



# Telescope

MAY ☆ JUNE, 1984  
Volume XXXIII; Number 3



GREAT LAKES  
MARITIME  
INSTITUTE

DOSSIN GREAT LAKES MUSEUM  
Belle Isle, Detroit, Michigan 48207

### MEMBERSHIP NOTES ●

The museum will be celebrating its 25th anniversary in 1985. We have received a grant from the State of Michigan to present a shipwreck exhibit titled "Michigan Nautical Time Capsules". The exhibit will open in January and identify prominent examples of nautical architecture on the bottomlands of the lakes. Information and materials on exhibit will be from the *Sandusky, Edmund Fitzgerald, Wm. Barnum, Indiana, Carl D. Bradley, Daniel J. Morrell* and *Alvin Clark*. More information will follow in *Telescope*.

Curator John Polacsek has produced *Captain of the Fleet*, a game designed to teach players the economy and geography of the Great Lakes. A map of the lakes is printed on a vinyl surface with ports and shipyards. The object is to complete the required number of trips while overcoming obstacles such as weather delays, mechanical breakdowns and collisions. The game is available at the museum for \$14.50 plus \$2.50 for postage and handling.

The following exhibits are scheduled for the museum:

June 27-September 23rd - Gar Wood: Speedboat King

September 29-October 27th - Third Annual Model Shipbuilding Contest

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### MEETING NOTICES ●

The May 18th entertainment meeting will be members slide night. Everyone is invited to bring 15 slides taken anywhere on the Great Lakes. The meeting begins at 8:00 p.m. and the museum will provide slide carousels.

The next business meeting is scheduled for June 15th at 7:30 p.m. at the museum.

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Published at Detroit, Michigan by the  
GREAT LAKES MARITIME INSTITUTE

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*OUR COVER PICTURE.* . .Originally launched as the *Fred G. Hartwell* in 1923, she was considered one of the largest vessels on the lakes. She sailed for sixty years and finished her career under the Misener flag. On January 29, 1984 Misener sold the *George M. Carl* for scrap. This photo was taken in the St. Marys River by Richard Kruse. □

# GEORGE GOBLE: OSWEGO SHIPBUILDER

by  
RICHARD F. PALMER

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Being a marine reporter in the mid-19th century must have indeed been an enjoyable vocation in a place like the port of Oswego. He wrote about a variety of activities along the waterfront, ranging from shipwrecks to steam and tugboat explosions. But one of his more pleasant tasks was covering a launch at the local shipyard, of which Oswego had many at one time.

Take the case of launching of the fine schooner *J. Maria Scott* at Goble & MacFarlane's shipyard on Saturday, May 9, 1874. The launching of a ship in Oswego was an occasion to celebrate. Stores and businesses closed for a time and everyone amassed at the local shipyard to witness the spectacle. It was a scene often repeated up and down the Great Lakes.

At exactly 3 p.m., the ropes were cut and the handsome new vessel glided gracefully into the water amid the cheers of the crowd. Old-time reporters had a flowery way of describing such events. In this case, the

*Oswego Palladium* writer said: "The cheers of the crowd mingled with the sound of the splashing disturbed the waters and as both died away, the new schooner settled down on the fluid with which she is to hereafter wrestle, lightly as though she scorned to displace too much of it."

The *J. Maria Scott* was substantially larger than most vessels built of the schooner class in Oswego, being 142 feet in length, 20 feet, 3 inches beam, 12 feet hold and 348 tons. She was designed to carry 19,000 bushels of wheat through the Welland Canal, or 24,000 bushels to Buffalo. Rigging for the three-and-after was furnished by Daniel Lyons & Son, ship chandlers, while the sails were made by the veteran sail maker Robert Green. William Proud & Company did the painting. "It is hardly necessary to speak of the cabin other than to say that Archie Preston built it in his usual tasty manner, and that is large, well finished and furnished,"

the marine reporter wrote.

Probably no shipbuilder was so well known for his product than George Goble. In fact, in the mid-19th century, it was not an uncommon occurrence to witness two or three ship launchings in a single week at the Goble shipyard at the foot of West Third Street. Four days after the *J. Maria Scott* glided into the water, the even larger schooner *Boliva* (143' x 26' 2½" x 12' 3" 143 tons) was launched at Goble's under "a bright sky, a smooth lake and a fair breeze".

This ship was built under the supervision of Peter Dufrane, who for many years had charge of the Shickluna shipyard at St. Catharines, Upper Canada. The hull was finished in grand style, disregarding the usual "barber pole" effect. The cabin had inside blinds, a new feature, the rest of the interior being done in imitation black walnut and curly maple. Ship chandler Lyons furnished the wire rigging for the *Boliva*. Ready for sea the schooner, owned by Morgan M. Wheeler, cost \$25,000. Aloft, the canvas was furnished by Mr. Green, "whose sails always fit like a glove".

Our friend, the marine reporter noted, "she has an easy sheer, true to the line, with a good run and entrance..." He added, she was a three-and-after, "well fitted and furnished, and has everything required by a first class vessel, which she is. The *Boliva* is the largest vessel ever built at this port".

In total, the Goble shipyard produced thirty-one schooners, two tugs, a yacht, two dredges and a launch, besides an untold number of small sailing craft, in a period stretching from 1854 to 1912.

The story of George Goble is the story of the glory days of shipbuilding in Oswego. Born in Kinsale, Bantry Bay, County Cork, Ireland on August 1, 1819, Mr. Goble came to Oswego when he was 18 years of age. For 19 years he followed the trade of ship carpenter. Then he went into business for himself, building vessels on the bank of the lake at the foot of West Fourth Street.

In 1854 he appears to have been associated with the Crockett & Rogers shipyard at the foot of West Third and Fourth Streets. According to the 1853 Oswego Directory, this yard possessed excellent facilities for shipbuilding and employed about fifty men. The yard was owned and operated by George Rogers and William Crockett. After a nearby grain elevator burned down in 1859, Goble

purchased this property and built a graving drydock on the site of a former marine railway. He also took over the lake front property which was the former shipyard of George S. Weeks. It was here that many of the early steamboats were built by Weeks, who moved to Buffalo in 1854.

