

S&D

REFLECTOR

Published by Sons and Daughters
of Pioneer Rivermen



Vol. 57, No. 4

Marietta, Ohio

December 2020



Annual S&D Report for 2020

Winter on the St. Louis Riverfront - 1888

Where Did IDLEWILD's Calliope Come From?

Front Cover

This bone-chilling view of the St. Louis riverfront was snapped sometime in December 1887 - January 1888 and shows the sidewheel railroad ferry JOHN TRENDLEY (3125) of the Wiggins Ferry Company frozen in below the Anchor Line fleet at the foot of Lesperance Street. Read more about that icy winter at St. Louis beginning on page 10. *Photo from Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin - La Crosse.*



📍 Shown above is Charles Bogart's August 26 view of the identical scene depicted in the 1908 panorama painting displayed at the bottom of the page. We thank Charles and his wife for making both the trip and the effort to photograph that scene, and also for sending it on for our readers to enjoy. It's also reassuring to know that there are occasional good things that can occur during this pandemic.

Capt. Jim Blum writes: "Well sir, today the front lawn got cut along with some weeds in the backyard jungle *and* the REFLECTOR got read as well! There was a rather nice breeze while cutting the grass and working in backyard. So after drying off a bit, I headed to the porch swing and consumed the REFLECTOR cover to cover in peace and quiet. Great photo of you and Mary Bill a few years back!"

"You do keep impeccable notes as relayed in the RR journey from Chattanooga to East Dubuque with a ride on the Big Silver Boat en route! We need to hear more on other rail travel you did during those times. Roddy Hammett told me early on that there were lots of *Official Railway Guides* in the Wharfboat office which Purser Bob McCann had him throw away in the River. Anyway, I just wanted to say what another great issue!"

Reflections from Our Readers continued on page 31

Reflections from Our Readers



Charles Bogart writes: "The painting of RAMONA at Anderson Ferry in the September 2020 issue of the REFLECTOR led Mary Ann and me to drive from Frankfort, KY to Constance, KY. As good a reason as any to take a day trip with the COVID-19 lockdown. At Constance, we took the Anderson Ferry across the Ohio River to Cincinnati. Once on the Ohio side of the river, we drove west to Rising Sun, IN. Here we took Rising Sun-Rabbit Hash Ferry back to Kentucky. At Rabbit Hash we stopped to have a beer and a bratwurst. While enjoying our beer and brat, the Rabbit Hash Mayor visited us looking for a handout. I gave him part of my brat. (The elected Mayor of Rabbit Hash is a dog.)"

"Attached is an August 26, 2020 comparison photo of the Constance, KY downriver view as shown in the circa 1910 painting. Tied up to the Kentucky shore is the ferry BOONE NO. 7. Approaching the Kentucky side of the river is the ferry LITTLE BOONE. And coming into a landing on the Ohio side of the river is the ferry DEBORAH A. We saw no towboat traffic during either crossing."



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**81st Annual
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**Seasons Greetings
to all our readers
from S&D Reflector**

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Thinking about submitting to the REFLECTOR?

Please follow these guidelines:

Articles

- » 500 words or less
- » .rtf or .doc format (no PDFs)

Features

- » 750 words or more
- » .rtf or .doc format (no PDFs)

Images

- » at least 300 dpi
- » .jpg, .tif, .png, or .bmp format
- » minimal compression

Send to the Editor as an e-mail attachment

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

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America's Steam & Diesel
Riverboat Magazine

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S&D REFLECTOR

Published by Sons and Daughters
of Pioneer Rivermen

Vol. 57, No. 4
ISSN 1087-9803

Marietta, Ohio December 2020
Post Office Permit #70, Dubuque, IA

The name of this publication comes from the *Fleetwood Reflector* published in 1869 aboard the packet FLEETWOOD. This quarterly was originated by Capt. Frederick Way, Jr. in 1964.

Correspondence is invited and serious papers on river related history from our readers are always welcomed. Please check with the Editor before sending any material on a "loan" basis.

David Tschiggfrie, Editor
2723 Shetland Court
Dubuque, IA 52001
reflector@riverhistory.org

REFLECTOR BACK ISSUES AND INDICES

Copies of the current or prior years are available at \$8 each, postpaid for subscribers, and \$10 for all others.

Indices for five year increments of the quarterly, 1964 through 2003, are available for \$5 per volume. The 2004-08 index is available in CD format only for \$11 postpaid.

Orders should be sent to PO Box 352, Marietta, OH, 45750 for these items.

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There are two classes of subscription - full and family. Full subscription includes the quarterly S&D REFLECTOR, admission to the Ohio River Museum and towboat W. P. SNYDER, JR. at Marietta, and voting rights at the Annual Meeting. Family subscribers enjoy all privileges except the REFLECTOR.

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Getting Posted Up

Good News in These Troubled Times

Your December issue brings to a close a year that definitely has had an unexpectedly different look than the one we ushered in twelve months ago. S&D, along with most all of the things that touch our lives, has been impacted in various ways, some large and some small. From postponements and cancellations, to a slightly accelerated publishing schedule for the REFLECTOR made possible when curtailment of outside activities freed up additional work time at home for your editor, COVID-19 has left its mark on our organization and this magazine.

But in spite of all these changes, there are some things that have remained the same, and have in fact refocused our attention on those very things we might have taken for granted in less trying times. One of those is the ongoing support of the REFLECTOR by its readers and contributors. This issue contains the work of at least six members: Bob Reynolds, Lee Woodruff, Travis Vasconcelos, Charles Bogart, Matt Dow, and Jeff Spear, not to mention those

S&D RENEWAL NOTICE FOR 2021

As 2020 comes to an end, it is now time to renew your subscription. Cost of a full renewal subscription is \$35. See additional information at the bottom of page 4. You will also receive a postcard notice around Christmastime. Please complete your renewal and remit **by no later than February 13, 2021** by mailing your payment to our secretary at this address:

Mrs. Sharon Reynolds
1002 Oakland Drive
Paragould, AR 72450

You may also renew your subscription at www.riverhistory.org by logging on to our website. Because of postal fees, renewals received by mail or online after February 13 will require an additional \$2.50 for each back issue mailed with your 2021 subscription.

who have written letters and emails to the editor. Even our veteran columnist John Fryant, who is concluding his "Small Stacks" model-building column in this issue, is quick to add that "this writer doesn't plan to just walk away though, as there are other riverboat subjects I hope to cover." And then there was the phone call from Vic Canfield: he and Jeff Spear will cover the BELLE's upcoming tramp trip to Madison and her subsequent drydocking at Henderson, WV for our magazine. Yes, in spite of the pandemic, S&D continues to steam Full Ahead!

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Michael Jones, President

Mississippi River Chapter
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Thank you for giving consideration to this opportunity. If you desire to make a contribution, please send your check to:

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Meet Our Contributors

Travis Vasconcelos (*Where Did the Steamer IDLEWILD Calliope Come From?*, p. 14) has always had a close connection with the river. His earliest memory is listening to the calliope on the Showboat MAJESTIC during her last season. In 1978 he signed on as substitute calliope player aboard BELLE OF LOUISVILLE, and was named house calliapist in 1981. Since then, the “Wizard of the Whistles” has served on a number of vessels, including the Strs. DELTA QUEEN, MISSISSIPPI QUEEN, AMERICAN QUEEN, BELLE OF LOUISVILLE,

NATCHEZ, and MINNE-HA-HA, as well as the riverboats P.A. DENNY and CITY OF NEW ORLEANS. In 2014 he accepted a position as Administrative Assistant at Howard Steamboat Museum in Jeffersonville under then-Director/Curator and longtime friend Keith Norrington. Together they streamlined Museum operations, bringing it into the 21st century while maintaining the traditions of the Howard family. In 2020, Travis was named Director/Curator upon Keith’s retirement, a role he uses well to continue educating a new generation of river fans about rivers and steam calliopes. He also substitutes as calliapist aboard the BELLE and is relief calliapist for IU’s steam calliope wagon. Even with his extensive and interesting career on and around the Western Rivers, Travis has never forgotten his “roots.”

A Christmas Eve on the River (with apologies to the ASPCA)

by Capt. Bob Reynolds

“Something’s always happenin’ on the river ...” A few years ago, Jeff Spear asked me to relate some of my “day to day” experiences on the river. Much of what we do day in and day out is very mundane and repetitious, but coming into the Holiday season, I do remember one incident that happened to me about thirty years ago.

This writer caught the m/v THOMAS HERNDON at Lemont, IL on December 23rd. We were working in the heavy oil trade and loading barges at Lemont to go south. Lemont is a suburb of Chicago on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal. Around 6:00 on a cold, rainy Christmas Eve, we had just departed our dock with our last load. As I headed up the canal toward the fleet where we would make up our tow, I noticed something moving out on the deck of the barge – it was a cat! This cat was likely looking for a handout from a crew member. He regularly lived at the dock, probably being pampered by the dock personnel and catching an occasional mouse. This cat was to soon be anything but pampered on this cold Christmas Eve.

I called our Mate to go out on the barge and get the cat. We were very shortly going to meet the m/v HAL D. MILLER with one empty barge, going to the dock we had just departed. My thought

was to get close when we met them, put the cat on their barge, and he’d get a ride back home. I called the Captain on the HAL D. MILLER, asked him to get close to me and slow down, and told him what I wanted to do. As we got abreast (about 8 feet wide between us) my Mate tossed that cat, underhanded, up to the deck of the barge towed by the HAL D. Unfortunately, he misjudged and was just about a foot shy of getting the cat over to the barge. Now we had a swimming cat, something which that species doesn’t usually appreciate very much! I stopped, the HAL D. stopped, and we fished the cat out of the canal. Capt. Joe Hicks on the HAL D. MILLER said, “I’ll get in there real close this time!” He did, and my Mate, not wanting the cat to go swimming again, lobbed him over to the barge. This time, that cat went SPLAT! against the cargo trunk of the HAL D.’s empty barge, but landed on the deck, safe and sound! I’m not a betting man, but I’ll bet that cat never got on another barge after that night.

Several months later, I went to work for Magnolia Marine Transport as Pilot on the HAL D. MILLER, a position I held for 13 years, working with Capt. Joe. We often reminisced about the time we met trying to save a cat.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!



Annual S&D Report for 2020

Our S&D Board of Governors and its officers met at Campus Martius Museum in Marietta, OH on Saturday, September 19, to conduct the business of the organization for the current membership year as required by our constitution. In attendance were Taylor Abbott, Curt Alden, Bill Barr, Vic Canfield, C. R. Neale, Fred Rutter and Jeff Spear, with Tom Dunn, Dale Flick, Bill Judd and Lee Woodruff participating via conference call. This summary of that meeting and accompanying reports have been forwarded to the REFLECTOR by chairman Lee Woodruff for publication in this issue of the magazine.

After the call to order, minutes of the September 2019 Board meeting and annual business meeting were approved as printed. The first report was presented by Capt. Bill Barr, chairman of the J. Mack Gamble Fund Board of Trustees. A printed report in conjunction with a conference call from Chris Moran of PNC Bank, custodian of our Gamble Fund, showed that its current value as of August 31 was \$537,991. Bill shared that \$44,000 in requests for projects over the past year were received, with the groups and amounts which were awarded grants as follows: Friends of the Museum - \$3750; Howard Steamboat Museum - \$2632; Ohio Valley River Museum - \$1639; RiverWorks Discovery - \$1000; Steamer BELLE OF LOUISVILLE - \$10,453; and S&D for renovation and upkeep of the TELL CITY pilothouse at Ohio River Museum - \$6400. These grants totaled \$25,874 for the current year.

Secretary Sharon Reynolds provided a written report that as of the meeting date the number of current membership/subscribers stands at 296. This number has consistently declined over the years, with those at the meeting making the observation that our various efforts at recruiting new members appears to have had few positive results. A renewed call for each of our members to take responsibility for making a personal contact with a potential new member was urged once more as the only significant way to stem this downward trend.

