

Telescope



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Steamer Tashmoo Leaving Marshland, St. Clair Flats, Mich.



GREAT LAKES
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Belle Isle, Detroit, Michigan 48207

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

Your Editor owes a debt of gratitude to a number of members who've filled in for him over these past few weeks. You, *also*, owe them a debt, for without them there is some doubt that this issue of *Telescope* would reach you on time.

You see, on May 26, without warning, we had a heart attack! It happened at 4 am, and in less than an hour we were in the intensive care section of Detroit's Harper Hospital. Fortunately, it was not as bad as it might have been. We survived and, with the exception of the disruption. . . and the indescribable boredom. . . of ninety days off the job, we seem to have come through it in fairly good shape.

The problem is, of course, the unfinished work that one carries about in one's head. to which no one else is privy, and which must then be transmitted to others who are left to carry on with little or no background.

Fortunately, thanks to the new typesetting machine, we had *Telescope* finished ahead, including this issue, with the exception of the News. Gordon Bugbee filled in there, and Fred Weber worked extra hard to give him the advantage of additional time by getting it in early for Gordon to prepare.

There were others. . . many others. . . who've helped, and we thank them every one, as we also thank those who knew of our trouble and sent good wishes or took time to visit us. From all of this we've learned a couple of things, first; we've a lot of *good* friends, and, second; keep your business in order, for you know not the hour!

MEETING NOTICES

There will be a General Membership meeting held on November 17, 1978. This will close the current year's activities. The first meeting of 1979 will be held on January 26, 1979.

Business meetings are scheduled for the Board of Directors on the following dates: October 27, 1978, and then next on January 5, 1979, followed by February 23, 1979. All meetings listed above fall on Fridays, and all are held at the Dossin Museum, beginning at 8:00 PM. □

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OUR COVER PICTURE. . . The Steamer *TASHMOO* is shown departing the "Marshland" dock, St. Clair Flats, Michigan, in this view from a color postcard, published by A. C. Dietsche, Detroit, and in the Dossin Museum Collections. The card is undated, but it is postmarked July 31, 1912. The *Tashmoo* is featured in the article beginning on page 127. □

A SCHOONER'S LAST TRIP FROM DOUGLAS

by
CARL A. NORBERG

Back in 1924, the slip alongside a rotting old dock at the foot of Union Street in Douglas, Michigan, became a landmark in the final chapter of the sailing days on southern Lake Michigan.

Captain John Woltman, the owner of the schooner *Mary A. Gregory*, bent on the best suit of ancient canvas she owned, cast an experienced eye over the weatherbeaten standing and running rigging and with partic-



L. F. BOCKMANN Photo/Author's Collection

The MARY A. GREGORY, taken at Douglas in 1923, before her final trip to Chicago.

ular attention to the bilge pump, declared her ready to sail.

A small cargo of potatoes and local fruit was stowed in the hold by his two seamen, docking lines were cast off as the small tug put a strain on the tow line.

With mixed feelings, her master guided his craft past old Saugatuck, into the Kalamazoo River, passing a ripple away from the old sawmill city of Singapore buried beneath the sand dunes and out the "new" cut into Lake Michigan. Mainsail and foresail rattled up to their places aloft in cadence to a half-forgotten chantey. As the tow was cast off, two headsails slid up the stays and she was bound for Chicago.

Captain Woltman fully realized that this was the last chapter for the *Mary A. Gregory*. Furthermore, he knew this was the swan song of his sailing career. He suspected, and rightly, that this was the last cargo to reach the port of Chicago under sail, an unbelievable contrast to the maiden voyage of his schooner in 1875 when 20,900 sailing vessels arrived and departed that port in a single season.

After discharging her cargo at the South Water Street Market, she was towed up the north branch of the Chicago River and moored in the mud alongside of Abe Burrell's Yacht Yard, where Captain Woltman became the foreman. I became well acquainted with the schooner here, which quickly became a haven for homeless sailors of the old school, who could spin endless yarns of Skillagalee, Beaver Island and the Straits.

But the old vessel was deteriorating rapidly so that in 1926 she was towed out into Lake Michigan, well off shore, for her last moments. Set to the torch, she was a vivid spectacle to only a half-dozen old salts. When the charred embers slipped beneath the waves, the last vestige of commercial sail was gone from Chicago and southern Lake Michigan.

It is reported that she was not forgotten to the Chicago Historical Society, which is said to have acquired her capstan, compass, figure-head, port and starboard running lights, megaphone and sternpost.

John Woltman, last owner of the *Mary A. Gregory*, was born in Holland, Michigan, in 1857, son of Captain Thomas Woltman, master of the Great Lakes schooners *William Tell*, *Union*, *Mary* and *Anteres*. Young Woltman shipped aboard the *Mary* on her maiden voyage to Chicago with a load of lumber, in 1874. After ten years of sailing he married Selma Sundman and made their home in

Chicago. When he obtained his masters papers in 1893, he purchased the schooner *Wonder*, of 39 tons, which a few months later was caught in a vicious late fall storm and on November 29, with sails in ribbons and anchor dragging, was driven ashore seven miles south of Grand Haven. Farmers assisted the exhausted crew to safety. Undaunted, Captain Woltman saw the *Wonder* floated, the following spring, and once more sailed her.

It was in 1875 when the new schooner splashed into the murky waters of the north branch of the Chicago River at John Gregory's ship building yard. This is about a mile from Abe Burrell's yard where she ended her days fifty years later. The vessel was built for Nathan Saunders, of Chicago, who was so proud at the launching he passed out 10¢ cigars while dreaming of the profits he would make from his new vessel.

Not a sailor himself, he would have a captain and crew engage in carrying lumber from the north woods ports into blooming Chicago. Soon he would regain his investment of \$7,000, which was her building cost. In the late 70s and early 80s the freight earned to Chicago from Grand Haven was \$1.25 per thousand board feet of lumber and \$1.65 from Manistee. Lumber cargoes were always available and demand for lumber in Chicago unlimited. Sailors' pay was 75¢ to \$1 per day.

The *Mary A. Gregory* was a handy two-master of 87 gross tons, 84.6' x 23.8', and drew only 6.6' of water with her centerboard up, without cargo. Always well cared-for, insurance inspectors rated her A-1 and A-2, even in 1895. Mr. Saunders sold her in 1893 and for some time she loaded barreled fish from northern Wisconsin waters to Milwaukee and Chicago. At the turn of the century her ownership shifted to Michigan ports, usually owned by her master, and was well known from the Straits of Mackinac to St. Joseph.

As lumber became scarce at the great sawmill ports, like Manistee and Muskegon, our schooner found cargoes at anchorages such as Cross Village, North Manitou Island, Hamlin Lake, Beaver Island and innumerable small piers requiring risky and skilled vessel handling, always without benefit of tow boats. Her curse was common to all schooners — that of too small a crew. She usually carried two men besides the captain, once in a while one more or less. In heavy weather and close quarters they always needed more hands, but in fifty years of constant sailing — often late in the fall — or evading ice floes in the spring,

THE WRECK OF THE PASSAIC

by
JACK MESSMER

During the last half of the 19th, and the first quarter of the 20th century, Tonawanda was the terminus of great quantities of lumber from the upper lakes. One of the lake vessels involved in this lucrative trade was the *Passaic*, a wooden propeller.

The *Passaic* was built in 1862 at Buffalo, by Mason and Bidwell for the Erie Rail Road, as a line propeller. She measured 198.3' x 27.7' x 11.4', and was 654 gross tons. From 1862 to 1877 the *Passaic* travelled between Lake Michigan ports and her eastern terminus, either Buffalo or Dunkirk. In 1877 the *Passaic* was sold to Captain C. C. Blodgett of Detroit. She was rebuilt for coarse freight and lumber trade. Her passenger accommodations were removed, but for structural strength her arches were left. Although her basic dimensions were not altered in the rebuilding, the gross tonnage was reduced to 531 by these changes.

