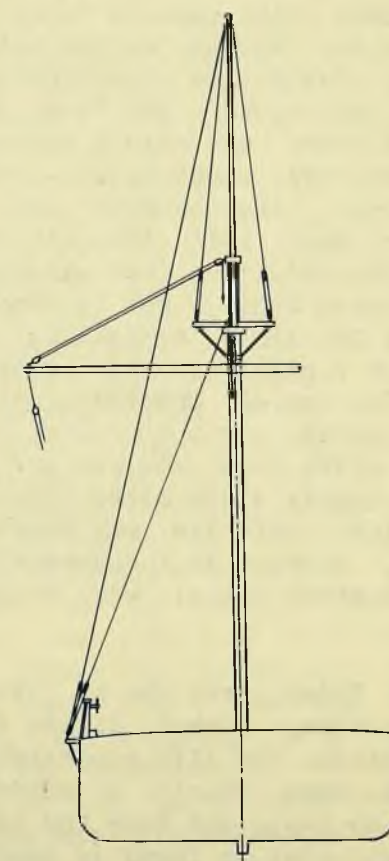
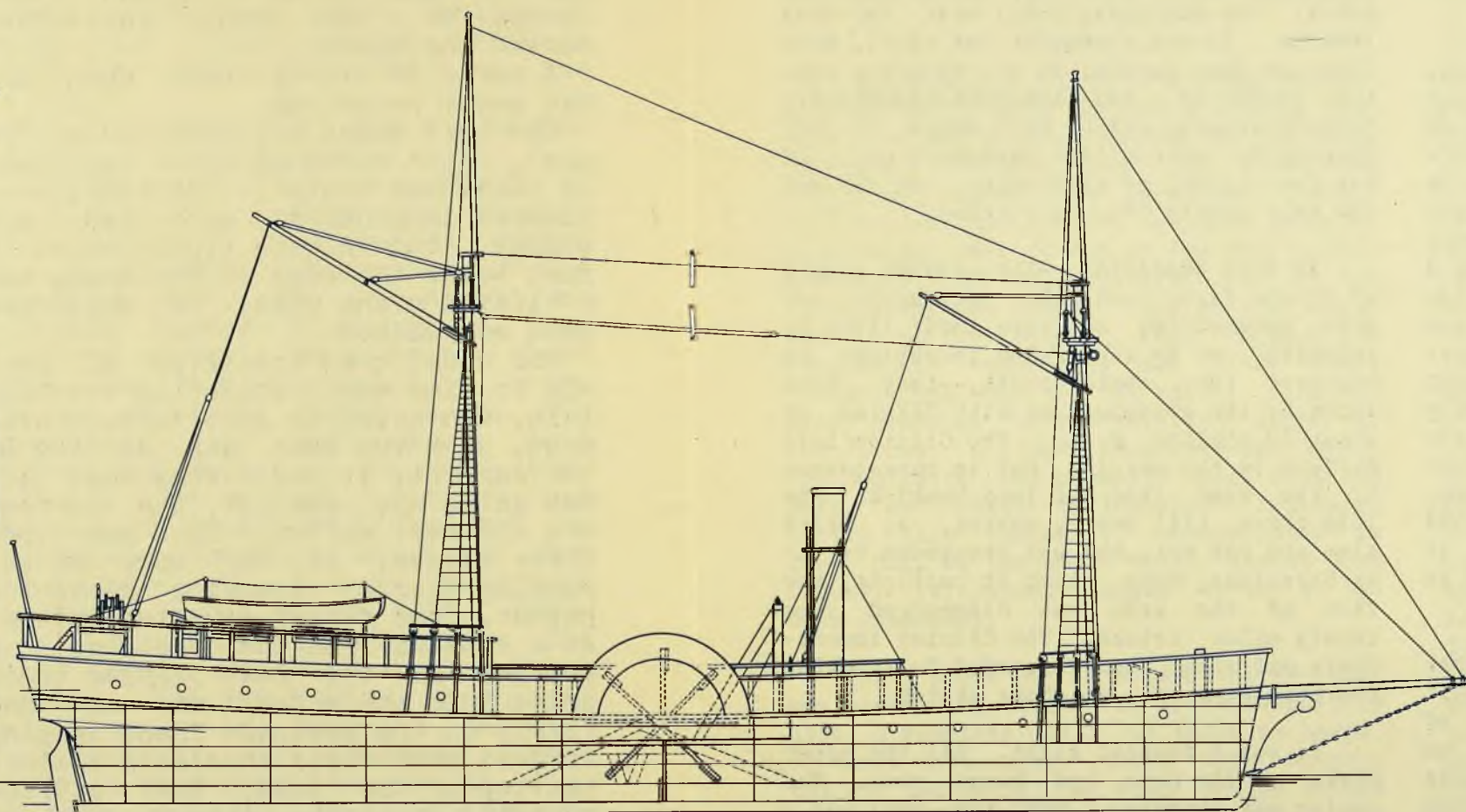
VIEW OF ENGINE LOOKING STARBOARD



