Telescope

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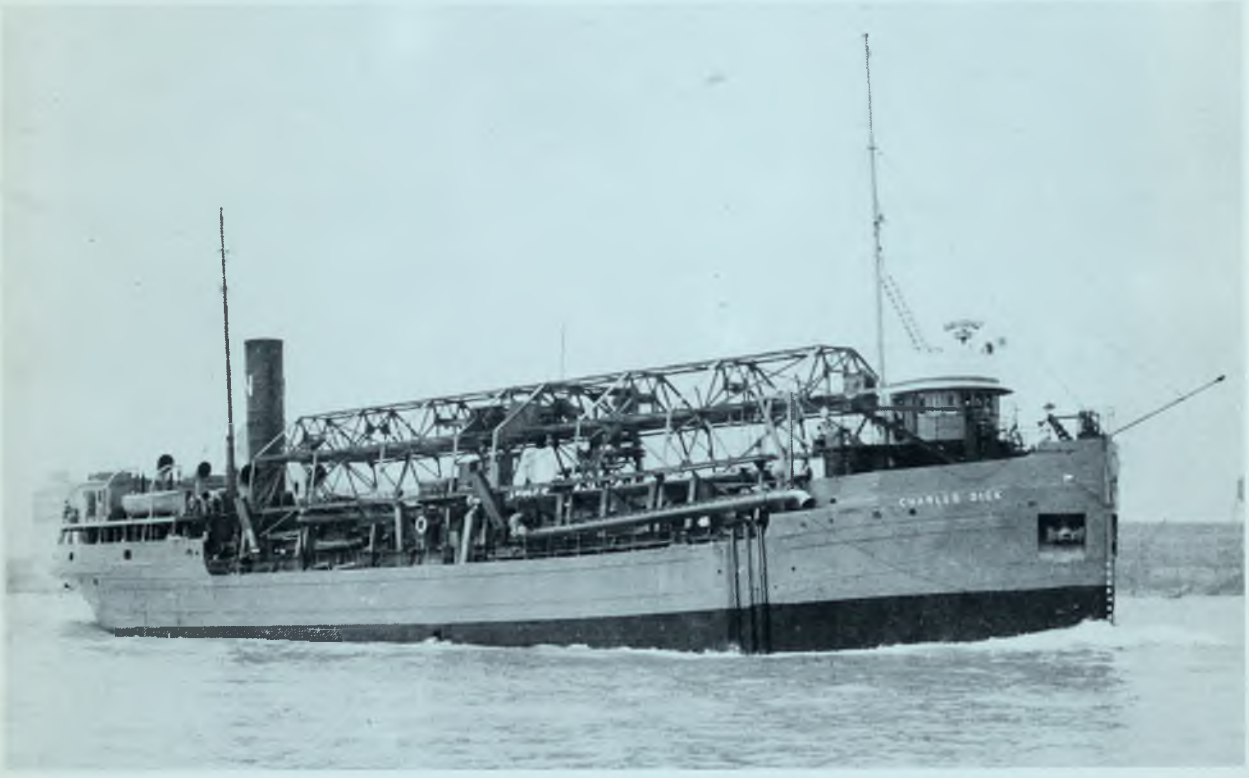

GREAT LAKES
MARITIME
INSTITUTE

DOSSIN GREAT LAKES MUSEUM
Belle Isle, Detroit, Michigan 48207

Membership Notes

Due to staff shortage, and a growing backlog of unused vacation time among staff members, and the need to liquidate this unused time, the Dossin Museum will close over the holiday season this year. The last day of business will be December 16, 1971, and we will remain closed until January 4, 1972. Normal operation will resume on January 5. The January issue of TELESCOPE may reach you a bit late, but it usually does because of the mail backlog anyway, so the net effect should be minimal. If this closing should cause inconvenience to anyone we regret it, but there is simply not enough time left in the year to liquidate all of the days due to staff members who have repeatedly delayed taking the time off in order that the museum might continue to serve the public without interruption. If it is not taken it will be lost to them; hardly fitting reward for faithful service and concern.

MEETING DATES

The entertainment meetings for the next several months will fall on the following dates. All will be at Dossin Museum, and all will begin at 8 P.M. November 19 *(to avoid Thanksgiving weekend)* January 28, 1972; March 24; and May 19, 1972. MARK THE DATES NOW!

Business meetings will be held, same place and same time, on the following dates: December meeting held January 7, 1972; February 25; April 28; and June 23. *All members are encouraged to attend business meetings.*

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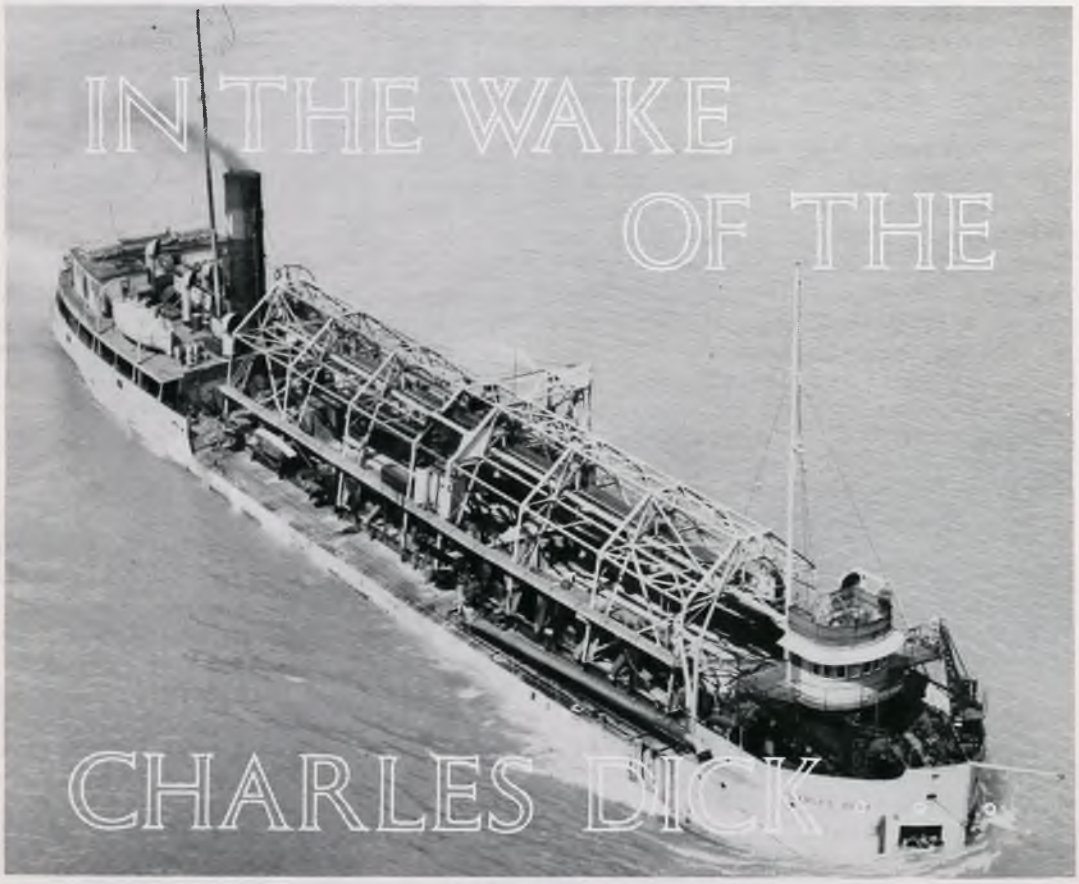
OUR COVER PICTURE...The ***CHARLES DICK***, subject of the lead article in this issue, shows off her unique profile in a view taken on the Detroit River, just above the Detroit Harbor Terminal.

Dossin Museum Collection.

ONE LOOK AT THIS WEIRD AND WONDERFUL CONTRAPTION THAT IS THE CHARLES DICK WOULD BETRAY TO THE VIEWER HER CERTAIN RUBE GOLDBERG ANCESTRY, YET THIS WONDEROUS COLLECTION OF NUTS, BOLTS, PUMPS AND PULLEYS, IS PROBABLY THE ONE MOST EFFICIENT FLOATING PLANT OF HER KIND ON THE GREAT LAKES.



IN THE WAKE OF THE CHARLES DICK

By C. E. Stein
Associate Editor
TELESCOPE

Recently the lake steamer *Charles Dick* has received a surge of publicity. Her owners have been sued for allegedly operating outside her licensed area. Before deciding the case, Provincial Judge Lloyd Henricksen convened his court...perhaps a judicially historic precedent...aboard the *Charles Dick*, on Lake Erie, to satisfy his curiosity as to her activities.

No doubt many others have gazed out over the lake, viewed her unique silhouette on the horizon, and wondered what goes on aboard her. For those readers who have harbored that wonder...read on.

One of the rarest privileges ever accorded a dweller of the Great Lakes region is the opportunity to take an extended cruise on a working lake steamer.

That privilege was accorded to me on May 10th when a telephone call was received from Captain John Leonard, Master of the steamship *Charles Dick*.

Captain Leonard had come ashore in a lifeboat from his vessel, which was anchored off the tip of Point Pelee, over Grubb's Reef. He was to inquire if I would like to go for

a trip with him. I was not at home, but my wife answered for me...*I would!*

Borrowing a station wagon from Peter Sikemos, concession operator on the end of the Point, the Captain drove out to our home. When I returned I packed my camera, an extra sweater, a change of clothes, and was away.

We returned the station wagon, boarded the power lifeboat that had been made fast and left in charge of Ginger, the captain's dog, then put off for the steamer. In the gathering dusk of the evening sky it loomed as a large indistinguishable bulk on the southern horizon.

I had not previously met the captain. Over the hum of the motor, on the trip out, I discovered our mutual interest...not only is he a working lake captain, he is a dedicated Great Lakes marine buff as well (and an INSTITUTE member of long duration).

He had decided to provide me with a contemporary view of the modern shipping scene from the eminence of his wheelhouse. Sometime soon, he said, he expected to be in Lorain, Ohio, where United States Steel *Roger Blough*, the 850 foot freighter is being fitted out. And over at Erie, Pennsylvania, Bethlehem Steel was readying the *Stewart S. Cort*, a thousand-footer.

We stopped alongside a yellow drum buoy.

"I put this here every year so I don't run aground on the Old Dummy", Captain Leonard explained. "Here.. We'll put the lead line over." The depth was fourteen feet. He handed me the line and as I lifted and dropped it I could feel the solid clink of the metal striking on the rocks in the old crib. (The Dummy Lighthouse was constructed in 1888 approximately two miles south and slightly west of the tip of Point Pelee. Its wooden superstructure built on the solid, stone-filled crib, which still remains, burned towards the end of the last century).

The lead line was reeled in and again we headed for the steamer. I was sitting facing aft the better to carry on a conversation with Captain Leonard who was steering.

"Well...here she is!"

Suddenly he swung the lifeboat in an arc. We crossed the steamer's bow. She was at anchor straining backward on her chain in the wind.

I had seen pictures of her. I had, like thousands of others, glanced casually at her bulk on the broad horizon, but nothing had prepared me for the sudden confrontation with this broad, squat, machinery-studded steam-belching monster from which torrents of water were pouring thunderously like twin waterfalls on each side of a watershed. This was my first closeup of the steamer *Charles Dick*...occupation: sand-sucker.

A hand signal from the captain brought a sudden cessation of the cataract pouring over her starboard side and we pulled alongside a ladder lashed to the ship's rail. slinging my duffle bag around my neck I climbed aboard and was directed aft to a companionway leading to the main deck. Six crew members materialized, fastened block and tackle to the lifeboat and, hoisting it into the davits, made it secure.