On Saturday, October 31, 1891 while down-bound on Lake Erie, the *Passaic* with four tow barges; *Hattie*, *Elma*, *Superior* and *B. W. Jenness*, all loaded with lumber for Tonawanda, were struck by a severe gale. The *Passaic* plugged along throughout the night, but the strain of the tows and the gale were pulling the 29-year-old vessel apart. When off Erie, Captain Canastney gave orders to cast off the tows, to ease the strain on the propeller. However, the captain's decision was too late to save his ship. The beating had opened the *Passaic's* seams, and water rose in her hold faster than her pumps could carry it off. Within a few miles of Dunkirk the fires were put out by the rising water and the *Passaic* fell off into the trough of the waves. The crew of 14 and Captain Canastney were forced to climb onto

the pilot house to escape the waves as the ship settled in the water. Finally, Captain Canastney decided it was impossible for the *Passaic* to remain afloat and ordered all hands to the yawl.

When Captain Canastney gave the order to abandon the *Passaic*, he hoped they might be able to reach the *Hattie*, which had come to anchor near the foundering *Passaic*. Fourteen of the crew lowered the yawl and climbed aboard, but all effort to convince one of the firemen to join them in the yawl had failed. As the yawl drew away from the vessel, the fireman suddenly changed his mind and jumped into the raging water in an effort to reach the yawl. The yawl was immediately turned around, and the fireman was snatched from certain death. Again the yawl headed for the *Hattie*. Finally, when the crew reached the *Hattie*, they found it impossible to board her. Every time the yawl attempted to approach the barge, the waves would smash her into the side of the *Hattie*. After numerous tries, it was decided to bring the yawl under the stern of the *Hattie* where it would be sheltered from some of the waves. Throughout the rest of the night the yawl was tossed around and was very often nearly swamped. The sailors, using their hats, and anything available, bailed to keep the yawl afloat. Finally at 9:00 Sunday morning, the waves subsided somewhat and the crew of the yawl were brought aboard the *Hattie* in a state of near-exhaustion.

At 12:30 AM Sunday morning, shortly after the crew had abandoned the *Passaic*, she plunged stern-first into 30 feet of water.

On the beach near Dunkirk, the remains of the ship and her cargo began coming ashore.



In the only photo of the PASSAIC available to us, all abaft of her pilot house is hidden by a huge lumber pile. The picture was probably taken toward the end of the ship's career, when she was in the lumber trade.

McDONALD Coll. / DOSSIN MUSEUM

Wreckage of all kinds such as chairs, beds, an ice box, clothing, personal effects, and the ship's papers were washed in. The people of Dunkirk were soon alerted to the disaster and began gathering at the beach. Rescue craft attempted to reach what appeared to be the wreck of the *Passaic* and her barges, but there were no vessels in Dunkirk which could weather the lake's fury. A message was immediately sent to her owners in Detroit to inform them of the fate of the *Passaic* and her tow. From the beach she appeared to have struck a reef about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the beach. Apparently after sinking, the deck of the *Passaic* separated from the hull and stranded on the reef near Lighthouse Point. Those with binoculars could see that the deck, which they mistook for the entire vessel, was completely stripped of all equipment, and there was no sign of life on board.

Search parties were formed to scour the wreckage for bodies. The progress was slow because the searchers were hampered by additional wreckage washing in. By Sunday night all that could be found were three life-preservers with the name "PASSAIC" printed on them. It was felt that all of the *Passaic's* crew had perished and were buried beneath the wreckage on the beach.

Upon receiving the message from Dunkirk, Sunday afternoon, Homer Blodgett telegraphed

Buffalo to send a tug to the scene of the disaster. The tug *Hebard* left the same afternoon with a lifesaving crew. Due to the heavy seas the tug was only able to make Port Colborne where it put in for the night. Early Monday morning the *Hebard* again set out for Dunkirk and while traveling west was joined by the tug *Gee*, which had left Buffalo for Dunkirk earlier. At daybreak, Monday, the four barges were still at anchor and had suffered severely during the gale. All were flying a signal of distress. At around 10:00 that morning the two tugs from Buffalo arrived. The *Hebard* and the *Gee* each took two barges in tow and proceeded back to Buffalo.

Upon arriving at Buffalo the crew of the *Passaic* were paid off by the captain. They received no wages for the two days from the sinking, on Sunday, until their rescue, nor did they receive compensation for the loss of their effects. When Mr. Blodgett arrived in Buffalo, from Detroit, the matter was brought to his attention by the sailors. Their protests were ignored.

So ended the the career of the *Passaic*, one less of a dying breed remained on the lakes, and in consideration of her owner's kindness and consideration toward his crew, one might be forgiven if he hopes she went down without insurance. □

THE COMING OF THE TASHMOO

by
GORDON PRITCHARD BUGBEE



DOSSIN MUSEUM Collection

For nearly forty seasons the St. Clair River was the domain of the big sidewheel excursion steamer *Tashmoo*. It has now been a longer time since the *Tashmoo* last sailed to Port Huron. *Tashmoo* was the flagship of the White Star Line of excursion steamers from Detroit that, in addition to their St. Clair River runs, also ran southward to Toledo.

Only once previously to the White Star years did the upriver route "belong" to steamers of a strong, prosperous, enterprise.

The St. Clair was the home route of the Ward Family's steamboat empire that embraced all the upper Great Lakes in the 1850s. Thirty years later, the St. Clair was served by an illusion of a steamboat company called the "Star Line." Throughout the 1880s a succession of steamboat owners struggled for control of this Star Line, or at least for a place in line for their own boat. Some promoters talked grandly of building a 300-foot steamer for the St. Clair River route, but nobody could afford to deliver such an elegant ship.

At last, in 1888, Captain Darius Cole of Bay City took over what became the "Star-Cole Line," after two years of running opposition boats. Associated with Captain Cole as general

manager was Charles F. Bielman, a former purser on the D & C boats. Captain Cole lived only five years more to enjoy his prize.

The price of Captain Cole's takeover included his giving up the line's newly-formed Detroit-Toledo service to a new "Red Star Line." The latter owned the big wooden steamer *Greyhound*. She was a former night boat on the D & C Line to Cleveland, and still belonged to Senator McMillan, who controlled the D & C. In 1894 the Senator sold his interests to a syndicate headed by Aaron A. Parker and Captain James Millen. They put *Greyhound* under Bielman's management on the Port Huron run.

Opposition boats still nibbled at this "Star-Cole and Red Star Line." The fast *Unique* was running opposition on the upriver route between breakdowns of her cranky machinery. In 1896 the steel sidewheeler *City of Toledo* threatened to intrude on the Detroit and Toledo run. Parker and Millen formed a new "White Star Line" to purchase *City of Toledo*. Bielman used her to drive pesky *Unique* off the morning run down from Port Huron.

Parker and Millen were becoming hungry for full control to rebuild the awkward "Star-Cole-Red & White Star Line." They wanted to

bring out that long promised 300-foot steamer before somebody else grabbed the Port Huron route with one. The Cole estate heirs no longer cared to put more money into new boats, but they bristled at the prospect of being frozen out of the Star Line routes altogether. And, the Cole Estates owned the Star Island House, an 1874-vintage summer hotel that was home to most of the visitors to the St. Clair Flats who came by steamer. If there was going to be another steamboat war, perhaps only Cole steamers might be allowed to call at the Star Island dock.

At the turn of the century, picnic grounds and amusement parks were beginning to replace summer hotels for the growing excursion crowds all around the country. In 1897 Parker and Millen laid out their own picnic ground just below Sans Souci in the Flats. They named it "Tashmoo Park." On her way to Port Huron, *Greyhound* would leave off Sunday School parties, conventioneers, factory outing groups and any other day excursionists. (The next year, the Detroit, Belle Isle and Windsor Ferry Company built its own amusement park on Bois Blanc Island, the present

"Bob-Lo.")