PLAN VIEW OF ENGINE



6
5
4
3
2
1



WALK-IN-THE-WATER
1818
MUSEUM OF GREAT LAKES HISTORY
DRAWN BY *Asst. J. C. Johnston*
TRC'D BY *James B. Jones*
SCALE - 1/8" = 1' SEE SHEET NO. 2 FOR DETAILS
SHEET NO. 1

CONFLAGRATION OF THE STEAMER ERIE

Prepared for Telescope by Gordon P. Bugbee from STEAMBOAT DISASTERS and Railroad Accidents in the United States. Pub....1846

On Lake Erie, while on her Passage from Buffalo to Chicago, August 9, 1841; by which Awful Calamity nearly Two Hundred Persons perished.

The steamer ERIE, Captain T. J. Titus, left Buffalo for Chicago on the afternoon of August 9, having on board upwards of two hundred passengers. The crew, including the officers and others attached to the boat, numbered about thirty--making a total of nearly two hundred and forty souls. The boat left the dock about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and although the wind was blowing fresh, and a rough sea prevailed at the time, everything otherwise promised a pleasant and prosperous passage. The vessel proceeded gallantly on her way until about 8 o'clock in the evening--at which time she was off Silver Creek, and nearly eight miles from shore, --when a slight explosion was heard, and immediately, almost instantaneously, it seemed, the whole vessel was wrapped in flames.

Captain Titus, who was on the upper deck at the time, rushed to the ladies' cabin to obtain the life preservers, of which there were nearly a hundred on board; but so rapid had been the progress of the flames, that he found it impossible to enter the cabin.

He immediately returned to the upper deck, having previously given orders to the engineer to stop the engine--the wind and the headway of the boat increasing the fierceness of the flames, and driving them aft. The engineer replied, that, in consequence of the flames, he could not reach the engine. The steersman was instantly directed to put the helm hard-a-starboard. The boat swung slowly around, heading to the shore, and the small boats, of which there were three on board, were then ordered to be lowered. Two of them were lowered, but, in consequence of the heavy sea and the headway of the vessel, they both swamped as soon as they touched the water.

We will not attempt to describe the awful and appalling condition of the passengers. Some were frantic with fear and horror, others plunged madly into the water, while others seized upon anything buoyant upon which they could lay their hands. The remaining small boat had been lowered. It was alongside the wheel, with three or four persons in it, when the captain jumped in, and the boat immediately dropped astern, filled with water. A lady floated by with a life preserver on. It was Mrs. Lynde, of Milwaukie, and she was the only female who was rescued.

In this condition,--the steamer a mass of fierce fire, and the passengers and crew endeavoring to save their lives by swimming, or by supporting themselves on whatever they could reach,--they were found by the steamboat De Witt Clinton, at about 10 o'clock, P. M. The Clinton left Buffalo in the morning, but in consequence of the wind had put into Dunkirk. She laid there till nearly sunset, at which time she ran out, and had proceeded as far as Barcelona, when, just at twilight, the fire of the Erie was discovered some twenty miles astern. The Clinton immediately put about, and succeeded in reaching the burning wreck, as above stated.

It was a fearful sight. All the upper works of the Erie had burnt away. The engine was standing, but the hull was a mass of dull, red flame. The passengers and crew were floating around, screaming in their agony, and shrieking for help; the boats of the Clinton were instantly lowered and manned, and every person that could be seen or heard, was picked up, and all possible relief afforded. The Lady, a little steamboat lying at Dunkirk, went out of that harbor as soon as possible after the discovery of the fire, and arrived shortly after the Clinton.