"Our guest cabin is being painted ...I'll put you in my stateroom, and I'll sleep in one of the crew's bunks when they are on watch," explained the captain. "Come on up forward." He turned and casually started forward along a catwalk stretching the length of the well deck between the roof of the after cabins and the bridge deck forward. The catwalk flooring was a succession of grids made of metal mesh suspended fifteen feet above the well deck. A steel cable offered protection as a hand rail on the outside.

My progress, understandably, on this frist trip forward, was slightly slower than that of my host. To my right, below me, was the open lake; to my left, below me, were the cavernous hopper holds into which torrents of water were being directed from overhead flumes. The pumps

Below right: *First Engineer Joe Kennedy walking forward along the catwalk. Also shown is A-frame that supports the rail for the travelling clam bucket used in unloading.*

Bottom right: *Scene shows overhead flume, conducting water the length of the forward hopper, and vents at different intervals to permit level loading. To obtain differing grades of sand, screens are placed into the flume.*

Top left: *Captain John Leonard conning the* **CHARLES DICK** *up the Cuyahoga River. (His big steam whistle that the engineer won't let him blow, may be seen lashed to the rail on the bridge deck.)* Bottom left: *Deckhands prepare to drop the ship end of digging pipe into slot, preparatory to digging.* All photos by the author

had been started again and the well deck was awash. Everywhere...water; everywhere spurts of steam drifting disembodied through the brilliant rays of the arc lights; and everywhere on that trip forward along the catwalk was an indescribable cacophony of sounds...the hiss of steam, the rush of water, the roar of machinery.

Still, I was not so far behind the captain to note that when he reached the bridge deck he turned to the starboard wing and descended a set of steep steel steps to the deck below. When I gained that deck he was holding open a stout door. Inside was a three room suite...compact and comfortable. One room, equipped with desk, filing cabinet and tilt chair was his office. From it opened a spacious stateroom containing a full-width bunk, plenty of drawer space, and hangup wardrobe storage. Two portholes in this room faced the bow of the ship. Off this was a decently large bathroom complete with shower.

This apartment was mine for the duration. How lucky can you get?

Captain Leonard had perhaps ten minutes to indicate his shipboard collection of marine miscellania of books, magazines and boat pictures before a deferential knock on the door summoned him on deck. Interestedly I took stock of my surroundings and unpacked what few items I had brought with me. Then I made a list of questions for which I would either observe the answers or ask them.

It was getting late. But every now and then a horrendous clatter of machinery would start up just outside my portholes. Since I didn't think I could sleep with that racket so close I stepped out on deck to glance around. A white-thatched, pleasant-faced man clad in T-shirt and dungarees was coming forward along the catwalk. He reached the bridge deck and descended the steps to where I was standing.

"I'm Joe Kennedy, Chief Engineer. The 'Old Man' is having trouble finding the right kind of sand so I thought I'd see if you'd like a snack before you turned in. While I'm up here would you like to see the pump engines?"

We stepped down to the main deck, passed through a doorway in the bulkhead and descended a narrow steep stairway to a grating circling at half their height two huge orange Caterpillar diesel engines. Down another stairway into the bowels of the ship and we were on the level where the motors were solidly bedded. In that inferno of sound, flashing lights and whirring belts, questions had to go unanswered...it was impossible to hear each other speak.

Ascending to the upper atmosphere we made our way aft along the suspended catwalk. The scene was brilliantly lighted and the second passage was not so awesome as the first. We stepped off the walk to the roof of the after house, passed inboard of the row of lifeboats to the gangway leading to the taffrail, down a companionway, along the rail of the after deckhouse to the dining room.

Two long tables, each capable of seating ten men, were already set for breakfast. A place mat for each diner, knives, forks, and spoons in position. The center of each table was one continuous selection of condiments, sauces, ketchup, mustards, pickles, jams, marmalade, and honey. We passed through the dining room to the galley...a spotless fifteen by thirty foot room. To the stern, off the galley, were two walk in freezers; along the inside bulkhead, a huge propane-fired cooking range. A serving bar spaced off a small lounge where half a dozen off-duty seamen were watching an episode of the Stanley Cup. On the serving bar the cook had left out a half dozen deep-dish pies, a platter of cold ham, a platter of corned beef, and a dish of peeled, hard-boiled eggs.

The Chief, as Joe Kennedy is called, put the kettle on and showed me where the tea bags were kept. "The galley is always open. Whenever you

feel hungry come back and help yourself," he said.

The roar of machinery was still in full cry when we finished our snack. "Might as well see the engine room and the boilers," offered the Chief. These were located deep down in the after end of the ship. Navigating two steep sets of steps we reached the control panel where the third engineer was manipulating his throttle in response to the bell signals of the engine room telegraph. We inspected the banks of gauges, watched the smooth, sinuous rhythm of the glistening rods, stooped low to enter the passageway in front of the boilers (the *Charles Dick* is now oil fired, having been converted from coal in 1947) and here, all the while, we were able to talk in normal tones. There was sound here, but it was soft and muted by the three-story height of the room. Here acquaintanceship with the engineer, fireman and oiler on this shift was made. And by the time this visit was over, the Chief decreed it was time for another forage on the galley.

Finally...I thought I had better get to bed so as to be up when we pulled in at Cleveland the next day. I felt more at ease making my way along the catwalk now for the third time. I turned in and actually slept. But at four in the morning the winch hauled in the anchor with an incredible rumbling and clanking right outside my open portholes. An increased lift to the stateroom curtains suggested we might be moving.

Being used to the staccato of diesel and gas engines on smaller boats I could scarce believe we were under way, so quiet was it forward. I heard the rustle of water along the bows and actually crawled out of my bunk and stepped out on the deck to actually confirm it. We were under way all right but so solidly silently that my doubts could be pardoned. Grubb's Reef lighted bell buoy slipped astern. Ahead the red light of the Southeast Shoal lighthouse blinked on and off. And, the length of the Pelee Passage was ablaze with a parade of lake boats lighted up like young cities. A full moon and a sky full of stars etched the panorama deep.

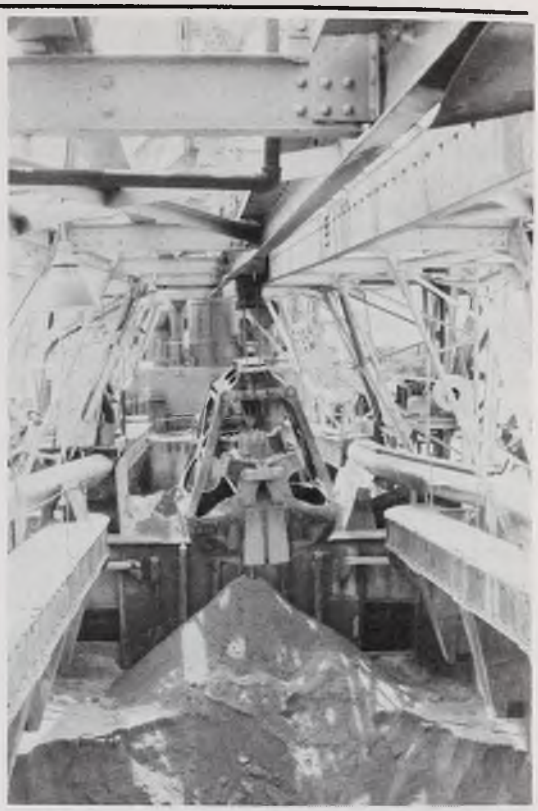
I awakened again at seven. After shaving and dressing I ascended to the bridge deck and, gauging the wind direction, went round to the lee side and entered the wheelhouse. A mate, perched on a stool, was keeping a watchful vigil out of a window. A wheelsman was easing and catching the wheel to keep the red line of the compass over the degree of the course. To the east, Cleveland's water intake was showing up, to the west the bulk of highrise apartments began to show through the morning murk. When the high spire of Cleveland's distinctive skyscraper showed on the horizon I decided to go aft and have breakfast over with by the time we reached the harbor mouth.

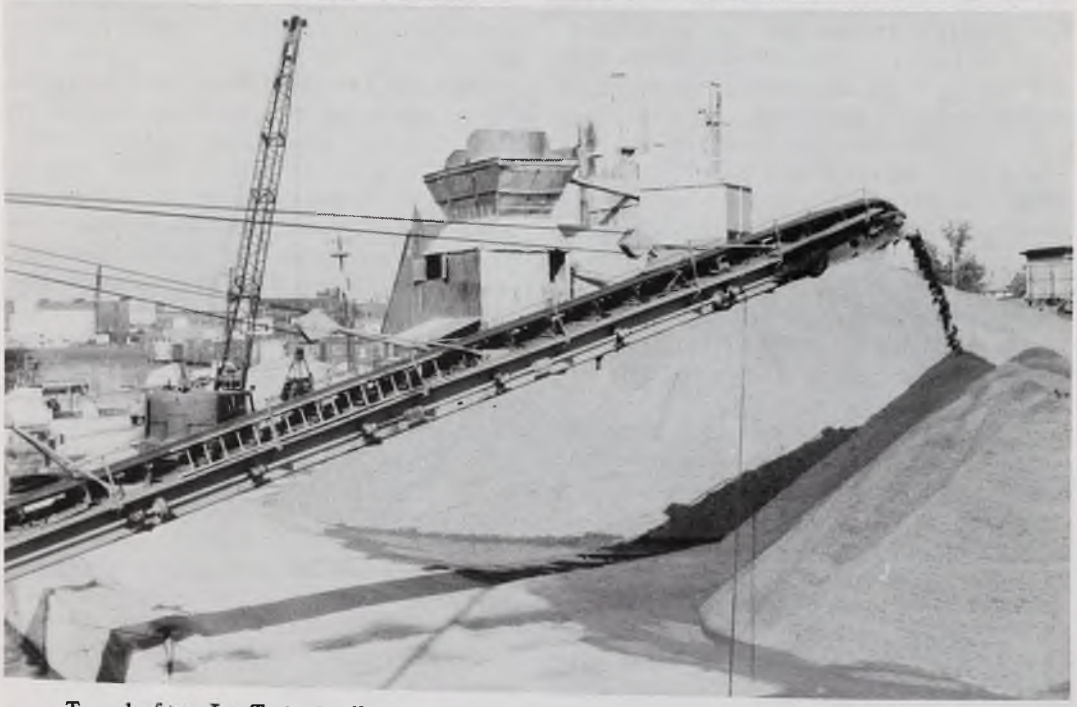
In the full light of morning negotiating that catwalk was easy. I walked its entire length without on one accasion reaching for a guidewire!

Captain Leonard was seated in the first chair at the side of the first table. I sat down next to him. Possibly I had usurped the first mate's place. When he came in he sat on my left. If I had taken his chair he did not mention it, and for the week I was aboard he always took the third chair even if he preceded me to the table. The second mate sat on his left, and the third mate took the fifth chair. Across the table from the captain sat the chief engineer, and on his right the second, third and fourth engineers.

At the next table, the wheelsmen, deckhands, oilers, pump men, and the boatswain sat in the order of their heirarchy.

On a blackboard fastened to the forward bulkhead a chalk written menu was written out for each meal. A steward took our orders and returned in remarkably short order from the galley. The food of that first breakfast, and of all other





Top left: *In Toledo Harbor with bumboat alongside, this view shows the digging pipe stowed.* Top right: *View aft during unloading with both hoppers shown.* Bottom: *The unloading boom in action.*

All photos by the author

meals eaten aboard the *Charles Dick*, was beautiful, tasty, and well-prepared; the quantity, variety and aroma reminding one of a threshing dinner or a church supper.

