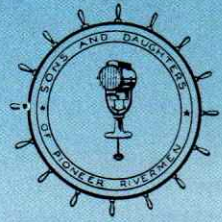


# S&D

# REFLECTOR

Published by Sons and Daughters  
of Pioneer Rivermen



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Vol. 39, No. 3

Marietta, Ohio

September 2002

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**- FRONT COVER -**

**October 26, 1999. The morning sun lights the turning leaves on Harmar Hill as W. P. SNYDER JR. returns to Marietta after a star turn at the Tall Stacks event in Cincinnati. The LADY LOIS of Madison Coal & Supply Co., Port Amherst, WV backs up the Muskingum with the SNYDER in tow as Capt. Bill Barr returned her smoothly to her landing at the Ohio River Museum.**

**Those S&D stalwarts who arranged the gift of the SNYDER to the Ohio Historical Society and the Crucible Steel Co. folks who brought the boat to Marietta under steam would be mighty pleased to see her looking so good - and still afloat - after forty-seven years.**

**- LETTERS -**

Sirs: May I remind everyone that the Sistersville, WV - Fly, OH ferry is not the only one operating between Pittsburgh and Cincinnati. The ferry still runs at Augusta, KY, and crossing over to Baudes Ferry, OH on Rt. 52. It is a small towboat, the OLE AUGUSTA, which pushes the car flat.

James A. Haley  
3908 Lori Dr., Apt. 1  
Erlanger, KY 41018

= The Editor forgot about the Augusta ferry (see NEW ERA article, June issue). Jim keeps busy with his art and exhibits at local shows in the Cincinnati area. Ed.

\* \* \*

Sirs: The article about the ferry NEW ERA on page 32 of the June issue caught my attention. I've ridden several ferries but sure never heard of "bouncing." I can remember Model Ts and Model As running around and my first car was a '35 Plymouth coupe similar to the one on the head of the boat in the photo; that car was HEAVY! Did the passengers stay in the car when the crew was "bouncing" for a free added attraction? Sounds impossible!

Bill Smith  
1240 Warbler Ridge  
Springfield, OH 45503

= We're surprised that bouncing wasn't practiced by young bucks in Pt. Pleasant

and observed by reader Bill during his formative years. There was little entertainment in our hometown so moving cars to unlikely parking places was popular. Easiest to bounce onto a sidewalk were Willys 77 coupes or Bantam roadsters. Ed.

\* \* \*

Sirs: I have found my way back home. I was purser on the DELTA QUEEN in the late 1970s and my father has had a membership for years. Please sign me up.

Margaret P. Cotton  
1006 Fraser Ave., SE  
Huntsville, AL 35801

= Welcome home! Ed.

\* \* \*

Sirs: R. C. Brasington's letter in the March issue brought manna from heaven! Thirty-one years of the S&D Reflector are in good hands and my thanks to "R.C." for the collection and the opportunity to visit with him.

Michael H. Jones, Pres.  
Vintage Chevrolet Club of America  
5442 Cloverleaf Lane  
Cincinnati, OH 45239

= Congratulations to Mr. Jones. Might we suggest a Bouncing Event for 1929 Chevys at the Club's next rally? Ed.

\* \* \*

Sirs: While going through some photos of boats during the Klondike Gold Rush I came across one of a barge with a raised pilothouse about in the center. What was the purpose and were such barges used on the Mississippi and Ohio?

Enjoyed the Red River article, - no complaints.

Jerry Green  
Geography Dept.  
Miami University  
Oxford, OH 45056

= The photo accompanying Jerry's letter shows a barge ahead of the boat, Western Rivers style. But when towed on a line behind the boat, as when crossing open water, a helmsman in the barge's pilothouse was useful. Open water was encountered in the 50-mile transit from St. Michael to the mouth of the Yukon and on the lower river itself. Ed.

\* \* \*

Sirs: I had to laugh when I read the letter that Capt. Tom Greene wrote to Capt. Fred Way in which he expressed his disdain for Huntington and its shabby treatment of the steamer EVERGREENE. (June issue, page 30). Now I see where we kids of Capt. Tom get our hot tempers when it comes to "money abuse."

Furthermore, the article brought to mind a delightful afternoon I spent with Fred Way on the DELTA QUEEN years ago. I asked Fred to compare the personalities of daddy and his brother Chris, my uncle. Capt. Way grinned, lit his pipe and said, "Well sir, Capt. Tom had a hot temper and would rant and rave all day if he was mad but his bark was bigger than his bite. Chris, on the other hand, was the quiet type and very mild mannered. Yet, if he got mad he was the first feller to knock you down."

Letha Jane Greene  
1304 Morten St.  
Cincinnati, OH 45208

= Readers will recall that the Jesse Hughes diaries, when Jesse was running the Huntington Terminal, referred to various difficulties with the city, - zoning restrictions, building permits and tax assessments to name a few. After serious high water, trucks couldn't get down the public road to the wharfboat because of the mud but the taxpaying Greene Line had to foot the bill and scrape the landing at its expense or lose business. Ed.

\* \* \*

**- THE FREIGHT BOOK -**

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**S&D ANNUAL MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 13 & 14, 2002**

**The official meeting of the Corporation will convene at the Lafayette Hotel, Marietta, Ohio to conduct official business, hold an election of officers and to enjoy the presence of friends old and new. FRIDAY EVENING Registration and social hour in the hotel ballroom beginning at 8 pm.**

**SATURDAY MORNING Business meeting begins at 9:30 in the ballroom. Reports from the officers, J. Mack Gamble Fund, Inland Rivers Library, River Museum, etc. and annual election.**

**SATURDAY AFTERNOON Optional three-hour luncheon cruise aboard the VALLEY GEM up the Muskingum through Lock 2.**

**SATURDAY EVENING Banquet in the ballroom followed by speaker from US Army Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh District.**

**PICKUP MEETING BULLETIN AT THE HOTEL DESK FOR DETAILS**

**MONONGAHELA RIVER  
DAM PROJECT AT  
BRADDOCK, PA.**

As announced in the June issue, the Saturday evening banquet for the S&D Annual meeting, September 13-14 will feature the Monongahela River. Conrad Weiser of the Pittsburgh District Office, US Army Corps of Engineers will bring us the story of the unique dam construction project now underway near Pittsburgh. Whether or not you will be able to be with us in September, readers will be interested in following report from, *The Monongahela Packet*, Corps of Engineers historical bulletin.

**BRINGING YOU UP TO DATE  
ON  
THE LOWER MON PROJECT**

"We have accomplished some exciting aspects of our Lower Mon Project to modernize Locks and Dams 2, 3, and 4 on the Monongahela River in Allegheny, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties in southwestern Pennsylvania. Our plans to utilize an innovative in-the-wet construction process to construct new Braddock Dam at Locks 2 have been proceeding successfully.

In July 2001, the huge 16,700 ton Segment 1 was towed about 29 miles from the construction basin at Leetsdale and up the Ohio River to the point of conjunction of the three rivers at Pittsburgh and then up the Monongahela River to an outfitting pier at Duquesne. Here it received further outfitting until December 2001 when it was set down on its foundation at Braddock.

The 9,600 ton Segment 2, also constructed at the Leetsdale Casting Basin, was successfully transported from Leetsdale to Duquesne on February 27, 2002. Its set-down is projected to occur in May 2002.

Current Lock and Dam 2 at Braddock, completed in 1905, is one of the oldest three locks and dams currently operating along the Monongahela navigational waterway. Since these three locks and dams experience the highest volume of river traffic in the system, their modernization is essential to safe and economical river transportation in the region. Completion of the new Braddock Dam will be an important milestone in our Lower Mon Project that will create one of the most efficient waterways in the world.

**INTERESTING FINDS ON THE  
LOWER MON PROJECT**

Following the successful transport of Segment 1 for new Braddock Dam to its outfitting pier at Duquesne in July 2001, additions were made to the dam segment while at ilie pier. This work increased its draft from about 11 feet to over 15 feet making it necessary for the District to dredge the navigation channel between Duquesne and Braddock to provide adequate depth to transport the floating segment to its final destination in December 2001. Around river mile 11.7 the District's dredging contractor encountered and removed a small hump near the riverbank consisting of a number of large cut stones and timbers. From an

inspection of th0e timbers and stones, they appear to be remains from the original Locks and Dam 2 built by ilie Monongahela Navigation Company between 1838 and 1841 or a second lock chamber added landward of the first chamber between 1848-1854. No additional impact on this area is anticipated. We will photograph and record the significant features of the recovered materials for inclusion in our project documentation and we will consider options for interpretive signage of the location and interpretive display of these remains from the first generation of structures that turned a free flowing river into an industrial highway."

The dam construction basin mentioned at Leetsdale, PA is below the Dashields Dam and a short distance up-river from the LST dock location where American Bridge Co. built Landing Ship Tank craft during World War II.

It also turned out that the site had been the location of two large brick factories built by the Harmonists about 1850. These operated until 1900 or a little later and represent opportunities for interesting industrial archaeology and historic preservation. The Harmony Society was an important economic force in the Upper Ohio Valley during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and had its headquarters in nearby Economy, now part of Ambridge. The Village of Economy is now a state park.

\* \* \*



"Lighting up the Past, Present and Future of the Mississippi River System"

**S&D REFLECTOR**

Marietta, Ohio

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The name "Reflector" is taken from the newspaper published in 1869 aboard the packet FLEETWOOD in the Parkersburg and Cincinnati trade. The *S&D Reflector* is the official publication of the Sons & Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen and has appeared quarterly since 1964, originated by Frederick Way, Jr. who was editor and publisher through 1992.

Correspondence is invited and serious papers on river related history are welcomed. Photographs or artwork should not be sent unsolicited on a "loan" basis.

Joseph W. Rutter, Editor  
126 Seneca Drive  
Marietta, OH 45750

**THE ONLY REQUIREMENT FOR MEMBERSHIP IN S&D IS YOUR INTEREST IN RIVER HISTORY!**

Full membership entitles the holder to the quarterly *S&D Reflector*, admission to the Ohio River Museum and towboat W. P. SNYDER JR. at Marietta, Ohio and voting privileges at the annual meeting of the association. Family members are entitled to all privileges except receiving the quarterly.

Memberships are for a calendar year including four issues of the quarterly. Dues notices are sent out near year-end and prompt remittance assures receipt of the next issue of the magazine.

Membership dues are \$15 for a full member; \$1 additional for spouses and children under 18. Please list full names of children to be enrolled so that each may receive a membership card. Correspondence should be sent to:

Mrs. J. W. Rutter, Secretary  
126 Seneca Drive  
Marietta, OH 45750

***S&D Reflector* BACK ISSUES**

Copies of the current issue or those of the immediate prior year are available at \$5 each, postpaid. Back issues through Volume 9 (1972) are \$3 each or \$10 for the complete year (4).

***S&D Reflector* INDEXES**

Indexes for the quarterly are available in five year segments, 1964 through 1998. Index volumes are \$5 each, postpaid. Order from the Secretary.

**PLEASE BE AWARE!**

**THE U.S. POSTAL SERVICE DOES NOT FORWARD MEDIA MAIL. ADDRESS CHANGES, SEASONAL OR PERMANENT, REQUIRE NOTICE TO THE SECRETARY TO ASSURE RECEIPT OF YOUR *S&D REFLECTOR*!**

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- LETTERS ADDENDA -

This issue was about to be put to bed when the following letter arrived from Bob Parkinson, a faithful West Coast contributor from the beginnings of the *S&D Reflector*.

Sirs: Much has been written about steamboat calliopes but do you have any information about steamboats with music boxes which played by the turning of the paddlewheels?

From a newspaper column in a local paper dated December 29, 1953 by a journalist who had interviewed some old-timers appears the following:

"You would have to be a Berkeleyan well beyond the Social Security recipient age to recall the ferryboats, PARTHENIA, WHIPPLE and the CHIN-DU-WAN. They were single-enders and carried music boxes which played by the turning of the paddlewheels, - such songs as 'One More River to Cross,' 'Life on the Ocean Wave,' and 'Suwannee River.'

Every Sunday for several years the WHIPPLE was put on the run to Berkeley with the MARE ISLAND. The boat left the original West Berkeley pier at 6 p.m. for San Francisco and, like time and tide, waited for no man or woman.

At 5:45, the WHIPPLE's music box started to play 'One More River to Cross,' hawsers were hauled in sharply at 6 o'clock and a whistle blast echoed, On-Our-Way!"

Research on the three ferryboats shows that PARTHENIA was a sidewheeler of 294 tons, 154 feet in length and in the Merchant Vessels of the U.S. (LMV) until 1881. The S. M. WHIPPLE was built in San Francisco 1866 and removed from documentation in 1885; the 1884 LMV has her home port as New York. CHIN-DU-WAN is in the LMV from 1868 but not in 1884.

A columnist in a different paper in the 1950-57 era quotes sources remembering calliopes on the CHIN-DU-WAN and S. M. WHIPPLE.

Can you shed any light on this?

Robert W. Parkinson  
2086 Allston Way, #222  
Berkeley, CA 94704

= A music box actuated by the rotation of the paddlewheel doesn't seem plausible, - unless the mechanical concerts were intended only for the confined passengers? We'll bet on a land-lubber reporter. Advice is solicited. Ed,

\* \* \*

**MOONLIGHT CRUISE AT  
ST. LOUIS!  
Thursday, October 17, 2002**

The Herman T. Pott National Inland Waterways Library of the St. Louis Mercantile Library, U. of Missouri, St. Louis extends an invitation to enjoy an evening dinner cruise aboard the MV. BECKY THATCHER on October 17.

Boarding begins at the levee below the Great Arch after 7:00 pm with departure promptly at 7:30. Parking is available on the levee but watch your step on the cobblestones! Return at 10:00 pm.

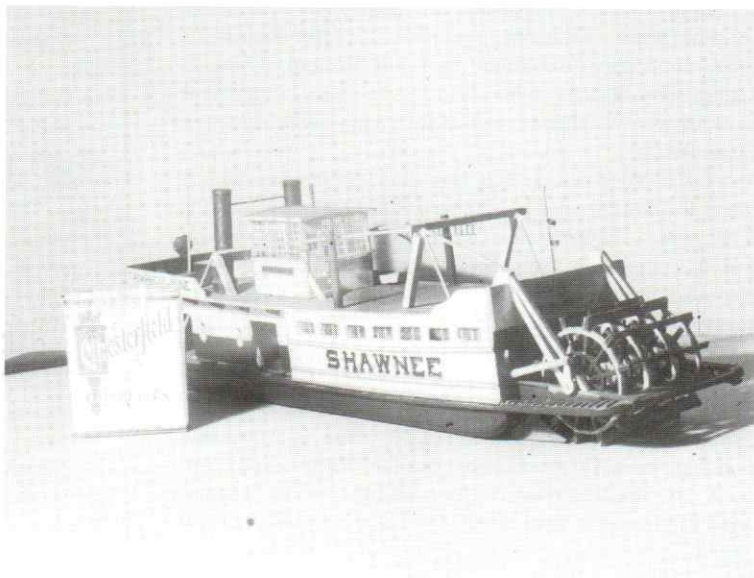
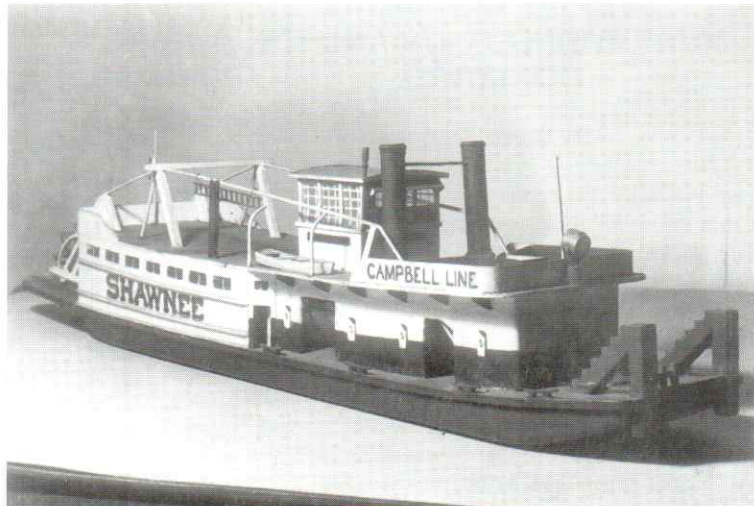
For cruise and dinner reservations call (314) 516-7240 by not later than NOON, October 14, 2002. Mastercard and Visa accepted.

**MYSTERY MODEL BELOW**

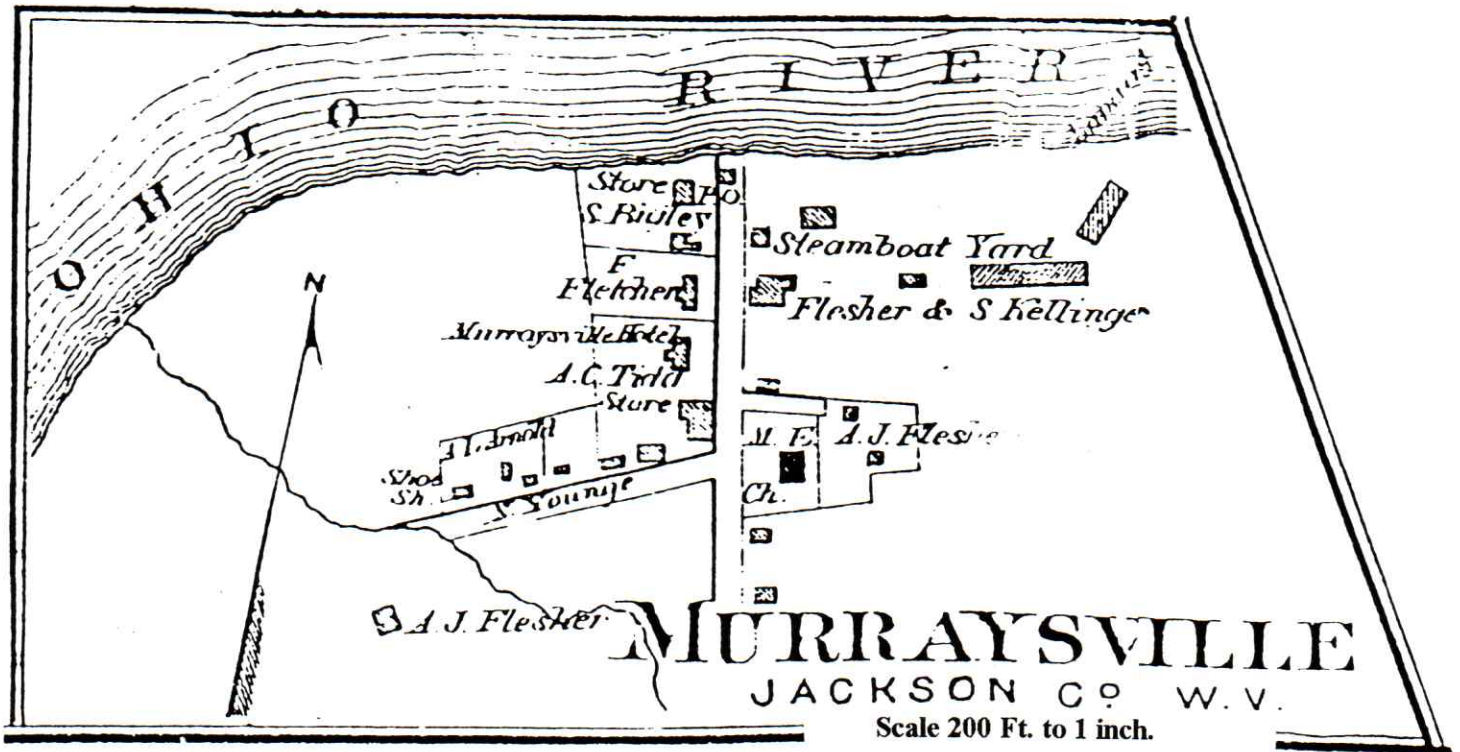
For ten years past these photos of a very small model of the towboat SHAWNEE (T2296) float to the surface of the pile periodically. We have never located the name of the craftsman who built it so that he/she could receive proper accolades but it is time to solicit help.

The modeler obviously knew towboats and had an interest in the Campbell Line. The pack of dangerous Chesterfields somewhat dates the photo and construction looks to be genuine wood and very close to scale. If it was intended for a bottle it must have been a Mason jar.

Please let the Editor know if you recognize this gem or, better yet, know where it presently resides.







Map from, "Illustrated Atlas of the Upper Ohio River," 1877

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF MURRAYSVILLE, WV AND ITS BOATYARD

By Daniel D. Bonar

If we pull aside the curtains of history, it is interesting to learn that the small river community of Murraysville, West Virginia (Jackson County, Grant District) was once a lovely, prosperous village. The town's most important industry was a boatyard that employed as many as seventy-five workers at its zenith. In addition to building steamboat hulls and barges, the Murraysville Manufacturing Company advertised itself as the manufacturer of "Rough and Dressed Lumber, Balusters, Newels and Veranda Posts." Probably the second largest business in nineteenth century Murraysville was the stone quarry, opened about 1895 by two brothers with the surname Murray.

