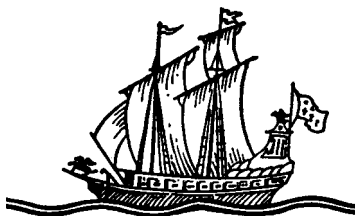


Inland Seas



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GREAT LAKES HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Order from the Great Lakes Historical Society

Greetings from the President

AS PRESIDENT of the Great Lakes Historical Society I am happy to present to the members the first number of its quarterly bulletin INLAND SEAS. Here, we hope, you will find something of value to you as charter members whose enthusiastic support has made possible the founding of the Society and the birth of this magazine.

May we all look forward to the pleasures of an association of mutual interests in a strong and prosperous Great Lakes Historical Society.

ALVA BRADLEY, *President.*

The Society Makes Its Bow

THE GREAT LAKES Historical Society arose from an astonishing discovery. Though the states bordering on the Great Lakes account for over 52,000,000 of the country's population of 131,000,000; and though their location gives them a common interest and common qualities, yet no magazine and no society existed to express this interest.

This spring the first step was taken to meet this need. On April 26, 1944, in the Cleveland Public Library, a group of Clevelanders met to organize the Great Lakes Historical Society. Among the number were ship captains, newspaper men, yachtsmen, skippers, librarians and lake enthusiasts. A constitution was adopted, and officers elected. The president, Alva Bradley, is a Cleveland ship-owner and financier. Clarence S. Metcalf, the executive vice-president, is librarian of the Cleveland Public Library, which for the time being is the headquarters and mailing address of the Society.

The plan is not to supersede, but to supplement existing societies and museums. These should retain the documents and curios of Great Lakes interest which they now own, and should ordinarily receive the others that may come from future givers. If, however, any prefer to give them to the Society, they will be gladly accepted.

What does the Society plan to do?

1. To list Great Lakes materials now in the libraries and museums of the region.
2. To publish an illustrated quarterly magazine concerned with Great Lakes events and history.
3. To furnish inquirers with information about the Lakes, or refer them to places where they can get it.
4. To extend itself throughout the Great Lakes. That the officers and trustees under whom the Society has started come from Cleveland is a purely temporary condition. As soon as the Society is fairly under way, its officers and trustees will, it is hoped, like the membership, come from both sides of the Lakes, and all the way from Duluth to the St. Lawrence.
5. To promote knowledge of the Great Lakes and preservation of historical data and objects related to them.
6. To bring together persons, societies and organizations interested in the Great Lakes and serve as a channel of expression of this interest.

The membership in the Great Lakes Historical Society numbers to date both individuals and organizations and new members are steadily coming in.



Sixty Years of the C.P.R. Great Lakes Fleet

BY FRED LONDON

THE YEAR 1944, just passed, marked the sixtieth anniversary of the establishment by the Canadian Pacific Railway of its Great Lakes fleet. It was in the spring of 1884 that the steamers *Algoma*, *Alberta* and *Athabasca* made their initial trips from Owen Sound on Georgian Bay to Port Arthur at the head of Lake Superior, fitting into the great transportation scheme, then nearing completion, to link the distant Northwest with Eastern Canada. Of the three vessels which came on the lakes at that time the latter two remained in service until the close of the season of 1943. Late in 1944 they were advertised for sale. The *Algoma* was lost in her second season.

When British Columbia entered the Dominion of Canada in 1870 the building of a transcontinental railway became a national obligation. As part of the terms of union the federal government agreed to link the Pacific coast province with the East within ten years. This daring promise, made by the government of which Sir John Macdonald was prime minister, brought many predictions that it would be an impossibility to carry out the bargain. And, indeed, it seemed for a time as if the doubters were right for the Macdonald government was thrown out of office in the federal election of 1874, largely because of a scandal in connection with the proposed railway, and the Liberal administration of Hon. Alex. Mackenzie which succeeded did but little towards fulfilling the promise made to British Columbia.

Only after Macdonald was returned to office in 1878 was real progress made. A contract was entered into at that time with a syndicate which included George Stephen (later Lord Mount Stephen), Richard B. Angus, William C. Van Horne, Donald Smith (later Lord Strathcona), and for a short time James J. Hill, though Hill soon dropped out in order to give full time to his schemes in the American West. These men lost no time in undertaking the construction of the road and carried it through with such energy that early in November 1885 a passenger train went through from Montreal to Vancouver.



The Old Lake Triplets

By DANA T. BOWEN

NOTE: *This article, published with the courteous Permission of Mr. Bowen, is a chapter from his forthcoming book.*

PROBABLY NO OTHER SHIPS stand out as clearly in the memories of old timers, whether seamen or travelers on the Great Lakes, as do the passenger steamer triplets, *India*, *China* and *Japan*. They ran from Buffalo to Duluth, the usual full length trip of the lakes, making calls along the way at Erie, Cleveland, Detroit, Mackinac Island, Marquette and Hancock. These sturdy vessels maintained a highly reliable passenger and freight service for over thirty years and in that time never figured in any serious accident. They were a success from every standpoint, whether of the public, the owners or the crews.