Mr. Goble's first vessel of record appears to have been the schooner *Titan*, which was launched on May 6, 1856. At that time, the "Goble & Crockett" and Rogers shipyards appear to have been side by side at the foot of West Third and Fourth streets.

Early in 1868, work was completed on the Ontario Dry Dock which was owned by F.G. Carrington and leased to George Goble and his partner, James McFarlane. The dock was 100 feet long, 60 feet wide at the top, drawing in slightly toward the bottom, and 12 feet at low water over the keel blocks. The total depth was 17 feet. It could accommodate a vessel with a 25 foot beam. Adjoining this dock was an enginehouse with a 50 horsepower engine which operated a rotary pump used to pump out the drydock. Also constructed was a steam planing mill 70 feet long, also operated by the same steam engine. Goble operated it in connection with his shipyard.



George Goble  
1819-1901



Author's Collection

*The Goble Shipyard buildings in Oswego.*

With the exception of numerous boat yards existing primarily to service and build canal boats, the Goble shipyard had a virtual monopoly on the construction of large schooners until the end of that era. The last schooner built at this yard was the *Leadville*, launched on July 2, 1879. She was owned by Michael J. Cummings and was commanded by Captain Daniel Hourigan. She registered at 343 tons and was a three-and after, spreading 9,357 feet of canvas.

From then on, the Goble yard was primarily for repair of vessels, and smaller craft such as yachts and skiffs. The last major project was the construction of the dredge *Sodus* for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1912.

Mr. Goble's sons were also very much involved in activities at the shipyard. These included Nicholson C., Thomas C., George W. and Joseph. Nicholson or Nicholas died on June 6, 1909. Thomas C. died February 4, 1931, and Joseph H. died November 14, 1934.

Joseph was responsible for the office work after attending Oswego schools while his brothers worked in the yard.

The *Oswego Palladium* of November 15,

1934 said concerning this shipyard: "In addition to ways, the concern had one of the drydocks in the port, in the days of sailing vessels, that served a wide clientele, and eventually, it became the only, as it was the last shipyard in the city. The drydock was excavated from solid rock, and was of the then full Welland Canal size, but as shipping lessened on Lake Ontario, the drydock and shipyard found less and less business, and when the Barge Canal Terminal Act was passed, the Goble property, with several terminals in the vicinity was acquired by the state of New York for the west side barge canal and approaches. The remains of the old drydock may still be seen to the west of the elevator terminal approach."

Frederick W. Barnes, an old Oswego yachtsman said: "I remember the late George Goble, who more than anyone else who has ever lived here, was associated with Oswego's shipbuilding industry. When I knew him, he was already far advanced in years; approaching the end of his career, but in his younger days, not he alone, but others were responsible for the activities of our lake front

and the land bordering the Oswego Canal.”

A tribute to the skill and craftsmanship of George Goble is the fact that in 1899, the machinery of the tug *Alanson Sumner*, a tugboat launched at the Goble yard on April 25, 1872, was installed into a new hull at Port Huron. At the time the *Sumner* was regarded as one of the best vessels ever built by Goble.

The present owners decided to duplicate the hull and sent to Oswego for a set of the original plans. Although 29 years had passed and great advances had been made in shipbuilding, the fact that the owners had decided to build along the same lines adopted by Mr. Goble was a fair tribute to this skill and ability as a designer and builder.

George Goble died at his home on Sunday, October 14, 1903. The buildings and shipyard remained intact until 1915, when they were demolished to make way for the new barge canal terminal. The *Oswego Palladium* of March 6, 1915 noted: “In the old days when the schooner was the queen of the lakes, this shipyard was busy every day in the year

and some of the fastest and staunchest of the great Oswego-owned fleet of schooners which brought grain from the upper lakes and lumber from Canada, and carried back salt, coal and general freight, making Oswego the third largest port in the country, were built there.

In those days the business was owned and run by George Goble, then whom there was no more honored and respected citizen, and he not only built schooners for others, but he owned a fleet of no means of importance himself. Even during the last two or three decades, when steam was driving out the sailing craft, the building operations ceased, but the drydocks did a thriving business in repairing and rebuilding the obsolcent schooners and smaller steamers.

Older residents of the city hated to see the old buildings go. Almost every male resident born in the First Ward has tender memories concerning it for most of them have been hauled by the seat of their pants, half drowned, from the old drydock. . .”

#### VESSELS BUILT BY THE GOBLE SHIPYARD IN OSWEGO, NEW YORK

*Great West* (US 10198) 137'6" x 26'2" x 10'9" 1854 360 tons Bark. Original owner: Henry Wright, Oswego. Wrecked near Sleeping Bear Point, Lake Michigan in 1857 and later salvaged.

*William Sanderson* (US 26503) 136 x 25 x 11 1856 385 tons Schooner. Original owners: Clemlow & Moore, Oswego. Sunk in 1871 in Lake Ontario.

*Titan* (US 24149) 131'9" x 25'8" x 11'6". Launched on May 6, 1856 361 tons Schooner. Original owners: Doolittle, Irwin & Wright. Lost off Pentwater, Lake Michigan in 1869.

*Bermuda* (US 2100) 138 x 26'1" x 11'9" 1860 394 tons Schooner. Original owner: Thomas Mott. Lost in 1870 in Lake Superior.

*William L. Preston* (US 26563) 136 x 25 x 11 1861 389 tons Schooner. Owners in 1864: Carrington & Company, Oswego. Lost in 1888.

*George Goble* (US 10544) 137 x 25'10" x 12 1863 396 tons Schooner. Original owner: George Goble. Lost in 1871.

*Thomas S. Mott* (US 24334) 137 x 26 x 13 1862 431 tons Schooner. Original owner: David Manwaring. Abandoned in Sturgeon Bay, WI.