In addition to these substantial enterprises, the community had a post office, a church, a school, a coffin factory, a ferryboat connecting the town to Long Bottom, Ohio, a blacksmith shop, a hotel, a boot and saddle shop, two general stores, a tobacco warehouse, and an ice cream parlor operated by a Mrs. Brown.

Today the small village has less than ten houses and is located at the end of a dead-end paved road, 2.6 miles off WV State Rt. 68. Murraysville is at river mile 210 below Pittsburgh on the Ohio River, approximately ten miles north of Ravenswood and twenty-one miles south of Parkersburg. Murraysville is a quiet backwater and drivers must look sharp to find the turnoff from the main highway.

The town is named for Elijah Murray who had a partnership with William Henry Hicks in establishing a sawmill and boatyard at this location in 1838. The boatyard site covered approximately seven acres (See Dee Record Book No. 10, page 410, Jackson County Court House). Elijah Murray managed the boatyard until about 1840 at which time he sold

his interest in the facility to Robert W. Skillinger and John Roberts. Mr. Murray moved to Paducah, Kentucky where he died. In 1847 Mr. Hicks sold his interest in the property to J. F. Scott, John Roberts, and R. W. Skillinger.

About 1850 Mr. Hicks again becomes involved with the business by buying out Mr. Roberts. Around 1853 Captain William Hicks retired from the business, and the new owners became J. F. Scott, R. W. Skillinger, and A. C. Tidd. Mr. Tidd withdrew from the firm around 1855; Scott and Skillinger continued the operation. The name Murraysville Manufacturing Company came into use at that time.

In 1858 Captain William Hicks purchased the Scott interest in the firm for his son, Milton E. Hicks. This interest was sold in 1859 to R. H. Sherman, who with his brother, Isaac B. Sherman, worked with R. W. Skillinger in keeping the firm alive. The Sherman shares in the firm were sold to Captain Andrew Jackson Flesher in 1863. A. J. Flesher and R. W. Skillinger worked as partners in the firm from then on until it closed in the early 1890s.

Captain Flesher then purchased a boatyard in Levanna, Ohio, near Ripley, and moved some items used at Murraysville to that yard. Captain Andrew Jackson Flesher, "Captain Jack" as many knew him, was one of the most prominent residents of Murraysville. Before coming to Murraysville, he had owned and operated a boatyard and sawmill at Antiquity, Ohio. Over his lifetime, Andrew Flesher was responsible for building approximately 150 river boats and other craft and he personally owned thirty steamers at various times.

The following items have been taken from newspapers and they help in establishing some dates as well as providing information concerning the boatyard:

*The Meigs County Telegraph*, Pomeroy, Ohio,  
November 1, 1882:

Jonathan Walker, a resident of Long Bottom, but employed as a ship carpenter at Flesher & Skillinger's boatyard, at Murraysville, W. Va., was instantly killed last Saturday



afternoon while helping to launch a ferry boat hull. The boat was being lowered preparatory to the slide down to the river, and Mr. Walker was under it in a stooping position, when the boat sprang down, crushing him against a block of wood and causing his death instantaneously. Mr. Walker was a much-respected citizen of Olive Township, and had been employed by the same firm for nearly forty years.

The following appeared in the *Ravenswood News*, Ravenswood, W. VA.

November 27, 1879

Messrs. Flesher and Skillinger have contracted for building Capt. List a sternwheel steamboat, 223' long, 34' beam and 5' hold. She is to be a low-water craft and will carry the machinery formerly used by the R. R. HUDSON. Parts of her timbers are already sawn out. (The SIDNEY, 5103)

December 7, 1879

Capt. Flesher has procured the license of a steamboat pilot.

January 8, 1880

The Mill, for some time idle for want of timber, started up last week with Mack German as chief engineer.

1881

The boat builders launched last week the hull of a small towboat for Peter Lalliance of Syracuse, Ohio and are now putting up the deck and frame. They also have pretty well underway a passenger packet, 125' long, 21' beam, and 3 1/2' hold for E. B. Ball, Portsmouth, Ohio. She will carry the machinery of the W. H. HARRISON (?). As soon as Mr. Ball's boat is completed, there will be built for John Sayre a model barge 225' long, 35' beam and 8' hold.

[The towboat might be the RUSH (T2202), completed at Middleport.]

The largest job undertaken by the Flesher-Skillinger firm at Murraysville was building the big wharfboat in 1871, named "Mammoth" by some, for Jim Fiske, the railroad tycoon. In was commonly called the "Big Sandy Wharfboat" and during the period 1872-1904 when operated by the White Collar Line at Cincinnati. Various accounts describe that wharfboat as being 315 to 325 feet long, and 65 to 85 feet wide; it sank in the ice March 17, 1904 after the Greene Line bought the upriver White Collar Line trades (but not the wharfboat).

The following list of boats built at the Murraysville boatyard was first reproduced in Vol. 1, No. 2 of the *S&D Reflector* in 1964 so we suspect that not many current readers will remember it. Ivan W. Saunders, Pittsburgh, PA found it in *The Jackson Herald*, of Ripley, WV dated February 4, 1910. Recently, Mary E. C. Bolovan (who is related to the Flesher family) dug through the Way Directories and added eight more. Boats are shown as built at Murraysville when they were so documented in the List of Merchant Vessels of the United States. There were several model barges named in the newspaper list but we have not included them. It appears that the ED. HOBBS, 1871, is the only towboat but it is likely there were others. We do not claim that this listing is by any means definitive but any hope that the boatyard's office ledger will show up someday is doubtful, given the floods of 1884, 1913, etc.

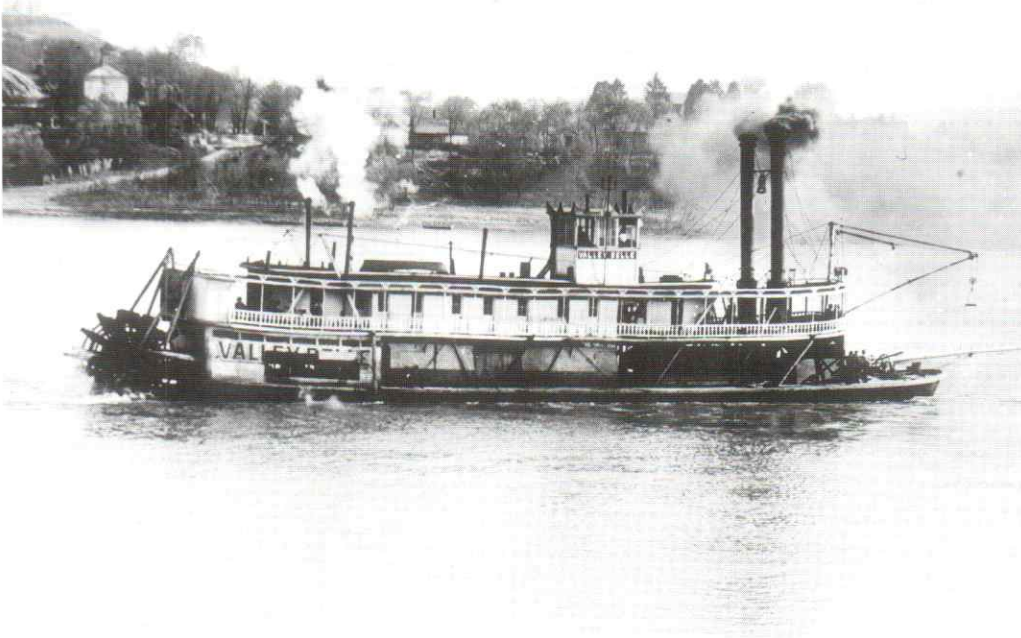
BUILT AT MURRAYSVILLE BOATYARD

YEAR	NAME	FOR
1839	AMAZON	Capt. Louderbeck
1839	MIAMI	Capt. Greene
1839	GEN. SCOTT	Capt. Dobbins
1840	SCIOTO VALLEY	Capt. Hicks
1841	OHIO VALLEY	Davis & Smith
1841	ONEIDA	Davis & Smith
1843	Congress	Capt. Hicks
1842	IMPORTER	Capt. Johnson
1843	LANCET	Capt. Hicks
1844	FORT WAYNE	Capt. Hicks
1843	LOUIS PHILLIPE	Rogers & Co.
1846	SCIOTO	Davis & Smith
1847	A. N. JOHNSON	Capt. Bennett
1848	BEACON	Capt. Shaw
1848	CAR OF COMMERCE	Davis & Smith
1853	AUDUBON	Martin & Anshutz
1852	YUBA	Capt. R. Hill
1854	DAVID GIBSON	Capt. McKinley
1854	CITY BELLE	Capt. Hicks
1855	BAYOU BELLE	Capt. Walker
1856	ISAAC SHELBY	Capt. Bishop
1856	REUBEN WHITE	Capt. Shelby
1857	HAM HOWELL	Proctor Ankrum
1858	FREESTONE	Garrett & Co.
1858	CATAHOULA	Capt. Walker
1863	EMPEROR	Capt. Reno
1863	GLIDE	Capt. Anderson
1863	REVENUE	Capt. Booth
1864	ST. JOHNS	List & Co.
1866	R. R. HUDSON	Capt. Russell
1866	QUICKSTEP	Capt. Smith
1869	ORIOLE	Capt. Dowry
1868	HOPE	Capt. Davis
1871	ED. HOBBS	Capt. Hornbrook
1871	R. W. SKILLINGER	Capt. Flesher
1873	PRAIRIE CITY	Capt. Flesher
1875	HUDSON	Capt. List
1878	TRANSIT	Ferry at Wheeling
1878	HENRY LOGAN	L. Kanawha R.
1879	ST. LAWRENCE	Capt. List
1880	SIDNEY	Capt. List
1881	HORACE	L. Kanawha R.
1888	S. R. VAN METRE	Muskingum R.
1890	HENRY M. STANLEY	Bay brothers
1890	LUELLA BROWN	Capt. Brown

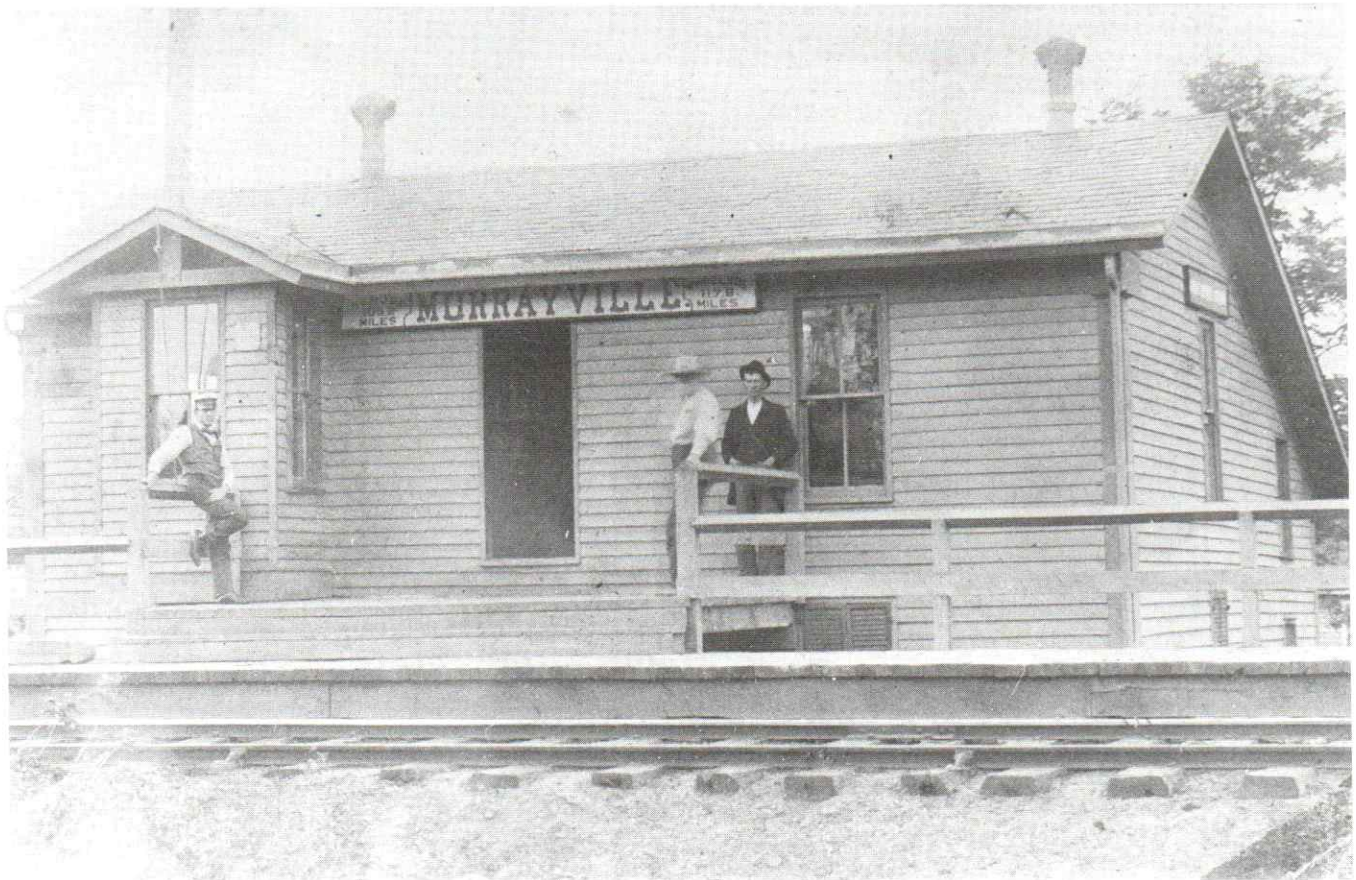
Total boat hulls listed = 45.

Many of these were probably "hull only" with framing for the upper decks included; the extent of the finishing work such as cabins, railings, trim, etc. on specific boats is unknown but it appears that the yard had the capability for a complete boat. Machinery, including boilers, would be installed at Wheeling, Marietta, Pt. Pleasant, Gallipolis or elsewhere as arranged by the owner.



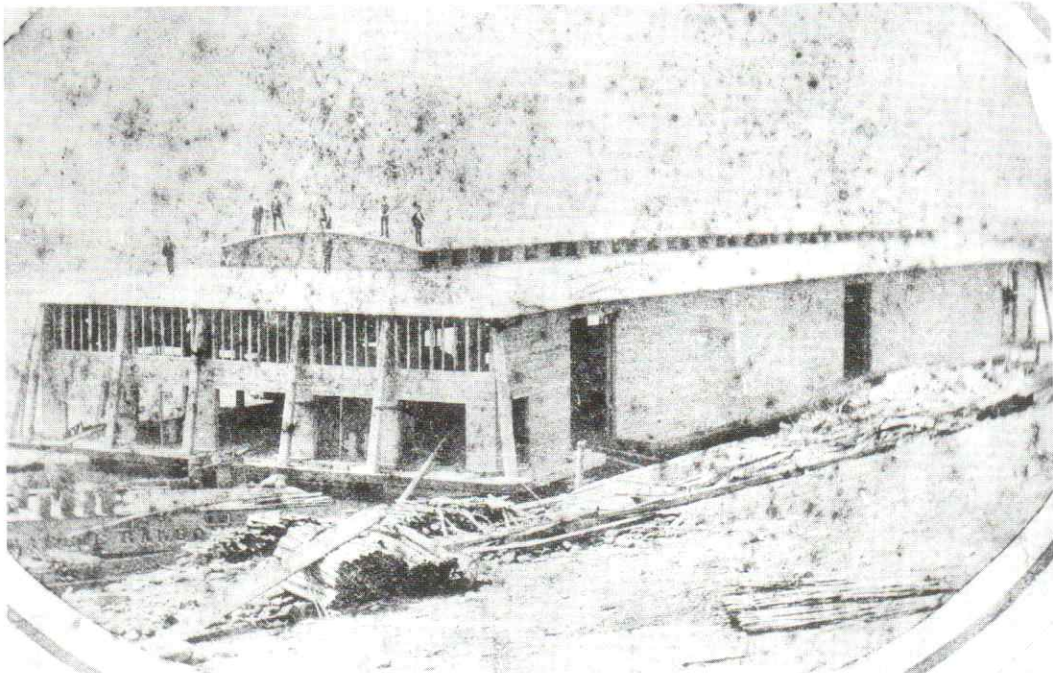


The VALLEY BELLE (5534) is down-bound passing Murraysville sometime between 1897 and 1907 when she was in the Marietta-Middleport trade. The quarry and Methodist Church show on the left with the ferry landing and road up to the railroad crossing just below. The small building with the single chimney to the right of the plume of steam could be the Adams Express building or the still existing house next to it. The roof of the Hicks-Flesher house shows behind the tall trees to the left of the stacks.



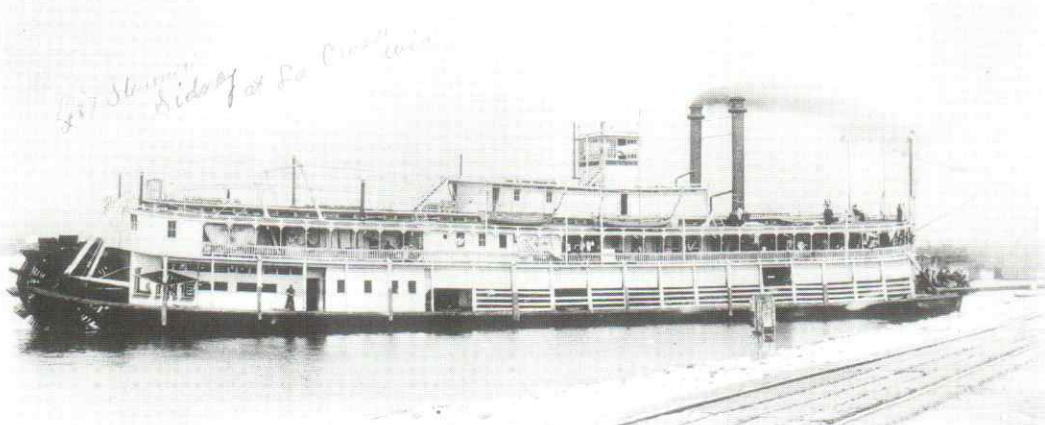
The Murraysville station on the Ohio River Railroad about 1890. The sign drops the "S" and shows Wheeling 117.8 miles and Kenova 105.2 miles. Gentleman in the center is Nelson E. Bonar, author's grandfather.





The big wharf boat built in 1871 for Jim Fisk was owned by the Southwestern Transportation & Wharfboat Co. until sold to the Big Sandy & Portsmouth Packet Co. on July 16, 1873. Capt. Ellis Mace was the manager for 14 years and gave her size as 315 ft. long by 65 ft. beam; it is reputed to have required 800,000 board feet of lumber. and could handle as many as six packets at a time. Wagons were driven in the end doors and exited through the center. Reportedly, the big wharf boat saved the Packet Company \$150 per month in freight handling expense. It was a fixture at the Foot of Broadway in Cincinnati until sunk and lost early in 1904.

The SIDNEY (5103), looking longer than her 221 feet, was built at Murraysville in 1880 for the Ohio River but soon was sold to the Diamond Jo Line on the upper Mississippi. She was later owned by Streckfus and became the excursion steamer WASHINGTON (5711) in 1921. Dismantled in 1938 - a long life for a wooden boat.



In the mid 1880s, the Ohio River Railroad was built, and the first train passed through Murraysville in 1886. There was a freight depot, telegraph office, and passenger waiting facility in Murraysville. Telegraph poles, each with one or more tiers of wires, were placed parallel to the train tracks from Wheeling to Kenova. Incoming mail for Murraysville and Long Bottom, Ohio was dropped from the moving trains. On the west side of the tracks stood an ingenious structure designed to permit a moving train to snag a heavy canvas sack of outgoing mail. John Osborn and Del Larkins were two of the many individuals who carried the mail across the river to Long Bottom. Until about 1950, Murraysville had a wood fenced pen or corral with an inclined loading chute making it possible to load cattle, hogs, horses, and other animals on railroad cars for shipment to market. The corral was located on the east side of the train tracks and approximately 60-70 feet from the post office. Passenger service on the B&O Railroad was available until the mid 1950s.

If one were to offer a one-word description concerning the demise of Murraysville it would surely be "floods"! The floods of 1884, 1913 and 1937 crested upriver at Parkersburg on February 9, 1884 at 53.9 feet; on March 29, 1913 at 58.9 feet; on January 26, 1937 at 55.4 feet. Census records for 1880 suggest that the village, together with nearby residents, had a

population of approximately 150. The 1884 flood nearly wiped out the town but a number of determined citizens rebuilt many of the houses and stores. The floodwaters did not touch the church on an elevated knoll, nor the schoolhouse located about two tenths of a mile from the river's edge. Also, the stately Hicks-Flesher-Douglas house overlooking the town was above the high water in each of the floods.

But, the 1913 flood was really the kiss-of-death for Murraysville. By that time, many business enterprises in the village had disappeared. About a dozen houses near the waterfront, and the railroad depot were swept downriver by the raging waters.