At each meal I took the opportunity to slip in a question and invariably the diners of both tables would worry it around, disect it, reconstruct it, and bring forth profound, humorous, and remarkable viewpoints.

Finishing this first breakfast I again went forward to the wheelhouse and the captain hied himself to his office to keep even with his interminable paper work.

At all times one complete watch is on duty with one mate in charge on the bridge and one engineer stationed in the engine room.

Not until we were abreast of the lighthouse of the Cleveland pierheads was the captain called. When the captain enters the wheelhouse he automatically takes command of the ship.

"We'll be giving you the grand tour of the Cuyahoga river this morning," he told me when he came up. "We're going all the way up to the Corrigan turning basin."

Other captains may call for harbor tugs to negotiate the continuous twisting of the Cuyahoga river channel. Not Captain John Leonard. Peering casually out the open wheelhouse windows he lined up his markers, counselled his wheelsman, signalled the engine room on his telegraph, pulled down the lever sounding the stentorian steam siren, stepped out on the bridge deck to wave a cheery greeting to each and every bridge tender, in one continuous and smoothly Shakesperian performance. When a straight hundred yards of water between the twenty-five or so overhead lift, suspension and bascule bridges did not require his attention for the next twenty seconds he would turn to the chart desk and insert a word in a cross word puzzle in an opened newspaper spread out there. The ticking of an ingrained clock seemed to tell him when to turn, to give further direction, with split second timing. We didn't brush a bridge, touch a wall, and we turned in the up-river basin without placing a snubbing line ashore. It was a fantastic demonstration of ship-handling.

It takes about five hours for the *Charles Dick* to tie up, unload, untie, and get underway again. It takes her five hours to run from Cleveland, four hours from Lorain, and seven hours from Toledo, to return to her digging ground in the vicinity of the Old Dummy, a couple of miles off the tip of Point Pelee. While I was aboard, her loading time varied from two and one half hours, during which time she withdrew her sizing grates and retained all sizes of sand and gravel her pipes sucked up, to as long as fourteen hours when she had difficulty separating silt from a good grade of cement sand.

On our one trip out of Lorain we steered for the International Boundary buoy. Once across the line, the captain came on deck and began to prospect. This 'prospecting' is upon the recommendation of the Ontario government that sandsuckers seek other sources of supply than off Point Pelee.

All afternoon and evening the intake pipes were lowered to the lake bottom at intervals and the ship was backed up slow for half a mile at a time. Deckhands lowered pails beneath the flumes and brought samples of the collected sand to the captain who walked endlessly from one flume to the other. He would thrust his hand into each bucket, take a handfull of sand, rub it between thumb and forefinger to determine grade and texture. Just once, during the afternoon, from the International Boundary north to the southern border of the shipping channel below the Southeast Shoals, did he buoy a likely area.

Daylight or dark makes no difference to the crew of the *Charles Dick*. One watch starts at eight in the morning and works until twelve

noon, then it has eight hours off. At eight in the evening that watch goes on duty again. The second watch goes on at twelve, the third watch goes on at four. The members of each watch are ambidextrous in that they are capable of handling the gear while the ship is underway, loading, or unloading. The operation is continuous. The captain, first engineer, and the boatswain, do not work regular watches...they are on call 24 hours a day.

Due to this continual operation I had just one opportunity, during daylight hours, to observe the proceedures for a complete load.

When the buoy marking the digging area is sighted a short blast of the whistle summons the watch forward.

The two deacon cranes (those noisy contraptions outside my stateroom portholes) roar and hiss into action lowering pulley blocks to shackles on the forward ends of the sixty-five foot long digging pipes. When these shackles are bolted and secured the deacon crane turns on its orbit and pulls the digging pipe forward along a trolley track on the port and starboard well decks, where they have been stored inboard out of harm's way while the steamer is running, or unloading alongside a dock.

At a certain spot in its forward journey along the trolley tracks the pipe is stopped, and tackle from a stationary crane is lowered to the stern end of the pipe. Then, the end of the pipe, which is fitted to a wide plate of steel, is lowered into a slotted rack running down the side of the vessel below the water line to the intake port. The wide plate inside the slot makes a watertight seal.

When the digging ground is reached the steamer is headed into the wind, anchored, and the two intake pipes are lowered to the lake bottom by the noisy deacon cranes.

Then, the diesel-powered pumps are turned on and two streams of water are sucked into the vessel through 18-inch diameter suction pipes.

Pictures, better than words, could convey the appearance of the intricate A-frame superstructure running the length of the vessel from the bridge deck to the after cabins. Suspended half-way up this A-frame, and positioned over two open hoppers are long sheet iron flumes which carry the water from the intake pipes the length of the two hoppers. At intervals in these flumes, bottom sluices are inserted to evenly distribute the incoming aggregate and water. In the bottom of the flumes, over the sluices, grates if different screen sizes are inserted to automatically size the material coming aboard for a particular order of either plastering sand, cement sand, or gravel.

The two receiving hoppers are open to the weather. There are no hatches to cover them in rough weather. (Wednesday afternoon, May 12, 1971, we were running up Lake Erie, in the face of a stiff west wind, on the steamer course off East Sister Island before turning in toward Toledo. Waves were striking the bow and breaking completely over the wheelhouse. As the wave gushed back along the side, the low well deck was completely awash. As the seas rolled unhindered along the well deck sufficient of them washed over the coaming of the after hold to require the pumps to be started to keep it clear of water. It was at four o'clock on this afternoon that the owners called Captain Leonard by radio telephone and asked his opinion as to whether it was advisable to confirm picking up Judge Henriksen the following day. Captain Leonard advised of the recent MAFORS weather broadcast to all mariners warning of an approaching *low* from Lake Superior and mentioned the current high seas he was encountering...and, it was agreed that in the interest of safety for all concerned the visit of the Judge should be postponed. I was in the wheelhouse at the time and, impartially, I would agree with the decision. Ironically, it turned out that the weather front passed to the north of Lake Erie and on Thursday

morning that lake was as flat as a mill pond!)

The after hold is of sufficient size to hold 950 cubic yards...the forward hold 1,031 cubic yards. "But," said the captain, when I queried to verify their capacity, "we never get that much into them or we'd sink her." The depth of the holds are marked off in feet and inches. A graph in the wheelhouse translates the load depth into cubic yards. Our load, that Wednesday, came to 1,650 cubic yards.

I noticed that the general proceedure was to load a few feet into the forward hold, then fill the stern hold to a safe level and return to filling the forward hold...no doubt to keep the ship on an even keel and not have her settling by the stern or standing on her nose, because; sand is heavy. The accepted standard weight for a cubic yard of wet sand is 2,650 pounds.

While on the subject of loading, various and sophisticated gear in the wheelhouse permits the captain to find his buoys on the darkest of nights. A radar set is positioned to the left of the wheel. To select a safe loading depth there is a depth finder. To view the bottom there are two pieces of sonar equipment tracing continuous patterns of the lake bottom. One of these, an asdic, is capable of sending out a very sensitive sonar beam side-scanning the bottom, and effective to a 300 foot depth. This is over-equipment for Lake Erie, as the deepest spot in the lake, off Long Point, is only 210 feet deep. To think that this huge vessel operates in shoal water where she is liable to ground may seem odd, but it is a fact of life to the crew of the *Charles Dick*. She usually seems to get aground at least once every time she loads. Even if there is sufficient water under her when she starts to load, the heavy discharge of wrong size aggregate and silt over both sides builds up around her, and wind direction, swinging her at anchor, shifts the ship, the lake level, and sometimes both.

When she grounded first when I was aboard, one of the engineers, sitting opposite me in the dining room, lined up the door jam with the Pelee Passage light and, when the steamer had not budged for a few minutes after her engines had been turned over 'slow astern', he remarked: "I guess the Old Man will have to put the wheels under her again!"

However, after a few more minutes of reverse, she dug herself out.

When the suction pumps pull the streams of sand laden water aboard, a deckhand is stationed on each flume. He drops a bucket on a rope into the spray of water from the sluice gate. At intervals he pulls up his bucket, empties the water, and carries the sand residue to the captain to make sure they are digging below the silt or that the silt is not entering the digging pipes.

The principle of loading is; the two intake pipes suck up continuous streams of sand laden water from the lake bottom. The sand settles to the bottom of the hoppers. The water is pumped back overboard.

In essence, it is as simple as that.

In detail...the machinery to do just that is a mechanics dream.

The designer of the *Charles Dick* must have indeed been a genius. Each operation has its own custom-built equipment. But so abrasive is its sand cargo that a larger than ordinary crew is required to pamper and grease and oil her to keep her operative. With the exception of the two big diesels forward, powering the pumps, all else is steam powered.

And in Captain John Leonard she has found her proper master. He understands and loves every steamy groan and gadget in her gutlets. Even aboard the *Dick* he does not get his fill of steam. The crew tells me he shatters their ear drums with a steam calliope circus organ when they visit him at home during the winter months. And, on his vacation, he makes the circuit of vintage threshing machine rodeos.

As the days and nights aboard the *Charles Dick* merged, the faces of

her crew became individuals and they produced pictures of home and wife and child. During the quiet watches in the wheelhouse, in the galley, in the engine room I learned life stories to fill volumes, Men aboard the *Charles Dick* have sailed in convoys in frozen Murmansk, stormed across the North Atlantic into Narvik with cutlass in hand, chased the *Bismark*, tonged for oysters in Appalichicola Bay, sailed banana boats across placid southern seas, fished from Lunenburg schooners off the Grand Banks, circumnavigated the globe on the seven seas. But...it is the story of the steamer *Charles Dick* we are telling here.

There is not much more to tell. We have described her loading operation, running loaded with boarding seas, and her navigation of winding river channels. Now, it remains but for her to dispose of her cargo. And, for this too, she is equipped.

No sooner is she moored to a sand and gravel dock at her destination than her 85-foot self-unloading boom is winched out. This boom, centered amidships, has lain inconspicuously along her port side, its tip nestled in a cradle atop the after house.

What it is is a movable, cleated, self-powered, endless rubber belt.

Now, another custom-built feature is put to use. Between the two huge cargo hoppers is a small six foot wide hopper with sloping sides, positioned over the inboard end of the endless belt. During loading and running, a clam bucket is stowed there. As soon as the self-unloading boom is run out over the spot ashore where the sand is required, one of the crew steps up into a little control shanty perched high in the center of the starboard A-frame. He begins to manipulate levers as if they were extensions of his brain. The clam bucket suddenly takes on an animate life of its own. It swings up, jaws agape, plunges into the sand in the forward hold, gulps a huge bite, swings back, opens its mouth disgorging the sand over the small center hopper, never slackens an instant, swings back over the stern hold, gulps a bite there, disgorges ...ad infinitum until the cargo is all neatly coned dockside.

Then the clam is once more stowed. The unloading boom cradled, the mooring lines cast off, the siren sends out a stentorian signal, the captain steps to the radio telephone and speaks his ritual: "*Security! Security! This is the steamer CHARLES DICK outbound in the Cuyahoga river, off the Irishtown coal docks. This is the steamer CHARLES DICK, over and out.*"

Another cargo has been unloaded and another voyage begun.