With Tashmoo Park established, Parker and Millen engaged the naval architect Frank E. Kirby to design that 300-foot sidewheeler at last. Her design was patterned after that of Hudson River day steamers. Two great white stacks loomed over the hurricane deck, and the cabins were all windows that glowed at night. On the quarterdeck was the dining room with marble columns and white table linen. The deck above had a spacious salon in mahogany with brocaded armchairs and twin pianos. The salon was flanked by day parlors, and up forward were wicker chairs facing the observation windows. On the top deck was a smoking room finished in dark green chestnut. The old familiar "walking beam" was banished from the hurricane deck, for *this* steamer had one of the new, lower "inclined" engines with three cylinders.

This was *Tashmoo*, which was Frank Kirby's masterpiece, in the original sense of a work of art that proves a journeyman's fitness to be called a master. On the strength of her design, Kirby was to win commissions (shared with J. W. Millard) to design the largest day steam-



After she had served on the Great Lakes, the WAUKETA took up new duties on the East Coast where this view was taken by a Swampscott, Mass. photographer.

Photo by H. LOREN GRAHAM/Dossin Museum Coll.



The graceful GREYHOUND at the Tashmoo dock. The photo is undated, but it was probably taken shortly after the park opened.

Photo from HARRY WOLF Collection

ers in the country for the Hudson River Day Line.

For Lake Erie, Kirby was yet to design the four largest sidewheelers in the world — 500 foot night boats for the D & C and C & B Lines.

On December 30, 1899, the next-to-the-last day of the "Gay Nineties," the slender hull of *Tashmoo* was launched at the Wyandotte yards of the Detroit Shipbuilding Company.

Earlier that year, Parker and Millen had incorporated the White Star Line company to gather up their excursion property and sidewheel steamers.

The Cole estate yielded quietly. But a more formidable contender had appeared, promising some of the old river towns their first year-around connections with the rest of the world. This was the Rapid Railway, an interurban line extending its rails from Mt. Clemens to Port Huron, along the river. While taking shape, moored to the fitting out berth, *Tashmoo* was silently racing the laying of the rails. She won, reaching Port Huron a month before the new interurban cars began running through.

The maiden voyage from Detroit on June 9, 1900, was a splendid occasion. Admiral Dewey, the hero of Manila Bay, visited Detroit after his triumphal return home. *Tashmoo* was his flagship for the afternoon, flying his battle-torn admiral's flag. Captain Bert Baker was otherwise in command, as *Tashmoo* led a parade of antiquated gunboats and cutters up the Detroit

River. Reaching Lake St. Clair, *Tashmoo* left the plodding fleet behind for a fast round trip to the St. Clair Flats.

The *Tashmoo* could never show her best speed on the river, for the shallow waters acted as a drag on her hull. In October, Parker offered a thousand dollars to any boat that could beat his *Tashmoo* out on the open lake.

The C & B took up the challenge for their sidewheel night boat *City of Erie*, another Kirby design of two years earlier. The race was set for June 4, 1901, over a Lake Erie course of ninety-four miles.

Government inspectors allowed no passengers to board the racers, so friends of the management signed on a "millionaire crew" on both of the steamers. The walking beam engine of the *Erie* was pitted against the inclined engine of the *Tashmoo* — the old against the new.

First across the starting line was the *Erie*. She had her lifeboats and masts stowed away to reduce wind resistance — and to awe the *Tashmoo*'s men. Boilers blowing off steam all the way and wheels turning up 40 revolutions, *Tashmoo* gained and held the lead by several lengths from off Fairport to off Ashtabula. The *Erie* was gaining again when Chief Engineer Dubois, of the *Tashmoo*, resorted to the opening-up of a passover valve — especially added to the power plant just for the race, and the ship sprang forward momentarily. But, it

was no use.

After four hours and twenty minutes of racing, the *Erie* led the way across the finish line to win by just forty-five seconds! The average speed for each ship was nearly twenty-two miles per hour. It would be small consolation that the noted steamboat historian, John Morrison, would soon write that American twenty-two mile boats, making such speed for a duration of an hour or more, could almost be counted "on the fingers of both hands."

Before the race, the White Star Line ordered a slightly smaller Kirby sidewheeler for the Toledo run; a new *Greyhound*, using the walking beam engine from her older namesake. (At the same time, Kirby was busy designing the *Columbia* for the Bois Blanc run and *Eastern States* and *Western States* to revive the Detroit and Buffalo run.)

In 1903 the line purchased a sidewheeler they named *Owana*, and in 1909 they ordered the freight-and-passenger propeller *Wauketa*. In between, the line acquired the old picnic

ground on Sugar Island, near Grosse Ile, to serve the Toledo run. Business even justified lengthening the *City of Toledo* by forty feet in 1916 and giving her a second "Tashmoo" stack. But business didn't last.

As late as 1924, *Tashmoo* and *Wauketa* served opposite each other on the Port Huron run, while the other three sidewheelers ran to Toledo and Sugar Island. That winter the White Star Line company was liquidated. In its place *Tashmoo* and *Wauketa* ran their parallel services under separate owners in 1925. The Toledo route and its three steamers were laid aside. By the 30s, *Tashmoo* had the St. Clair to herself.

Returning from a moonlight run to Sugar Island on June 18, 1936, *Tashmoo* ripped her hull on a submerged rock. After her passengers were safely landed near Amherstburg, Ontario, she settled in fourteen feet of water. The wreck was later raised and dismantled. Never since has the St. Clair River had a steamer of its very own. □



It was no way to treat a lady! This was Tashmoo, "the morning after."

THE RIVER'S EDGE:

A HISTORY OF THE DETROIT WATERFRONT

by
ALFRED J. LEVANEN

I'd like to start this article off on a poignant note — in my research I found this early description of the Detroit River, “— the river is unusually tranquil and never rough. The water is of a bluish tinge, and in transparency and purity is unrivalled”.¹

Our river has obviously changed considerably since those words were first spoken. The Detroit waterfront has changed considerably, too, since Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac first spotted this wild, marshy area and proclaimed it as a good landing spot for his band of explorers.

The river has played an important role in Detroit's development, indeed waterborne commerce has long played an important role in the development of all the greatest cities of the world. History underlines this important role of water transportation in its analysis of civilization and its story of mankind. It is no coincidence that the world's greatest cities have either been located on the water or had easy access to it to develop their commerce.

Cadillac recognized the importance of waterways as both a means of communication and commerce. He knew his site on the Detroit River would have a significant importance to the development of trade because of the easy access to and dispersment of raw materials. It was not long before Detroit became a major fur-trading center.

The Detroit River, where it flows between Canada and the United States, has the advantage of being a “natural port.” It had long served the Indians in their birch-bark canoes and then the French, English, and Americans in their brigantines, barques, and men-of-war. In the late 1800s it was written that “— the harbor formed by the Detroit River contains more room than the harbors of Buffalo, Erie, Cleveland, Milwaukee, and Chicago all combined, and the water is deep enough to float the largest ships of war, and in

any kind of weather vessels find safety here”²

The physical development of Detroit's waterfront began when colonists from the fort ventured out into the river to sail their gaily painted canoes decorated with large Indian symbols. These canoes were about six feet wide and thirty-five feet long.³ In 1796 the first wharf was constructed in Detroit and called the Merchant's and King's Wharf. It is shown on T. Smith's map of the town drawn at the time.⁴ After the surrender of 1796 communication between the two banks of the river increased. Those citizens that did not have canoes preferred to be ferried over by skillful oarsmen. Soon this business of ferrying became quite profitable and had to be regulated. On March 5, 1802 the first license was granted to a Gabriel Godfroy for a ferry “from his house across the river Detroit”.⁵ In 1802 specific regulations were spelled out concerning the transportation of people across the river and in 1806 a ferry-house was built on the river fifty feet west of Woodward between Atwater and Woodbridge Streets.

The physical configuration of Detroit's skyline and waterfront began to change as waterborne transportation increased on the Detroit River. Construction began on many new piers and wharves. On June 11, 1816 a wharf ten feet wide and extending two hundred feet into the river was authorized. Fees were to be fifty cents for tying a boat five tons or under, coming from a distance of ten miles or more. Boats up to twenty-five tons were to pay a dollar and a half and larger craft had to pay two dollars.⁶ The waterfront at that time was along the south side of Woodbridge Street.