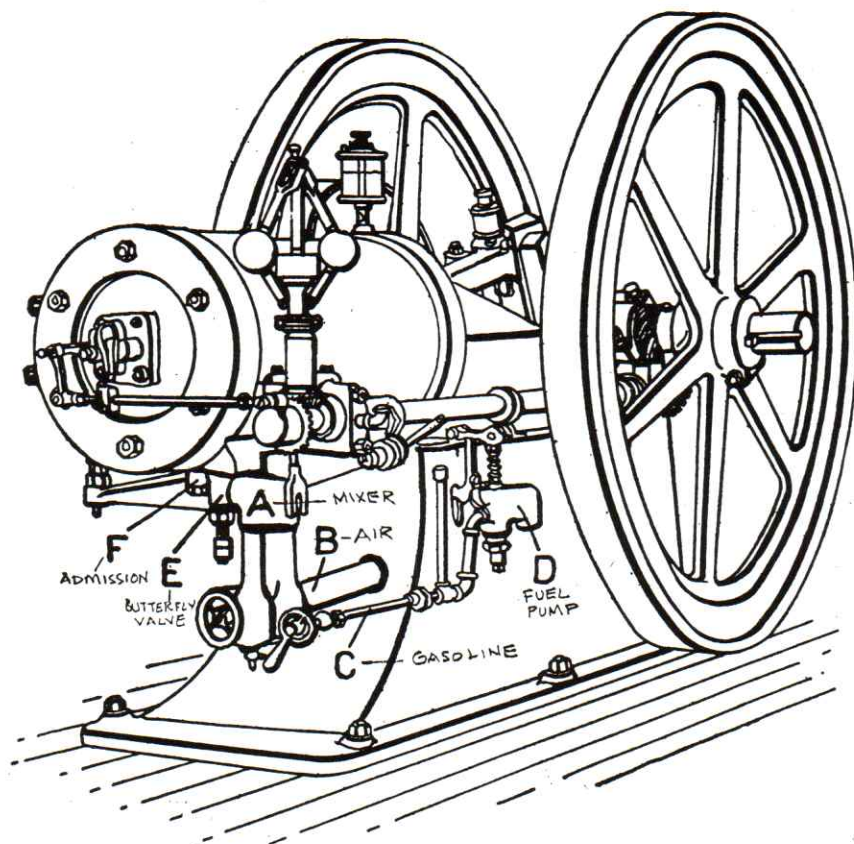
When the Murraysville yard closed in the early 1890s, my father Nelson Edward Bonar II purchased the bell used by the boatyard to signal the beginning and the ending of the workday. That bell may be the only remaining artifact from the Murraysville boatyard. The bell will soon be on permanent display at the Washington Woods Museum in Ravenswood, together with an explanation of its connection with Ohio River history.

What the future holds for Murraysville is anybody's guess but its past can accurately be tagged as interesting and significant in the history of the river in its heyday of the packets.

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"The speed of the engine is regulated by varying the volume of the charge by the action of a throttling governor operated from the side shaft by means of bevel gears."



The heart of a gasboat's power plant was the "one-lunger" which might have earlier seen service at an oil well. There were dozens of makes in 1900 with the Fairbanks-Morse being the most popular; above is typical, a White-Blakeslee, but different makes had unique design governors and ignition - electric spark or hot-tube. The illustration is from Audels Gas Engine Manual with labeling by the late George Schotten.

## GAS ENGINES AND PITMAN DRIVES

On page 31 of the June issue we have a photo of the sad remains of the gasboat PEARL following the 1916 fire at St. Marys, WV. Most boats adapting the one-lung gas engines to marine use had a chain drive to the sternwheel but the PEARL (and some others) employed pitmans, - just like a steamboat. In the photo following the fire may be seen the gas engine (about amidships), the larger bull wheels (at the stern) from which the pitmans are connected to the paddlewheel shaft.

Capt. Alan Bates responded to our request for an explanation of how these Rube Goldberg contraptions worked, - for which we are most grateful.

## REGARDING THE PITMAN DRIVE ON M/V PEARL

The biggest problem in using internal combustion engines with paddlewheels has always been the disparity in speed between the prime mover and the paddlewheel. Even small paddlewheels, like the PEARL's, turned at a mere 30 rpm. while the power plant churned away at 250 or more at top speed. A ratio of 8 to 10:1 required a lot of gear reduction. Either gears or belts did this with the latter predominating in the early days. If the pulley on the engine shaft was, say, eighteen inches in diameter, somehow or another the builder had to get the equivalent driven pulley diameter of fifteen feet! The best way was to make a double reduction by mounting a four and a half foot diameter driven pulley on a shaft with another eighteen inches. This shaft would then turn at eighty-three and a third rpm. A second belt to another four and a half

foot pulley would reduce the second shaft speed to about twenty-eight rpm., suitable for wheel speed.

BUT, a belt could not drive a pulley on the paddlewheel shaft owing to the wet location and high torque. It was necessary for the final drive to be something else. The best was to substitute a heavy chain drive for the second reduction with a sprocket keyed to the paddlewheel shaft. That chain had to be protected from the water so a box was built around it. SO-called 'silent' power chains also were vulnerable to breakage owing to the thousands of parts used to make them.

Ah, but what if the builder already had a paddlewheel from a steamer on hand? The best solution then was to use a belt for the second reduction and keep it indoors, then use the old pitmans and a 'bull wheel' to transmit the power to the paddlewheel. Easy to lubricate, needing no shelter, lighter than a chain and sprocket plus housing, the pitmans did a good job.

Alan L Bates, Architect.

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## WHITHER WENT THE STEAMBOAT INSPECTION SERVICE?

Every so often a question comes along to which the answer would seem to be easy to locate. But then a diligent search turns up nothing concrete, We think it happened in such and such, but more often and correctly have to admit, "Damnfino!"

Alan Bates wrote recently that he was stumped with the precise date that the U.S. Coast Guard assumed the duties of licensing river personnel. Ye Ed had to admit that his guess was only that, - and far off the mark as it turns out.

Chuck Parrish, retired historian of the Louisville District Office, U.S. Corps of Engineers, consulted with Dr. Leland Johnson and supplied the following sequence of events to Capt. Bates. We are pleased to note it here for posterity:

### STEAMBOAT INSPECTION SERVICE

July 7, 1839 - Steamboat Inspection service (SIS) established as part of the Justice Department.

August 30, 1852 - SIS transferred to Treasury Department.

February 14, 1903 - SIS transferred to Labor and Commerce Department.

January 28, 1915 - Coast Guard (USCG) created by merger of the Life Saving Service and Revenue Cutter Service.

June 30, 1932 - SIS transferred to Commerce Department.

May 27, 1936 - SIS renamed Bureau of Marine Inspection (BMI).

February 28, 1942 - BMI transferred to USCG, then part of the Navy Department.

July 16, 1946 - BMI abolished and duties placed with the USCG, part of the Treasury Department.

April 1, 1967 - USCG transferred to Department of Transportation.

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### ENFORCEMENT OF THE 1852 STEAMBOAT INSPECTION LAW

One of the new books reviewed in the June issue deals with the ineffective attempts to improve safety on steamboats. Several laws were adopted or considered in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century leading up to the passage of the Federal law requiring the licensing of steamboat officers and

inspection of machinery and boilers. The establishment of the U.S. Inspection Service in the law of 1852 was the first effective regulation and went into effect January 1, 1853.

### PRACTICAL STEAMBOAT INSPECTIONS

The KATE SARCHET (3239) was a small sternwheel boat built in 1856 at New Albany, Indiana for the Wabash River. In 1858 she was sunk on the Wabash while attempting to jump a mill dam and after repairs her owner dutifully requested that the U.S. Inspection office at Louisville inspect her as required by the 1852 law. The response follows:

Inspectors Office,  
Louisville, Kentucky

Thomas DuSouchet, Esq.,  
Steamer Kate Sarchet,  
Evansville, Indiana

October 9th 1858

Sirs -

We have received your dispatch by Telegraph dated yesterday, 8 inst. And in answer thereto say, that owing to the low state of water, it will not be convenient at this time for us to come down and test your Boilers. The expenses for doing so will be so much increased for the above reason that we fear the Department, will be unwilling to incur it.

But, that you may not be subject to fine or inconvenience from this cause, we desire that you send us on receipt of this, a statement by the Boiler Maker that made your Boilers, of their exact size, length, thickness of iron

in the Shells, size of the Flues thickness of iron in the flues, and whether the said Boilers are of good workmanship. This is rendered necessary as we understand you have new Boilers in place of the Old ones.

When this is done, we can then send you a permit to serve your purpose until it may be convenient for us to come down.

In the mean time, should you find it necessary to go to work before this can be done, you can do so, but should first raise steam on your Boilers, to at least 20 per cent higher than you intend working it in ordinary running, before carrying passengers.

Very Respectfully Yours,  
Joseph Swagan  
Reuben Dawson

The enforcement of the new inspection law was practical and if not very efficient in those days it was better than under the 1838 law with no inspection at all.

The KATE SARCHET was lost by stranding February 16, 1861.

Our thanks to Nel Hamilton, Nashville, Indiana for the copy of the letter.

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### ON THE MATTER OF CREW DECORUM

The following letter received by the U.S. Steamboat Inspection Service, Wheeling Office might not touch on "safety" per se unless profanity is construed to be a fire hazard. The letter was found in the papers from the Wheeling Inspection Office so we assume that it came to us courtesy of the Inland Rivers Library, Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, - the sender, some months back, did not sign her note.

"New Matamoras, O.  
January 2<sup>nd</sup> 1899

Dear Messrs Clark & Thomas,

On behalf of the traveling public, I write you about the disgraceful and disgusting profane language that has been used by the pilots on the Steamers BEDFORD and LEXINGTON. They frighten women and children and people are getting tired of it.

You ask the crews of both boats about the occurrences at Proctor and Baresville last Saturday. There is (sic) gentlemen on both boats - and others that are not.

The boats are a great accommodation to the people but respectable (people) do not like to travel where such actions are allowed and ask you to have it stopped.

A passenger who heard it."

The H. K. BEDFORD (2491) was owned by Capt. Henry R. Craft and Charles and A. C. Frantz in 1899. LEXINGTON (3446) and was in the New Matamoras-Wheeling trade among others. Baresville, Ohio is now Hannibal while Friendly, West Virginia is about across from New Matamoras.

"What did they say and when did they say it?" No indication that Inspectors Clark and Thomas took any action.

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Moorhead, MN. The PLUCK built in Moorhead and documented in 1880, 92x32x3.5; home port Pembina, ND. She looks similar to logging tugs of the period - single engine and stiff-shaft with clutches and reversing gear on each wheel. Murphy Library photo.

Lots of business at Moorhead: flatboat of lumber is partly unloaded; model barge WINNIPEG with assorted farm machinery; scow holds several portable engines and 6-7 threshing machines. The Northern Pacific R.R. mainline trestle crosses the river to Fargo, ND.

### RED RIVER OF THE NORTH ELICITS COMMENT

In our June issue we tiptoed into the Red River country with Lewis Morgan's account of his 1861 trip to get acquainted with the Indians. Brian Lerohl, Fairview, SD writes:

"Sir: Noted your muted apology for the Red River story on Page 8, June issue. No apologies are called for. No corrections are needed. The Red River of the North may be obscure to readers in Pittsburgh and Cincinnati but Easterners sometimes need to have their eyes opened.

The 5/8-mile stretch of land between a tributary to Big Stone Lake and Lake Traverse is the only Land Bridge between New York and Seattle, i.e. it is the focal point of the N-S watershed of the North American Continent. This geographical significance is the obvious reason why the Red River was used by the U.S. Steamboat Inspection Service to help define the Geographic area referred to in the June issue.

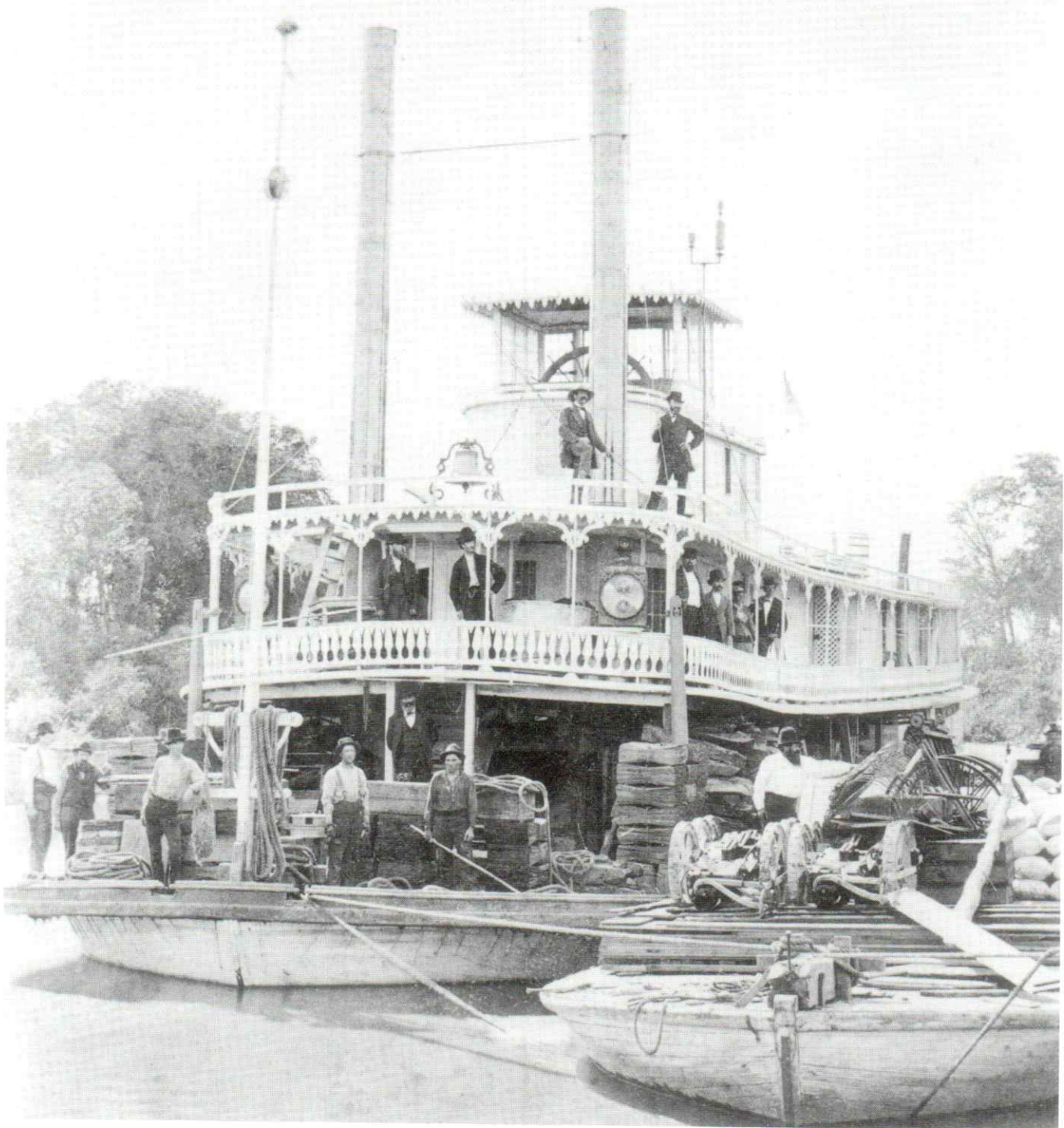
Rumor has it that during high water, the waters of the two lakes (or tributaries thereof) join together. Having visited there many years ago, I question whether this has ever happened during Historical (Modern) times - but don't know for sure.

Navigation on the Red was brief, a moderate amount during the 1870s, and the upper reaches to Breckenridge are a prairie creek of incredible meander. And boats did go to Breckenridge a few times early-on but the second boat that tried it tore her stacks off on the trees, - had to back down several miles before she could find a place wide enough to turn around."

Mr. Lerohl's approbation of our attempts to sort out the locations on the Red River of the North is appreciated. Breckenridge, MN is a good ways below Big Stone Lake. Mr. Lerohl alerted us to some of the boats of more substance than the ANSON NORTHRUP upon which Morgan traveled in 1861 on the Red River. It would be worthwhile to know more about the traffic up there, evidently substantial until the railroads came to the valley. Boats were listed in the List of Merchant Vessels, however, ferreting them out by "homeport" or "place of build" is tedious. So far, we've not found a book which speaks particularly to steamboating on the Red.

But, if you are interested, there is a book about the Metis, 1870-1885, which now has us hooked. These unexpected diversions make history interesting but slow production of the *Reflector*. Ed.





The SELKIRK was built at McCauleysville, MN in 1871, 110x24x3. She has style - must have been THE floating palace of the Red River - and with a texas is one of those boats that looks larger than life. The two searchlights on the boiler deck are angled to light up the bullfrogs when running the narrow river at night.

In the 1870s the closest office of the Steamboat Inspection Service was Galena, IL. SELKIRK was inspected by the Galena office in 1877 and 1881 at Grand Forks, ND. She hit the N.P.RR bridge at Grand Forks October 25, 1886 and was lost. F. Jay Haynes photo at Moorhead, MN. Murphy Library print.





The J. L. GRANDIN was one of the two boats operated as the "Grandin Line" on the Red River, part of the huge Grandin Brothers farm operation. She was

built at Fargo, ND in 1878, 217.8 tons. Looks new in this photo at Moorhead, MN by F. Jay Haynes. She was inspected in 1881, we know. Murphy Library Print.



## The Red River Country and F. J. Haynes, Photographer

This excursion into steamboats on the Red River of the North has indeed opened out eyes. The photos furnished by the Murphy Library came from the prodigious output of photographer F. Jay Haynes, 1853-1921. The book Following the Frontier with F. Jay Haynes by Freeman Tilden, Alfred Knopf, 1964, gives a glimpse of that Red River country in the 1870s, the amazing big-scale grain farming and the brief boom on the river which followed.

F. Jay Haynes studied photography under an established "artist" in Saline, Michigan before relocating to Moorhead, Minnesota and opening his own studio in 1876. We quote from Following the Frontier:

"In the fall of 1876 one of these luxurious hunting cars (railroad) was sidetracked near the Grandin farms, just then being developed. The car belonged to a rich manufacturer from Worcester, Massachusetts, and was named 'City of Worcester.' Whether Mr. Jerome Marble and his guests, the Houghtons, were financially interested in the Grandin farm, or whether they were investors in Northern Pacific common stock and were taking their dividends in prairie chickens, we do not know; but they were certainly proficient with firearms.

Professor Haynes may have taken his first pictures of bonanza farming on this assignment with the hunters. Fall plowing was in progress at the Dalrymple farms in the valley, and one of the first shots shows a long string of horse-drawn plows tearing up the stiff sod. Over the years, F. Jay, returned to the bonanza scene and photographed the operations from every angle. As late as 1888, when he must have been fully occupied with other enterprises, he took a picture of the harvesting on the great Leech farm.

In 1876 the words 'bonanza farms' and the name Oliver Dalrymple were magic. During the following years, as the fame of this spectacular cultivation of virgin soil on an extensive scale spread through the East, many a newspaper and magazine correspondent came to the Red River Valley to report on the prodigy. A Haynes print of 1877 depicts a Northern Pacific excursion: a big crowd of tourists and prospective settlers watches the Dalrymple

harvest from flatcars. And then, the following year, the President of the United States himself came, with a large party. Rutherford B. Hayes, who had known small-time farming in the Ohio of his boyhood, was vastly impressed. The Haynes camera, of course, faithfully recorded the presidential visit.

Now, what was bonanza farming, and who was Oliver Dalrymple, about whom so much was written at the time but whose impact on later historical literature of the Northwest frontier was, curiously, so negligible? It was James B. Power, the tireless land commissioner of the Northern Pacific, who discovered Dalrymple. Power was behind the master stroke that lifted the troubled railroad out of the slough - at least temporarily, for it had a long way to go yet to achieve full solvency and yield a profit. Power realized that the railroad might be a dead dream before its immense landholdings could be settled on the basis of small tracts. The settlers who had come were courageous and industrious, and no doubt the struggle with poverty can sharpen the character. But the going might be just too hard. Visiting newspapermen were not exaggerating when they reported that the sod-house farmer was 'without a sign of comfort' and 'hopelessly in debt.' This marvelously rich lake bed, not inaptly compared with the Nile Valley, was just not adapted to small-acreage farming. It had to be cultivated on a grand scale and by machinery that the poor settler could not afford or use effectively. Oliver Dalrymple, then, was a demonstrator the Northern Pacific brought in to show what could be done. He was an expert grain farmer who had planted three thousand acres of his own in Washington County, Minnesota, and was using the most modern mechanical equipment then available.

And now it is necessary to backtrack a little in the story. When Congress granted a charter to the Northern Pacific, it allotted no money for construction. It did grant land amounting to forty sections to the mile. The stock of the railroad, when issued, was convertible into land, and after the Northern Pacific collapse of 1873, great parcels came into the hands of the large investors. Among these were the Grandin brothers of Tidioute, Pennsylvania, the Cheneys of Boston, George W. Cass of Pittsburgh, and some of the European speculators who had put money into the enterprise.

At the request of the Northern Pacific, Dalrymple had gone on horseback over some of these valley lands, sampling the clayey silt topped with a mat of cured grass. 'If these lands aren't worth at least twenty-five dollars an acre,' he had reported, 'I'm no judge.' He was not overstating the case, even in terms of the dollar of his time."