By 1 o'clock in the morning, all was still except for the dead crackling of the fire. Not a solitary individual could be seen or heard on the wild waste of waters. A line was then made fast to the remains of the Erie's rudder, and an effort made to tow the hulk ashore. It was towed

within about four miles of land, when it sunk in eleven fathoms water. By this time it was daylight. The lines were then cast off, and the Clinton headed for Buffalo, which she reached about 6 o'clock, having on board twenty-seven human beings whom she had rescued from death by fire or water. The little steamer Lady had also picked up two, thus making but twenty-nine who were saved of the entire number on

Origin of the Fire. Among the passengers on board were several painters, who were on their way to Erie to paint the steamboat Madison. They had with them demijohns filled with spirits of turpentine and varnish, which, unknown to Captain Titus, were placed on the boiler-deck directly over the boilers. One of the firemen who was saved, says he had occasion to go on the deck, and, seeing the demijohns, removed them. They were replaced; by whom is not known. Immediately previous to the bursting forth of the flames, a slight explosion was heard. The demijohns had probably burst with the heat, and their inflammable contents, taking fire instantly, communicated to every part of the boat, which, having been freshly varnished, caught as if it had been gunpowder.

Not a paper nor an article of any kind was saved. Of course it is impossible to give a complete list of those on board. Of cabin passengers there were between thirty and forty, of whom ten or twelve were ladies. In the steerage were about one hundred and forty passengers, nearly all of whom were Swiss and German emigrants. They were mostly in families, with the usual proportion of men, women and children.

It is a singular coincidence that the Erie was burnt at the same place where the Washington was destroyed in June, 1838. Captain Brown, who commanded the Washington at that time, happened to be on board the Clinton, and was very active in saving the survivors of the Erie. ...

We extract the following particulars relative to this awful disaster, from the letter of a gentleman, dated Buffalo, August 10:

"... The Clinton, with twenty-seven of the saved on board, took the hull of the Erie in two for Buffalo; after having been drawn, however, fifteen or twenty miles, the remnants of the wreck suddenly sunk. The steamer Lady returned, with the two she had picked up, to Dunkirk; one of them was my informant. He has thrown himself overboard on a plank, when he saw further efforts to be useless, but relinquished it to a friend, who could not swim, and took for his own support the fender, which just then fell by his side. He states that those who survived the swamping of the boats, clung with desperation to the burning wreck. One man he saw standing for some minutes on the gallows-beam, the flames encircling him, with his coat-skirts thrown over his head, till he dropped dead into the body of the flames. One of the wheelmen is said to have been burnt up doing his duty at the helm. A young lad, of the age of fourteen, (by the name of Beebe and one of those saved), is reported to have behaved with great courage. As he descended the guys to the water, the chain was so hot that he left masses of flesh upon the rod at every clasp of his hands. Reaching the rudder, he stood upon that, and soaking his jacket in the water, he applied it to assuage the pain of his hands, and then used it to extinguish the fire from his dress and parts of the wreck near him. The only lady who was saved, (Mrs. Lynde, wife of C. J. Lynde, Esq., of Milwaukie,) was standing at the stern of the boat, with her husband, arranging her life-preserver about her person, when the boat gave a lurch and precipitated her into the water. She saw nothing more of her husband, but was herself buoyed up till the Clinton arrived.

"The first notice which the boat I was upon (the Fulton) had of this sad event, was at Dunkirk, about 5 o'clock in the morning; the boat was placed upon the track of the Erie, and in about one hour we perceived many indications of the disaster: a basket, a chest of tea, and a box of lemons were picked up. Presently the numerous small pieces of burnt wood, embraced in quite a small area, indicated the immediate scene of the catastrophe. As they were seen at some distance off, the boat checked her speed; and her slow and solemn motion over the unmade graves of hundreds, the measured surge of the

waves under her prow, and the sound of the occasionally puffing steam, were felt to be more solemn than any common tribute to the memory of the dead."

From the narrative of Edward Johnson, a colored man, who was on board the Erie at the time of the conflagration, we have gathered some further particulars: --

"Early in the evening the Erie got under way. Not long after the boat had started, the steward, Mr. Gilson, came to me and said he wished to employ me, as I had been recommended to him as a good cook. He then made propositions to me, which I consented to accept - but had not gone to work when the boat arrived off Silver Creek. I was sitting on the boiler-deck near the cook-room door, when I heard a noise as if some vessel had burst, and heard the rattling of glass. Heard a movement on the promenade-deck; when I went aft and climbed up over the stern, in order to see what was the matter. The moment I got upon the promenade-deck, I saw the flame of fire coming up midship, and went towards it. It was then about 9 o'clock. The sea was running very high, with a stiff breeze. I thought the vessel must go, as no one attempted to suppress the fire. I then went aft to the boats, to which many people had rushed. Saw so many white people about them that I concluded there would be no chance for me, (being a colored man) and determined to seek for my own preservation in some other manner.