Treasurer Dale Flick submitted his written report, along with brief comments via conference

call to the group gathered. The organization showed a starting balance of \$31,066.73 as of September 14, 2019; with expenditures of \$14,814.48 and income of \$20,830.91, leaving a balance as of September 11, 2020 of \$37,083.16. Despite the continuing decrease in memberships, the financial condition of the organization remains on solid footing to date, with concerted efforts having been made at trimming expenses, among which are included a substantial savings in printing the REFLECTOR over the past four years along with no expenses having been incurred for the Annual meeting canceled due to COVID-19.

The Ohio River Museum report was presented by Bill Reynolds, which described the TELL CITY pilot house restoration work funded by J. Mack Gamble Fund that included replacement of gingerbread, breast board, painting, and some minor roof repair. Together with Jeff Spear and Curt Alden, this dedicated three-man crew did additional interior work such as stabilizing the pilotwheel, removing and replacing the old floor covering, painting, etc. In addition, they completely repainted the Schoonover Shanty Boat, maintaining its upkeep for another ten years. Three donations to the Museum's collections were also reported this year. The roof bell from the steamer OAKLAND, later the CRUCIBLE, was donated by the Boggs family of Huntington, WV. It will go on display at the Museum, and the acquisition was made possible due to the astute eye of S&D member Barb Ritts. The late Jane Greene also gave a generous donation of many family items including a chronograph, gate, and photographs. And finally, a member of the Greenlee family, which included Capt. Lovell Greenlee, one of the W. P. SNYDER's pilots on her last trip and also another family member who was a former engineer on the boat, donated an Allegheny River chart and photograph of the SNYDER.

The annual report from the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County was given by Vic Canfield on behalf of Larry Richmond, department manager of the Inland Rivers Collection which is housed there. He stated that, like a good number of institutions, PLCHC has faced many challenges because of the pandemic, including furloughs of



Bill Reynolds supplied this photo collage of work being done during the spring and summer on renovations to Schoonover

Shanty Boat and TELL CITY pilothouse. Pictured in work crew are Bill, Jeff Spear and Curt Alden. A job well done!

some staff. Fortunately, the Digital Services team who lead digitization efforts at the Library and also manage that library, was not impacted. The Inland Rivers Library has made significant progress sorting its backlog of donation materials. Going forward, they will focus their collection efforts around the Ohio River and its tributaries. Previously, the IRL had included material from as distant as the Eastern seaboard, the Great Lakes and the Lower Mississippi Valley. They have no plans to de-select any of their materials, but they think the community will be better served with this new focus. The digitization of the S&D REFLECTOR has been placed on their upcoming project list, and that process will begin soon.

Although the Mercantile Library in St. Louis did not provide a report for this meeting, their Summer 2020 newsletter announced that Sara Hodge was hired as the new curator of the Herman T. Pott Inland Waterways Library beginning July 1. She had worked previously at the First Missouri State Capital Historic site in St. Charles and also with the Missouri Historical Society. Sara has extensive collections management, educational programming, and cataloguing experience. Currently, she is working on digitizing the Library's newest acquisitions, developing a virtual school outreach program, and getting acquainted with the various collections in the Pott Library.

Among our S&D regional chapters, the Middle Ohio River chapter president Michael Jones submitted the following report: "The cancelled year is the best way to describe MOR for 2020. The trip down the COVID-19 path has not been good. My thanks to Taylor Abbott for the work he put in to plan the May meeting in Frankfort, KY. And thanks to Liz Patterson for her work for the August meeting in Richmond/Metamora, IN. We hope to be able to try our 2020 schedule in 2021 if we have a handle on COVID-19, and if Taylor and Liz are willing. Hope all of you are safe and are doing the things that reduce your chances of catching COVID-19! Looking forward to MOR and to S&D in 2021."

As the Board meeting neared its end with no further business brought to the table, it was agreed that a short video recap of the meeting needed

to be recorded for viewing by interested S&D members on our website, www.riverhistory.org. Taylor volunteered to record a short 5-minute video summarizing items discussed at the meeting. The Board also decided to select a date for its upcoming Spring 2021 meeting sometime early next year. The meeting was adjourned after just under an hour's duration.

In light of the fact that there was no annual membership meeting at which to elect officers for 2021 and three new Board members for a three-year term, a special meeting was called to address this issue. President Jeff Spear appointed Bill Reynolds and Curt Alden as nominating committee per the constitution and by-laws of S&D, who made the following nominations for 2021. President - Jeff Spear; Vice President - Vic Canfield; Treasurer - Dale Flick; Secretary - Sharon Reynolds. These individuals, already having given their consent to serve if re-elected, were approved by unanimous acclamation to serve as officers for 2021. Jeff also appointed the following to continue as Board members for another three year term, as permitted by the constitution and by-laws: Taylor Abbott, Michael Jones, Capt. Charles Neale III. With those positions filled for the coming year, the special meeting was adjourned. Lee Woodruff thanked all who made the special effort to participate in this meeting under these most unusual circumstances. 📷



Taylor and Jeff pose for camera with TELL CITY pilotwheel.

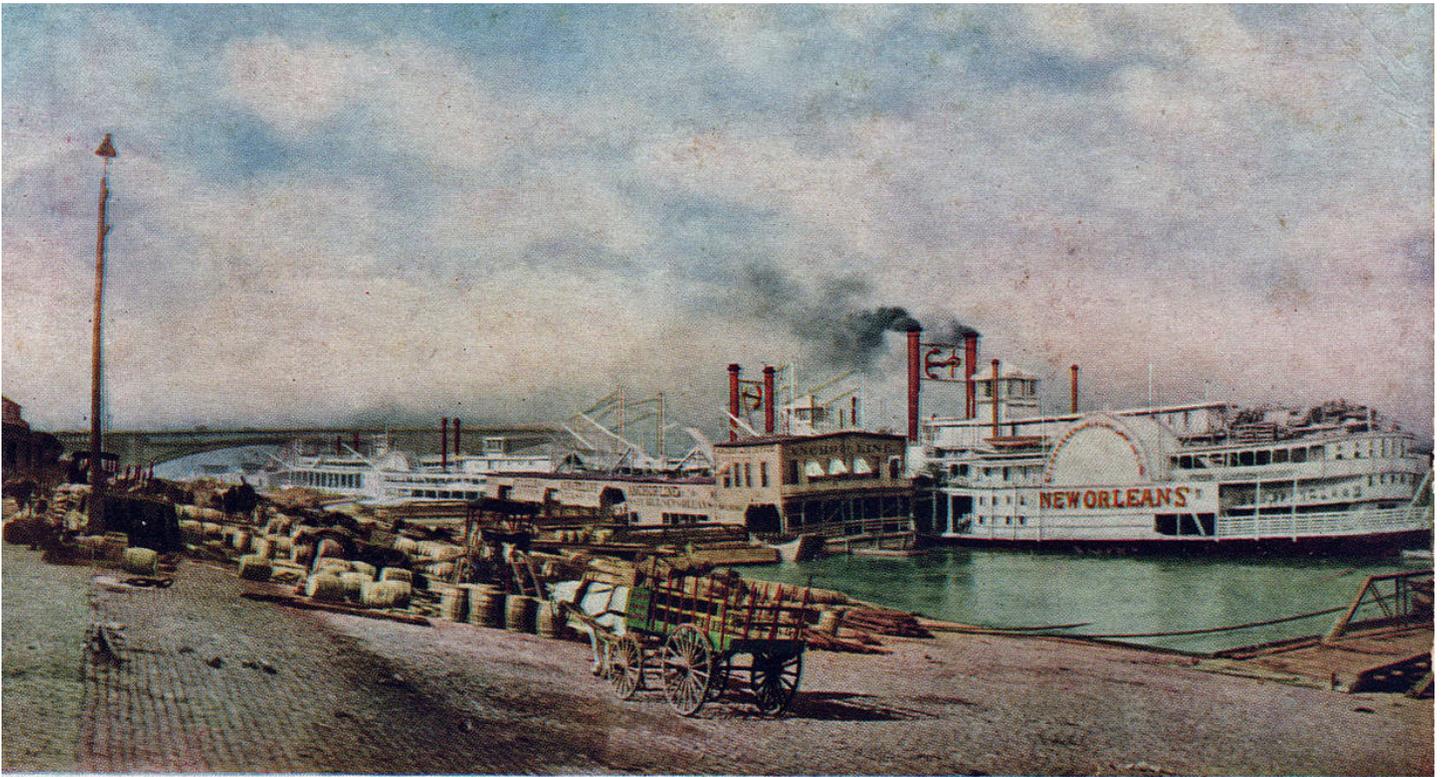
Winter on the St. Louis Riverfront - 1888

The frigid view on our front cover is one of several snapped sometime during the record cold of December 1887 - January 1888 at St. Louis, which produced this massive ice gorge opposite the city front. An article by Stefene Russell this past January in the *St. Louis Magazine* (www.stlmag.com) reported some details about river ice which may have been lost over time, except perhaps to those hardy souls who still spend their winters fighting these frozen expanses on the inland rivers.

Ms. Russell writes: "The Mississippi still ices up, but it doesn't gorge." [Your editor takes some exception to this statement, but will defer to the judgement of Bob Reynolds, Dan Shrake, Bill Judd, Bill Barr, and others in S&D who are in a much better position to make this call - Ed.] "A gorge, at least as explained in an 1888 article in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, is 'a mass of ice blocks heaped upon one another and rivaling a church steeple in height.' A century or more ago, you could pick up

any paper to learn where the ice had stubbornly jammed. Dynamite cartridges, like the ones tossed out by harbor tugs such as RESCUE NO. 2 [shown on opposite page], had mixed effects. B. W. Denton of Gray's Iron Line swore that the ice varied from shore to shore. Missouri River ice, he explained, 'is light and porous, much mixed with clay and sand, and seldom comes in large fields. But the ice from the upper river is different ... It is formed on deep water and is clear and free from impurities, comes in great floes and is solid as iron.' This made it so sharp, he said, that it cut through a hull 'like a knife through cheese.' He claimed that it was also 'what river men call *colder*. Two lumps the same size and shape may be laid in the sun together and the Missouri River produce will disappear far sooner than that from the upper river.'

Pictured in the background of that cover photo are packets of the Anchor Line, readily identified by the large anchor suspended between their stacks.



THE LEVEE, ST. LOUIS, MO.

J. A. Gebbie

No. 1064. V. O. Hammon Pub. Co., Chicago

This colorized post card shows the Anchor Line CITY OF NEW ORLEANS ca. 1895 at the company wharfboat below Eads Bridge in balmy days. Photographer was St. Louisan Henry Stark, Jr., likely the brother of George Stark, the first known photographer to work for the *St. Louis Globe Democrat*. This card was published by V. O. Hammon Pub. Co. of Chicago sometime around 1907.