"When Professor Haynes came on the scene, Dalrymple was beginning his large-scale farming in the landholdings of Cass and Cheney, with headquarters at Casselton. Cass and Cheney, and the others who had swapped railroad stock for soil, were anxious to be bailed out, naturally. But if any proof were needed that the Dalrymple operation was mainly a publicity demonstration for the stymied railroad, a letter written at the time by Haynes to Lily Snyder will give it. He had just got his first big outdoor job, he said, 'I am going to photograph the operations on the great Dalrymple farm of 30,000 acres.' His photography of railroad shops and the rolling stock and the 'City of Worcester' hunting party had paid off.

The 30,000 acres mentioned by the Professor was a more or less exact figure. There is no record of what Dalrymple undertook the first year. The Cass holdings represented more than six thousand acres; the Cheney holdings, more than five thousand. It may have been arranged that the Dalrymple demonstration extend to the vast Grandin acreage as well, but of course this did not mean that that much sod was to be turned at once. We do know that Dalrymple later acquired for himself the 4,000-acre Alton farm, so that certainly he was for a period in charge of more wheat-producing land than anybody in agricultural history. The holdings were scattered over Cass and Trail and Barnes counties; and the counties were not small.

The Grandin farm alone consisted of more than forty thousand acres. Indeed, one visitor from New York exclaimed that in it, you could put down three Manhattan Islands and then have a margin all around."

Besides being surprised at the scope of the "bonanza farms" in the Red River Valley 125 years ago readers might wonder how the Grandin brothers, of Tidioute, Pennsylvania on the Allegheny River, came to own one. Did their stake come from lumbering? From oil? Are they remembered in their hometown?

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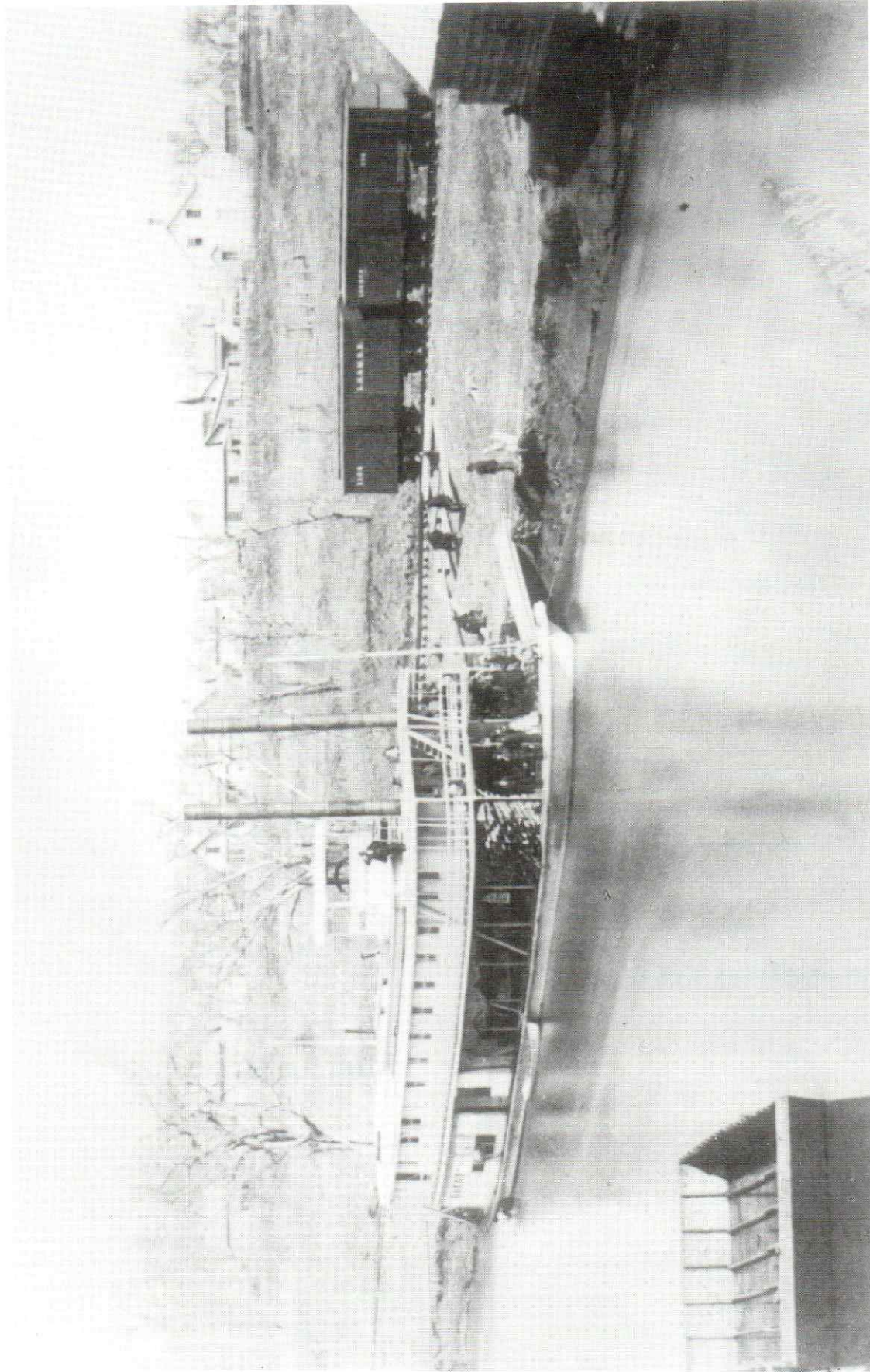




Here's a trim sidewheel boat on the Red River, the CHEYENNE, built at Red Lake, MN 1874, 90.98 tons. We find her inspected in 1877 but no other information.

There is a painting on the paddle box, a full skylight for the cabin - style! We guess she's landed at Winnipeg, the address of the photographer. Murphy Library print.

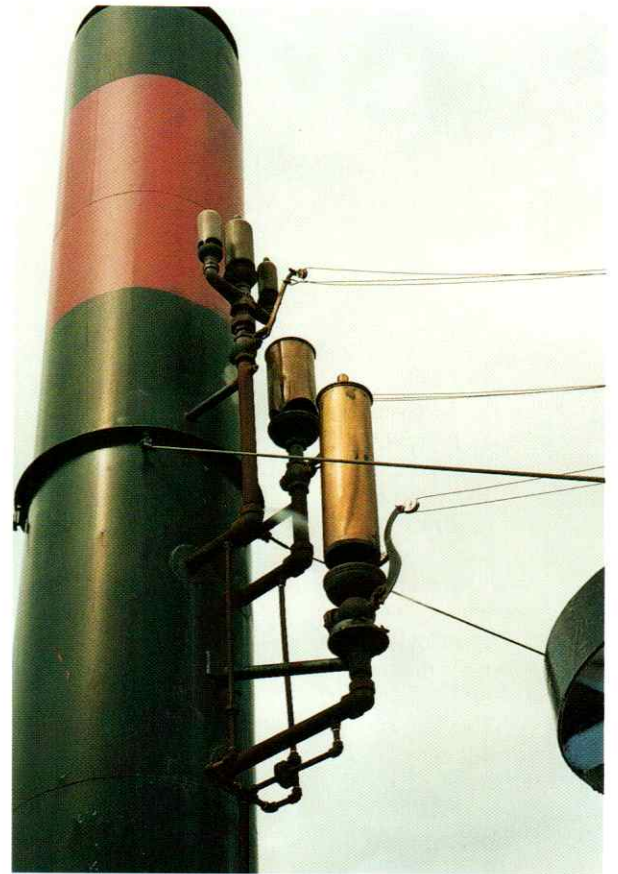




The DAKOTA, built 1872 at Breckenridge, MN location, judging by the railroad siding and size measured 117.75 tons. She appears to be fresh of the river, could be Grand Forks but we'll await a word from Red River experts. DAKOTA was inspected in 1877 by the Galena inspectors. The master standing in front of the pilothouse.

All of these Red River boats show style and good design and we wonder where the builders learned their trade. This photo is from the Geo. V. Allen collection, Murphy Library print.



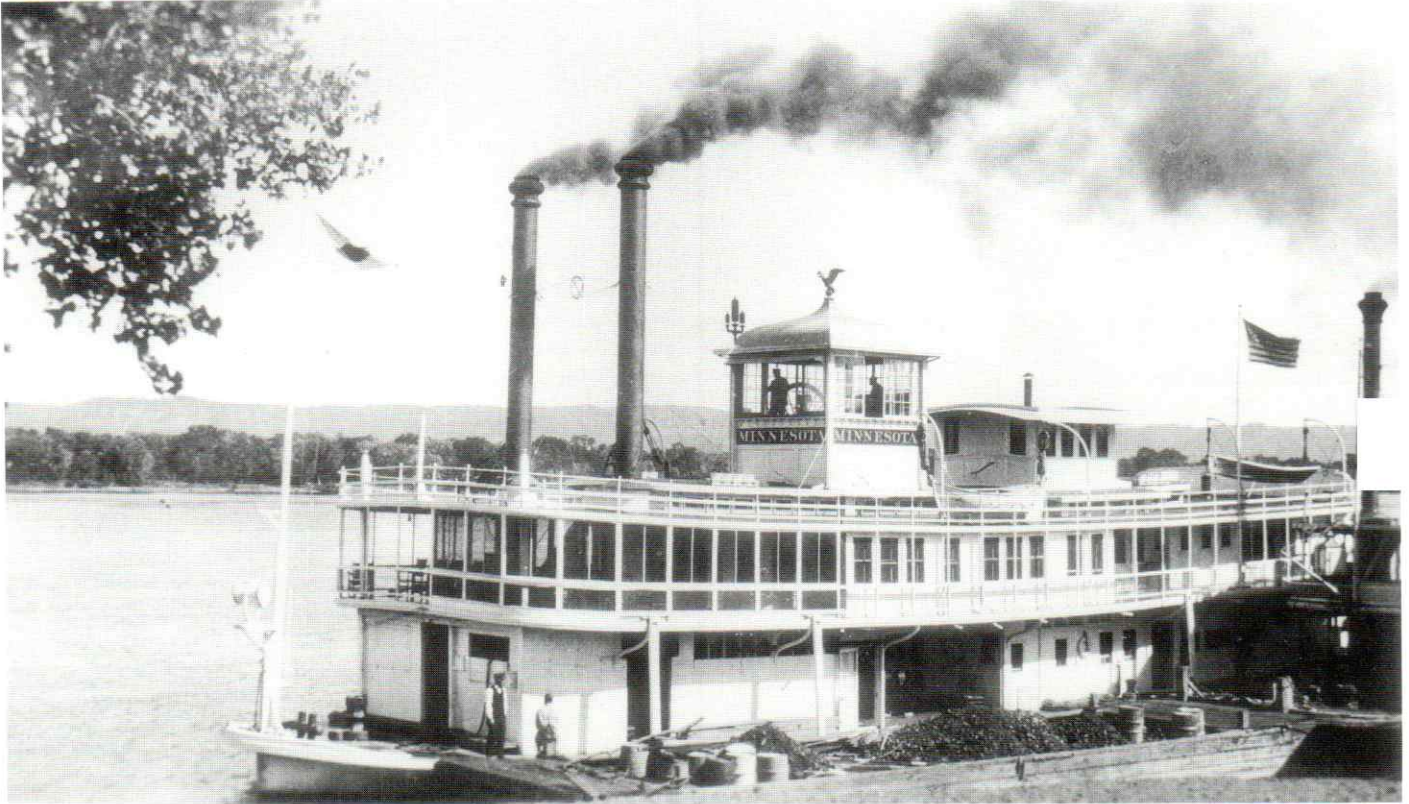


#### TWO STEAMBOATS ON THE LAKES

Member Frank Prudent went traveling up north (of us) this past June and found time to look up two handsome sternwheel steamboats. Top, is the CHAUTAUQUA BELLE, designed by Alan Bates, which has operated on Chautauqua Lake in the SW corner of New York at Mayville since 1976.

Lower, the MINNE-HA-HA with her tall stack is found at Lake George Village and operated by the Lake George Steamboat Co., Bill Dow, President. MINNE has been lengthened in the middle since we last saw her and it has given her a much more graceful look. The whistle assortment should satisfy every musical taste, - Frank endorses the 3-chime Lunkenheimer.





### WHISTLE FROM THE U.S. GENERAL ALLEN BLOWS AGAIN

The following comes to us courtesy of The Great River Steamboat Co., operators of the steamer JULIA BELLE SWAIN at La Crosse, Wisconsin:

Sounds of a once-familiar steamboat whistle echoed off the bluffs and downtown buildings at La Crosse's riverfront levee on the morning of June 19, 2002, for the first time in more than a half-century.

They are the sounds of the sternwheeler MINNESOTA that was built in 1915 at the Howard Yard, Jeffersonville, Indiana as the personal steamer of the Mayo brothers of Rochester, Minnesota. After being sold to the U.S. Engineers/St. Paul District in 1922 she was renamed GENERAL ALLEN and became a familiar sight to residents along the entire Upper Mississippi River for decades. She is noted for bringing the first commercial tow out of the Twin Cities in May 1926, and then returning with the first tow to reach St. Paul from St. Louis in August 1927.

Central Barge Line bought GENERAL ALLEN in 1943 and the name was restored to MINNESOTA and she continued towing until dismantled in early 1944.

Retired riverboat pilot Capt. Stanley B. Knoll of Joliet, Illinois donated the whistle to the La Crosse County Historical Society. Ralph Dupae of La Crosse was asked to transport the whistle with the request by Capt. Knoll that it be blown by steam and recorded before being placed on permanent display in a museum. Dupae worked with the Great River Steamboat Company, owners of the JULIA BELLE SWAIN, who donated time and materials to blow the whistle off their boat's steam plant.

The big whistle was assembled atop the JULIA BELLE's pilothouse, and the landing calls of twelve different river lines were sounded including Central Barge Line, Federal, Hatfield, Standard Oil of Louisiana, American Rolling Mill, Greene Line, etc.

Gregg Mitchell of Sound World in La Crosse was on-hand to make the recording on a CD that was sponsored by Ralph Dupae. A copy was furnished to Capt. Knoll who applauded the result, - "Just like I remember her as a kid!"

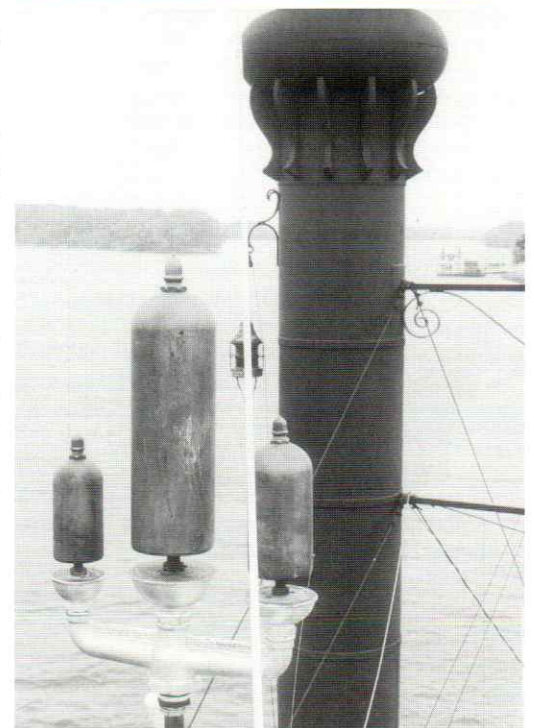
With assistance from the J. Mack Gamble Fund of S&D, the whistle will be exhibited at the museum in Riverfront Park in downtown La Crosse. Readers with an interest in the MINNESOTA/GENERAL ALLEN display may contact Rick Brown, Executive Director, LaCrosse County Historical Society, PO Box 1272, LaCrosse, WI 54602.

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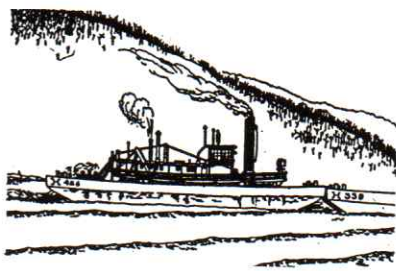
This would be fine to take to the regattas at Augusta, Charleston and Marietta! Even the great-unwashed at Tall Stacks in sophisticated Cincinnati would be impressed.

MINNESOTA was 115.9x30.2x5.2, built to replace the wooden hulled ORONOCO. The forward end of the boiler deck was screen-enclosed and on the roof was the observation lounge. But, the good doctors tired of her and in 1922 she was sold to the U.S.E. and became the towboat GENERAL ALLEN, deluxe quarters and all.

Photo from Murphy Library.







## MY DAYS AS A DECKHAND ON THE TOWBOAT RELIANCE

By William V. "Bill" Torner

It was anything but romantic to be a deckhand on the towboat RELIANCE (T2135) but that is where I found myself in 1940, - and pleased to have the job too. The RELIANCE was a typical wooden hull pool-style boat, built as the ACTIVE (T0035) in 1916 and with engines from the LITTLE FRED (T1604) of 1881. She was not powerful, the design little changed from the 19<sup>th</sup> century but her owner, Union Barge Line, maintained her to a high standard. I would like to tell about some of my experiences as a deckhand on the old RELIANCE, things I was personally involved in or saw or even heard.

Some of the personalities mentioned in this account were:

Captain Walter C. Booth, master, who had had a financial interest and long association in the steam packet LIBERTY prior to coming on the RELIANCE about 1937.

Captain Schlagle, pilot on the opposite watch from Captain Booth.

Eris "Pete" Price, first mate and a fine man to work for.

Jim Martin, fireman. He was very particular about where the coal was placed in the firebox.

Harvey Holland, deckhand. We first met when he was decking on the Streckfus excursion boat WASHINGTON and it was Harvey who got me called to come on the RELIANCE.

### A LESSON LEARNED - SANCTITY OF THE PILOTHOUSE

When I came on board the RELIANCE I brought my camera with me. Photography being my hobby, I thought I could make a photographic documentation of life and work on a towboat. The second day I was on the RELIANCE, and after breakfast when I came off watch, I took my camera and went to the pilothouse to take some pictures - wanted one looking out over the tow as the pilot saw the river. I walked into the pilothouse but never got to take a picture and my onboard photography on the RELIANCE was over before it began. Capt. Booth did not appreciate my photographic ambition.

When I came on watch that afternoon Pete asked me to help him splice an eye on a leaving line. As we worked with a fid and marlin knife making the splice, Pete calmly told me that the pilothouse was the exclusive domain of masters, mates and pilots. Deckhands only went to the pilothouse when they were called for, - and when they were called they went on the double. They did what they were asked, or told to do, quickly, quietly and only spoke when they were spoken to.

On the RELIANCE the call for a deckhand to the pilothouse was a short low moan of the whistle. Some routine deckhand duties in the pilothouse were sweeping and mopping the floor, bringing coal for the stove, carrying out the ashes and cleaning the windows.

### WHEEL COAL - SLEEP - EAT - WHEEL COAL

If there was such a thing as a typical day in the life of a deckhand on the RELIANCE that would be the schedule.

A full fuel flat had peaks of coal left by the clamshell bucket that loaded the flat. The first thing to be done was to level peaks where the planks for the wheelbarrows would be placed. These planks would run from about the center at the stern of the flat to the gunnel beside the firebox of the towboat. On the outside of the fuel flat from the gunnel down to the deck of the towboat were short planks, usually three wide, known as runboards. The planks for wheeling coal in the fuel flat were one foot wide and a misstep while pushing a loaded wheelbarrow could result in spilling the coal back onto the fuel flat and more shoveling to reload the wheelbarrow.

As the coal was used the wheelbarrow planks go deeper into the fuel flat until they reach the bottom. This meant pushing loaded wheelbarrows up a greater incline while, as the coal is used the fuel flat floats higher, so the runboards become steeper. Perhaps slideboards would be a more appropriate; you did slide down the boards to control your wheelbarrow.

With your load of coal on deck you are in the realm of the fireman who on my watch was Jim Martin. Jim was very particular about how and where you dumped your wheelbarrow. The coal had to be distributed across the firebox in front of the access to the coal bunkers and placed in such a manner that Jim took the least number of footsteps to shovel into the furnaces. There also had to be clear deck space for Jim's feet if he had to use a slash-bar or rake ashes from the ash pan down the ash well into the river. On the RELIANCE the coal in the bunkers was held in reserve while the boat used coal direct from the fuel flat.

While in the firebox I should mention the medicinal benefits of the ash pan. All crew members get the "river runs" at one time or another and while there are many prescription and over the counter remedies for diarrhea, Jim Martin had his own cure - and it worked. Under the furnace grates was the ash pan and there was always water running thru the pan to cool the ashes and wash them into the ash well and the river. When I told Jim I had the "river runs" he reached for a tin cup, filled it with water from the ash pan and told me to drink the whole cup of ash-water; it stopped the diarrhea with no ill effects.

### SCRUB DUTY

The RELIANCE had short stacks to clear the low bridges over the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers in the Pittsburgh area. So, depending on the wind direction if there was any wind, there would be times that the RELIANCE was surrounded by her own smoke and soot. Add to that the coal dust from the fuel flat.

