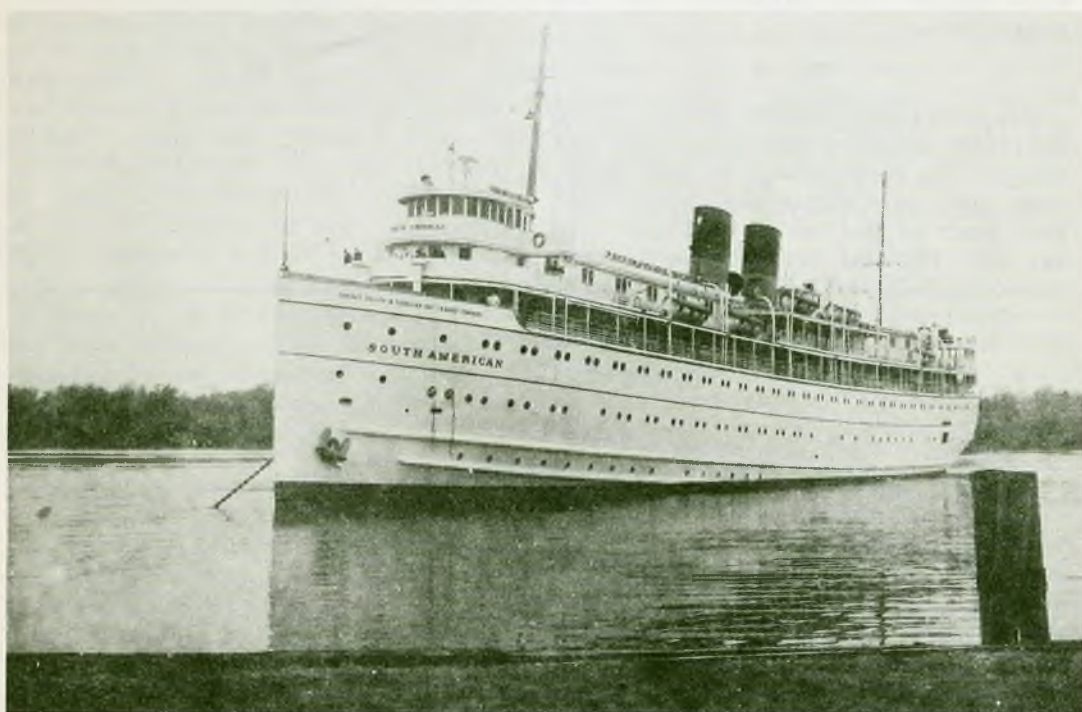


TELESCOPE

March, 1966

Volume 15, Number 3



**Great Lakes
Maritime
Institute**



**Dossin Great Lakes Museum,
Belle Isle, Detroit 7, Michigan**

MEETING NOTICES

Annual Meeting

Friday 24 June 1966

Dossin Museum, 8 p.m.

Results of the election for members of the Institute's Board of Directors will be reported, and the Board will choose its officers for the coming year.

* * *

Our cover photograph shows *South American* working her way around her anchor to turn about in Lake Macatawa and come along the cement company pier at Holland, Michigan, on May 14. She was carrying passengers

from Chicago to the annual Tulip Festival there. The *South* winters at Holland, and each year the Tulip Festival brings her to life to begin her pre-season charter cruises of convention groups, high school graduating classes, and the like, before she begins her regular weekly Buffalo-to-Duluth cruises in late June.

The cover subject is an indication of how late this March issue is in arriving in your hands. It has been delayed by your editor's being burdened with other commitments during the past spring. If all goes well, the summer should bring us back on schedule, and we apologize for the inconvenience to our readers. --GPB

Notes on Two Early Revenue Cutters

BY ISABELLA E. SWAN

THE REVENUE CUTTERS operating out of Detroit from October, 1817, until July, 1821, were the *A. J. Dallas* and her successor, the *Porcupine*. Because many records kept in the Treasury Department, Washington, D. C., were destroyed by fire in 1833, details and events concerning the *Dallas* and the *Porcupine*, herein related, are gathered from local contemporary documents preserved in the Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.

Though there evidently were revenue boats at Detroit in earlier times, little is known about them. In a contract of April 7, 1811, it is stipulated that Augustus Roy, a mariner, was to perform such duties "as may be directed...by the master of the Revenue boat of the district."¹ On May 31, 1817, the Secretary of the Treasury requested William Woodbridge to extend "every facility which the revenue boat will permit" to President Monroe during his visit to Detroit.²

The *Dallas* and the *Porcupine* were obtained for the revenue service by William Woodbridge when he was Collector of Customs for the District of Detroit, 1814 to 1828. Both cutters were involved in slanderous and incriminating charges which gave rise to correspondence containing information about their construction and operation.

Enforcement Problems

After careful study of regulations, which had been in effect since 1799, Woodbridge reported conditions at Detroit, February 24, 1816, to Alexander J. Dallas, Secretary of the Treasury.³ There were no storehouses, as were required by law. "Much loss has intervened from the necessity...of putting goods heretofore seized within this District into Garrets cellars, & such other unsafe places of deposits as could be procured...there are not in the possession of this Office any Scales, weights, nor measures... [no] Hydrometer nor a thermometer, nor any other instrument by which to ascertain the proof of Spirits."

Editor's note: The schooner *Alexander J. Dallas* was the first of two revenue cutters of that name to see service on the Great Lakes. The second was a wooden propeller built at Portland, Maine, in 1874. Her steeple compound engine later served in Arnold Transit's *Mackinac* of 1909. A list of "Ships of the U. S. Revenue Marine," by the Rev. Edward J. Dowling, S. J., appeared in *Telescope* of August, 1962, on pages 172-75, and described revenue cutters that saw service on the Great Lakes.

1. Miscellaneous U. S. Customs Reports (1802-1820). Woodbridge Papers.
2. *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*. Lansing, 1877 to 1929. 1: 468.
3. Unless otherwise specified, all manuscripts quoted are in the Woodbridge Papers.