The world of the steamer *Charles Dick* is self-contained, unusual and interestingly unique, and until now life aboard her has been relatively unknown to all but her crew. And her crew is loyal to her. Eleven of her crew of thirty have been on board going on twenty to twenty-five years. Her third mate, Lester (*Touch*) Beattie of Rexton, New Brunswick has sailed on the *Charles Dick* for thirty-eight consecutive years. He started as a teen-age steward. Her first and second mates are captains in their own right, without commands because of the larger but fewer vessels now operating on the lakes.

Regardless of readers' sympathies, pro or con her occupation, the steamer *Charles Dick* is sailed by a competent captain, a happy crew, and an exceptionally good cook.

During my too-short week aboard we made two trips into Cleveland, two trips into Toledo, and one trip into Lorain.

In case anyone wonders how I arrived back on dry land...the power lifeboat was swung out on the davits lowered to the water, and I climbed back down the ladder into it. With the captain in the stern sheets manning the tiller, and a seaman forward to handle the lines, I was ferried back to the tip of Point Pelee with a parting admonition that whenever I became tired of being a landlubber to come back aboard for another week.

TEN YEARS OF STEEL AT ST. CLAIR

By Rev. Peter J. Van der Linden

(All photos supplied by the author.)

The enterprising genius of one man and the foresight of others often combine to make a success out of a somewhat far-fetched idea. More often, however, the 'best laid plans of mice and men often go astray.' The Blue Water district of Michigan, the area of the St. Clair River around the turn of the century was a bustling industrial and shipbuilding center. The life of the people was the river, the lake, and the commerce connected with them. Understandably, progress to make the St. Clair district the most productive site for shipbuilding was uppermost in the minds of its citizens. Along with the ever present desire to make a quick fortune, the men of that time were obsessed often with grandiose ideas that led not a few of them into serious financial difficulties.

An article in the MARINE REVIEW for October 24, 1901 relates the

The Columbia Iron Works in 1903. TOP LEFT: Fabricating shop and steel supply. TOP RIGHT: Machine shop. BOTTOM LEFT: Building the engines. BOTTOM RIGHT: Completing the *John C. Howard*.

The Great Lakes Engineering Works at St. Clair. The *Frank J. Hecker* is on the stocks.

beginning of an adventure that was to be a joy and a sorrow to many in the years to come. If it had been a success, the lives of people living there would certainly have been changed. J. E. Botsford and others of Port Huron were men of vision but not men of means. Plans for the establishment of a shipyard to build steel steamers, either at Marine City or St. Clair (both early wood shipbuilding centers) were laid in the late months of 1901. Mr. Botsford was president of a small vessel firm called the Port Huron & Duluth Steamship Company. It operated the steamers *Wm. Castle Rhodes, Spokane,* and *Harlem,* three package and bulk freighters, in connection with the Grand Trunk Railway. A new contract with the railroad would necessitate either chartering or building at least four new vessels. It had been reported to the MARINE REVIEW that the Grand Trunk had completed details for a scheme giving that road a continuous chain of connections for the shipment of grain from Duluth and Port Arthur on the Lakehead to Leith, Scotland, where a new elevator had just been finished. Estimates of up to eight new ships to haul this golden cargo were envisioned.

What better way to earn a share not only in building the ships for the new contract, but also in building them for the other vessel owners

Normania launched into the ice filled river, February 5, 1908.

of the great lakes and St. Lawrence Canal trade? Botsford's idea was not only logical but also far-sighted. The ship owners of this period were gradually abandoning the old wooden vessels for larger and more powerful steel craft and the vessel industry was booming. Within the next decade upwards of 160 ships would be built of steel to replace outdated wooden hulls. Each year the shipyards would vie to turn out the best and the largest vessels then afloat.

The citizens of St. Clair, eager to become involved in an industry as lucrative as any then existing, held a meeting to raise funds to donate a shipbuilding site of 1,000 feet frontage on the St. Clair River, just below the Oakland House, to Messrs. J. E. Botsford, F. D. Jenks (not in any way involved with the Jenks Ship Building Company of Port Huron), and C. O. Duncan, who were contemplating the shipbuilding plant. Even a finance committee of nine men was appointed to canvass the business men of the town to raise the capital. The citizens were wholly behind such a project because of the immense wealth and importance it would bring to their small town. The site was indeed suitable, the time opportune, and the funds could be raised without too much difficulty. It would truly be a community project.

The plans went on. Professor Wm. F. Durand of the School of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering at Cornell University was engaged in the capacity of consulting engineer.

He had planned a type of grain carrier that involved some features of construction radically different from the ordinary grain vessel of the lakes. It involved a unique hopper bottom construction, more complicated, and as a result more expensive. It was truly a practical scheme to eliminate the shoveling of grain and coal where clam shell unloaders were used, but the added expense that would be incurred in event of bottom damage to the vessel would far outdistance the cost of using normal unloading methods. The hopper bottom idea was later adopted and is now used exclusively in the self-unloading type lake carriers.

The yard was planned in such a way that two vessels could be built at one time. Everything would be in readiness at the St. Clair site to

Mutual Transit's *North Lake* after launch in 1909.

lay their first keel by March 1, 1902. The dimensions of the first vessel would be 405 x 50 x 30.

By November 14, 1901 a company was organized with a capital of $100,000 called the Columbia Iron Works. Along with plans for the yard, the first steamer, the hopper bottom construction and the first of chartered boats, was a steel elevator of 1,500,000 bushel capacity to be located in Sarnia, Ontario, across the river from Port Huron. This would supplement the two existing elevators in operation on the American shore, at Port Huron.

In an article in the December 12, 1901 issue of MARINE REVIEW, J. E. Botsford outlined his plans.

"We have the deeds for about 50 acres of land, 1,700 ft. front on the St. Clair river below the Oakland house, accessible by the Michigan Central Railroad and two other railroads. We have begun the work of establishing a ship yard and will have berths for two boats, one a package freight and grain boat 380 feet long and 50 foot beam for our line already in operation, to run between Port Huron and Duluth. The second vessel is to be a lumber carrier, 180 ft. keel and 40 ft. beam, for Cleveland parties. All stock in the shipyard company has been subscribed and paid in. The stockholders are J. E. Botsford, F. D. Jenks and C. O. Duncan of Port Huron, and W. F. Botsford of Los Angeles, California. We have ample means to carry the project through. The package freight boat will be built on a new design as far as the water bottom is concerned, the arrangement being such to avoid shoveling grain, or trimming coal where clam shells are used."

The editors of the MARINE REVIEW continue the article showing blue prints that Botsford enclosed and then add:

"The plans to which Mr. Botsford refers show quite clearly the change proposed in the ship's bottom. It will readily be seen that the construction is more complicated and will prove more expensive than the ordinary tank-top covering. There is no doubt of the practicability of building the bottom of a vessel in this way, but there is some question as to whether the extra cost of construction and repairs in event of bottom damage will be offset by avoiding the expense of operating steam shovels, etc., in getting the grain to the elevator leg in the hold of the vessel. The new form of bottom does not, of course, add or subtract from either the capacity of the lower hold or the capacity of the water bottom. The scheme allows the grain to trim itself into the hoppers and directly to the base of the marine leg, which is lowered in the usual manner through the hatches."

Of course the March 1st. date was never met. The yard progressed steadily through the coming months of 1902 and business seemed to be going well. Two other steamers were chartered for the 1902 season to fulfill the new contract with the Grand Trunk. These were the *Buell* and the *Wyoming*. In april the *Major* was also added by charter from the Mitchell fleet. Through the summer months more work and thought occupied the minds of the energetic young men.

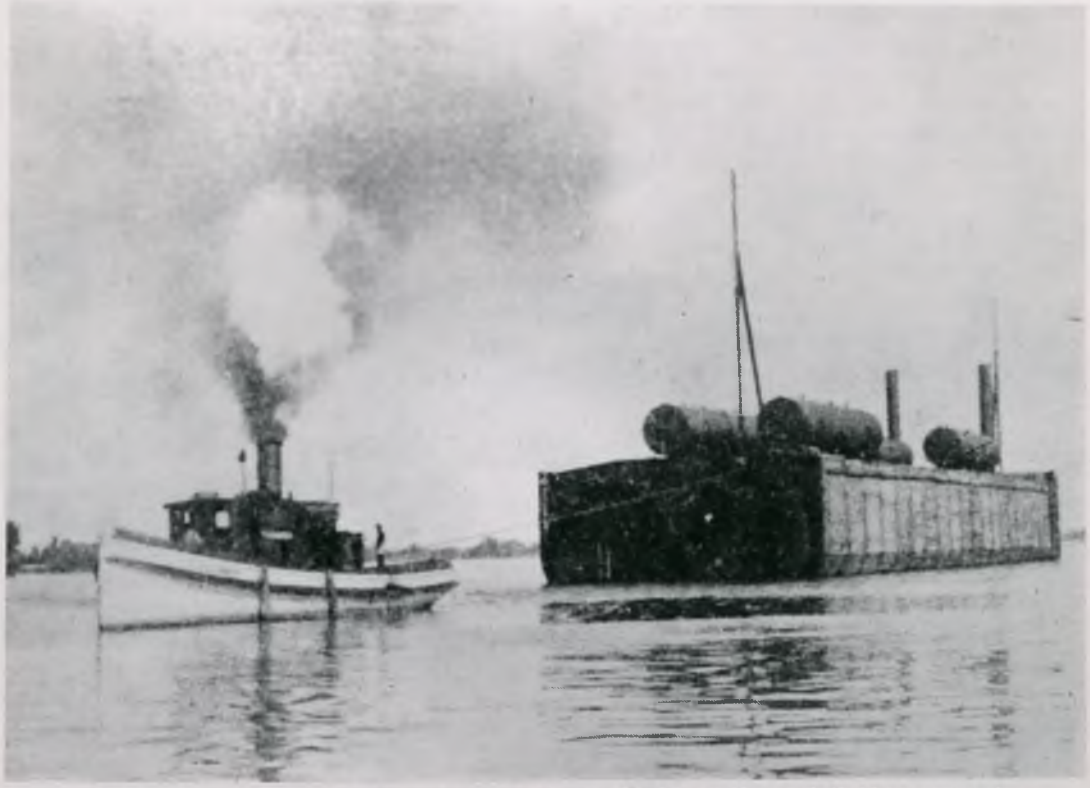
The company's first contract for a steel vessel was for a small cargo steamer for Chicago and Buffalo parties, not one as previously envisioned. This would be 215 x 39 x 16, and cost about $100,000. Negotiations for three other ships were in progress but no decision had been reached by September of that year. The work on the first steamer was begun but the company experienced some difficulty in purchasing various necessary materials. The idea of a hopper bottom carrier was dropped as unfeasible and another dream went down the drain. Meanwhile, the yard itself assumed very trim proportions and the machinery they purchased was of the best available at the time.

The officers were announced as J. E. Botsford, president; C. O.

Duncan, vice president; F. D. Jenks, secretary and treasurer; Prof. W. F. Durand, consulting engineer. By October 2, contract had been acquired, the steel elevator to be constructed at Sarnia dropped due to the inability to secure necessary structural steel, and bids were made to get contracts for two new full sized cargo steamers for the Gilchrist fleet. Progress on the two canal-sized carriers was underway by the end of the year. The George Hall Coal Company of Ogdensburg would have the second of these and the firm of T. J. Prindeville of Chicago the other. Employment in the yard soon reached the 600 mark.