Photo by Henry Post



Dossin Museum Collection

*Top: Tug CHARLEY FERRIS in drydock at Goble Shipyard.  
Bottom: ALANSON SUMNER began service in April, 1872.*

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*James Platt* (US 13302) 1863 434 tons Schooner. Owner in 1864: D. Mannering. Abandoned in the Straits in 1874.

*Senator Blood* (US 22917) 127 x 26 x 10 1863 310 tons Schooner. Owners in 1864: Blood, Bond & Ford, Oswego. Abandoned or lost near Lorain, Ohio in 1894.

*Montauk* (US 16403) 136 x 27 x 12 1863 433 tons Schooner. Owners in 1864: Lyons, Finney & Goble. Wrecked near North Manitou Island, Lake Michigan in 1882.

*Bahama* (US 2380) 136 x 27 x 12 1863 433 tons Schooner. Original owner: T. S. Mott, Oswego. Abandoned in 1904.

*Knight Templar* (US 14110) 136 x 26 x 11 1865 289 tons Schooner. Original owner: Daniel Lyons, Oswego. Abandoned near Alpena, Michigan in December, 1905.

*Fred D. Wheeler* (US 9456) 60 x 14 x 6 1865 32 tons Tug. Original owner: Morgan Wheeler, Oswego. Abandoned in 1895.

*Henry Fitzhugh* (US 11502) 137 x 26 x 11 1866 315 tons Schooner. Original owner: T. Mott. Last owner: Parry Sound Lumber Co. Launched on April 19, 1866. Sold Canadian (C 111578) around 1900. Abandoned in 1924.

*George C. Finney* (US 10545) 130 x 26 x 10 1866 300 tons Schooner. Original owners: Finney Brothers, Oswego. Foundered near Long Point, Lake Erie on October 22, 1891.

*Olive Branch* (US 19061) 138 x 26 x 11 267 tons Schooner. Launched on April 30, 1867. Original owner: T. Mott. Stranded near Glencoe, IL. on Lake Michigan in 1855.

*Nevada* (US 18319) 136 x 26 x 11 1867 318 tons Schooner. Launched on April 25, 1867. Original owner: Wheeler, Oswego. Stranded near Fairport, Ohio in 1886.

*Florida* (US 9727) 138 x 26 x 11 1868 300 tons Schooner. Original owner: T. Mott. Lost near Marquette, Lake Superior in 1886.

*Guiding Star* (US 85006) 139 x 26 x 11 1869 324 tons Schooner. Original owner: Micheal Cummings, Owego. Stranded near Big Bay Point, Lake Superior in 1892.

*John T. Mott* (US 75157) 137 x 26 x 11 1869 319 tons Schooner. Original owner: T. Mott. Lost in Georgian Bay around 1915.

*West Side* (US 80115) 138 x 26 x 11 1870 324 tons Schooner. Original owner: George Goble. Foundered in Lake Huron on October 29, 1906.

*Madeira* 137 x 26 x 11 1871 322 tons Schooner. Original owner: Wheeler. Wrecked near Long Point, Lake Erie on October 3, 1877.

*Alanson Sumner* (US 105155) 127 x 24 x 11 1872 300 tons Tug. Launched on April 25, 1872. Original owner: Page & Dobbie. Abandoned in 1899.

*Nassau* (US 18734) 137 x 25 x 11 1872 315 tons Schooner. First owner: T. Mott. Sunk in collision with *Joseph L. Colby* on October 15, 1898 near Bar Point, Lake Erie.

*Daniel Lyons* (US 6780) 137 x 25 x 11 1873 318 tons Schooner. Owners: Lyons & Goble. Sunk in collision with schooner *Kate Gillett* on Lake Michigan in 1878.

*Atlanta* (US 105269) 137 x 25 x 11 317 tons Schooner. Lost with all hands in 1891 as a tow barge.



*Sam Cook* (US 115186) 137 x 25 x 11 318 tons Schooner. Foundered in the St. Lawrence River on July 2, 1882.

*M.J. Cummings* (US 90592) 137 x 26 x 11 1874 330 tons Schooner. Original owner: George Goble. Foundered in Milwaukee Harbor on May 18, 1894 with six lives lost.

*J. Maria Scott* (US 75610) 136 x 26 x 12 1874 348 tons Schooner Original owner: Scott & Co., Oswego. Launched on May 9, 1874 and name changed to *White Star* in 1880. Burned in Toronto on July 11, 1903.

*Leadville* (US 140367) 136 x 26 x 12 1879 343 tons Schooner. Original owner: M. Cummings, Oswego. Launched on July 2, 1879 and wrecked near Long Point on November 13, 1883.

*Charley Ferris* (US 126201) 69 x 17 x 8 1884 54 tons Tug. Original owner: J.D. Allen, Oswego. Last owner: Barnett & Record, Duluth.

*Aida* (US 106424) 71 x 9 x 5 1885 20 tons Steam Yacht. Owner: James MacFarlane.

*George H. Hasleton* (US 85780) 58 x 11 x 5 22 tons Tug.

*Frontenac* 75 x 26 x 6. Dredge built for the U.S. Army Corps of Eng. in 1891. Rebuilt in 1910.

*Ontario* 27 x 6 x 4 1 Ton. Launch built for the Corps of Eng. in 1904.

*Sodus* 100 x 35 x 9 375 tons. Dredge built in 1912.