NOTES ON TWO EARLY REVENUE CUTTERS

As for weighers, gaugers, measurers, inspectors, or mariners, he stated: "All such as were employed heretofore have been discharged in consequence of an intimation from the Comptroller that their employment had never yet been by you expressly sanctioned. ...There has [been] since the period of discharge...a continued illicit commercial intercourse between this District & the Province of Upper Canada not only in violation of the Public law but to the great injury of the honourable merchants."

No contract had been made for the procurement of a small revenue boat which had been approved in 1815, as it would be "altogether inadequate to effect that full protection to the Revenue laws so much to be desired." Woodbridge estimated that a boat with its suitable equipment, capable of guarding "the principal avenues of illicit trade...between Amherstburg in Canada & the entrance of the Miami bay inclusive, would...cost at least \$200 & a larger one would be much safer.

"It was announced in your circular letter of FebY 25, 1815, that it was intended that all revenue barges & Cutters throughout the U. S. should be uniform in their construction & equipment. In reference to this particular no model & no instructions have been received at this office."

PART ONE: THE A. J. Dallas

In 1816 construction of a larger vessel was approved. In a letter to Major Robert Irwin, of Mackinac, April 9, 1824, Woodbridge reviewed the circumstances of placing the contract.

"In 1816 or 17, I was directed by the Gov^t to cause to be built a revenue boat [Dallas]. At that time there were neither materials nor good workmen here who followed that business. I wrote a letter of inquiry to Col. Forster...[who] kindly offered to make a contract for me in behalf of the Gov^t. I acceded to his offer. The vessel was built. I from time to time & I believe always considerably in advance of the contract forwarded money to him."

Thomas Forster, Collector for the District of Presque Isle, had placed the contract for the hull with William Copis; Giles Sanford & Co., of Erie, supplied the rigging. There was some

NOTES ON TWO EARLY REVENUE CUTTERS

miscarriage or faulty entry in the accounting and, on August 12, 1823, G. Sanford & Co. dunned Col. Forster who, in turn, forwarded the statement to Woodbridge.

Heated argument over the charges, coupled with a suit for defamation of character, indirectly connected with Woodbridge (Thomas Forster vs Leonard Gordon), caused a rift in the Forster-Woodbridge relationship. Convinced that Forster had been "deceived and imposed upon by mischief makers," Woodbridge became anxious to restore friendly feelings and sought the intercession of Robert Irwin. It was this difficulty that resulted in Woodbridge's lengthy letter of April 9, 1824, previously quoted.

A Trim Built Vessel

Francis A. Dewey describes "the successful United States Revenue Cutter *Alexander J. Dallas* as "a trim built vessel with black hull, painted ports, long raking masts and black yards. Her cabin was ornamented and decorated on all sides with cutlasses and swords, and around her masts were boarding pikes. On her main deck was the monitor gun, on the quarter deck was the swivel gun, mounted for use. The compliment of men in uniform was Sixteen."⁴

An "ex-midshipman," Dewey once "had charge of this gallant monitor of the lakes for the term of five months, when she was laid up in winter quarters in Buffalo harbor." That may have been the winter of 1828-29 while Dewey, age 17, was attending a military school in Buffalo. In 1829 he moved to Michigan with his parents.⁵

Dewey names Captain [William Keith] as commander of the vessel. This is the only mention of Captain Keith in connection with the *Dallas*. Though he is said to have been master of the first revenue cutter on the Detroit River, it is doubtful that he commanded the *Dallas*; he was commander of the *Porcupine*, as will appear later.

Arrival at Detroit

Perhaps it was the balance still due on the account which detained the *Dallas* at Erie during the summer of 1817. In the fall Woodbridge ordered Col. Forster to send her to Detroit.

(Continued on page 63)

4. *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*. 4: 79-81.

5. *History and Biographical Record of Lenawee County (Michigan)*, by William A. Whitney. Adrian, 1879-80. 1: 375-77.

Curator's Corner

By Robert E. Lee, Curator
Dossin Great Lakes Museum

As the year unfolds and the season gets underway, the Museum has a great deal to look ahead to, and by this time next year it will be a different and better place.

First, and most important in the good news department, we are getting an addition to the building. By the generosity of the Helen L. DeRoy Foundation, we are adding a wing along the river front which will serve as a combined exhibit hall and meeting room. It will be designated as the Aaron DeRoy Hall. The room will furnish an unobstructed view of the passing river traffic to visitors who just want to "boat-watch." The room will also have projection facilities in a closed and raised booth at the rear of the room, and a raised dais at the front for speakers.

Work has already begun on preliminary plans. Older Institute members will be interested in knowing that Jim Jones, formerly of our own staff, and now with the Detroit City Engineer's Office, is assigned to the architect in the planning. Jim, you'll remember, was responsible for the production of ship plans for modellers, which resulted in many of the museum's collection of models being built.

* * *

Another gift, this one from the Historic Memorials Society in Detroit, will place an illuminated

bulletin type sign in front of the building. This sign, much like those used in front of churches, will proclaim the special events being held at the museum. This will eliminate the old method of signs painted on plywood sheets.

Finally, we will have the Gothic Room of *City of Detroit III* ready and will be dedicating it during the summer. While we'll be glad to have this job done, we will regret that it is finished in some ways. For it has resulted in considerable very good publicity for the museum while it has been under construction. The *Detroit News* devoted a center-spread of their Sunday Rotogravure to an illustrated color article recently, and those of you who have ever been responsible for publication know what a plum that is!

We've been on Television with a fifteen minute show, detailing the work that has gone into restoration of the room. Three radio programs have covered it in more or less detail, and we were personally on the air in an interview dealing with it. All this has, rest assured, been very good for attendance!

The Institute meeting in May will be put on by the Museum's staff who have been active in the Gothic Room project. At that time many of the photographic record slides that have been taken will be shown for the first time.

So, it bids to be an active period that we're entering, and surely it will be a rewarding one.