On the 21st of March, 1903, the *Winnebago* was launched for the Iroquois Transportation Company of Chicago amid all the fanfare and parties usual for such an event. The yard had reached its zenith in but one short year. While the Hall Coal Company steamer was being rushed to completion and the first of the Gilchrist vessels was being prepared the company planned to build a dry dock to handle repairs on the largest of the lake freighters. The *John C. Howard* was launched on June 20, and work was begun on the Gilchrist boats. As with other new concerns, the company experienced great difficulty obtaining delivery of materials to build their ships. Now the *real* trouble began.

Insufficient capital in the beginning of any operation usually spells trouble somewhere along the way. In the case of Columbia Iron Works the trouble came sooner than expected. With a moderate beginning and a successful bid for more contracts while the yard was not even complet ed, this seemed almost impossible... but it happened. When the Gilchrist vessels were ordered the contract stipulated that J. C. Gilchrist would take over the management of the yard as far as completion of the two vessels was concerned if anything went amiss before they were



Tug *C. A. Lorman* towing a section of the Michigan Central Railway tunnel to Detroit.

completed. R. S. Jenks of Port Huron was appointed receiver and the *Howard* was allowed to be completed. The legal papers were filed at Port Huron showing the total indebtedness at some $368,000, while assets were appraised at $179,475, although the original cost was said to have been $409,156. For weeks the creditors met to try to reorganize or refinance the venture but without success.

The creditors made a thorough examination of the books and it was impossible for them to determine from the system of bookkeeping precisely what the condition of affairs was. They could not even determine from the books whether a profit had been made on the steamers already completed. The Honorable Franklin Moore of Port Huron was appointed to the committee and the assignee, Russ S. Jenks, appeared before the judge of the circuit court with a petition authorizing the sale at public auction to the highest bidder. The judge granted the petition and the sale was set for September 18, 1903; the property including the land, buildings, machinery and tools, tc be sold in bulk for cash. The Detroit Trust Company came into temporary charge of the plant as receiver and efforts were made to have it appointed trustee in hopes the plant could be rehabilitated. The company was adjudged bankrupt in the United States District Court upon petition of the National Land Company, one of the creditors, and the matter was then referred to Harlow P. Davock, referee in bankruptcy. The matter then hung on for an entire year before further developments occurred.

Late in November, 1904, a new company called the St. Clair Engineering Company was formed to take over the shipyard. The keel for the Gilchrist vessel was still on the stocks, the steel was waiting and the workers were more than anxious to return to their jobs. Two weeks elapsed before the Great Lakes Engineering Works of Detroit leased the

Launch of the *Harry Yates*, March 5, 1910. Tug *Sarnia City* at right.

entire plant and set wheels aworking once again. Mr. Antonio Pessano, president and general manager of the Detroit-based company, negotiated the deal. Through his foresight the home plant had grown to great proportions during the last few years and he had the capital to back up this new venture. Already seven new vessels were under contract for this firm when the St. Clair plant was leased. The Gilchrist steamers, whose plans originally called for ships of 416 foot keek, were changed and the new vessels would be 464 foot keel and 50 foot beam.

While negotiations for the plant dragged on, worried workers were left in a quandry about their job security. To keep the force busy, the small drillboat, *Earthquake*, hull number 3, of the Great Lakes Engineering Works, originally destined to be built at Ecorse after her plans were finalized in late May of 1904, was quickly begun at the St. Clair yard. This vessel was completed and launched late in 1904.

Now work began in earnest on the two Gilchrist boats and both were in the water by the end of 1905. Through a series of financial negotiations in 1905, the entire plant was purchased outright. The *George H. Russel* was ready for launching. With special cars bringing many distinguished guests up to St. Clait, the day of the launch, April 25, 1905, was an exciting event for the townspeople and a proud day for the workers. The first full-sized cargo steamer, an imposing steel giant, was successfully introduced into her native element.

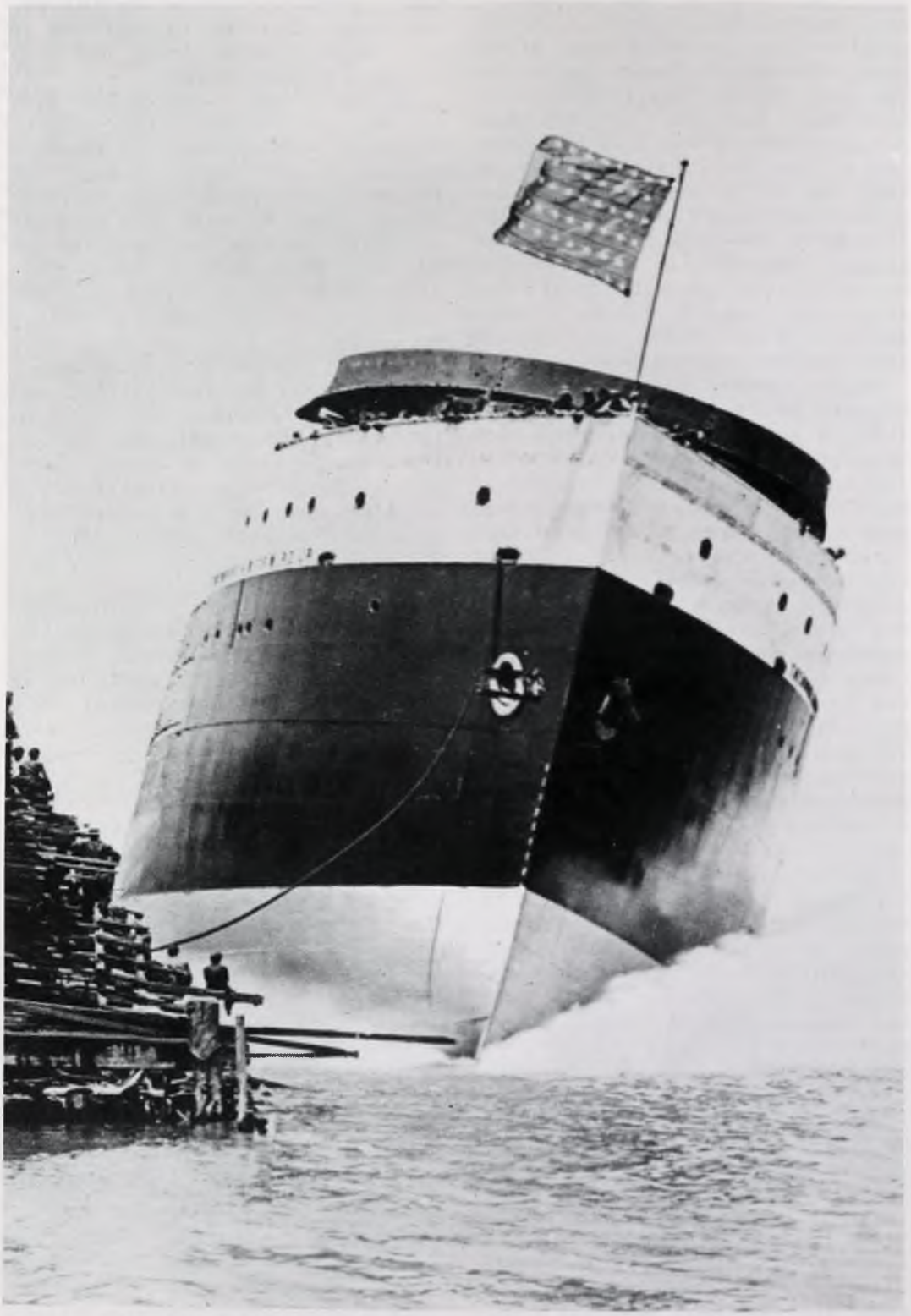
The second Gilchrist boat, the *Frank J. Hecker*, was launched on the 12th of September of that year amid similar festivities, as work on another contract kept the yard humming. This was the steel car ferry to carry railroad cars across Lake Erie. Originally laid down as the *Ellsworth*, the carferry *Ashtabula*, was launched on the 12th of May, 1906. The yard once more was jammed with spectators who lined the river bank, stood on tops of buildings, cautiously held on to anything to give them a better look, and witnessed a perfect launch.

The following few years were hectic ones at the St. Clair plant. Contracts were abundant as shippers vied with each other to gain new tonnage in record time. In 1907 alone, some 45 bulk and package freighters were on the ways, launched, or ordered in Great Lakes shipyards. Not to be outdone by any means, the Great Lakes Engineering Works could bid on many contracts because of the two yards they owned.

At St. Clair the *John Mitchell* and the *William B. Davock* were built in 1907. Two more vessels followed in 1908, the *Normania* and *Adam E. Cornelius*[1]. The package freight steamers *North Lake* and *North Star* were launched in 1909, followed in 1910 by the bulk carriers *Henry Yates*[1] and *Theodore H. Wickwire, Jr.*

Besides these giant leviathans the company contracted to build the Detroit-Windsor railway tunnel sections at the St. Clair yard. During 1907-08 eleven sections of this tunnel were built there. These were built on the regular shipways, launched sidewise like freighters, but were then towed by tugs to the Detroit site. Sunk to the bottom of the river into a trench dug for the tunnel, they were joined under water fastened down, and then pumped out. This unique method of tunneling paid off in huge profits for the yards and the construction gangs involved. The tunnel was completed in record time and is still in operation to this day. (However, the height of the tunnel is too low to permit passage of the new piggy-back and jumbo hi-cube cars, which must be ferried across the river.)

Much of the success of the tunnel venture depended upon the exact measurement of each section and its placement on the river bottom. Because of Great Lakes Engineering Works' competence and foresight, this project became an engineering masterpiece which still stands as an



The *Theodore H. Wickwire, Jr.* going down the ways in June, 1910.

amazing feat in the annals of Great Lakes history.

The *Theodore H. Wickwire, Jr.* was the last big freighter launched at St. Clair. With the exception of a few small steel ships built later, it proved to be the last steel giant built in St. Clair County. Many problems beset the yard in the next few months. Not among the least was labor problems. In the end, all of the machinery, and much of the labor force, was moved to Ashtabula, Ohio during 1911 and 12. The negotiations for building this new yard began in 1909 and were completed before the end of the year. Because Ashtabula was closer to the steel plants at Pittsburgh and Youngstown, and had greater railroad facilities, the site appeared much more favorable. Then, when the problems besetting the St. Clair yard came to a climax, it was decided to abandon the yard completely. By 1912 everything had been removed. Today the site is a peaceful subdivision. Some of the cement keel blocks were still visible in the lawns a few years ago. The site of the former yard is below the State Police post at St. Clair. Visitors to the area will note street names with a familiar ring; Owana Avenue, and Tashmoo Street.

St. Clair proved to be too small to compete with the Lake Erie shipbuilding facilities and the powerful lobby of the railroads. No longer would the majestic steel giants come crashing down the ways into the blue waters of the St. Clair River. When this yard closed its doors, it also marked practically the end for all shipbuilding at St. Clair. From the trim wooden *Grand Turk* of 1825 to the mammouth *Wickwire, Jr.* of 1910, St. Clair produced upwards of 66 ships to sail the saltless seas, a record that justifies pride.

No more will paragraphs like that which follows, describing the launch of the *Normania*, be written about the excitement and thrills of shipbuilding:

(From Marine Review, Feb. 1908)

"This Wednesday tugs had to be sent to break the ice in the St. Clair River. Quite a number of spectators, including some hardy photographers, had gone out upon the ice beyond the yard to witness the launching. When the *Normania* went overboard, they speedily discovered how it felt to have ice rock like the waves of the ocean. The swell was as though a line of boats was passing and cracking and breaking of the solid field was anything but pleasant for those who stood upon it."

One wonders what happened to those hardy photographers!