*Thomas Martin* (US 24392) 93' 6" x 23 10' 2" 1862 196 tons Schooner. Original owners: T. Martin & Charles Ratcliffe. Built on the bottom of the schooner *J.C. Riggs*. Abandoned in 1881. □



*Tug CHARLEY FERRIS in Duluth c. 1910.*

# PIPE ORGANS ON LAKE FREIGHTERS?

Pure Speculation By  
Robert E. Johnson

*Robert Johnson rejoins the ranks of active Telescope contributors with this whimsical piece. Shortly after making his first steamboat pictures, he became interested in pipe organs and wishes he could play them. Following an attempt to do emergency repairs on a church organ, he mortified his bride*

Our old world passed through an era during which the pipe organ branched out of its ecclesiastical milieu into other environments. "Unit" organs ( so termed because pipes were borrowed among various stops ), were voiced for entertainment and situated in motion picture palaces, where they flourished briefly. Some went to roller or ice skating rinks and to convention halls or arenas. Earlier, the classic voiced pipe organ was used at per-

*(of now 37 years) by coming home top-toe dirty after the expected dinner guests had arrived; organ chambers collect dust, and he attracts it. Bob got his technical education in Chicago schools and finished at Northwestern University. Most of his former articles were written about the Chicago area.*

manent Chautauqua locations and at expositions. Three or four were heard at the Columbian Exposition of 1893, and six at the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. One of the six, now greatly enlarged, is still played daily in Philadelphia's John Wanamaker Department Store. Even the homes of some affluent individuals were equipped for concert renderings of S. Bach's organ music.



*The WILLIAM P. SNYDER, JR. was known to have carried at least an organ-type instrument.*



Massman Photo/Dossin Collection

*The JOSEPH S. YOUNG II (DAVID P. THOMPSON) (WILPEN) reportedly carried an organ in the forward cabin when she came out in the Shenango Furnace fleet in 1910.*

Pipe organs even went to sea, to be heard in the saloons of various ocean liners. Nearer to home and heart, though, was the one installed in the saloon of the *City of Detroit III*. Regrettably, *D-3* seems never to have had a staff organist nor a musician deck hand, and the word is that the organ stood silent unless the organist from Detroit's Fox Theater walked down hill to warm the instrument.

Stories of pipe organs in the forward cabins of lake freighters must intrigue anyone who, like me, has been involved in caring for an ailing pipe organ. We can wonder how the installation could be performed. The very smallest pipe organ would be a cabinet instrument, perhaps six feet square and eight feet tall, equipped with one flute stop and one reed, with reinforcement of the bass. One might fit a cabin, but could hardly be called suitable for entertaining important guests. A small church or theater organ of two divisions and pedal needs a chamber about 8' x 14' x 12' high plus room for the console. Visualize a forward observation cabin housing the master's desk, a file cabinet, some chairs, a sofa (perhaps) and possibly the master gyrocompass; how does one fit a pipe organ into such an environment? Speculation begins with that question.

In the *Encyclopedia of Mechanical Musical*

*Instruments* by Q. David Brown, one can find several references to water-borne music machines capable of generating pipe organ-like sounds. Some were placed on ocean liners, in lieu of console-controlled instruments. Others went to sea in naval vessels; in those days there were no motion pictures nor video cassettes to entertain crews. At least one went into an elegant steam yacht. Some were as compact as others were huge. Cousins to merry-go-round organs, these mechanical music makers possessed more dignified tonalities. Their musical literature, on pegged wooden rolls (barrels) or punched paper embraced dances, marches, ballads, overtures and the popular music of their era—the first years of this century.

The builders termed these machines "orchestrions". Some have been preserved by enthusiasts; one such was shown at the Smithsonian for a time, and a fine stereo disc recording, "Orchestrion - the Magnificent Music Machine" was prepared by the Institution. Another went on display in the Smithsonian's Arts and Industries center in 1983, and may become a permanent part of the collection. Orchestrion sound amalgamates pipe-organ and instrumental-band sounds. The bass might consist of only ten notes (keys) instead of two and a half octaves

as on a pipe-organ pedal clavier. The playing ranks, too, are shorter than the usual sixty-one pipes of an organ. They speak as violins, violas, trumpets, oboes, clarinets and organ diapasons. Drums, bells and glockenspiels provide percussion. An orchestrion may appear to be a pipe organ, may sound a bit like a pipe organ and someone could easily term one a pipe organ. None of the services of a talented musician to make it play. A small one could very well fit into the forward house of a laker and provide ample entertainment for discerning guests.

Old timers may recall the immense Orchestrion installed in the pavilion at Bob-Lo Island. Its picture in the *Encyclopedia* suggests that it could have been 15' x 10' x 12' tall. That giant must have developed enough sound to fill the hall and delight a large house full of dancers and listeners. Too, it saved Bob-Lo management the wages of a live band, which would have to be paid even in adverse weather and when the crowds were small.

Speculation thus far shows only that a means existed for this sort of music to go to the lakes. A further tie may be offered. Recently in *Telescope* pages we have read of a pipe organ on the passenger deck of the *William P. Snyder, Jr.* Whether organ or orchestrion,

a like instrument may well have been placed in its near twin, the *Col. James M. Schoonmaker* (b. *Willis B. Boyer*) since the two appeared in 1912 and 1911, respectively. Elsewhere we may read that the *Joseph S. Young* (a. *Wilpen*, b. *David P. Thompson*) was fitted with an organ for its 1910 debut. That makes one for sure, one on speculation and one possible; all three vessels were built for the Shenango Furnace fleet, a Snyder-family business. Mr. William P. Snyder (the elder) had a large Welte Orchestrion installed in his home in Sewickly, Pennsylvania. Does not this fact entitle us to speculate that Snyder may have specified one or more Welte Orchestrions for the company's lake fleet?

If you check that *Encyclopedia* out of your library, you may conclude as I did, that a Welte Model 5 Orchestrion was about the right size for a guest cabin, and while no one will deny that any or all of these vessels were fitted with true pipe organs, we can have fun speculating that the Orchestrion may have been the chosen instrument. Smithsonian, by the way, made a dandy record. Anyone interested in recorded music might like to collect this one in lieu of a journey through time just to learn how it was when Grandfather was young. □



COL. JAMES M. SCHOONMAKER, nearly a twin of the SNYDER, has the same cabin configuration as that vessel and could have had the same equipment.

# THE SS OCTORARA

by  
WALTER W. MCNEIL, JR.