Growing boys in lake ports saw the trim steamers pass and vowed that some day they would sail aboard those fine ships. Many of them did so, some as passengers, some as crew and some as officers of the boats. The *India*, *China* and *Japan* are well within the memories of men living today who still enjoy recalling the days of the old craft; days of substantial growth of a great nation; days when America was forming her future greatness. The days of the lake triplets were "the good old days."

The three steamers were built of an early iron, good iron that stood well the test of time, water, wind and weather. At the end of their days the old hulls were practically as good as when launched. It was in a Buffalo shipyard in 1871, the year of the great Chicago fire, that the three boats were launched. Mr. E. T. Evans and his father, Mr. J. C. Evans, of Buffalo, were the men directly responsible for the detailed construction of the triplets. Nine years previous the elder Evans had built an iron ship, the *Merchant*, when such construction was unheard of among shipping men. Today the *Merchant* is recorded as being the first iron ship to sail under the American merchant flag on the Great Lakes. Under the Evans management the triplets eventually came into the Anchor Line fleet, a part of the Pennsylvania Railroad System. They were operated efficiently and were always well kept up and well manned.



Early Disasters on Lake Erie

THE INDIANS OF THE LAKES never liked the south shore of Lake Erie between the mouths of the Cuyahoga and the Black Rivers. They were used to canoes, accustomed to make their way clear to the Ohio in these frailest of craft, but they had learned that the most skillful brave was out of luck if he were caught offshore and it came on to blow. The banks, whether of Chagrin shale or the yellow clay to the west of it were too high, the coves too few and far between.

The French voyageurs chose to follow the Indians' routes along the Trent and the Severn, or the Ottawa and the French Rivers. Even when they headed for the Indian towns of the Sandusky marshes they followed the north shore of Lake Erie and crossed among the islands rather than paddle that unsheltered twenty-odd miles.

The English, more fortunate on blue water, had not yet developed the enthusiasm for birchbark which seemed instinctive in the couriers-du-bois and they lacked experience with the great bateaux of the fur traders. They had yet to learn caution, and they were to pay for their over-confidence with the first two big shipwrecks in Lake Erie's history, Cuyahoga County's own.

On May 7, 1763, Major Henry Gladwyn's Indian girl friend saved the British post at Detroit by tipping him off to Pontiac's great conspiracy. The next night the little garrison was surrounded by six hundred scalp-hungry savages. Within six weeks the little blockhouses at the Sault, St. Joseph, Michigan, Ouia Tenon (now Lafayette, Indiana), and at Miami (now Fort Wayne) had all fallen to treachery. So, too had Sandusky and Presqu' Isle and LeBoeuf and Venango in Pennsylvania. Reinforcements for Detroit must be provided speedily unless everything west of Lake Ontario was to be lost.

During the summer of 1763, General Jeffrey Amherst (the Lord Jeff of the college song) sent out four relief expeditions from the forts on the Niagara River. Only the second and the third got through. Indians spoiled the first, a Lake Erie storm the fourth. The first relief party, under Lieutenant Cuyler, was all American. Ninety-six men of the Queen's Company of Rangers coasted along the north shore of Lake

1. During the siege the Indian girl slipped out of the stockade and was haled before Pontiac. He gave her a beating but influential relatives saved her life. Many years later, while drunk, she fell into a kettle of boiling maple syrup and died of her burns.

Erie as far as Pelee, where they were ambushed by the Wyandots. Cuyler, a New York Dutchman, and half-a-dozen men got away, crossed through the islands to the south shore and made their painful way back to the foot of the lake, mostly by rowing. Some fifty of the others reached Pontiac's camp as captives.

The second party was of Gotham's Rangers, led by Major Robert Rogers,² greatest of all Indian fighters. The chroniclers have neglected to tell their route but it was probably by the south shore, for three years earlier Rogers had met Pontiac at the Cuyahoga and had easily made his way to Detroit. Gotham's Rangers strengthened Gladwyn's garrison in late July.

The third expedition was more pretentious. Captain Dalzell had 280 redcoats of the 55th and 80th of the Line in twenty-two barges and he carried many supplies and some small cannon. The weather was favorable and he reached Detroit late in August. Soon after, however, he insisted on leading an ill-advised sortie and his men were roughly handled. Only the exertions of Rogers and his hard-bitten woods fighters prevented a complete disaster.

More help was needed in a hurry. Drafts from a dozen garrisons and active recruiting among the provincials finally brought six hundred men together at Albany and they started west in bateaux, lightly built for the many portages ahead. Sir William Johnson kept five of the Six Nations in line and Major Wilkins, the commander, made good time until he reached the Seneca country. There, on September 14, he was ambushed between Fort Niagara at the head of Lake Ontario and Fort Schlosser, just above the Falls. His men were struggling to get the bateaux up the Niagara escarpment and casualties were many.

It was weeks before Wilkins could get his boats into the water and start west. Then the Senecas attacked again and he had to turn back. It was November before he finally reached the chilly lake and headed along the south shore.³ Oars and paddles, helped by lug sails when the wind permitted, drove the boats fast.