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF STEEL VESSELS BUILT AT ST. CLAIR

WINNEBAGO. Steel canaller launched 3/21/03. US 81794; 200 x 39.3 x 13.7. 1091 GT. Sold to west coast interests in 1906. At 3:10 AM, July 31, 1909, she stranded after striking a submerged rock 4 miles NW of the Life Saving Station at Point Arena, California. She was bound from Everett, Washington to San Francisco with lumber. The crew of 38 was saved by the Arena Cove Life Saving Station.

JOHN C. HOWARD (i). Steel canaller launched 6/20/03. US 200151; 220 x 39.3 x 13.7. 1244 GT. Sold to west coast interests in 1906 (Dollar SS Company) and renamed *Melville Dollar (i)*. Sold Japanese in 1916 and renamed *Jinyo Maru*. Sold Chinese in 1919 and renamed *Shin Ping*. Scrapped Shanghai, 1930.

EARTHQUAKE. Steel scow built in 1904. Hull Number 3. US 162293; 106 x 30.4 x 5.8. 384 GT. Foundered 10/15/18 at Dunkirk, N. Y. but raised again. Renamed *Scow No. 130* in 1936. Her document was surrendered in 1965. Scrapped 1964.

GEORGE H. RUSSEL. Steel bulk freighter launched 4/25/05. Hull Number 11. US 202149; 462 x 50 x 24. 4978 GT. Sold from Gilchrist to Interlake in 1913 and renamed *Canopus*. Sold to Nicholson in 1945. Sold for scrap in 1961 and scrapped at Ashtabula in the winter of 1961-62.

FRANK J. HECKER. Steel bulk carrier launched 9/2/05. Hull Number 12. US 202475; 462 x 50 x 24. 497 GT. Sold to Interlake in 1913 and renamed *Persius*. Sold to Nicholson in 1945. Sold for scrap in 1961. Filled witha cargo of scrap iron and *buttoned up* (all outside openings welded shut, rudder welded straight, and propeller removed). She was towed across the Atlantic for Genoa, Italy. She broke the tow of the tug *Englishman* in a storm at 44° N. 33° W. September 11. She was abandoned but later found by the Dutch *Witmarsum* about 90 miles NNW of Fayal, She was taken in tow but soon foundered on September 21, 1961.

HANDY ANDY. Steel dredge built in 1905. Hull Number 18. US 162762; 95 x 44 x 10. 471 GT. Spent most of her life in the Dunbar & Sullivan Dredging Co. Sold Canadian in 1944 and renamed *Commander J. E.* (C 138146) Still in service with McQueen at Amherstburg, Ontario.

ASHTABULA. Steel railroad carferry launched 5/12/06. Hull Number 19. US 203071; 338 x 56 x 17. 2670 GT. Originally laid down to be the *James W. Ellsworth* but changed before launch. She served her time on Lake Erie, and was scrapped after a serious collision with the *Ben Moreell* in 1958.

JOHN MITCHELL. Steel bulk freighter launched 11/28/06. Hull Number 25. US 203943; 420 x 52 x 23. 4468 GT. Sunk in collision with the steamer *Wm. Henry Mack* off Whitefish Point, Lake Superior on July 9, 1911. Three lives were lost.

WILLIAM B. DAVOCK. Steel bulk carrier launched 4/25/07. Hull Number 26. US 204121; 420 x 52 x 23. 4468 GT. Disappeared with all hands (32) in the Armistice Day Storm of November 11, 1940 in Lake Michigan somewhere off Pentwater.

NORMANIA. Steel bulk freighter launched 2/5/08. Hull Number 39. US 205017; 420 x 52 x 24. 4871 GT. Renamed *William F. Stifel* in 1916. Served many years in the Columbia Transportation Co. Sold Italian for scrapping in 1960. Arrived at Savona, Italy, December 27, 1960.

ADAM E. CORNELIUS (i). Steel bulk freighter launched 5/1/08. Hull Number 53. US 205239; 420 x 52 x 24. 4900 GT. Converted to a self-unloader at Manitowoc in 1942 and lengthened to 475. Renamed *Detroit Edison (i)* in 1948; *George F. Rand (ii)* in 1954. Sold Canadian in 1962 (C 316352) and renamed *Avondale (ii)*. In service for Reoch SS Company.

NORTH LAKE. Steel package freighter launched 3/13/09. Hull Number 61. US 206144; 350 x 46 x 26. 3861 GT. Built for the Mutual Transit Company. Sold in 1916 to the Great Lakes Transit Corporation. Renamed *J. E. Gorman* in 1927. Went to war in 1942 and converted to ocean service by the Alabama Dry Dock and SB Co. She served on the Pacific during WW II. Sold to Panama in 1948 and renamed *Adelaide*. Scrapped in Japan in 1955.

NORTH STAR (ii) Steel package freighter for Mutual Transit Company launched 10/2/09. Hull Number 70. US 207011; 350 x 46 x 26. 3849 GT. Sold to Great Lakes Transit Corporation in 1916. Renamed *H A Scandrett* in 1927. Also went to war in 1943. Sold Finland in 1947 and renamed *Hamina*. Sold to Belgian shipbreakers in 1954.

HARRY YATES (i). Steel bulk freighter launched 3/5/10. Hull Number 77. US 207361; 504 x 56 x 26. 6077 GT. Converted to a self-unloader in 1934. Renamed *Consumers Power (ii)* in 1934. Again renamed *Fred A. Manske (i)* in 1958. Sold Canadian (C 316036) in 1962 and renamed *Leadale*. Still in service with Reoch.

THEODORE H. WICKWIRE, JR. (i). Steel bulk freighter launched 6/25/10. Hull Number 78. US 207766; 504 x 56 x 26.2 6077GT. Converted to self-unloader, by American SB Company at Lorain in 1932 and engthened to 511, renamed *Thunder Bay Quarries (i)*. Renamed *United States Gypsum in 1939 and still* in service.

GOSOON. Steel scow built in 1910. Hull Number 80. US 164322; 70 x 30 x 7. *134 GT. Still in service with Dunbar & Sullivan Dredging Company.*

11 TUNNEL SECTIONS. Each 260 feet x 23.4 in diameter. Hull Numbers 34, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, and 68. Built at St. Clair during 1907-08.

Editor; Frederic E Weber
11400 Balfour Road, Detroit, Michigan 48224

Seaway News Editor; George Ayoub

Correspondents;

Walter P. Murphy, Jr.; Chicago
Donald J. Comtois; Bay City
Barry Gillham; Toronto
Edwin Sprengeler; Milwaukee
Otto Strek; Detroit
Carl Luhrs; Toledo

This is the last issue of TELESCOPE *in which the name of George Ayoub will appear on the news masthead. After years of faithful service, George finds the pressures of business too great to continue as Seaway Editor. We will miss his regular contributions greatly. From all the readers, and from the Editor especially, thanks, George, for a fine tour of duty.*

July 2...*Kingdoc* clears Port Weller Drydock after five year inspection.

...The Greek vessel *Maria P. Lemos* damaged her bottom in the upper St. Marys River today when she holed starboard and port No. 1 tanks and center No. 2 tank. She went to anchor until she has been pronounced seaworthy. She was downbound from Duluth with grain.

...The captain of the *Stewart J. Cort* dropped anchor in Erie Harbor after her four thrusters (two in the bow and two in the stern) began acting up. She returned to the fit-out dock at daylight for some more work on them. One of the Cort's exhaust stacks on the service generator caught fire from an accumulation of carbon and oil, but the fire burned itself out without damage.

July 3...The *Maria P. Lemos* settled to 28 feet 5 inches of draft and the Army Engineers wouldn't let her transit the locks. Under Coast Guard supervision her fuel oil was pumped into the *Cape Transport* which had been along side for that purpose. Once she reached 26 feet draft, she was permitted to transit the locks and head for a shipyard in the Montreal area.

In the meantime the Corps of Engineers' sweep-boats dragged the 1,500-foot width of the channel at the point of coolision and reported finding nothing.

July 4...Lake Erie beaches near Cleveland, Ohio and as far east as the Pennsylvania border are remaining closed this holiday because hundreds of millions of gallons of raw sewage accidentally dumped in the water near Cleveland in late June. A leak at the easterly sewage treatment plant, Cleveland, Ohio, caused the sewage to spill into the lake at the rate of five million gallons an hour.

July 5...Nine sailors are living in a darkened tanker *Golden Sable* in Montreal harbor because a dispute with the ship's owners has left them without money to go home. Another 13 crewmembers have already returned to their homes. Presently, the ship is under a writ of seizure as the crew's lawyer attempts to gain wages for a month amounting to $15,162. The ship is owned by Penn Shipping, Ltd., Toronto.

July 7...On the St. Marys River new vessel speed limits for the area are

being considered after the Commander of the Ninth Coast Guard District received a complaint and petition signed by forty-three residents of DeTour Village, Michigan reporting that vessels traveling at high speeds between Sweets Point Light and DeTour Reef Light are endangering life and causing damage to shore property.

July 9...The *Elmdale* aroused the anger of a Toronto radio station due to what they call excessive air pollution while unloading at the Victory Mills Elevator. (Station CHUN spent two days trying to get a public outcry.)

July 19...A $125,000 yacht, which had been taken from Sandusky, Ohio on June 9, has been recovered today by F.B.I. agents and the U.S. Coast Guard. The yacht was found tied to a pole in a small channel on the north side of Harsen's Island in Lake St. Clair. The yacht is 44 x 14-6 and weighs 25-tons and is named *Web*. A Coast Guard man said it was the largest he had ever heard of being stolen.

...The sleek new 570-foot Japanese freighted, *Totai Maru*, launched February 28, 1971 is making her maiden voyage into the Great Lakes.

July 13...A three-judge Federal Court panel has dismissed a suit by the Lake Carriers' Association seeking to halt enforcement of a Michigan law requiring holding tanks for sewage on a commercial vessel.

...Operating headquarters of the Great Lakes Fleet of U.S. Steel Corporation will move from Cleveland, Ohio to Duluth, Minnesota. September 1 of this year is the transfer date.