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*Walter McNeil, Jr. is a retired priest, now working part time on the staff of a Seattle Parish. Since his retirement in 1977, he and his wife have enjoyed several freighter trips.*

*The one mentioned in this article was from Chicago to the Mediterranean via the St. Lawrence Seaway. His nautical adventures had their beginnings on the S.S. Octorara.*

In the post-depression days of the early 1930's, I was employed as a Porter and later in 1934, moved up to Assistant Steward on board the cruise ship *S.S. Octorara* of the Great Lakes Transit Corporation of Buffalo, New York. The two sister ships, the *S.S. Juniata* and the *S.S. Tionesta* were on the same run, a nine day cruise from Buffalo to Duluth and back. Stops for passenger sightseeing included Cleveland, Detroit, Mackinac Island, Sault Ste. Marie, Houghton-Hancock and Duluth.

These had been the halcyon days of luxury passenger ship travel on the Great Lakes. The *North* and *South American* were of comparable size and luxury. They included Georgian Bay and Lake Michigan in their itinerary. The sidewheelers *Eastern* and *Western States* of the D&C Line plied the waters between Detroit and Chicago with a stop at Mackinac Island. The *Greater Buffalo* and the *Great Detroit* made the overnight runs between those two cities in remarkable time and the largest of them all, the *Seeand-*

*bee*, ran between Cleveland and Detroit.

The Canadian Steamship Company also operated three deluxe passenger ships. The *Noronic*, *Huronic* and *Hamonic* sailed between Canadian ports on Lakes Superior, Huron (including Georgian Bay) and Erie. This list doesn't exhaust all of the passenger ships on the Lakes at that time, but it covers some of the major vessels, particularly the cruise ships.

The Great Lakes Transit Corporation also operated a fleet of package freighters with green hulls and white superstructures. I remember that on board the *Octorara*, we would pass a "Line" ship almost every day. I was always thrilled from the resonant sound of the steam whistle salute!

The *S.S. Octorara* was built in Wyandotte, Michigan in 1910 as one of the three ships designed for the Pennsylvania Railroad to serve on the route from Buffalo to Detroit. She was 361 feet long and carried approximately 500 passengers. In the early 1930's the fare for the nine day roundtrip was one

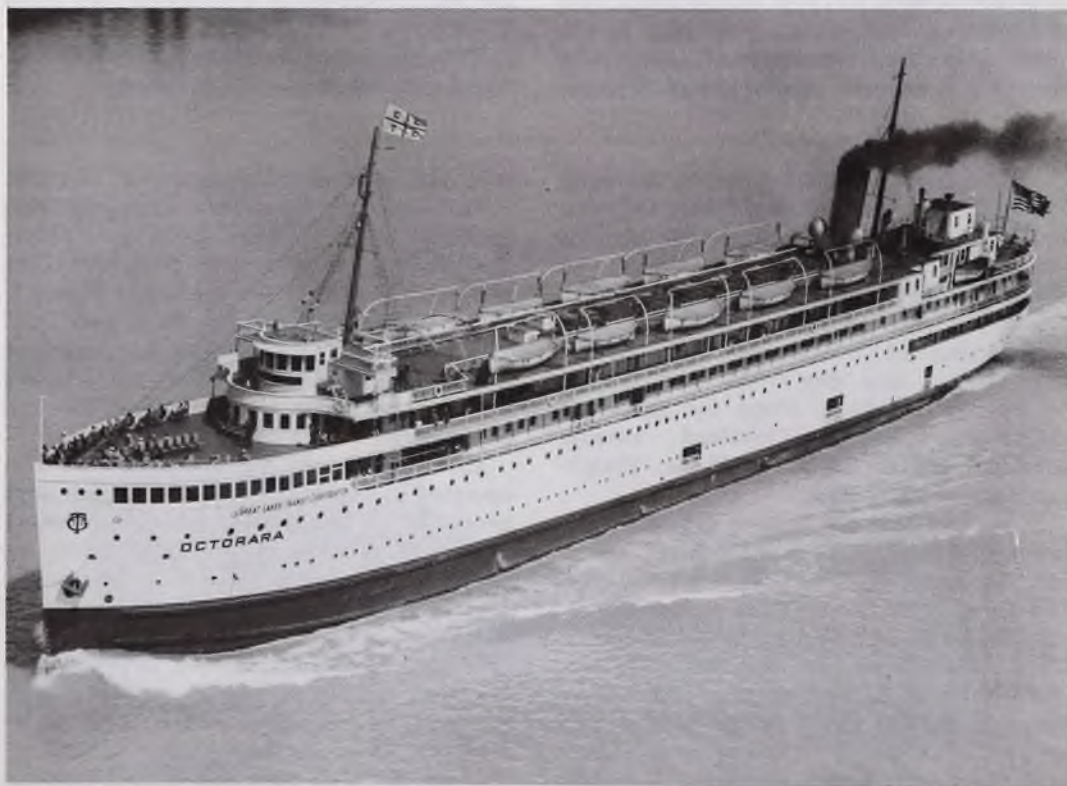
hundred dollars. This included an inside cabin and all meals.

Of the special interest to our membership is the fact that the *Octorara* bell is now rung each year in honor of our fallen brothers. The late Robert E. Lee wrote: "Unique to this ship (the *Octorara*) was her immense bronze bell, the largest ever cast of bronze for a Great Lakes vessel". Because of the efforts of several friends, and especially the Detroit Yachtswomen Association, the bell was presented to the Dossin Museum in 1964. (Author's note: As a porter on the *Octorara* in 1932-33 one of my jobs was to polish the bell. I remember how big it was!)

The ships of the Great Lakes Transit Corporation came together through the mergers of various lines, until in 1929 there were the three passenger ships and twenty one package freighters. At this time the Buffalo-Duluth route was established for the passenger ships. The only deviation from this was during the Chicago World's Fair when the *Juniata* and the *Tionesta* were assigned to the Buffalo-Chicago route. The *Octorara* remained on the

Lake Superior run. Quoting again from *Robert Lee*: "In the Second World War the S.S. *Octorara* was taken by the military and left the Great Lakes for salt water service. Filling various military transport assignments, she became a hospital ship in the South Pacific before ending her career at the close of hostilities in San Francisco".