2. Rogers and his Rangers preferred ship's whale boats to bateaux, just as they had in the Lake George - Lake Champlain campaigns and in the famous Saint Francis expedition.

3. Cleveland historians are not agreed on this. Col. Charles Whittlesey and Crisfield Johnson believed Wilkins followed the north shore. Dr. Jared Kirtland and W. H. Album regard the south shore route as the more likely. Their theory is to be preferred because

- (a) Cuyler came to grief on the north shore.
- (b) Rogers (twice) and Dalzell had followed the south shore.
- (c) The south shore offered more shelter from the prevailing winds.

Johnson made much of references to Pointe aux Pins, Rondeau Provincial Park, Ontario.

By nightfall of November 7th, the flotilla was off the mouth of the Cuyahoga but Wilkins would not stop to make camp. The weather promised well. He was told that another river, seven miles west, would provide shelter at need. He would push on. No doubt the soldiers, with their blistered hands grumbled a bit, but they kept going. Major Moncrief, second in command, told the result of Wilkins' decision in the dispatch he forwarded to Detroit the next day.

"At 11 o'clock at night," he wrote, "we were overtaken by a violent storm which came in suddenly. The whole detachment was in danger of being lost as every bateau which reached shore was more than half-full of water."

There were forty or more boats, half canoe –half barge, in the flotilla and they must have been well bunched when the squall hit them. Three foundered or were blown against the shale bank from which Lakewood, Ohio, looks down on the lake. Half a dozen reached the shelter of the mouth of Rocky River.⁴ Others were beached on the marshy island just to the east or along the shore to the west of the bluff. The stem and ribs of one of these last was long a landmark on what is now the Rocky River bathing beach. Every one of the beached bateaux was battered to pieces as the northwest squall veered to the north.

Majors Moncrief and Wilkins, with the men from the boats in the river or west of it, made camp on the bluff now known as Eells' Point and lighted fires to hearten their scattered men. The next morning, when those who had found safety and discomfort to the east of the river had discovered the ford half a mile up stream and rejoined their commanders, the roll call revealed that seventy enlisted men and three officers were missing. Lieutenants Davidson and Payne and Surgeon Williams were never found. Gone, too, were fifty barrels of provisions, all the ammunition and the field pieces for Detroit.

There was nothing to do but turn back. Moncrief⁵ wrote the dispatch from which we have quoted and sent it on to Detroit by two friendly Indians who were willing to take a chance. They got through on November 18th, for Pontiac had already given up hope and raised the siege. The wretched survivors of Wilkins' force took turns coasting

Before the hemlocks died out, every bluff beside a river mouth deserved that name. There were hemlocks on the bluffs at either side of Rocky River thirty years ago.

Weightier still is the fact that Moncrief's Indians took eleven days to reach Gladwyn. Rondeau Provincial Park is a scant sixty miles from Detroit.

4. Rocky River seems to have had two outlets then, with a marshy island between. This island is now the Clifton Park bathing beach.
5. Moncrief, a Highlander, reported the disaster in a code of his own devising — half-English and half-Erse.



Recovery of the Steamer Humphrey

By JEWELL R. DEAN

RAISING OF THE wrecked freighter *George M. Humphrey*, the first 600-footer to sink in Great Lakes history, was accomplished in the late summer of 1944 by Capt. John Roen of Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, in a salvage job that undoubtedly will become one of the achievements for telling and retelling by lake people.

The raising, declared impossible by one leading lakes salvager testifying in Federal court, was made to appear easy by the ingenious Capt. Roen who partially filled the ship's ballast tanks with air, then lifted the buoyant craft with a small surface vessel and towed the two by stages to shallow water.

The *Humphrey*, owned by the Kinsman Transit Co., Cleveland, and operated by G. M. and H. G. Steinbrenner, sank in 77 feet of water in the Straits of Mackinac one and a half miles northeast of Mackinaw City, Michigan, twenty minutes after being in a collision with the 600-foot *D. M. Clemson*. The sinking took place on June 15, 1943, in heavy fog.

Insurance companies, after the owners had abandoned the wreck to them, in turn passed the vessel to the United States Engineers for removal as a navigation menace. The tip of the *Humphrey's* masts extended slightly above the water directly in the path which ferries follow across the straits in runs between Mackinaw City and St. Ignace.

The War Department cleared claims on the wreck by fall and Capt. Roen took over the channel-clearing job with the million dollar ship (wartime value at the time of her sinking) as his prize –if he succeeded. Failure to succeed within a year would mean that the immigrant from Norway would have to demolish the *Humphrey* to a depth safe for navigation and lose financially all money expended in salvaging efforts.

Capt. Roen and his salvage crew began work on October 20th after fall storms were starting and seasonal winds varied the water levels of Lakes Huron and Michigan intensifying and shifting quickly the currents that prevail incessantly in the straits connecting the two giant bodies of water.

As weather permitted, divers removed hatch covers which remained in place and Capt. Roen's barges *Maitland* and *Industry*, using cranes and clam shells, brought to the surface 8,000 of the 13,992 gross tons of iron ore which the *Humphrey* carried. Divers kept at the job of remov-



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The Japan. (See Page 8.) Photo courtesy of Louis Baus.