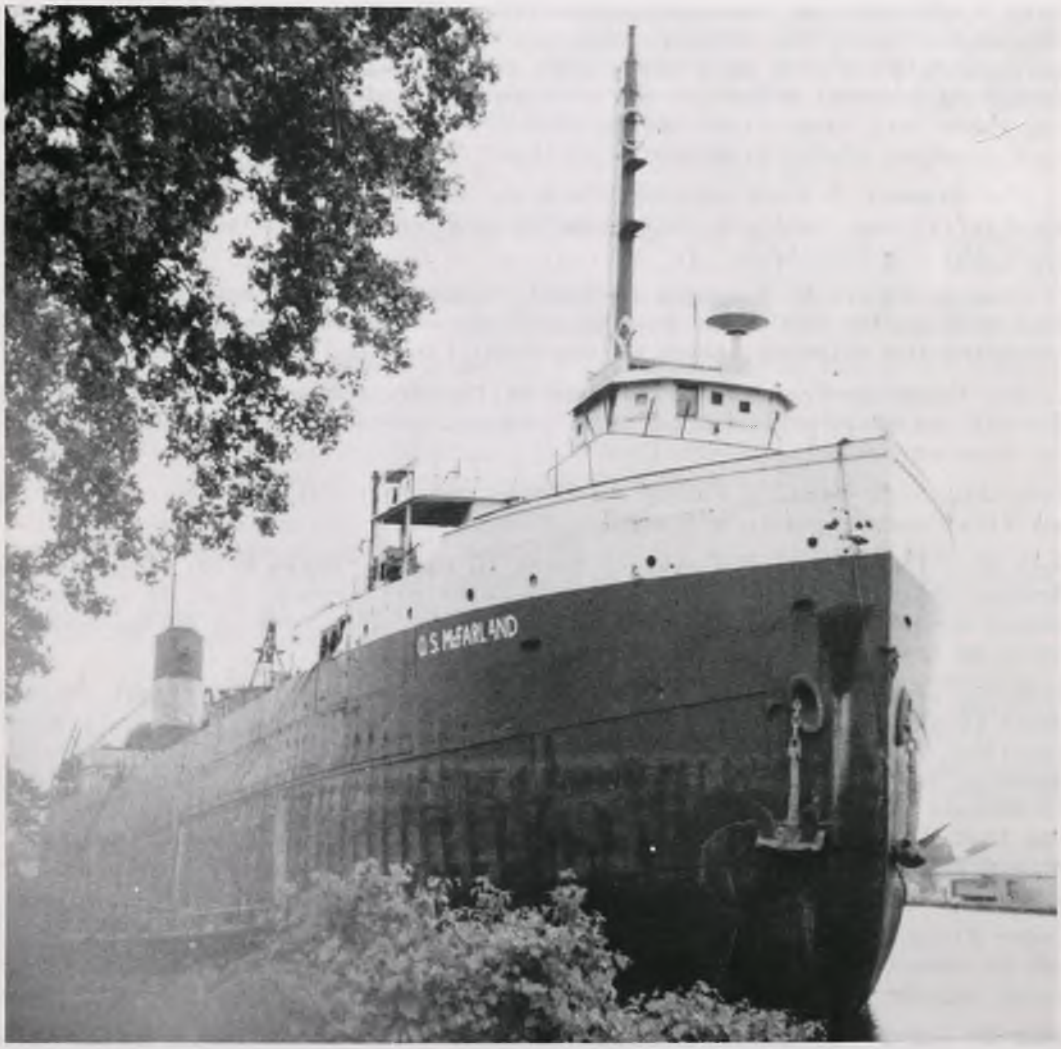
...A Chicago physician's 34-foot sailboat, with three men and a ten year old boy on board, drifted for four hours on Lake Michigan after winds snapped the mast. The Swedish freighter *Lianna* spotted emergency flares and flashlight SOS signals and radioed the coast guard. The *Lianna* circled the disabled sailboat for ninety minutes until the Coast Guard arrived. Waves at the time were twelve to fifteen feet high. They were towed into Wilmette, Illinois, by the Coast Guard.

July 14...Litton Industries announced plans to produce and operate a tug-barge combination in the Great Lakes that will be the largest of its type in the world. Contract to build the tug, to cost $3.5 million, has been let to Holter Marine Industries Co. of New Orleans. The barge is already under construction at Erie Marine, Inc., Erie, Pennsylvania. The tug will be 152 feet long and have two 7,500-horsepower engines. It will be fitted into a notch in the stern of the barge and connected by a newly designed rigid connection invented by Breit Engineering of New Orleans. The barge will have a self-unloading system capable of discharging at 19,000 tons per hour.

...Admiral Willard J. Smith, former Coast Guard Commandant, will join the administrative staff of Northwestern Michigan College, Traverse City, Michigan, as assistant to the president for maritime affairs. The Great Lakes Maritime Academy is located at the college.

July 15...The icebreaker *Mackinaw*, will sail today from Chicago with about 500 veterans on board for the 27th Purple Heart Cruise. Since the *Mackinaw* was not built as a passenger ship, the Canvas Smith Inc., of Chicago, constructed a 5,200 square foot awning for the *Mackinaw* so the veterans will be protected. This will be given to the ship after the cruise.

GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS



...The sixty-eight year old *O. S. McFarland* has been sold at public auction for $51,000 to John Stropich. The former Columbia Transportation Company boat was sold last year to a group of New York investors, who in turn had her towed from Fairport, Ohio to the Saginaw River area last fall. The *McFarland* has been out of service since the U.S. Coast Guard condemned her ancient steam engines more than five years ago. John Stropich, along with Carl Enkevoort, own the Escanaba Towing Company.

July 17...Sea trials for the new 1,000-footer *Stewart J. Cort* are scheduled to start today.

...155 sailing yachts headed north today from the Chicago lakefront in the start of the 64th Chicago-Mackinac Island race.

July 19...The Burlington Northern Railroad will be testing today the feasibility of shipping coal from the Montana area to the Great Lakes when they

GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS

load 5,000 tons of low-sulphur coal from Montana into the hold of the *Samuel Mather* at the Allouez iron ore docks at Superior, Wisconsin. The shipment will arrive in a fifty-five car train, is destined for Taconite Harbor, Minnesota. Observers say this is an experiment that might point the way for a very large trade moving coal from the lakehead to the lower lakes in a reversal of the traditional pattern.

...The *Stewart J. Cort* returned to Erie, Pennsylvania early today after a thirty-five hour test run that revealed problems in the electrical circuitry of the bow thrusters.

...Senator Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn), urged Congress today to appropriate $1.5 million for the first year of a study to determine the feasibility of extending the shipping season on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway.

...The *Canadian Progress* is in Port Weller dry docks for engine repairs. She will be there at least ten days as parts are flown in from Great Britain.

July 20...U.S. Steel's *Philip R. Clarke* down the Welland Canal. (This is her first canal trip in a few years.)

July 21...Fourteen of the sixteen gates in the St. Marys River Compensating System, which is used to equalize the water difference, will be closed to permit a special three-week study of fish life. The study is being conducted by an international commission.

July 22...A new ruling by the Coast Guard on load lines will permit certain boats to ignore the winter load.line regulation, which each year cuts about fourteen inches off the draft of the newer vessels on the lakes, starting November 1. Now these twenty-six ore boats will be able to load to the intermediate mark in November and December and into January if they are sailing that late. The vessels involved are those that gained six inches or more draft in 1969. (See TELESCOPE, Vol. 18; No. 5, page 136.)

July 24...The twice postponed investigation into the fire on board the *Roger Blough* has been put off a third time until jurisdictional problems can be resolved; in other words, who will investigate the fire...the Coast Guard, or the Ohio State Fire Marshall?

July 25...Grain shipments of 2,950,262 tons on the Great Lakes during June were the highest on record for that month.

July 26...A wildcat strike of Longshoremen has hit the Port of Chicago.

...The *Stewart J. Cort* has again undergone sea trials and this time everything was satisfactory.

July 28...The Greek ship *Ulysses Reefer* pulled out of Navy Pier in Chicago and headed for Milwaukee to unload its Chicago cargo. One other ship has already been diverted.

...Inland's *L. E. Block* is scheduled to arrive at Manitowoc, Wisconsin today where she will receive new side tanks, tank tops and ballast piping. The work will take approximately three months and cost about $½ million.

...The tanker *Irvinglake* which ran aground in November 1963, in New Brunswick's Bay of Chaleur, could pose a pollution threat. A Canadian surveyor

said an investigation showed that the tanker still has an estimated 22,000 gallons of bunker oil in her tanks and that it will definitely break up. The survey was made after fishermen complained they had found oil on the shoreline and in the waters surrounding the vessel. The tanker is grounded in Beloui Cove, thirty-five miles from Bathurst.

July 29...*Ferndale* enters the Port Weller Dry Docks for her five year inspection.

...C&O's carferry, *City of Saginaw*, which is in the Manitowoc Shipbuilding, Inc. yard, Manitowoc, Wisconsin, was hit with a fire that virtually destroyed the upper deck and forward section. She was laid up for general repair and an engine overhaul. Damage is estimated from $450,000 to $750,000.

...The Lake Carrier's Association will appeal today to the U. S. Supreme Court the recent refusal of the U. S. District Court, in Detroit, to decide the Constitutional validity of the Michigan water-craft pollution control act. The ruling simply advised the Lake Carrier's Association to seek relief in the Michigan Courts before going to a Federal Court.

...Steamboat mail service was restored in the U. S. today when the stern-wheeler *Delta Queen* was granted authority to act as a floating post office. (Steamboat postal service was inauguarated in 1825. The *Delta Queen*'s the first to qualify as a steamboat post office since 1954 when the diesel towboat *St. Louis Zephyr* was so designated.)

Aug. 2...Peter Riley, retired general manager of Shenango Furnace Co.'s fleet of Great Lakes ore carriers, and Troy Browning, formerly of Detroit, are working together on a Hawaiian Interisland ferry system. Riley is acting as advisor to Browning who is the president of the Hawaiian Inter-Island Ferry System. The company will let contracts in about two months for two ferries.

Aug. 3...Lockheed Shipbuilding and Construction Co. of Seattle, Washington, are low bidder for an icebreaker for the U. S. Coast Guard. The ship will be 400 feet long with a power plant nearly 80,000 horsepower.

Aug. 4...A new salt water line has come into the Great Lakes. It is the San Rocco Line and will run between Great Lakes and Mediterranean ports.

...A 45 by 24 foot barge has been sunk ten miles north of Oswego Harbor, New York in 510 feet of water. No other details at this time are known.

...The Attorney General of the State of Wisconsin, has asked permission to intercede for Wisconsin in an Interstate Commerce Commission investigation against Great Lakes ports by railroads. The ICC investigation began eight months ago.

...The testing of the unloading system on board the *Stewart J. Cort* has been postponed for a week. The owner has asked the builder to make some minor revisions in the electrical system of the motor control cabinet.

Aug. 5...The Tomlinson Fleet Corp. has sold all three of its vessels to Oglebay-Norton Company. They are the self-unloaders *G. A. Tomlinson* and *Sylvania* and the straight-decker *James Davidson*. The vessels have been under charter to the Columbia Transportation Division of Oglebay-Norton since 1969. The *Davidson* has not operated for the past two years and is laid up in Toledo.

GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS

...The Canadian Government is waiting for the results of an air survey before deciding if a clean-up operation is necessary for a midchannel diesel oil slick on the St. Lawrence River near Quebec City. The oil slick occurred August 2 when the Greek freighter *Sithonia* hit bottom near Point Basile, upriver from Quebec, ripping open one of her fuel reservoirs. The area water pollution co-ordinator said a clean-up would be necessary only if the oil reaches the shoreline.

Aug. 6...Several Great Lakes fleets have laid up twenty eight vessels, at least temporarily. This is due to decreasing demands for steel and a steelworkers' strike at Taconite Harbor and Silver Bay in Minnesota. The strike has prompted Wilson to lay up five ships, Columbia to lay up one, Inland Steel to lay up two, and Boland and Cornelius to lay up one. U. S. Steel has laid up six older vessels and they say these are permanent lay ups. Pickands-Mather & Co. is laying up its entire operating fleet of thirteen ships for a couple of weeks.

Aug. 7...Ohio Fire Marshal, Robert Lynch, says his office's closed hearing into the cause of the June 24 fire aboard the *Roger Blough* should be concluded within a month.

Aug. 8...A large oil slick has been sighted on Lake Huron. The slick is about eighteen miles long and 50 to 100 feet wide and is about six miles from shore near Lexington, Michigan. The Coast Guard is investigating.

...About 10:10 P.M. the 110-foot yacht *Helene*, with thirty four persons on board, and the 23 foot cruised *Boha*, with seven persons on board, collided. The collision took place in the shipping channel or the Detroit River about half a mile upstream from the eastern tip of Belle Isle. Prompt action by the Coast Guard and the four-man crew of the *Helene* averted a major loss of live. The Coast Guard were investigating the cause of the accident.