"There were three boats, all of which I saw in the water afterwards, bottom up. The people hallooed and screamed, and commenced jumping overboard. A tall gentleman came aft, where I stood, followed by three ladies, who were screaming for mercy. He said 'Don't be alarmed, we shall all be saved;' and then sung out, 'Man, run your boat ashore!' and in the next moment, as it were, he jumped into the water from the taffrail, and was followed by the three ladies, neither of whom had made the least preparation to save themselves. This was the case with most of the people, who seemed to have lost all their senses. They would scream as they jumped from the vessel, strike the water, and nothing more could be heard.

"While the boat was leaving the harbor at Buffalo, I noticed a young lady, who was very gay, and who talked quite loud. She told a gentleman, who was in conversation with her, that she expected to be seasick, and that if he would get her things from the cabin, she would stay on deck. After the boat was on fire, and while I was aft, the lady came to the same gentleman, who was then standing in the corner by the taffrail, and asked him to go and look for her father; to which the gentleman replied, that it was of no use. He said he would try to save her; and having picked up a settee, he held it over the stern, and directed her to get over and take hold of it that he might thus let her down into the water. In attempting to do this, she let go her hold too soon, and fell into the water; and as she did not come up again, I supposed her head had struck on the rudder-blade. The gentleman then went overboard with the settee.

"I now thought it was time to look out for something with which I could assist myself in the water; in which I succeeded. I climbed over the stern, and let myself down by means of the tiller chains. When in the water, I could see lights all along the shore; and around the burning vessel the most appalling sight was displayed. Hats, caps, cloaks, bonnets, and human bodies were plainly to be seen floating upon the water by the light which the fire threw out, and cries for help were heard in every direction.

"I call myself a good swimmer, yet I do not know whether I or the boat had made the headway; but I had acquired the distance of about one and a half miles from the steamboat, when I saw two men in the water near me. They hallooed, and, inquiring what support I had, I answered, 'Nothing.' I thought they were as good swimmers as myself, and I did not feel willing to share my board with them. Then said one of the men, 'O Lord! I do not think I can stand it to get ashore.' Hearing this, my sympathy was awakened, and I hallooed to them and said, 'Come to me; I have a board.'

"The two men then swam up and took hold of my board. At one end of this board was an iron leg, which I had pulled from the

deck with the board, at which end I kept hold myself, with my arm around the iron. After the two men had come to me, they proposed to return to the yawl, which could be seen at a distance, bottom up. I at first declined to do so, because I thought we could make the land, but afterwards finding we made very slow headway, I consented.

"We soon reached the yawl, to the keel of which some ten or twelve persons were clinging. At a short distance from this was a lady, (who subsequently proved to be Mrs. C. J. Lynde), calling for help. A person who had hold of the boat at the right, whom I afterwards learned was Captain Titus, said that the woman had a life-preserver on; and another person cried out to her, 'My dear woman, you are doing better than we are.' But, as she continued to cry for assistance, I proposed to Captain Titus, whom I then did not know, that if he would take hold of the end of my board, and agree to give it to me when I should come back, I would go for Mrs. Lynde and bring her up; to which he assented, and I swam towards her.

"When I reached her, she was lying nearly on her back. She had a life-preserver on, reaching around her body under one arm and over the other shoulder. An oar was in the water near her, which I caught hold of to assist myself with, and as I came up to Mrs. Lynde, she laid hold of it. I then seized her arm and swam with her towards the yawl, during which she complained much of the cold. When I had brought her to the yawl, I requested her to lay hold of the boat, but she declined to so do, and said, 'Let go, I shall do now.' I did so, and Captain Titus gave me my place again.

"The heavy sea knocked us about terribly, and sometimes the yawl turned entirely over. In this situation we remained for a long time, until the boat of the De Witt Clinton picked us up, and rescued us while at the last extremity. Indeed, I was the only one who could get into the boat of the Clinton with no assistance; the others entirely exhausted, were pulled in and laid at the bottom of the boat, like so many sheep tied for the slaughter.

THE CORNELIA E. WINDIATE

December weather was setting in on Lake Michigan back in 1875. The staunch three master Cornelia B. Windiate, lying at the dock in Milwaukee, was being slowly loaded with some twenty thousand bushels of Wisconsin wheat. The owners and Captain Mackey wondered if it was wise to set sail for Buffalo so late in the season, but others were doing it and the profits from the haul were tempting, so much better than in the depression year of two seasons past. It had also been easy to secure eight good sailors to man the craft.