WELLAND CANAL PADRE

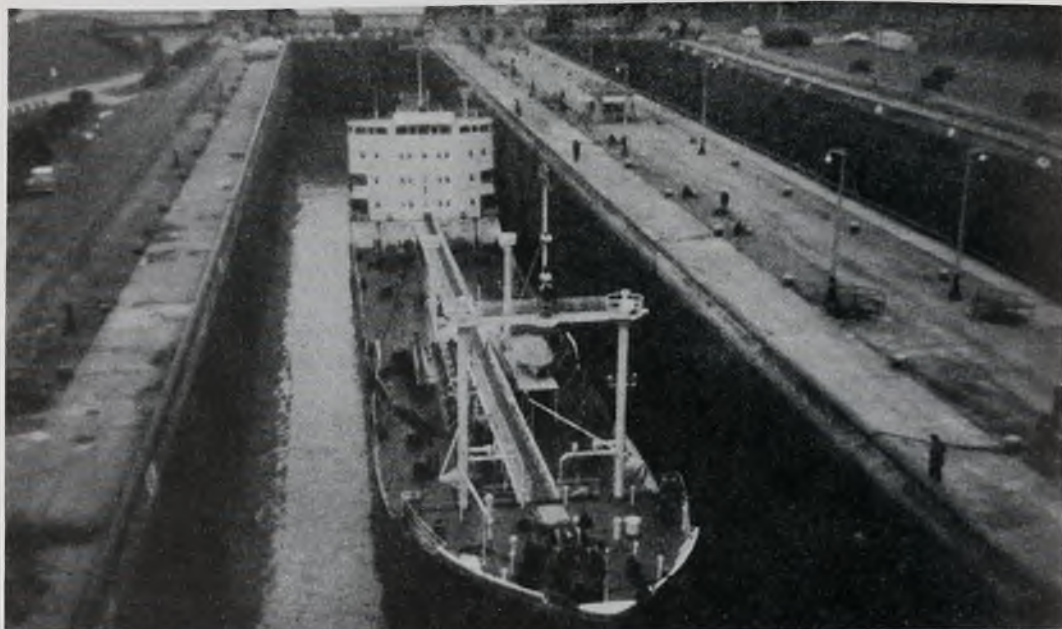
BY SKIP GILLHAM

Many of us who enjoy watching the many vessels that sail our Great Lakes are no doubt unaware of the restrictions placed on men's souls by the confining nature of shipboard life. Recently, this writer had the chance to spend a day with Reverend Cameron Orr of the Welland Canal Mission in his rounds of visiting sailors. This is a work that Rev. Orr has done for the last twenty-six years. Being "aboard" was not new to this writer, who financed his last year of college by working the summer of 1963 as an oiler on the m.v. *Lubrolake* a) *Mercury*, but accompanying Reverend Orr as he visit-

ed the men was indeed a thrilling experience.

The Welland Canal Mission was organized in 1868. Rev. Orr is the third minister in the ninety-seven years of its existence. The mission is controlled by a board of directors who meet three times a year to discuss financial and policy matters.

Rev. Orr is an ordained Baptist minister, having graduated from Toronto Bible College and later, in 1939, from McMaster University in Hamilton. Residing close to the canal in St. Catherines, he begins each working day at 8:45 in prayer in his home. Arriving at the canal



Jos. Simard in Lock Four of the Welland Canal, Oct. 16, 1965. Author's photo.

at 9:30, he checks in at Lock Seven to learn what vessels are traversing the canal that day. He then proceeds to Lock Four where he leaves his car before boarding ship.

The first ship we met was the Branch Lines tanker *Jos. Simard*, transporting a cargo of gasoline from Clarkson to Fort William. This vessel cost five million dollars when launched at Sorel in June of 1964. We noticed that a number of the crew sported beards. On inquiring, we learned that the vessel had recently returned from the summer Arctic run with her sister ship, *J. Edouard Simard*. These tankers had carried petroleum products from Goose Bay, Labrador, to various Arctic outposts for three months. As there are no port facilities in the North, unloading is carried out by anchoring in a bay and pumping the cargo directly into a pipeline leading to the shore. This meant that the crew's only time ashore was during loading at Goose Bay.

Once we were safely in Lock Five, the Captain took time to show us the latest modern equipment in the pilot house. He was especially proud of the radio and radar sets--the best on the market. Later he took us to his quarters, which were beautifully equipped and capable of sleeping fourteen guests. We then proceeded to visit other parts of the ship, including the electronically controlled engine room as well as the officers' dining room for lunch.

At each of these stops, Rev. Orr would read scripture, pray and pass out magazines and tracts. The bulk of these tracts are supplied free to Rev. Orr by various societies, but others are purchased. The Gideons Society, for example, supplies 1200 testaments annually to be passed out to each new crew member. In addition, the padre supplies each ship with a Bible on its maiden voyage through the canal.

The men welcomed Reverend Orr's visits, and listened attentively to his words. The author was impressed with the way Rev. Orr was careful to wait for his opportunity to speak, and to make every situation relative

WELLAND CANAL PADRE

to the gospel in a free and easy manner. The men seemed to have confidence in the padre, and discussed personal matters. One captain later requested Rev. Orr to call his wife to say he was in good health.

After visiting most of the men, we disembarked below Lock Seven and walked back to Lock Four. The Reverend said he often received rides down the road that parallels the canal. But although a few passed in the other direction and called "Hi," we had to make the short trip on foot. Rev. Orr can walk at a brisk pace, and his nimble leaps from deck to shore show that he is in good physical condition. I can well understand why he says he does not need golf for exercise as do some of his compatriot men of the cloth.

On arriving at Lock Four, we found the Nationalist Chinese vessel *Kally* a) *Fort Panmure* b) *Sunvalley* upbound from Japan to Chicago with a load of coiled steel. *Kally* was a World War II class Liberty ship built at Vancouver in 1940. We stopped at the car to pick up some Chinese literature (Rev. Orr carries pamphlets in all languages), and we boarded her in Lock Five. The author was truly amazed at the overwhelming welcome and picture-taking ceremony that greeted us. The pilot introduced us to the captain, and inquired whether either of us could play the piano, as the crew had one strapped on deck. Neither of us qualified, but the Second Mate knew a few tunes ranging from "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" to hymns. So we had a regular sing-song around the piano. We even had visitors on shore calling requests, and I believe that such a sing-song was a "first" for the canal.