The identity of those packets shown is uncertain, but at the time of this photo the fleet included BELLE MEMPHIS and a notable list of "City" boats: CITY OF BATON ROUGE, CITY OF

CAIRO, CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, CITY OF PROVIDENCE, CITY OF ST. LOUIS, CITY OF VICKSBURG, and WILL S. HAYS. The transfer boat JOHN TRENDLEY pictured above

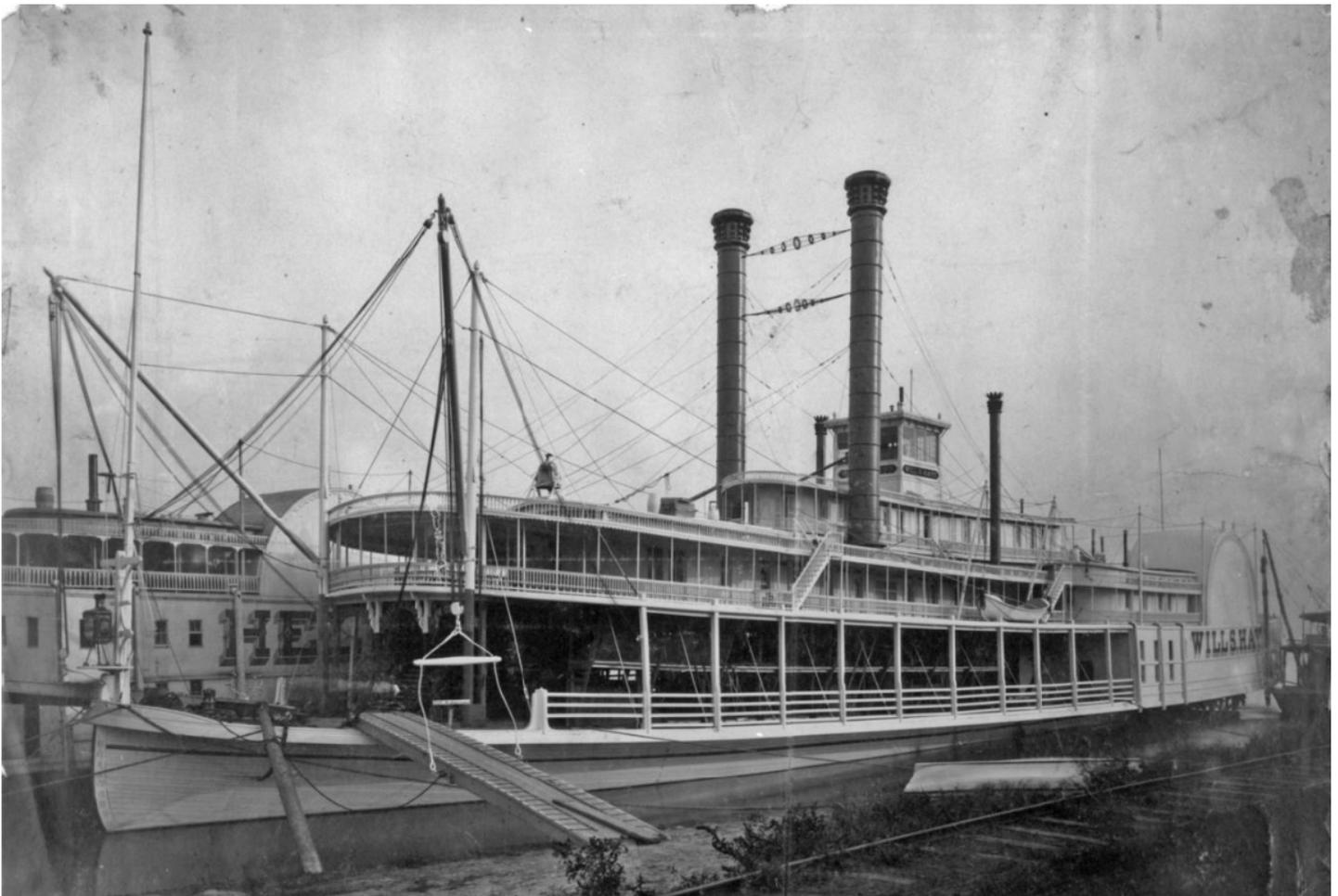


in these Missouri Historical photos was built for St. Louis' Wiggins Ferry Company at Madison, IN in 1881. Her engines were 22's-7 foot stroke on a hull 205.4 x 36.6 x 5.8. She burned at East St. Louis on November 11, 1892. Also pictured in the two photos is the steam screw propeller tug RESCUE NO. 2 (T2145). She was built for the Louisville, Evansville and St. Louis Railroad in 1882 at Metropolis, IL, measuring 95 x 20 x 7, and is pictured here while working to dynamite an opening in an attempt to break up the ice gorge jamming the river. RESCUE NO. 2 burned at St. Louis on December 12, 1898.

The only Anchor Line packet mentioned in this story that was not named for one of the company's ports of call was WILL S. HAYS, named instead for Louisville's well-known river reporter and composer. A big boat, her hull was built in 1882 at Freedom, PA, with the engines and cabin from THOMPSON DEAN being moved over onto that hull. Measuring 305 x 44 x 9, her six boilers supplied steam for engines 28's with a 10-foot stroke, and

she was one of the earlier packets to boast electric lighting. Originally she ran Cincinnati-New Orleans, until acquired by the Anchor Line in her later days for the St. Louis-New Orleans trade. Capt. Way notes in his *Packet Directory* that "the HAYS became called the 'Wild Bill' and whipped many of the fast nags of the day; came near taking down the J. M. WHITE time to Baton Rouge."

It is somewhat ironic that this race hoss is pictured below with HELENA, shown in the background while being converted from the J. B. M. KEHLOR. Capt. Way commented about the KEHLOR: "Unique in construction, with a single engine and a stiff shaft. The paddlewheels rolled lazily and seemed almost to hang up on center ... Notoriously slow, and a story originating in the *St. Louis Republican* in 1879 went into great detail about her exciting race with the East St. Louis grain elevator." At any rate, WILL S. HAYS met her end on January 31, 1888, cut down in that terrible ice gorge at St. Louis pictured in these photos. 🕒

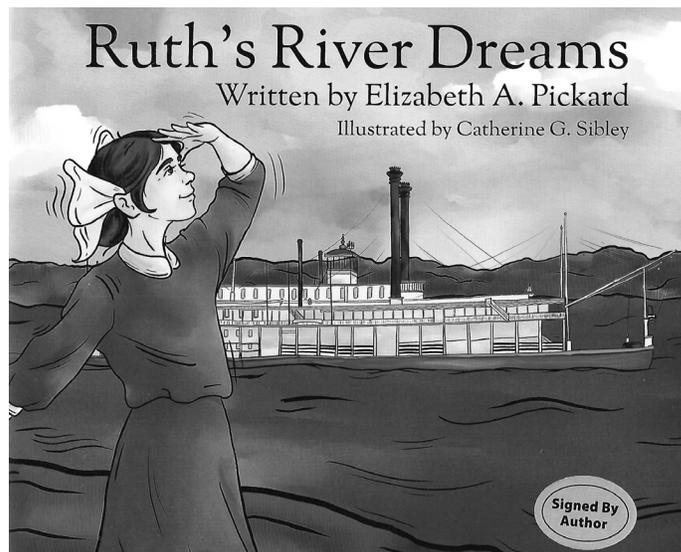


WILL S. HAYS (5795) is shown when brand new in this 1882 view from Murphy Library. Pictured in the background is HELENA (2577) being rebuilt from the former J. B. M. KEHLOR. That these two particular boats appear together is somewhat amusing.

New Children's Book Features Miss Ruth Ferris

Elizabeth A. Pickard has authored a delightful book to introduce new generations of young people to one of the river's most ardent fans, Miss Ruth Ferris, an icon and mentor for countless steamboat enthusiasts and historians over many decades. The story of Miss Ferris, longtime teacher at Community School in Ladue, MO and educator/curator at the River Room exhibit at Missouri Historical Society and later at the Midship Museum aboard the BECKY THATCHER on the St. Louis riverfront, is an enchanting and lovingly told tale in this 32 page book filled with eye-catching full color illustrations by Catherine G. Sibley. We suspect that Miss Ferris would be pleased that her story will continue to excite and inspire young people as they discover the wonderful world of steamboats and the river. The book retails for \$7.99 and is available

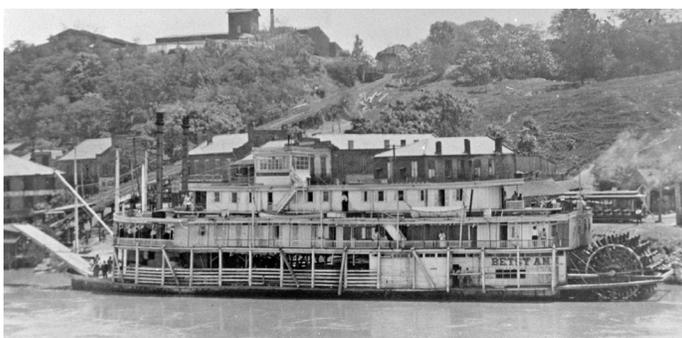
at Missouri History Museum's online bookshop at www.missouri-history-museum-shop.myshopify.com



Steamer BETSY ANN Weathers a Storm

S&D members Donna Allen and David Rankin sent us this newspaper clipping about the April 5, 1907 cyclone which wreaked havoc on the Str. BETSY ANN. The packet was northbound at Morgan Station, thirty miles below Natchez, and had just landed before the cyclone struck at 8:00 a.m. Her captain, Wilby Calahan, was able to telegraph the

office of Natchez and Bayou Sara Packet Company to send sister boat LITTLE RUFUS (5762) to provide assistance. Rouster Alex McDowell was drowned in the storm. Rufus F. Learned and S. B. McNeeley were company owners who had BETSY built in 1899 at Dubuque's Iowa Iron Works. When their company needed an additional vessel to run along with the BETSY, Iowa Iron Works was embroiled in a battle with the government for payment due on the torpedo boat ERICSSON, and was in the process of reorganizing as Dubuque Boat & Boiler Co. As a result, the contract for the wood hulled LITTLE RUFUS went instead to Capt. David Swain up at Stillwater, MN. 



BETSY ANN at Natchez and LITTLE RUFUS under construction at Stillwater. Photos courtesy of Murphy Library.

BOAT CAUGHT IN CYCLONE

Mississippi River Steamer Badly Damaged by Storm.

Associated Press Dispatch.

Natchez, Miss., April 5.—The Natchez and Bayou Sara Packet company's steel-hulled steamer Betsy Ann was badly damaged in a cyclone at Morgan Station, thirty miles south of this place. The telegram conveying the information did not reach the city until this afternoon when the steamer Little Rufus was dispatched to her relief. The telegram was sent by Captain Wilby Calahan, master of the Betsy Ann and reads as follows:

"Come to Morgan Station with Little Rufus. Betsy Ann caught in cyclone. Chimneys, staging and derrick gone. Steam pipes broken, boiler off foundation. Some of crew slightly injured. All passengers safe. Accident happened at 8 a. m., while north bound."

The Betsy Ann is a stern wheel boat with a gross tonnage of 295 tons. She was built at Dubuque, Iowa in 1899.

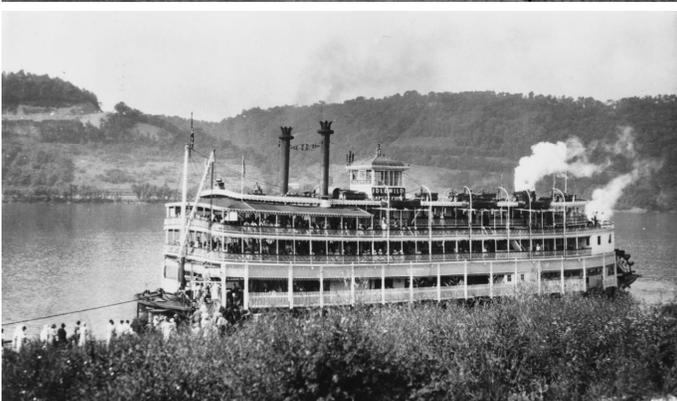
Where Did the Str. IDLEWILD Calliope Come From?

by Travis Vasconcelos

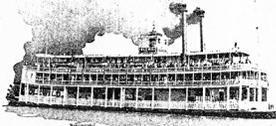
In October of 2019, David Tschiggfrie, Jon Tschiggfrie, Zachary Morecraft, Capt. Matt Dow, and myself gathered at the Howard Steamboat Museum and enjoyed conversation, stories, and pictures. This is not unusual, as we are avid researchers and historians on the subject of the steam calliope. On the rare occasion we get together, our previous research and findings are generally the topic of discussion. This generally leads us to look at pictures from various sources and as a team determine what may or may not be the case. This time, we stumbled upon a rather interesting discovery. After viewing several photos of the calliope of the Steamer IDLEWILD, we came away with the reasonable scenario that it most likely came from the Steamer AMERICA. We were able to prove one unique feature that no other instrument built by Thomas J. Nichol had: all 32 threaded rods in the whistles were flat-topped, while every other calliope he built featured rounded or pointed tops. Unfortunately, we were still missing an elusive photograph from the shallow end of the “U” shaped manifold to substantiate our belief.