The Windiate had been built at Manitowoc in 1873 by Thomas Windiate, a contractor and hotel keeper, and Joseph Butler who had constructed several craft in previous years. It was a canal type schooner of 332 tons and had cost some twenty thousand dollars, a considerable sum to put into a schooner in that period. She had secured an A 2 rating and was considered a very satisfactory and seaworthy craft in the two years she had been running in the grain trade. Mr. Windiate had named the boat after his wife and was so proud of the schooner's performance that he had refused \$25,000 for her.

Thus it was that the schooner left Milwaukee laden with the grain cargo on December 8th with Buffalo as her goal. A week passed and nothing was heard of her passing either the straits or the Detroit River. Anxiety turned into resignation as the weeks passed. No trace of boat or crew was ever found. How far did she get from Milwaukee? There was a storm on December 10th that swept over Lake Michigan in December fury. How far north was the Windiate when she met her fate? Did the cargo shift causing her to capsize? All these questions were asked but never answered.

The story of the Cornelia Windiate was prepared for Telescope by Ralph G. Plumb of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

MORE ABOUT THE WALK-IN-THE-WATER

By B. E. O'Keefe

According to an article in the Saginaw Courier, November 6, 1867, the engine of Walk-in-the-Water, one of the first Great Lakes steamboats, was used to provide power in the first sawmill erected on the Saginaw River.

The first sawmill in the Valley was built by Harvey Williams in 1834 at Saginaw. Chapman's History of 1881 states the machinery was made in Detroit "sufficient to run one muley saw." The fly wheel, according to the same source, was from the old steamer "Superior," called by Chapman, the second steamboat on the Lakes.

The fly wheel was eleven feet in diameter, and "in the steamer was fixed on a shaft distinct from the main shaft, and was geared to make three revolutions to each revolution of the paddle wheels."

The fly wheel along with the other machinery was brought to Saginaw in 1834 from Detroit on sleighs. The journey from Detroit was an arduous one, as shown by the fact the sleighs crossed the Clinton River five times in only nine miles of the hundred mile trip.

It is simple to explain the fact that one source says this fly wheel came from "Walk-in-the-Water" while another credits it to the steamer "Superior." As pointed out in TELESCOPE's November issue, in the article on "Walk-in-the-Water" the latter was beached during a gale on October 31, 1821. Though she was completely destroyed her engine was salvaged and used in the second steamboat, the "Superior."

The above story has been carefully checked and found to be true even though a modern marine engineer declared, to your editor that such a flywheel as the one described was not possible. After much research we came up with a contemporary description of the engine and in it the flywheel was mentioned. Later we found it on a very dim drawing and now we are re-drawing our plans of the boat's engine to show it in its proper place.

(Editor)

Reports from along the St. Clair River show that nature is again showing her hand in the eternal battle between man and his environment. Just a few years ago people owning property along the river and around the shore of Lake St. Clair sustained heavy losses caused by high water. At this time many towns in the same areas are faced with the possibility of having to lower the intakes of their water supply systems to keep them below the surface.

The latest accounts indicate that the trouble is due to an ice jam at Port Huron, Michigan, where the St. Clair River leaves the lake. Below that point the water is two feet or more below normal for this time of year (January 24). The U. S. Coast Guard cutter "Acacia" has been trying to relieve the situation by breaking away the lower edge of the jam, hoping to work through to the key point but has as yet failed to succeed. Lake Huron is said to be six inches higher than the water below the jam but it is not clear whether this meant a mean of six inches over all of Lakes Huron and Michigan. Theoretically both lakes are of one level though winds make considerable local variations. The cutter "Tupelo," of Toledo, Ohio, has been working with the Acacia but both returned to their bases on the above date. It would be difficult to foretell the damage that could be caused by a sudden breaking of the jam at the upper end of the St. Clair.

At Detroit, the falling water has left ice tables on pilings at least two feet above the present surface. Some of the larger yachts that were left in the water during the winter season are lying over on their bilges. For some time the Detroit River, at Belle Isle, had reached a level so nearly that of Lake Erie there was no perceptible current. Thin ice formed all the way across to the Canadian side. What will happen when the break comes will depend upon how fast the ice gives way.

COPY PLEASE

Our recent call for good stories of ships, ports, rivers, and people has not brought in much copy except from our very good friends in S.W. Michigan. Put your port or your river on the map-----soon.