When Rev. Orr began to talk to the men, language was no barrier as they

all understood his actions and enthusiasm. After he had passed out copies of Luke, one gleeful crew member summed up their appreciation by exclaiming, "This is in Chinese!" Another of the crew had a brother in Canada, "long way away," and we managed to discover that he was at the University of Alberta in Edmonton.

Before we departed Captain Lu Yueh Hsue invited us to his quarters and showed us pictures of his family, some of whom he had not seen in fifteen years since they live on the Communist Chinese mainland. When we made our final farewells in Lock Seven, Rev. Orr promised to visit again when *Kally* returned downbound with a load of scrap from Saginaw and more to get at Toronto, destined for blast furnaces of the Orient.

Rev. Orr normally visits four or five vessels a day. But owing to the time already spent, we had time only for a brief call at the Misener vessel *George M. Carl* (ii) a) *Fred G. Hartwell* (ii) b) *Matthew Andrews* (ii). She was upbound with ore from Seven Islands to Cleveland. The padre chatted with the deck crew and later with the Captain, who was an old personal friend. We departed from Lock Seven.

It was five o'clock, so Rev. Orr headed home for the day. But this was not the end of his work. During the evening he answers his correspondence, and often makes hospital calls to ailing sailors or members of their family.

Each Sunday during the summer and winter, Rev. Orr is engaged in deputation work throughout Southern Ontario. He also organizes the annual sailors service during the winter. The only financial support for the mission comes from donations of church groups and individuals interested in his work. These are all

WELLAND CANAL PADRE

accounted for and the records forwarded to the Board. It is indeed a work of faith, as he has no guaranteed income.

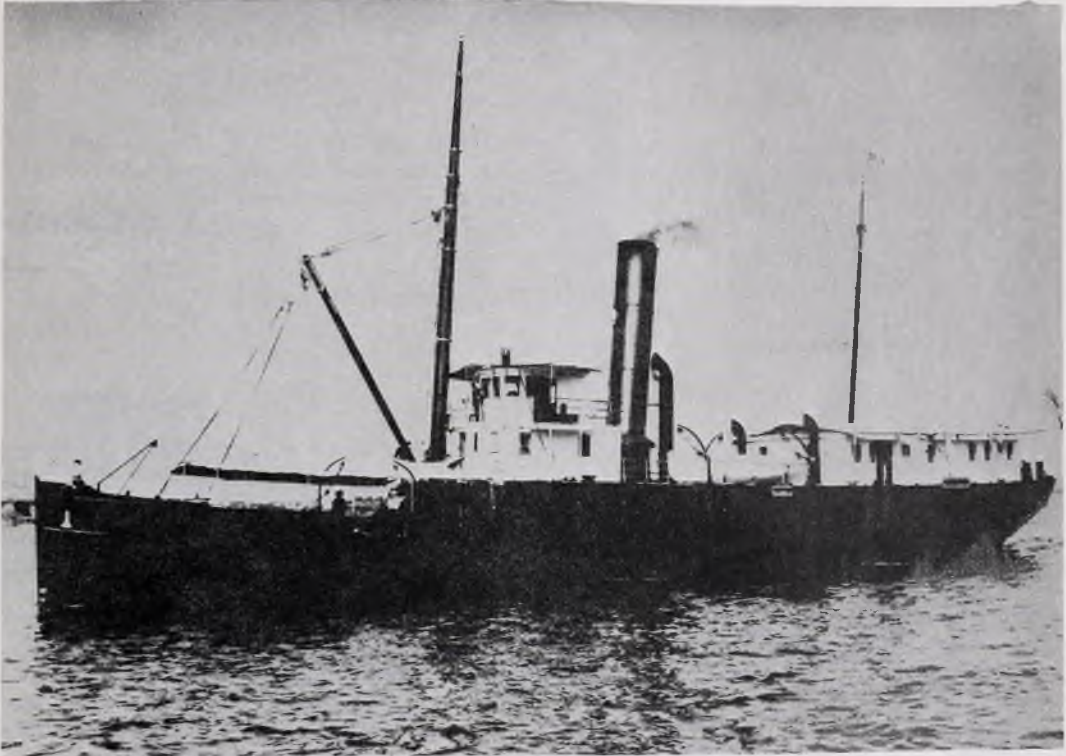
The minister believes that the biggest change along the canal since he began his work was the opening of the Seaway. This permitted the deeper-draft vessels of many nations to enter his parish. This greater contact with men has given his work a wider dimension as well as perhaps the largest congregation in the world.

A number of honours have come to Rev. Orr. But the one he appreciates most is Honorary Life Membership in the International Shipmas-

ters Association in recognition of his quarter-century on the canal. This award had never previously been granted to a clergyman.

Each year Reverend Orr visits hundreds of lake vessels, and may contact each ship as often as five times, varying of course with its frequency of canal passages. The men have great respect for Rev. Orr, and appreciate his effort in bringing church to them, since they are unable to attend a community church, themselves. Those who do not share his beliefs nevertheless listen politely to his words. Occasionally someone will commit his life to God, fulfilling the primary objective of Reverend Orr.





Blueprint: U. S. Lighthouse Tender SUMAC (Part 2 of 3)