This picture, if found, would show an unusual gap between two whistles on that particular end before it was changed later in the instrument’s life. With both pieces of the puzzle, we would be able to prove our suspicion and start to form a timeline for it.

This conversation would resurface, this time in a posting on the popular social media website Facebook in August of this year. Capt. Gabriel Chengery, the current owner of the IDLEWILD/AVALON calliope, asked: “Travis, I know for sure that you are the one person who can answer my question ... I want to date the AVALON calliope. What year did Nichol build it, what year was it put on the IDLEWILD, and where was it until it appeared on the IDLEWILD?” My response at the time was that the calliope most likely was sourced from the AMERICA based solely on the aforementioned conversation. Several other people became involved in the online discussion, and comments were made concerning many details of this instrument. Additional photos that were not available before were supplied by those involved in



FOR SALE
STEEL HULL EXCURSION STEAMER
IDLEWILD



Built 1911—just off Pacific way. Thoroughly repaired. Government inspection approved Nov. 10, 1926. Length 162 feet, Beam 45. Steel hull, no masts. Depth 3 feet. 11 water tight compartments. 2 funnels 44 inches by 24 feet. 2nd funnels 20 by 10 inch diam. fitted in 1926. Also 2 funnels fitted in 1926. Steam pressure 120 pounds. Same as when new. Engines 1614 inches, 6 feet stroke. Draft 10 feet 11 inches. 2 feet 10 inches. Equipped for coal, oil or wood. Will be allowed 300 additional for adding required equipment. Steam steering. Air calliope. Can be seen at Louisville.

Price \$50,000 Cash
WEST MEMPHIS PACKET CO.
Memphis, Tenn.

Top left: IDLEWILD at St. Louis in spring 1931 being readied for her excursion work at Louisville, sans calliope.

Left: At Madison, IN with newly installed calliope in summer of 1931. Above center: Ad for sale of IDLEWILD on November 27, 1926 mentions an “air caliohone” on the boat, but no steam instrument. Above right: Nichol offered a 32-note model for \$550.

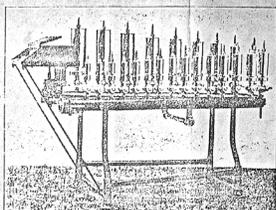
Do you

We have the Best Advertiser yet invented for

Advertise?

Circuses, Shows, Excursion Steamers, Floating Theaters, Specialties of all kinds. . . .

We have sold them in every advertise Soap and Extract.



CALLIOPE.

We make them with 20 Whistles	price, \$425.00
“ “ “ 24 “	“ \$475.00
“ “ “ 32 “	“ \$550.00

Thos. J. Nichol & Co.,
S. E. Cor. Pearl & Ludlow Sts., CINCINNATI, O.

the online conversations. Now that I have alluded to this hypothesis, let me paint the full picture.

The AMERICA was laid up above the Howard Shipyards at Jeffersonville, IN the day after Labor Day in 1930. On the 8th of September (six days later) the large excursion boat was lost in a spectacular fire that was said to be seen for miles around. As the late Capt. Alan Bates was wont to recall, the mate from the AMERICA appeared at the Louisville wharfboat (about a mile and a half from the location of the Str. AMERICA) a half hour before the smoke was seen and declared, "The AMERICA is on fire." This led to the suspicion that she was intentionally destroyed by arson. She was quite a large boat measuring 285' in length, 45' in width (82' over the guards), and carried almost 3400 passengers. She had suffered declining ticket sales and was not doing well financially in the two seasons following the start of the Great Depression. One could surmise it was quite hard to make a profit with her in such lean times. It would stand to reason that an owner would think about retiring, replacing, or liquidating a vessel in this situation. While we may never be able to confirm what sparked the fire, the question posed by this article still remains: what happened to her calliope?

The AMERICA appears to have acquired her calliope in the spring of 1920. According to calliope



historian Zachary Morecraft, the AMERICA's calliope was built by Thomas J. Nichol between 1915 and 1923, based on the details of the construction of the manifold and manufacture of the whistles. This also fits the time frame when the instrument showed up aboard the AMERICA. Photographs from the Murphy Library at the University of Wisconsin, La Crosse taken by Miss Alene Stottlebower of Madison, IN show the calliope aboard, positioned between the stacks forward, on the 29th of May, 1920. The vessel, which had not been converted to a full-time excursion boat at the time of this photo, is shown leaving the Madison wharfboat northbound. Another of Miss Stottlebower's photographs dated 27th of July, 1919 clearly shows the vessel from the Madison wharfboat without a steam calliope aboard. All pictures prior to this date in July of 1919 show her without a calliope. While the instrument could have been built for and served on a prior boat or in a circus, there are no records to indicate this. Commensurately, neither are there any records to say it had not. Such is the frequently consternating life of a calliope historian. Mr. Nichol did not affix serial numbers or any other notation to his instruments that would make one identifiable from another.

We know this calliope was built by Thomas J. Nichol in Cincinnati, OH in his shop at Pearl and Ludlow Streets. There has never been any

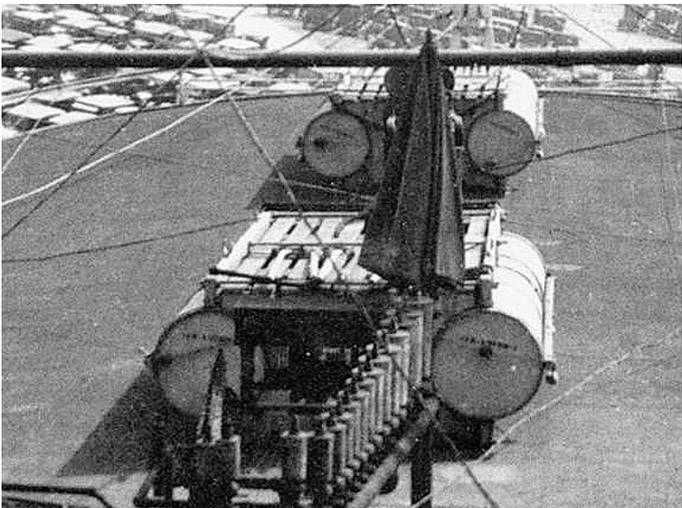
Left: Photo by Alene Stottlebower dated 27 July, 1919 shows AMERICA without calliope at Madison, IN **Bottom left:** Another Stottlebower photo of 29 May, 1920 now shows calliope in its usual location ahead of pilothouse forward on texas roof. This is the earliest known photo to show the boat with a calliope. **Right:** Undated photo shows New Albany calliope



player Harry Stocksdales at AMERICA's keyboard. Clearly visible is the pronounced split in the wooden keyboard console case and the unusual brackets which were mounted to provide support. All photos from Murphy Library, U. W. - La Crosse.

documentation to indicate why this instrument was different from the others he built. In later years, while aboard the AMERICA, it also featured a unique bracing addition on the keyboard, a wooden rail screwed onto either side and attached by metal straps to the inlet steam line. While this rail does not show up in the earlier pictures of the instrument, it is prominent in late pictures of it. One could opine that it was a structural addition owing to a pronounced split in the wood on the left side of the console cover.

To my knowledge there are no pictures of the carnage of the AMERICA showing the calliope to either be or not be aboard post-fire. Because the blaze aboard the AMERICA did not have fuel oil as an accelerant and the superstructure was primarily wood, the fire was not hot enough to melt the



Above: Undated photo showing the unique spacing between middle D# and E whistles at center of the manifold. This photo taken at Pittsburgh shows HOMER SMITH in background. **Opposite right:** This Courier Journal photo taken aboard IDLEWILD on 26 July, 1931 was the picture that proved the provenance of the instrument, showing the tell-tale gap and also the flat tops of the threaded rods through the whistles.

calliope and had it still been aboard, it could have remained intact. In one historic case, a calliope installed in a wooden circus wagon that was lit on fire survived with the sole exception of the whistle bells being separated from their caps, due to melting of the silver solder that affixes the bell to the cap, something that is easily remedied (as this calliope still exists to this day). Now we have the following question: was the calliope removed prior to the fire? Again, the answer to this may never be known.

The notion that the calliope was not aboard the vessel during the fire has also been discussed. Would the vessel have been stripped of accouterments prior to the suspicious fire? If so, who would have done it? She was laid in above the Howard Shipyards. Were they hired to strip the vessel? Did they store the items stripped off her? The records of the shipyard are stored in the Lilly Library in Bloomington, IN and a quick review of the items stored there make no mention of the Howards being involved. The AMERICA was not rebuilt by her owners, River Excursion Company (a subsidiary of the Louisville and Cincinnati Packet Company). Her hull was sold for scrap and her sad story comes to an end.

Because of a lack of excursion boat service to the near-by Rose Island resort property, the Rose Island Co. leased the Steamer IDLEWILD from the New St. Louis and Calhoun Packet Corporation of Hardin, IL. She did not have a calliope at the time of her arrival at Louisville to begin this service. Based on the previous vessel operations which served their park, it would make sense they would want one of



the classic music makers. Its call would not only market the boat's service, but become a piper to call people to the riverside to board the vessel back to town, some fourteen miles downriver.

Additional photos taken by Stottlebower in the summer of 1931 on the event of a tramping trip to Madison, clearly show the IDLEWILD to have a calliope on her roof. Based on the date we can prove that the vessel had a calliope at this time. Mr. James Reising has supplied a 26 July, 1931 picture from the *Louisville Courier Journal* newspaper showing a close up of the calliope aboard the IDLEWILD that further substantiates the assertion that the calliope is in fact from the AMERICA. Clearly pictured in that photograph is the manifold and steam whistles showing threaded rods. It is also the elusive picture mentioned earlier, showing the gap in the whistles on the shallow end of the "U" shaped manifold. However, the unique bracing is not shown on the sides of the keyboard. Perhaps this is because the entire console framework had been replaced prior to installation aboard the IDLEWILD. Many pictures exist showing this calliope aboard the IDLEWILD during the rest of her service under this name as well as the entire time on the AVALON. This would place her service aboard the excursion boat over a period of thirty-one years.

Interesting to note is that the stern mast (or flag pole) fell onto the calliope in the early days as the AVALON, causing the original curved legs to collapse onto the deck. The middle D# (or E \flat depending on your musical preference) whistle was knocked off onto the deck. When the engineering

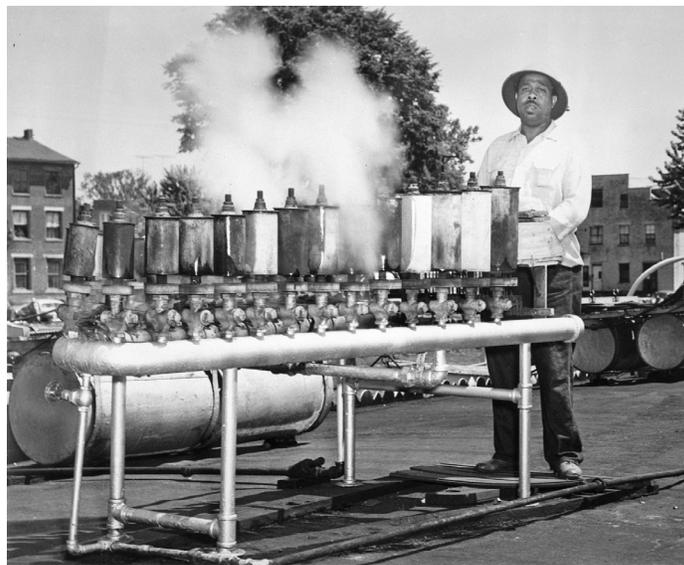
crew of the AVALON repaired the instrument, the signature gap was lost between the D# and E whistles, the curved legs were replaced with spare plumbing parts, and the console box was eventually replaced because of the damage. A photo of Bill Foley at the keyboard during this time shows the instrument without its wooden console box. As a result, pictures of this historic instrument after this damaging event show different legs on the manifold, exactly as it is today in Capt. Chengery's collection.