(Ed.)

MICHIGANIA

Because Marion Schoolland had access to the recently recovered documents and letters from the Van Raalte estate, and was familiar with old residents of western Michigan, she has given us an authentic historical novel of the Dutch settlement at Holland and Zeeland, Michigan, in her book, A LAND I WILL SHOW THEE.

The events leading up to the departure of the first group of Dutch emigrants under their Dominie-Albertus C. Van Raalte in September, 1846, are well given.

The sight was chosen for its possibilities of navigation, saw mills, and grist mills. Thousands of acres were purchased in Van Raalte's name for his people, that they might have land of their own, without the danger of being dispossessed by a domineering landlord.

The spirit of these early colonists is caught in the following words of the author: "We will share. And when it is gone, we will still share." And share they did indeed! From the unaccustomed labor of felling trees and clearing land, sickness and death of many of their numbers--to their religious and economic freedom, they shared!

The quiet message of courage and hope during desperate times should stimulate the minds of all readers.

Ruth Rouse
Route 2
Eaton Rapids,
Michigan

MODEL VAN DE OORLOGSBRIK "IRENE"
Door E. W. Petrefus. 8½x11½, Holland 1952. 202 p. With 492 beautiful, detailed text drawings plus 3 plates loosely inserted, being detailed hull and rigging plans. Although printed in Dutch, the illustrations alone are worth the price! They show details for construction of this Dutch brig-of-war "IRENE," built in 1806, but also all phases of hull, internal and deck layout & rigging of all types for 18th & 19th centuries. Includes a bibliography of ship model books in Dutch and English.
\$5.00 (689)

FROM WAY BACK YONDER

When you think of "Way back yonder,"
With a self-approving air
For the light and truth you've garnered
Since the time you wandered there;

Don't be too enamoured with
The man you've come to be,
'Till you've taken stock, completely,
And seen what you can see.

For I want to tell you, brother,
That you're further from the truth
Than you were in "Way back yonder"
When you were a callow youth.

You have caught a lot of fishes,
With a lot of fancy gear
But they've come to be more tasteless
With every passing year;

And the stream is now polluted
With a lot of harmful stuff
That you had never dreamed of
When you swam there in the buff.

Sure! You've learned a lot of rubbish,
But unless it brought you joy
You're just sophisticated
And no wiser than the boy

Who fished along the river bank,
Or swam there when 'Twas hot:
You've lost a world of wonders
In the search for what you've got.

(J.E. Johnston)

HOW TO MAKE CLIPPER SHIP MODELS. by Edward W. Hobbs. A Practical Manual dealing with every aspect of Clipper Ship modelling from the Simplest Waterline Types to Fine Scale Models fit for Exhibition purposes. 5½x8, Glasgow, (1952). 215 p. With 160 photos. 40 line drawings of details & parts, and 5 large size folding plates of working drawings. Separate chapters are devoted to masts and spars, sails, standing & running rigging, deck fittings, etc. Also on painting & finishing, making show cases & stands. \$3.50 (678)



BOOKS



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SIDEWHEEL STEAMERS OF LAKE ERIE

The most thorough study of Great Lakes side wheel steamers made in the past one hundred years.

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WANDERINGS

A most interesting and educational collection of sketches having to do with the eastern end of the upper peninsula. Local characters of the past, birds, and animals of the great wilds as well as domestic pets come to life in this outstanding work.












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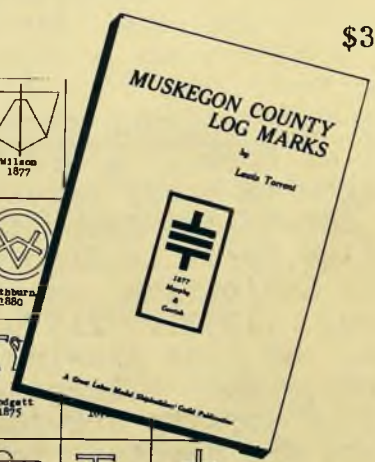
ALSO COMING SOON

MUSKEGON COUNTY LOG MARKS

This booklet contains a most interesting account of how saw logs, during the boon days of lumbering, were marked by their owners with distinctive brands, monograms or designs, to enable them to be separated according to owners at the end of a log drive. Nearly 200 of these distinctive marks are included in this most interesting study of a long forgotten practice.

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Telescope BELLE ISLE DETROIT, MICHIGAN