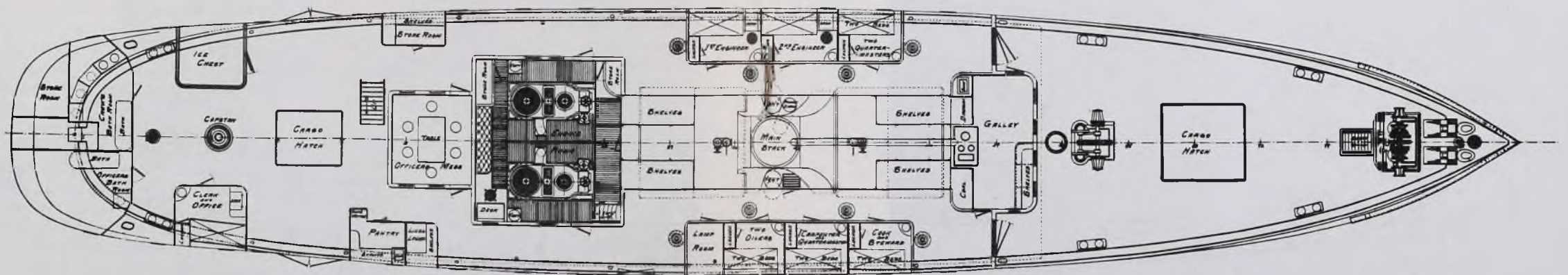
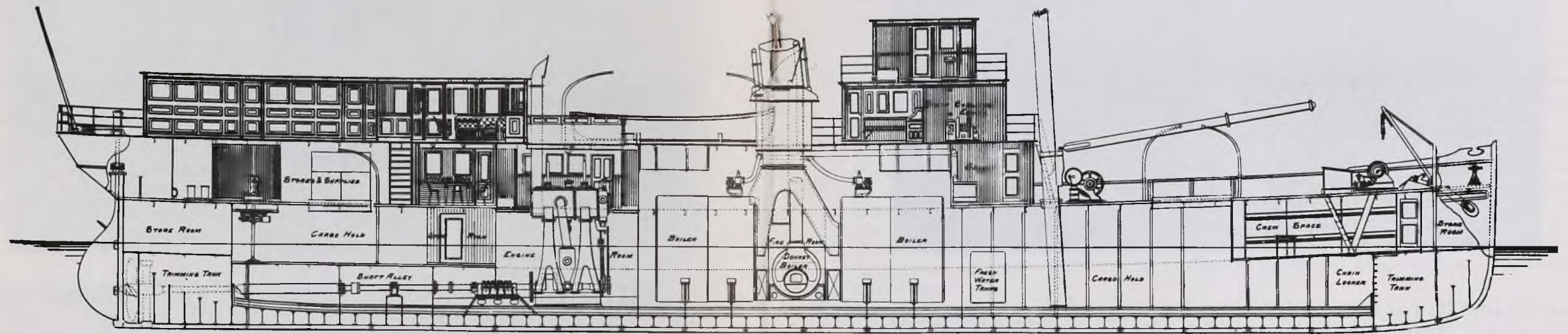
By C. Patrick Labadie

The United States Lighthouse Tender *Sumac* was built in 1903 at Port Richmond, New York, by Burlee Drydock Company. Built at the same time were tenders *Ivy*, *Heather* and *Magnolia*, which appear to have been near sisters. *Sumac* measured 168.10 by 30.0 by 14.1 feet, and 681 gross tons. She had twin screws, driven by two fore-and-aft engines measuring 18¼ and 34¼ by 28 inches. The Burlee Company built her power plant which was rated at 700 h.p. It is not clear just when *Sumac* came into the Lakes, but she first appears as stationed at Chicago in 1910. She then carried a crew of six officers and twenty-one men. According to the 1915 volume of *Merchant Vessels of the United States*, her station

was changed to Milwaukee, where she remained until 1938. During these years, of course, she was a frequent visitor to most of the ports of Lake Michigan. It was just prior to the Second World War that she was decommissioned. In 1940 she was sold out of the service, to Lakehead Transportation Company of Fort William, Ontario, for use as a rafting tug. Renamed *Oscar Lehtinen* (Can.173181), she was somewhat refurbished, and her tonnage was changed to 582 gross and 375 net tons. She was sold for scrap in 1957, and was dismantled at the Knudsen Drydock in Duluth.

The profile photograph above comes by courtesy of David Glick, while the dockside photograph on the opposite page is from Father Dowling's collection.

U.S. LIGHT-HOUSE TENDER
 — SUMAC. —



Captain Knapp's account of the Dallas' pursuit of Hercules. From a copy (author's collection) of manuscript in Solomon Sibley papers, Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library. See text on page 64.

I received from the Dallas' pursuit of Hercules. From a copy (author's collection) of manuscript in Solomon Sibley papers, Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library. See text on page 64.

Pursuit on board the 12th of November
 at Dallas' pursuit of Hercules. From a copy (author's collection) of manuscript in Solomon Sibley papers, Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library. See text on page 64.

NOTES ON TWO EARLY REVENUE CUTTERS

NOTES ON TWO EARLY REVENUE CUTTERS

(Continued from page 53)

On October 21, Forster wrote: "On the 18th inst I sent the Cutter by Mr. Knapp...the Boat you will receive by the *Washington*." With this communication Forster included a statement showing: 1 Revenue Boat \$600; 1 Row Boat \$75; 12 chairs \$72; Bell No. 1 anchor \$129.02½; Bell No. 2 Outfit \$35.71. He could not enter credits as he had mislaid some of the accounts.

Evidently the *Dallas* was not yet equipped for action. On October 23, Woodbridge wrote to General Alexander Macomb: "Capⁿ Knapp has made an examination of the old guns in the ordnance department ...he has not been able to discover any except as were entirely too heavy."

The next day Woodbridge addressed a lengthy letter to William H. Crawford, Secretary of the Treasury, explaining that because of the "rapid advance of the stormy season, when it would be unsafe for so very small a vessel to traverse the Lake...and a conviction that the interests of the Government really required that the Boat...should be brought without further delay," he had ordered the *Dallas* delivered without Crawford's previous sanction.

"My agent...Col. Forster at Presq'Isle gave her in charge to Gilbert Knapp Esq. late a distinguished & greatly respected member of the Naval establishment, who with three hands brought her up, under an assurance that if he were not appointed master of her by the Government, I would myself pay him for doing it. ...I have already incurred the further hazard of sending the Boat under Capⁿ Knapp's direction on a short cruise to the Miami Bay with two hands, the smallest number possible--smaller indeed, than will justify his going out of sight of land. ... Some improvements will be required for the accomodation of the hands on board. These...I could obtain from the military here ...without the least detriment to that establishment, if I were regularly authorized to ask it. Additional sails & rigging will be required. May I be permitted to procure them?"

Patrol on the Detroit

By spring the *Dallas* was patrolling the river. Captain Knapp's log book records that on May 27, 1818, all hands were "employed in sounding the N. W. Channel of grossile." That evening the vessel "stood to westward...past Grossile in the N. W. channel finding not less than 9 feet or more than 5 fathom." By six in the morning they "came to anchor off browstown." On the 28th all hands were "employed in sounding out the channel from Brownstown to the mouth of Lake Erie."