In 1818 the first steamboat on the upper lakes, the *Walk-in-the-Water*, came to Detroit. The whole of the city's population turned out to see this remarkable sight.⁷ The social and economic significance of this visit by the *Walk-in-the-Water*

cannot be stressed enough. It changed the lives of all Detroiters and had a great effect on the city proper. Potential new settlers were encouraged to visit Detroit. The dreaded two-week voyage across Lake Erie was now cut down to just a comfortable few days. A regular schedule was established between Detroit and Buffalo. Because the *Walk-in-the-Water* could accommodate one hundred passengers a special wharf was built especially for it at the foot of Bates Street.

It didn't take long for the population of Detroit to increase. In 1817 it was nine hundred. In 1830 it grew to twenty-two hundred and by 1837 it had grown to ninety-seven hundred.

Although steam navigation was revolutionary it did not eliminate the use of sailing vessels until many years later. All during the 1800s sailing craft were predominant on the Detroit River and the Great Lakes. The use of sailing vessels came down to a matter of economics. Steam engines and boilers were very expensive and they also took up space in the vessel that could be used for valuable cargo.

As it was then the Detroit River was busy with sailing and steam vessels plying its waters. It became so busy that the United States Congress declared on December 31, 1819 that the Detroit River be designated a "public highway."⁸

With the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 the advantages of waterborne commerce took a quantum leap. Overland travel had been hard, hazardous, and for commerce quite expensive. In 1815 a barrel of goods sent to Buffalo cost five dollars. In 1825 that same barrel of goods cost only fifty cents, transported by water.

In 1827 the City Council of Detroit voted for an improvement to the waterfront facilities. This improvement consisted of a dock, sixty feet wide, to be built at the foot of Woodward Avenue. By 1857 shipments were coming into Detroit from Europe and Detroit's reputation as a major port in the world was gaining. As one influential Detroitier said at that time, "[Detroit] — offers one of the largest and safest harbors in the world. London is the largest port, but more largest port, but more tonnage passes Detroit than enters the Thames."⁹

In 1863 the first harbormaster was appointed by City Council. Among his normal duties he was also entrusted with the "charge of 26 life preservers owned by the city, which, by vote of the council on August 25, 1871, were ordered placed along the docks. Four others were provided at Belle Isle.¹⁰ By the late 1800s the Detroit River was lined with docks five miles along the waterfront of Detroit.

In 1909 it was proposed that the waterfront of Detroit be re-designed and a new series of "finger piers" be constructed that would jut out

into the river much like those of New York Harbor.¹¹ This would enable more ships to put into the Port of Detroit. Local vesselmen were divided over this project. It was finally resolved not to create the concept because of the difficulty in maneuvering ships because of the general manager of the D&C feared this concept." — would spread it out [Port of Detroit] and cause all kinds of inconvenience."¹²

At that time the parameters of the port were At that time the parameters of the port were Third Street to the west and Randolph Street to the east.

Today the official Port of Detroit extends from the uppermost part of the river, where it leaves Lake St. Clair, down to Point Mouille, near Monroe, Michigan a total of thirty-two miles.

In 1850 a total of 2,341 vessels carrying a total of 671,545 tons with crews numbering 31,784 passed through the Port of Detroit.¹³ In 1907 there passed through the port, 75 million tons of waterborne commerce.¹⁴ Although tonnage figures have dropped significantly because of other forms of transportation and commodity demands, the average tonnages to pass through the Port of Detroit for the past ten years have hovered near the 30 million mark. During fiscal year 1973 the U. S. Customs Bureau reported that the Detroit District collected well over two hundred and fifty million dollars in import duties on goods into Detroit. This was enough to rank the district fourth out of the top fifteen collection districts in the country.¹⁵ The first three in rank order are New York, Los Angeles and Kennedy Airport.

Certainly not significant to the history of Detroit's waterfront, but most interesting, however, is that during the late 1800s the waterfront gained a notorious reputation. It had a number of places known as "snug harbors" where sailors, tugmen, and other "men of the lakes" would "tie up for the winter." There were many saloons that catered to the thirsts of the men. This area was located on Franklin and Atwater Streets east of Brush Street. It was really a subcellar for the underworld of Detroit. The area was known as "The Potomac" after a famous Civil War song, *All Quiet Along the Potomac*. When the police patrolled this area and all was tranquil they would yell to other police on duty — "all quiet along the Potomac!"¹⁶

Because of the steady stream of ships and material plying the Detroit River and putting into the Port of Detroit, the Detroit-Wayne County Port Commission was created in November, 1933 by public referendum.

The Port Commission is vested with the duty to control and manage the port district which includes all the 32 miles along the river. This

control and management includes planning and making improvements to port facilities and waterways for harbor purposes, regulation of structures in navigable waters, representation of the port district before federal, state and local agencies, advertisement of the business of the port district and cooperation with other public agencies in port improvement matters.

The Port Commission then and now holds the unique position of administering to a port that is made up of private operators. In fact, the Port of Detroit is the largest privately run port in the world.¹⁷ To strengthen the Port Commission's authority they attempted twice in the late 50s and early 60s to create a publicly-owned Port of Detroit. Had these referendums passed, the privately-owned facilities would have been purchased from those owners by the State of Michigan.¹⁸ The operators objected to this vehemently and through efforts of their own succeeded in convincing the House Committee investigating the Port of Detroit to vote down the proposal.¹⁹

In 1973, the metropolitan Detroit area accrued almost \$49 million of economic benefits that are directly linked to shipping activities in the Port of Detroit.²⁰ These monies were produced by private enterprise. If indeed the port had gone public all financing would have come from the taxpayer's wallet and the returns would have been the same. With a smooth-running operation now functioning, why try to change it merely for the sake of change? But now, we're deviating from history...

Historically, Detroit's waterfront had another claim to fame. It was a great ship-building center. In fact, Detroit at one time was the greatest ship building port in the United States.²¹ Hundreds of ships were built along the waterfront. In 1907, twenty-one of the largest ships sailing the lakes were launched in Detroit.²² The waterfront was dotted with ship-building rigs, launching docks and dry docks. To aid the war effort in both World Wars Detroit yards turned out military vessels.²³ The last shipbuilding firm in the Port of Detroit, the Great Lakes Engineering Works, went out of business in 1959.²⁴ One third of all marine engines built in the United States from 1897 to 1920 were built in Detroit. Some of these famous builders were Riverside Iron Works, located at the foot of Chene Street, Frontier Iron Works, situated near Belle Isle, and the Dry Dock Engineering Works, located at the foot of Orleans Street.²⁵

In 1956, there was an attempt to create a rival port, located where the Detroit River meets Lake Erie. It was proposed by Robert C. Begail who created the concept of Port Everglades in Florida and Port Longview in Washington state.²⁶ Begail's proposal was grandiose — it included

hotels, marinas, a heliport, docks for ocean-going freighters, etc. — in fact, he planned on a whole new community because he included private residential dwellings to surround the new port. One gentleman from Michigan through the project a good one; Gerald R. Ford said, "— the project is a worthy one."²⁷ However, as so many plans go, so went this and it was dropped. It was just too expensive to carry out. However, today there is another threat to Detroit's port, present in the technology of transporting material. It is called containerization. With this concept goods are placed in containers that are standardized to fit on ships, trains, and over-the-road trailers. The containers are taken off ships and then because of their design are placed on land transportation carriers. There is no need to unload the material out of the containers until they reach their destination. The concept is called *landsbridge*.²⁸

In Baltimore Harbor there is a large sign proclaiming it as the "Gateway to the Midwest." They are, in essence, saying it is faster and cheaper to ship from Europe to Baltimore to our Midwest than from Europe to Detroit, which is the midwest. This has caused shipping to decline in the Port of Detroit for the last few years.