The RELIANCE was painted white which became dirty gray quite regularly. Captain Booth was determined that the RELIANCE would be a clean, white boat whenever it passed thru the Pittsburgh harbor so regardless of weather conditions the outside bulkheads were scrubbed before any trip approaching Pittsburgh and the deckhands did the scrubbing.

All of the time the RELIANCE was owned by the Union Barge Line beginning in 1924 it was under charter to Standard Oil of New Jersey. In 1940 she was towing gasoline in six tank barges rated at 2,300 barrels each. The barges were



loaded from a pipeline at Midland, Pennsylvania, mile 35.0 Ohio River, and towed up the Monongahela River as far as Fairmont, West Virginia and down the Ohio River to Parkersburg, West Virginia. The work on these two rivers had one thing in common, - wheel coal and scrub. But each river had its own demands that affected the work of the deckhands.

#### FLIPPING A TOW END-FOR-END

In this episode Capt. Schagle will be referred to as "Cap" and the RELIANCE as "the boat". The location is Midland, Pennsylvania.

All six tank barges were loaded with gasoline and the loading hoses had been disconnected and pulled free of the barges. The barges are lashed into a single unit, two barges wide and three barges long, the usual configuration. Cap was easing away from the loading dock and out into midstream when somebody discovered that we had faced-up to the wrong end of the tow. The barges at the head were the two that would go all the way to Fairmont, and so should be against the towing knees of the boat, while the other four barges would be dropped at different points on the way up Mon River.

It was decided that the boat would break away from the tow, start the tow swinging and then - when it waltzed around - catch the other end. It was a simple and timesaving solution. Nothing to it!

#### A NICE TRICK IF YOU CAN DO IT

Pete was on the tow while Harvey and I were slacking the rigging by hitting the slide rings of the pelican hooks on the ratchets that gave instant release of the wire lines. With the wires loose, Pete lifted them off of the timberheads on the barges and Harvey and I pulled the lines onto the head of the boat.

With the rigging clear, Cap gave a little nudge of the tow to starboard and started the head of the tow swinging to port; Cap then backed the boat away from the tow. While the tow was swinging Harvey and I were running out the ratchets to be ready to use them when the boat faced up to the tow again. Pete was riding the tow. When the tow had swung one hundred eighty degrees Cap brought the boat up and put the knees against the end of the barges. Harvey and I got two wire lines to Pete and he dropped them over timberheads on the barges. Harvey and I had those lines secured in the ratchets on the head of the boat expecting to draw them tight to hold the tow in place.

Cap was pushing against the tow and this accelerated the swing to port that caused the port wire, of the two wires that connected, to remain slack while the starboard wire became snug, tight, taut, and began creaking and popping. We all knew what was going to happen; the wire was going to snap.

Pete retreated to the center of the tow while Harvey and I went back on the starboard guard of the boat where we would not be in line with the wire but could see what it was doing. It was obvious that wire was not going to hold and stop the swing of the tow; the wire shrank in diameter, started smoking, became red-hot and, "BANG!" When it parted, it whipped across the deck of a tank barge loaded with gasoline in a shower of sparks but nothing more.

With the one line still in place between the tow and the head of the boat, Cap started backing which brought the wire snug then kept backing. As the tow started to follow the boat the port swing stopped and the tow began to line up with the head of the boat. Cap stopped the boat and, as the tow drifted against the towing knees, Harvey and I got more wires onto the tow and Cap came ahead easy, holding the boat against the barges while Pete, Harvey and I put the tow rigging in place. When we had coupled up, Cap came ahead enough to get way on and we were heading up the river on our way to Pittsburgh.

#### WORKING ON THE MON

The Monongahela River is usually referred to by boat crews as the Man or as the "Sweat River" - or other descriptive terms that will not be used in this narrative.

In 1940, the lock chambers of the lower dams were small, 760 or 360 by 56 feet; and on the Upper Mon they were 182 by 56 feet and hand operated by the deckhands of the boats using them. On a cold, rainy night blowing the whistle for one of those upper-river locks was a navigational formality but a waste of steam as no lock tender would get out of bed; the deckhands could handle it.

On the Lower Mon were steel mills for the first forty-five miles up river from Pittsburgh. By day, they were large gray and rust colored buildings with rows of smokestacks spewing acrid fumes that often made breathing difficult, and killed all vegetation on the hillsides.

At night these mills took on a totally different appearance that could only be seen from the river. The fire and hot metal of the blast furnaces lit up the sky making silhouettes of the buildings and stacks. Lined up along the river bank were huge ingots of red hot metal standing on end glowing in the dark as they cooled; a very memorable sight.

#### TOWBOATS DID RACE ON THE MON

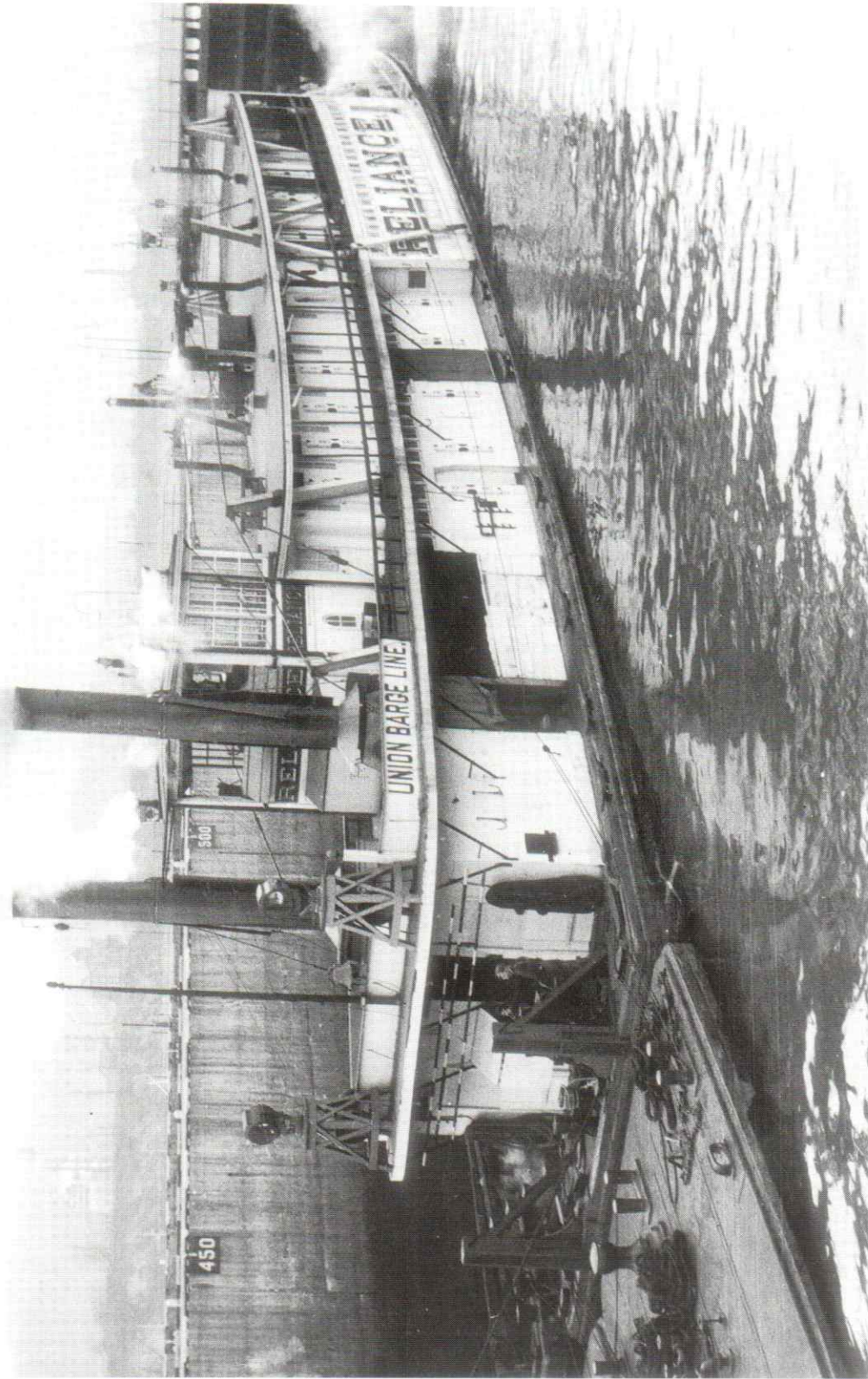
The RELIANCE was heading up river one spring afternoon with her tow of six loaded tank barges while coming up behind her was another sternwheel towboat with a tow of empty hopper barges. Harvey and I were wheeling coal out of the fuel flat when we became aware that the following tow was overtaking us. Other members of our crew were also watching as the distance was closing and in a short time our paddlewheel was throwing water onto the head of the following tow.

The following pilot eased to port and it was clear that he was trying for a two whistle passing.

That is when Capt. Schagle pulled the ship-up gong twice. That is the signal for, "All She's Got", and the race was on. Being first at the arrival point of the next lock was the prize for the winner and the loser would clear the lock about four hours later.

As the tow of hopper barges began to come up on the port side of the RELIANCE and before they got up to the fuel flat the port, lead barge on the overtaking tow suddenly started climbing the riverbank and the race was over. I never saw the name on the towboat that lost the race, just one of the many boats towing coal out of the Mon River in those days.





The RELIANCE (T2135), where Bill Torner received his deckhand education, was built in 1916 as the ACTIVE (T0035) for the Pittsburgh Coal Co., a wooden hull, 136.9x26x4.7, and sister to the BEACON and CONQUEROR. She was the

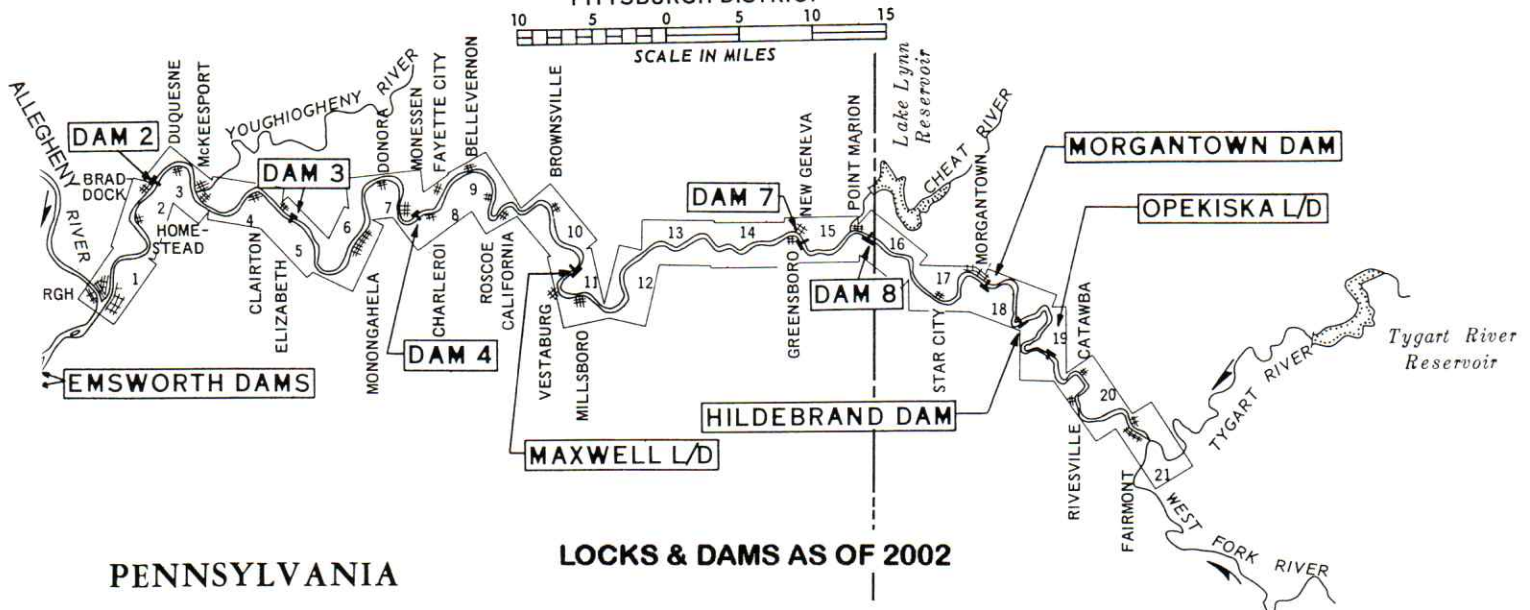
HECLA when Union Barge Line bought her as its first boat in May, 1924. Later she was rebuilt and looked a little different with the roof then extending alongside the pilothouse and signboards on top. She operated until February, 1946.



## U. S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, PITTSBURGH

MAP INDEX  
 NAVIGATION CHARTS  
 MONONGAHELA RIVER  
 PITTSBURGH DISTRICT

WEST VIRGINIA



PENNSYLVANIA

## THE HAND OPERATED LOCKS

With the tow and towboat tied off along the land side guide wall, Harvey and I would be on the lock wall opening or closing the filling or emptying valves depending on what water level we found in the lock chamber. Pete would stay with the tow and, if it was daylight, a lock tender would help us. If it was nighttime Harvey and I did all the work.

The gates had a rack on the arms that opened and closed them, similar to those seen on the Muskingum today. A pinion gear that was turned with a tee-handled shaft, about waist high, moved the rack. With one of us on each handle we walked around in a circle pushing on the handles opening the lock gates or closing them.

The upper six locks, numbers ten through fifteen, had the 182x56 foot chambers and our tow was by then reduced to four or fewer barges. At various terminals we would drop one or two barges as the RELIANCE continued her trip up the Monongahela, leaving four barges to be pumped out and taking the last two barges to Fairmont at mile 127.8.

To put a barge, or two barges side by side, into the lock chamber the towboat would push them in and Harvey and I would secure them with lock lines, break the barges from the tow and the towboat would back out with the remaining barges. Pete would put a lock line on a pin on the guide wall from a timberhead on the head of the barge and stay with it, tending the lock lines as the water rose or fell. Harvey and I on the lock wall were closing the gates and then filling or emptying the lock chamber and, with the proper water level attained, we opened the lock gates.

To remove the barge or barges from the lock chamber there was a hand-operated barge-pulling winch on the lock wall with a wire pulling line. These winches were usually in such bad condition we could not or would not use them. Some were

lacking lubricant, making them hard to crank, while others had broken or frayed pulling lines and no deckhand was going to ruin his gloves handling lines like that.

Harvey and I would reverse the lock lines on the barge or barges, putting the eye of the line on a timberhead and around a kevel and payout the line for a longer pulling angle. We stood on the lock wall facing the barge or barges, brought the line up and under an arm, over the opposite shoulder and gripped the line with both hands in front of our chest. We each had a line and with our feet firmly on the lock wall we leaned back on the line and pushed with our legs. Thus our legs, back and shoulder put pulling power on the line and when we had the barge or barges moving, taking steps backward keeping the barge or barges moving was easy. As the barge or barges passed thru the lock gate the one of us that had the bow line kept going out on the guide wall while the other one took a turn of the line around a mooring pin on the wall and checked the way on the barge or barges. With movement stopped we secured the lines, closed the lock gates and were ready to start the process all over again with the next cut.

With the second cut thru the lock and up against the first cut we opened the gate for the last two barges and the RELIANCE to enter the lock chamber. When we opened the gate to leave the lock Captain Schlagle came ahead easy against the barges along the guide wall as we put coupling wires on where we had broken the tow, and tightened the wires with the ratchets. The tow now intact, we brought the lock lines on board and were on our way up or down the river.

Note! There were no lights on the locks and guide walls so when locking thru at night we worked in the dark. Capt. Schlagle would only use the searchlights when pushing barges into the lock chamber and backing out. That saved a lot of carbon in the searchlights, - I guess.



After positioning the last two barges at the Standard Oil dock at Fairmont the RELIANCE broke away and lay at the riverbank while the barges were being pumped out. This provided an excellent opportunity for off watch crew members to go up town. Each person had their own desires to be fulfilled and for most this meant patronizing a bar or some other establishment where personal gratification could be achieved. For some, just taking a walk, window-shopping and enjoying time away from the boat was a welcome relief.

At mile 104.0 is a well-known landmark to boat crews. It is a high peak named Dorsey's Knob, just up river from Morgantown, West Virginia and best seen from the river when coming downstream. From the top of Dorsey's Knob the view of the curve in the river and lush green vegetation is well worth the climb - and best when looking up river. Looking downriver the view is quite different; it is an overlook of the Morgantown Ordnance Works and during World War II Dorsey's Knob was a restricted area, off limits to the public.

A little farther down river at mile 98.0 was the cable-operated ferry at Star City, West Virginia. The RELIANCE reduced speed and whistled for the ferry crossing. Pete went to the head of the tow as a lookout. If the ferry was crossing the river the boat stopped until the ferry had made its landing and slacks the cable to the bottom of the river. If the ferry were at the landing when the RELIANCE blew for the crossing it would immediately slack its cable. In either case the RELIANCE ran "slow bell" when passing over the cable. The ferry did not operate at night so the cable lay on the bottom. At Fredericktown, Pennsylvania, mile 63.9, there was another cable-operated ferry.

On some trips to Fairmont the RELIANCE would leave one or two barges at Star City, a few miles below Morgantown, on the up trip and pick them up empty on the return:

When in the Pittsburgh area Capt. Booth would have reasons to go ashore and be brought to the RELIANCE in midstream. This meant yawl duty for someone and if I was on watch I ferried Capt. Booth in the yawl and there were times when the yawl was used to ferry other crewmembers and supply items that could readily be handled. Fortunately the RELIANCE had a very low freeboard making it easy to launch the yawl or pull it up over the guard into the deckroom.

Once back at the Midland terminal with her empty barges the RELIANCE and her fuel flat break from the tow and go to the coal loading dock to have the fuel flat filled. From there to a boat store for groceries and various miscellaneous items needed on the boat, - more rigging wires, cordage, electrical supplies, scrub brushes, paint, pots, pans or dishes to name a few.

Back to the terminal, the RELIANCE laid waiting at the riverbank. The peaks on the new coal in the fuel flat had to be leveled so the planks for the wheelbarrows could be put in place and other cleanup jobs occupied the deckhands' time. On one such occasion there was some unexpected activity when we spotted a deer swimming across the river. The off-watch crew gave chase in the yawl, caught the deer but inadvertently choked it to death when pulling it back to the boat. There were suggestions of butchering the deer for a meal of venison but Capt. Booth vetoed the idea. The deer was given a burial in the Ohio with an old grate bar to weight it down.

## DECKING WAS EASIER ON THE OHIO

There were twelve dams between Midland and Parkersburg, a distance of 143.4 river miles, an average of 11.95 miles between dams. All of the dams had 600 by 110 foot lock chambers with power-operated gates and pulling winches using electric motors and/or compressed air for double lockages. There were well-lighted esplanades and guide walls and a lockmaster and crew, day and night. The RELIANCE and her tow locked thru these 600-foot chambers in a single locking, saving time and deckhand work compared to those small hand-operated locks on the Monongahela River.

The lockmen usually placed the eye of the lock line over the mooring pins on the lock wall and removed the line at the proper time while the deck hands worked the deck end of the line. On at least one occasion this harmonious arrangement for handling the lines saved the embarrassment of losing a line. Capt. Schlagle came ahead slow after the lock whistle signaled the tow was clear to leave the lock but my line was still on the wall pin. I tried the time-honored way a deckhand uses to free the line, - a rolling snap of the line to get the eye off - but it was not working and I tried repeatedly while walking the deck to stay abreast of the mooring pin. I was running out of deck space and line while Cap was cussing me out and yelling from the pilothouse what the consequences would be for losing the lock line. Fortunately, a lock tender saw the problem and lifted the eye of the line off just in time and dropped it into the water while I still had a hold on the line. I pulled it onboard as the tow was clearing the lock, - Capt Schlagle still cussing.

After the tow had cleared the lock I coiled the wet line on my shoulder and took it to the deckroom to dry back of the boilers. All lines that got wet from rain or any other reason were hung in the deckroom to dry; in winter, a frozen line is a little stiff to toss. This was also where cut, broken and/or chafed lines were repaired and spliced when time was available between wheeling coal and locking through.

## DON'T EAT! - DON'T WORK!

No, it wasn't really a mutiny!