NOTES ON TWO EARLY REVENUE CUTTERS

One lively encounter experienced in the course of duty is found in the Solomon Sibley Papers:

Remarks on board the U S Revenue Boat A J Dallas

Gilbert Knapp cummanding

Tuesday Sep^t 1st 1818 -

at 4 Am got under waigh from Gross Isle & Proceeded down the river
 at 6 am. Came to under baublack Isle Boarded the Schooner American Eagle
 Capt. Gallard from Senduskay bound to Detroit
 at 7 am Spoke the Schooner Tiger Cap^t Keith from Detroit bound to Bufflow
 at half past 7 AM Spoke the Schooner Monro Cap^t Conner from Detroit bound
 to forte Erie
 at 8 AM got under waigh & Stood out to the mouth of the river
 at 9 Am hove tou & boarded the Schooner Rachal Cap^t Eaton bound to Detroit
 at half past 9 AM made a Straing Sail Standing from the American Shore
 towards the English Shore
 at 10 AM made all Sail in chase and Stood to NE
 at 11 AM finding my Self with in gun Shot I hoiste my Insine and pendnt
 I then gudge my Self about tou Leegs from the American Shore or tou and a
 half
 as Soon as I hoisted my Insine & pendent the Schooner hove A bout and Stood
 towards the American Shor which being so near that it enabled me to reade
 her name on her Sturm whitch was as follow, Hercules of Detroit
 at 12 meridan I fire a gun with a blank Carterag as a Signal for her to
 heave tou
 at that time I Judge me Self to be with in tou leeges of the American Shore
 at 12 meridan fired the Second gun with a Shot and throde it to the wind-
 ward of the Hurcules
 she Still cupe her course under full Sail and fired a gun or muskt
 at half past twelve fired the 3 Shot
 she then wair within five mils of the American shore
 at 1 PM the Schooner Hurcules hov About and Stood for Detroit river having
 the Advantage of the wind
 She cup to the windward of me that it wair out of my power to bord hur
 at half past 1 PM I fired the 4 Gun
 She then hoisted hur Squair Sail and Stood for malden
 at 2 PM I fired the 5 Gun
 She Still cupe her course under all Sail
 sh wair within bar pointe wich wair the Entrance of the river of Detroit
 from the Hurkles heaving a bout so many differunt times and alltring hur
 course from her frste bing discovered I expected that She hade Smuggled
 property or wair a goine to Smuggle wich made me hav Sespishion of hur--
 the wind leaving me under baublanke Isle it compeld me to heave tou and
 cum to Anchor
 Report to William Woodbridge Esq^t Collector of the Porte and District De-
 troit of the Cruis from Detroit to the mouth of the rivr of Detroit

(signed)

Gilbert Knapp
 cummandg

NOTES ON TWO EARLY REVENUE CUTTERS

In forwarding the manuscript Woodbridge wrote to Solomon Sibley, District Attorney of the United States for the District of Michigan:

"Sir, If upon inspecting the matter contained in the within Statement you should be of the opinion that a suit can be sustained, be pleased to institute it---The name of the master of the *Hercules* is [Ebenezer] Church."

Apparently no legal action was taken. A week later the *Dallas* left the Detroit River. An entry in the Custom House Day Book, September 8, reads: "Revenue Boat (Cap^t G. Knapp commanding) and five mariners transferred to Adam D. Stuart Collector of the District of Michillimackinac, under date of September 7, 1818."

Epilogue

Departing from the District of Detroit, the vessel left a strange ghost in her wake. The entry of the *Dallas* in a Great Lakes port village resulted, several decades later, in a unique error in historical research, according to which the Rev. Cutter Dallas was the first Protestant minister to come to the community. The author reasoned that he evidently did not remain long, as there was no record that he either preached or rendered any other religious service.

PART TWO: THE Porcupine

Between 1819 and 1821 William Woodbridge served Michigan Territory as delegate to Congress. While he was absent from Detroit, management of the customs office was left to his clerk, John J. Deming. Through Woodbridge's efforts at Washington, the *Porcupine*, a United States Navy vessel, "with armament, sails, rigging, etc.", was loaned to the Treasury Department for the Revenue Service at the expense of which service she was to be repaired. A remnant of Oliver Hazard Perry's fleet, she had suffered heavy casualties in the Battle of Lake Erie.

En route homeward, Woodbridge wrote to his wife, April 5,

NOTES ON TWO EARLY REVENUE CUTTERS

1819, asking her to inform Mr. Deming that "...[I have] procured the *Porcupine* to be assigned to me as a Revenue Cutter and that I shall want a discreed & prudent, but a firm & active man to be appointed Inspector & to serve as master. Such a man I believe is Capⁿ Keith, whom if now at Detroit I wish to consult without delay..." Woodbridge also desired that Keith supervise repairs of the *Porcupine* at Erie.

On Patrol, 1819

On June 1, 1819, William Keith took oath as an Inspector of Customs, and contracted with DeGarmo Jones, of Detroit, for provisioning the *Porcupine*. At Woodbridge's orders, seamen were shipped "for only one month at a time." The *Porcupine* cruised among the islands at the mouth of the river and in Lake Erie. But Woodbridge informed David Deacon, Captain of the Naval Command at Erie, July 26, 1819: "It has been certified that the decayed condition of the rigging of the *Porcupine* renders her really unsafe [in] storms on the Lakes."

Among the witnesses to the Treaty of Saginaw, September 24, 1819, appears William Keith's signature. Apparently the *Porcupine* was one of the two vessels that transported supplies and troops to that historic meeting.

A Frail Old Thing

On January 15, 1820, Captain Keith, who had just settled his family on Grosse Ile, wrote to Woodbridge:

"According to your request I take the liberty of writing to you informing you that I have laid the *Porcupine* up at Gross Island and find that she will want a good deal of repairs to make her fit for the next season, such as 4000 feet of 2½ inch plank for new decks, and it will also be necessary to heave her out and examine her bottom, and about 700 wt of cordage assorted and one cable 7 inch 60 fathoms in length. I am now giving the sails a complete repairing."