As I reflect on my three years of service on the *Octorara*, I regret that there isn't the same opportunity to enjoy a lake cruise today. Automobiles and airplanes gradually forced the passenger steamers out of business. I still recall the thrill when we sailed from the foot of Main Street in Buffalo at 9:00 in the evening. The bell-hops had the luggage aboard and the orchestra was down at the gang plank playing "Anchors Aweigh". Mr. Condon, the passenger agent, was the last person ashore. Capt. McPherson gave the orders to cast off and another porter and I removed the gang plank and boarded the ship. Some passengers were still lined up in front of the Purser's Office. They brought their meal tickets across to the Steward's Office for



*The OCTORARA in Great Lakes Transit colors.*



Photo by Commander Beall

*After serving as a hospital ship in World War II, the OCTORARA ended her career at San Francisco.*

dining room seating assignments. There were two sittings. Our head waiter, though totally deaf, needed only to look at these table assignments for the first meal, and after that he would show people to their proper seats without error. This included 500 people at two sittings!

If there was a major league baseball game being played in Cleveland the next day, we always knew it because Capt. McPherson would bring the ship in early so that he and others could attend the afternoon game.

Time was allowed in Detroit for a tour of the Ford Plant or other sightseeing. Mackinac Island, the jewel of the upper Lakes, afforded a horse and buggy tour around the island to visit the old fort (no autos are allowed on the island), or a speed boat trip for the more adventuresome. What pure and exhilarating air in this region!

The locks at the Soo were a favorite of mine. Ship traffic converged here and frequently we would pass a "Line" ship which would allow crew members to greet each other. Fog was an ever-present hazard around Whitefish Bay, and I remember that one night on a downbound trip that we were

nearly thrown out of our bunks by a sudden reversal of our engines. Rushing to the deck, were just in time to see one of the company's freighters gradually disappearing into the fog. It was a close call.

In 1979 my wife and I were among the twelve passengers aboard the *S.S. Shirley Lykes* of the Lykes Brothers Steamship Company of New Orleans. We boarded in Chicago and sailed directly to Montreal via the Welland Canal and Seaway. As we made our way through the Straits of Mackinac and down Lakes Huron and Erie, I rejoiced that I could repeat the voyages of the *Octorara* of forty-five years ago, but I also wondered why Lykes cargo ships and those of two foreign countries were the only ones to carry a limited number of passengers. Some of the most scenic country in the world borders on the Lakes and can be appreciated in all its beauty from a ship.

We may not be able to return to the voyager canoes of the 17th and 18th centuries, but perhaps we may be able to look ahead to the promise inherent in the translation of the Iroquois word *Octorara* which means "Where money and presents were distributed". □

# PHOTO GALLERY



Photo by Bob Zelenik

*On June 5, 1972 the SYDNEY SMITH, JR. collided with the PARKER EVANS below the Blue Water Bridge in the St. Clair River.*



Detroit News/Dossin Collection

*The SMITH rolled over in 40-feet of water and the bow section broke away completely and sank in deep water.*





*The PARKER EVANS suffered a 4-foot gash in her bow and docked on the American side of the river.*

Photo by Norman Hart



*Because the SMITH was blocking the shipping channel, traffic was stopped and later reopened to one lane. The EVANS was repaired at Port Colborne.*

Photo by Norman Hart

# GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS



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Those who have contributed to the News  
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J. KLINGER	E. SANDS	J. SCHANBECK
K. STREK		T. WEBER

Jan. 1. . . *Stephen B. Roman* laid up in Toronto, ending the 1983 season.

. . . The Russian m/v *Timur Frunze* was the first ship into Montreal harbor in 1984 and received the "Gold Cane".

. . . The 123,000 dwt. Liberian m/v *Mohawk* was the winner of the "Gold Cane" at Quebec City. She was carrying crude petroleum.

. . . The self-unloader *American Mariner* was trapped in the ice in the St. Clair River near Roberts Landing. A Gaelic tug has been called for.

. . . From Christchurch, N.Z. comes a report that the U.S. Coast Guard icebreaker *Westwind* has struck an ice shelf just outside the Antarctic circle, south of the Falkland Islands. Some damage was reported.

Jan. 2. . . The *Westwind* has a 10-foot gash in her side above the waterline. Because of communication problems, repair plans are not known. She was scheduled to reach Seymour Island and pick up the American scientists.

. . . Algoma's self-unloader *John B. Aird* became trapped in the ice near Port Stanley in Lake Erie. The U.S. Coast Guard was called.

Jan. 3. . . The *John B. Aird* arrived at Port Stanley after the icebreaker *Neah Bay* freed her. After unloading, the *Aird* will lay-up for the winter at Sarnia.

. . . C.S.L.'s *Atlantic Superior* arrived in New Orleans.

Jan. 4. . . The self-unloader *John G. Munson* cleared Chicago and headed for winter lay-up in Toledo.

. . . The port of Bristol, England received the largest grain cargo in recent years when the *Egla-*

● GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS



Photo by Barry Anderson

*Texaco's tanker TEXACO WARRIOR has been sold and will be renamed TRADER.*

*tine* discharged 26,134 tons of grain products. The *Eglantine* loaded at Thunder Bay and Port Cartier, Quebec.

Jan. 5. . .Gaelic's tug *Shannon* and her empty tank barge became trapped in the ice in the St. Clair River at the Salt Dock light.

. . .The *Edwin H. Gott* was in Bay Shipbuilding for repairs and a five-year inspection.

Jan. 6. . .*John G. Munson* arrived in Toledo with 22,000 tons of petroleum coke. After unloading, she will lay-up for the winter.

. . .Inland Steel's self-unloader *Wilfred Sykes* suffered an explosion in the furnace of her port main boiler. There was extensive damage to casings, firebrick, insulation controls and back wall tubing. She will lay-up for the winter in East Chicago.