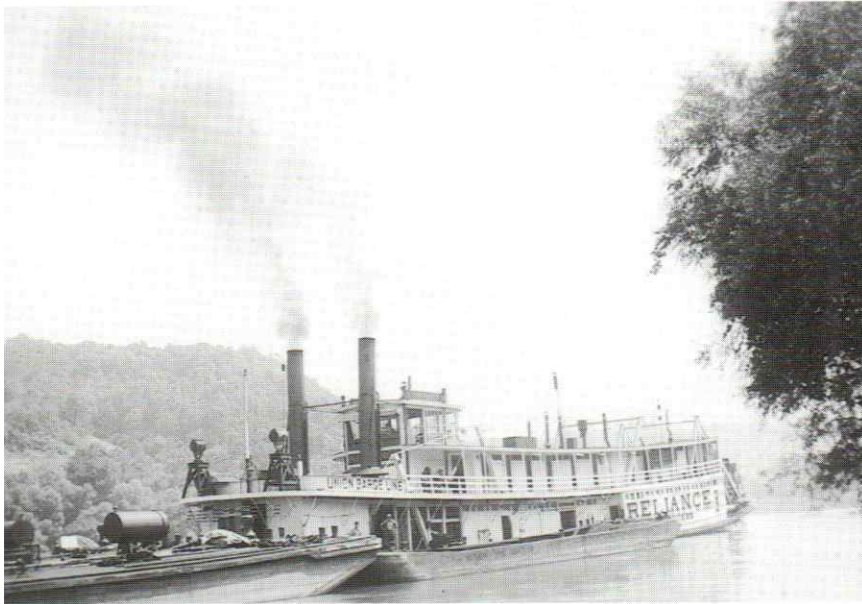
One day when the watch was called for the noon meal the place settings were in place, the condiments on the dining table and the crew was seated but no food on the table. Belatedly, the cook brought the food on platters and in serving dishes, and put them on the table. We pitched in and everyone had filled their plate and started eating when Capt. Booth walked into the dining room. He had an edge in his tone, as he asked why the watch had not been relieved.

Harvey Holland looked up at Capt. Booth and said, "Captain if we don't eat we don't work. We just got our food". Harvey then went right on eating as did everyone at the table and Capt. Booth left the dining room without further comment. When we all finished our meal we relieved the watch.

Meals on the RELIANCE were something no crewmember would want to miss. There was top quality food prepared in ample quantities, usually including two kinds of meat or meat and poultry or meat and fish, a variety of vegetables, fruit and fresh baked bread while pie and/or cake for dessert completed



## RELIANCE STORY CONCLUSION -



**RELIANCE in 1941 with an empty gasoline barge showing and the coal flat alongside the boat. Downbound at Star City, WV on the Mon River, mile 98. Photo by Bill Torner**

the menu. There was always a good selection of sandwich material for midnight lunch and cup cakes, doughnuts or sweet rolls and fruit for mid-watch snacks. The coffee urn was always steaming for a towboat could not operate without gallons of coffee.

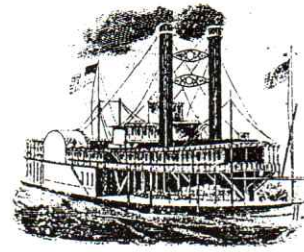
A good cook was a valued member of the crew and the one on the RELIANCE was the best, - a least in fading memory. Towboat fare was notably better than on the Streckfus excursion boats where I had also decked and the frequent boiled wieners for lunch sometimes had a slightly green tint.

At Parkersburg the RELIANCE and her tow entered the Little Kanawha River and went up river to the Standard Oil Company dock at mile 1.5. The oil company had had a refinery at this location until 1936, dating back to the oil boom days around Parkersburg. With the tow placed at the dock the RELIANCE would break away from the tow and lie at the riverbank while the barges were pumped off. As at Fairmont, this gave the off-watch crewmembers an opportunity to go up town. For me, I went home and spent my off-watch time with my wife. It seemed to me the tankermen could pump off six barges at Parkersburg faster than two barges at Fairmont.

With her tow of six empty tank barges, the RELIANCE came out of the Little Kanawha River into the Ohio and was on her way back to Midland where the sequence of towing gasoline on the Ohio and Monongahela Rivers began all over again.

No, it wasn't romantic to be a deckhand on those old pool boats and it was hard work, too. Things I learned in my time on the RELIANCE were very valuable to me when I was later in the U. S. Navy during World War II, - but that's another story.

The End



**D**iscussing business (or art or the weather) in New Orleans often requires adjournment to one of the notable restaurants of which the city is blessed. Below, left to right, are Capt. Doc Hawley, well known marine illustrator Michael Blaser and Gordon Stevens, C.E.O. of New Orleans Steamboat Co. The location of the conference is Galatoires on Bourbon St., once a barbershop we seem to recall.

The subject of discussion is a commission by the owners of the excursion steamer NATCHEZ for an historical painting by Mr. Blaser. The NATCHEZ was designed by Alan L. Bates, Louisville and since 1975 has been a fixture at New Orleans and has carried on the excursion business very successfully. She is licensed for 1,600 passengers and conducts daily harbor, dinner and charter cruises. Clarke "Doc" Hawley was master of the NATCHEZ for twenty years, retiring December 31, 1994 and lives in the French Quarter. Nobody would know the boat and the locale better than Doc; as the technical advisor on the painting he is nonpareil.

The proposed painting sites the NATCHEZ with St. Louis Cathedral and the French Quarter in the background with architecture widely known to Americans and foreigners alike. Also included in the scene will be the square-rigged barque ELISSA which was built at Aberdeen, Scotland in 1877 and remains one of the Tall Ships still in commission; she last visited New Orleans in 1996 so her inclusion is an authentic if romantic touch.

We look forward to seeing the final product.





## - THIS AND THAT -

### MISSISSIPPI QUEEN OUT AND RUNNING

River fans along the Upper Ohio were pleased to see the MISSISSIPPI QUEEN pass along in July on her first trip of the year to Pittsburgh. She stopped at Marietta up-bound on Sunday the 14<sup>th</sup> and was at the landing again on Thursday the 18<sup>th</sup> on her way back to Cincinnati.

We understand that the big boat was unable to get through the Montgomery Dam above Midland, PA on account of repairs in progress on the large (600'x110') lock chamber; MQ is too big for the 56'x360' auxiliary lock. We understand passengers were shuttled by bus to Pittsburgh or on shore tours and rejoined the boat at Wellsburg, WV, a regular scheduled shore stop.

The 2003 schedule for all three steamboats, AQ, DQ and MQ, is now available from The Delta Queen Steamboat Co. at 1-800-543-1949.

\* \* \*

### DISPOSITION OF OTHER AMERICAN CLASSIC VOYAGES VESSELS

*Travel Weekly*, June 10 edition, brings word that the COLUMBIA QUEEN, the Delta Queen Steamboat Co. boat that was operated on the Columbia River before the ACV bankruptcy, has been sold by the Maritime Administration to American West Steamboat Co. It is planned to add her to the Columbia River fleet beginning in the 2003 season. The company's new EMPRESS OF THE NORTH reported upon in our June issue (page 15) should also go into service in 2003.

Also, *Travel Weekly* reports that Voyager Holdings may buy the two coastal vessels built by ACV, the CAPE MAY LIGHT and the CAPE COD LIGHT, for use in Alaska waters. Nothing more definitive at press time.

\* \* \*

### GREENE FAMILY HISTORICAL MARKER

We've mentioned the Ohio Bicentennial coming up next year and the program of installing historical markers but have seen few to commemorate river-related events or people. Eileen Thomas, Newport Twp., Washington Co., Ohio has been coordinating the efforts of local citizens to erect a marker noting the early pioneering Greene family. The marker will also note the story of Capt. Gordon C. Greene and his wife Capt. Mary Becker Greene as the successful operators of the Greene Line fleet of packets on the Ohio.

Gordon Greene grew up on a farm at Newport while Mary Becker's birthplace was at Hills Post Office on the Little Muskingum River. With contributions from the Ohio Bicentennial Commission, the Longaberger Foundation and the S&D J. Mack Gamble Fund, cooperation of the Greenwood family and sponsorship by the Newport Township trustees, the marker will be installed between the river and Ohio Route 7 in front of the Greenwood Farm at Newport. Very appropriate and a long time coming, we'd say.

We are surprised that more local historical societies along the Ohio and Muskingum haven't taken advantage of this program to mark people and events of river significance. For details, contact: OHIO BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION, ATTN. NICHOLA MORETTI, STATE HOUSE, ROOM 0212 NORTH, COLUMBUS, OH 43215.

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### LOCK SIX RESTAURANT

Several years ago we reported that some enterprising folks were converting the dilapidated buildings that were once Lock and Dam No. 6, Ohio River into a restaurant. This was the old Merrill Dam, the second wicket dam on the Ohio River, located at Vanport, PA near Beaver, and opened in 1904. Montgomery Dam replaced it in the mid-1930s.

The new owners did a fine job of restoring the powerhouse, decorated with interesting river photos, provided a boat dock and the fare was excellent.

\* \* \*

### ANOTHER WRECK RECOVERY PROJECT

Early this summer (May) *The Waterways Journal* had a report in Jim Swift's Old Boat Column on the recovery of a considerable part of the side-wheel packet TWILIGHT (5472). This boat had been built in St. Louis in 1865, 180'x32'. She had engines 16s-4.5 ft. stroke and two boilers and was sunk near Napoleon, Missouri on the Missouri River on September 10, 1965, - a new boat on her second trip.

We quote from Jim Swift's WWJ report: "This (recovery) is a little different (from the BERTRAND and ARABIA) it is the vessel itself that is the most interesting part of the salvage, not the cargo it carried. There were some items found but it is the gull, wheel, engines and boilers that are noteworthy in the TWILIGHT's excavation."

"Then in 1986 the wreck was found again and a group led by Gene Smith began a careful plant to uncover the engine boat. In 3-½ months in 2001 the entire hull, one side wheel, both engines, two boilers, water pump, anchor, rudder, pitman arms and capstan were saved. Also the snag that sank the boat."

It is hoped that the recovered pieces can be displayed in a suitable museum; temporarily, they are in storage.

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### SOMETHING TO SEE IN VICKSBURG

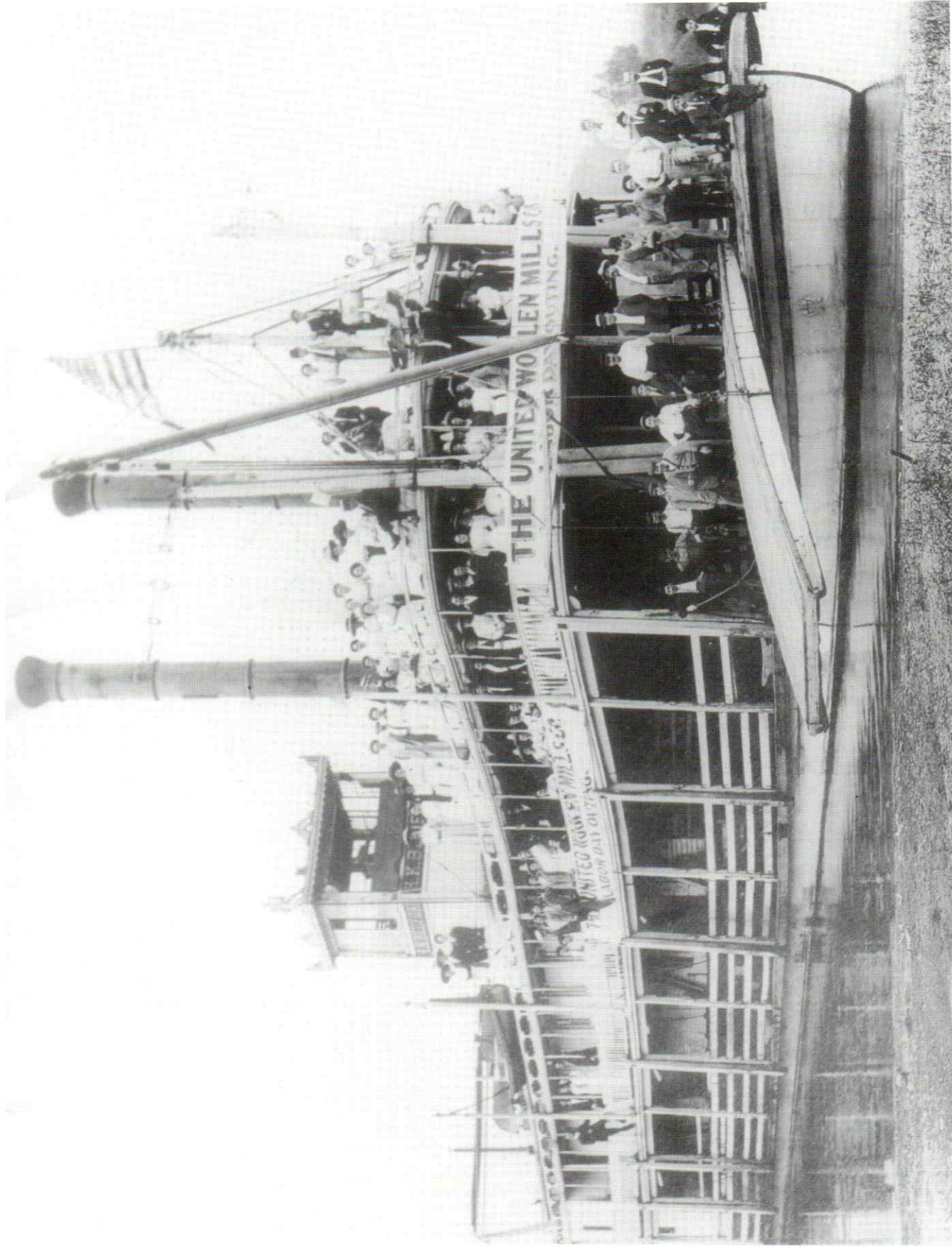
The Gray & Blue Naval Museum opened in Vicksburg in the spring of 1993, the outgrowth of Lamar Roberts' interest in the Civil War and his hometown. It began with a display of thirty-three models of the vessels from the era of the War Between the States and at last count there were two hundred and thirty-eight. Lamar says, "It is a hobby that got out of hand."

The museum is operated by the Gray and Blue Naval Society, Inc., a tax exempt, non-profit organization. In addition to the model collection there are dioramas of the Battle of Vicksburg and Battle of Big Black River and a collection of paintings by Civil War naval artist Herb Mott.

The Museum is located at 1102 Washington Street.

\* \* \*





The H. K. BEDFORD (2491) is about to set off from the Parkersburg, West Virginia landing on Labor Day, 1909. The occasion is the annual outing for employees of the United Woolen Mills, a maker of made-to-measure clothing for men. The BEDFORD was then owned by Capt. Henry Kraft - sold by Capt. Gordon Greene in 1898 - and ran in the Pittsburgh-

Parkersburg trade. She was sunk by ice near Marietta in 1912; the iron sheathing evident on the bow did always protect the wooden hulls. Photo from Paul Borrelli, Parkersburg.



## - S&D CHAPTERS -

### MIDDLE OHIO RIVER CHAPTER

The summer meeting of the M.O.R. Chapter convened in Madison, Indiana on the weekend of July 5 and 6. Headquarters was the Country Hearth Inn, up on the hill behind town, where about thirty members and friends gathered for the traditional "show-and-tell" Friday evening.

There was a picnic by the rivers (Ohio and Kentucky) at Point Park, Carrollton, Kentucky scheduled for noon on Saturday with forty-seven on hand. The sky had been overcast with a threat of rain but this held off until after the meal. Rain did set in about the time to board the vintage diesel, sternwheel towboat BARBARA H.

The BARBARA H. was built in 1923 and she is still very much a towboat with limited space for excursionists to get away from the weather. Still, about two-dozen decided to brave the rain and go for a cruise as guests of the boat's owners, Steve and Barbara Huffman.

We headed up the Kentucky River from the park at Carrollton at a leisurely pace and the rain finally abated. At Lock No. 1, a log became lodged between the rudder and the hull. Captain Steve Huffman ran the wheel backward and forward while mate Aaron Richardson (builder of fine replica steam whistles) worked to dislodge the log with the aid of a pike pole.

Finally free of the obstruction, we headed back down the river. About a half mile from the mouth, the venerable diesel (installed in 1940) died. The BARBARA H. drifted to the bank where it was tied up to a big sycamore and the problem was investigated. A typical dedicated mate, Aaron had to wade in waist-deep water to get the line ashore.

This being the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the excursionists suffered the delay for only a reasonable period before a dozen cell phones were in evidence. Calls were made to all known inhabitants in the area to seek rescue but all answers were voicemail, - the 21<sup>st</sup> century, you know. As luck would have it, the BARBARA H. landed near a small ravine near a private airstrip and the owner became curious about the boat being there. Our plight was explained and the flyboy said he would be back soon to improve the landing place. Meanwhile, a fisherman stopped by to see what was going on and offered to ferry Gary

Frommelt and Vic Canfield down to the park to get their vehicles.

Gary and Vic departed with the fisherman and Berry Brown, owner of the airstrip, reappeared on a bulldozer. In short order the narrow track had been widened and improved and a turnaround cleared. Then Dan Back came along with the gangway used to board the passengers and in no time at all the crowd was shuttled back to downtown Carrollton. The Huffmans seemed quite chagrined by the whole affair but the M.O.R. gang declared it a grand day, - a river group aboard a vintage boat on a beautiful little river with a breakdown thrown in.

Barbara Huffman was the speaker at the evening banquet and gave an interesting presentation on the history of their boat. Due to the adventures earlier in the day, Barbara had not been able to pick up her slides and prepared notes but did just fine on a subject she loves. It was a fine conclusion to an eventful day.

Fred Rutter, Editor, *The Riverview*.

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### OHIO & KANAWHA RIVER CHAPTER

Sunday, June 2 was fine and warm for the summer meeting of the O-K group at the Mason County Library, Pt. Pleasant. There was a good turnout of the faithful, about 30 by our count, including Capt. Nelson Brown who came down from Marietta particularly to view the progress on the new River Museum on lower Main Street.

Missing unfortunately was Capt. Bert Shearer, the Chapter Pilot, who has been troubled by general debility and was not up to making the trip from Charleston. Engineer Charles Stone opened the meeting at 2 p.m. and called upon Clerk Jim Bupp to look into the cigar box and report on the treasury.

Bupp advised that there was \$63.97 in the till but no stamps on account of the increase in postage anticipated for July 1. There may be an appeal for the members to reach into their pockets at the fall meeting.

Jack Fowler, president of the Pt. Pleasant River Museum board was called upon for a report. Outside, the building has a new, handsome Victorian storefront as when it was originally built. The building had recently been enhanced by a coat of paint - brick red - applied by

Americorps volunteers; the workers received some nice notice on the evening news on local TV stations. Jack invited attendees to stop by the museum building and see the completed improvements which are underway inside.

Mr. Fowler listed some of the steamboat artifacts recently received for exhibits including a number of items from Capt. Bert Shearer. Bert and Ann Shearer have also made a handsome financial contribution to support the museum and additional funding has been received from the state of West Virginia.

Walter Carpenter, St. Marys, WV, donated a video copy of a 1929 16mm movie commissioned by his father Hiram which shows the trial trip of the Marietta Manufacturing Co. towboat WALTER A. WINDSOR. The movie also has some views of the towboat J. D. AYRES moving past Marietta with the first tow to transit all of the completed Ohio River canalization project.

The target date for the formal opening of the first phase of the river museum is September 9, 2002. It was also mentioned that work was underway by the city of Pt. Pleasant for restoration and landscaping of the Public Landing. This covers a considerable distance outside of the floodwall and is a desirable beautification of the downtown riverfront.

The program was a video titled, "Steamboats on the Missouri" which was well done. Many of the members and guests took an informal tour of the museum building following the meeting.

Things are looking up in Pt. Pleasant!

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### CONCLUDING REPORT ON 1875 TRAGIC AFFAIR ELUDES EDITOR

The story of the unfortunate death of Capt. Hutch McDaniels of the packet ACTIVE by the hand of Bill Weitzel on January 6, 1875 was told in our June issue (page 28). The report was cut short by the photocopy machine and we promised to bring readers the conclusion of the story.

Alas, a diligent search in Marietta, Pt. Pleasant and Gallipolis papers has been fruitless, so far. The Gallipolis librarian was surprised at the interest: "If it happened across the river why would they care over here?" Marietta papers featured the price of hogs and who was in town on Saturday. A Pt. Pleasant sage (unidentified) opined, "Shooting your wife's lover, - why, that's no crime down here!"

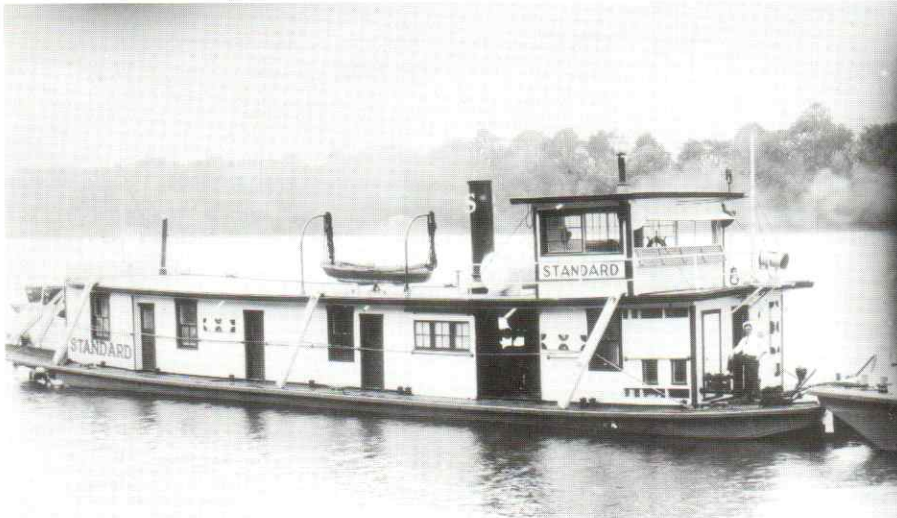
The *Reflector* will pursue this matter!