Aug. 10...Vessel passages at the Soo are down to 30 to 35 vessels a day as compared to 40 to 45 at the beginning of the month.

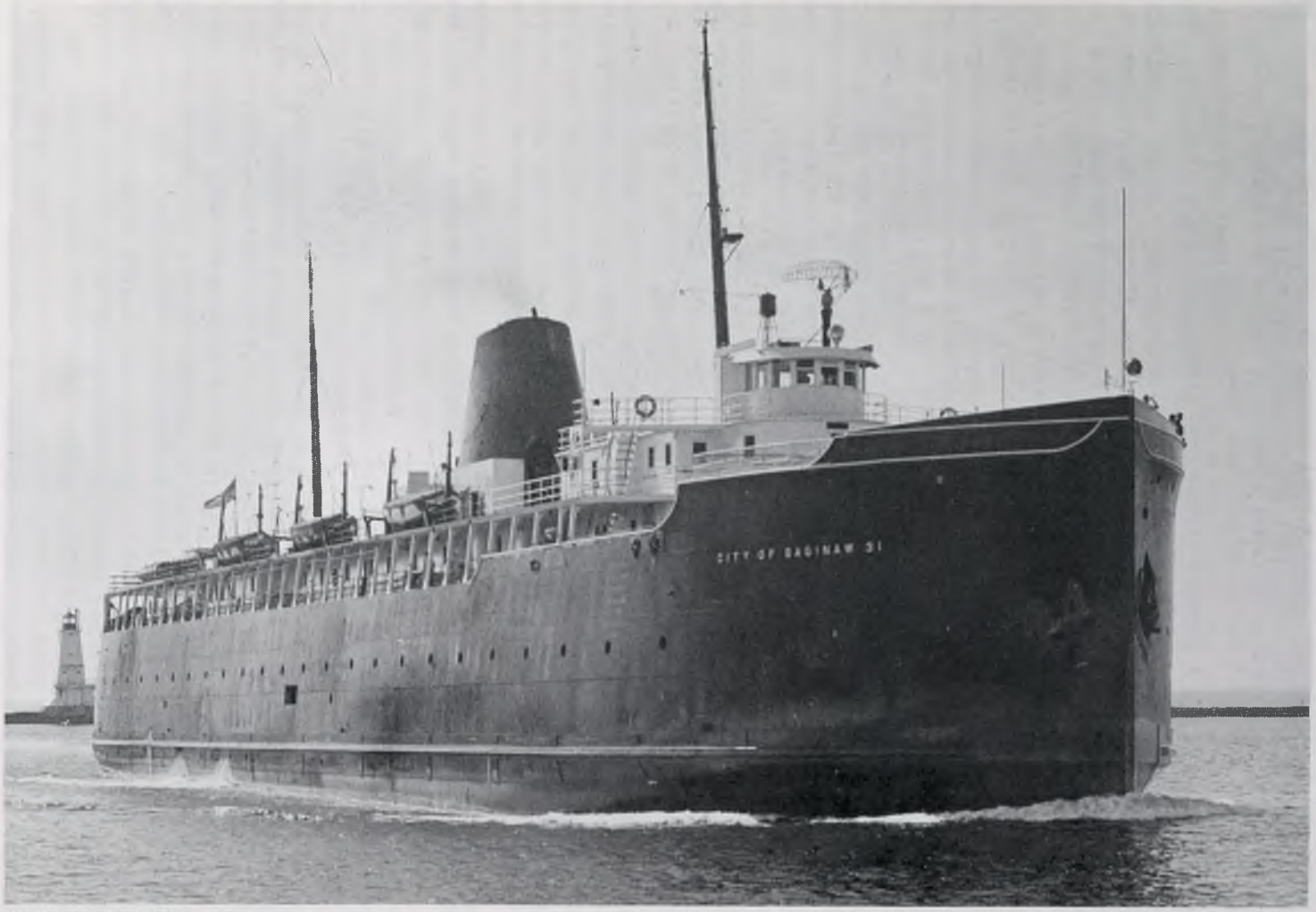
...The *Grovedale* has been sold to the Steel Company of Canada and with her cabins removed at the United Metals Yard, the hull will be sunk as a breakwall for a land reclamation project in Hamilton, Ontario. Apparently the *Henry R. Platt, Jr.* will also be sunk in this project off the Stelco Works.

Aug. 12...At Bay City, Michigan, a condemnation suit for fifteen acres of Saginaw River shoreline land to expand Veterans' Memorial Park will begin September 7 in Bay County Circuit Court. The city will argue owners of the land, Edward C. Davidson and James E. Davidson Estate, have refused to sell the land. This is the property of the old Davidson Shipyard.

...Milwaukee officials are studying the potential of a hovercraft route to Chicago. Included in this study is a route to Muskegon, Michigan.

...White Motor Corporation has received orders for four diesel engines from American Shipbuilding Co., Lorain, Ohio, to furnish power for two twin-screw ore carriers to be used on the Great Lakes. The engines, valued at a total of $750,000, each have 16 cylinders and deliver 2,8.0 horsepower. Delivery to Lorian is expected before January 1.

...The Canadian self-unloaded *Agawa Canyon* unloaded 21,600 tons of highway



CITY OF SAGINAW 31 *which sustained damage in Manitowoc shipyard fire.* Massman Photo Dossin Collection

salt at Bay City, Michigan. It was the largest shipment of salt to arrive there at one time.

...The 286-foot Navy hydrographic survey vessel *Wyman* passed her dock trials at Bay City's Defoe Shipbuilding Co. yard and will head out into Lake Huron for builder's trials September 10.

Aug. 14...The Great Lakes sea lamprey control program will get an extra $200,000 under a U.S. House-Senate compromise. The total amount the Great Lakes Fishery Commission will get is $1,813,000 for lamprey control.

...At Milwaukee, twenty-five members of the American Indian Movement, relying on an 1868 peace treaty, took over abandoned U.S. Coast Guard station on the Lake Michigan shore before dawn today.

...Lake Carriers' Association has given a warm reception to the new law requiring virtually all U. S. commercial vessels to have and use bridge-to bridge radio telephone equipment. This equipment has been in use on the lakes since 1934

Aug. 16...The West German freighter *Normannia* delivered the 300,000 Volkswagon to the Port of Toledo since the Seaway opened.

Aug. 17...A warehouse fire on the Hamilton waterfront was estimated at a loss of $400,000 and for a time it threatened the idle self-unloader *Orefax* which was docked in the area. The ship was finally moved to safety.

...Ralph H. Bertz has been named superintendent of engineering for U. S. Steel-Great Lakes Fleet, effective September 1.

Aug. 18...As of August 15 the monthly report of operating rates of American ore boats compiled by Hanna Mining Co., shows 94 vessels in commission of 135 available. Last year at this time, 131 were sailing out of 134 available.

Aug. 19...Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad officials have joined officials in Manitowoc, Wisconsin in investigating the cause of the fire on the *City of Saginaw,* July 29. Preliminary study of the damage suggested the fire was caused by an acetylene torch.

...Troy H. Browning, president of Hawiian Inter-Island Ferry System, Ltd., reports his company has given Todd Shipyards Corp. a letter of commitment for construction of two 424.foot diesel ferries. Construction is expected to take two years.

...Tests of the *Stewart J. Cort's* self-unloading system has been delayed for about ten days at the request of some subcontractors.

Aug. 20...Marinette Marine Corp., Marinette, Wisconsin, has received a $10.2 million Navy award for construction of twelve harbor tugs for use on the East and West coasts. Each tug will be 109 feet long and have a 2,000 horsepower engine. The contract will be completed in about two years.

Aug. 24...Wilson Marine Transit Co. has rescinded an 8% increase in the freight rate for iron ore.

...Season tonnage and number of vessels passing through the Soo Canal during July were down from the same period last year. Season tonnage to July 31 was 45,188,367 against 45,791,821 tons a year, according to the Corps of Engineers.

GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS

Aug. 26...All but three Interlake Steamship Co.'s vessels have returned to service. The three that are laid up for the season are the *Samuel Mather*, *Col. James Pickands* and *Walter E. Watson*.

Aug. 27...As a result of recently completed wave-measuring and vessel-speed studies, the St Lawrence Seaway Authority has introduced a speed limit on the St. Lawrence River in the Lake St. Francis area as well as modifying the existing speed limits in Hamilton Island/Cornwall area.

...Around 3 A.M. the German freighter *Transmichigan* was rammed by the Brazilian freighter, *Netuno* near the buoys marking the passage from Lake Huron into the St. Clair River. The Coast Guard said they have not yet determined how the accident occurred. At the time of impact the lake was calm and visibility was seven miles. After the crash the *Transmichigan* managed to power her way to a shoal near the Sarnia Yacht Club. She is about eighty yards from shore in about twenty-three feet of water, well out of the navigation channel. She has been holed in her No. 2 tank from the duct to below the water line, and is spilling bunker 'C' oil into the water. The *Netuno* suffered bow damage and it is above the water line. She continued on her destined trip to Detroit after the collision.

...Conservationists issued a statewide call for help to clean up the oil along the shoreline of the St. Clair River.

Aug. 28...At the Lorain yard of American Ship, workers are busy removing the damaged parts from the after-end of the *Roger Blough*. American Ship Building Co. has ordered new twin diesel engines from Fairbanks Morse, Inc. in Beloit, Wisconsin to replace the two damaged engines built by Peilstick-Crossley in England.

...Remnants of the oil slick that washed down the St. Clair River from the *Transmichigan* has been mostly swept up by the Coast Guard or dissipated in Lake St. Clair. As much as 20,000 gallons of heavy fuel oil may have leaked from the ship.

...Early today three tugs pulled the *Transmichigan*, which is carrying a load of Scotch whiskey, off the beach and moved her to the Canadian government dock in Sarnia, Ontario. The ruptured fuel tanks were sealed and booms placed around the vessel to confine any more leakage.

Aug. 30...The *Alcoa Seaprobe*, the largest aluminum ship ever built, has been turned over to her owners, Aluminum Company of America and Ocean Science and Engineering of Washington, D.C., after successfully undergoing trials by the builder, Peterson Builders, Inc., of Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin.

...Canadian Officers Maritime Union has threatened to take engineers off Canadian ships November 1, unless owners improve conditions aboard the vessels. About 200 ships are involved. The union is asking for pay raises totaling $160 per month over the next three years.

Aug. 31...The *Stewart J. Cort*, completed a twenty-four hour endurance run to test operations of the unloading belts and elevator wheel. Delivery and commission of the ship would follow in a week or two.

...American Steamship Co. (Boland & Cornelius) has agreed to sell two vessels subject to Federal approval. One is the *J. L. Reiss* to Erie Sand Co. Ltd., of Port Colborne, Ontario for scrapping.

The GREAT LAKES MARITIME INSTITUTE, INC., *promotes interest in the Great Lakes; preserves items related to the history of these lakes; encourages building of scale models of lake ships, and furthers programs of the* DOSSIN GREAT LAKES MUSEUM, *repository of the Institute's holdings. The Institute was organized in 1952 as the Great Lakes Model Shipbuilders' Guild. 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 to the organization.*

TELESCOPE, the Institute's journal is published six times per year, and covers Great Lakes topics. Its editors welcome an opportunity to review manuscripts for publication, sent to GREAT LAKES MARITIME INSTITUTE; DOSSIN GREAT LAKES MUSEUM; Belle Isle; Detroit, Michigan 48207. *The organization makes no payment for such material, and editors cannot be responsible for statements by the authors of articles published.*

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