Hopefully, new technology and procedures may come along that will be in Detroit's favor, yet the history of the Port of Detroit remains rich in adventure and achievement. ★

FOOTNOTES

1. Farmer, Silas. *History of Detroit and Wayne County and Early Michigan*, pg. 7.
2. *Ibid.* pg 917.
3. *Ibid.* pg 907.
4. *Ibid.* pg 6.
5. *Ibid.* pg 915.
6. Catlin, George b. *The Story of Detroit*, pg 212.
7. Written narrative in static display at Detroit Historical Museum.
8. Farmer, *loc. cit.*, pg 6.
9. *Ibid.* pg 6.
10. *Ibid.* pg 917.
11. *The Detroit News Tribune*, April 18, 1909.
12. *Ibid.* *The Detroit News Tribune*.
13. Dunbar, Willis Frederic. *Michigan*, pg 577.
14. Curwood, James Oliver, *The Great Lakes*, pg 27.
15. Detroit Wayne County Commission *Annual Report*, 1973, pg3.
16. Catlin, *loc. cit.* pg 580.
17. *Port of Detroit Riverfront Study*, Booz, Allen and Hamilton, Inc May 29, 1963, pg 11.
18. Telephone conversation with Mr. Omer DeBeaudry, Director of Traffic, Nicholson Terminal and Dock Co., March 21, 1975.
19. *Official Michigan*, November 8, 1965, pg 6.
20. *Annual Report*, *loc. cit.*, pg 2.
21. Curwood, *loc. cit.*, pg 15.
22. *Ibid.* pg 172.
23. DeBeaudry, *loc. cit.*,
24. *Ibid.*
25. Interview with Rev. Edward J. Dowling, SJ. Great Lakes historian at the University of Detroit, march 20, 1975.
26. *Port of Detroit*, a proposal by Robert C. Begail, Detroit, 1956.
27. Letter to Begail from Representative Gerald R. Ford, January 4, 1956.
28. The concepts of containerization and landsbridge were explained to the writer in an interview with Ward Schultz, Secretary of the Port of Detroit Operators' Association, February 5, 1975 and in a telephone interview with Charles Theisen, Marine Editor of the *Detroit News*, February 2, 1975.

CHICAGO'S ALWAYS HAD BRIDGES . . . ALWAYS

Submitted to *Telescope*

by

EDWARD N. MIDDLETON

(Reprinted from *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, issues of
September 20, 21, and 22, 1893.)

Regular readers of *Telescope* have noted frequent mention of troubles encountered by *Medusa Challenger* in confrontations with the bridges in the Chicago River. This is no new situation, and member Edward N. Middleton has submitted the following series of news items from the *Inter-Ocean* of 1893 to bear out the historical fact of life for shipping in and out of the river. All that follows is copied exactly as it originally appeared. But, first, some facts about the ship;

The *Centurion*, US 126994, was built in 1893 by F. W. Wheeler & Company at W. Bay City, Michigan in 1893, their hull number 100. She measured 360' x 45.2' x 21.9'; gross tons, 3,401, net 2,728. She was a combination freighter of steel construction, equipped with triple-expansion engines, 20", 33" & 54" diameter, by 44" stroke, also built by Wheeler in 1893. Her owners were; F. W. Wheeler, Cleveland Cliffs, Milwaukee Western Coal, Reiss Steamship, and U. S. War Shipping Administration. She was renamed *Alex B. Uhrig* in 1919, and was scrapped in Hamilton, Ontario in 1947. Now, on with the story.

SEPTEMBER 20, 1893

The new steel steamship *Centurion* arrived yesterday from Bay City on her maiden trip.

She was ordered to Armour's "E" elevator at Sixteenth street, but before she was half way up the South branch to that point it became a problem whether the river would have to be made bigger for the boat. All went well until the big steamer, with two tugs, reached Taylor street. As the stern entered the draw, the tug began to pull to the west side of the river, to get around the curve there and enter the draw of the Wisconsin Central railroad bridge, but the immense length had not been counted on, for the bow swung upon a group of spiles built for a protection and could be pulled no further. The *Centurion* was too long to make the bend and stuck there. After several ineffectual attempts to go ahead, the big craft was pulled out of the draw and back below Polk street, where she was made fast to a dock. The owners of the boat, Mark Hopkins and F. W. Wheeler, of Bay City, were on board, and with the captain and Captain Carr, the Chicago agent, held a council of war. After much discussion they repaired to Captain J. S. Dunham's tug office and consulted with him. It was then agreed that the only thing to do was to get those spiles out, and the city engineer was asked to have them removed. This was agreed to, and a tug was sent early in the evening with a pile driver to remove the obstruction



The CENTURION in an early Pesho photo "fully dressed," and in Cleveland Cliffs livery. Cliffs was her second owner.

Before this was decided upon, the owners of the boat and the Chicago representatives were in an unhappy frame of mind. The elevators of the South branch were, of course, inaccessible.

The North branch was also out of the question. That left only the two Illinois Central elevators to load at, situated at the mouth of the river. George Boyden, the shipper of the cargo, said that this did not help out the boat at all.

There is only a small amount of corn in the Central elevators and not nearly the amount the *Centurion* can carry. If she had to get her load there there would be nothing to do but tie up at the dock and wait for corn to arrive from Nebraska.

The arrival of the *Centurion* has shown Chicago marine men that the river is far too small for the modern steel steamers. The *Centurion* is nearly fifteen feet larger than any steamer that ever attempted to get up the South branch, and the boat that came second in size, the *Selwyn Eddy*, got through Taylor street last week only with a small space left. If lake steamers increase in size as they have done in the last year it will be but a short time before they will not be able to get in the river at all.

The *Centurion* is now the largest steamer on the chain of lakes. She is 370 feet all over (sic) by 45 feet beam and 20 feet deep. She was chartered to take 155,000 bushels of corn to Buffalo, 14,000 bushels larger than any previous cargo. She was met outside the harbor by the tug *Morford* and towed up the main river.

As she passed through the bridges she nearly reached from one side of the river to the other. At the forks she turned around, and with the tug *Hackley* at the stern she started stern-first up the South branch. Marine men are enthusiastic over the new boat. Strength is aimed at every part, and the *Centurion* stands today one of the strongest steamers on the lakes. She is commanded by Captain W. C. Brown. Running light, the *Centurion*, on the trip up, averages about twelve miles with new machinery. No trial trip had been made, and until she started for Chicago the engines had never been used. It is thought that the *Centurion* will be one of the fastest steamers in the lake freight trade. In model the *Centurion* is somewhat finer than either the *Merida* or *Curry*, sister boats. The *Merida* now holds the palm, having beaten the *Curry* and the *E. C. Pope* which held the honor in a recent race on Lake Huron.

SEPTEMBER 21, 1893

The big steamer *Centurion* now lies in an Illinois Central slip and will wait there until enough corn comes from the Western States to fill her immense hold. The big steamer could not get into either branch of the river, and had to go back to the mouth of the river to get her load of 155,000 bushels there. Before pulling the group of spring spiles at Taylor street bridge, which blocked the boat Wednesday afternoon, a careful survey of the river at that point was made, and it was decided that even if the *Centurion* could get through the bridge, light, she would never be able to get back with



The *Centurion* ended her career as the ALEX B. UHRIG for the Reiss Steamship Company.

100,000 bushels of corn on board, and so the scheme to get to Armour's "E" elevator was abandoned. Then an attempt was made to get to Armour's "A" elevator, in the North branch. Two tugs made fast to the steamer and towed her to the forks of the river, and there turned her around to go up the North branch. All went well up to the Northwestern Railroad bridge at Kinzie street. The railroad officials were afraid that the huge steamer would get in the draw and block the movement of trains indefinitely. Finally the harbor master prevailed on the bridge tender to open, and the *Centurion* was got safely through. She went up the branch all right until she reached Halstead street bridge, but there she stuck, and could be towed no farther. Then the big ship was taken to Illinois Central slip "B" and there she will wait until loaded. How long that will be, no one seems to know, but the *Centurion* will be here for a long time to come.