Jan. 7. . .Gaelic tugs *Shannon* and *Kinsale* with a barge were trapped in the ice in the St. Clair River at Willow Point. The tug *Barbara Andrie* was also icebound in the same location. All three tugs later freed themselves.

Jan. 8. . .The tugs *Kinsale* and *Wicklów* became icebound near Algonac. The next day they were still trapped and they were later joined by the *Shannon* and her barge. The tanker *Gemini* passing upbound, was able to free them.

Jan. 11. . .*Canada Marquis* loaded coal in South America for Germany.

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 GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS ●
 

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. . . Jan. 12. . . The Canadian tanker *Texaco Warrior* has been sold by Texaco Canada to Greek interests. She will fly the Cypriot flag and renamed *Trader*. She had been idled at Montreal since December, 1982. She departed Montreal for Sydney, N.S. and then headed for Nigeria.

Jan. 13. . . The Canadian tanker *Le Cedre No. 1* collided with with the Cypress tanker *Trader* in the St. Lawrence River near Cape Chien. *Le Cedre* proceeded to Chatham, N.B. and the *Trader* proceeded to Nigeria.

Jan. 14. . . Tugs *Barbara Ann*, *Arundel* and *Barbara Andrie*, each with an oil barge, became icebound near Algonac for over 24 hours. They have requested Coast Guard assistance and the *Bristol Bay* was dispatched from Detroit.

Jan. 16. . . All three tugs were freed by the *Bristol Bay*.

Jan. 20. . . The vessels in the Quebec and Ontario fleet have been sold to Desgagnes Navigation. An attempt by the employees of Q&O failed to purchase the fleet.

Jan. 25. . . A U.S. Federal jury has awarded 2.3 million to a former merchant seaman and his wife for injuries suffered on the *American Mariner*. Chester Patton injured his back in 1980 while clearing ore and stone with a power hose while on Lake Superior. Patton claimed that a defective nozzle wouldn't shut off, causing him to lose his balance and fall.

Jan. 26. . . The Desgagnes Board of Directors have approved the acquisition of the Q&O fleet.

Jan. 28. . . The Wisconsin based Superior Shipbuilding prepared an offer to purchase the Upper

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Dossin Museum Collection

*Milwaukee's fireboat DELUGE will be replaced this fall by a modern LARC unit.*

● GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS



Photo by James Michael

*The NEAH BAY was called on to free the JOHN B. AIRD trapped in the ice.*

Peninsula Shipbuilding Company.

Jan. 29. . .Misener's bulk carrier *George M. Carl* has been sold to Marine Salvage for scrap.

Jan. 30. . .The Canadian tanker *Eastern Shell* joined the tugs *Shannon* and *Wicklow* ice bound near Willow Point. The *Bristol Bay* was sent to assist and freed all three vessels the next day.

Jan. 31. . .Port Weller Dry Docks has taken over operations of the small drydock at Port Colborne.

. . .At Port Maitland, the *Cabot* was partially scrapped and there was no sign of the *Pointe Noire*. The *Royal Clipper* remained untouched.

Feb. 2. . .The Upper Peninsula Shipbuilding Company has agreed to sell its Ontonagon Shipyard to Superior Shipbuilding. The sale doesn't include the half-finished tug and barge.

. . .Mr. James Emery was sworn in as head of the St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation.

. . .Marinette Marine has been awarded a 7.5 million contract by the Naval Sea Systems Command to build twenty eight 50-foot workboats. If the Navy is satisfied, they have an option to buy twenty four more workboats.

Feb. 3. . . "Friends of the *Canadiana*" are attempting to purchase the ship for restoration. She is now idle at Triad Salvage in Ashtabula, Ohio.

GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS ●



Dossin Museum Collection



Photo by Skip Gillham

*Top: The CANADIANA carrying a full load of passengers.  
Bottom: The CANADIANA beached in Ashtabula in February, 1984.*

● GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS



Dossin Museum Collection



Dossin Museum Collection

*Top: The GEORGE M. CARL was launched as FRED G. HARTWELL in 1923.  
Bottom: She was renamed MATTHEW ANDREWS in 1951.*



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GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS ●

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Feb. 4. . .*Nonia*, idled in Montreal since October, 1981 has been sold and departed Montreal with her registry in Georgetown, Cayman Islands.

. . .The U.S.C.G. cutter *Sundew* was launched 40 years ago today. She is now stationed in Duluth.

Feb. 10. . .At the International Shipmasters convention in Toledo, Capt. Delmar Webster of Columbia Transportation was installed as Grand President. Capt. Vic Anderson was elected Second Vice President and Capt. Kurth Grainger was elected Secretary-Treasurer.

. . .Milwaukee's 97-foot fireboat *Deluge* will be replaced on October 1, 1984 by a modern amphibious rig that Milwaukee officials say will save the city \$410,000 a year. The new LARC unit was built by Ladder Tower Corp. in Lancaster, PA. The *Deluge* was 35 years old.

Feb. 13. . .The Canadian self-unloader *Silverdale* was reportedly under-arrest at her winter berth in Windsor, Ontario.

Feb. 14. . .Malcolm's tug *Barbara Ann* broke up the ice in the Chenal Escarte and Sydenham Rivers to lessen flooding in Wallaceburg and Dresden, Ontario.

. . .It was reported that Canadian tugs *Vac* and *Atomic* broke ice at the mouth of Lake St. Clair and Thames River to lessen flooding in the Thames River watershed.

. . .Mr. Yvan Desgagnes told the *Chatham Daily News* that his company will operate the *New York News* and *Franquelin* in Wallaceburg. Wallaceburg has operated commercially since 1850 and appeared doomed with the sale of the Q&O fleet.