Thereupon Woodbridge directed Deming to prepare an estimate of the expenses and revenue to be derived during the coming season. The total receipts in 1819 had been \$3,365.55. Deming figured that "in the event of repairing the vessel," including operation with a crew of seven for seven months plus three "other inspectors," disbursements for 1820 would be \$4,984.80. He considered the expense of the vessel "disproportioned to its income." 6

6. Deming to Woodbridge, February 26, 1820.

NOTES ON TWO EARLY REVENUE CUTTERS

Despite differences with Woodbridge the previous season, Keith agreed not to seek other employment for the summer.⁷ Apparently much apprehension existed regarding the vessel. Deming remarked in a letter to Woodbridge, April 15: "I wish you much success in respect to the *Porcupine*. She is really [a] troublesome frail old thing."

Somehow the vessel weathered the season. On November 18, Deming wrote: "The *Porcupine* arrived safe this morning and is stripping today to lay up at the Public Wharf." By April, 1821, William H. Crawford had come to a decision. He advised Woodbridge: "The experience derived from the employment of a cutter in your district for the last years has convinced me that the benefit resulting from it is not such as to justify the retaining of the *Porcupine* any longer in service, more especially as the repairs which she will constantly require will be productive of considerable expense. I have therefore to request that immediate measures may be adopted for restoring her to the Navy Department."

On July 22, 1821, Major Delafield's party of Boundary Commissioners were at Put-in-Bay. They observed "the U. S. Schooner *Porcupine*...windbound...she was bound to Erie, to be delivered up to the Naval Officer there, not being required longer in the Revenue Department, and being considered not worth repair."⁸

Barbed Quills

During the spring of 1823 an advertisement ran in the *Detroit Gazette* announcing the auction, April 15, of "a large quantity of Junk, old Cables, Rigging, Castings, likewise, the hull, spars, rigging, &c of the U. S. Schr. *Porcupine*, about seventy tons burthen."

But this was not the last heard of the bristly little schooner. As late as 1824, Captain Keith was endeavoring to obtain reimbursement for obligations incurred by the cutter. He was highly incensed at delays in payment. During the heat of "party warfare" directed against William Woodbridge in 1826, Keith was called upon for a statement of the difficulties he experienced as master of the vessel. That statement, duly sworn and attested, was spread to public view in the *Detroit Gazette*, April 25, 1826. Quills from the *Porcupine* flew in all directions. William Woodbridge, his political supporters, and Captain Keith, all felt the barbs. They never forgot the *Porcupine*.

7. Deming to Woodbridge, April 8, 1820.

8. *The Unfortified Boundary*, by Major Joseph Delafield. New York, 1943. 366.

GREAT LAKES AND SEAWAY NEWS

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February 1...The Blount Marine Corporation of Warren, R.I., has been awarded a contract for the construction of a 5000 bbl. diesel tanker by West Shore Fuel, Inc., Buffalo. The new tanker will measure 130 x 32 x 14 and will be twin-screw with a total of 700 HP.

...CGC BRAMBLE retired to Toledo for repairs after burning out her main motor while participating in "Operation Coal Shovel". The cutter is expected back in service by March 1st when the coal trade is expected to resume.

February 2...Milwaukee's harbor commission chose Duluth's manager of port operations to be their first deputy port director. The newly created post was offered to Robert Tomich, who is expected to accept and become the assistant to Harry C. Brockel, port director since 1942.

...The PROTOSTATIS was expected to resume its journey to Hamilton after tugs completed icebreaking operations near the eastern end of Wolfe Island.

...Secretary of State Dean Rusk sent Congress a Canadian-American interim report urging immediate action to combat pollution of Lakes Erie and Ontario, and the St. Lawrence River. The report was made by the International Joint Commission and included three main steps:

- 1) Purification of all municipal and industrial wastes before discharge "to achieve the maximum possible removal of phosphates", which act as fertilizer for algae.
- 2) Banning construction of sewers carrying both sanitary and storm waste and initiation of a program to separate combined sewers already in existence.
- 3) "An effective system of regular sampling of effluents discharged into these waters and their tributaries in accordance with programs approved by the commission."

February 3...The tanker POLARIS, carrying nearly a million gallons of petroleum products, became stuck in ice two feet thick about four miles off St. Joseph, Michigan. CGC WOODBINE (W289) was dispatched from Grand Haven to aid the tanker.

GREAT LAKES AND SEAWAY NEWS

...The icebreaking tug GEORGE M. McKEE, owned by Marine Industries, Ltd., Sorel, cleared her home port for Ile d'Orleans where she arrived the same day to attend the floating equipment being used in the salvage of LAWRENCECLIFFE HALL. The transit marked the earliest start of tug operations in that part of the St. Lawrence. Attempts to raise the maximum size Hall laker have been hampered by ice conditions, but company officials were hopeful she would be refloated before the end of March and returned to service during May. Repairs would be completed at Lauzon.

February 4...The ill-fated Greek ship PROTOSTATIS reached a position six miles east of Main Duck Island after two days of slow going through heavy ice.

...The CGC WOODBINE became entrapped in ice half a mile from the tanker POLARIS as she attempted to escort the former LST into St. Joseph. CGC RARITAN (W93) was dispatched to assist both vessels.

February 6...The 7260-ton Greek freighter PROTOSTATIS arrived in Toronto under tow of the tug G.W. ROGERS. The Halco Canaller KEYSHEY (a. CLEARWATER, b. TRENORA), which had been laid up at Kingston, was used as a lighter and arrived at Toronto at the same time. Ship Repairs & Supply, Ltd., have reportedly obtained questionable salvage "rights" to the abandoned freighter.

...Two Canadian Coast Guard icebreakers smashed open a giant ice jam near Sorel, giving rise to hopes that a channel would be opened soon. One Soviet, one Finnish, and two Canadian ships tied up at Sorel to await better conditions, while icebreakers continued to work on Lake St. Peter near Trois Rivieres.

February 7...Millions of dollars in damages were caused by a fire which gutted a new iron ore mill owned by Wabush Mines, Ltd. in Labrador. Iron ore from the mine was shipped to Pointe Noire for pelletizing and shipment, an operation that had just commenced in June of 1965.