SEPTEMBER 22, 1893

A reception, given by the owners on board the new steamship *Centurion* to grain shippers and marine men yesterday afternoon was largely attended. The magnificent appointments of the steamer, equal to those of any steam yacht on the lakes were much admired. In one respect the *Centurion* is a steam yacht, for she is fitted up for a party of twenty people, who may at any time be the guests of the owner for a trip on the lakes. After generous refreshments there was a period of speeches in the main cabin of the steamer. George L. McCurdy presided and Captain J. S. Dunham was the first speaker. Captain Dunham said:

"We are here to see the largest boat on the lakes to-day. When she came into the river the other day she was a curiosity, but in my opinion she is but a type of all steel steamers hereafter to be built for general lake trade. They will not be smaller, but larger if anything. I remember well the excitement which prevailed among maritime men when the Anchor liner *Susquehanna* came out. People said she too big to do business in the Chicago river. It was considered dangerous to tow her around, but in four trips all this was forgotten, and then the *Susquehanna* came and went the same as any other boat. I always recall the schooner *Collins*, which we all said was too big. She carried the immense load of 30,000 bushels of corn. You could put five of her cargoes on board this steamer. With every advance in the size of lake boats the cry has gone up that they are too big. Still they keep growing

and what was a leviathan to-day is soon forgotten in the next newcomer. Chicago must simply move along with the procession. Had she stopped when the *Collins* came out and said boats no larger than she could navigate Chicago river I suppose that grain shippers would be paying 10 and 15 cents a bushel on corn to Buffalo instead of 1½ cents which this boat gets. There would have been more money in it for vesselmen, for we never made as big a percentage on our money as we did when our boats were small."

Captain Dunham explained that measures were being taken by marine men to open the North and South branches for boats the size of the *Centurion*.

Hugh MacMillan, agent for the New York Central line of steamers, believed that it was in the power of the general government to compel the city of Chicago to remove all obstructions in the river which prevented its free navigation. Like Captain Dunham, he regarded the *Centurion* as the type of new boats which will hereafter be built. She was in no case a "freak," for two other boats of nearly equal size have come out in the same shipyard this season, and another huge steamer was under construction at Detroit. "I believe," said Mr. MacMillan, "that the owners of the *Centurion* can collect damages from the city of Chicago on account of the obstructions which prevented her going to the North and South branches for cargo. It is not in the power of the city of Chicago to say that boats shall be so large and no larger. The river if navigable water of the United States and the city can be compelled by the Secretary of War to remove all obstructions to free navigation. I hope that the question will be taken up immediately by marine men and pushed to the end."

Speeches in the same vein were made by E. J. Henry, agent for the Lehigh Valley, George L. McCurdy, A. L. Fitch, John G. Keith, and D. T. Helm. The general sentiment was to make a direct appeal to the Secretary of War against the Taylor street bridge, as at present constructed, as an unreasonable obstruction to navigation. This action will doubtless be taken in a day or two. At the same time, the owners of the *Centurion* will make a formal complaint to the city and make a claim for damages on account of the big boat being towed hither and thither only to find her way blocked. It will be two or three days yet before grain comes into the Illinois Central elevator to fill out her great cargo of 155,000 bushels of corn. □

GREAT LAKES *and* SEAWAY NEWS

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April 21...Halco's *Lawrencecliffe Hall* clears Montreal for Indiana Harbor.

April 25...The Great Lakes Maritime Academy reports that salvage bids were taken on *Allegheny* which capsized this January. The high bidder purchasing the wreck was Malcolm Marine Salvage and Construction Co., St. Clair, Mich.



DOSSIN MUSEUM COLL.

April 28...The 1,000-footer *Stewart J. Cort* and the Greek motorship *Joanna*, Duluth for Rotterdam, had a minor collision near the Poe Lock at the Soo. Both were downbound in heavy ice and high winds; no damage reports yet.

...The tug *Dolphin X* and her tow, the bulk carrier *Emmanuel C.*, sailed from St. Johns, Newfoundland, for Murray Bay, Quebec.

...The British motor vessel *Zealandic*, from Valleyfield, Quebec, arrived at Kenosha, Wis. In the turning basin she struck a dock, damaging stem and stern. Temporary repairs are being made in Kenosha.

April 29...The 1,000-footer *James R. Barker* struck a fender boom on the west inner chamber of the Poe Lock at the Soo. The *Barker* and two other vessels had to wait while a new boom was installed.

...The Liberian motor vessel *Federal St. Clair* suffered an electrical fire

● GREAT LAKES AND SEAWAY NEWS

in a ballast control panel while being lengthened at Kobe, Japan. She made her maiden voyage into the lakes.

...The barge *B-8*, which sank in Lake Michigan while under tow of the tug *American Viking*, was salvaged in the first week of March and is now back in service.

May 1...The Canadian registration for the former canaller *Birchton* was closed on February 28, 1978, as "sunk."

May 2...A threatened strike by dock workers at Montreal has been averted by conclusion of a new three-year working agreement.

...The ice booms at the Little Rapids Channel of the St. Marys River have been removed for the season.

May 3...Continental Grain Company and the International Longshoremen's Association are still far from settling a strike by the ILA against two grain elevators in Chicago. The dispute hinges around seniority rights.

...*Quebecois* clears Port Weller Dry Docks.

May 4...Tugs *James E. McGrath* and *Princess No. 1* tow *Peter Robertson* as far as Thorold, Ont., before high winds force them to tie up.

May 5...*Peter Robertson* arrives at the Port Weller Dry Dock for survey, prior to her charter to the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority. They plan to use her to test the shunter system they wish to use along the Welland Canal.

...*Amoco Indiana* goes aground briefly in Whitefish Bay on Lake Superior.

...*Adriatik* is now repaired and reloaded at Prince Rupert. She is resuming her trip to China that was interrupted earlier when she began to leak.

...*Federal St. Clair* sails from Kobe for Nagoya, Japan.

...By a three-to-one vote the National Transportation Safety Board ruled that *Edmund Fitzgerald* sank because a hatch cover collapsed and suddenly flooded the cargo hold.

May 6...A collision in the North Sea off England between the ore carrier *Roseline* and the Greek tanker *Eleni V.* slices the latter in half. *Roseline* has been a Seaway visitor.

May 7...*Paterson's Troisdoc* resumes service after repairs at Port Colborne.

May 8...An oil spill from the wrecked tanker *Eleni V.* is causing serious pollution on the coast of England.

May 9...The Soviet freighter *Elton* was ordered to leave Duluth by Commander Harold Norton of the U. S. Coast Guard because *Elton* had failed to apply for a visit permit issued by U. S. authorities.

GREAT LAKES AND SEAWAY NEWS ●

...The loaded Greek motor vessel *Maria*, downbound from Thunder Bay, Ont., contacted a lock wall in the St. Lawrence Seaway and will be inspected at Comeau Bay.

May 10...The Greek bulk carrier *Odyssey-10*; outbound in the Seaway at Montreal, struck the south shore bank and damaged the starboard side of her bulbous bow. She was inspected and will continue her voyage. Repairs will be made in Europe.

...An estimated ten to twelve vessels are waiting to load at Chicago grain elevators. The backlog results from increasing demand, decreased U.S. loading capacity, reopening of the lakes and the continuing strike against the Continental Grain Co. elevators in Chicago which started last September.

...*Peter Robertson* is towed to Thorold for further work prior to new job.

May 11...Seasonal launch of goelette *L'Etoile de l'Ile* occurs at Isle aux Coudres, Quebec. She has work for three months and may be the only goelette to operate this year.

...Repairs to bulk carrier *Charles M. Beeghly* will be completed in about ten days.

...The Kuwaiti motor vessel *Shamaly* sails from Quebec City, but goes to anchor nearby off Orleans Island, suffering from engine trouble which will take about two hours to repair.

...The St. Lawrence Seaway floating crane *Hercules* has been surveyed in dry dock at Sorel, Quebec, for damage from grounding at Grondines, St. Lawrence River, at 1650 hours on April 24. Repairs will be made at Sorel.

Concluded from Page 124.

she had a good record. Only once, in 1903, did she capsize. On that occasion she lost four men in the strong gale. In 1907 she stove a hole in her bottom anchored off Bois Blanc Island in the Straits of Mackinac, loading cedar posts.