On the 24th of May, 1962 the assets of Str. Avalon, Inc., which had ceased operation in October of 1961, were sold at auction in a series of lots, the City of Louisville and Jefferson County bidding successfully on the boat. One of those lots was the antique calliope which went to Mr. Ernest J. Wilde of Cincinnati. Mr. Wilde would end up building five steam calliopes of his own design over the next seven or so years. One final addition to that original Nichol instrument appears to have taken place during Wilde's ownership with the stamping of each whistle's note on the underside of every chime. In 1977 he sold the historic AMERICA/IDLEWILD/AVALON calliope to Capt. Chengery, who today has the instrument mounted on a flat bed trailer and operates it with a leaf blower motor, supplying around five pounds per square inch of air to energize its whistles.

This is certainly an interesting tale with many plot twists and turns. Like many a river tale, we may never know all the answers but we will always have the questions. 🕒



Left: First Mate Clarke "Doc" Hawley opens steam valve on the calliope aboard AVALON in 1958 prior to afternoon pre-boarding concert. Notice the gap has been closed and whistle is realigned. **Right:** Ronnie, a member of AVALON's band, at the keyboard in the summer of 1950 after repairs had been made. From Murphy Library.



LEVI J. WORKUM: The Whiskey Boat

by Charles H. Bogart

In the year 2020, Petersburg, KY, had a population within its urban area of some 300 persons. The town is not located on a railroad and its connecting road to the outside world, Kentucky Route 20, is a narrow two-lane road which twists and turns on itself as it descends from the uplands to the town. Petersburg, however, is located on the Ohio River, 23-miles downstream from Cincinnati. Amazingly during most of the last half of the nineteenth century, Petersburg was home to one of the largest distilleries in the United States. All of its raw materials arrived via the Ohio River and all of its finished goods left on the waters of the Ohio River.

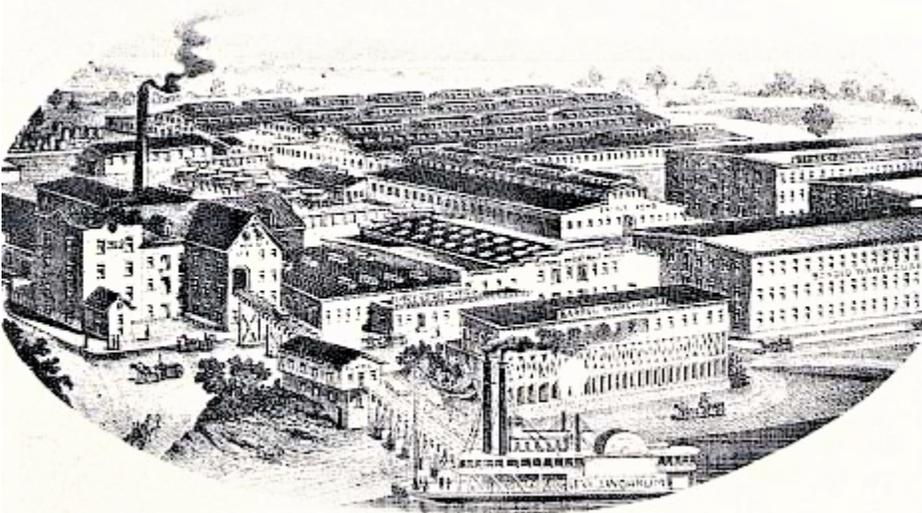
Petersburg, located in Boone County, Kentucky, was platted in 1817 by John J. Flournoy. He reserved a 2.5-acre lot on the west side of town upon which he and some business partners erected the Petersburg Steam Mill Company. In 1825, Flournoy sold the mill to Absolom Graves and Benjamin G. Willis. Eight years later, the mill was purchased by John and William Snyder. These two brothers added the distilling of grain as part of the services they provided. Raw grain and processed grain were both bulky items. When 2,000 pounds of either grain product was transported, they consumed considerable deck space on a packet boat and pound wise when sold, produced but a small profit. Some 2,000 pounds of distilled spirits, whiskey, however,

required little deck space and pound wise when sold produced a considerable profit. A bushel of corn sold for 25¢ in 1850, but the 2.5 gallons of whiskey made from it was worth \$2.00. Thus, 16 bushels of corn could, when distilled, become 40 gallons of whiskey, enough to fill one barrel.

In 1850, the mill turned out 7,000 barrels of flour valued at \$28,000, and the distillery produced 4,000 barrels of whiskey valued at \$53,000. The whiskey, produced by a steam still, was sold by the distillery to wholesalers and retail stores by the barrel. Most of the whiskey sold before the Civil War was raw spirits, which when purchased would be adulterated to the new owner's taste and then either bottled for sale or sold by the glass at a bar. In 1860, at the start of the Civil War, the mill produced 16,000 barrels of flour worth \$95,000 and the distillery 28,000 barrels of whiskey worth \$225,000. That year, the Snyder brothers installed a column still which raised production to 4,200 gallons a day.

Movement of the raw materials to the mill and distillery and their finished products to the market before 1850 was dependent on local river transportation. In turn, river transportation was dependent upon sufficient water in the Ohio River. Before being canalized in the first two decades of the twentieth century, the Ohio River was often said to be unusable three months of the year due

to being iced over, unusable another three months due to flooding, and could not be used the remaining six months due to lack of water. With no rail service to the flour mill and the distillery, the owners had to transport their finished product by water to Cincinnati for shipment by rail to other points in the area. However, in 1850, the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad (O&M) on its way west from Cincinnati to St. Louis, reached Lawrenceburg, IN, located across the river from Petersburg. Processed flour and



Artist's rendering of the Petersburg Distillery ca. 1890. Courtesy of Charles Bogart.

spirits loaded in a wagon could, by use of a ferry, reach the O&M Depot in Lawrenceburg, but capacity of the railroad was low. The preferred method of shipment was by barge or packet boat.

In 1862, the Snyders sold their interest in the mill and distillery for \$13,080 to William Appleton, J.C. Jenkins, and James W. Gaff. In 1862, as part of the war effort, Congress imposed a 20¢ per gallon spirit tax. This was later raised to 60¢, then to \$1.50 and, in 1865 to \$2.00 per gallon. Between 1863 and 1868, production of spirits at Petersburg hovered between being profitable and unprofitable. When in 1868 the spirit tax was lowered to 80¢ per gallon, it became possible to again make a profit producing whiskey. However, due to financial difficulties facing the owners of the mill and distillery, both were sold in 1869 to the Cincinnati based firm of Freiburg & Workum. This company was owned by John Freiburg and Levi J. Workum.

Freiburg and Workum, upon taking ownership of the mill and distillery, set out to increase their plant's production by upgrading and modernizing the facility. In 1870, the mill ground 9,500 barrels of corn, 4,500 barrels of flour, and 200 barrels of rye, while the distillery produced 3,700 barrels of whiskey. In 1880, whiskey production at Petersburg was up to 29,000 barrels per year. The distillery now had a new name, Petersburg Distillery, and was valued at \$250,000. It was now not only the largest distillery in Kentucky, but one of the largest distilleries in United States. Most distilleries in Kentucky produced 5,000 barrels of whiskey or less each year as they only processed grain grown nearby. Petersburg Distillery was different in that it used grain grown up and down the Ohio River Valley. The Petersburg Distillery also had on its site one of the largest bonded warehouses in the United States;



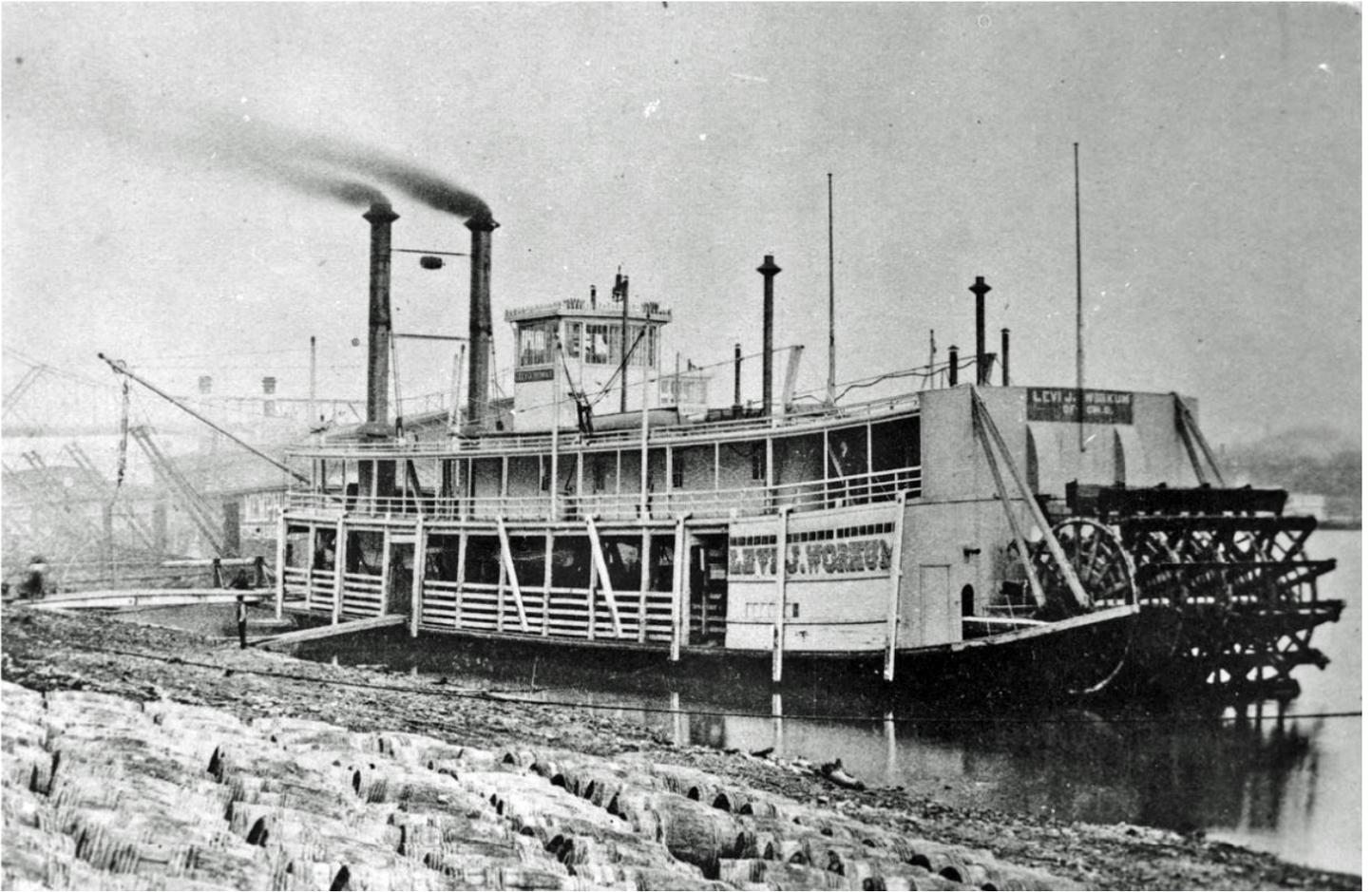
Levi J. Workum (1822-1883) and partner John Freiburg operated the Petersburg Distillery.

it was three stories high and measured 68 feet by 148 feet. With the construction of the bonded warehouse, Petersburg Distillery began to bottle whiskey under its own brand names.

Through the efforts of Freiburg & Workum, Petersburg Distillery changed from a seasonal distillery to a year-round operation. The movement to year-round production required a steady supply of raw material, which included various grains, wood for barrels and cases, glass bottles, coal for the boiler, and paper for labels. Grain and coal now arrived by the barge load. All incoming supplies and outgoing products had to move on a schedule. The employment of packet boats to deliver goods to Petersburg and carry away finished products left Freiburg & Workum vulnerable to the cooperative spirit of the employed packet boat captains. All too often the hired boats deviated from their Cincinnati-Petersburg-Cincinnati schedule for what Freiburg & Workum considered unacceptable reasons. Thus, in 1890, they began to build their own packet, the LEVI J. WORKUM (3431). The boat was built at Levanna, OH, 50 miles above Cincinnati. The boat's namesake had died in 1883.