...Shippers will be offered uniform rates to and from the Great Lakes and West African ports this season by the four lines engaged in this service: Black Star Line, Ltd., Farrell Lines, Inc.; Westwind Africa Line; and Zim Israel Navigation Company.

February 8...Wilson Marine Transit Company announced that it will raise its rate for carrying iron ore from Lake Superior to lower lake ports in the Spring. The new rate will be \$1.95 a gross ton, compared to the \$1.90 rate in effect since 1963. Other companies were expected to follow suit, although the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company has already stated that they plan no increase for the present.

GREAT LAKES AND SEAWAY NEWS

February 10...The Youngstown Sheet & Tube Company announced its purchase of Transoceanic Terminal Corporation, the largest private shipping facility in Chicago. Transoceanic's site at the mouth of the Calumet River, considered the most strategic in the port, had been a Youngstown steel mill from 1923 until 1960. The possibility of building piers from the property into Lake Michigan is being studied as a means of increasing the capacity of the terminal.

...Legislation to give federal recognition to the Great Lakes Commission, established eleven years ago, was proposed by Senator Philip A. Hart of Michigan. The commission consists of members from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Its purpose is to preserve and promote the orderly use of Great Lakes waters. Congress' blessing is being sought by Hart in order to satisfy the Justice Department which considers the interstate pact as a "common-law marriage."

February 14...Superior Court in Toronto awarded \$52,005 to the Federal Commerce & Navigation Company, Ltd., of Montreal for damages aboard the FEDERAL PIONEER (a. OUTREMONT PARK, b. BRAZILIAN PRINCE) in June of 1959. McDonnell Ship Repairs, Ltd., of Toronto was found responsible for fire damage caused by a welder's torch.

February 15...Captain Martin E. Joppich, Master of the sunken freighter CEDARVILLE (a. A.F. HARVEY) had his license suspended for one year. Charles J. Carroll, Jr., Coast Guard examiner, stated that Joppich's license was not being revoked due to his long and previously unblemished record. The suspension dates from last August 24th, when Joppich pleaded guilty and surrendered his license.

...The first British flag ship to arrive at Montreal during the winter season, the INISHOWEN HEAD, was also the first ocean ship to dock within the inner harbor so early in the season.

February 16...The fishing tugs BEAR and BUTCH LAFOND became trapped in ice a mile out in Lake Michigan north of South Haven, stranding three men on the BEAR and two on the LAFOND. The Coast Guard dispatched CGC WOODBINE to assist the stricken craft, but she was hampered by 40 mph winds, 20 foot seas, and ice. Once again the CGC RARITAN had to come to the rescue of all three craft, escorting the fishing tugs into South Haven and the WOODBINE back to Grand Haven.

February 19...The Ford Motor Company announced the purchase of the JOSEPH S. WOOD (a. RICHARD M. MARSHALL) from the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company. The WOOD had been under charter to Wilson Marine Transit Company since the dissolution of her original builder, the Great Lakes Steamship Company in 1957. Built in 1953 by Defoe at Bay City, the 644-foot vessel will carry approximately 18,500 gross tons.

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...Medusa Portland Cement Company of Cleveland announced that Darin & Armstrong, Inc., of Detroit, and Nicholson Company, Inc., of New York, will build the ten million dollar Medusa plant near Charlevoix. The plant is expected to be in operation one year from next fourth of July, with an annual capacity of four million barrels.

...Continuous pouring of concrete commended on the new second lock at the Soo with the first batch going into monoliths in the southwest corner. Work is scheduled to continue until late this year when the last concrete is expected to be poured. The lock is slated to go into operation in August 1967.

...President Johnson has named Rear Admiral Walter J. Smith, a native of Suttons Bay, Michigan, as the new Commandant of the Coast Guard. Smith, present commandant of the Ninth District and former superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy, succeeds Admiral Edwin J. Roland, who retires May 31st.

February 21...U.S. Steel Corporation announced that three ships of the Pittsburg Fleet and one member of the Bradley Fleet are being equipped with bow thrusters this winter. The CASON J. CALLAWAY and PHILIP R. CLARKE are being done by American Ship at Lorain, the ARTHUR M. ANDERSON by Fraser Shipyards at Superior, and the JOHN G. MUNSON by the Toledo yard of American Shipbuilding Company.

...Canadian Department of Transport authorities stated that traffic was being maintained on the St. Lawrence although channels had been narrowed by "deep-freeze" conditions. The tanker J. EDOUARD SIMARD was able to complete a trip from Montreal to Three Rivers without incident.

...A hydraulic model of the St. Lawrence River from Montreal eastward is being built by the Department of Transport at Ville LaSalle and will be used to study the feasibility of dredging a second ship channel in the river. An earlier model is being enlarged to cover the area from Lake St. Louis to below Three Rivers. Transport Minister J.W. Pickersgill estimated the cost at 225 million dollars to provide separate channels as a means to avoid collisions.

February 25...James D. Norris, Jr., 59, multimillionaire sportsman and businessman, died in Chicago. Mr. Norris' family owned large interests in the Norris Grain Company, Upper Lakes Shipping, Ltd., and Port Weller Dry Docks, Ltd.

February 28...The level of Lakes Huron and Michigan rose one inch in the last six days and are heading for their highest levels in five years. The lakes are expected to reach a level of 578.4 feet by July 30th, about nine inches above the ten year average.

...Canada Steamship Lines report that MIDLAND PRINCE is receiving new boilers at Kingston, and that METIS is being converted to a cement carrier to replace GLENELG.

THE GREAT LAKES MARITIME INSTITUTE, INC., promotes interest in the Great Lakes of North America; preserves memorabilia, relics, records and pictures related to these lakes; encourages building of scale models of lake ships; and furthers programs of **DOSSIN GREAT LAKES MUSEUM**, repository of Institute holdings. The Institute was organized in 1952 as the Great Lakes Model Shipbuilders' Guild, with efforts of the late Capt. Joseph E. Johnston. It is incorporated as an organization for no profit under the laws of the State of Michigan. Donations to the Institute have been ruled deductible by the Internal Revenue Service. No Institute member receives any remuneration for services rendered.

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