The Editor



The report of the M.O.R. Chapter meeting (previous page) features an afternoon adventure aboard the BARBARA H. and prompts this photo display. Here, BARBARA H. is waiting at the Carrollton, KY landing to board passengers for the cruise up the Kentucky River to Lock 1. The boat is powered by a 160 hp, Fairbanks-Morse engine installed in 1940 when owned by Ray and Harry Brookbank of Higginsport, Ohio who called her DONALD B. Present owners Steve and Barbare Huffman have left her essentially unchanged.

A lineup of plastic chairs on the roof show she's ready for the excursion crowd. The junction with the Ohio River is a short distance to the right. Photo by Fred Rutter.

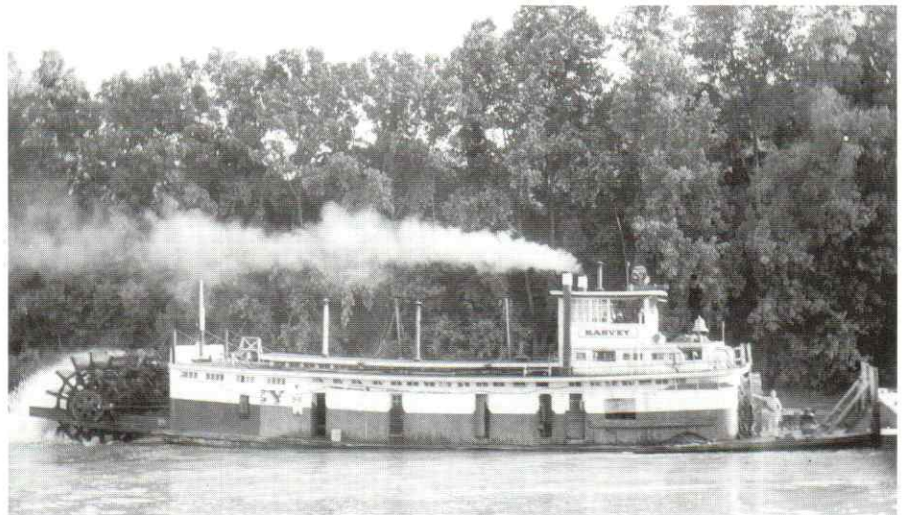


Before the BARBARA H. was the DONALD B. she had been the STANDARD, owned and operated by Standard Oil Company of Ohio. She was built at Pt. Pleasant, WV by the Marietta Manufacturing Co. in 1923, 70.6x18x3.5 and was powered by a 60 hp. gasoline engine. Photo is probably after the gas engine was switched in 1925 to a 100 hp. Fairbanks-Morse diesel, - if the haze of smoke coming from the stack is an indication.

The front of pilothouse was then open with traditional breast boards and no glass to cause disturbing reflections for the pilot.

The HARVEY is credited with having the first installation of a true reversing "diesel" engine on the rivers. Built 1923 by Nashville Bridge Co. at Nashville, TN, 92x26.8x4.3 and was powered by two, four cylinder, two-cycle engines, each 120 hp. The split paddlewheel had a separate drive on each side; final drive was by shaft with bevel and ring gears.

(See Engines Afloat, by Sam Grayson, Devereux Books, P.O. Box 503, Marblehead, MA 01945 reviewed September, 1999 issue.)





**THE BUCKEYE BELLE  
EXPLOSION  
#  
The Coroner's inquest,  
1852**

The recently released new book, Exploding Steamboats, Senate Debates, and Technical Reports which was reviewed in our June issue (page 34) explores the 1837 boiler report by The Franklin Institute, Philadelphia rather thoroughly. The reader, however, might be wondering about the details of the experiments and tests that are the basis for the report's conclusions and recommendations; what are the precise mechanics that cause a steam boiler to explode? Low water level? Feed water introduced onto exposed, hot flues resulting in instant steam? Blocked safety valves? Poor design or workmanship?

Well, maybe the questions are only asked by those of our readers who also wonder about the mechanics of a clock when the question is, "What time is it?" Fortunately for the rest of us, the Washington County, Ohio coroner didn't have to rely on theoretical surmises by the technically trained when he looked into the explosion of the BUCKEYE BELLE (0727). She was a new side-wheel packet built for the Muskingum River, about the size of the later ZANETTA, and went skyward in the Beverly, Ohio canal on November 12, 1852. Twenty were killed and we quote from the Coroner's Inquest:

"STATE OF OHIO, WASHINGTON COUNTY - On the 17th day of November 1852, before the Subscriber Coroner of the County of Washington personally appeared Carazan Davis, who was duly sworn to give evidence and the truth to say concerning his knowledge of the...wreck of the Steam Boat BUCKEYE STATE in the Canal in the town of Beverly on the 12th day of November 1852 ...thereupon the said Carazan Davis deposes and says as follows.

"That he is a resident of Marietta Township, has lived there for the last two years, was employed as Carpenter on the Steam Boat BUCKEYE BELLE, entered on board the aforesaid Boat on Tuesday the 9th day of Nov. 1852 at the town of Marietta, Ohio, and from thence started on her second trip to Zanesville, Ohio, and pursued the same to the town of Beverly at a distance of about twenty three miles

above Marietta. That said Boat then landed in the canal above the first lock at Mr. Chas. Devol & Co. warehouse for the purpose of taking on board a small lot of wheat.

While laying at the aforesaid warehouse he observed the Doctor, or that part of the Machinery used for the purpose of furnishing water for the boilers, did not operate. That he (witness) proposed to Joseph Daniels, Second Engineer to start the Doctor and that said Daniels refused to do it saying there was water enough in the boilers, Witness further states that he had tried the gauge (cock) in the usual manner immediately after leaving the warehouse, say within three minutes after starting, and found water enough in the boilers. That the Boat laid at the aforesaid warehouse about twenty minutes, that the gauge which he tried was the middle gauge and that he had tried the same not more than three minutes before the explosion.

At the time the Boat left the warehouse the said Joseph Daniels fastened to the chord attached to the main valve, five wrenches, four wheel wrenches and one Samson wrench, weighing about thirty pounds in all; in addition to this were the usual weights to wit: two balls and a stuffing box.

Witness further states that after the Boat was under headway in the Canal he requested the Engineer Daniels to take off some of the weights under apprehension that there was danger from too much steam. Daniels made no reply, but when the steam blowed off (through the safety valve) he caught hold of the chord and pulled her down, and continued to do so repeatedly. That within five minutes from the time the boat left the warehouse she arrived at the guard lock at the upper end of the Canal where both boilers exploded, at which time Daniels was standing on his foot box alongside of his engine and pulled down the main valve which was then blowing off steam; at that moment the explosion took place. Witness was standing at his workbench looking directly at the Engine.

Witness further states that at Coal Run, about six miles below Beverly, David Muncy, the first Engineer, left his watch and called the Second Engineer Joseph Daniels and Edwin Blackmer, Striker (engineer) to their watch, saying to them, 'Be careful now for she makes steam fast,' As far as Witness had any acquaintance with the first Engineer Muncy he

considered him competent as such, that the machinery all worked very well during the time the Witness was on the Boat up to the day of the explosion.

Witness further states that he has been engaged in the river trade and employed as a Carpenter and Engineer in conjunction for the last fifteen years, but does not consider himself a competent Engineer. Witness further says he believes Joseph Daniels, Second Engineer, to be a sober man and to have been sober at the time of the explosion, and further that he never heard Captain Hahn give any orders to the Engineers during the trip; if any were given he (Witness) did not hear it; that at the time Muncy went off watch at Coal Run, Witness heard him (Muncy) tell Daniels not to put any more weights than the usual weights, to wit: the two balls and stuffing box. Witness further says that he considers said Daniels competent as a Second or Striker.

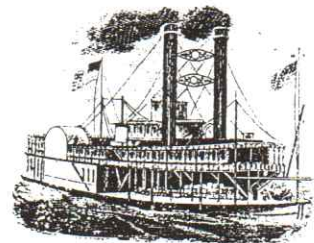
Sworn to and Subscribed before me,  
C.T. Judd, Coroner. - Carazan Davis."

Who could know what the pressure in those boilers might have been: two balls and a stuffing box plus thirty pounds at the end of a lever arm of unknown length acting on, say, a three inch diameter outlet? Conclusion, "Never hang a Sampson wrench on the safety valve."

While browsing through the book, Exploding Steamboats, Senate Debates, and Technical Reports a curious line on page 32 attracted our attention: "The famous steamboat inventor himself, Robert Fulton, wrote an 1851 article describing the type of engineer created in these continuing conditions described by Professor Locke:"

Mr. Fulton died at half-past nine on Thursday morning, February 23, 1815 and Professor John Locke's report on the MOSELLE explosion was written in 1838. Something is amiss. Ed.

\* \* \*





## THE LOSS OF THE WAR EAGLE and The Mary Ulrich Tragedy

The WAR EAGLE (5691) had been built in 1854 at Cincinnati, a sidewheel boat 225x27, three boilers. She was similar to other packets operating on the Upper Mississippi and well suited for the Galena (Illinois)-St. Paul trade where she ran the first two years. Later she was running Dunleith-St. Paul where she stayed except for several charters to the Union Army during the Civil War years. (Dunleith was East Dubuque, IL)

On the night of May 14-15, 1870 the WAR EAGLE was tied up in the Black River at La Crosse, Wisconsin taking on freight near the railroad freight depot when there was the cry of, "FIRE!" The WAR EAGLE was destroyed and her hulk sank at the dock where it remains today. The newspaper, *Gate City Eagle*, reported on May 16, 1870:

"Further accounts of the great fire at LaCrosse yesterday state that the entire loss is estimated at \$300,000, at least one third of which falls upon the Packet Company. The depot buildings and elevator attached cost at least \$100,000. The WAR EAGLE had about one hundred tons of miscellaneous freight on board and the warehouses contained forty or fifty tons of merchandise of various descriptions. The American Merchants' Express Co. lost about \$15,000 in goods and cash on the steamer. Nine second class passenger coaches, one each baggage, mail and express cars and six freight cars were also consumed.

So far as is known only two persons died: Ulrich of LaCrosse and the barber of the boat were lost. Their bodies have been recovered. A passenger, an old gentleman, is missing. The steamers KEOKUK and MOLLIE MOHLER, lying near, had a narrow escape from the burning boat, the former vessel being badly scorched."

The final count of people lost in the conflagration was six but perhaps the most heart-wrenching death was that of passenger Mary Ulrich. This story is provided by the La Crosse County Historical Society and was prepared on the occasion of the 130th anniversary of the Great Fire, May 15, 2000.

### PASSENGER MARY ULRICH

At the time of the War Eagle fire in 1870, steamboat transportation was a common way to travel the Mississippi River. In fact, it was the preferred mode of transportation. Travel by foot, horseback or stagecoach was tiring, dirty and subject to breakdowns, muddy roads, robbers, and wild animals. Railroads did not connect to many towns and railroads were also noisy, bone-jarring and dirty with coal soot. The Steamboat, however, was luxurious, relatively quiet and glided smoothly across the placid water.

There were dangers with Steamboats however. They got stuck on sand bars and were delayed, sometimes for days; they struck snags (half sunken trees) and sank. Then, too, there was the fear that the boilers might explode, although that was more likely to happen during the 1830's, 40's and 50's when steam technology was still developing. And there was the danger of fire. Traveling with the public also meant that one might meet up with Gamblers, Thieves and Pick Pockets, too, so a young woman like Mary Ulrich had to be careful.



MARY ULRICH  
1852 - 1870

Mary Ulrich was the 18 year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Ulrich of Waumundee, Buffalo County. She was born in Zurich, Switzerland about 1852. After immigrating with her parents to Wisconsin, Mary spent nearly all the time of her residence in La Crosse, with the family of her Uncle, John Ulrich, Esq., editor of the *Nord Stern*, a German language newspaper. La Crosse afforded Mary greater social and educational opportunities than rural Waumundee.

Mary was well regarded, and the *La Crosse Morning Leader* related:

"Few young ladies in this city had a wider acquaintance; or none more generally beloved." She was "Endowed with superior intellect, prepossessing in appearance, kindly and affectionate by nature, with a grace of manner and degree of culture excelling that of most of her companions..." "Of the Singers Society, she was a very valuable member, excelling in vocal music and amateur dramatic settings and taking a lively interest in the prosperity and advancement of the society." But Mary could not swim.

Mary's sister, Anna was engaged to be married to Capt. Albert Kirchner of Fountain City, Wisconsin. The wedding would be at the family home in Waumundee in May of 1870 and Mary was to be a bridesmaid. She would travel to Fountain City by the WAR EAGLE and from there overland to Waumundee. Mary was old enough to travel by herself but because of the dangers of travel and to make sure she was taken proper care of by the Steamboat Company, Mary's Uncle John sought someone to watch out for Mary's well being. The person he chose was Felix Spiller, the black Barber of the boat, who





The WAR EAGLE, built 1854, was handsome with a "war eagle" on the wheelhouse; lettering proclaimed, "North Western Line," running as the Dubuque, Prairie Du Chien & St. Paul Rail Road Packet. The occasion is

probably the railroad excursion of 1858 by Milwaukee & La Crosse RR taking guests from La Crosse up to St. Anthony's Falls. She's in still water but where? Goodhue Co. Historical Society. Murphy Library print.

was from Cincinnati, Ohio. He was to see that Mary left the boat at Fountain City, her destination.

Mary occupied stateroom 'A' on the starboard (right) side of the boat. This being the first stateroom in the ladies cabin, it was near the center of the boat on the second (boiler) deck. The fire began, possibly from a broken oil barrel, on the larboard (left) side of the boat amidships. As the flames grew higher and the black petroleum smoke thickened, Mary and Felix jumped from the second deck aft of the starboard wheelhouse on the shore side, - within 20 feet of the dock.

We can hardly imagine the terror of the scene: awakened after midnight to the panic-cry of "FIRE," the choking smoke, the hot flames, the shouts of passengers and crew, the total confusion. The jump from the second deck would be a leap of 15 to 20 feet in height. Down they went into the murky waters of the Black River followed by smoke and burning embers. Mary could not swim and Felix Spiller tried to get her across the short distance to the dock.

Within an hour's time the WAR EAGLE was consumed in flames and sunk. Mary Ulrich was originally reported safe, perhaps by someone who could not bear to think of her death. However, on Sunday afternoon, May 15, 1870, the body of

Miss Mary Ulrich was found. Also found was the body of Felix Spiller. Charley Gesell, a deck hand, related that the bodies were found clasped together, the barber evidently having tried to save the girl, but both drowned.

Mary's body was conveyed to the home of her uncle, John Ulrich. Her death, after her reported safety brought grief to her relatives and a large number of friends. A large public funeral was held from the John Ulrich home. A large funeral procession of the friends of the lamented Mary Ulrich took place on Wednesday morning, May 18, 1870, and evinced a profound feeling of grief and respect in the community. It was a solemn event and this last sad tribute of affectionate regard was appropriate to the occasion.

The Singing Society members wrote a memorial song in Mary's native German language in lament for the loss of their friend and the stilling of her voice. Although Mary was lost to her friends, her memory is preserved for us: The picture of Mary at age 18 is the only known photograph of any of the passengers aboard the WAR EAGLE on the fateful night of May 15, 1870.

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## LOADING CATTLE ON A MISSISSIPPI STEAMBOAT In Antebellum Times

Editor's Note: The following is taken from the book, "Facts for Farmers" published in 1867 and describes practices and language in the days a before the Civil War. The author was Solon Robinson, of whom we have no biography.

The approximate time frame of the incidents related by Mr. Robinson would be 1857-1860, set by the packet he was riding, the HENRY CLAY (2590). She was built at McKeesport, Pennsylvania in 1857 for the Northern Line, sidewheel, 181 ft. by 31 ft. and arrived in St. Paul on May 2, 1857, one of the first boats of the season. She was a regular in the St. Louis-Davenport trade until the advent of the Civil War. The HENRY CLAY was chartered by the Union Army early in 1862 and served as a transport at Shiloh that April. She was lost attempting to run the Vicksburg batteries on the night of April 16-17, 1863 with her civilian crew (or most of them) escaping back to the Union lines.

As to the details of loading cattle, the swinging stage did not make an appearance until about 1870 and the temporary gangway described was the general means for loading freight at bank landings. The CLAY was running below St. Louis, out of her usual trade, on the trip recounted here and the condition of servitude of the plantation workers seems apparent, - Missouri was a slave state. The dialect and language of the day is, we assume, as heard and accurately reported by Robinson with no demeaning intention.

# # #

### SHIPPING CATTLE ON A MISSISSIPPI STEAMBOAT

Shipping cattle on a Mississippi steamboat, as I once witnessed, afforded infinite amusement and I am disposed: to give a photograph of it...before I take up the more practiced details of farm stock.

Engagements for boats to stop and take cattle on board at various landings are frequently made before leaving a port, and it often happens that the boat, reaches these points in the night; - and then a scene occurs which might employ a more graphic pen than mine to describe, or which would have been a fit subject for Hogarth to paint. (William Hogarth, 1697-1764)

I will try to give my readers some idea of such a scene, although one so common on the Mississippi it rarely meets a passing notice; yet it is full of interest.

The steamer left St. Louis about sundown of a dark day during the latter part of which the rain came down in torrents, corresponding to the size of the great river they were destined to fill. Of course, mud was a component part of all the little tributary streams; but it did not discolor the great river -- that is always muddy.

At ten o'clock we saw a light on the right bank and run in for it. Though the rain had ceased, the night was dark--one which gave the pilot but little chance to see any but the most prominent landmarks.

"Whose place is this?" sung out the captain, when he had approached as near the light as he thought safe--for in the time of "a fresh' the master of a boat always approaches shore with great care.

"Why dis is my massa's place; what boat is dat? If you is de HENRY CLAY, den dis nigger mighty glad, 'cause, gorra, cap'en, hab been watching for all dis two-free nights for de old CLAY."

"Have you got your cattle there?"

"All in de lot. Gorra bless you, den you is de HENRY CLAY, sure--right here by de light."

"Is the water good in shore?"

"Why, spec him is good for the steamboat, but not very good to drink."

"How deep is it near the bank?"

"Oh Lord, massa, dat mor'n dis nigger knows for sartin, 'cause him mighty deep."

"That will do. Forward there get your lines ready. Light them torches--let's see where we are. Call all hands; here is a hundred head of cattle to be got on board."

In a few minutes the lights flashed a bright glare over the boat and shore, bringing to view a scene worth a long journey to behold. The torches are composed of "light wood," which is the concentrated pitch of old pine trees, of the long leaf variety--the richest of all the family in turpentine. The wood is split in small pieces and put in an iron frame, with a staff not unlike the common hod used to carry mortar so it can be carried about or stuck in the ground, where by a little replenishing it will burn for hours, giving a light unequalled by any other portable contrivance I ever saw. In the present case, it disclosed more mud than anything else. The whole bank was alluvial clay loam; the face was steep and 60 or 80 feet high. The boat, made fast to stakes driven into the soft earth, lay within 20 feet of the shore between which and the guards was a gangway made of long planks locked together, about 6 or 8 feet wide, without side railing, or anything to prevent springing down in the center. (Torch baskets were commonly mounted on the edge of the main deck with the basket overhanging the water during bank landings. Ed.)

The cattle were in a yard on top of the bank, where, around the watch fire, huddled about a dozen sleepy Negroes, amongst which the anxious face of massa made an appearance. He had been awakened at his house two miles distant, by the tremendous noise that is made by one of these river steamers by the puff of her high-pressure engine.

"Halloo, Captain Smith, is that you? I might have known it, though, for no other fool would come here in the night for such a job as this. What are you go in to do - hold on till morning?"

"Hold, the devil?"

"Well, I might just as well as hold you, I do believe. If the CLAY's engine would break going up stream, the boat would not stop, - there is steam enough in the captain to keep her going."

Evidently pleased with this compliment, the captain jumped ashore, with one of those hearty shakes of the hand which alone is equal to a whole volume in the man's character.

"Well captain you see how it is. I am already. The cattle are here, wet, wild, and muddy, and the bank awful. I couldn't help it. It would rain and the river is on the fall. I doubt whether your men can stand on the slippery bank. My boys



will take down some of the gentle ones, but, Lord help you with two or three; we had to bring them in with the dogs."

"So much the better, then, that the road is wet; they will slide the easier. Ropes and men will bring them down; don't you fret, Colonel."

"Well, well! I'll leave it to you; I'll risk the cattle if you will your necks. Better wait for daylight though--what say?"

"Never! What should I do with that surplus steam you say I carry? Wait? No! I intend to have them all aboard and win half of them playing poker with you before morning; at daylight I am going to take on Tom Kilgore's at Rocky Landing, so bear a hand boys. Stir up your lights and rouse 'em out, one at a time and often."

In a few minutes there was a line of men and bullocks from the top of the bank to the boat. The first dozen or two came down very orderly to the end of the gangway where, if they hesitated, a rope was thrown over so as to encircle them from behind and two or three stout fellows at each end gave them material aid about coming on board. The owner said we should see fun directly but, not caring to participate in it personally, he took care to make himself one of the spectators in a safe, comfortable position on board the boat. Upward of half were brought down without giving us a taste of the promised amusement, though the whole scene was exceedingly interesting.