LEVI J. WORKUM, as built, was a sternwheel packet with a wooden hull 154.5-foot long, a beam of 30 feet and a depth of 4.8 feet. She measured 183 tons and was powered by two boilers. Her bow was fitted with towknees to assist in moving barge loads of coal from Cincinnati to Petersburg. It is speculated that she was built by C.W. and S.C. Boyd, owners of a lumber yard and planing mill at Levanna. Between 1890 and 1907, the WORKUM ran between Cincinnati and Petersburg carrying not only goods to and from the Petersburg Distillery, but offering transportation to the citizens and merchants of Petersburg. In the Cincinnati area she was known as the "Whiskey Boat" and for most of her life in this trade, she was under the command of Capt. Henry B. Fenton of Newport, KY.

The 1890s were a golden age for the Petersburg Distillery. The facility had been upgraded and was now producing 400 barrels of whiskey per day, some 144,000 barrels per year. The average Kentucky distillery, at this time, produced 40 barrels per day. In 1899, the firm of Freiburg and Workum sold the Petersburg Distillery to the Kentucky Distillery &



Warehouse Company for \$100,000. Unfortunately, Kentucky Distillery & Warehouse was part of the “Whiskey Trust,” one of the more sordid American corporations. One of the nicer things written about the Whiskey Trust was that it “manipulated the market at the expense of independents, sold water stock, and on occasions used violence against a recalcitrant independent.” Once the Petersburg Distillery was in the Trust’s hands, it went into a decline. Long term profits were ignored for what could be made today. The quality of the whiskey

made at Petersburg Distillery declined and the building and its equipment deteriorated.

In 1907, LEVI J. WORKUM was sold by the Kentucky Distillery & Warehouse Company. Taken to Madison, IN, her hull was lengthened and other “improvements” made. She left the yard with the name KENTUCKY painted on her hull. In 1910, the Petersburg Distillery was closed. The Whiskey Trust tore down most of the Petersburg Distillery buildings and sold the copper and other metals for

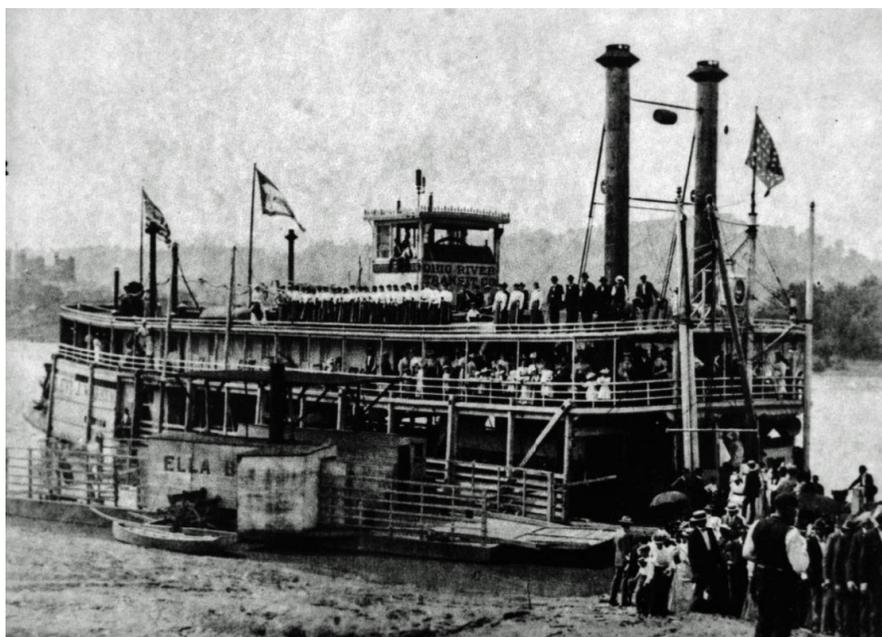


Remains of coal conveyor once used for unloading barges at Petersburg, KY.

scrap. Today visitors to Petersburg will find an historical marker at Mill and Front Street where the distillery once stood. While in Petersburg, take time to drive to Front and Grant Street to view the remains of a conveyor that once carried coal from barges tied up on the river bank to 1-ton dump trucks that were used for local deliveries. If you drive out the Lawrenceburg Ferry Road to a watercourse located on your left, you will have found the site of the remains of an abandoned New

York Harbor cruise line ship, CIRCLE LINE V. Driving ten miles further west on Kentucky Route 20 and you will be in Belleview, KY at the site of former Lock & Dam 38. The Corps housing there is now private residences. Continuing three miles on to the west is Rabbit Hash, KY and its world-

famous General Store. Also located here is the Rising Sun Ferry. [A full-color panorama of this area accompanies Charles' letter on page 2. And in the *It's a Small World* department, John Fryant just happens to make reference to the CIRCLE LINE V in his "Small Stacks" column on page 28 - Ed.]



LEVI J. WORKUM landed at Cincinnati wharfboat in this "posed" picture with the pilot standing astride the sill of the sliding window in the pilothouse. Just below is most likely the Captain casually resting his left foot atop the skylight roof with another officer positioned forward on the roof. Four members of the steward's department (cooks or cabin stewards) are lined up at the stern of the boiler deck with two other figures standing outside the boiler deck cabin. Those snow-covered barrels no doubt are the property of the Petersburg Distillery. The "snow" in the upper part of this Murphy photo are defects in the print. We wonder what the occasion was which led to this portrait. The middle view shows an ice-clogged Cincinnati riverfront with the WORKUM at her landing below L&C's CITY OF CINCINNATI (1066), both boats under steam. The two boats inboard of the WORKUM with white stack collars appear to be laid up. This Murphy view is undated, but local weather department records indicate the Ohio was completely gorged by ice from January 5-21, 1904 and also again from February 1-28, 1905. Sadly, conditions even worse than these would find both the CITY OF CINCINNATI and CITY OF LOUISVILLE cut down at this very location by ice in the winter of 1918.

In this Murphy Library print, LEVI J. WORKUM displays Ohio River Transit Company name on front of her pilothouse, landed alongside the ferry ELLA B. (1779). The ferry was built in 1897 and was operated by Toronto (OH) Ferry Company until 1908. Just what the WORKUM is doing way up here on the Upper Ohio near New Cumberland poses an interesting question. She was sold in 1907 and taken to Madison for rebuilding and renamed KENTUCKY. Ohio River Transit Company, who occasionally bought older vessels and put them into far-ranging service, apparently purchased the boat and brought LEVI here prior to her renaming. Now who do you suppose all those folks in white shirts are up on the roof? We'll have to refer this one to Jerry Sutphin for an answer!

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS *Makes First Cruise*

by Capt. Matt Dow

At 2:45 on the afternoon of September 18, the Riverboat CITY OF NEW ORLEANS cast off her lines and departed the Lower Bienville Street Wharf. While this doesn't seem like anything out of the ordinary for the New Orleans riverfront, this time was different. This was the first ever public cruise aboard the CITY, and the culmination of an arduous four-year renovation and recertification process. [The REFLECTOR has been following the story of CITY OF NEW ORLEANS in our December 2017 and September 2019 issues.] As the two 1,000 horsepower-electric motors roared to life, and the long, melodious departure whistle echoed off the nearby buildings of the French Quarter, a wave of relief washed over me. I wondered if I was feeling the same feeling my Dad had felt 45 years before during that first trip of the NATCHEZ. Throughout my life, he has told me many stories of the trials and tribulations of her construction, especially the dealings with the United States Coast Guard. Having had my fair share of issues with them during this renovation process, I can say I sure do relate to Dad now more than ever!

Despite the rainy weather that Friday, the boat ran exceptionally well (knock on wood!), a testament to her amazing marine crew, and the exceptional subcontractors we brought in to bring the boat back into operation. I even got to break away from work for a little bit and play a few songs on her calliope, which was built by Jess Coen of the Frisbie Engine and Machine Company and previously resided onboard the excursion boat P.A. DENNY.

This is certainly an interesting time to be bringing out a new boat, and definitely not like I thought it would be when we finally got the CITY running. Not only do we have to deal with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, but as I sit here writing this, Hurricane Delta is spinning down in the Caribbean, with New Orleans in the cone of uncertainty for the sixth time this hurricane season. There have been lots of different types of storms to weather this year, that's for sure! I look forward to a day when these trying times are behind us, and I can share this beautiful new boat with each and every one of you. 🍷





Above: Capt. Steve Nicoulin, Sr. with son Skyler on lazy bench. **Below:** Capt. Doc Hawley performs at Frisbie calliope.



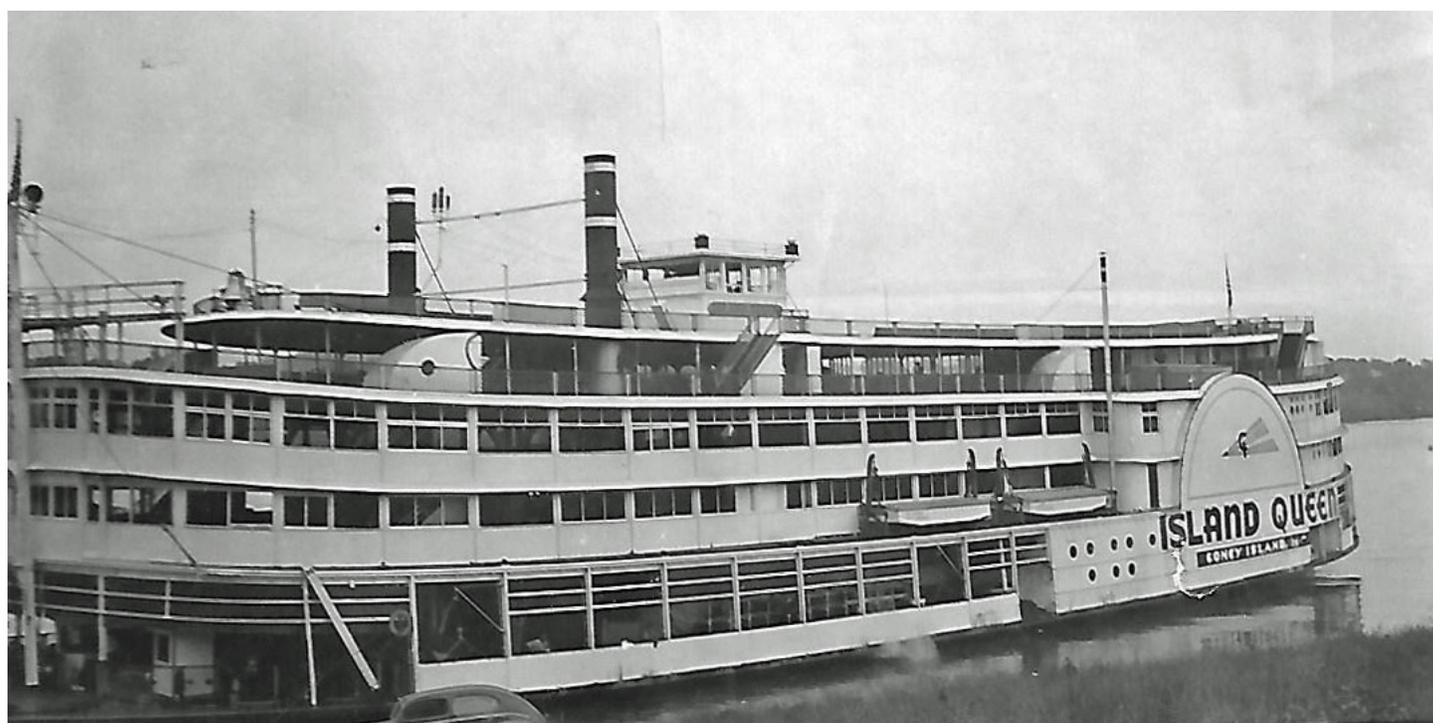
Standing are Capts. C. J. Lardner and Steve Nicoulin, Sr. with Capt. Steve Nicoulin, Jr. between the sticks.