In late summer and early fall her captain-owner often became an inter-island trader, peddling fruits and vegetables from the mainland. When Captain Woltman bought her in 1912 he continued to seek a few extra dollars in this manner for his wife and four daughters back in Chicago.

Records of the Life Saving Service and Coast Guard show only a few minor assists to the schooner, so well was she handled in spite of depleted rigging and an aging hull. On December 3, 1913, truly a late month to be sailing, but still seeking a few more dollars before winter lay-up, Captain Woltman loaded potatoes at the Sands and Maxwell Warehouse in Pentwater,

Michigan. The marine reporter of the *Ludington Chronicle* wrote, "These vessels, which once lined the docks almost continuously, are seldom seen in Pentwater nowadays."

As a postscript to our story of the *Mary A. Gregory's* final trip in 1924, there still remained on Lake Michigan three old schooners. They were the *Lucia A. Simpson*, carrying cedar posts to Milwaukee, the *City of Grand Haven*, a two-master, and *Our Son*, a three-master, both carrying pulpwood logs to Muskegon. By September 26, 1930, all were gone — forever.

(Editor's note; Mr. Norberg, of St Petersburg Beach, Florida, is an Institute member and a historian of Great Lakes sailing vessels. The foregoing story was written by him for the [Saugatuck] Commercial Record and Telescope reprints it with their permission for which we express our appreciation.) □

● GREAT LAKES AND SEAWAY NEWS

May 12...*U.S.S. Crockett*, converted from a gunboat to a floating laboratory, arrives at Detroit. The 165-foot vessel will begin a two-year study of whether anti-pollution measures are working for Lake Erie and of what must be done to speed the lake cleanup.

...*Odyssey-10* sails from Montreal for Three Rivers, Quebec, to load for a European destination.

May 13...The British bulk carrier/cable layer *Photinia* grounds off Milwaukee. *Photinia* was anchored about a mile offshore waiting for dock space when 40-MPH winds began pushing her towards the shore. Her crew of thirty-three was evacuated by helicopter. *Photinia* came from Chicago to load grain for England.

...Canadian tug *Annie* has engine problems in the Welland Canal; the previous week she was idle at Port Colborne with generator problems.

May 14...Subsiding winds permit the Coast Guard to send a boat out to the *Photinia*. Later the motor vessel drags anchor and hits the beach south of Milwaukee and just east of the Wisconsin Power Plant. She rests in seventeen feet of water at her stern, with her engine room flooded.

...*Arctic* leaves Port Weller Dry Docks.

...When leaving Berth 101 in Montreal, the Liberian freighter *Uniluck* comes in contact with the Canadian tanker *Imperial Bedford* moored ahead of her, with some damage to both vessels.

May 15...Repairs are being made at Chicago to bulk carrier *J. L. Mauthe*, which stranded in the St. Lawrence River last December 12.

...A local diving contractor is engaged to try to stop leakage on grounded *Photinia*, which is moving in fairly heavy seas with Number 3 and 5 holds now flooded to lake level.

...Tanker *Imperial St. Clair* arrives at Port Weller Dry Docks.

May 16...The Swedish owners of the Liberian-registry cruise liner *Kungsholm* have been fined \$10,000 in a Montreal court for a seven-mile oil slick she left in the St. Lawrence River last August.

May 17...Ford Motor Company has been receiving coke from Europe at their Rouge River plant in Dearborn, Mich. Salties that have reached the Ford basin so far are *Nikolaos Pateras* on April 14, *Federal Seaway* on May 14 and *Orion* today.

...The Canadian bulker *Shelter Bay* returns to service, ending rumors that she would not sail this year.

...*Photinia* is lying on boulders and hard clay. An attempt will be made to refloat her with local tugs when the leakage has been stopped.

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Photo by BARRY ANDERSEN

The U.S. freighter YELLOWSTONE, among the oldest of her kind remaining, left the Seaway system only to become involved in a fatal collision off of Gibraltar. One of the victims was a Michigan man.

...Canadian motor vessel *A. C. Crosbie* is at Cadiz, Spain, for repairs to ice damage sustained on a loaded voyage from Montreal to Ray Point, Northwest Territories of Canada.

...The forebody of *Steelcliffe Hall*, under tow to Texas for scrapping, is reported adrift in the Atlantic.

May 18...Demolition of *Harry L. Allen* commences at Duluth.

...The forebody of *Steelcliffe Hall* is again under tow, along with *Emmanuel C.* in tandem.

...Mining operations in Northern Quebec and Labrador have been at a standstill. A strike which began on March 9 shows no sign of ending.

May 19...The owners of *Photinia* have abandoned her to the insurers, rather than make repairs estimated at \$1.5 million. She remains stranded in shallow water a few hundred yards off suburban St. Francis, Wis.

May 21...The Yugoslav vessel *Getaldic* grounds in St. Marys River mud near the U. S. locks at the Soo when downbound with a cargo of grain.

May 22...*Getaldic* is free without damage.

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...The Liberian vessel *Kathleen* strikes the wall of Cote St. Catherine Lock in the Seaway, damaging her forecastle on the starboard side.

May 23...U. S. Congressman Philip Ruppe has blocked a move to rename the new Poe Lock at the Soo for Congressman John A. Blatnik in a bill before Ruppe's committee.

...*Arctic*, Port Weller Dry Docks' new \$38 million icebreaking freighter, is on her trials in Lake Ontario.

May 24...The strike against Iron Ore Co. of Canada at Labrador City, Seven Islands and Schefferville is now in its eleventh week with no signs of any settlement in the near future.

...*Kathleen* arrives in Detroit.

May 25...The Singapore motor vessel *Neptune Iris* reports that she has minor leakage in Number 5 hold. Repairs will be made at Milwaukee.

May 26...Detroit may get a long-promised floating restaurant next spring. City officials made tentative agreement with three investors for a lease of dock space behind the Veterans Memorial Building for mooring the 94-year-old iron sidewheel train ferry *Lansdowne* which is to be purchased and converted for her new service by next April.

...Six grain vessels are loading and two others awaiting loading in Duluth-Superior harbor. Another seventeen ships are scheduled to arrive there before June 2nd.

...CSL's self-unloader *Jean Parisien* is idle for mechanical repairs at Welland.

May 27...The former C-4 type freighter *Yellowstone*, now one of the oldest U. S. flag deep sea ships, passes down the Welland Canal with grain for Algeria.

May 28...*Neptune Iris* arrives at Hamilton, Ont.

May 30...*Mount Olympos* is surveyed at Chicago for damage done in ice on May 15. The owners will have temporary repairs made at Duluth.

...The Royal Navy explodes and sinks the remains of broken tanker *Eleni V.*

May 31...Malcolm Salvage Company's tug *Barbara Ann* tows the former floating classroom tug *Allegheny* into Port Huron for refitting for their service, the company having raised the vessel which capsized in January at Traverse City, Mich.

June 1...The Canadian vessel *Lady M. A. Crosbie* (a) *Baltic Vanguard* (b) *Cortes* has started service from Montreal for Chimo Shipping.

June 2...*Arctic* is christened at St. Catharines, Ont., by the wife of Canada's Governor-General. The 687.5' x 75' x 50' vessel is rated Ice Class 1A

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and is powered by a 14,586-BHP engine.

June 5...The Canadian tug *Wilfred M. Cohen* and barge *G.L.B. #3* arrive at the Ford Basin of the Ford Motor Company bearing broken molds (scrap iron) from the Algoma Steel Works at the Canadian Soo.

June 6...U. S. Steel's *Leon Fraser* loses her rudder in the St. Clair River under the Blue Water Bridge at Port Huron, Mich. She is brought under control with her bow thruster and goes to anchor in Lake Huron upbound just north of the bridge.

...Cleveland-Cliffs Iron Co. and Detroit Edison Co. have signed a letter of intent as prelude to an agreement before year's end for signing a twenty-year contract for coal transportation to their St. Clair and Monroe plants in Michigan. Cliffs also announced intentions of building a 1,000-footer.

...The Black Sea-Canada Line ends service to Canadian ports with the sailing of their last vessel from Montreal. These Russian ships have been come into the lakes and St. Lawrence ports for over a decade.