At length they got hold of one of the animals that the Colonel said was wilder than forty deer and vicious as an old buck in rutting time; and then there was fun. He was a great, long-legged five year old steer, of the mouse color, long taper-horned Spanish cattle, who had never before felt the weight and strength of a man's hand upon his heretofore unrestrained wildwood liberty. Round and round the yard he went carrying or dragging through the mud as many Negroes, sailors, and firemen as could find horn, ear, nose, or tail to hold to. Finally, they got a rope around his horns and drew him up to a stake at the edge of the bank, to wait till others were caught to lead down first, thinking that he would better follow than take the front rank. He did follow!

When about 12 or 15 head were on the way down, the wild one was cut off from his moorings and led up to the edge of the bank, when just at that moment the engineer blew off steam, at which the frightened animal leaped forward to the slippery path, lost his foothold, and went down against the next, and the next, arid so on; like a row of bricks. One tumbled or slid against another, upsetting men and beast, till the whole came down like an avalanche upon the end of the platform with such force that the strain upon the mooring line of the bow drew out of the stake. When the strong current almost instantly swung the CLAY off shore so far, before the men could get hold of the line and make it fast again, that the platform dropped off into the water, and with it 8 or 10 men with steers, among which was the one that caused all the mischief.

I must say that the fun was not so great as the fright, for a minute, as it did not take much longer to finish off the greatest feat of "sliding down hill" which I have witnessed since the halcyon days of hand sleds and boyhood upon the snow-clad, wintry hills of my native land. That all were got out safe was owing to the instant thought and action of the mate who sprang ashore with a pole which he placed in the wheel so as to prevent the cattle from floating down past the stern where it would have been impossible for them to get up the soft, slippery bank. As it was, some of them were in the water over



**Daylight, no muddy bank, - it still takes three pushers and a line to coax a steer up the stage onto the LEROY.**

an hour with the catamount, as the colonel called him, being purposely left until last, and severely threatened with being towed to New Orleans. But, when he was at last taken out, there was not a more docile animal in the herd; he had been completely subdued. The whole affair, though fraught with danger at first, afforded all hands with a scene of uproarious mirth. Even at the time when it looked as though half a score of men might be killed in the grand tumble, it was almost impossible to avoid laughing. The whole thing was extremely ludicrous.

One big Negro fellow finding himself hard pressed by the bullock he was leading and half a dozen more behind him, either for sport or to save his shins, jumped upon the animal's back and came down with a surge into the water; but he never let go till he had him safely ashore again, where he met some of the most hearty, though rude, congratulations of his companions for his skillful feat of horsemanship on an ox.

Finally, in spite of mud and peril, the grand entertainment of shipping cattle on the Mississippi was concluded and the boat was off before daylight, for the next landing, where the operation was to be repeated. Owing to better ground, and a different plan adopted, this was not quite so entertaining. The cattle were yarded in a long, narrow pen, which came near the shore. A rope was being passed over the horns of the forward steer with the other end through a snatch-block on the boat; a dozen or fifteen men would lay hold of it while two men by the tail to steer and one on each side kept him on the gangway. The fellow was out of the pen and sliding up the plank before he knew what he was bellowing for.

As in all cases where science and skill direct human efforts, the labor was lessened and business expedited.

The lesson: Where science and skill are exercised in regard to all kinds of animals, success may be looked for.

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 "Shipping Cattle on a Mississippi Steamboat," by Solon Robinson was found by James E. "Jim" Cree more than twenty years ago. The account appealed to Jim's sense of humor but just then it didn't seem to fit the *Reflector's* style.

Jim's story was put aside only to surface recently when we were pawing through a box of miscellany. Mud wrestling is humorous but this is a true-to-life sketch of hard work, not without danger, manhandling cattle 150 years ago. It's history!

Jim Cree was a charter member of S&D and grew up in Newport, Ohio where his family ran a hotel. Jim lived in Utica, Licking County, Ohio and died in the fall of 1980.

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## - OBITUARIES -

## JOHN JOSEPH BURNS

We have recently learned of the death of a long time member of the steamboating fraternity. John Joseph Burns, born April 27, 1910, died in Oakland, CA, April 22, 2001, just days short of his 92nd birthday. John was the son of James (Jim) Burns, Port Engineer for the California Transportation Co., which ran sternwheel passenger and freight steamers throughout the Sacramento Delta and San Francisco Bay Areas. Jim Burns (1863-1951) coordinated the design, and superintended the construction of the steamers DELTA KING and DELTA QUEEN in Stockton, California. They were the zenith of sternwheel passenger and freight steamers, as well as the last to be put into service.

John Burns, after graduation from Oakland Technical High School and a memorable journey from Oakland to Seattle, Washington in a well used 1913 Model T Ford touring car, went to work for his father's company as a fireman on the steamer LEADER in the early 1930's. In this capacity, he had a front row seat watching the filming of John Ford's 1935 movie, "Steamboat 'Round the Bend." The LEADER was gussied up as Will Rogers' "Claremore Queen", and she raced the PORT OF STOCKTON as Irvin S. Cobb's "Pride of Paducah". Later, John served in the fireman's capacity on both the DELTA KING and DELTA QUEEN.

The outbreak of World War II found John working as an engine mechanic for Pan American World Airways, maintaining their famed Pacific Flying Boats. Shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the U.S.

Navy took over operation of Pan Am's flying boats, and John spent the rest of the war working on them at Pearl Harbor. After the war, John started a civilian aircraft repair business at the Oakland Airport. Several years later, he started Central Engineering Co., a heavy equipment machine shop that among other things, overhauled and repaired diesel engines for submarines and tugboats. He kept active in the business well up into his eighties.

John was interested in anything mechanical, the bigger, the better. He was an ingenious tinkerer who could effect repairs and modifications to things his competitors had given up on. A grand story teller with a good memory, John was an invaluable resource to Stan Garvey, when Stan wrote King and Queen of the River, the authoritative history of the DELTA's KING and QUEEN. In 1991, John got the opportunity to go back east, and to once again travel on the DELTA QUEEN. He went to an S & D Meeting in Marietta, and he visited with Capt. Fred Way, whom he had not seen since he and his dad went to the Fulton Shipyard, Antioch, CA, to visit the boat as she was being made ready for her ocean voyage to the Ohio River Valley, in 1947.

John loved ballroom dancing and, when well up in years, he made weekly visits to the "Ali Babba" and "Sweet's" Ballrooms, two 1920's Oakland classics that had somehow beaten the odds and survived into the 1980's. John Burns was preceded in death by a brother and sister, and with his passing, we have lost yet another living link to the Great Steamboat Era.

By Dick Rutter.



## - BACK COVER -

**A mood picture for our fall issue!  
Looking up the Ohio River from the  
Marietta-Williamstown bridge,  
a.k.a. "Robert C. Byrd Bridge"  
(because West Virginia owns it).  
The rising sun is seen through the  
thin screen of disappearing fog  
and the I-77 interstate bridge is  
just visible in the bend.**

**Dick Hamilton, West Jefferson,  
Ohio caught the scene with the  
unusual lighting in October, 1997.**

## THOMAS KENT BOOTH

Capt. Kent Booth, 94, died in Leesburg, Florida on August 3, 2002. Kent had been living in the Lake Harris Health Facility for about the past three years, still sharp of mind but in declining health. He was a charter member of S&D.

Capt. Booth followed in the footsteps of his great-grandfather John K. Booth, grandfather Ernest K. Booth and father, Walther C. Booth, all of whom worked on the river in the packet days.

Kent began his career working for his father on the packet LIBERTY, eventually holding a license as mate and then moved over to the Streckfus Ohio River excursion boats WASHINGTON and SAINT PAUL/SENATOR. He served as mate and became master of the SENATOR in 1941. He began working on the Ashland Oil towboat fleet in 1942 and retired from the company in 1965 as master and pilot of the MV VALVOLINE

He is survived by his wife Elizabeth of Leesburg, son John K. and wife Kay of Everett, WA and three granddaughters.

Burial was at Brownsville, PA.

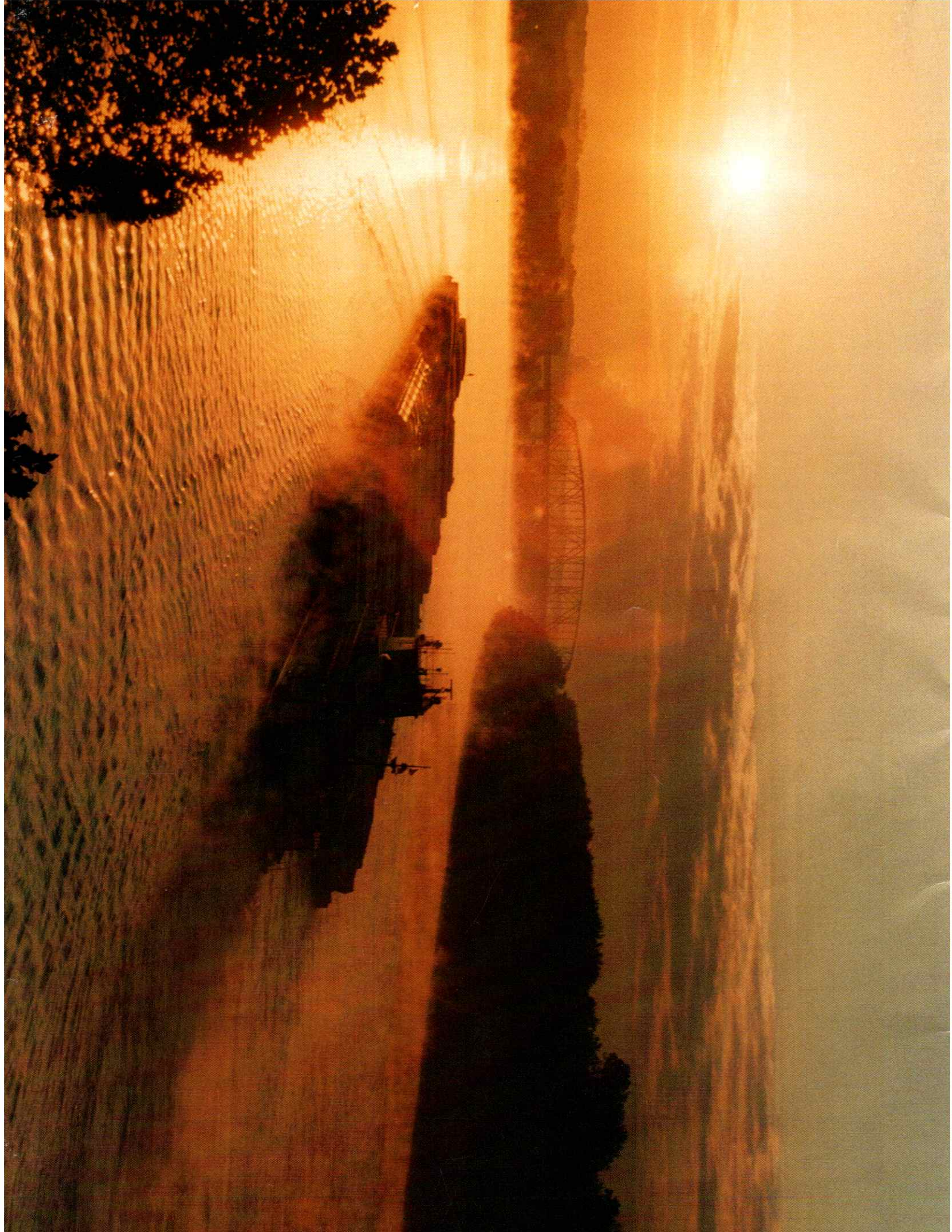
## MONONGAHELA RIVER DAM

The photo on the left has a long story with it. The negative was a practice-piece used when we first became interested in photography; the subject was labeled only, "Mon River, 1917." The Monongahela River is the subject for our speaker at S&D so it was time to trace the scene captured.

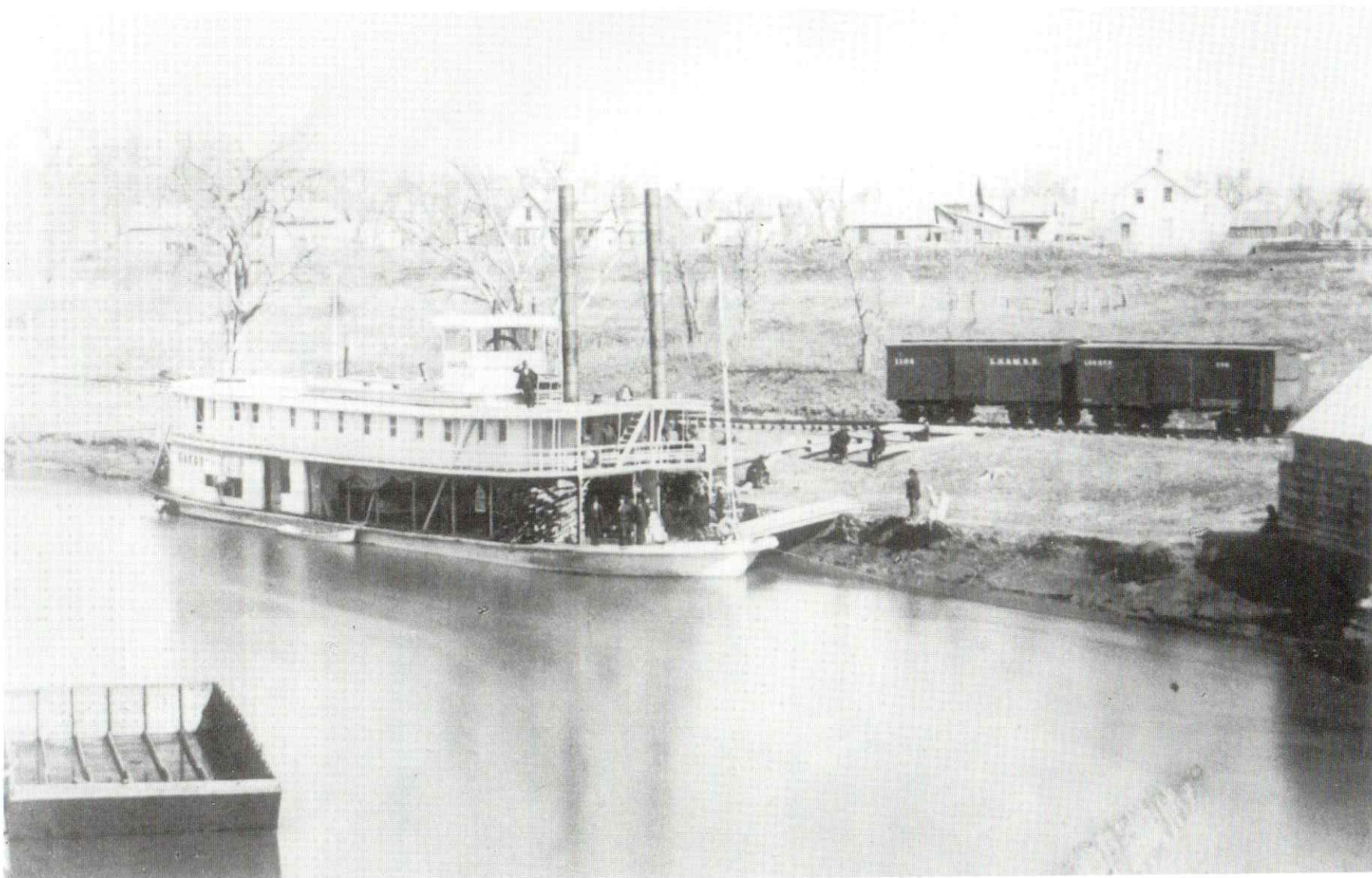
River charts indicate the likelihood that it was Lock No. 4 but not the present location, - the dam was later moved above the bridge in the photo. Inquiry of Conrad Weiser, Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh, produced a Chief of Engineers 1917 Report reporting there was a 150 foot washout of the crib dam at No. 4 in 1917, all repaired by year-end. Mystery solved!

Fred Way, Jr. photo.







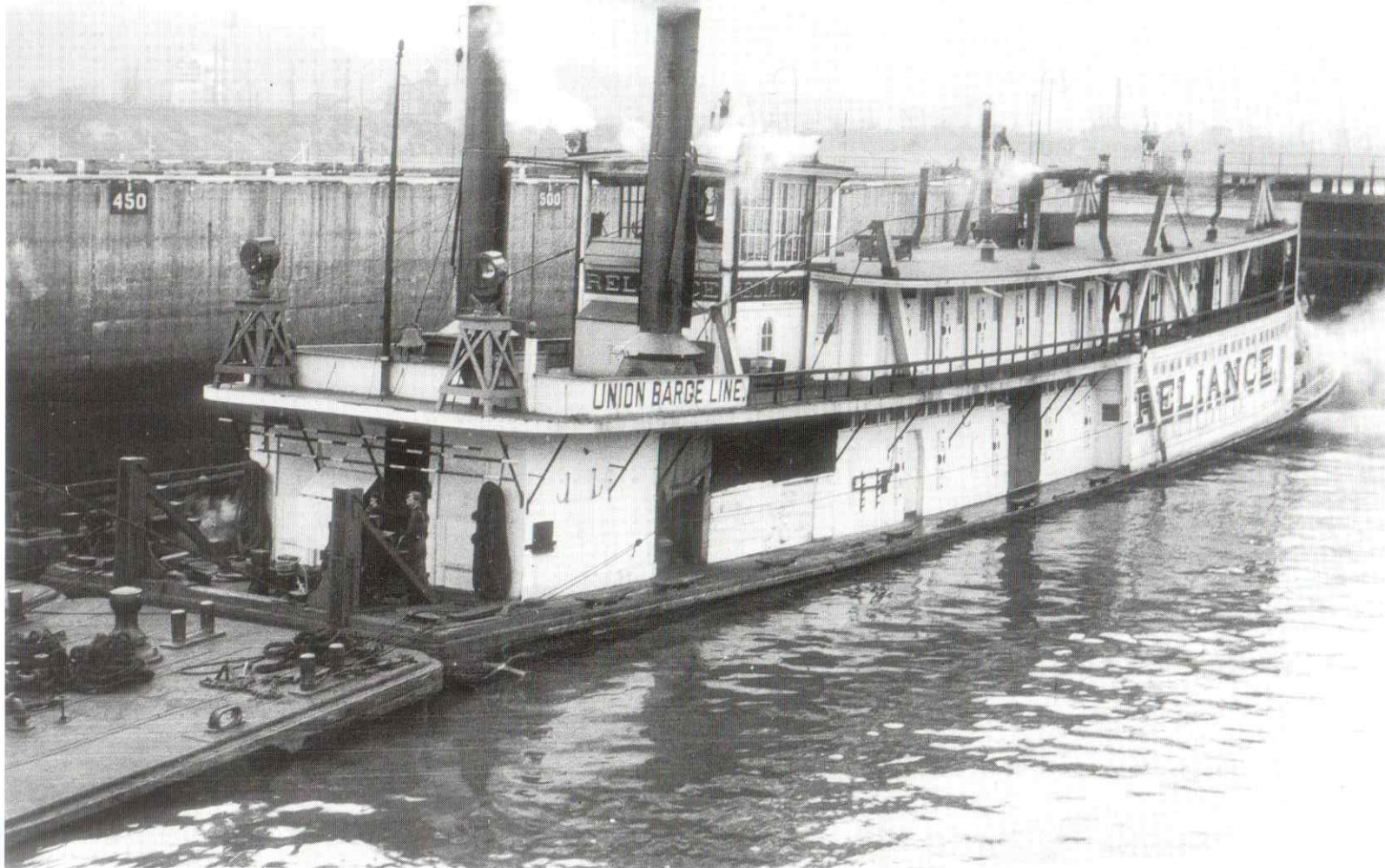


The DAKOTA, built 1872 at Breckenridge, MN measured 117.75 tons. She appears to be fresh from the yards in this view with the proud master standing in front of the pilothouse. The

location, judging by the railroad siding and size of the river, could be Grand Forks but we'll await a word from Red River experts. DAKOTA was inspected in 1877 by the Galena inspectors.

All of these Red River boats show style and good design and we wonder where the builders learned their trade. This photo is from the Geo. V. Allen collection, Murphy Library print.





The RELIANCE (T2135), where Bill Torner received his deckhand education, was built in 1916 as the ACTIVE (T0035) for the Pittsburgh Coal Co., a wooden hull, 136.9x26x4.7, and sister to the BEACON and CONQUEROR. She was the

HECLA when Union Barge Line bought her as its first boat in May, 1924. Later she was rebuilt and looked a little different with the roof then extending alongside the pilothouse and signboards on top. She operated until February, 1946.





The H. K. BEDFORD (2491) is about to set off from the Parkersburg, West Virginia landing on Labor Day, 1909. The occasion is the annual outing for employees of the United Woolen

Mills, a maker of made-to-measure clothing for men. The BEDFORD was then owned by Capt. Henry Kraft - sold by Capt. Gordon Greene in 1898 - and ran in the Pittsburgh-

Parkersburg trade. She was sunk by ice near Marietta in 1912; the iron sheathing evident on the bow did always protect the wooden hulls. Photo from Paul Borrelli, Parkersburg.