A Peek Inside Jeff's "Dusty Boxes"

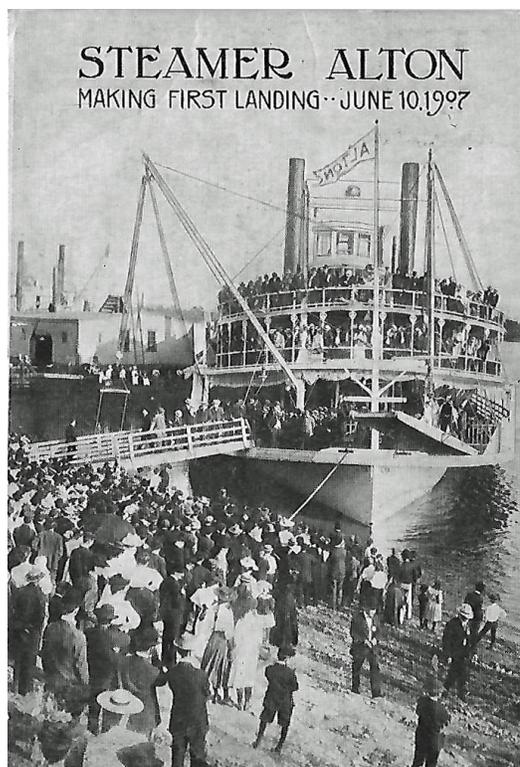
S&D Treasurer Dale Flick has been known on occasion to dig through his legendary "dusty boxes" in search of info or a photo about some finer point of steamboating. Apparently Jeff Spear has his own version of those dusty boxes, as evidenced by an envelope of photos and post cards that arrived over the Fourth of July holiday with the following note. "Was digging around today looking for an

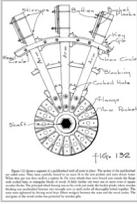
IQ picture. Finally found it in a group of unfiled photos, imagine that! Along the way I also found a few more that may be of interest to you." Those six views are presented here for your viewing, along with Jeff's brief commentary jotted down in his note. The two shown below are prints, while the others are post card images. The shot of ISLAND QUEEN came from C. W. Stoll's collection.



The excursion steamer AMERICA (0241) is at the Marietta landing in this photo taken by Jesse P. Hughes. Note the streetcar on the bridge and open touring car on the right. Jeff commented, "She looks so big! Never knew she was up this far. Looks like early 20's to me." The AMERICA turns out to be a major player in the feature article which begins on page 14. The ISLAND QUEEN (2800) is also pictured at Marietta in late summer, most likely after the close of her Coney Island season on Labor Day when she customarily tramped to Pittsburgh and back. Jeff writes, "Dare I date this as 1947? There have to be more pictures of her here, but this is the only one I know of." His posing the question of dating this photo in 1947 refers to the possibility that it may picture the boat's last visit to Marietta, since she was destroyed at Pittsburgh by fire on September 9 of that year. The view of railroad transfer boat ALBATROSS (0104) at Dubuque when new in 1907 and also of Eagle

Packet Company's ALTON (0207) "making her first landing June 10, 1907" in the St. Louis-Alton trade, were included as a courtesy to your editor's Upper Mississippi River roots. An interesting detail in the photo of U. S. GUYANDOT (T0994) is the man in lower right displaying a large mussel shell, eliciting the observation "I count nearly forty button holes stamped in it. They ain't shirt buttons either! I'll bet early 20's." GUYANDOT ran in Cincinnati District for U. S. Engineers 1913-1937. Clamming was a lucrative business for fishermen on the Ohio, Upper Mississippi, and other rivers until the manufacture of new plastic buttons put an end to the enterprise. The final photograph pictures this happy quartet posed at the roof bell of STEEL CITY (5187). Jeff noted that "if you look at the right side of the nameboard, there's a 'Y', not an 'A' at the end. [The boat was formerly the VIRGINIA.] She had that strange acorn on her roof bell. Postmarked September 21, 1914 which is probably close." 🕒





Small Stacks

Building the RAINBOW

Part 4

by John Fryant

The RAINBOW model has been completed and has passed her “sea trials” with flying colors. A major challenge in the completion process was determining the type of wire mesh used on the railings. In some of the photos of the steamer the mesh was almost invisible, while in others it appeared as a square patterned screen material. In trying to find something to accurately represent this, searches through the fabric departments of several craft stores finally surfaced an acceptable mesh material in ribbon form. While the pattern runs diagonally rather than straight up and down, it looks more correct than anything else to be found.

A preference for putting human figures on my models give the viewer an idea of the size relationship between the passengers and the boat. The German firm Preiser makes very realistic figures in many scales, so a small 1/32 scale group was chosen that looked appropriate for the 1912 – 1923 time period of the boat. The figures come in both painted and unpainted versions. They are not inexpensive, but the latter versions manage to save a few bucks. Painting them can be an interesting experience, as model figure painting has become a hobby in itself.

As yet no information on the RAINBOW’s color scheme or name has come to light, so the colors used were pure speculation on my part. Having read that some of the Western paddlewheels were painted “salmon red”, a custom-mixed shade of red-orange looked good. The dark green used on the lower main deck bulkheads and railings was typical of the greens used on many of the old boats. Also the tops of some of the paddlewheel covers were occasionally painted sky blue and this touch added a nice splash of color to the model. (Note to self – further research necessary on trim colors.)

Also in comparing photos of the finished model with those of the full-size boat, it appears that there

is not enough sheer in the bow. So although the model is not perfect, it is still a reasonably accurate replica of the full-size boat. There will be no pot of gold at the end of this RAINBOW, as it was not built as a commission job, but there was a lot of fun and satisfaction from creating it.

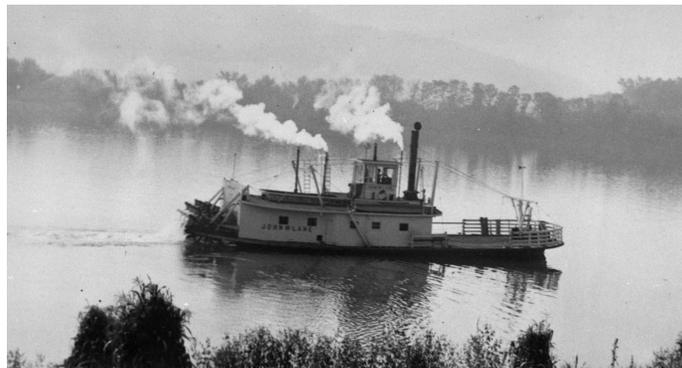
The RAINBOW model becomes number 48 in my list of modeled river vessels. It all started in 1954. The Ideal Toy Co. had produced a kit of a stern-wheel towboat, the “Southern Belle.” Although a fictional boat, a recently (at the time) acquired interest in river steamboats compelled me to build the kit. It is now long gone, but an exact duplicate was given to me by the late Virginia Bennett. Although the name of its original builder is lost in the mists of time, I had repaired it for Virginia and later received it as a gift when she had to move from her apartment in Ludlow, KY. It is shown in the photo on the next page alongside the RAINBOW, which has been the subject of this year’s columns.

In the years that have transpired between the creation of those two models, this writer has married, helped to raise two children, enjoyed both a successful career and retirement, and built, repaired or restored 77 different models. The Excel listing records them all to the best of my memory. They aren’t all riverboats, but of the 77 vessels on the list, 48 are river craft of one type or another. The largest, most complex of my riverboat models was the 1/48th scale ROB’T. E. LEE built for the Mud Island Mississippi River Museum in Memphis. The 6 1/2 foot long model was built over a three year period from 1979 to 1982. During the same time period, a 1/48 scale model of the packet S.S. BROWN (1907, James Rees & Sons) was constructed for the same museum. This was the only occasion when two models were under construction at the same time for a single client. Needless to say, that was never repeated! The two models were completed while still working full-time and dealing with the usual demands of a young family. To say that I have an understanding wife is a major understatement!

So what started this obsessive interest in nautical subjects? The seed was planted in the summer of 1946 when at the tender age of 8, I was treated to a “round trip” across the Ohio River on the old Gallipolis ferry JOHN W. LANE. My



Left: 66 years of model building are represented by the SOUTHERN BELLE (1954) and RAINBOW (2020). Below: "Official portrait" of finished RAINBOW model and "sea trials" underway. Hand-painted scale model figures give proper perspective to relative size of the model. Perhaps the author's most intricate and complicated model is represented in the famous racer ROB'T. E. LEE. Bottom right: A "seed was planted" during John's first steamboat ride: a round trip crossing on Gallipolis ferry JOHN W. LANE (3129) in 1946. The editor is surprised that this memorable vessel was not one of his later models!



Mother's family were all from in and around the old French City and we made yearly summer trips there for family visits. At some point I learned about the ferry and after considerable nagging and begging, my parents finally yielded and I got my first boat ride. I still have distinct memories of that short voyage, particularly of the boat's hinged cap that could be lowered over the top of its single stack - probably used when the fires were banked during the night.

That 1946 seed didn't germinate until 1954 when I built that little kit model. Another event that changed my life at that time was the discovery in our local library of a book titled *The Log of the Betsy Ann* by Frederick Way, Jr. After reading that I was firmly "hooked" on riverboats. Added to this was my 1955 senior high school class trip to New York City and Washington D.C. While in NYC we took the Circle Line cruise trip around Manhattan Island on the CIRCLE LINE 5, a former private yacht converted to a sightseeing boat. This was my first exposure to deep-water vessels. As an aside here, that boat is now the Ohio River's "ghost ship"- a dead thing unburied in a creek off the river below Cincinnati. How she got there is a long story, but your author rode on that boat.

Model building in general has become less popular in today's world, particularly with younger people who are occupied with many more activities and distractions than were the "old folks" of my generation. Construction techniques have changed considerably since my start in the hobby with many new materials and tools available. Laser cutting, photo etching, and 3-D printing are now widely used in kit manufacturing and scratch model building. The latter is probably the most amazing new process to become widely used. A computer generated drawing can be directly converted into a three dimensional part, saving the modeler much time and effort.

Notwithstanding all of these developments, in my opinion the most important part of building a riverboat model is not the building process, but the research involved. That also has become much easier with the availability of boat photos and historical information on the internet. What used to often take months in correspondence is now almost

instantly available on a home computer. And as often stated in this column, many steamboats and towboats went through significant changes during their sometimes brief existence. Modelers and artists often must choose a specific time period in which to depict their subject.

With proper care, boat and ship models will outlive their creators. For that reason alone, I have always felt that they should be thoroughly researched and carefully built, as sometime in the future they may prove to be a primary source of information on a particular vessel.

My modeling career has also included writing about different projects, not all of which were riverboat related. Nearly twenty years were devoted to writing bimonthly columns for two now out-of-print model boat magazines on different occasions, plus occasional articles for a couple of European ship model magazines. Add to this a lot of two dimensional riverboat art (drawings, paintings, etc.) which has not been covered in this column devoted to three-dimensional models.

This "Small Stacks" column made its debut in the REFLECTOR in 2010. Although there was reader feedback from these efforts at first, that is no longer the case. And over this time, I've nearly run out of subject matter relative to model riverboats. So regretfully, this column will conclude in this issue. However, this writer doesn't plan to just walk away though, as there are other riverboat subjects I hope to cover, some of which will relate to modeling. My S&D membership plus the association with the REFLECTOR over the years have resulted in many lifetime friendships which I will always treasure. It has been an honor and privilege to share this column with you, and I hope that these efforts will inspire present and future model builders to produce accurate replicas of the vessels that played such an import part in the development of this great country.