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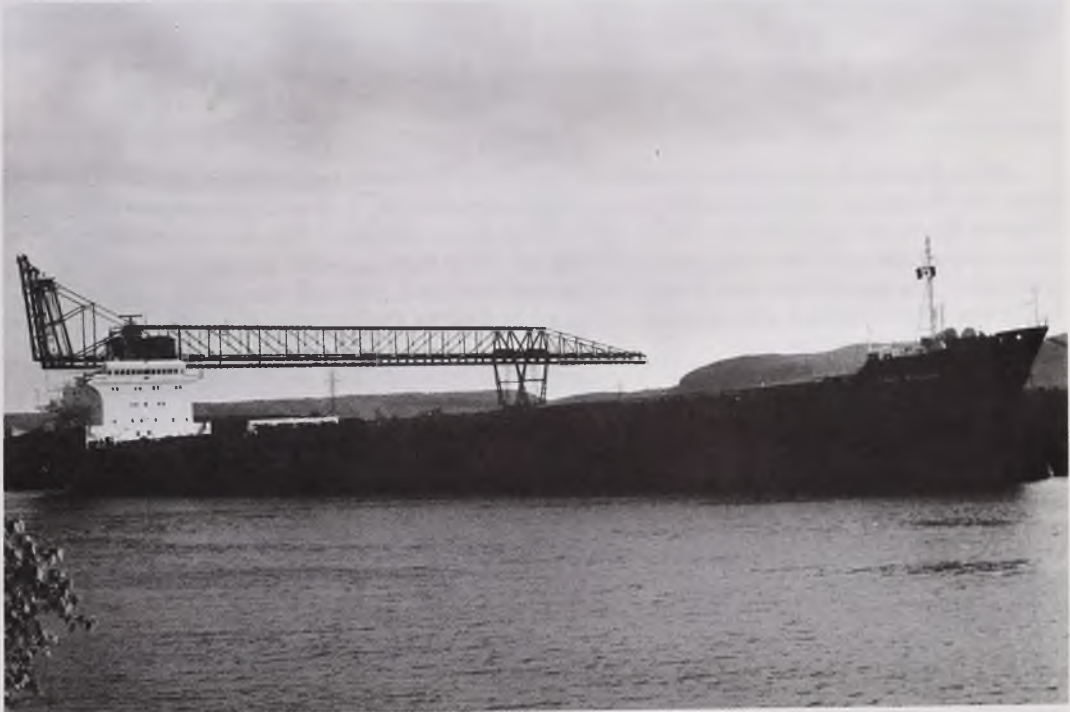


Photo by Scott McLeiter

*Carryore's LAKE NIPIGON will be chartered to Misener and renamed LAKETON.*

● GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS



Photo by Barry Anderson

*C.S.L.'s ATLANTIC SUPERIOR spent the winter in deep sea trading.*

. . . From Quebec Radio comes a report that the ferry *Radisson* was adrift in the St. Lawrence River ice off Lauzon, P.Q. Later at 8:30 a.m., she departed Levis, P.Q. with passengers for Quebec City and her main engine stalled due to ice blockage in the propeller. She was carried by the current and ice floes until she went aground. With the aid of tugs *Leonard W.* and *Donald P.* and an icebreaker, she was taken in tow to Quebec City and unloaded. She was then taken to be inspected and it was discovered that she was holed at the aft end of the shaft tunnel. Extra pumps have been put on board to curtail the leaks.

Feb. 15. . . C.S.L.'s *Atlantic Superior* has been busy in deep sea trading. Cargoes include gypsum from Halifax to New Orleans and cargoes from the Bahamas to the United States.

. . . *Saskatchewan Pioneer* loaded grain at Baie Comeau to the United Kingdom.

Feb. 17. . . Carryore's *Lake Nipigon* will be chartered to Misener Transportation and renamed *Laketon*.

Feb. 23. . . The opening of the Seaway was tentatively set for March 28 at the Welland Canal and April 2 at Montreal.

MISCELLANEOUS. . .

. . . In the December, 1983 issue of *Telescope*, we reported that American Steamship's *John J.*

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GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS ●

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*Boland* had been sold. We regret this error and are glad to state that she will sail for American Steamship in 1984.

Sales: *Ever Honor* sold by First Steamship Co. Ltd. to American interests. *Falcon* (ex-*Northern Ice*, ex-*Cap Valiente*) was sold by Faleron Maritime Company in Greece to Karachi shipbreakers. She had visited the Seaway as *Northern Ice*.

... Texaco Canada will close the refined products terminal in Montreal later this year.

... Toledo River Cruise Lines will operate a new vessel this season. The *Arawanna Princess* was received from Hans Hansen Company in Toledo. She measures 105 feet long and 24 feet wide.

Saltie Scrappings: *City of Worchester* at Bangladesh as *Cape Greed* in August, 1983. *Fontenay* arrived at Gadani Beach in September, 1983 as *Eastern Guardian*. *Jaladhriev* arrived at Bombay, India in September, 1983. *Jalazod* scuttled off Ghana in September, 1983 as *Jyoti Vinod*. *Maria Angela Martinoli* arrived at Bombay in 1982 as *Tarka*. *Western Trader*, ex-*Sea Explorer* at Chittagong as *New Sea Explorer*. *Offin River* arrived in Spain. *Klauida* arrived at Kaohsiung as *Balstad*. *Athelprince* arrived at Busan as *Banahan*. *Konsul Schulte*, ex-*Garoufalia* at Shanghai as *Fair Island*.



Maseman Photo/Dossin Museum

*American Steamship will fit-out the JOHN. J. BOLAND this season.*

The Great Lakes Maritime Institute, Inc., promotes interest in the Great Lakes; preserves items related to their history; 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 Shipbuilder's Guild. It is incorporated under the laws of the State of Michigan as a not-for-profit corporation and donations to the Institute have been ruled deductible by the Internal Revenue Service. No Institute member is paid for services.

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Please direct ALL NEWS MATERIAL to the NEWS EDITOR. ALL OTHER CORRESPONDENCE to the COORDINATING DIRECTOR.



Printed in the United States of America  
by Macomb Printing Specialties Incorporated  
Mt. Clemens, Michigan