June 7...Tugs take *Leon Fraser* under tow for Lorain. Malcolm Marine has the job of trying to locate the missing rudder.

...*Sugar Crystal* arrives at Duluth to load grain for Aarhus and Copenhagen.



Photo by BARRY ANDERSEN

Port Weller Drydock's latest contribution, the ARCTIC, a \$38 million icebreaking freighter was making her sea trials on Lake Ontario when this photo was taken on May 23, 1978.

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June 8...The tanker *Reiss Marine*, built by Blount at Warren, R.I., passes up the Welland Canal bound for Duluth to be a refueling vessel there.

June 9...The 736-ton former Southampton-Isle of Wight passenger ferry *Osborne Castle* is now at Quebec City.

June 10...Maple Leaf Shipping has a new service between the Great Lakes and the Canadian West Coast. They have an eighteen-month charter of *Silverforta* and *Silver Clyde* and a shorter term arrangement for the Panamanian vessel *Hand Loong*.

June 11...The bulk carrier *Merle M. McCurdy* touches bottom in the St. Marys River, loaded with grain. She heads for Buffalo for inspection.

...The veteran salty *Glowinia* which has visited the lakes many times passes up the Welland Canal for the first time under her new name, *Virginia M.*

...A. C. *Crosbie* sails for Montreal from Cadiz, Spain.

June 12...Seaway visitor *Marka L.* collides with Canadian trawler *Lady Maria* in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, sinking the latter with one man missing.

...U. S. freighter *Yellowstone* collides with the Algerian *Ibn Batouta* in heavy fog in the Atlantic off Gibraltar, with the latter's bow deep in the side of *Yellowstone*. Two aboard *Yellowstone* are killed and three missing, one of the dead being Donald Tucker of River Rouge, Mich.

...International Longshoremen's Association has ratified a new contract with Continental Grain Co., settling the strike at the firm's two grain elevators in Chicago.

...A fierce storm strikes the Welland Canal and the upbound *Carmelou*, tied up above Lock No. 7, is torn loose and blown across the canal. All navigation in the area is stopped.

June 13...Loaded with corn on her maiden voyage, *Arctic* hits Cherry Street Bridge while clearing Toledo and tears a thirty-five foot gash in her port bow. Repairs will be made at Port Weller Dry Docks.

...*Yellowstone* is taken in tow by a British Navy tug after being separated from *Ibn Batouta*, but sinks afterward.

...The entire working population of the French islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon in the Gulf of St. Lawrence went on strike today to protest lack of action in Paris to improve their economy. The fish plant, stores, restaurants and other businesses were closed at noon for a twelve-hour strike.

...The thirteen-week strike against Iron Ore Company of Canada is settled.

June 14...The wrecked *Photinia* has been sold to Selvick Marine Towing Co. and Midwest Marine Contractor Inc. The buyers hope to remove and repair the

GREAT LAKES AND SEAWAY NEWS ●

vessel, but acknowledge that she may have to be scrapped.

June 15...The tanker *Edouard Simard* is being rebuilt at Sorel at a cost of four million dollars.

June 16...*Sir Robert Bond*, a Port Weller-built car ferry, is being rebuilt as a replacement for the sunken *William Carson* to carry passengers, cars and trucks between Goose Bay and Lewisport, Newfoundland.

June 17...Discovery of a lifeboat from the lost trawler *Lady Maria* on the West coast of Miquelon rekindles a search for the missing seaman.

June 18...The tanker *Imperial St. Clair* leaves Port Weller Dry Docks for the fit-out berth and the Canadian bulker *Gordon C. Leitch* goes into the drydock there.

June 19...The Algoma fleet's new self-unloader *Algobay* is launched at Collingwood, Ont.

...*Gypsum Baron*, built at Collingwood in 1976, is now owned by Australian Coastal Shipping Commission.



SCOTT McLELLAN Photo.

The IMPERIAL ST. CLAIR shown here at Thunder Bay, was recently placed in the Port Weller Drydock. She has emerged with a set of four rubber-tired wheels, set sideways into her hull, to simplify sliding along lock walls. Other work was also done, but becoming a "four-wheeler" strikes us most interesting.

● GREAT LAKES AND SEAWAY NEWS

June 20...Cleveland-Cliffs' *Willis B. Boyer*, with coal from Toledo bound for Silver Bay, has fire discovered in her cargo and puts into Ford Basin at River Rouge for partial unloading to get at the fire. Coal Tower #3 malfunctions during unloading in a driving rain and snaps the *Boyer's* foremast off, almost driving it into the wheelhouse. The *Boyer* sails from Ford Basin with a jury rig for a foremast.

June 21...*Arctic* is completing repairs at Port Weller Dry Docks.

June 23...At Duluth-Superior Harbor, seven ships wait to load grain while seven others are loading. At Chicago, four are loading and five waiting.

June 26...The self-unloader *J. Burton Ayers* loses her anchor at the head of the Detroit River.

...Fire breaks out at 5:30 PM at Montreal aboard the Cypriot motor vessel *Paros Island*. The fire is confined to spare cabins on the port side of the boat deck. Temporary repairs will be made in Montreal.



TRELOAR Photo/DOSSIN Collection.

The JAMES NORRIS, recently aground, as she appeared in 1952, downbound through Lock 4, Welland Canal.

GREAT LAKES AND SEAWAY NEWS ●

June 27...The Canadian bulk carrier *James Norris* grounds near the harbor entrance at Kingston, Ont., and is refloated with aid of tugs from the McAllister Towing and Salvage Company based at Kingston.

...The Liberian freighter *Alessandra*, bound from Thunder Bay for Holland with 16,000 tons of flax, goes aground in fog at 7 AM at the head of Russell Island in the St. Clair Flats. Tugs have been called for.

June 28...After twenty hours aground, *Alessandra* is refloated with aid of the tug *Barbara Ann*.

June 29...U. S. Steel's *Ralph H. Watson* goes aground near Buoy No. 7 in Lake St. Clair and the tug *Barbara Ann* goes to her aid.

June 30...After being lightered of some limestone cargo, the *Watson* is refloated with the aid of *Barbara Ann* and the Gaelic tug *Kinsale*.

...Repairs are completed on *Poros Island*.

MISCELLANEOUS

...Seaway salties renamed include *Prins Willem III* (now *Agia Irini*), *Manchester Rapids* (now *Esther Del Mar*), *Beechmore* (now *Mari*) and *Muneshima Maru* (now *Sava Career*). Seaway salties scrapped include *Magdeburg* (as *Ra-faela* at Tanise Bay) and *Ascania* (as *Gulf Unity* at Sodon Beach). Seaway salties sunk includes *Mardina Reefer* (as *Nathalie D.* off Djidjilli on March 12, 1978, position 37° 32' North, 5° 41' East).

...Steam tanker *Imperial Ottawa* is sold in May by Imperial Oil Ltd., Toronto, to Esso Petroleum Co. Ltd., London, for a price of about \$2.3 million.

...The 7,727-gross-ton motorship *City of Newcastle*, ex-*Benratha*, which was in the lakes this year, is sold by Ellerman Lines Ltd., London, to London-based buyers for about \$400,000. She was built at Glasgow in 1956.

...The 1,000-foot self-unloader *James R. Barker* is transferred from Interlake Steamship Company to Moore-McCormack Leasing Inc. Bulk carrier *Samuel Mather* (ex-*Frank Armstrong*) is transferred from Pickands, Mather & Co. to Interlake Steamship Co.

...Self-unloader *Charles E. Wilson* is transferred from Franklin Steamship Company to American Steamship Company.

...*Island Prince* (ex-*Hoegh Ariane*) is sold by Northland Navigation Ltd. of Canada to Columbus Shipping Corporation of Greece and renamed *Saratoga*.

...*Santiago*, which visited the lakes as *Continental Pioneer*, has been moved from Liberian to Greek registry by Santiago Steamship Co. Ltd.

...Tod Reed sent us a report that the passenger liner *America* is now making cruises to Nova Scotia from New York City under Panamanian registry.

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