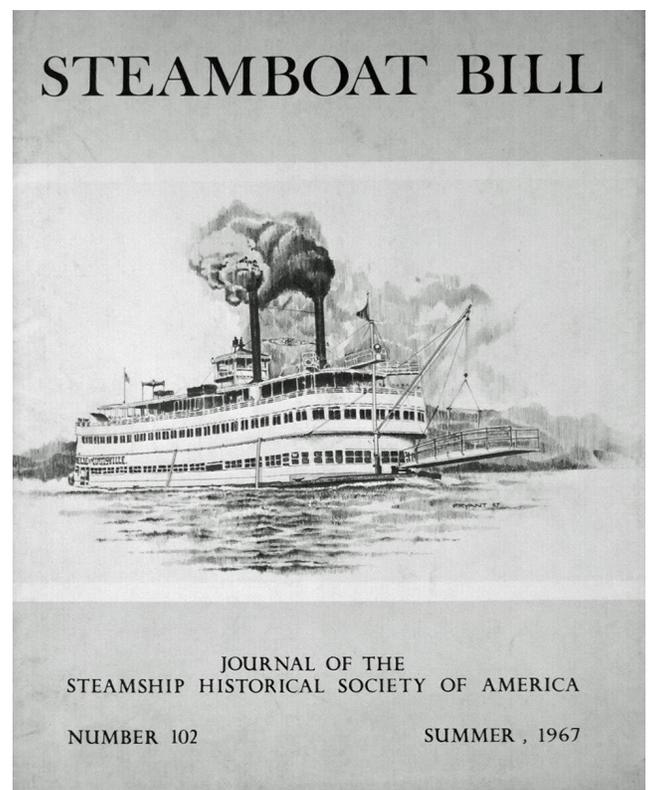
One of my favorite "endings" was in a TV truck rental commercial that aired several years ago. In the closing scene the actor climbs into the truck, slams the door, and leans out the window yelling "See ya on down the road, Jack!" So I'll leave it at that as "Small Stacks" signs off.

Steamboat/Boat/Ship Models Constructed/Repaired by John Fryant

<i>Name of Vessel</i>	<i>Type of Vessel</i>	<i>Model Completed for</i>
AEOLUS	EC 12-meter model racing yacht	scratch built for self - sold to private owner
AMBER	Star Class sailboat	kit built for self
AMERICA	Great Lakes passenger steamer	scratch built for private client
AMSTERDAM	ocean going salvage tug	modified from kit for magazine article
ARMENIA	Hudson River steamboat	unfinished - scratch built from plans
ARNOLD S.	small harbor tug	from kit - sold to private owner
ATTABOY II	small truckable towboat	scratch built - sold to private owner
B. L. ENDER	fictional vane wheel towboat	scratch built for magazine article
BELLE OF LOUISVILLE	sternwheel excursion boat	completed unfinished model for Ohio River Museum, Marietta
BETSY ANN	sternwheel river packet	restoration for Ohio River Museum
BETSY ANN	sternwheel Ohio River packet	commission for private owner
BETSY ANN	Ohio River packet	restoration for Cincinnati Historical Society
BLUE GOOSE LOBSTER YACHT	lobster yacht	reviewed kit and built for magazine
BRANNERAN	ocean going tanker	from kit for private owner
BROOKLYN	1910 NYC railroad tug	from kit for magazine article - sold to private owner
BRYANT'S NEW SHOWBOAT	showboat	commission for Smithsonian Institution
C. Y. DUNCAN, JR.	small diesel prop towboat	scratch built for magazine article
CAPT. BRYCE	small diesel prop towboat	scratch built for magazine article
CHAPERON (2 models)	sternwheel packet	scratch built for self; 2nd model from kit for private collector
CHICOT	sternwheel USE towboat	scratch built - donated to Howard Steamboat Museum
CHRIS CRAFT CONSTELLATION	motor yacht	from kit for magazine review
CHRIS CRAFT CABIN CRUISER	pleasure boat	from kit for magazine review - sold to private owner
CITY OF CINCINNATI	Ohio River packet	restoration for Cincinnati Historical Society
DAVID L.	San Francisco Bay tug	from semi-kit for magazine review
DELTA	harbor tug	from kit for self - sold to private owner
DELTA QUEEN	sternwheel tourist steamer	repair & restoration for Cincinnati Historical Society
DUNCAN BRUCE	sternwheel diesel towboat	scratch built for magazine article
ESSO HONDURAS	Central American river tug	scratch built for magazine article
FAR WEST	sternwheel Missouri River packet	scratch built for Smithsonian Institution
FIRE BOAT	typical small harbor fireboat	built from semi-kit for self
GORDON C. GREENE	sternwheel Ohio River packet	rebuilt model for Cincinnati Public Library
GYPSY F.	sternwheel diesel towboat	scratch built for self and magazine article
HATTIE BROWN	Ohio River packet	restoration for Cincinnati Historical Society
IDLEWILD	sternwheel ferry/packet	scratch built for self - sold to Smithsonian Institution
ISLAND QUEEN II	sidewheel excursion boat	scratch built for private client
ISLAND QUEEN II	Ohio River excursion boat	repair & restoration for Cincinnati Historical Society
JANE ANN	fictional motor yacht	scratch built for private owner
JIM KING	Dutch river & harbor tug	unfinished - built from fiberglass hull and plans
JOHN MACDONALD	diesel river towboat	modified kit for private client
KENNEBEC (KOMET)	New England harbor tug	from kit for self and magazine review
LADY CHARLOTTE	steam yacht	modified from kit for private client
LADY SHARON	fictional classic 1920s motor yacht	scratch built for self
LOWELL	1838 sidewheel river packet	commission for Columbus, GA museum
MARY POWELL	sidewheel Hudson River boat	restoration of folk art model for private owner
MARY POWELL	sidewheel Hudson River boat	repair & restoration of Smithsonian model
MT. WASHINGTON	sidewheel lake steamer	from kit for magazine article - sold to private owner
NELLIE G.	Casco Bay, ME ferry	from kit for magazine article
NEW BIG SANDY	fictional sternwheel packet	scratch built - donated to Howard Steamboat Museum
OHIO VALLEY	sternwheel diesel excursion boat	modified from Dumas CREOLE QUEEN kit for mag. review

<i>Name of Vessel</i>	<i>Type of Vessel</i>	<i>Model Completed for</i>
POTOWOMAC PRINCESS	typical steam harbor tug fictional sternwheel packet	from kit for magazine article - sold to private owner scratch built for self - sold to nautical collector
QUEEN CITY QUEEN CITY	Ohio River packet folk art river packet	study model for private client folk art model restored for Cincinnati Historical Society
R. DUNBAR RAINBOW ROB'T. E. LEE RUSSIAN ICEBREAKING TUG	sternwheel Tennessee River packet sternwheel Coos River packet sidewheel Mississippi River packet icebreaking tug	commission for Gaylord Entertainment, Nashville scratch built for self and magazine review scratch built for Mud Island Museum, Memphis scratch built for magazine article
S. S. BROWN SOLARWHEELER SOUTHERN BELLE ST. CANUTE SUNSHINE SUSIE	sternwheel Mississippi River packet sternwheel solar-powered launch sternwheel towboat British icebreaking tug fictional sternwheel dinner cruise boat sternwheel workboat	commission for Mud Island Museum, Memphis scratch built for self and magazine article first steamboat model, built in 1954 from kit kit built for magazine review scratch built for self and magazine article scratch built for magazine article
THOMAS A. EDISON TOOTS Two Coal Barges Two Gasoline Barges	sternwheel Florida packet small open steam launch barge barge	scratch built for self sold to Mariner's Museum, Newport News from kit - sold to private owner scratch built for self scratch built for self
U.S.S. STEVENS	W.W. II Destroyer	repair and restoration for private owner
VALLEY BELLE VIRGINIA B.	sternwheel towboat fictional sternwheel diesel dinner cruise boat	scratch built - sold to Smithsonian Institution scratch built - sold to private owner
WILD GOOSE WINDRUSH WINSWEPT W.W. II VICTORY SHIP	sternwheel diesel towboat British crew boat sailboat half-model victory ship	scratch built - sold to private owner scratch built for self repaired for daughter-in-law repaired for private owner
YVONNE K.	fictional diesel towboat	modified from kit for Howard Steamboat Museum
ZWARTE ZEE	Dutch salvage tug	scratch built for self

John Fryant's skill as a master model boatbuilder and restoration expert is ably demonstrated over the past decade in these issues: Dec 2010 - FAR WEST; Sep and Dec 2011 - CHAPERON; Jun 2012 - MARY POWELL; Dec 2012 and Mar 2013 - CREOLE QUEEN; Jun 2013 - VIRGINIA B.; Sep 2013 - vane wheel towboat; Jun 2014 - OHIO VALLEY and SUSIE; Sep 2014 - IDLEWILD; Sep 2015 - DELTA QUEEN; Mar 2016 - CITY OF CINCINNATI, ISLAND QUEEN II, BETSY ANN, HATTIE BROWN; Sep 2016 - folk art QUEEN CITY; Dec 2017 and Mar 2018 - DUNCAN BRUCE; Sep 2018 - ATTABOY II; Dec 2019 - BETSY ANN; and Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec 2020 - RAINBOW. In addition, two full color drawings by John have graced our REFLECTOR covers: the pioneer steamboat NEW ORLEANS in Sep 2011 and the IDLEWILD/BELLE OF LOUISVILLE in Sep 2014. And by a curious stroke of good luck, it was John's front cover illustration of the BELLE featured on the Summer 1967 *Steamboat Bill* which carried your editor's first published steamboat story. Sincere thanks to John for this 53-year collaboration in sharing our passion for telling the story of the Western Rivers steamboat. 🌀





Final Crossings

Jack L. Fowler

Jack L. Fowler, 85, of Pt. Pleasant, WV died on August 10, 2020 in Huntington. Jack was born December 11, 1934 and lived his entire life in Pt. Pleasant, always aware of the river industry and its history. He was a graduate of Pt. Pleasant High School and attended Marshall University. He began work as a pipe fitter at Marietta Manufacturing Company and went on to become an installer repairman with C&P Telephone Company, eventually becoming a product marketing manager at Kaiser Aluminum in Ravenswood, WV until his retirement after 24 years service. Jack served for sixteen years on Pt. Pleasant City Council and also in other county and city organizations. He was devoted to his hometown and its people. All of his life experiences prepared him for the challenges to build and curate the Point Pleasant River Museum, where he was able to secure many artifacts, photographs and literature of river history that otherwise would have been lost. Jack was honored with three different awards for his work in preserving river history. He remained executive director of Pt. Pleasant River Museum until the time of his death. Jack is survived by



his son Tony (Kim) Fowler, his daughter Tammy Hovis (Richard Watts) and their mother Mary Fowler; by four grandchildren and five great grandchildren. Private graveside services were held in Pt. Pleasant.

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Patrick Acton writes: "Thanks for the kind words about my matchstick art. You are too kind. Wow! I built the ROB'T. E. LEE riverboat many years ago ... over thirty years ago in the mid 80s. I am not sure how much I remember about it's construction, but I was always fascinated by the great riverboats. This combined with my interest as a kid with the 1870 race between the LEE and the NATCHEZ and was the impetus for the build. Unfortunately I have very few pictures of my ROB'T. E. LEE and no video. I sold the model to Ripley's Believe It or Not in 1991. Selling this model to Ripley's has been one of my biggest regrets in all my dealings with Ripley's over the years. It remains one of the favorite models I have ever built. For years Ripley's displayed the model in their museum in Gatlinburg, TN, but with the flooding that happened there two years ago, they just opened a totally remodeled and restored museum there. I don't have any idea if they still have the model there or not."

🔦 Shown above is Patrick's LEE model comprised of wooden matchsticks. His model museum in Gladbrook, IA has a fascinating website at www.matchstickmarvels.com

Back Cover

This June 10, 1913 photo of the first boats to traverse the newly opened Keokuk Lock shows Streckfus' SIDNEY (5103) and Capt. D. W. Wisherd and Sam Gregory's G.W. HILL (2188). Our September 2013 issue pictured the widely published bow-on shot of the occasion, but this lesser known stern view provides a new perspective. *Photo courtesy of Murphy Library.*



Police Development

Mississippi River

KEOKUK IOWA

GW-HILL
PAINTWORKS